

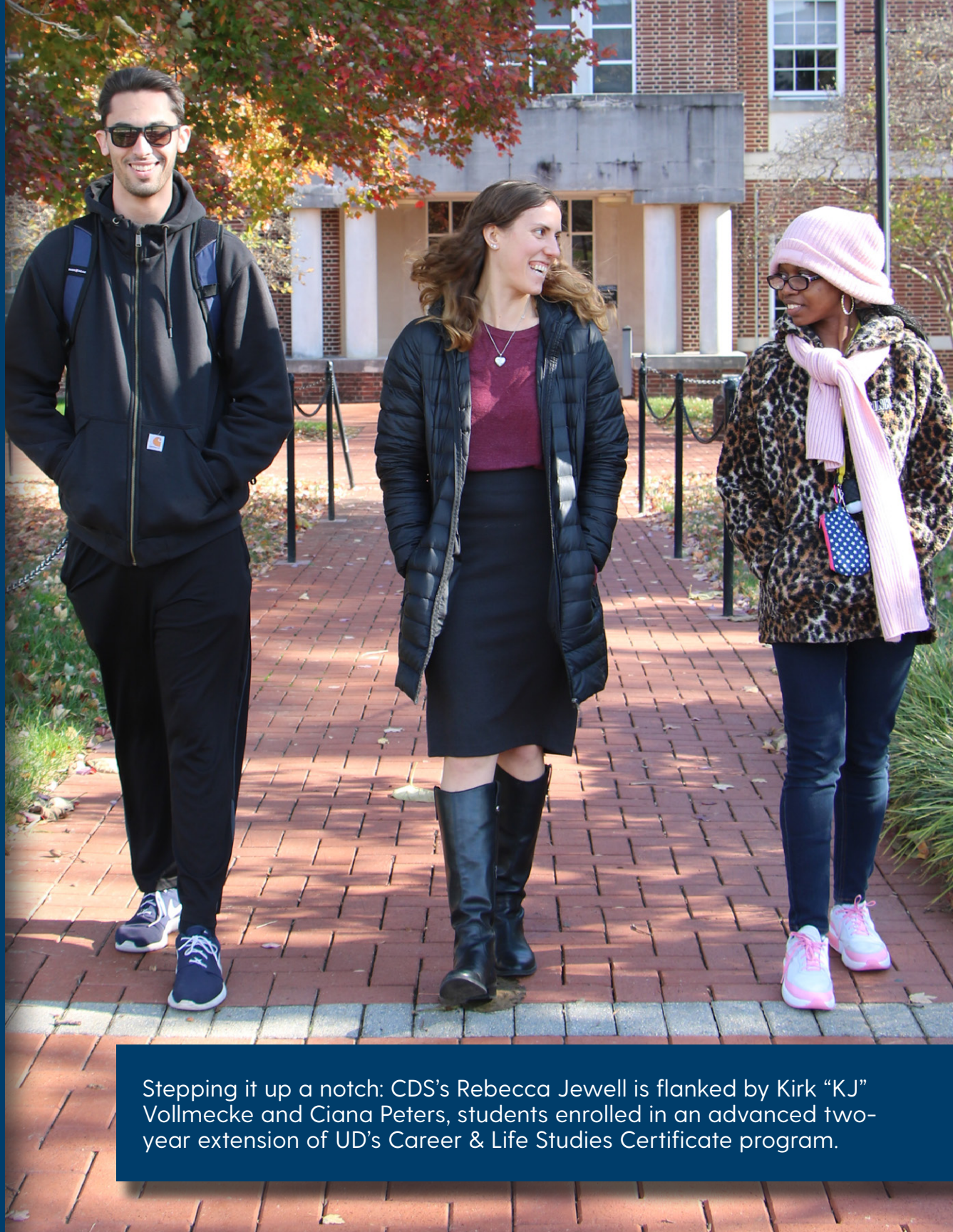
Better able to succeed

In 2011, for the first time, individuals with intellectual disabilities got the opportunity to attend a college program in Delaware designed especially for them. Students in UD's two-year [Career & Life Studies Certificate \(CLSC\) program](#), administered by CDS, attended classes, established career goals, connected with peers, and grew their independent living skills.

They still do. But in 2021, several CLSC (pronounced "classic") students got the chance to "step it up a notch," says program developer [Rebecca Jewell](#). "We launched CLSC Advanced, a third and fourth year of CLSC that enables participating students to expand their education, further develop their leadership skills, do community service, and engage in paid internships."

Kirk "KJ" Vollmecke leapt at CLSC Advanced and, in Year 3 of his program, began living independently off campus. "I knew I could do this," he says, while crediting his CLSC coach for making him feel more confident. "My schoolwork's improving. My positive attitude helps me interact with people." Next up for KJ: possibly a second internship at Delaware Stadium and, he hopes, a job helping manage sporting events.

A career in fashion could be next up for Ciana Peters. "I feel supported and better able to succeed," she says. In classes and internships, she's learning about garment making and entrepreneurship, skills and knowledge that complement her demonstrated talent at designing clothing. Midway through her third year, she says she's happier in her schoolwork, appreciating how women of color can excel in the workforce, and building relationships. "I'm so blessed," she says.



Stepping it up a notch: CDS's Rebecca Jewell is flanked by Kirk "KJ" Vollmecke and Ciana Peters, students enrolled in an advanced two-year extension of UD's Career & Life Studies Certificate program.