FAQ: Next Step Ambassadors

AMBASSADOR [am-bas-uh-dohr] -noun
a peer mentor of the highest quality who serves as a role model and person of support to the Next Step student they work with
    since they are model citizens and ambassadors for the Next Step students as well as great Commodores – we call them Next Step Ambassadors

How will Ambassadors serve as peer mentors?
Five Ambassadors will be selected to be the Circle of Support for each Next Step student for the semester. The Circles assist the Next Step student during scheduled activities throughout each day. Support will be needed during workout sessions, technology/organizational sessions, lunch, academic tutoring, and social times like club meetings and sporting events. Each Circle of Support will have the ability to decide which member will cover which activities each week. Our goal is to have each Circle of Support evolve into a Circle of Friends that is responsive to each individual’s needs.

How much time will Ambassadors need to commit to at any one time?
Please refer to sample Next Step student schedule. The minimum commitment is 2 hours/week. You can serve in many different roles (i.e. lunch buddy, work out buddy, academic tutor, daily planning/reflection...etc.).

What type of training will Ambassadors receive?
Ambassadors will be required to participate in a 3-hour orientation/training session. Ambassadors will receive training on disability awareness, social skills training, and strategies for improving learning. Time will also be spent building bonds among the Circles. There will also be on-going support and training throughout each semester.

Background checks-
Because Ambassadors will be working with what is considered a “vulnerable population,” finger printing and background checks will be done. There will be no cost to the VU students to have these completed.

Please check out our website at: http://NextStep.Vanderbilt.edu