

Community-Based Engagement for Adults with Intellectual Disabilities

Capstone Site: The RAM Scholars program at Colorado State University



BACKGROUND

Literature Review:

- Participation in inclusive postsecondary educational opportunities support the development of self-determination for individuals with intellectual disabilities (ID) (Burke et al., 2024).
- Development of self-determination is positively correlated with skills like organization and productivity for individuals with ID (Erickson et al., 2015)

Identified Gaps:

- There is a need for social engagement opportunities for transition-aged individuals with intellectual disabilities.
- There is a need for individuals with intellectual disabilities to have access to both meaningful and intentional opportunities while maintaining their self-determination in a community-based setting.

THEORETICAL GROUNDING

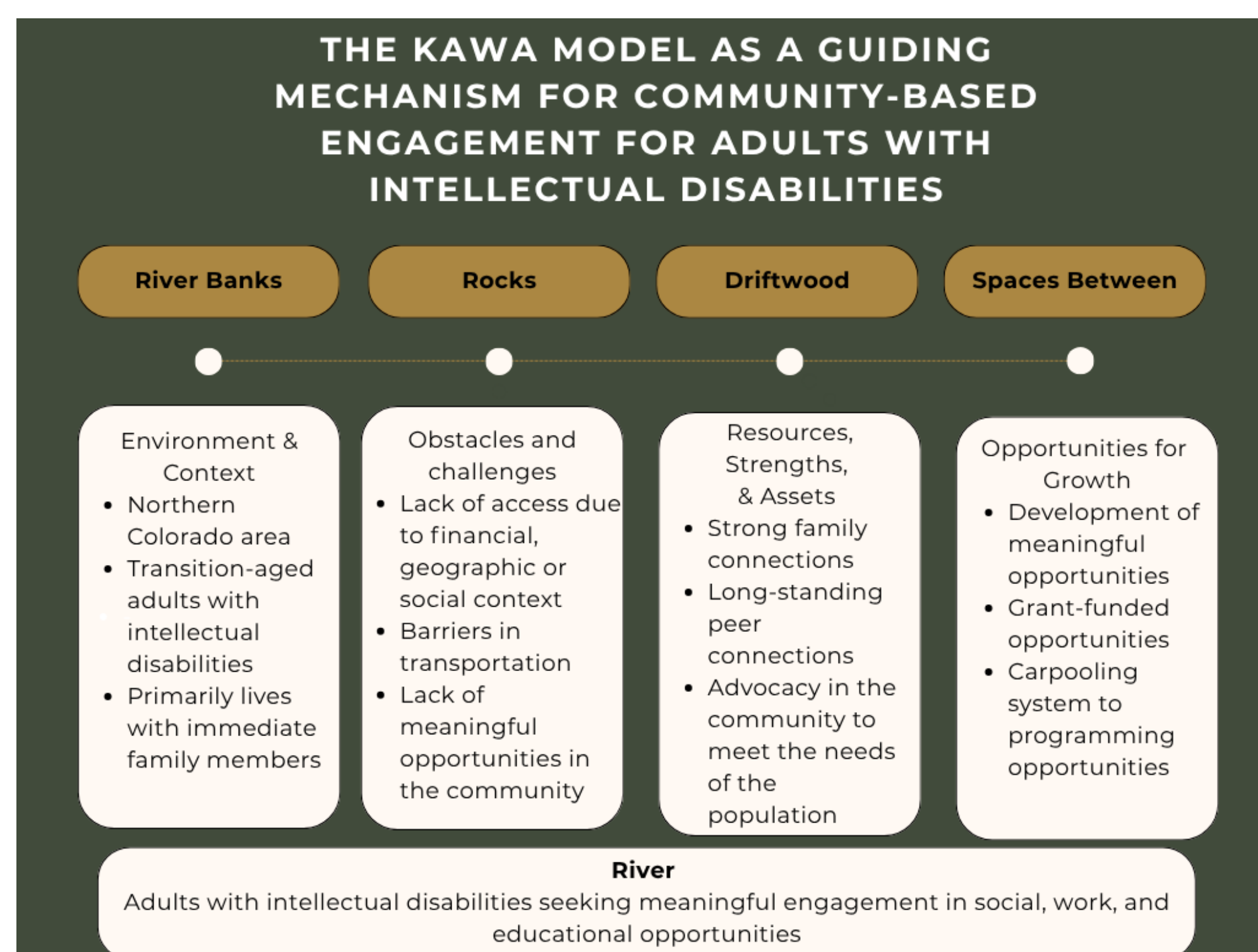


Figure 1. Visual application of the KAWA model for participants of the RAM Scholars program

