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Bridging the Gap:

Expanding Supported Employment for Adults with I/DD from San Francisco to Marin County

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Abstract

The shortcomings of supported employment programs for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities exiting high school and special education programs present a nationwide issue of high under- and unemployment rates among said population. Through a synthesis of the current research on supported employment and data gathered from the applied practice of an internship program at The Arc San Francisco, this paper demonstrates the immediate need and extensive benefits of providing highly structured and realistic training and skills development for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities as they not only seek and secure competitive employment, but pursue satisfying and sustaining, lifelong careers.

A literature review describes the best practices of supported employment programs and challenges of the current system, highlighting the need for a “bridge” between school and employment that would prevent adults with disabilities from experiencing lifelong dependence, poverty, and dissatisfaction with their lives. Project SEARCH, a nationwide vocational rehabilitation initiative with extensive educational tools and resources, provides a curriculum for The Arc San Francisco to foster the growth and evolution of a workplace immersion internship program. An analysis of The Arc San Francisco’s internal outcome data of a pilot partnership with Project SEARCH in San Francisco underscores the advantages of expanding The Arc San Francisco’s services north from San Francisco, into Marin County. The authors recommend this expansion begin in early 2016.

Keywords: Supported Employment, Project SEARCH, Internship, Intellectual Disabilities, Developmental Disabilities

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Introduction

The Arc San Francisco (The Arc SF) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization serving individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) by promoting self-determination, dignity and quality of life (The Arc San Francisco, 2015). One of the main areas of service that The Arc SF provides is Employment Development, encompassing an extensive pre-employment curriculum for individuals preparing to secure competitive employment in an integrated work setting. Currently, The Arc SF is working toward a major strategic initiative to increase their social impact and performance by expanding their supported employment services into Marin County (G. Motola, personal communication, September 15, 2015).

This particular project is the result of a collaborative effort between The Arc of San Francisco and the University of San Francisco Masters in Nonprofit Administration (MNA) program. A team of two students in the MNA program worked in close collaboration with The Arc SF's Chief Executive Officer and their Director of Employment and Education through a series of meetings and interviews. Together, they gathered and analyzed data to demonstrate the imminent need and establish a compelling argument for expansion of employment services to Marin County, and to prove The Arc SF's capacity to deliver a successful supported employment program to adults with I/DD living in that region.

Through this paper and the accompanying poster presentation, the authors hope to directly respond to The Arc SF's current needs by "reporting and recommending relevant, practical, and informed suggestions for improving organizational performance" (Tavanti, 2015, p. 4). Recommendations include concrete steps for The Arc San

Francisco to leverage their existing partnership with Project SEARCH in order to replicate the program in Marin and begin rolling out services in early 2016.

Background Information

Individuals with physical, cognitive, developmental, and mental health disabilities who desire and/or are seeking employment generally require specialized training and support services provided by an “interdisciplinary team of rehabilitation professionals, employers, and family members” (Medical Dictionary, 2012). For the benefit and protection of these individuals and their unique needs, the United States passed the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The Rehabilitation Act establishes and funds Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) programs, the national employment program for individuals with disabilities (“Supported employment,” n.d. b).

VR agencies receive Federal and state funding to provide supported employment (SE) services, defined as “Competitive employment in an integrated setting with ongoing support services for individuals with the most significant disabilities – a) for whom competitive employment has not traditionally occurred; or b) for whom competitive employment has been interrupted or intermittent as a result of significant disability; and c) who, because of the nature and severity of their disabilities, need ongoing support services including both intensive initial support services and also extended services after transition from those initial support services in order to perform work...” (as cited in Goodall, Lawyer, & Wehman, 1994).

