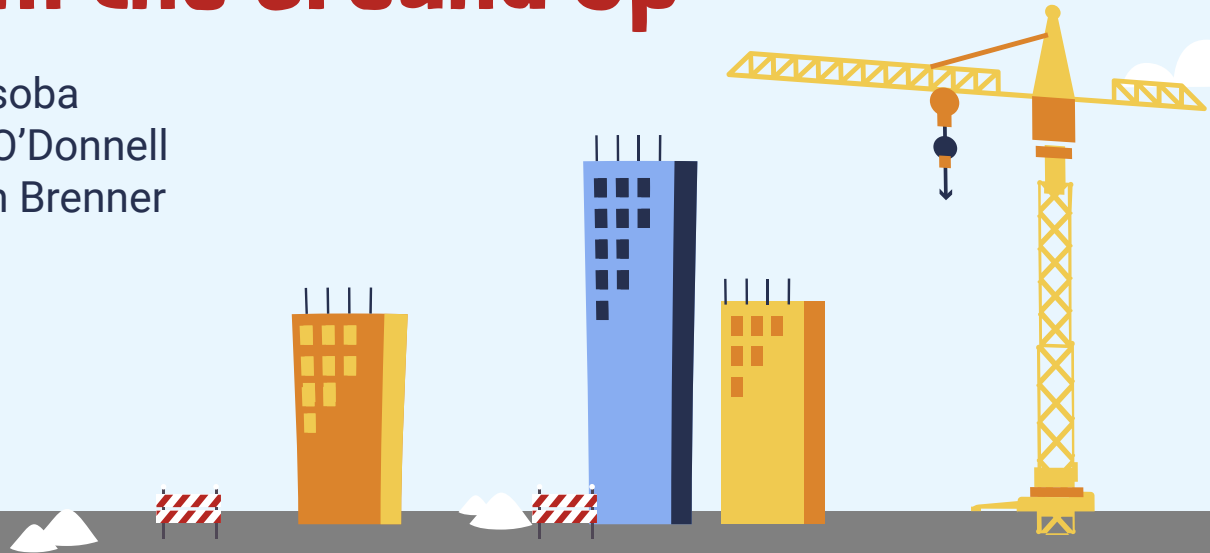


November 3, 2022

All Good Things Take Time: Building Vocational Programs from the Ground Up

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Introductions

Justin & Sara – Special education teachers in CPS

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**Hannah – Former special education teacher in CPS, 3rd-year PhD
student at UIUC**

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Program Context

- Significantly modified curriculum, moderate to intensive supports
- Students participate in separate classroom > 61% of the school day
- Approximately 26 students per year
- Students have autism, intellectual disability, physical disabilities
- Three teachers, five paraprofessionals
- Functional academic, life skills, and vocational curriculum





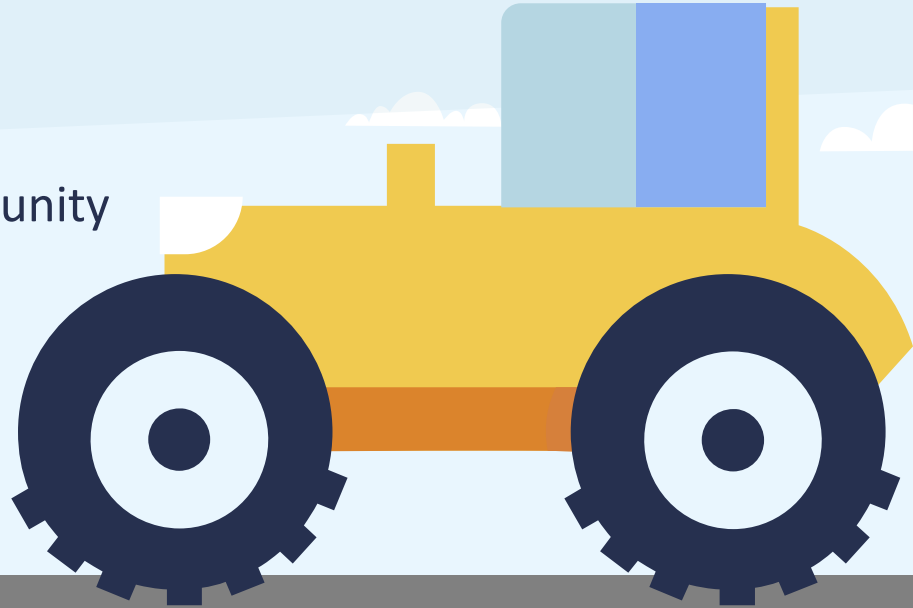
01.

