WHAT IS THE BRIDGES TO SUCCESS SUMMER PROGRAM, AND WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS TO APPLY?

The Office of Bridges to Success (BTS) is responsible for working with diverse populations to assist with the post-secondary transition from application to enrollment and graduation; as well as assist the college in creating an educational environment that supports the success of these students.

In addition, BTS is committed to helping all students become successful in achieving their educational and career goals. We know that the Road to Success can be challenging as students balance their academic course work, responsibilities and personal life.

An important element in a student’s success at Valencia is the connection with people and services that can assist them when they need it. BTS works within the college to provide services and programs of interest and benefit to our diverse student population.

BTS, as a part of its’ action plan for minority recruitment and retention maintains vital connections with colleges, universities throughout the country, minority churches, other civic organizations and ethnic groups in the community that support students in their educational endeavors.

To be considered for the Bridges program you must meet the following criteria:

- Student must be a resident of Orange or Osceola County
- Student must be a graduating senior (must graduate with a standard high school diploma, or GED, and be eligible to receive financial aid) with a minimum GPA of 2.75
- Student must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), and have demonstrated financial need **(BTS Award is Needs Based)**
- Student must take the Postsecondary Education Readiness Test (PERT- Math, Writing, and Reading sections)
- Student can submit scores in lieu of PERT, however scores must indicate college readiness (See Assessment website for Placement Chart)
2. WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE BRIDGES SUMMER PROGRAM AND THE BRIDGES ACHIEVERS PROGRAM?

The Bridges to Success Summer Program provides you with an opportunity to begin your college-level work in the summer prior to full-time degree seeking enrollment at Valencia College in the fall. If you are selected for the program you will register and attend courses for approximately six weeks between June and August after completing senior year of high school.

Upon successful completion of the Bridges to Success Summer Program you will become a Bridges to Success Achievers Scholar in the fall. Bridges Achievers Scholars receive a renewable in-state full-tuition award and book stipend that will be coordinated with financial aid to cover up to the full cost of attending Valencia College.

3. WHEN MAY I START APPLYING TO THE PROGRAM, AND WHAT IS THE DEADLINE?

The Bridges to Success admission application is opened each year in September. You may apply via ATLAS upon acceptance to Valencia College. You will need your Valencia ID number along with all the necessary documentation required for application completion. The application deadlines can be found on the Bridges to Success website calendar tab.

4. IS IT OKAY IF I SUBMIT A REGULAR RECOMMENDATION LETTER INSTEAD OF THE BRIDGES TO SUCCESS PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION FORM WITH MY APPLICATION?

The Bridges to Success program recommendation form must be completed online by a school counselor, coach, or community member and is the only acceptable form for recommendations. You will need the email address of the recommender in order to provide the link for them to complete the form.

5. I TOOK THE PERT IN HIGH SCHOOL; DO I HAVE TO TAKE IT AGAIN?

If you have taken the PERT in high school within the last two years, you are not required to retake it however, you must have all three sections of the PERT (writing, reading, and math) submitted to the Assessment Center before your Bridges to Success program application is submitted. Scores are NOT automatically sent to Valencia College. You have the option of delivering your official scores to the Valencia College Assessment Center on East, West or Osceola or emailing the Assessment Center at assessment@valenciacollege.edu with your Name, VID, and DOB requesting to have your scores retrieved from the PERT Repository. The PERT is NOT a PASS/FAIL assessment. It is used to advise and create your academic plan.

6. I COMPLETED EVERYTHING ON THE BRIDGES TO SUCCESS PROGRAM APPLICATION CHECKLIST EXCEPT SUBMITTING THE HIGH SCHOOL TRANSCRIPT. CAN I STILL SUBMIT MY APPLICATION?

The Bridges to Success program application must be submitted with all items completed on the checklist. Deliver a sealed unofficial academic transcript to the BTS office before the application deadline in January. Upon graduation deliver your final official academic transcript to the Valencia College Answer Center or preferably have your high school send it electronically to transcripts@valenciacollege.edu.
7. **ARE THERE ANY FEES ASSOCIATED WITH THE BRIDGES TO SUCCESS PROGRAM?**

There is no fee to apply for the Bridges to Success Program. However, there is an application fee to apply for enrollment at Valencia College ($35.00). Additionally, there may be other fees associated with Assessment services. It is recommended you can contact College Board or Valencia's Assessment Center for more information.