Since the 1970s, supported employment programs have been a key resource for people with I/DD in their transition from education to gainful employment. Traditional programs follow an “individual placement” model through the work of a part time or full

time Job Coach. Job Coaches are funded as professional vocational rehabilitation service providers whose foremost responsibility it is to be, “direct support professionals who assist people with disabilities to secure, maintain, and advance in employment” (Hall, Bose, Winsor, & Migliore, 2014, p. 489). The services they provide are personalized for each client and may include customization of job responsibilities and/or individualized “person-centered community development,” so that each client is best positioned to gain and maintain employment in his or her community. As the individual becomes more capable of performing job duties and relies less on the support of a Job Coach, properly structured programs are designed to “fade” incrementally over time (“Supported employment,” n.d. b).

Literature Review

Studies show that employment placement rates for I/DD who receive supported employment services through vocational rehabilitation agencies are consistently higher than for those who do not receive SE services, and that supported employment is, indeed, “an effective mechanism of change for young adults with I/DD who are served by this public program” (Wehman, Chan, Ditchman, & Kang, 2014, p. 303).

In many states, the only true eligibility requirement for acceptance to a community rehabilitation provider (CRP) that provides supported employment services is funding from the state Developmental Disability agency (Moon, Simonsen, & Neubert, 2011). Receiving state funding essentially confirms that the client has a diagnosed disability (or disabilities) and qualifies for services. However, far more than “eligibility” determines an individual’s propensity for success in a supported employment program. At a very minimum, and according to multiple studies, some level of communication

skills and proper self-management (hygiene) are crucial (Nord, Leucking, Mank, Kiernan, & Wray, 2013; Moon, Simonsen, & Neubert, 2011; Nicholas, Attridge, Zwaigenbaum, & Clarke, 2015). Moon, Simonsen, & Neubert also identify self-advocacy, safety awareness, social and communication skills, and travel-training skills as preferred pre-requisites for clients entering CRPs (2011). Previous work experience (and documentation of such), and fading supports toward the end of formal schooling also increase preparedness as they access supported employment services from a community rehabilitation program (Moon, Simonsen, & Neubert, 2011). Supporting research shows that other necessary skills, tools, and experiences of transitioning youth with disabilities are “paid work experiences... and assessments that document employment preferences, interests, and needs” (Moon, Simonsen & Neubert, 2011, p. 99). These skills, of course, occur in varying degrees among individuals, depending on the type and severity of the individual’s disability (Hall, Bose, Winsor, & Migliore, 2014).

Effective training and development through direct work experience is one of the strongest predictors and determinants of successful supported employment programs, and preparatory curricula that include these opportunities translate to an increased number of placements, higher wages, more hours of work per week, and greater length of job (Moon, Simonsen & Neubert, 2011; Nord, Leucking, Mank, Kiernan, & Wray, 2013). Other common characteristics and intervention practices of effective state systems include technology as a training aid, natural job supports, and person-centered career planning (Nord, Leucking, Mank, Kiernan, & Wray, 2013).

Intrinsic motivation to work is another important factor to consider in the supported employment process for I/DD. Individuals who are not working, especially

younger adults, are less satisfied in their lives, and are motivated to change their circumstances through employment (Rose, Perks, Fidan & Hurst, 2010). Finally, research also shows that knowing a client's employment preferences in order to achieve a good "fit" also contributes to appropriate and long-lasting job placements (Moon, Simonsen & Neubert, 2011). Some programs have even begun to build the job around the worker, an emerging strategy meant to emphasize his or her strengths and abilities (Nord, Leucking, Mank, Kiernan, & Wray, 2013).

Challenges of Supported Employment

Supported employment is meant to be both integrated (with both disabled and nondisabled employees) and appropriately suited for the individuals performing the work. "According to 29 USCS § 705(35)A [Title 29. Labor; Chapter 16. Vocational Rehabilitation and Other Rehabilitation Services; General Provisions] the term "supported employment" refers to competitive work in integrated work settings, or employment in integrated work settings in which individuals are working toward competitive work, consistent with the strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice of the individuals, for individuals with the most significant disabilities" (as cited in USLegal, Inc., 2015).

