

## What is Project SEARCH?

**Project SEARCH** is a dedicated program focused on providing education and training to young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. This is accomplished through an innovative workforce and career development model that benefits the individual, workplace, and community.

**Our primary goal is to prepare each intern for competitive employment upon completion of this year long skill-building experience.**

Project SEARCH has grown from one original program site at Cincinnati Children's Hospital to over 280 host business sites across 43 states and four countries.

## How is the program structured?

Through an internship format, this one-year program follows an academic school year calendar and is geared towards selected students who will be entering their last year of a transitional high school program.

We are pleased to be hosting 11 students who **started on August 19, 2014**, and providing internship opportunities in multiple departments within the hospital setting.

## What are the benefits of participating in Project SEARCH?

### ***Benefits to the Students:***

- ❖ Acquire competitive, transferable and marketable job skills
- ❖ Gain increased independence, confidence, and self esteem
- ❖ Obtain work based individualized coaching, instruction and feedback
- ❖ Develop connections to Vocational Rehabilitation and other adult service agencies



### ***Benefits to Cadence Health:***

- ❖ Access to a new, diverse, talent stream with skills that match labor needs
- ❖ Gain interns/employees with disabilities who serve as a role model for patients, visitors and staff
- ❖ Experience increased regional and national recognition through marketing of this unique program
- ❖ Performance and retention, in some high-turnover, entry-level positions, increases dramatically

To further enhance the student's total immersion in the workplace, there is an onsite classroom/work space at Central DuPage Hospital that will accommodate our students, a special education teacher (Kati Curby) and job coaches (Lead Job Coach, Hailey Paver) during the academic school year. Students participate in three, 10-week internships to explore a variety of career paths during this important transition from school to work experience.

**School Day**

- 7:45am Student & Staff Meeting: Employability Skills
- 9:00am-2:00pm Worksite Internship (includes lunch)
- 2:00pm Review, Plan, Communication
- 2:45pm Depart

**Project SEARCH** is driven by a collaboration with the following community partners all centered on providing employment opportunities to students with disabilities:

- Project SEARCH graduates receive effective follow-along services to gain and retain employment after they complete this last transition year.
- Our goal is for 100% of our students to achieve employment.



TRAINING • CONNECTING • DEVELOPING ILLINOIS' WORKFORCE

**For more information about Project SEARCH:**

<http://www.projectsearch.us/>

**Business Testimonial:** *“Project Search breaks down stereotypes by increasing the public's expectations about people with significant disabilities. The Project Search program provides young people with significant disabilities the opportunity to contribute to their communities and to society at large by providing the necessary supports to work and receive minimum or prevailing wage. We are proud here at DOL to be the first Federal agency to embrace this program. This summer, we will hire several Project Search graduates at above **minimum wage.**” Kathleen Martinez, Assistant Secretary for the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), Department of Labor, Washington, DC*