

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS (HTTP://WWW.UNT.EDU)

# College of Education (/)



[COLLEGE OF EDUCATION >](#)

[COLLEGE OF HEALTH AND PUBLIC SERVICE >](#)

## Highlights

- 2nd: Inclusive Post- secondary Education program in Texas
- 4: Tentative number of Students in the inaugural year (Fall 2021).
- 10-12: Number of Students admitted per year (starting in 2022-2023)
- Seeking: \$250,000+ in donations to support students with scholarships
- Self-Sustaining: Designed to be self-sustaining by 2025

## Program Activities

- UNT courses for audit credit focusing on career interests
- Inclusive internships on campus & community that could lead to competitive employment
- Participation in traditional college activities with UNT students
- 'T ELEVAR Classes: designed for their needs (life skills, financial literacy, career planning, health & illness)



## Need & Impact

UNT ELEVAR is part of an international trend of post- secondary education for young adults with intellectual/ developmental disabilities. It addresses a significant social problem: inclusive education is widely available for children with disabilities in PK-12 level, but there are few educational opportunities after high school.

UNT ELEVAR not only provides these opportunities for an underrepresented population, but it supports them in pursuing a career of their choice building on skills necessary to pursue a competitive job, live independently, and continue to be part of a larger, inclusive community.

It also provides a larger impact to the students, faculty, and staff at UNT and the surrounding communities in broadening their perceptions through inclusive experiences.

Finally, partnerships with on- campus and local organizations, school districts, and employers, extend on the importance of diversity in the workforce.



## Program Description

**UNT ELEVAR (E**mpower, **L**earn, **E**xcel, **en**Vision, **A**dvance, **R**ise) is a four-year inclusive postsecondary education program for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). Following the definition of the program's name, ELEVAR [lift, soar, rise, in Spanish], the program's vision is to empower young adults with ID who wish to continue postsecondary education (PSE) to become self-determined, independent, and healthy adults readied for integrated competitive employment. Most importantly, the UNT ELEVAR program welcomes young adults with I/DD to be part of the Mean Green family experience. UNT ELEVAR will seek the Comprehensive Transition Program accreditation from the U.S. Department of Education.

## Admissions Information



The UNT ELEVAR program is designed to serve young adults with intellectual disabilities of at least 18 years of age, has completed high school with or without a high school diploma, and who received services through an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), been served by IDEA, or completed an alternate assessment portfolio.

**The application will open December 1, 2020.** For more information, visit our [Admission Information page](#)

<http://elevar.unt.edu/admissions>).

# Supporting the UNT ELEVAR Program

Spreading the word about the inclusive options and possibilities for students with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities is a great way to support the program. In addition, here are other areas where donations can help provide immediate impact for students and the future of the program:

- Curriculum Materials & Employment Training
- Technology used by UNT ELEVAR Students (e.g., iPads, Laptops)
- UNT fees for Audit Courses for UNT ELEVAR Students
- Student's Living Expenses, including on-campus housing
- UNT ELEVAR Program Fees for one student (one year)
- Graduate Assistant/Instructor assistantships (tuition + stipend) per year
- UNT ELEVAR Student's fees, living, expenses, & program fees ("Full ride")
- Endowment for the Program

For more information about donating to the future UNT ELEVAR program, please contact Shelly Lane at [shelly.lane@unt.edu](mailto:shelly.lane@unt.edu) (<mailto:shelly.lane@unt.edu?subject=UNT%20ELEVAR>) or Paula Jonse at [paula.jonse@unt.edu](mailto:paula.jonse@unt.edu) (<mailto:paula.jonse@unt.edu>).

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The University of North Texas (UNT) supports the creation and implementation of a high-quality and self-sustaining, four-year inclusive postsecondary education program model for young adults with intellectual disabilities (ID) called UNT ELEVAR (Empower, Learn, Excel, enVision, Advance, Rise). The program's vision is to empower young adults with ID who wish to continue postsecondary education to become self-determined, independent, and healthy adults readied for integrated competitive employment. As the first Hispanic serving institution to house an inclusive postsecondary education program in Texas, UNT ELEVAR will strive to facilitate natural and culturally responsive individual supports and services for students with ID from diverse and underrepresented communities through an inclusive college experience across academics, employment, community engagement, health and well-being.

Guided by Person-Centered Planning, the UNT ELEVAR program will provide students with ID with a diverse enriching college experience through its main program components:

- a. High quality and well-rounded inclusive coursework,
- b. Integrated competitive employment,
- c. On-campus and independent living,
- d. Inclusive social experiences,
- e. Health and well-being activities, and
- f. Transition Pathway program.

Program's goals are to:

- a. Develop and implement a self-sustaining four-year inclusive postsecondary education program for students with intellectual disabilities at the University of North Texas;
- b. UNT ELEVAR students will graduate with a UNT certificate advancing their independent living, social, health, and employment related skills; and
- c. UNT ELEVAR Pathway students and their educators will participate in and complete the Transition Pathway program to increase their awareness of or teaching of independent living, pre-employment, and college success skills (e.g. UNT ELEVAR program).

In partnership with local education agencies (i.e., Fort Worth ISD, Irving ISD, Denton ISD, Decatur ISD, Region 10 ESC, Region 11 ESC), a key component of the UNT ELEVAR program called Transition Pathway, seeks to bridge transition supports for high school students with ID served under IDEA to enhance their post-high school outcomes. This component will serve as a pathway to attending UNT ELEVAR at the University of North Texas. Sustainability and replicability efforts, as well as a close collaboration with the TPSID Coordinating Center, will expand inclusive postsecondary opportunities to other local education agencies and institutions of higher education.

Upon culmination of the UNT ELEVAR program, students will earn a certificate of completion. This certificate will be a meaningful credential from the Comprehensive Transition Program (CTP) and will assist students in reaching their employment, career, and life goals. During the five-year grant performance period, the UNT ELEVAR program will serve a total of 40 ELEVAR students at UNT and 100 Transition Pathway high school students from diverse communities.

## Principal Investigators



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