Supported employment programs have progressed substantially since the passing of the Rehabilitation Act in 1973. Before the passing of this legislation, the most common model for supported employment of adults with I/DD was to segregate them into sheltered workshops where they would perform menial tasks under the guidance of a supervisor. Most community and vocational rehabilitation programs have moved away from this antiquated system and embraced an integrated community approach to

employment for I/DD, especially as their peers without disabilities have come to better understand their capabilities (“Supported employment,” n.d. b).

Although supported employment has evolved over the years, the system still contains weaknesses and gaps. In most states, special education programs end at either age 18 or 22, and limited postsecondary educational and/or vocational opportunities exist, and those which exist may be difficult to access. Typically, young adults then transition to community rehabilitation programs, or day services, where they participate in recreational activities and some skill development (K. Pedersen, personal communication, September 15, 2015). For individuals with more severe and profound disabilities, these placements may prove to be appropriate. However, for many individuals whose disabilities do not preclude them from progressing further toward independence and self-sufficiency, day programs are more of a “dead end” (G. Motola & K. Pedersen, personal communication, September 15, 2015).

Employment outcomes for people with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) also raise concerns. Challenges of this population include acquiring interview and social skills and, when placed in employment, work environments without effective supports in place. Vocational support interventions and technology-based support tools can help improve these situations/combat these challenges, but studies conducted demonstrate gaps in services (Nicholas, Attridge, Zwaigenbaum, & Clarke, 2015).

Social service agencies for adults with I/DD have commonly and traditionally played the role of “caretaker.” They are not considered to emphasize or provide upwardly mobile pathways through employment. Unfortunately, employment-track programs are less common and accessible, so only a small percentage of higher-

functioning clients are fortunate enough to enroll in these types of programs (K. Pedersen, personal communication, September 15, 2015). Additionally, people with I/DD learn differently than their non-disabled peers. Most postsecondary educational institutions, such as community colleges, do not have the resources or internal supports to accommodate the unique and individualized learning styles of people with I/DD (Issod, 2015).

One can conclude that the current system does not provide sufficient access to disability-appropriate educational resources throughout the lives of these clients. The lack of skills development programs, desirable employment options, and accessibility to employment services available to this population leads clients to lives of subsistence and financial dependence (Issod, 2015). Gaps in services most definitely exist, and for these reasons, must be addressed.

Supported Employment in California

Supported employment is currently being implemented in various places around the world (“Supported employment,” n.d. b), but the focus of this particular project is within the State of California, specifically the San Francisco Bay Area. Throughout California, the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) provides “services and supports to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities including cerebral palsy, epilepsy, autism and other related conditions” (State Department of Developmental Services, 2015a). Through contracts with 21 nonprofit regional centers throughout the State, The DDS serves as a vital resource to individuals with developmental disabilities and their families throughout their lifetimes (2015a).

Regional centers “provide diagnosis and assessment of eligibility and help plan, access, coordinate and monitor the services and supports that are needed because of a developmental disability” (State Department of Developmental Services, 2015b). The Golden Gate Regional Center (GGRC) serves people with any of the aforementioned disabilities who live in Marin, San Francisco, or San Mateo County. Each year, a new group of transitional age regional center clients graduate from high school in search of their next step. Despite the educational resources available through high school special education programs, many young adults with I/DD who transition into day programs, or CRPs after high school graduation have unmet learning needs, a lack of (or gaps in) job readiness training, and deficits in psychosocial development (Issod, 2015; G. Motola, personal communication, September 15, 2015) making them unfit to enter and succeed in the workplace.

Alternatively, individuals placed in CRPs with vocational rehabilitation or supported employment programs often do have success in securing employment, thanks to the additional skills and development training they receive through these services (Wehman, Chan, Ditchman, & Kang, 2014; The Arc San Francisco, 2015; Issod, 2015). The pervasive problem, however, is that these placements are often entry-level jobs, many of which put little or no emphasis on learning, growth or promotion. Typical placements are in “food, filth, and flowers” (food service, commercial cleaning, or gardening) because they don’t require a high level of skill, judgment, or cognition. The insufficient training and education provided to these individuals, combined with the unconscious bias that people with disabilities are not capable of handling more challenging responsibilities, result in adults with I/DD being relegated to sub-par jobs.

