

Dear senators, my name is Massoud Beardsley and I'm a proud graduate of the Career and community studies program at Portland State University PSU. I am writing today to express my strong support for senate bill 977 to help create new college programs for youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities. I want to start by thanking the Senate Committee on Education for sponsoring this bill. Passing SB 977 would be life-changing for so many students like me, giving us the chance to pursue a college certificate, engage in meaningful social interactions, and develop skills that lead to fulfilling careers. Before the creation of the CCS Program at PSU, I never thought a program like this would be possible. Without the opportunity to attend college, I couldn't imagine a future that included independence and employment. But thanks to CCS, I now receive the support I need to succeed academically and gain valuable career experience. Whether it's academic coaching or course modifications, the program has helped me show what I'm capable of, and it's been an essential part of my growth. I also want to share how CCS has opened doors for my career development. I am currently working at Trader Joe's and some of my roles and responsibilities include stocking shelves with the correct products and creating product poles to take out onto the floor and bring carts back into the store which is what we call cart runs and also face products to make the store look nice and clean. And clean the break room. Cleaning microwaves and tabletops and washing dishes and sweeping and mopping the break room. I'm also studying to become an educational assistant and I play tee-ball and help and support the growth of pre-school children. I'm also a volunteer baseball coach with Santa Fe High School where I throw and hit ground-balls to high school baseball player's with a fungo bat and a machine. Through Career counseling, I have a clear path forward. The support I've received has made all the difference in helping me achieve my goals. Senate Bill 977 is a crucial step toward helping more students with disabilities reach their full potential. By expanding inclusive college programs across Oregon, it will enable more individuals to pursue their dreams and contribute to society in meaningful ways. I encourage you to vote in favor of Senate Bill 977 to help create more opportunities for students like me to thrive. Thank you for your time and for your service to the people of Oregon. I also was part of the club Baseball team for four years at Portland State University and that wouldn't have been possible without the help of my peer navigator Kinsey my freshman year at Portland State University. I enjoyed it from the first practice to the last practice. I even got to control the Twitter and Facebook pages my senior year of playing club baseball. I also worked at the Campus Recreation center all four years at Portland State University cleaning machines and enforcing policies and restocking towels among many other things. I even created a social Happy Hour to stay connected with all of my friends during the trying years of Covid. Having moved from Claremont California to Portland Oregon, peer navigators were very helpful to me because I was in a new state different from the one that I grew up in. I did tons of fun activities with my peer navigators that ranged all the way from getting foot massages to going to basketball games and practicing my acting skills. And going bowling with my peer navigators and as a peer navigator my final year in the program.

Sincerely Massoud Beardsley

Career and community studies program student

Portland State University