



Project | SEARCH

# Project SEARCH

What is it all about??



# What is Project SEARCH?

- Project SEARCH is an employment training and career advancement program for individuals with developmental disabilities.
- The program provides real world skills training through a series of internships all designed to teach marketable skills that will transfer to a variety of employment settings.
- The program in the Monadnock region takes place at Cheshire Medical Center/Dartmouth Health
- The program runs on an academic calendar.

# Partners Involved



**Cheshire Medical Center/Dartmouth Health (CMC/DH)** provides an on-site classroom and a variety of internships that teach transferable job skills.

**Monadnock Developmental Services (MDS)** provides referrals, support and coordination for individuals in the program. MDS also provides the Instructor, Vocational Trainers and Job Development for interns during the program. Support continues after the interns graduate and are employed

**New Hampshire Vocational Rehabilitation** provides individual career guidance, and other supports for each intern to gain competitive employment.

# Minimal Requirements for Project SEARCH

- In order to be considered for Project SEARCH applicants must meet the following minimal requirements:
  - Currently be receiving services from Monadnock Developmental Services
  - Have Medicaid and are, or can be, open for the Developmental Disabilities (DD) Waiver
  - Have a current application for, or are receiving active services with New Hampshire Vocational Rehabilitation Services (NHVR)

If accepted, the applicant must be able to pass the required comprehensive background check. In addition copies of immunizations, current TB test and flu vaccine are required. A COVID-19 vaccination is required.

# Who participates in Project SEARCH?

Project SEARCH participants are between the ages of 18 and 34 years of age.

- Students between the ages of 18 and 22, are encouraged to partner with their school in applying for Project SEARCH. This is to ensure students have maximized the benefit of their entitled education services.
- Students who have exited school between ages 18 and 22 years of age, need to have communicated with MDS prior to application for Project SEARCH that they have completed their education, meet the minimal requirements and are on the projected needs list.
- Adults over the age of 22 need to meet the minimal requirements outlined on the previous slide.

# Ideal Candidate

The ideal candidate is between the ages of 18-34 who:

- is committed to learning new skills and securing competitive employment at the end of the program
- has an effective method of communication
- has reliable transportation
- can work with some degree of independence
- can pass the required comprehensive background screening and meet immunization requirements
- be responsible for his/her/their own personal care
- be able to participate in the program remotely if the need arose due to COVID-19

# Class Size & Staffing Supports

- We pride ourselves with the amount of support and direction our interns receive.
- No more than 8 individuals are accepted into the program.
- There is a Project SEARCH Instructor and Vocational Trainer(s) on site at all times.
- Although we do not provide 1:1 staff support, interns have access to staff at all times during the program.

# How We Achieve Our Goals

We....

- select participants who are driven to learn new skills
- believe in each intern
- focus on what each intern can do
- provide systematic, precise instruction
- work with interns to ensure they have the support they need to achieve their goals
- create tools & accommodations as needed for each intern.
- problem solve and help resolve any issues
- promote independence
- communicate progress/concerns with families and support staff



