

A stylized line-art lightbulb with a yellow glow inside, positioned to the right of the title.

The Learning Studio

**A GALLERY OF
WORKSHOPS PROVIDED BY**

**The Alliance Center
for Independence**



ADACIL.ORG • 732-738-4388 • ADACIL@ADACIL.ORG

The Learning Studio's Gallery of Courses



The Alliance Center for Independence (ACI) has designed the following courses with the goal of teaching employment readiness and independent living skills to individuals who receive services through the NJ Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD). The nature of these courses allow individuals to develop friendships and peer connections amongst each other while learning new skills. Courses can be modified to meet the individual's needs and interests.

The Learning Studio programs are available by referral made through your DDD support coordinator. Contact Luke Koppisch, ACI Deputy Director, at [732-738-4388](tel:732-738-4388) or lkoppisch@adacil.org for more information or visit our website adacil.org.

Due to COVID-19, all courses are currently being provided remotely through Zoom unless otherwise noted.



Who We Are

ACI is a Center for Independent Living (CIL) assisting individuals with all disabilities in Middlesex, Somerset, and Union Counties. Established in 1986, ACI is grass roots 501 (C)(3) organization based in Edison, NJ. We are one of eleven CILs in NJ. We provide five core services mandated by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). These are: Information and Referral, Advocacy, Independent Living Skills, Peer Support, and Transition services.

As a DDD vendor, ACI provides Pre-Vocational training, Career Planning, Community Based Services, Community Inclusion, and Supported Employment. Referrals to these programs are made through support coordinators. ACI has over 20 years experience in teaching these courses. ***(Note: Because of COVID-19 we are unable to provide Supported Employment at this time).***

All services are offered in Middlesex, Somerset, and Union counties unless otherwise noted.

→ Employment Readiness Courses



ORIENTATION TO EMPLOYMENT

Pre-Employment Instructional Support - In this course, participants will look at their own disability and how it impacts them on a day-to-day basis. This course will explore how to identify work settings that are best suited to an individual's unique abilities to ensure the individual's optimal success. An assessment will determine the strengths and paths to follow thereafter.

- **PRE-VOCATIONAL TRAINING**
- **3 HOURS - DELIVERED IN A 1:1 SETTING**

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EMPLOYEE AND THE EMPLOYER: TITLE I OF THE ADA

This course provides an overview of the rights and responsibilities of an employee and employer under Title 1 of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Topics include who is covered under the ADA, essential functions of jobs, qualifications of a job, myths about the ADA, reasonable accommodations and protections when applying for a job, during an interview, and on the job. Participants will be given

sources of information about Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

- **PRE-VOCATIONAL TRAINING**
- **2 HOURS - DELIVERED IN A 1:1 SETTING**

KEYS TO OBTAINING & RETAINING JOBS AND ENRICHING QUALITY OF ADULT LIFE

This course focuses on the social skills and workplace etiquette skills needed to achieve success on the job. Components include effective communication, anger management, developing listening skills, being supervised, workplace conduct, building relationships, working as a team, and asking for assistance/requesting accommodations.

- **PRE-VOCATIONAL TRAINING**
- **3 HOURS - DELIVERED IN A 1:1 SETTING**

Career Development Courses



EMPLOYMENT READINESS INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT

This course focuses on creating a variety of individualized tools that are essential in the process of applying for and accepting employment opportunities. Components include: career options, conducting a job search, building a resume, online applications, interview skills, travel training, and work incentives.

- **CAREER PLANNING**
- **3 HOURS - DELIVERED IN A 1:1 SETTING**

STEPS IN VOCATIONAL PLANNING

This course will review the steps in vocational planning for an individual. Participants will gather information about themselves (self-assessment), explore the options available to them based on their interests, match their options with their self-assessment, explore alternatives, and develop an action plan to reach their employment goal.

- **CAREER PLANNING**
- **3 HOURS - DELIVERED IN A 1:1 SETTING**

UNDERSTANDING YOUR PAYCHECK

This course will review the most common benefits an individual should consider when deciding to accept a position. Components will include understanding your paycheck withholdings, health insurance, employer match, vacation and sick time, and insurance benefits (medical, dental, vision). This course will also provide an overview of financial management, including maintaining a checking and savings account and budgeting within your means.

- **CAREER PLANNING**
- **3 HOURS - DELIVERED IN A 1:1 SETTING**

EMPLOYMENT JOB CLUB

Participants will share their experiences around looking for work, offer tips and advice, and network to find employment leads and useful information about work in their area. Each session will cover a different topic regarding employment seeking and retention. The Employment Job Club will also

include guest speakers.

- **COMMUNITY INCLUSION**
- **6 HOURS - DELIVERED IN A GROUP SETTING UP TO SIX (6) PARTICIPANTS**

HOW TO MAINTAIN EMPLOYMENT

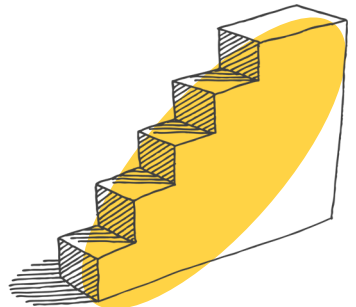
Participants in this course will learn the skills needed to maintain employment. Topics include clear communication, getting along with co-workers, flexibility, productivity improvement and natural supports on the job. After participating in this course, individuals will be able to identify and resolve any issues that may lead to an employee getting fired.

