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Are You Ready for the Adventure of Your

**LIFE?**

(“Learning Independence, Feeling Empowered”)

**What is LIFE?**

4 week residential training program for students between the ages of 14-18 years old who are returning to a high school academic program in the fall of 2023

Provides basic training in the skills of blindness and advocacy skills

Helps students become responsible for their lives

Provides students with opportunities to explore employment and college goals

Provides an opportunity to gain real world work experience or additional skills of blindness training

Affords opportunities to participate in physical fitness and confidence building activities

Offers opportunities to network with successful mentors who are blind or vision-impaired

Helps students develop positive strategies for dealing with misconceptions about blindness

Provides daily opportunities to have LOTS of fun!

**Important Dates for LIFE:**

***Application Deadline:***  11:59 PM, Monday, May 8, 2023

Program Begins:  Sunday, July 9, 2023 - check-in - 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Program Ends:  Friday, August 4, 2023 - 12:00 p.m.

Graduation Ceremony:  Friday, August 4, 2023 - 10:00 a.m.

Student/parent meetings with staff via Zoom:  August 7-10, times will be scheduled

**Classes:**

Braille

Personal and Home Management – cooking, cleaning, and organizing

Independent travel skills using a long white cane

Keyboarding/Computers

Access Technology

Job Readiness

Work Experience

Conversations about Blindness

**Confidence Building Activities:**

Improvisation Training

Formal Dinner/Dance

Drivers Education Experience

Movies

Grilling

Business and Social Networking Skills

Whitewater Rafting

Swimming

Sailing

And much more!

**Work Experience:**

Students between the ages of 16 and 18 work part-time in a community-based setting during the last two weeks of the LIFE program.

In some instances, staff will recommend that a student continue to focus on blindness skills (Travel skills, Braille, Access Technology, and Cooking) during the last two weeks of the program.

**Requirements for LIFE:**

Students must:

Actively participate in **all** four weeks of the program (unless returning to school during the last week of the program)

Be between the ages of 14 and 18 and returning to a high school academic program in the fall of 2023 (must be 14 years old on or before July 9, 2023, and must not turn 19 years old before August 4, 2023)

Be blind or vision impaired and interested in acquiring blindness skills

Be able to participate in a group structured program

Be able to take care of personal care needs independently, including managing and self-administering medications

Have a valid government issued photo ID card

Have an open or be willing to open a Vocational Rehabilitation case with DBVI

**What is the application process for LIFE?**

Go to [**2023 LIFE application,**](https://www.formrouter.net/forms@VRCB/2023LIFEApplication.html) complete, and submit

Print and complete the [**DBVI Health Checklist Form**](https://www.vadsa.org/apps/DocumentRepositoryViewer/fileviewer/2159) and sign as parent/guardian where it says counselor signature. Then, attach the completed form to the [**DBVI General Medical Examination Form**](https://www.vadsa.org/apps/DocumentRepositoryViewer/fileviewer/2158) and take to student’s physician or other medical professional to complete (must be dated not more than one year prior to the LIFE application submission date).

Print the [**DBVI Eye Exam Report**](https://www.vadsa.org/apps/DocumentRepositoryViewer/fileviewer/584) and have it completed by a medical professional (must be dated not more than one year prior to the LIFE application submission date)

\*If a student attended a summer program at VRCBVI in the past, the health checklist and eye report form submitted for that program are acceptable, provided the parent(s) submit a statement that the student’s health and/or eye report information has not changed and is still accurate.

Include a copy of the **student’s current IEP**

Scan all completed forms and send to Brooke Rogers, [Brooke.Rogers@dbvi.virginia.gov](mailto:Brooke.Rogers@dbvi.virginia.gov) or mail to 401 Azalea Ave., Richmond, VA 23227 – Attention: Brooke Rogers.

***Please note***:  Only complete applications received by 11:59 PM Monday, May 8, 2023, will be *considered. VRCBVI will not accept forms piecemeal; please submit your forms all attached to one email or all in the same envelope.*

Here is a checklist of forms to be submitted once all are complete:

DBVI Health Checklist Form,

General Medical Examination Form,

DBVI Eye Exam Report,

Student’s current IEP

After the application deadline, all complete applications will be reviewed.

All applicants will be notified no later than May 25, 2023, of their acceptance status.

Students accepted into the LIFE program and their parent(s) will participate in an informational interview by phone with VRCBVI staff, which will be scheduled by Amy Phelps, Assistant Director for Instruction.

Get your application in quickly, as a maximum of **22\*** participants will be accepted into the program. **NO APPLICATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER MAY 8, 2023.**

For additional information about the LIFE Program, please contact:

William Sutton

Community Engagement Coordinator

Virginia Rehabilitation Center for the Blind and Vision Impaired

401 Azalea Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23227

(804) 371-3204

Email:  [William.sutton@dbvi.virginia.gov](mailto:William.sutton@dbvi.virginia.gov)