To make matters worse, a preconceived notion, expectation, and commonly held belief exists that this population is incapable of more sophisticated duties. Therefore, many programs also lack a focus on career development (G. Motola, personal communication, September 15, 2015).

Many young adults rely on support services provided to them during high school and college to help them discern their career interests. Learning is not meant to end upon graduation from high school, or even post-secondary school. Adults without disabilities avail themselves to higher education, vocational school, professional training, self-help courses, and other educational resources throughout their adult lives (Issod, 2015). Programs for young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities lack widely accessible supported employment programs and comparable career exploration opportunities. This systematic failure has been shown to fast-track these individuals into underemployment and poverty. An absence of meaningful and competitive employment can also have negative psychological effects and cause a lack of satisfaction for these individuals (State Department of Developmental Services, 2015a).

Finally, when it comes to the economics of supported employment “individuals with disabilities experience greater monetary benefits than costs when working in the community” (as cited in Cimera, 2012). When supported individuals are able to secure employment that pays competitive wages and affords promotion and upward mobility, they become less dependent upon Social Security Disability Income, earn taxable wages, and become significantly more financially independent (Cimera, 2012). The challenge, then, is not only to help adults with developmental disabilities find jobs, but

also to overcome the unconscious bias that any type of employment is enough for them. Success is not placing someone in a mediocre job; it is creating a career path that leads to future success and independence.

Despite the fact that employment rates for adults with I/DD who receive supported employment through vocational rehabilitation agencies are consistently higher than for those who do not receive supported employment, only 23% of working-age Americans with disabilities were employed in 2013. Furthermore, investment in and access to publicly funded systems in different geographic areas impacts this rate significantly (Nord, Leucking, Mank, Kiernan, & Wray, 2013). Given the myriad reasons for importance and value of employment for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and the related economics and cost benefits, the effectiveness of the current employment support system and employment-specific interventions is largely insufficient.

This underscores the immediate need for more comprehensive services that implement the success factors listed above, specifically, real work experience with appropriate supports that provide thorough and proper preparation for individuals with I/DD entering the workforce.

Project SEARCH

In the mid-nineties, a nurse by the name of J. Erin Riehle was working as the Director of the Emergency Room at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center in Cincinnati, Ohio. She was in need of a reliable worker who could stock supplies in her department. Erin had become acquainted with individuals with I/DD whom the hospital served, and she wondered "if it would be possible to train people with developmental

disabilities to fill some of the high-turnover, entry level positions in her department, which involved complex and systematic tasks such as stocking supply cabinets.”

Erin collaborated with Susie Rutkowski, Great Oaks Manager of Disability Education; and Jennifer Linnabary, a Job Developer with the Hamilton County Board of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities who had been training people with I/DD to be valuable employees and helping to find them internships and jobs. Together, their newly formed team began to devise a systematic solution to the need for preparation of transition age youth with I/DD so they could gain competitive employment in integrated work settings.

Riehle proceeded to hire Annie Sublett, who has Downs Syndrome, to work in the Emergency Department at Cincinnati Children’s Hospital and she worked there for six months before she was offered a job in the Dental Clinic. Nineteen years later, Annie now works full time at the Hospital’s 15 room Dental Clinic, where she sterilizes and sorts the instruments used for each and every dental surgery performed in the clinic (Goodwin, Pedersen & Chagall, 2014; Project SEARCH, 2012).

Project SEARCH formally launched in 1996 and is now “an international trademarked and copyrighted program model” with over 380 national and international work sites. Each Project SEARCH site provides training and education that may lead to employment opportunities for individuals with I/DD (Project SEARCH, 2012). While enrolled in this collaborative program between an employing company or organization and a licensed nonprofit program, individuals with significant disabilities spend a full academic year immersed in an integrated workplace learning skills that will prepare them for competitive employment. Project SEARCH is primarily based in hospital

settings, but also operates in banks, universities, and other workplaces and industries (Goodwin, Pedersen & Chagall, 2014).

