

Project SEARCH at Danbury Hospital

An Employment Focused Secondary Transition
Program



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At Ability Beyond, we discover, build and celebrate the ability in all people. Our organization is dedicated to empowering every person, no matter their ability, to have the opportunity to live, work and thrive as an integral part of their community.

Our History:

For over 68 years, Ability Beyond has pioneered ways to help thousands of people with physical and mental disabilities to discover their abilities and become an integral part of their communities.

Today, with over 4,000 people served annually, benefiting from our services across New York and Connecticut, we are at the forefront in developing innovative programs and best practices that are being recognized and adopted on a national level.



Who is Ability Beyond?

September 2017: Became the Skills Provider at Montefiore Project SEARCH with New Rochelle

September 2018: Partnered with NPS to begin Project SEARCH at Norwalk Community College

January 2022: Started Project SEARCH at Norwalk Hospital

September 2023: Beginning Danbury Hospital Project SEARCH



Montefiore



New York State
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
ADULT CAREER & CONTINUING ED SERVICES



Ability Beyond and the Project SEARCH model

What is Project SEARCH?

- Project SEARCH is an internationally recognized program dedicated to building a workforce that includes individuals with disabilities.
- The program was established in 1996 at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center to address staff turnover in entry-level support positions.
- This successful model has been replicated in hospitals, hotels, colleges, and other large community businesses in more than 500 locations around the world.
 - Programs that provide this service must adhere to the fidelity model, complete with visits, reviews, and data collection



The Project SEARCH model

Five days a week, following the school calendar.

Students complete three 10-week internships.

- Individualized
- Transferable skills
- Identify interests
- Independent

The ultimate goal is for each intern to secure competitive employment within their community.

Individualized job development is based on the intern's experiences, strengths, interests & skills.



The Project SEARCH model

8:50a-9a: Arrive independently at program

9a-10a: Employability Skills Class

10a- 12:00: Internship Sites

12:00-12:30: Lunch

12:30-2:30: Internship Sites

2:30-3:00: Classroom Reflection/Planning



Danbury Hospital Project SEARCH program- typical day



Interns receive daily instruction designed around the approved Project SEARCH focus areas:

Team Building



Technology



Preparing for Employment



Health and Wellness



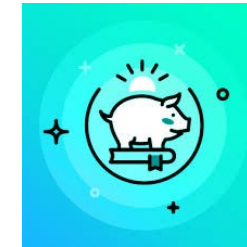
Maintaining Employment



Workplace Safety



Self Advocacy



Financial Literacy



Project SEARCH Curriculum



Food Service



GI Unit



Maternity and
Emergency



PACU and
Ambulatory Surgery



Norwalk Hospital Internship Opportunities

Employment Planning Meetings

The purpose of these team meetings are to discuss progress and next steps toward the intern's employment goal. Parents and team members are encouraged to attend. These happen quarterly.



Family and team involvement

- 18-22 years old
- Completion of their high school academic program
- Typically in their final year of special education services
- Diagnosed with a disability
- Potential and desire to work in a competitive employment setting upon exiting
- Ability to work independently without program supervision for part of their day
- Acceptable Nuvance background check results
- Vaccination records for: MMR/Varicella (Chicken Pox)/Covid-19/Flu
- TB Test or Attestation
- Ability to get to and from the program independently (can be provided transportation by the school but SweetHart is strongly encouraged if an option)

*Program capacity: 8 students per year

*IMPORTANT: At the PPT it can only be recommended that the student APPLY to the program. Once candidates complete the process, and it is determined they are accepted, a PPT to finalize programming will be scheduled (May/June).



Program Eligibility Criteria

Next year's timeline – School year 23-24:

- Applications are due in early March
- Program interviews and mandatory skills assessment day in late March
- Program acceptance notifications happen in mid-April
- PPTs scheduled to finalize placement in May and June
- Intakes with Ability Beyond after PPT
- Nuvance onboarding process to start in July
- Tuesday after Labor Day program start date
- September – December; January – March; April- June: Internship rotations
- June: Connection/Applications to BRS for adult services and placement
- After June/HS exit: Continued support by Ability Beyond for job placement via adult funders



Project SEARCH international website: <https://www.projectsearch.us/>

“Project SEARCH 101,” a 20-minute introductory course to the model.
<http://projectsearch.us/EDUCATION/ProjectSEARCHAcademy.aspx>



Additional resources

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