

# Action CATS!

## Action CATS

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AR-232



## Action CATS are Live on campus!

The second year of Action CATS program has begun. We are proud to welcome our second class of students to the program. You will see them around campus, in the cafeteria, dorms, athletic fields, and even in your classes.

Pacer's National Center on Transition and Employment describes Post-Secondary Programs for Adults with Intellectual Disabilities this way:

Higher expectations and inclusive K-12 education has allowed students and families to see the potential of attending a college program. While there are important concerns to address and questions to answer regarding safety, access, supports, and transportation, the benefits of postsecondary education for students with intellectual disabilities almost always outweigh the challenges. The development and growth of academic, work and personal skills, independent living, friendships, and self-advocacy are a few of the many positive student outcomes. In addition, Think College outcome data shows program participants are employed post-graduation at significantly higher rates with higher average wages.

To learn more, go to: <https://www.pacer.org/transition/learning-center/postsecondary/college-options.asp>

## Upcoming Events

Club Week  
9.9 @5-7 pm

Homecoming bonfire  
10.1 @9-12pm

Homecoming game  
10.1 @4-8 pm

# Getting to know the Action CATS

For some of the faculty and staff on campus, seeing the Action CATS around is a common occurrence. For others, the program is a new idea. Over the course of the semester, you will learn more about the program. But for now, here are a few communication tips that will help everyone break the ice.

These communication strategies come from Sheryl E. Burgstahler's (2020) book: *Creating Inclusive Learning Opportunities in Higher Education: A Universal Design Toolkit*. She begins her discussion on how to create faculty awareness by **providing communication tips**. Stating that the best way to begin to learn about others with disabilities is to engage in communication with them. Below are some tips she suggests for all disability groups on campus.

- Ask people if they would like help before providing assistance.
- Refer to a person's disability only if it is relevant to the conversation and do not ask intrusive questions about it.
- Use commonly accepted, respectful, accurate terminology and avoid derogatory, slang, dismissive, patronizing, and negative descriptions when referring to a person's disability.
  - Feel free to use common terms and phrase like "See you later" or "Let's go for a walk."
  - However, avoid negative phrases that relate to disabilities like "He's crazy" or "What an insane idea."
- Don't compare people with disabilities with those who are "normal"; if a comparison is needed at all, simply compare them to people without a disability.

If you are interested, and want to read more, stop by the Action CATS office, and borrow one of our loaner copies of Burgstahler's book. We are in AR-232 and are open daily from 8-6 p.m.