The Beginning

2015-2016

The Beginning

- Activities catered towards keeping students occupied
- Coloring, watching movies
- Significant challenging behaviors
- Limited access to school and community



A New Team

- Shared values related to students' transition to adult life
- Prepare students to have **options and choices** after exiting the school system
- New teachers, new to the community
- Unfamiliar with building a vocational program or establishing community partners



Pre-Vocational Programming



Classroom Vocational Instruction & Activities

e.g., filling baggies for a local dentist office



Authentic School-Based Jobs

e.g., stocking teacher mailboxes,
recycling



CBI

Twice weekly to promote community
access and participation





**Vocational
Programming:
Our Growth Model**

Growth Model for Vocational Programming

- Start small
- Growth mindset
 - Main focus is authentic transition
- Establish what's working
- Establish what can be improved
- Expand program with improvements

Where do we always begin?

- Scheduling
 - Making sure all students' needs are met
- Appropriate allocation of personnel



Your model could look different but it's important to have something to help guide the growth of your program.



ROAR Cafe: Where did we start?

- **Start small**
 - One building (served same 15 rooms per week)
 - One Cluster program across two periods
- **Growth mindset**
 - Main focus is authentic vocational transition
- **Establish what's working**
 - Scaffolding strategies for following a schedule
 - Data collection geared towards independently completing jobs based on a schedule



ROAR Cafe: Where are we now?

- **Establish what can be improved**
 - The process of making drink orders
 - Number of jobs
 - Technology
 - Money management
 - Track to ensure 2-year maximum working in cafe
- **Expand program based on improvements**
 - One classroom takes orders, others makes the orders (now reaching more than 65 classrooms per week)
 - Students take orders on iPads
 - Students track weekly earnings for CBI budget
 - Students work in ROAR cafe to prepare for community work-based learning

Fitness Center: Where did we start?

- **Start small**
 - One community work-based learning site
 - Students attend once per week for 2 class periods
 - Students who initially attend had fewer support needs
- **Growth mindset**
 - Authentic experiences and working to include all students
- **Establish what's working**
 - Jobs selected at site (e.g., passing out keys, cleaning machines)
 - Job coach (paraprofessional) fading out prompts



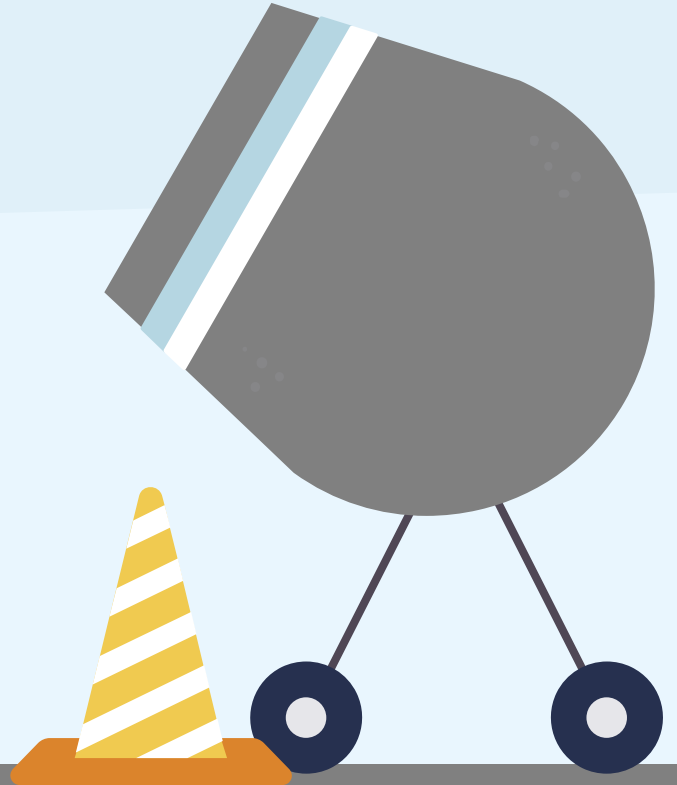
Fitness Center: Where are we now?

- **Establish what can be improved**
 - Getting all students involved
 - Scheduling of WBLE
 - Paraprofessional training
 - Student-self reflection
 - Plan for fading prompts
 - Tying in a simulated paycheck for work
- **Expand program based on improvements**
 - Every student (18-22) is involved at the fitness center
 - Improvements above have been addressed
 - Two additional community sites added



02

The Expansion Process



The Expansion Process: Scheduling Before

	Osoba	O'Donnell	Welch
1	WBL/Transition	Juniors/Seniors	Fresh/Soph
2	Fresh/Soph	Transition	Juniors/Seniors
3	Juniors/Seniors	Fresh/Soph	Transition
4	OFF	OFF	OFF
5	OFF	OFF	OFF
6	OFF	OFF	OFF
7	Transition	Fresh/Juniors	Soph/Seniors
8	Functional Life Skills/Club Push-Out		



The Expansion Process: Scheduling After

	Osoba	O'Donnell	Welch
1	WBL/Transition	Juniors/Seniors	Fresh/Soph
2	WBL/Transition	Fresh/Soph	Juniors/Seniors
3	WBL/Transition	Juniors/Seniors	Fresh/Soph
4	OFF	ROAR PE	OFF
5	OFF	OFF	OFF
6	OFF	OFF	OFF
7	Freshman, Soph, Junior, Seniors	OFF	Transition
8	Functional Life Skills/Club Push-Out		



Timeline for Expansion



Spring 2021

Established more traditional transition program



Fall 2021

Continued to expand community work sites



Spring 2022

Improved existing sites through ongoing reflection

How did we do this?



