



Who we are: Our mission is to increase the quality, quantity, and diversity of the skilled technical workforce by supporting students, families, and educators around autism and the college transition in STEM fields, particularly at two-year institutions. [Stairway to STEM](#) (STS) is the output of autistic STEM students, autistic educators and knowledgeable college administrators. Three of our primary contributors, Elinore Alms, Patrick Dwyer, and Laura Gilmour, have begun or began their college careers as community college students in STEM, and several of our editorial board members are community college leaders, including one who heads a nationally-ranked college transition program for neurodivergent students.

What we do: We create materials and host events for students, families, educators, and support professionals. The materials are guided by community need, and much qualitative and quantitative data indicate that autistic students tend to struggle most with classroom-adjacent barriers and challenges. For example, it's less about understanding the chemistry assignment and more about understanding classroom conventions, navigating stereotypes, improving time management, interacting with peers, and managing sensory sensitivities or common co-occurring conditions such as anxiety or OCD. That said, we also have significant resources on topics such as "how to succeed in introductory college biology classes."

Key metrics: Since launching in October 2018, STS has had 46,000 unique visitors and 109,000 page views. Additionally, at an event STS cohosted with Bellevue College's Autism Spectrum Navigators program, we served more than 100 students and family members looking for support around the college transition. Additional live events on college transition, such as SXSW EDU and collaboration with Tufts University, postponed in response to pandemic.

Key resources: [Autism 101 for College Educators](#)

[Intersectionality, Autism and STEM College Outcomes](#)

[STEM Jobs That Don't Require Four-Year Degrees](#)

[Studying College Biology: How to Learn as You Go](#)

[College, Autism, and STEM Careers: Participation, Barriers, and Solutions](#)

[Autism and STEM: Career Considerations for Students](#)

[Autism, STEM, and UDL: What is Universal Design for Learning?](#)

Get involved: questions or comments? Reach us at info@stairwaytostem.org or reach managing editor Jessica Murray at jmurray@stairwaytostem.org. **Follow us on social media:** [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#). **Share STS** with your colleagues, departments, disabilities services offices, families, and friends.



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