Structure of Project SEARCH

The cornerstone of Project SEARCH is total immersion in a large business through a formal, corporate, unpaid internship. Interns work five days a week at the host business or organization learning job skills and building their resume for gainful employment. Each internship site must have an Advisory Board comprised of a representative from each of the following teams: education, such as the intern's school district or career technical school; vocational rehabilitation; a community rehabilitation partner (which provides job coaching and job development); a long-term provider (such as a developmental disabilities organization) that provides support services throughout the client's life; and the partnering business (Goodwin, Pedersen & Chagall, 2014).

Project SEARCH is structured as a transitional program after high school for states that do not have regional centers with a goal for competitive employment for each student. However, it can be implemented within any system that requires additional supports for transitioning youth and adults with I/DD. "The program provides real-life work experience combined with training in employability and independent living skills to help youth with significant disabilities make successful transitions from school to productive adult life" (Project SEARCH, 2012).

Internship Program

The following description is synthesized from various Project SEARCH program documents, primarily the Mentor and Manager Guidebook (Appendix D).

Interns apply to the program and are reviewed by a selection committee. In early September of each year, the Project SEARCH team introduces interns to their internship site. Over the course of the nine-month academic program year, interns selected for the program participate in three internship rotations (September through December, January through March, and March through June). Each rotation takes place in a different department within the host business and is structured with three components: educational, career exploration, and clinical personal growth. In each rotation, interns participate in ongoing review with a Job Coordinator and Job Coach as they learn and practice job specific skills. They also receive feedback from their supervisor and co-workers. Their internship site supervisor collaborates with the Project SEARCH Job Coach and Job Coordinator to support the intern.

The role of the Job Coach is particularly vital to the success of Project SEARCH interns. Job Coaches assist with travel training and other pre-employment needs such as supporting interns during classroom activities, interview preparation and interviews, resume development, and classroom activities. Job Coaches help the intern understand the job, teach essential tasks and duties, and reinforce employability skills during the internship. They evaluate and give feedback to interns on their skill acquisition and develop tools or suggest modifications of tasks as needed, such as labeling cabinets or simplifying written instructions. They reinforce positive behaviors and performance consistent with the host site's policies and procedures, and are available to discuss issues and concerns with the host site's department supervisor as they arise. A Job Coach works with the intern until he or she can master his or her job.

Project SEARCH interns are also responsible for meeting a number of expectations during the time they are enrolled in the program, such as notifying their Job Coach and Supervisor if they will be absent or tardy; following rules and regulations at the host business, including the code of conduct and dress code; and attending weekly program meetings. Project SEARCH involves “an extensive period of training and career exploration, innovative adaptations, long-term job coaching, and continuous feedback from teachers, job coaches, and employers” (Project SEARCH, 2012) of which the intern must be accepting and receptive. In order to demonstrate their learning and growth, interns end each day of the program with a reflection on the day, problem solving, planning, and journaling their key learnings. As with other successful vocational rehabilitation programs, Project SEARCH has built-in a “fade” in services, as the participant becomes increasingly independent.

As a result of the Project SEARCH training program, “transition age youth with significant intellectual and developmental disabilities are preparing, qualifying for, and securing nontraditional, complex, and rewarding jobs” (The Arc San Francisco, 2015c) as evidenced by successful placements into full time employment. The businesses that sign on with this model reap immeasurable benefits as well. Not only do they receive completed work assignments at no cost to them, by providing this service they support young adults with disabilities in jump-starting their careers and shift the organizational culture of their business. “The presence of a Project SEARCH High School Transition Program can bring about long-term changes in business culture that have far-reaching positive effects on attitudes about hiring people with disabilities and the range of jobs in

which they can be successful” (Project Search, 2012). Project SEARCH’ total workplace immersion experience benefits all involved

The Arc of San Francisco

The Arc of San Francisco is a primary service provider and resource for over 750 people with disabilities in San Francisco and San Mateo counties. The Arc was founded in 1951 by parents who wanted better lives for their disabled children and other concerned individuals, and the organization has been a progressive leader in serving people with IDD ever since. The organizational mission is to “serve people with intellectual and developmental disabilities by promoting self-determination, dignity and quality of life.” This includes supports that empower clients to make the most of their abilities; learning new skills, holding productive jobs, and living ordinary and rewarding lives in the community (The Arc of San Francisco, 2015a).

