College Success@Perkins prepares you to get the most out of college.
It’s all happening

It’s the next step you’ve been waiting for — the chance to make new friends, pursue your studies and live on your own. College represents new beginnings and exciting opportunities. It’s a chance to break free and discover who you are.

College can also be a challenging place if you’re blind or visually impaired. The opportunities are there, but you have to be prepared to find them.

College Success@Perkins is an individualized, nine-month program designed to help you get the most out of college. You’ll go on a journey of self-discovery and skill-building, all while living in your own dorm room on the edge of campus at the world-renowned Perkins School for the Blind in Watertown, Massachusetts.

With College Success, you have the opportunity to develop skills that will empower you to take charge of your future and create the college experience you’ve always wanted.
3 facts about college that may surprise you

**ALL ON YOU**

Getting the services you need in college will be up to you — while offices of disability services are there to help, you will need to self-advocate in a whole new way. With an understanding of your rights and responsibilities, you can learn what you need and how to ask for it.

**TECH TALK**

The demands of college will require you not only to have mastery of your preferred electronic devices, but also to be resourceful in figuring out how to make information accessible to you. Individualized instruction and practice with assistive technology will help set you up for success.

**NUMBERS DON’T LIE**

Currently, 6 out of 10 college students who are blind or visually impaired never graduate. We want to help change this statistic. Being prepared for the jump in academic and independent living skills can pave the way for success in college.
Ask questions

At College Success, there are important — and big — questions to ask and explore deeper:

- What do you want your future college experience to look like?
- Where do you envision yourself in five years?
- What is your dream job?

We’ll also ask you specific skill-based questions as you define and reach for your goals:

- How do you learn best?
- How can you put technology to work for you?
- What’s your next step if your professor’s lecture is not accessible?

We believe our expert instruction, combined with giving things a try, is the best way to start answering these questions, and others.

What can you expect at College Success?

As a college student, you’ll have to sign up for classes, manage your own schedule and arrange for any accommodations you might need. Meals won’t magically make themselves, and of course, there’s always laundry.

College Success helps prepare you to tackle these responsibilities. You’ll be working on a variety of skills every day, based on your individual needs.
Over the course of the year, you’ll learn to:

**LIVE INDEPENDENTLY ...**

Academic and independent living skills are equally important ingredients for college success. You’ll get an authentic dorm experience — complete with dormmates — where you’ll learn how to cook and clean, shop for food and keep your spaces (somewhat) organized.

**EXPLORE YOUR COMMUNITY ...**

No matter what your orientation and mobility skill level is now, our instructors will help you become a more confident navigator. You’ll learn how to get from your dorm to classrooms and travel independently around Boston, including using the subway and ride-sharing services.

**PRACTICE STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS ...**

You’ll develop classroom skills like note-taking, organization and time management, as well as get experience giving presentations and working in groups to complete assignments. Expect to use the latest assistive technology to do research, write papers and communicate with instructors in preparation for college-level expectations.

**PLAN FOR THE FUTURE ...**

Get in touch with how your skills and interests can help inform your college and career paths, through evaluations that are all about you. With support, you can explore college options, including requirements and potential majors. One-on-one advising with our experts, along with job shadows, mock interviews and resume development will help prepare you for internships and the world of work.

**AND ... YOU’LL HAVE FUN!**

College isn’t all classes and homework, and neither is College Success. You can practice your navigational skills traveling to Boston sporting events and touring New England landmarks, and work on social skills hanging out with your dormmates in the lounge.
Who are you in the classroom?

There are few places more energizing than college campuses, but they often fall short when it comes to accessibility for students with visual impairment. At College Success, you’ll get insights into how you learn best and practice advocating for yourself.

Preparing now will ensure you spend your time in college studying and socializing, not struggling with how to approach your work or accessibility issues.

FIND POWER IN SELF-KNOWLEDGE

For any student, feeling comfortable in the college classroom comes from harnessing strengths and knowing how to get the right supports. With targeted evaluations and guidance, you’ll get to know how you learn — right down to details like how you best study and manage your time. Based on your individual needs, you’ll take a full range of classes taught by our experts and designed to prepare you for college academically, socially and personally.

College Success provides direct instruction in knowing your rights and responsibilities and finding the words to self-advocate, even when something unexpected happens.

USE ACADEMIC SKILLS — WITH SUPPORT

We know the best way to learn about yourself and gain confidence in your ability to tackle college work ... is to actually do college work. We’ll help you identify college courses that are a match for you as a student and for your goals. You’ll get familiar with the process of working with offices of disability services, which you’ll then put into practice when you enroll for a course.

With support from Perkins educators, you’ll apply for accommodations and complete college-level academics. You’ll use new skills to take effective notes, study for exams or tackle a long-term research paper.

Experience with a real college course means you’ll have a better sense of what to expect in the future.
Where are you headed?

