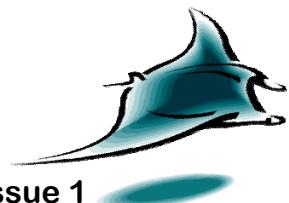


# The STING RAY Current



[www.project10.info](http://www.project10.info)

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## Students Transitioning to Adult Roles (STAR), Person-Centered Planning (PCP)

By Annie Johnson

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After a year of field testing and finalizing, the Students Transitioning to Adult Roles (STAR) Person-Centered Planning (PCP) Process is up and running for use with the students in Project 10 STING RAY. The timing for the STAR PCP release was perfect as five new students embarked on their college journey for the 2014-2015 school year at the University of South Florida St. Petersburg.

The STAR PCP is a collaborative person-centered planning process developed by the Florida Consortium on Postsecondary Education and Intellectual Disabilities and the Florida Inclusion Network, and it is available for use with students with disabilities who are transitioning to post-secondary environments. The STAR PCP gives a voice to the student and their parents, guardians, grandparents, siblings, family, and friends - those who know the student best and are willing and committed to work as a team to support the student through this important transitional phase. The resulting goals and objectives lead to an inclusive and well planned IEP. While the STAR PCP is not a required part of the IEP, having completed the STAR PCP process saves time when writing IEPs because the student and his/her family have already discussed and agreed to the goals.



Dennis displaying his completed STAR which resulted from his first STAR PCP meeting.

The STAR PCP meetings start as a celebration of the student. Members of the team brainstorm a list of the student's strengths and talents which are recorded on a large chart or white board. The facilitator leads the student and the rest of the team in a discussion about what the student's ideal future might look like. By looking at the chart and discussing the student's qualities, the student's current level of performance, and the student's future goals, the team will identify steps and support services needed to achieve those goals. The discussion leads to developing a plan for the upcoming year.

The STAR PCP process, individualized STAR PCP training webinar, and electronic STAR documents can be found on the Florida Consortium website at [www.fltsid.info](http://www.fltsid.info) for easy access. School districts and colleges may also request training and support through Project 10 Regional Transition Representatives or their local Florida Inclusion Network (FIN) regional facilitators.

## Stories from the First Year



**Demetrius participating in community service by removing litter from a lake in the community.**

by Demetrius S.

My name is Demetrius and I graduated from Gibbs High School two years ago with a portfolio full of awards. When I graduated, I didn't know what I wanted to do after high school. I spent a year at Richard L. Sanders Extended Transition program focusing on Customer Service.

During a meeting, my Vocational Rehabilitation counselor suggested I look into the STING RAY program at the University of South Florida St. Petersburg. I am so glad I did. I just completed an Introduction to Teaching course where I had the opportunity to work at Fairmont Park Elementary VPK with the cutest kids in the world. Their teacher was so nice. I don't know she does it! The kids can be really challenging, but she doesn't stop smiling. She inspired me to continue with studying to work with children.

The Sting Ray program has helped me become a better reader and I am learning more math. I love having the opportunity to meet up with my friends and go to the Hanger for lunch or watch the Rays play, I can't wait to see what happens next semester!



**Michael and new friend, Sebi, riding the trolley.**

by Michael J.

My first semester at USFSP was very productive and fun. I made a lot of good friends. I met a nice woman named Stephanie. She helped our class learn who we are deep in our souls. I also attended a Public Speaking course this year. I had a great first semester and did all my work. I laugh and smile every day at school. I have fun doing activities on campus. I do academic computer games throughout the week. They are Mindplay, Ascend, and Let's Talk. Next semester I want to take Spanish I. Last year I went to the Hartwick Symposium in Boca Raton and did a Self Determination training as well. Every Friday, I go to Bull Buds with other students and we sometimes play whiffle ball. Currently there are eleven students in the Project 10

STING RAY. My biggest accomplishment is I graduated from high school and started to attend USFSP in 2013. I love being around every one of my friends. What a great first semester I had at USFSP in Project 10 STING RAY.

by Harley H.

My name is Harley and this is my first year at Project 10 STING RAY at USFSP. I graduated from Dixie Hollins High School in 2011 and attended R.L Sanders to study culinary arts.

Last Semester, I took Introduction to Health Professions taught by Professor Hohengarten. He is a great and fun professor. We had a lot of work to do, but I did it! And I finished my first college course and I really loved it!

I took this class because I am interested in becoming a chef or working in a hospital. A couple of years ago, I volunteered at Northside Hospital cooking breakfast for the patients. I really liked working there and wanted to see what other health care professions were available.