The Arc SF’s Concept of Supported Employment

The Arc SF has a strong and proven philosophical belief in the positive impact that competitive employment has in the lives of people with disabilities. They recognize that employment in more competitive jobs is directly linked with higher self-esteem, increased adaptive skills, and other advantages. Executive staff and direct service providers at The Arc SF agree that when given the opportunity, people with diverse levels of functioning can accomplish far more than they were believed able for many decades prior. The Arc SF has seen their clients’ skills go far beyond the clerical type, to more judgment and analytical skills required for higher-level positions in competitive and integrated workplace settings. The Arc SF provides a supported employment program that yields job placements in more challenging, more financially sustainable,

and more satisfying than positions in “food, filth, and flowers” (G. Motola & K. Pedersen, personal communication, September 15, 2015; Pedersen & Motola, 2015).

The Arc SF’s Construct of Supported Employment

The Arc SF has been providing progressive services to the population of adults with I/DD for over 60 years; for 40 of those years, The Arc SF has provided supported employment services. As they evolve and grow from experience in practice, and particularly in the last five years under the leadership of CEO, Glenn Motola, the executive staff of The Arc SF has begun an agency-wide re-orientation and overall shift in philosophy toward continuing, lifelong education and skills development for adults with I/DD (G. Motola, personal communication, September 15, 2015). “The Arc of San Francisco believes that all individuals are capable of continuing to learn and grow throughout their lives; individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities need more post-secondary education access and support” (The Arc San Francisco, Proposal to the Margaret E. Haas Fund, 2013). They believe that adults with I/DD deserve the same opportunities as their non-disabled peers. Continuing education and proper training can unlock the potential capacity for employment that these individuals hold. This paradigm shift has led the Arc SF to place a stronger emphasis on career development that leads to higher paying jobs with potential for promotion (G. Motola, personal communication, September 15, 2015; K. Pedersen, personal communication, November 21, 2015; Issod, 2015).

Because the average adult does not stop learning when they complete high school, education and skills development services should not end either. As an agency that serves adults with I/DD for their lifetime, The Arc can create and facilitate these

educational opportunities based on the individual's specific needs. The Arc intends to be the first agency to provide systematic access to tailored, expanded, and disability-appropriate educational resources throughout their entire adult lives (The Arc of San Francisco Internship Expansion Goals, 2015). This simple, yet largely uncommon approach not only holds the promise of continued learning and growth for adults with I/DD (Issod, 2015), it fills gaps in services where the current system traditionally breaks down (G. Motola, personal communication, September 15, 2015). Most importantly, The Arc SF presents an alternative to the conveyor-belt track upon which most young adults with I/DD land after high school. With highly personalized employment services to help them get competitive jobs, no longer will they be relegated to living on Social Security Disability Income with no meaningful work or livable wage income.

The Arc SF and Project SEARCH: A High Impact Partnership

The Arc SF clearly recognizes the value in finding meaningful employment for their clients with disabilities. That's why, in 2010, they decided to partner with Project SEARCH by signing a memorandum of understanding (MOU) in order to strengthen and build out their Supported Employment program. The partnership they have created allows The Arc SF to utilize and Project SEARCH's licensed name, which has national recognition in the field of supported employment, and proven success over the past two decades. The Arc SF also has license to implement the Project SEARCH model, tools, suggestions, and curriculum in their pursuit of a "world class" supported employment/internship program. Project SEARCH provides technical assistance, helping The Arc SF structure their internship program once they have found a host company. However, The Arc SF Internship program is staffed and developed entirely by

The Arc SF, and all host site development and employer relationships are those they create (K. Pedersen, personal communication, October 21, 2015).