GOAL & OBJECTIVES

Goal:

Develop a manualized process to support future peer mentors, including future OT fieldwork students at the RAM Scholars program to promote engagement in social and educational opportunities while developing self-determination for participants with intellectual disabilities.

Objectives:

- Conduct a thorough needs assessment to understand the needs of stakeholders within this population and the needs of the RAM Scholars program.
- Create a total of 10 inclusive resources (visual aids, resources for study hall activities) that are accessible to participants to refine my skills in creating resources with plain language and easy read techniques. These resources will also support future OT fieldwork students in leading study hall activities to support engagement and participation in study halls.
- Explore research, online resources, and participate in the RAM Scholars program to write a manual that outlines inclusive processes to support adults with intellectual disabilities in the RAM Scholars program.

ACTIVITIES

Objective #1

- Conducted a thorough needs assessment with stakeholders
- Scholars
- Peers
- Staff

Objective #2

- Created a wide variety of inclusive resources that can be incorporated into study hall
- Diagrams
- Games
- Written activities

Objective #3

- Developed manual for processes around study hall that emphasize scholar autonomy and self determination



Figure 2. A screen capture of an inclusive resource for scholars learning about horticulture

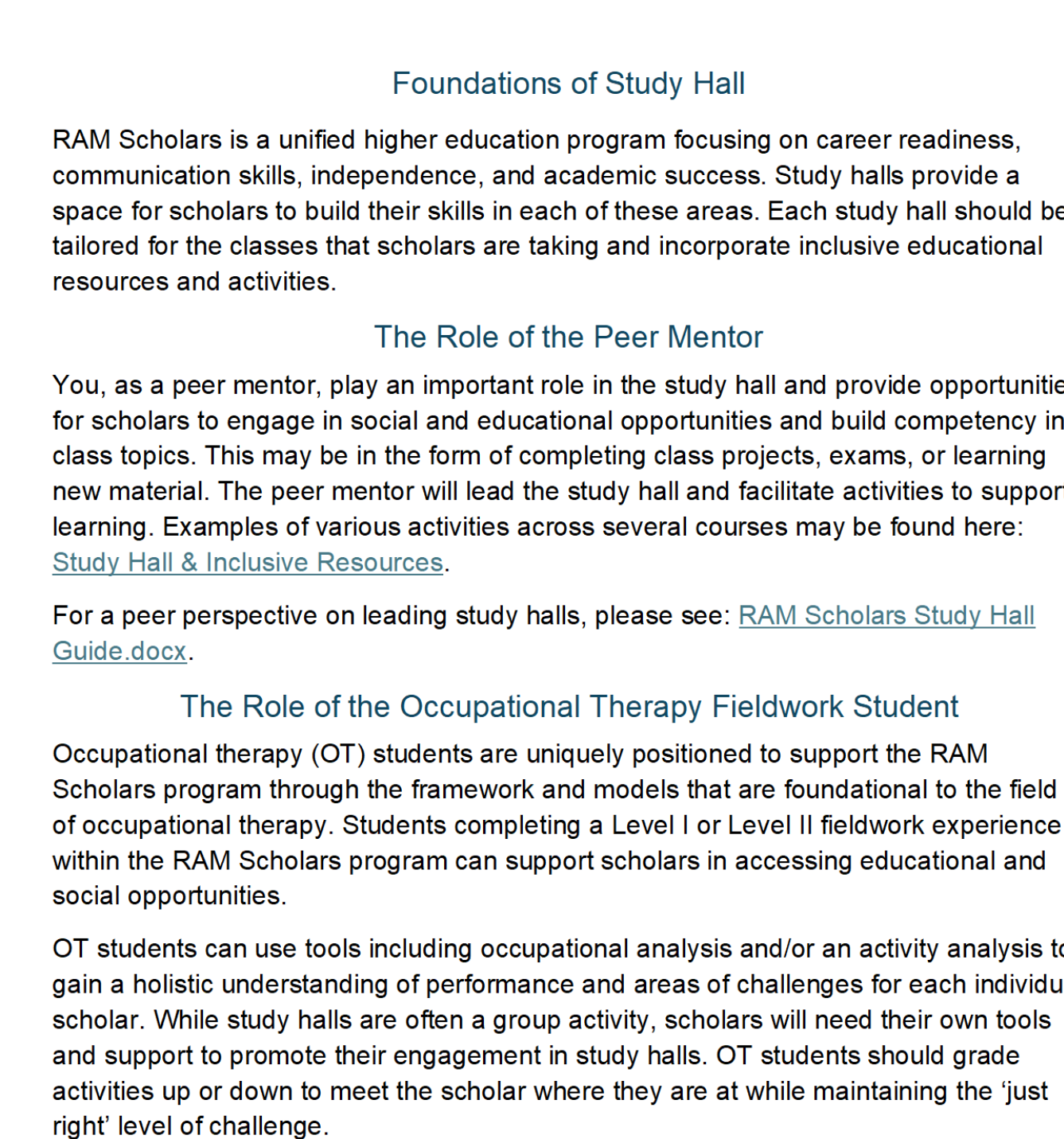


Figure 3. A screen capture of part of the manual developed for the RAM Scholars program

EVALUATION

Formative Evaluations

- Weekly self-reflection before check-ins with capstone mentor to promote practices in being a reflective practitioner
- Tracked daily progress towards meeting capstone objectives
- Feedback from stakeholders during the development of inclusive resources that was incorporated into final deliverables
- Feedback from stakeholders during the development of manual for study hall processes that was incorporated into the final deliverable

Summative Evaluations

- Reviewal and approval of needs assessment findings
- Final draft of the manual was reviewed and approved by the capstone primary mentor before the manual is integrated into the RAM Scholars program