- **CAREER PLANNING**
- **3 HOURS - DELIVERED IN A 1:1 SETTING**

SO YOU WANT TO BE A DJ?! (COMING SOON)

Enjoy music and making money? This course will teach you how to be a successful DJ at parties and events. Participants will learn everything from how to operate equipment to how to mix songs to work the crowd. Participants will also learn how to start their own DJ business. C'mon and join this fun class! *This class is only being offered at the ACI office.*

- **COMMUNITY INCLUSION**
- **6 HOURS - DELIVERED IN A GROUP SETTING UP TO SIX (6) PARTICIPANTS**



TIME MANAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATION IN THE WORKPLACE

Organizational services bring order to everything from office filing systems and medical records to budgets. They help individuals gain more control over time and space, reduce stress, and increase productivity. This course will provide an overview of basic time management and organizational tools for participants to utilize at work to help the participant become a more efficient employee.

- **PRE-VOCATIONAL TRAINING**
- **3 HOURS - DELIVERED IN A 1:1 SETTING**

CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN THE WORKPLACE

This course will teach participants why conflict resolution matters in the workplace. Components include identifying causes of conflict in the workplace, taking steps to prevent conflict before it arises, recognizing the effects of conflict in the workplace, effective communication to avoid conflict, steps for constructive conflict resolution, and how to manage recurring sources of conflict.

- **PRE-VOCATIONAL TRAINING**
- **2 HOURS - DELIVERED IN A 1:1 SETTING**

Life Skills Training



INDEPENDENCE AND COMMUNITY LIVING

Housing and community living is an essential part of achieving independence. The topics in this

course include choosing where and how you want to live, setting up a house/apartment, transportation, effective communication with your landlord, making new friends, staying organized, manners, decision making, how to ask for what you want, handling “down time,” decision making skills, goal planning (short and long term), budgeting, and connecting with community resources.

- **COMMUNITY INCLUSION**
- **4 HOURS - DELIVERED IN A GROUP SETTING UP TO SIX (6) PARTICIPANTS**

LIVING WELL IN THE COMMUNITY/ COMMUNITY LIVING SKILLS

Developed by the University of Montana’s The Rural Institute, this peer-facilitated and consumer-directed workshop takes participants on a journey of empowerment through peer support, goal setting and problem solving. LWC/CLS helps participants develop goals for meaningful activities that are linked to the development of a healthy and balanced lifestyle. Topics include peer support, housing, advocacy, eating well, healthy relationships, transportation, and physical activity.

- **COMMUNITY INCLUSION**
- **2 HOURS A WEEK FOR 20 WEEKS - DELIVERED IN A GROUP SETTING FOR EIGHT TO TEN (8 TO 10) PARTICIPANTS**

SPEAKING UP AND SELF-ADVOCACY

Speaking up for yourself using effective advocacy skills are an important part of independent living. This course will teach participants how to speak up



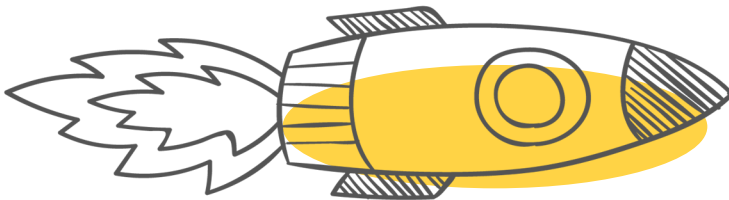
for themselves as well as work with a group to make changes in their community. Topics include: disability rights laws, public speaking, identifying issues, the legislative process, effective communication skills, and conflict resolution.

- **COMMUNITY INCLUSION**
- **6 HOURS - DELIVERED IN A GROUP SETTING UP TO SIX (6) PARTICIPANTS**

HYGIENE AND HEALTH

Good hygiene and health are essential for helping you achieve a more independent lifestyle. Topics in this course include: making healthy nutrition choices, exercise, drinking, smoking, drug use, proper bathing/washing, grooming, being safe, protecting yourself against colds/flu/COVID-19/ other diseases, establishing proper dental habits, talking to your doctor, and using the internet to gather appropriate and reliable information.

- **COMMUNITY INCLUSION**
- **10 HOURS - DELIVERED IN A GROUP SETTING UP TO SIX (6) PARTICIPANTS**



LAUNDRY AND CLEANING SKILLS

A clean house is a sign of a happy and healthy home. This course strives to stress the importance

of proper care of one's clothing and home environment, and is designed for individuals who plan to live on their own or recently have moved into their own home or apartment. Topics include sweeping, mopping, dusting, vacuuming, bathroom, bedroom and kitchen cleaning, how to make a bed, reading tags on clothing, separating colors, using the washer and the dryer, folding laundry, and ironing.