Following their agreement with Project SEARCH, The Arc SF initiated a relationship and structured collaboration with Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E), the San Francisco Bay Area's largest utilities company. They involved three additional key entities: City College of San Francisco, to serve as an education partner; and two funding partners, the Golden Gate Regional Center and the California State Department of Rehabilitation (Goodwin, Pedersen & Chagall, 2014). During each of the last five years, eight to nine clients have completed the nine-month Project SEARCH internship program through The Arc's collaboration with PG&E as a host site. There, interns perform clerical work, digital and archival projects, and light information technologies tasks.

As a more recent outgrowth of their partnership with Project SEARCH, The Arc SF has started a partnership with the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco for individuals interested in museum studies, science, and education. Five Interns completed the first nine-month internship rotation in June of 2015. Consistent with the model, interns participated in three 3-month rotations. One rotation was in customer and guest services; another was providing education for kids visiting the Academy (which included the responsibility of learning to be a "mandated reporter" of abuse since they were working with children); and the third rotation was in security, where interns were given the privilege of using "guard cards" as well as receiving full training in First Aid and CPR. As a result of the internship experience, three of the five interns have been hired by the California Academy of Sciences, one found employment elsewhere, and

the other intern has returned to school to pursue her Early Childhood Education Certification, “an area of interest that was fostered during her internship” (The Arc of San Francisco Internship Expansion Goals, 2015).

The process of career exploration and development, one that is largely available to the general population during and after college, can be complex and time consuming; but it is of utmost importance in this program (The Arc San Francisco, Proposal to the Margaret E. Haas Fund, 2013). The rotations expose interns to various opportunities in different departments within the host site where they can learn different skills and begin to identify their preferences and interests. Following the internship, interns work closely with a Job Coach to continue this process and begin searching for a job placement. Once an intern secures a job, a “Job Match” meeting is held to clarify roles and responsibilities as the intern changes from the Project SEARCH Internship Program to Project SEARCH Supported Employment with The Arc SF. Project SEARCH Job Coaches provide on-going job coaching support and The Arc SF continues to provide support as the new employee makes this transition (Goodwin, Pedersen & Chagall, 2014).

Results of The Arc/Project SEARCH Partnership

As a result of The Arc SF’s supported employment program, augmented by the implementation of a nine-month, full-immersion internship program, clients are getting better jobs in better companies, with higher salaries, with opportunities to be promoted. In two years, The Arc has supported 298 clients in gaining and maintaining employment at 120 job sites (Pedersen & Motola, 2015). Employers of internship graduates include Facebook, LinkedIn, Google, Salesforce, and DocuSign (The Arc of San Francisco

Internship Expansion Goals, 2015). 35% of internship graduates work full-time, a 20% increase in full time workers compared to statistics prior to beginning the program. The placement rate for interns is currently 96%, and those employed are working an average of 32 hours per week, making an average of \$18.50 per hour, compared with non-intern graduates of supported employment who make an average of \$13.10 per hour. This translates to \$4 million in earned taxable income since 2013. Impressively, The Arc SF employment rates are 56% versus 8% employment rate for people with disabilities nationally (Pedersen & Motola, 2015; K. Pedersen, personal communication, November 17, 2015).

The Arc SF's and Project SEARCH's individual successes have made them a highly productive team when combined, evidenced by these outcomes. Their model echoes the best practices and keys to success that the literature review highlights, as it provides real work experience in the workplace itself, gives exposure to different job duties leading to the ability to indicate job interests, and provides the proper supports every step of the way. The work that interns do also presents a benefit to the host company, as each task they complete adds value to the business itself.

The Arc SF, in partnership with Project SEARCH, is taking a holistic approach to the professional development and employment of their community members with disabilities. This arrangement jump-starts the careers of individuals with significant disabilities, allowing them the structure to learn new skills, build upon their successes, and begin working in fully integrated, competitive job placements. Most importantly, interns who complete the program and find employment self-report significantly higher self-esteem, self-determination, and satisfaction with their lives (The Arc San Francisco,

2015b). This high-impact partnership gives Arc clients the opportunity to answer the question, “what would you like to do with your life?” and then support them every step of the way toward achieving the goals they set for themselves (G. Motola, personal communication, September 15, 2015). Following this proven arrangement, The Arc SF aims to expand this philosophy and program beyond San Francisco.