Spring 2021: Reimagine Transition Program

- Established a more traditional transition program for students ages 18-22
 - Half day of work-based learning
 - Self determination and soft skills when not at work sites
 - Functional english/math in the afternoons
 - Parent/guardian agreements
- 2 dedicated paraprofessionals
- Students of all ability levels
- Planning for future related to employment, independent living, and recreation and leisure

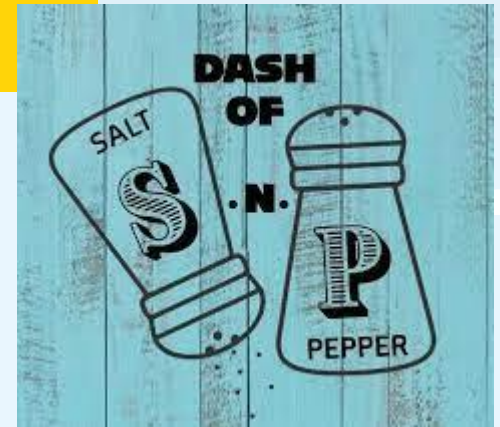
Fall 2021: Expand with More Community Sites

- Contacted PAWS as a volunteer site (Spring 2021)
- Contacted and secured Dash of Salt and Pepper Diner
- Contacted Fleet Feet
 - Decided not to add an additional site at this time

Selecting Potential Sites

- Distance from school
- Smaller business
- Partnership
- Job Sampling

PAWS[®]
CHICAGO



Adding on Sites

- Established a list of potential businesses/organizations in the community
- Determined the following:
 - Time available to work
 - Max number of community sites per day
- Mapped out an “ideal” schedule with students working 2-3 times per week



Confirming Additional Sites

- Called to schedule time to meet on the phone or in person
- Meeting with each site included:
 - Explaining the program
 - Sharing our expectations and learning their expectations
 - Listing potential jobs within that worksite
- Confirmed site
 - Days/time each week
 - # of students and support personnel
 - Tasks
 - Training/paperwork



Spring 2022: Refining Program through Reflection

- Student pre-work checklists
- Student self-evaluations and staff data collection
- Payday system based on daily evaluations
 - Budgeting
- Modified schedule to optimize staff support and number of students
 - Increase in paraprofessional support and tasks available
- Collaboration with related service providers
 - Speech pathologist going out to community sites

Current Schedule

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
A	2nd: Digital/ Task Boxes 3rd: Osoba	2nd: Work in 156 3rd: Osoba	CBI	2nd:Osoba 3rd: Geo	DePaul
B	2nd: Digital/ Task Boxes 3rd: Osoba	2nd: Work in 156 3rd: Osoba	CBI	Diner (W/ Mrs. Spadoni)	DePaul
C	2nd: Work in 156 3rd: Osoba	2nd: Work in 156 3rd: Osoba	CBI	2nd: Work in 156 3rd: Osoba	2nd: Work in 156 3rd: Lesson
D	PAWS	DePaul	CBI	Diner	2nd: Stock/Orders/ Inventory 3rd: Lesson
E	PAWS	DePaul	Diner	2nd: FB Recycling 3rd: Lesson	DePaul
F	2nd: MB North Recycling 3rd: Osoba	DePaul	Diner	2nd: FB Recycling 3rd: Osoba	DePaul
G	2nd: MB North Recycling 3rd: Osoba	DePaul	CBI	Diner	DePaul
H	2nd: MB North Recycling 3rd: Osoba	DePaul	Diner	2nd: FB Recycling 3rd: Osoba	2nd:Copies/shredding 3rd: Lesson
I	2nd: Digital/ Task Boxes 3rd: Lesson	2nd: Stock/Orders/ Inventory 3rd: Lesson	CBI	2nd: Clothing/Towels 3rd: Osoba	2nd:Copies/shredding 3rd: Lesson
	PAWS: Sanchez Recycling: Geo School: Osoba and Geo	DePaul: Geo and Sanchez School: Osoba	Diner: Sanchez CBI: Geo and Osoba	Diner: Geo Recycling: Sanchez School: Osoba and Sanchez	DePaul: Geo and Osoba School: Sanchez

Fall 2022

- Tracking system for students based on when they are aging out or transitioning to a different placement
 - First-fourth year
 - Increasing hours per week
- Teaching self-travel to work sites

Barriers to the Process

Support Staff Training

Responsible for students at worksite

Support staff and student absences



Liability

For School system and work sites

Cost of Travel



Questions?

Email brenner7@illinois.edu for access to the slidedeck from today's presentation!