College is the ideal time to begin thinking about your future. What are your skills and interests and how do they translate into a job? For students with visual impairment, it’s important to begin preparing for the world of work as soon as possible. Knowing your job preferences early on will help you tailor your college experience to meet your career goals.

EXPLORE CAREERS

At College Success, you’ll learn how to search for employment opportunities, and you’ll participate in mock interviews as preparation for applying to internships or jobs. You’ll hear from a panel of employers about what they look for in a potential hire, and we’ll give you opportunities to speak with professionals who are blind or visually impaired who have found jobs where they have been successful.

VISIT WORKPLACES

You’ll head to local companies and nonprofits to shadow employees in different departments and positions. You might discover that your dream career in education requires specialized courses ... or that your personality is a great match for the field of psychology ... or that more business classes would help you become an entrepreneur.

Identifying your strengths and interests now will go a long way toward helping you choose a major, secure a college internship and establish a career path.
The campus experience

At Perkins School for the Blind, we’ve spent nearly 200 years empowering students who are blind to reach their full potential. Our graduates have gone on to become successful lawyers, musicians, teachers, psychologists, entrepreneurs and more. They are living proof of the transformative power of a Perkins education, and we are proud to have played a role in their success.

TOMPKINS
YOUR HOME AWAY FROM HOME

For nine months, you’ll live in Tompkins, a cottage on the east edge of Perkins’ 38-acre campus.

The building includes dorm rooms, a tech center with the latest in assistive technology, classroom and common spaces, a newly renovated kitchen and a lounge with TV. You’ll make Tompkins your own — decorating for birthdays and holidays, celebrating Friendsgiving and creating memories hanging out and laughing with friends in the common areas.

Campus amenities include an internet radio station and music rooms in the state-of-the-art Grousbeck Center for Students & Technology, just steps away from Tompkins.

RESIDENTIAL LIFE

Our certified independent living and orientation and mobility specialists will teach you how to use kitchen appliances and prepare meals, as well as how to plan and problem-solve to travel safely. Boston and the New England region provide a playground for group day trips and exploration. Want to start a club or organize an excursion? Working with staff to pursue your passions is great practice for college, where you’ll want to socialize and go after your interests.

Health and wellness programming as well as counseling are also offered to support you as a whole person — important for anyone, especially during a time of transition.
What’s the buzz about College Success@Perkins?

It’s about becoming the best person you can be, discovering who you are outside the four walls of your childhood. I think that’s really important. You can’t do anything if you don’t, at least a tiny bit, know yourself.

Steph, 18

There’s been a mindset shift. I’m cooking, doing laundry and my O&M is a lot better. I’m just a lot more confident. Whether or not I wanted to admit it at the time, it was the right choice coming here.

Maddy, 18

I had no idea how different college would be from high school because nothing prepares you like actually taking a college course. Being here made it easier to understand what college really is like. This is the real deal.

Jared, 18

I wholeheartedly recommend College Success@Perkins to other families and students. It provides a smooth glide into college, rather than a crash landing.

Anne Greenwood Brown, parent

From a parent’s perspective, I knew Madison wasn’t ready for college, and she agreed. I’d strongly recommend this program. I’ve been pleasantly surprised by my daughter’s much-needed improvement in daily living skills, mobility and more.

Scott Baldwin, parent

Ken, 19
Program highlights:

- Academic, college and career counseling
- Individualized assistive technology training and support
- Instruction from certified independent living and orientation and mobility specialists
- Networking with college students and professionals who have visual impairment
- Residential life programming, including dorm meetings and celebrations, clubs and off-campus trips, as well as opportunities to take on leadership roles
- Lecture series on topics like: starting college with a visual impairment, adulthood and finding a career
- Health and wellness opportunities
- Counseling to support growth as a whole person
- Parent coaching and education
- Coursework at local college based on placement

By the numbers:

Located a **20-minute drive** from Boston Logan International Airport, College Success is prepared to welcome students from near and far.

Campus is a **5-minute walk** to a public bus stop, providing access to local coffee shops, restaurants and businesses.

College Success is **9 months long** — the same duration as a typical academic college year.

With **30+ colleges and universities**, Boston is a dynamic city, buzzing with student activity.
Who should apply?

College Success@Perkins is perfect for the high school graduate who is blind or visually impaired who wants to be fully prepared for the first year of college, as well as for students with prior college experience looking for a highly individualized, skills-based program.

The ideal College Success applicants are motivated and open to challenging themselves personally and academically. They are willing to work hard and engage with College Success staff and peers on the journey to achieving their individual goals.

Contact us

Do you think you or your student are a fit for College Success? We want to talk to you. Please contact Perkins Admissions at 617-972-7573 or CollegeSuccess@Perkins.org for additional information — including financing options, program requirements and how to schedule a tour.

For students, families and referring professionals looking to learn more about College Success@Perkins, visit Perkins.org/College.
Perkins School for the Blind

175 North Beacon Street
Watertown, MA 02472

Admissions: 617-972-7573

Perkins.org/College