

Project SEARCH

Satellite Program



Project SEARCH is a unique business-led transition program for young adults with disabilities. It provides individuals who want to work a chance to explore careers and develop transferable job skills. The ultimate goal: Independent adults working in a competitive environment.

Project SEARCH places interns in real-world situations where they learn all aspects of gaining and maintaining a job. Avera St. Luke's Hospital is the host business site for the Project SEARCH program in Aberdeen. The process of immersion between a host business and interns facilitates the teaching and learning of new work skills on-site.

Individualized job development and placement occurs based on the intern's experiences, strengths, and skills. A series of job rotations lasting up to 10 weeks allows individuals to find positions that best suit their preferences. Interns receive support with accommodations, adaptations, and on-the-job coaching. Applicants who have completed all requirements for graduation from high school may apply for enrollment in Project SEARCH. The first participants will be chosen from applicants still eligible for special education services through their school district. If openings are available, participants will be chosen from post high school applicants ages 21-25.

The Aberdeen School District provides Project SEARCH through a partnership with Avera St. Luke's Hospital, the Division of Rehabilitation, the SD Department of Labor and Regulation, and Aspire.

Time required

Full days for one school year

Grade levels

Upon completion of high school credits, ages 18-21 or post high school, ages 21-25 if openings are available

POSSIBLE INTERNSHIP POSSIBILITIES

Transporting

Lab

Sterile Processing

Food and Nutrition Services

Materials Management/Print Shop

Medical Records

Plant Operations

Business Service Center

Environmental Services

Rehab

Human Resources

Gift Shop/Education

A Typical Day's Schedule

School Day

- August through May, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. - 2:45 p.m.
- 8 -8:50 a.m.—Attend employability and independent living skills class at the host business.
- 9 a.m. –2:00 p.m.—Participate in non-paid job rotations throughout the location or other host sites.
- 2 -2:45 p.m.—Return to classroom for instruction.



Eligibility Criteria

- 18-21 years old in last year of school eligibility
- 21-25 post high school
- All academic requirements for graduation met
- Basic communication skills
- Appropriate social, grooming and hygiene skills
- Able to pass drug screening and background check
- Updated Immunizations

Job Rotations

- Job rotations last about 10 weeks.
- Interns are matched to the most appropriate job site based on interest and skills.
- A job coach or mentor works with the interns until the tasks assigned can be performed independently.
- Time and instruction is individualized.
- Interns are evaluated by the job coach, the instructor, and the department supervisors.

Job Placement

Job placement is the final goal of the program. Interns can be employed at any time throughout the school year. The intern's employment team, which includes the individual, family, Project SEARCH instructor, job coach, Avera supervisor, and representatives from the Division of Rehabilitation Services and the Department of Labor and Regulation, meets regularly to discuss progress and issues at work sites. The team assists each intern in defining a career goal.