

Program Overview



Project | SEARCH



NJTIP @ Rutgers
*Expanding Mobility
for People with Disabilities and Seniors*



Offered through Sussex County
Educational Services Commission
at Newton Medical Center

sussexesc.org

NMC-40372-19



Materials Management



Food Services



Heart Center



Environmental Services

Transitioning Students with Disabilities to Work

Project SEARCH is a one-year, business-led, unpaid internship program for students with disabilities in their last year of high school that takes place entirely at a host business site. It provides students who want to work a chance to explore careers and develop transferable job skills. The combination of instruction and immersion in the workplace prepares young adults with disabilities to make successful transitions from school to productive adult life.

The Goal: Independent adults working in a competitive environment

Internship Overview

Through the course of an academic year, Project SEARCH students participate in employment related instruction and rotate through two to three internships that are individually crafted to capitalize on each student's individual interests, and vocational goals and potential. Each rotation lasts about 10-12 weeks.

Interns work closely with an on-site team, including an instructor, skills trainer and job developer. The team assists the intern until the task assigned can be performed independently. The on-site team, student, family, vocational rehabilitation counselor, and school representatives meet regularly to discuss issues, progress, and career goals.

They leave the program with a professional portfolio which includes a resume, solid professional references, recommendations, and real-world work experience.

Job placement is the final goal of the program. Students can accept a job offer at any time during the school year if a match

is found (at the host site or elsewhere in the community) and the team is in agreement.

Once successfully employed, graduates receive follow-along services to retain employment. Project SEARCH has been instrumental in dramatically raising the bar for employment of individuals with disabilities. According to 2015-16 Project SEARCH data, these programs have placed over 75% of their graduates into employment.

Basic Eligibility Criteria

- › 18 to 21 years old
- › In last year of high school
- › All academic requirements for graduation met
- › Agree to accept diploma at successful completion of program
- › Appropriate social, grooming and hygiene skills
- › Able to pass drug screening and background check
- › Updated immunizations
- › Ability to self-medicate
- › Ability to access and willingness to use independent living skills and lunch routine
- › Meet eligibility requirements for Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS)
- › Desire to be competitively employed

Contact

If you have questions about Project Search or would like more information, call Jaime Westerfield, Supervisor of SLE/Project SEARCH, Sussex County Educational Services Commission, at 973-222-1671 or jwesterfield@sussexesc.org.