FINDINGS

Observations & Results	Peer mentors demonstrated an increase in confidence in leading study halls
	Scholars demonstrated an increase in task completion due to clear expectations following the implementation of inclusive resources
	Scholars demonstrated an increase in confidence during study hall activities
	Peer mentors more easily facilitated study halls following modeled and manualized processes
Feedback from Stakeholders	"I got it!" following a scholar completing an activity that was made for study hall
	"I love this activity!" said by a scholar after completing an activity in study hall for one of his classes
	"You being here (at study hall) has been so helpful" said by a peer mentor after they were provided with inclusive resources and a modeled example of leading study hall

“I really like working with Breelynn and how she helps us in study hall” said by a scholar to a peer mentor

CONCLUSION

Sustainability

- Opportunity for future capstone students to develop resources for the library of inclusive resources to support engagement in study hall for a wide variety of classes
- Virtual copies of manual and inclusive resources provided to program
- Findings of needs assessment provided to capstone mentor and program coordinator
- Implementation of manualized processes for future OT students to develop an understanding of the role of the OT fieldwork student within the program

Impact of the Capstone Project

- Increased participation and engagement during study halls by peer mentors and scholars
- Increased confidence in developing and manualizing processes to support program development
- Increased understanding in ensuring opportunities for self-determination and social and educational opportunities

Acknowledgements & References

I would like to extend my sincerest gratitude to my capstone team including Kaylyn Van Deusen, MS; Debbie Fidler, PhD; Julie Seidler, PhD, OTR/L; Aaron Eakman PhD, OTR/L, FAOTA; and Angela Gray for their support and guidance throughout my capstone experience. Thank you to the scholars, peer mentors, and staff of the RAM Scholars program. I also would like to thank James Graham, PhD, D.C. and Lisa Daunhauer, ScD, for their support and encouragement.

References



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