Next semester, I am registering to take Spanish 1. Spanish seems like a great class to take. I want to take this class because I want to know what other people are saying when they speak Spanish in front of me. I also want to learn Spanish so that I can know another language and can talk to people in the hospital and maybe be an interpreter. I can't wait!



**Harley and friends showing off their Bull pride by making a carnival game for USFSP Homecoming.**





## Internship at the Tavern



by Dennis N.

My first semester at USFSP was both fun and challenging. I got an internship at the Bayboro Tavern on campus in the beginning of the fall semester. I talked to Tom, the owner of the Tavern, to see which days were available for me to intern and he scheduled me on Tuesdays and Thursdays. My friend Michael, helped train me and taught me everything that I needed to know.

After a week of training I was able to work by myself. While at the Tavern, I delivered food, wiped down tables, washed dishes and made people happy. Tom is a nice guy. He really knows what he's doing. He is a good boss. I like the challenge and I'm always busy. I like seeing my friends while working and the customers are always nice. After every shift, I get a free meal! My favorite thing to get is the Cuban sandwich. During my internship, I learned how important it is to show up on time and work hard. I loved my internship!

Dennis enjoying his lunch after his shift at the Bayboro Tavern.

## Student Life Center Gym Internship

by Sebi J.

This semester I interned at the USFSP gym. The gym is located next to the Student Life Center. I worked in the mornings on Tuesdays and Thursdays. My responsibilities included gym safety, wiping down machines, helping people learn how to use the machines, check people and equipment in and out of the gym and making sure the towels were available to patrons using the equipment. I learned how to interact with many people and help them solve their problems. I enjoyed this experience a lot!



Sebi working hard at the USFSP gym.

## My First Paid Job

by Laresa B.



Since I started in STING RAY two years ago I've had a lot of experience doing internships on campus, but I never expected to become a USFSP employee!

My first internship was working as an office assistant in Project 10 office with Danie and in my second internship I worked for the office of Multicultural Club. I helped with setting up events on campus, checking mail, and making copies.

In the spring of 2013 I started an internship at the Student Advising Center (SAC) where I worked with some amazing people. I learned many valuable office skills like shredding, scanning, copying, and I got to add messages on our website. I love working at the SAC with Jesse and Geoffrey. I guess they like me too, because they offered me a paid position. They told me that they would train me to answer the phone and make appointments with other college students once the second semester began. I love working at SAC and I know they like having me there. It's a great feeling to make my own money!

Laresa making copies at her job at SAC.



# Love for American History

by Kailey C.

This is my second year at USFSP in STING RAY. I have always wanted to take a history class since I started at USFSP.

I loved my history class with Dr. Vogt. I audited American History from 1940-1990. We talked about presidents like JFK and sports athletes, like Muhammad Ali. I learned about JFK and the Cold War.

I felt JFK was a good president. I felt sad when we watched a video about his assassination. I liked learning about the Cold War. It was very interesting how our world came to be after that war.

Muhammad Ali was a great boxer; he won good fights. I liked learning about him and his history because he was a great person and many people looked up to him. He had a great sense of humor and was a funny guy. One of his greatest sayings is

"Float like a butterfly, sting like a bee, I am the great Muhammad Ali!"

My academic mentor, Patrick, is a veteran. He helped me make a PowerPoint to present to the class. It was a lot of fun working with him. He is a very nice guy, and I really appreciated him being my academic mentor. I am happy with all that I learned, and it was better than I expected. I hoped that I can take more classes to learn more about American History. I also hope that I get great mentors like Patrick.



Kailey working with her academic mentor to prepare for an exam.



Isabel pictured leaving campus after a busy day of class and internships.

## My American Dream

by Isabel M.

My American dream is to become an Ambassador for the Williams Syndrome Association. I have attended many camps such as Whispering Trails Music Camp in Grand Rapids, Michigan and Academy of Country Music Lifting Lives Music Camp in Nashville, Tennessee. I have also attended a couple of national conventions in Saint Louis, Missouri and Boston, Massachusetts.

It all started when I went to the VISIONS Conference in Tampa and my teacher's friend was speaking about living with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome. That sparked something so unbelievable in me. That was when I wanted to start giving speeches about living with Williams syndrome!

## Special Olympics

by Michael F.

I joined Special Olympics when I started the Project 10 STING RAY two years ago. Since then, I have been an athlete on the bowling team, as well as a soccer player. My team won the silver medal in soccer. This year I have already been to state for the second time in a row and brought home the gold medal in softball! The State Fall Classic was held in Kissimmee, Florida on November 15th-16th at the ESPN Wide World of Sports. I was on the bus early Friday morning and we drove about an hour and a half to the complex to participate in our preliminary round before lunch. After that, we went to the hotel to check into our rooms, meet our roommates and chill before the opening ceremony, which was magical!

