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# OCTOBER NEWSLETTER

TOPS PROGRAM / ISSUE 2 / OCTOBER 2018

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The school year is in full swing and we are loving every minute of it! See below for updates from our staff.

## WANT TO KEEP UP WITH TOPS?

Want to stay up to date with the TOPS Program? Visit our blog at <http://u.osu.edu/tops/>. Here, you'll find weekly posts featuring Student Spotlights, Event Recaps, Internship/Job Information, and more.



Families, are you looking for a place to gather virtually with other families of students in programs such as TOPS? Check out the Families Think College Facebook Page at [https://www.facebook.com/groups/1065141630294756/?source\\_id=60511340871](https://www.facebook.com/groups/1065141630294756/?source_id=60511340871).

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Do you receive supports from Opportunities for Ohioans with OOD? Do we have their updated case manager's name and contact information? We work alongside OOD to provide vocational supports for our TOPS students. If you have an upcoming meeting with the OOD counselor and would like us to join, please let us know. We know from the research that employment experiences and partnering with OOD leads to stronger employment outcomes so let us capitalize on this opportunity! Also, if you don't receive services through OOD but are interested in learning more, please let us help you with the process. Contact Jessie at [jessie.green@osumc.edu](mailto:jessie.green@osumc.edu) with any questions.



Greetings from the TOPS employment team! We want to sincerely thank the first year students and their families for their patience while we anxiously await everyone's medical clearance so they can begin work.

Starting a new job can be stressful for anyone and we would like to offer some suggestions that might help to ease the anxiety:

1. If possible, ask Nikki or Patty to take you to your worksite before you start work so you can see the space and potentially meet your boss before your first day.
2. Be sure to know what the appropriate work attire is for your jobsite. It could be casual, business casual, or you could possibly have a uniform.
3. Set your clothes out the night before so you are ready to go in the morning on your first day of work.
4. Pack any bags and supplies that are needed the night before as well. This might include a lunch or a change of clothes.
5. Eat a healthy breakfast.

Remember it is okay to be nervous and you will not be alone on your first day of work. You will have a job coach with you to help make sure you understand everything. Please do not be afraid to ask questions.

We really hope that you enjoy your first internship experience with TOPS and be sure to let us know how we can help.

## College Success as a Self-Advocate

Self-Advocacy is one of the hardest skills for a young adult to learn because it requires many other skills to be developed before it can be used in action. Positive communication, self-determination, confidence, and other important soft skills are necessary for a student to be able to successfully advocate for themselves. Below are some tips and tricks for students to develop their advocacy skills in a college setting:

- **Know what you want.** The first step towards self-advocacy is knowing yourself – your needs, your interests, your strengths, and your areas of growth. This is very important, especially when advocating for yourself in a college classroom because your instructor will want to know exactly what you are asking for, whether it be extra time on an exam or clarification on assignment guidelines.
- **Know your rights and responsibilities.** Knowing your rights and responsibilities as a college student with a disability is important when speaking up for yourself in the classroom. There are accommodations (and sometimes, modifications) that can be provided for you, but you also must be willing to put in the work required to meet the course objectives.
- **Know who, when, and how to ask for help.** All of these are skills that can be developed with the assistance of TOPS staff members. It is important to know who to ask for help with your internship (Patty, Ashlee, Nikki, your supervisor, your coworkers, etc.) and who to ask for help with your classes (Mallory, your Educational Coach, the tutors, the professor, your classmates, etc.) Establishing these support networks is important when you are struggling because the sooner you are able to ask for help, the better!
- **Don't give up!** There will be people throughout your adult life that will tell you that you cannot do something or they might underestimate your abilities. Being a self-advocate and knowing your strengths and areas of growth is a great way to let those nay-sayers know that you are capable of many things!

# SOCIAL EVENTS

