

Lifestream, Inc. Launches Assistive Technology Academy

LifeStream and Bridgewater State University (BSU) recently launched The Assistive Technology Academy, an Assistive Technology (AT) Training Certificate program for direct support professionals in southeastern Massachusetts.

The program format is a combination of online and in-person/classroom options. It includes classroom/lab activities at the BSU campus and in-context learning activities. The program is completed over a ten-week period, at approximately 1.5 hours per week.

Melissa Pepin, LifeStream's Director of AT and Therapy Services, oversees the program with Dr. James Feeney, Assistant Professor at BSU. "Assistive Technology has become a critical element in support services for individuals with disabilities, helping to increase independence and socialization," said Ms. Pepin. "The program helps direct support professionals develop and implement a customized AT plan, provides access to training materials and other resources, and offers up to date information on a wide range of AT tools."

Classes focus on topics including "What is AT?" and "Augmentative Communication," as well as instructions on completing a screening assessment and developing a support plan. All classes are geared towards helping participants increase independence for those they support. At the end of each ten-week session, each participant presents a project related to AT and the support provided to an individual based on what they learned during the class.

The pilot program has been a huge success, with participants actively demonstrating the knowledge and skills they have

utilized with the individuals they support. “One of the most rewarding aspects of this program is seeing how attendees are applying what they’ve learned to real-life situations,” said Dr. Feeney. “Many of them have noted how surprised they were with the abundance of available AT services, and how much they have learned from the program.”

For additional information please contact Melissa Pepin at mpepin@lifestreaminc.com.

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