8. **AM I ELIGIBLE TO APPLY IF I HAVE EARNED ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP) OR DUAL ENROLLMENT (DE) CREDIT?**

No, if you have earned college credit for AP or DE you are NOT eligible. The only exception to this requirement are students who have been enrolled automatically by their school district into Advanced Placement Spanish. These students are encouraged to apply to the Bridges to Success Program.

In addition, students who are taking Valencia College Dual Enrollment from the following high schools are eligible and should be encouraged to apply for the Bridges to Success program:

- Cypress Creek
- Ocoee
- Wekiva
- Freedom
- Colonial
- East River

Applicants who wish to participate in an accelerated academic model are encouraged to apply for the Seneff Honors Program - www.valenciacollege.edu/honors or contact 407-582-3835.

9. **IS THERE A PRELIMINARY ORIENTATION OR INFORMATION SESSION ABOUT THE BRIDGES TO SUCCESS PROGRAM OFFERS PRIOR TO APPLYING?**

The Bridges to Success program is hosting application help sessions during the Fall Semester on West and Osceola campuses. See the BTS Website for dates/times/locations. For any questions specific to the program or applying, we encourage you to contact our main office at 407-582-1395, or visit our website at www.valenciacollege.edu/bts

10. **IF ACCEPTED INTO BRIDGES TO SUCCESS PROGRAM, WILL I HAVE TO BEGIN IN THE SUMMER, OR CAN I START IN THE FALL TERM?**

Students accepted into the Bridges to Success program must enroll during the summer (See Valencia College Academic Calendar for Term B dates). Successful completion of the Summer Program will determine if a student is eligible to proceed into the Bridges to Success Achievers program in the fall.
11. **HOW WILL I KNOW IF I HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED INTO THE BRIDGES TO SUCCESS PROGRAM?**

   Once you have submitted a completed application by the deadline, you will be notified of a decision via Valencia College ATLAS email in March. It is important that you check your ATLAS email DAILY, all correspondence from the Bridges to Success program department and Valencia College are sent to your ATLAS email. Emails are not sent to your personal email accounts (i.e., Yahoo, Gmail, Hotmail, etc.)

12. **AM I ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE THE BRIDGES TO SUCCESS PROGRAM AWARD IF I ALSO HAVE THE BRIGHT FUTURES SCHOLARSHIP?**

   At this time, students may be offered the Bridges to Success program award along with Bright Futures. Students are always encouraged to follow up with Bright Futures directly to ensure they meet their requirements.

13. **WILL I HAVE TO ATTEND BOTH THE BRIDGES TO SUCCESS PROGRAM NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION AND VALENCIA COLLEGE ORIENTATIONS?**

   The Bridges to Success program New Student Orientation (NSO) is REQUIRED. This orientation covers all of your Bridges to Success program requirements, expectations, and will also cover many policies and procedures of Valencia College. Attendance at a regular Valencia orientation is optional, students are encouraged to attend if they would like more information about the college.

14. **WHAT IS THE BRIDGES TO SUCCESS PROGRAM HANDBOOK, AND WHY DO I NEED TO READ IT?**

   The Bridges Handbook outlines the policies and procedures of the Bridges to Success program. It is required reading. Students must review the handbook in its entirety, sign, and return the Handbook Agreement acknowledging you have read the information and understand the program expectations. Knowledge of the Bridges to Success program policies will help you remain successful in the program. The Bridges to Success program Handbook can be found on the Bridges website: www.valenciacollege.edu/bts.

15. **WILL I BE REQUIRED TO DO ANY COMMUNITY SERVICE AS A BRIDGES TO SUCCESS PROGRAM PARTICIPANT?**

   One of the requirements to maintain your Bridges to Success program eligibility is to complete 30 hours of community service per term (Fall and Spring) from the approved list of community service providers (See BTS Website). Community service hours are NOT completed during summer term.

