

Robert has always loved the theatre. At the Old Rochester Regional High School in Mattapoisett, Massachusetts, he appeared in 11 productions, including Chicago, Jesus Christ Superstar, The Boyfriend, Oklahoma, and Our Town. When it came time for his friends in the drama club to start thinking about college and beyond, Robert naturally began the same thought process. In his senior year Robert even asked his father, “When am I going to look at colleges like my cousins?”

Despite being directed to different vocational and life skills training programs, his parents were clear that they wanted Robert “to have a liberal arts education and a college experience”. During their research, they discovered the Think College website, and gathered information on the opportunities available for students with disabilities to go to college. Through Robert and his parents’ advocacy, and with the support of the school, he enrolled at Bridgewater State University (BSU) as part of the Massachusetts Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment Initiative program (MAICEI) to further pursue his interest in the performing arts.

PLAN

At the start of Robert’s first semester at BSU, with the help of his academic advisor and educational coach, he developed a person-centered plan that included short-term and long-term goals focusing on his vision of working in the theatre. Each semester, Robert updated this plan with his team, who also helped him choose courses and campus internships that fostered his interest.

LEARN

Over 3 years, Robert audited a variety of undergraduate classes that gave him a strong foundation in the performing arts. These included Introduction to Acting, Creative Dramatics, Introduction to Public Speaking, Theatre Appreciation, and Jazz, Pop, and Show Choir.

Robert used the skills he learned in one class to succeed in others. For example, in his Theater Management class, he used

the drawing and design skills from his Drawing 1 class to create a poster. Some of the classes Robert took proved useful when he worked at the YMCA as an assistant drama counselor.

SUPPORT

In collaboration with his professors and academic advisor, Robert and his educational coach developed accommodations that made the college curriculum more accessible. He received help with note-taking and completing the course readings. His coach created graphic organizers that helped frame information clearly, and reworded test questions for better comprehension.

Robert met every two weeks with his academic advisor to ensure that he was on track with his studies, and to get support with reviewing his goals, time management, and work organization. Robert also met with the career and development specialist, and attended monthly Career Connections workshops that covered topics such as developing a resume, cover letter writing, and interviewing skills.

After orientation and instruction from his coach, Robert became more independent in using the campus facilities. Robert’s school district also arranged for its speech therapist to work with ds
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WORK

Robert's love of theatre went beyond the classroom. He