- **COMMUNITY INCLUSION**
- **10 HOURS - DELIVERED IN A GROUP SETTING UP TO SIX (6) PARTICIPANTS**

COOKING AND KITCHEN SAFETY

Topics will include: cooking/baking, setting a table, proper hand washing when cooking, kitchen safety, setting up to cook with the correct tools, using a timer, use of the stove, learning about measuring, food storage, food handling, use of electrical appliances and safety, proper cooking terminology, menu planning, and reusing leftovers in other meals. Participants will have an opportunity to share their recipes and demonstrate how to prepare their dishes.

- **COMMUNITY INCLUSION**
- **10 HOURS - DELIVERED IN A GROUP SETTING UP TO SIX (6) PARTICIPANTS**

BANKING AND BUDGETING

Learning how to save and budget your money are important independent living skills and help increase your quality of life as an adult. Topics include the different types of bank accounts

(checking, savings, money market, mutual funds, and 401K), good credit/bad credit, debit cards, credit cards, how to save money, loans, creating and working within a budget, writing a check, basic math skills, opening up a checking account, making a deposit, withdrawing money, balancing a checkbook, identity theft, and applying for unemployment insurance.

- **COMMUNITY INCLUSION**
- **5 HOURS - DELIVERED IN A GROUP SETTING UP TO SIX (6) PARTICIPANTS**

VOTING RIGHTS

All US citizens over the age of 18 have the right to vote. For many exercising this right can be confusing. This course will cover the process of voting, including how to vote in person and by mail-in ballot. Your rights as a disabled voter, the importance of voting, and how voting is a form of advocacy will also be discussed. People with developmental disabilities can make an informed choice on election day.

- **COMMUNITY INCLUSION**
- **2 HOURS - DELIVERED IN A GROUP SETTING UP TO SIX (6) PARTICIPANTS**

SEX ED AND HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Using a curriculum developed by the National Council on Independent Living and Rooted in Rights, this interactive, non-clinical, video-based course, presented by people with developmental disabilities for people with developmental disabilities offers frank and open discussions in a non-judgmental

format. Topics include healthy relationships, puberty, masturbation, dating, appropriate touching, sexual harassment, male and female body parts, and attraction. (Must get guardian permission if you are not your own guardian).



- **COMMUNITY INCLUSION**
- **6 HOURS - DELIVERED IN A GROUP SETTING UP TO SIX (6) PARTICIPANTS**

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Staying safe during an emergency is an important part of independent living. This class will help participants learn about how to prepare themselves for emergencies in their homes and communities. Topics include building an emergency kit, sheltering in place, developing a contact list, learning important phone numbers such as 911, and using coping skills during and after an emergency. This course will include guest speakers.

- **COMMUNITY INCLUSION**
- **6 HOURS - DELIVERED IN A GROUP SETTING UP TO SIX (6) PARTICIPANTS**

ADAPTIVE YOGA AND MEDITATION

Adaptive Yoga is a gentle form of yoga that is practiced either standing or sitting in a chair. This class is ideal for those seeking the physical benefits of yoga and who may have limited mobility or be beginners. These 6 classes offer many benefits, including stress reduction, increased flexibility,

strength, and self-awareness.

- **COMMUNITY INCLUSION**
- **6 HOURS - DELIVERED IN A GROUP SETTING UP TO SIX (6) PARTICIPANTS**

DISABILITY HISTORY

This interactive class will teach the history of the disability rights movement in the United States. Lessons will include discussions on the events, people and laws that shaped our history and the disabled civil rights movement.

- **COMMUNITY INCLUSION**
- **6 HOURS - DELIVERED IN A GROUP SETTING UP TO SIX (6) PARTICIPANTS**

CREATIVE WRITING CLASS

Have a great idea for a story, but need help putting it on paper? Want to write the next great American novel or simply want to learn how to write poetry? Join us in learning how to develop your own writing style and unleash the great writer inside you.

- **COMMUNITY INCLUSION**
- **6 HOURS - DELIVERED IN A GROUP SETTING UP TO SIX (6) PARTICIPANTS**

POP MUSIC THROUGH THE DECADES - FROM SINATRA TO SHEERAN

Get together with other music enthusiasts to discuss some of the greatest pop music of all time and its influence on fashion and culture. Come meet new friends and share your love of music.

- **COMMUNITY INCLUSION**
- **6 HOURS - DELIVERED IN A GROUP SETTING UP TO SIX (6) PARTICIPANTS**

GAMES

Enjoy playing old school games like Bingo, Hangman, Uno, or Scrabble? Or are trivia games more your passion? Join us for a little friendly competition, a few laughs, and a good time in the company of friends or soon to be friends.

- **COMMUNITY INCLUSION**
- **8 HOURS - DELIVERED IN A GROUP SETTING UP TO TEN (10) PARTICIPANTS**

ARTS & CRAFTS

Discover your artistic side by learning new art skills and sharing your creative ideas with others! This course will allow you to express yourself through art and is one of our most popular classes. *Participants must provide their own supplies.*

- **COMMUNITY INCLUSION**
- **8 HOURS - DELIVERED IN A GROUP SETTING UP TO TEN (10) PARTICIPANTS**