16. **CAN MY COMMUNITY SERVICE HOURS FROM HIGH SCHOOL ROLL OVER TO FULFILL MY BRIDGES TO SUCCESS PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS?**

   No, the hours you complete must coincide with the term you are attending Valencia College.
17. **WHAT ARE SKILL SHOPS?**

Valencia College offers a wide array of skill shops for students to learn or enhance skills necessary to succeed in college and their daily lives. In total, students must complete two (2) skill shops per term, and one (1) professional development opportunity. A complete listing of skill shops offered at Valencia College will be available in the Bridges to Success program offices at the beginning of each term.

18. **WILL MY BRIDGES TO SUCCESS PROGRAM FUNDS BE AVAILABLE AS A REFUND?**

Bridges to Success will only cover the exact cost of tuition up to 31 credits per academic year, and a $300 (Fall/Spring Terms) book stipend. The stipend can only be used in the Valencia College Bookstores on East, West and Osceola campuses. You only receive a refund if you qualify for PELL grant. The program award is paid out at the end of the semester after you have met all Bridges to Success program requirements.

19. **WILL I BE ABLE TO USE MY BRIDGES TO SUCCESS BOOK STIPEND TO PURCHASE OTHER SUPPLIES?**

Yes, the Bridges to Success program book stipend functions as a store credit and is redeemed only at the Valencia College Campus Bookstore. If you need additional resources for your class and there are funds left on your account, you will have to contact the Bridges to Success department for pre-approval.

20. **WHY IS IT IMPORTANT THAT I ATTEND A REQUIRED BRIDGES TO SUCCESS PROGRAM EVENT?**

Any event that is required for Bridges to Success has objectives geared toward continuing each student’s success not only with the program, but with the college as well.

21. **DO I NEED TO MEET WITH AN ACADEMIC ADVISOR BEFORE I REGISTER FOR CLASSES EACH TERM?**

Students are required to meet with their Bridges to Success program academic advisor in their first summer term to outline their educational advising plan. However, students are always encouraged to meet with their advisors to ensure they are on track with completing the courses in their Education Plan. In addition, students may be required to meet with their advisor more frequently on a case-by-case basis depending on the student’s needs. Bridges to Success program advisors offer walk-in appointments throughout the semester. Visit the Bridges to Success office for dates/times/locations.

22. **ARE THERE ANY REQUIRED COURSES I MUST TAKE AS A BRIDGES TO SUCCESS PROGRAM PARTICIPANT?**

Bridges to Success program will require students to take the following Student Life Skills (SLS) courses: SLS 1122, and SLS 1201. Students will receive college credit for these courses as part of their education plan.
23. WHAT MAJORS/AREAS OF STUDY WILL BRIDGES TO SUCCESS PROGRAM AWARD COVER?
Bridges to Success program covers most majors and degrees except technical certificates. Please see Valencia College future student tab for additional information http://net1.valenciacollege.edu/future-students/programs/

24. WILL I STILL RECEIVE BRIDGES TO SUCCESS AWARD IF MY FINANCIAL AID HAS BEEN SUSPENDED?
The payment of Bridges to Success program funds hinges on whether a student qualifies for financial aid. If the student fails to maintain federal requirements for financial aid then Bridges to Success will be unable to cover tuition/fees/or books.

25. ARE THERE ANY SPONSORED COLLEGE TOURS OR INFORMATION SESSIONS AVAILABLE FOR ME TO ATTEND?
The Bridges to Success program will periodically sponsor tours to various colleges throughout Florida. Information about these tours will be circulated via email months prior to the trip date in order to give students adequate time to coordinate their schedules to attend. Students interested in touring a college should contact their advisor for details. You are also encouraged to reach out to the schools of their choice to receive information on applying and the transfer process.

26. AS A BRIDGES TO SUCCESS PROGRAM PARTICIPANT, WILL I RECEIVE GUARANTEED ADMISSION TO THE FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTION OF MY CHOICE?
The Bridges to Success program does not guarantee acceptance to other institutions. However, Valencia has a Direct Connect program with the University of Central Florida. Students interested are encouraged to contact the UCF Direct Connect department for more information. Students are responsible for contacting the schools of their choice to find out admission requirements needed for transfer.

27. CAN A BRIDGES TO SUCCESS PROGRAM PARTICIPANT TAKE PART IN OTHER ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMS?
The Bridges to Success program encourages students to fully engage in the college experience including; student activities, clubs, organizations, etc. However, should a student wish to take advantage of other scholarship opportunities, they should check with their campus advisor regarding any restrictions.