We sat right behind home plate, so we had a fantastic view of the field. Just then, three of my closest friends came out on the field: Minnie, Mickey and Goofy! Once the Olympic torch was lit, the field exploded with fireworks and "Let the games begin."



Michael showing off his gold medal from Special Olympics.



## STING RAY Orientation



Annie is proud of current student, Laresa, for welcoming new student, Aby, by showing her around campus.



New students, Delaney and Aby, bonded quickly during orientation week.

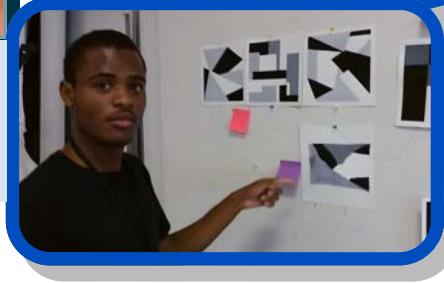
by Annie Johnson

I can hardly believe we accomplished so much in only two weeks, but our students all agree that our spring orientation was a huge success. The students had plenty of time to get to know one another, explore campus and the surrounding area, and get a feel for life as a USFSP student Project 10 STING RAY. We enjoyed adventurous sailing on the Tampa Bay, touring City Hall and getting a private meeting with St. Pete Mayor Rick Kriseman, touring the Museum of Fine Arts and writing about our favorite piece of art, participating in soft skills training and activities prepared and presented by current students in STING RAY. In addition, we got to know Tom, who owns The Tavern and Jacob ,who runs The Campus Grind, two popular places ti dine on campus. Some days were packed with activities and on other days the students were able to find their own recreation activities on campus, such as; hanging out in The Cove or playing Ping-Pong and pool at the Student Life Center.

One of the students in STING RAY is a member of Pinellas County's Transit Riders Advisory Committee (TRAC). He arranged to have PSTA send in a senior planner to the campus to present all the information our students need to become more independent in their travel, whether it's riding the bus or using DART. They also brought in a city bus just for us to explore. To give all of the students an opportunity to ride public transportation, PSTA generously gave everyone a one day bus pass. The students wanted to use it to go out to lunch, so we all took the bus up to Tijuana Flats and ate tacos! Everyone was looking forward to getting back together in the fall and it was a great way to orient the new students to life as a college student and have them learn from more experienced students.



During the two week orientation, new students spent time with current students to learn USFSP campus and explore the community.



# Announcements:



## Project 10 STING RAY Foundation

Great news! Project 10 STING RAY now has a foundation account at USFSP!

[Project 10 STING RAY Program Support Fund \(#PE0009\)](https://usffdn.usf.edu/apps/)

**USF: UNSTOPPABLE.**

Please consider donating to the Project 10 STING RAY foundation account at USFSP by following the link below:

<https://usffdn.usf.edu/apps/>

A gift from you can transform lives! Any amount helps the students served in Project 10 STING RAY to successfully transition into independence!

## Introducing the New Mentor Coordinator

The Project 10 STING RAY staff is thrilled to introduce Eric Vaughan as the new Mentor Coordinator. Eric ensures that all students in the program are matched with mentors and internships to meet their needs and future goals. Eric also monitors the mentor/mentee relationship throughout the semester to ensure that both the mentee and mentor's needs are being met. Eric graduated from the University of South Florida St. Petersburg with a B.A in English Literature, and is currently wrapping up his last year in graduate school for his Masters in Social Justice/English. Before coming to USFSP as the Mentor Coordinator, Eric worked at various nonprofit organizations throughout the east coast devoted to the betterment of children and education. Most recently Eric was the Volunteer Services Manager at Big Brothers Big Sisters of Pinellas County and ensured that over 1200 kids were matched with caring mentors and meaningful lasting mentorships. He began working with Project 10 STING RAY at USFSP in late August, and has hit the ground running.



Eric and student, Kailey, riding the trolley to Rays game.

**Project 10 STING RAY** is the direct result of recommendations proposed by the Education Subcommittee of the Governor's Commission on Disabilities in the 2008 report to Governor Charlie Crist. The intent of the project is to develop a pilot site that will serve as a program model for post secondary institutions to host students with significant cognitive disabilities who have graduated with a special diploma and wish to continue their education on a postsecondary campus.

**Project 10 STING RAY** is supported through collaborative funding by the University of South Florida St. Petersburg, Pinellas County Schools, Project 10: Transition Education Network, and the Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services (contract # 291-2620A-0C008).



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