



Project | SEARCH<sup>®</sup>

# Hudson County Project SEARCH 101 Overview



# Hudson County Project SEARCH



**Achieving Meaningful Employment for  
Youth and Young Adults with  
Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities**

# Program Philosophy

*People with disabilities have the right to choose a path toward education and employment. However, while freedom of choice is given, the right to work is earned. Earning the right to work is dependent upon the student's preparation.*



*Stephen Simon, ADA Quarterly, Fall 1998*

# Project SEARCH Transition Program

Project SEARCH is a one-year, ten-month, school-to-work program for young people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

- Goal of competitive employment
- Total workplace immersion
- Internship rotations for career exploration and job skills acquisition
- Customized job-search assistance

# Working Together For Success



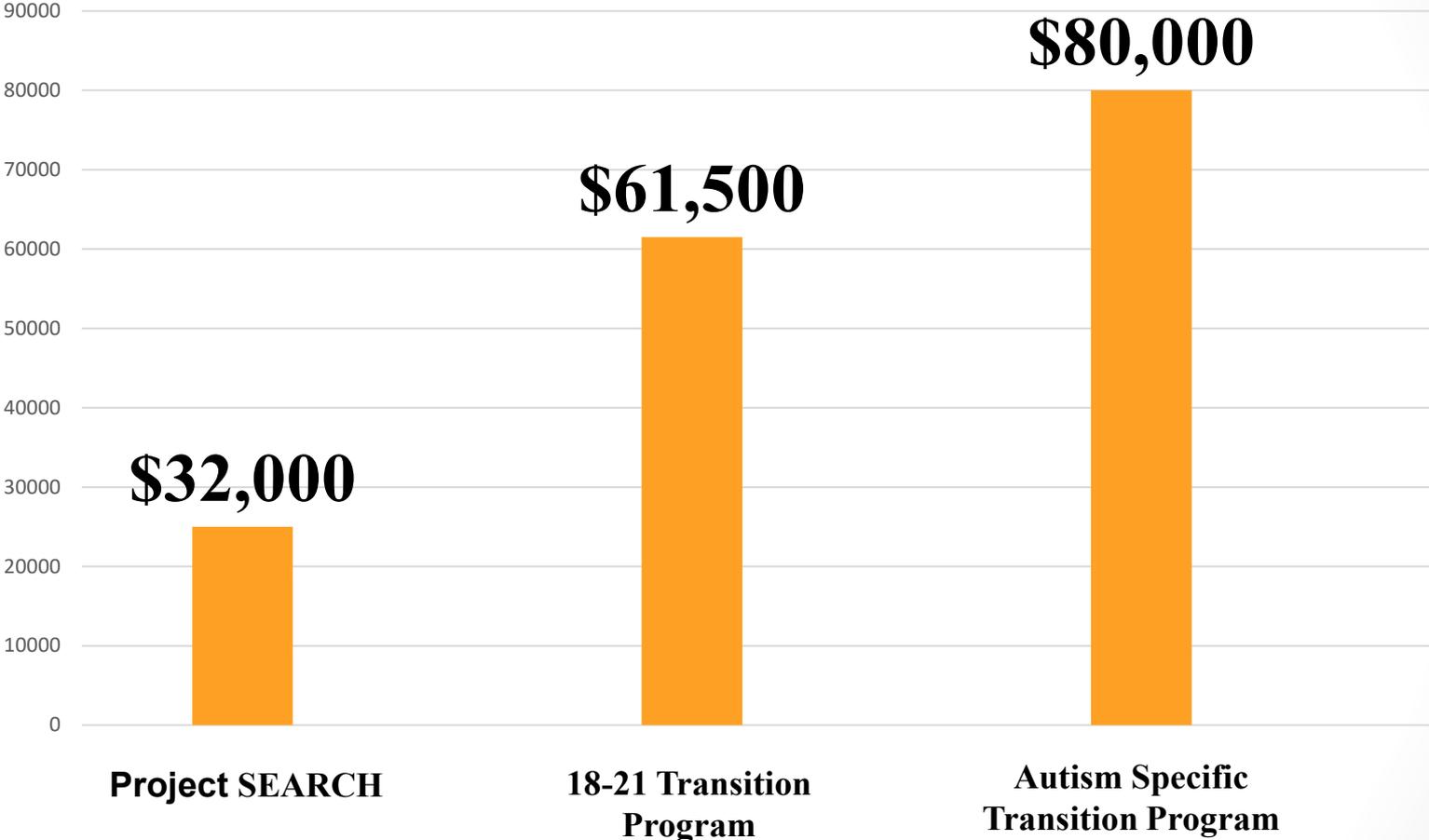
# Who Pays for Project SEARCH?