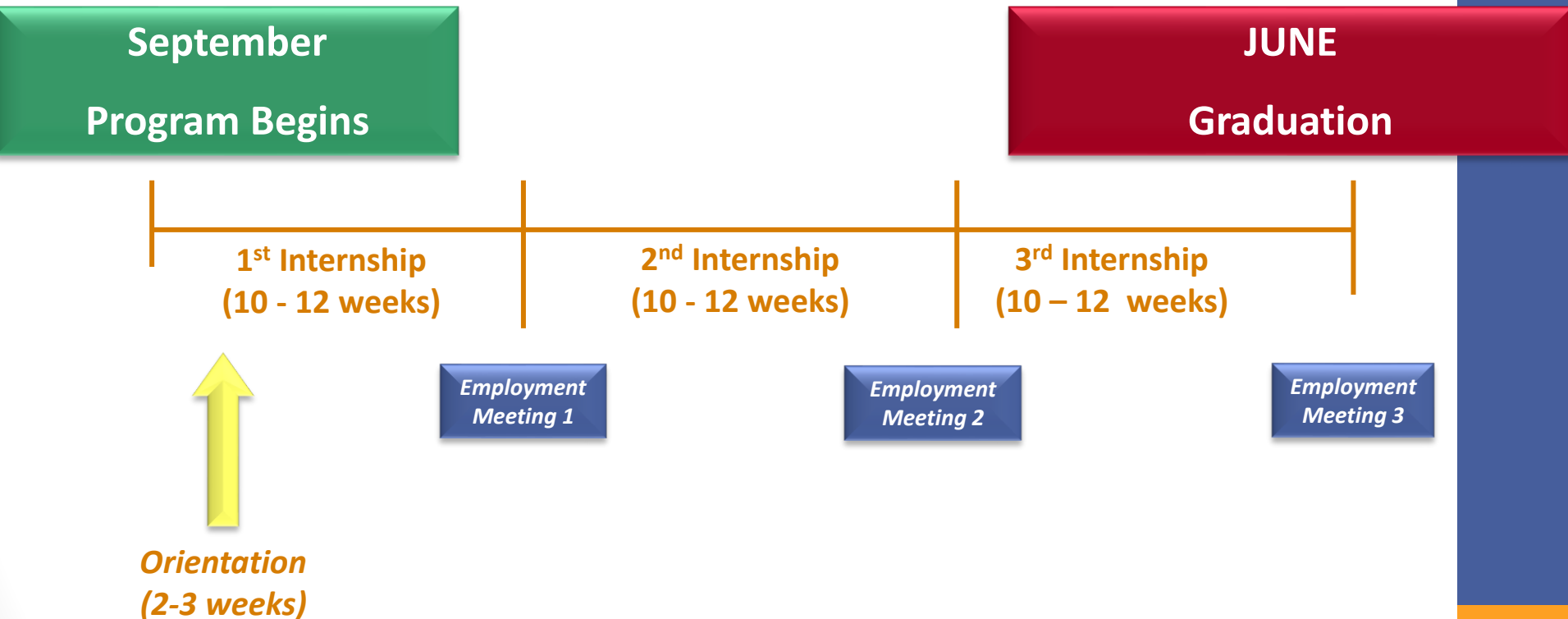
# Participant/Interns Role

- As a participant in Project SEARCH we need you to
  - give 100% effort and be open to learning
  - come prepared every day
  - strive to have a positive attitude
  - be cooperative and courteous
  - work to be a team player
  - communicate their own needs and be respectful
  - be on time for internships, break, lunch and classroom time.

# The Role of Families and Supports

- In order for interns to be successful, they need the support of their family or support staff.
- Here is what we need from you:
  - Communication of questions or concerns is key
  - Encourage self determination
  - Ensure ongoing eligibility for Medicaid, DD waiver, MDS and VR
  - Active involvement in employment planning meetings

# The Year at a Glance



# How the Learning Happens

- Project SEARCH is a hands on learning program that combines classroom learning with unpaid internships.
- Interns have 1.5 hours of classroom instruction each day and spend 4.25 hours in their internship sites. Interns have a 15 minute morning break and a 30 minute lunch break.

# Daily Schedule

7:45am - 8:00am – Arrive in classroom

8:00am - 8:30am Classroom: Goal Setting

8:30am -10:00am Internship sites

10:00am - 10:15am Break

10:15am - 11:30am Internship sites

11:30am - 12:00pm Lunch

12:00pm - 1:30pm Internship sites

1:30pm - 2:30pm Classroom: Employability Skills Topics

2:30pm - Leave for the day

# Skills Learned in the Internships and Classroom

## Hard

- Sanitizing
- Stocking
- Picking orders
- Cutting
- Measuring
- Assembling meals
- Folding
- Sorting
- Adding

## Soft

- Problem Solving
- Critical Thinking
- Team work
- Social skills
- Effective communication
- Flexibility
- Time management
- Accepting feedback

# Planning for Employment

- Employment is the end goal for all Project SEARCH interns. As part of the program, we provide the following supports:
  - Resume development
  - Interview skill development
  - Outreach to employers to secure employment
  - Ongoing job support (on and off site) to ensure a successful placement

# Employment Outcomes

- Graduates work in a variety of jobs. Some work in an office environment, others in retail, manufacturing, environmental services, food service, and recreation.
- On average, graduates of Project SEARCH earn an hourly wage of \$11.16 and work 17.8 hours per week.



# This Sounds Amazing!

How do we apply?

What information do you need?

When are applications due?

# Application Process

- Project SEARCH has a competitive application process; acceptance is not guaranteed.
  - Prospective candidates must complete the application and provide the selection committee with all required documentation.
  - Required documentation includes:
    - a completed application
    - references,
    - resume & photo,
    - copies of all vocational or related assessments.
- Priority is given to transition aged youth.

# Application Timeline

- Applications are due in March
- If selected for an interview, interviews will be mid April. Interviews are done via video conferencing.
- Accepted applicants will be notified by mid May
- Orientation for the accepted class would take place in late June/early July.

# Where to Find Applications

- Applications are available three ways:
  - They are on the MDS website, [www.mds-nh.org](http://www.mds-nh.org) and can be found under child or adult services

Or

  - You can email us at [ProjectSEARCH@mds-nh.org](mailto:ProjectSEARCH@mds-nh.org) for an application

Or

  - You can call our offices at 603-357-6000 or 603-352-1304 and we will send you an application.

# Questions?

- If you have questions about Project SEARCH please reach out and ask us!
- Here is how you can contact us
  - Email: [ProjectSEARCH@mds-nh.org](mailto:ProjectSEARCH@mds-nh.org)
  - Call us at 603-352-1304

We look forward to having you apply!