



PROJECT PANTHER LIFE: Panther Learning Is For Everyone

Academic Mentor & Peer Coach Application Packet

Program Description

Florida International University (FIU) in partnership with Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) and Parent to Parent of Miami, Inc. proposes to develop and oversee the implementation of a newly designed postsecondary transition program for students with intellectual disabilities (ID) entitled **Project Panther LIFE: Panther Learning Is For Everyone**. **Project Panther LIFE** will prepare eight (8) students with ID to complete a well-planned, structured, and individualized curriculum offering professional/career tracks (e.g., Hospitality and Vocational), and a system of supports through partnerships that will result in a certificate.

The principle objectives of **Project Panther LIFE** include: (1) The recruitment, preparation, and retention of eight (8) students with ID that meet project eligibility criteria; (2) Initial and ongoing advising, academic mentoring, peer coaching support, and job coaching; (3) The development of self-determination and advocacy skills for students and families enrolled in the program; (4) The development and generalization of independent living skills in the community; (5) The ongoing evaluation of the program leading to revisions and modifications in program development, functioning, implementation, and requirements; (6) The successful completion of eight (8) students with ID from the program; and (7) The successful and paid employability of eight (8) students with ID from the program.

An array of supports will be provided to students who qualify and enroll in **Project Panther LIFE** to ensure successful completion of the program and potential for employability. Supports will include: (1) university tuition waiver in Year 1 of the program and access to university financial aid in subsequent years; (2) transition support, ongoing academic advising, and instructional programming from M-DCPS project coordinator and faculty advisors; (3) ongoing academic mentoring from a trained mentor during the academic year; (4) ongoing peer coaching by a trained coach during the academic year; (5) job coaching, supervision, and career development seminars in Years 3 and 4; and (6) access and participation in university activities and events (e.g., clubs/organizations, sporting events) facilitated by peer coaches, faculty advisors, and project personnel. This certificate, non-degree program of study will allow students to access and participate in a variety of university courses, a 2-semester supervised employment internship experience totaling 240 hours, and other required program activities (e.g., online academic curriculum, transition curricula, family/student seminars) through a system of supports from academic mentors, peer and job coaches, and faculty.

Academic Mentoring Description

FIU undergraduate and/or graduate students from across the university community will be invited, selected, and trained to be *academic mentors*. A total of eight (8) mentors will be matched to students in the program, and mentors will be responsible for assisting and supporting the inclusion of students in university coursework and related experiences. Examples of academic mentoring support can include: re-explaining and/or clarifying content and information, checking assignment due dates, proof reading assignments and providing editing suggestions, creating graphic organizers or note cards for studying key concepts, highlighting key concepts in texts, and/or assisting the mentee in developing a list of questions to ask the professor. Each mentor will be assigned one (1) **Panther LIFE** student. Mentors will work with students three (3) times a week for 1 hour each time for a total of 14 weeks during the fall and spring semesters. Hourly rate is \$10. Mentors will be required to maintain a Mentor/Mentee Communication & Activities Log.

Peer Coaching Description

FIU undergraduate and/or graduate students will be invited, selected, and trained to be *peer coaches*. A total of eight (8) coaches will be matched to students in the program, and coaches will be responsible for facilitating social networking and connections for students. Examples of peer coach social support can include: eating lunch together, introducing mentee to others, addressing social skill needs through modeling, discussion, prompting, and redirection, and attending on-campus and off-campus events. Each peer coach will be assigned one (1) **Panther LIFE** student. Peer coaches will meet with students two (2) times a week for 1 hour each time for a total of 14 weeks during the fall and spring semesters. Hourly rate is \$10. Peer coaches will be required to maintain a Peer Coaching Communication & Activities Log.

**ACADEMIC MENTOR & PEER COACH
APPLICATION**

Name: _____ Date: _____

Panther ID#: _____

Check which position you are most interested in:

_____ Academic Mentor _____ Peer Coach

Current Address: _____

Telephone #: _____ Cell: _____

Email Address: _____

Current University Status:

_____ Freshman
_____ Sophomore
_____ Junior
_____ Senior

Major: _____ Minor: _____

Current GPA: _____

Number of Credits Taking This Semester: _____

What student organizations and/or clubs do you belong to?

Are you part of a sorority or fraternity? _____ Yes _____ No

If yes, please specify: _____

List all hobbies or interests you have: _____

Have you ever worked or volunteered with individuals with disabilities?

_____ Yes _____ No

If yes, please specify: _____

List your hours of availability for mentoring or coaching this fall semester:

Monday: _____

Tuesday: _____

Wednesday: _____

Thursday: _____

Friday: _____

Please explain why you want to become either an academic mentor or a peer coach for students in the **Project Panther LIFE** program?