- **High School Program (17 – 21 years old)**
  - Sending School District
  - DVRS
- **Adult Non-DDD Program (18 – 21 years old)**
  - DVRS
  - Hudson County Office of Inclusion and Accessibility
- **Adult Program (23 – 30 years old)**
  - DVRS
  - DDD – Through the interns' individual budgets

# How is Project SEARCH Funded?

- **The average cost per high school intern is \$32,000.00**
  - Funds instructors, additional skills trainers, supplies, staff training, equipment, insurance and other items.
  - Cost per intern varies each year:
    - $\text{Budget} / \# \text{ of Interns} = \text{Cost per intern}$
- **The average cost per adult is based on the intern's tier which is determined by DDD.**
  - Tuition under the adult program is paid directly from the intern's DDD budget

# Cost Savings – Average Cost Per Year



## The Host Business will provide:

- Business Liaison
- Work Mentors
- Internships
- Classroom



## Jersey City Board of Education provides:

- Teacher
- Skills Trainer



## Community Rehabilitation Partners (CRPs) will provide:

- Skills Trainer
- Job Development



# Eligibility Criteria

## High School Program

- 17 – 21 years old
- Last year of school eligibility
- Secured credits to receive diploma
- Eligible for DVRS services

## Non-DDD Adult Program

- 18 – 21 years old
- Graduated from high school
- Not eligible for DDD services due to age
- Eligible for DVRS services

## Adult Program

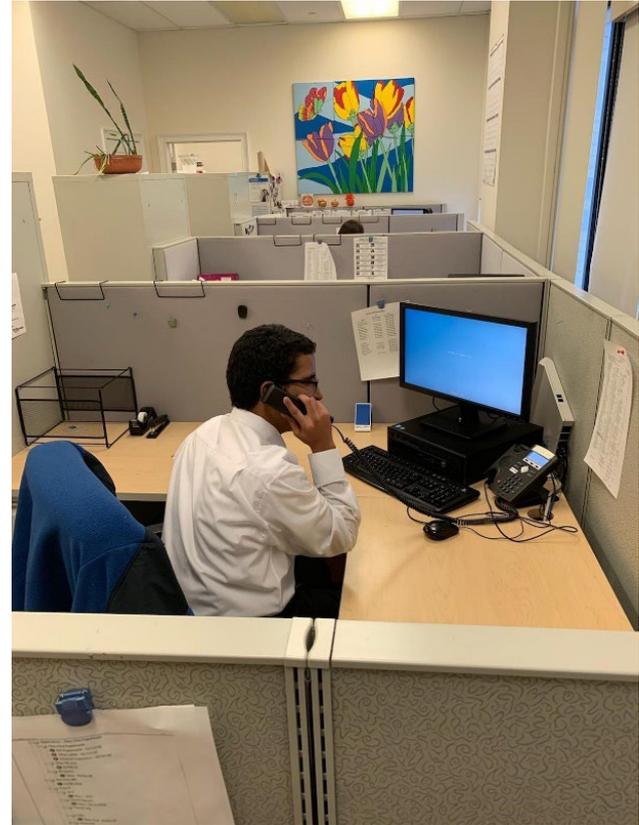
- 23 – 30 years old
- Eligible for DDD and DVRS services
- Appropriate hygiene, social and communication skills
- Ability to take direction and change behavior
  - Access public transportation independently
- Pass drug screen and background check
- **Desire to Work!!!**



# Outcome of Employment

## Definition of a Successful Outcome:

- Competitive employment in an integrated setting
  - Employment is not guaranteed at the host business site.
- Year-round work
- 16 hours a week or more
- Minimum wage or higher



# Skills Assessment Day

- The goal of the Skills Assessment and Interview process is to learn how applicants would react in certain situations, if they would feel comfortable asking for assistance and be able to identify who to ask for help.
- Applicants rotate through various tasks that will assess fine motor skills, problem-solving skills and organizational abilities.

