

What is Project SEARCH?

Project SEARCH is a one-year internship program for young adults with disabilities in their last year of special education services. The goal is competitive employment in the community, working part-time (16 hours or more a week) to full-time.

The program takes place at Avera St. Luke's Hospital, where hands-on experience in the workplace enhances the learning process. Students participate in up to three internships to explore a variety of career paths. The team chooses internships based on each person's skills and interests.

Employment teams work with students and their families to create goals and provide support during the transition from high school to work.



Benefits for Students:

- Variety of internship training experience
- Competitive, transferable, marketable job skills
- Increase independence, confidence, and self-esteem
- Build personal and professional relationships
- Link to adult service agencies
- Obtain individualized work-based coaching, instruction, and feedback

Intern Selection:

The most important factor for selection is the desire to gain competitive employment.

Referral to the program comes through their schools, a family member, VR counselor, or from other service agencies. Applications are due in February. A selection committee from partner agencies reviews the applications. Students not in the Aberdeen District are welcome to apply.

If you or someone you know is interested in learning more about Project SEARCH, contact Aberdeen Avera Project SEARCH at 605-622-5680, Vocational Rehabilitation at 605-626-2398, or the Aberdeen Director of Special Education at 605-725-7146. Applications for Aberdeen can be printed from https://aberdeen.k12.sd.us/dsc/departments/sped/forms/ProjectSearch_applic.pdf and sent to:

Director of Special Education Services
Aberdeen School District 6-1
1224 S. 3rd St.
Aberdeen, SD 57401

South Dakota has three other Project SEARCH sites. Find out more information at:
Brookings:
www.Sdsbrookingsprojectsearch.org
Rapid City:
Contact Heather Hoye at 605-394-5120
Sioux Falls:
<http://edec.org/projectsearch>



Aberdeen Avera St. Luke's Project SEARCH

is an Aberdeen School District program in collaboration with SD Dept. of Human Services, Avera St. Luke's Hospital, Aspire, Inc., and the Dept. of Labor. For more information, visit <https://aberdeen.k12.sd.us/dsc/departments/sped/TransitionPrograms.html>

About Project SEARCH:

Project SEARCH was developed at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, which is still the administrative headquarters for the organization. Project SEARCH is a business-led, one-year work-preparation program for young people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Most participants enroll while transitioning from high school to work. The hallmark of Project SEARCH is total workplace immersion, which facilitates a seamless combination of classroom instruction, career exploration, and hands-on training. Project SEARCH's primary objective is to secure competitive employment for every program participant. For more information, visit www.projectsearch.us.



A Unique Transition to Work Program for High School Students with Disabilities



"Having the Project SEARCH students on our campus adds so much value to the mission that we do. The students' positive attitudes give our staff and our patients an infusion of happiness, and it is so appreciated. The skills that they learn while here help to set them up for future successes. They are difference makers."
Todd Forkel, Avera St. Luke's Hospital Regional President and CEO