Reception

Tray Set-Up

Stocking

Folding Linens

Filing

Patient Transport

**Project SEARCH Assessment Video**

# Skills Assessment Day



# A Day in the Life of a Project SEARCH Student

- 8:00 a.m. Employability Skills/Health
- 9:00 a.m. Internship site
- 11:30 a.m. Lunch
- 12:15 p.m. Internship site
- 2:00 p.m. Review, Plan, Journaling
- 2:30 p.m. Depart



# Internships

Internships are designed to match student goals and skills

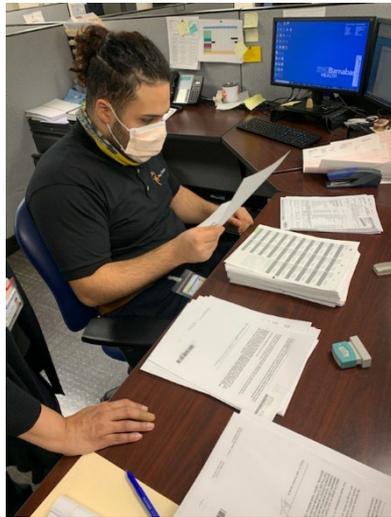


- Marketable Skills
- 4 – 5 hours of day, 910 per year
- Work/ Social Skills
- Integrated
- Cascading skills
- For the benefit of the student, not the benefit of the host employer

# Project SEARCH Internships

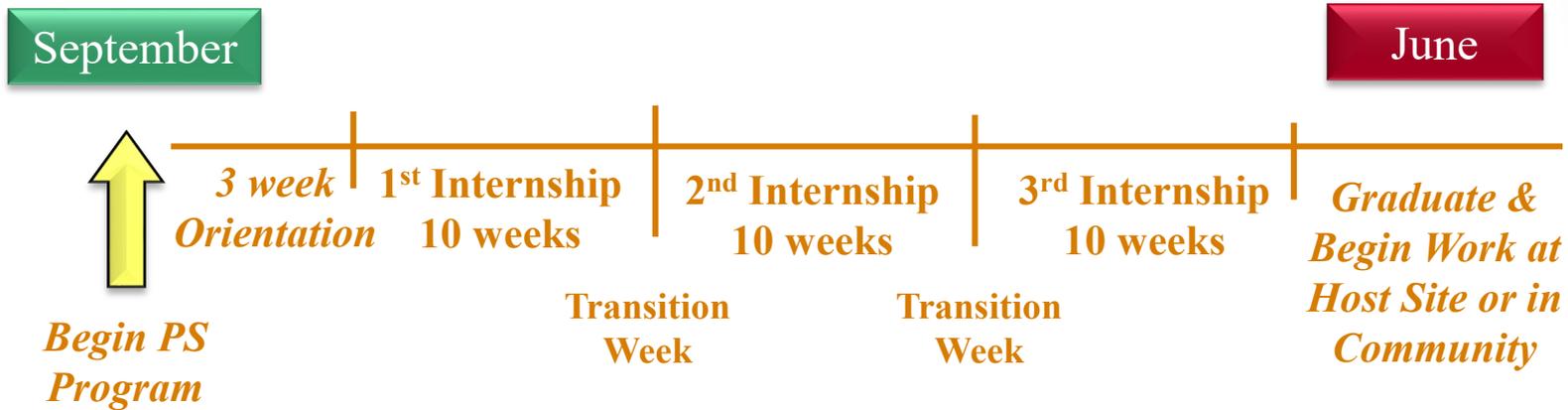
- **Central Sterile Processing**
- **Culinary Arts Department**
- **Custodial Department**
- **Emergency Room Department**
- **Emergency Services**
- **Engineering Department**
- **Enrollment Department**
- **Environmental Services**
- **Finance Department**
- **Food and Nutrition/Dietary**
- **Food Pharmacy**
- **Front Desk**
- **Housekeeping**
- **Human Resources**
- **Laboratory**
- **Library Department**
- **Linen Department**
- **Mailroom**
- **Maintenance/Public Space**
- **Materials Management**
- **Medical Records**
- **Outpatient Mental Health**
- **Patient Access**
- **Patient Transport**
- **Payroll**
- **Physical Therapy / Occupational Therapy**
- **Radiology**
- **Valet**
- **Women's Radiology**

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# 2020-2021 Project SEARCH Interns

# Annual Project SEARCH Calendar



*High School Program mirrors Jersey City Board of Education calendar*

*Adult Programs mirror the Hudson County Community College calendar*

# Role of Project SEARCH Skills Trainer

- **Break down job into individual tasks**
- **Develop accommodations and adaptations**
- **Build relationship with onsite employees and intern**
- **Execute plan to fade support**
- **Assists in defining and working toward Career Plan/Job Goal**

# Role of Project SEARCH Instructor

- **Provides leadership to the on-site Project SEARCH program**
- **Plans and provides daily classroom instruction in employability skills including resume writing, interview skills, etc.**
- **Works with business liaison and department managers to develop internship sites, write job descriptions and plan for necessary job modifications**
- **Communicates with parents on a regular basis**

# Role of Project SEARCH Instructor

- **Coordinates employment planning meetings to discuss progress toward the work goal**
- **Visits student interns and give feedback to all team members**
- **Works collaboratively with the skills trainers on a daily basis**
- **Completes necessary evaluations, reports and other documentation**
- **Facilitates the development of a portfolio for each student that documents each work site, skills acquired, evaluations, letters of recommendations, etc.**

# Role of the Family

Family Involvement results in:  
High expectations and accountability to the team  
Successful transition to employment

- Support interns by attending and participating in **mandatory** meetings and events
- Support use of public transportation and assists with travel arrangement
- Assist interns with attendance and appropriate employability skills
- Communicates and shares with Project SEARCH® staff regarding important issues, challenges and successes
- Assists in defining and working toward Career Plan/Job

Goal

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# 2018 – 2021 Hudson County Project SEARCH Outcomes

DoubleTree by Hilton	Jersey City Medical Center	Hudson County Community College
# Enrolled: 20	# Enrolled: 26	# Enrolled: 8
# Withdrawn: 2	# Withdrawn: 3	# Withdrawn: 0
# Completed: 18	# Completed: 23	# Completed: 8
# Employed: 9	# Employed: 13	# Employed: 5

**Employers:** Hudson County Community College, Jersey City Medical Center, DoubleTree by Hilton, Salvation Army Childcare Center, Acme, BJ’s Wholesale Club, Little Caesar’s Pizza, North Bergen School District, Ruth Chris Steakhouse, Walmart, Popeye’s Restaurant, Randstad In House Services, North Jersey Friendship House, P.C. Richards, Marshalls, Burlington Coat Factory, Hackensack Meridian Health Medical Center, Hudson Community Enterprises, McDonalds

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# 2023 – 2024 Project SEARCH Recruitment Timeline

**November 2022 – April 2023** Virtual Informational Sessions throughout Hudson County for Transition Coordinators, Educators, Students and Parent/Guardians

**April 12, 2023** – Completed Applications must be submitted to the Hudson County Office of Inclusion and Accessibility (OIA)

*Non-DDD Adult and Adult applications will be accepted on a rolling basis*

**Late-April, Early-May 2023** – Skills Assessment & Interview Day for all applicants

**Late-May 2023** – Acceptance and Denial Letters will be sent to all applicants

**Late-May, Early-June 2023** – Modified IEPs for Accepted Interns

**Late-June, Early-July 2023** – Host Business Site Orientation for Accepted Interns

**August 2023** – Transportation Training

**Late-August, Early-September 2023** – Kick Off Ceremony

**September 2023** – High School Program Begins at Interns' Respective Host Business Sites

**October, November 2023** – Adult Program Begins at Interns' Respective Host Business Sites

# Questions and Answers

What internships will be offered?

- Typically internships are developed and matched to abilities and interest.

How will transportation be addressed?

- Travel training will be offered in the summer. Ongoing services are available if needed.

What safety measures are in place?

- Each business host has standard procedures in place for all employees. Additionally, skills trainers will check with interns daily or more as needed.

Are interns ever left alone?

- The expectation is that interns will become independent in the workplace.

# Questions and Answers

Must an intern accept a job if it is offered?

- An intern is not required to accept a particular job at graduation. However, all interns should want to obtain a job.

How will Social Security and Medicaid benefits be effected?

- DVRS is available to answer questions regarding Social Security and Medicaid.

What if an intern cannot complete the program?

- There will be frequent meetings regarding each intern to adjust the program as needed. If ultimately, Project SEARCH is not a good match, the intern will return to the school.

Is this program appropriate for a person with autism?

- People with autism have completed the program successfully. Autism is a wide spectrum and each applicant will be evaluated on an individual basis.

# Contacts

## General & Non-DDD Adult Contact

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Administrator, Hudson County Office of Inclusion & Accessibility  
(201) 369-5280 x4142  
Eross@hcnj.us

## High School Contact

Dina Kosc  
Supervisor, JCPS Department of Special Education  
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Dkosc@jcboe.org

## DDD Adult Contact

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Director of Supported Employment, North Jersey Friendship House  
(201) 488-0411 x24  
Kreining@njfriendshiphouse.org

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