Beyond the evident myriad advantages to the individuals with I/DD, the businesses involved receive a return on their investment that far outweighs the cost of hosting an unpaid internship. Undoubtedly, the commitment results in lower staffing costs, but beyond labor benefits, hiring individuals with I/DD provides a great opportunity for teams that want to build management roles into their organizational hierarchy. By hiring individuals with I/DD, the workplace will also more accurately reflect the dynamics of the communities they serve. “Our interns, their families, friends and communities are our customers. The community will see this as oftentimes interns are in roles that interface with customers” (Pedersen, The Three C’s of Intern Success: A Business Liaison Perspective, 2015).

Analysis

California is an “employment first” state under the United States Department of Labor’s Office of Disability Employment Policy. Employment first refers to “a framework for systems change that is centered on the premise that all citizens, including individuals with significant disabilities, are capable of full participation in integrated employment and community life” (U.S. Department of Labor). An estimated 10% of California residents have a disability, and epidemiological estimates from UCSF indicate that nearly 32,000 of these people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities live in San Francisco,

San Mateo, and Marin Counties, and this number grows every day (Issod, 2015). The national average unemployment rate for this population is upwards of 90%, which translates to nearly 29,000 people in these three Bay Area counties alone who depend on Social Security Disability Income because they do not have the support to find jobs that pay living wages (G. Motola, personal communication, September 15, 2015).

If stakeholders involved in the current system do not take immediate and intentional action to reverse this trend, the Bay Area will see an increasing number of both transitional age and aging adults being under- or unemployed for the foreseeable future (The Arc of San Francisco Internship Expansion Goals, 2015).

Program Evaluation

An in depth evaluation of The Arc SF's supported employment program has clearly revealed that the Project SEARCH workplace immersion internship model is a strong one. As The Arc SF tirelessly combats the current reality and poor outlook for this population by increasing the number of Project SEARCH internship host sites in San Francisco, they also recognize the broad implications that their internship program can have if it were replicated in other geographic areas, assuming the need exists. This has spurred a major strategic initiative to implement the program in Marin County, as Marin does not currently offer any programs of this kind for transition age students or adults with I/DD (The Arc of San Francisco Internship Expansion Goals, 2015).

The Arc of San Francisco would eventually like to provide an array of services in Marin County (K. Pedersen, personal communication, November 17, 2015). Fortunately, the organization is extremely well poised to bring their supported employment program across the Bay to Marin County in order to build a bridge to career opportunities for

individuals with I/DD in Marin by scaling up the internship model. Launching this program in Marin would solidify The Arc SF's place as a service provider in Marin County. Furthermore, the expansion of their proven methodology will help "raise the bar for employer and client expectations... resulting in highly skilled, marketable employees who are earning 35% more than their peers and are experiencing not only employment, but career growth" as they simultaneously provide valuable work to the County's host businesses (The Arc of San Francisco Internship Expansion Goals, 2015).

Recommendations

The University of San Francisco's MNA Program team has determined that The Arc SF should leverage their existing partnership with Project SEARCH in San Francisco to expand the workplace immersion internship program to Marin County in order to increase their overall social impact. We suggest that the Marin expansion begin by establishing a relationship with a post-secondary educational institution and two workplace immersion host sites by early 2016. To accomplish this goal, we suggest that The Arc of San Francisco create an "expansion team" consisting of the CEO, Glenn Motola; the Director of Employment and Education, Kristen Pedersen; and the recently hired Associate Director of Education and Careers.

A Formula for Success

Regional center clients with I/DD living in Marin County who are not currently receiving supported employment services are entitled to such through the Rehabilitation Act (see description in "Challenges of Supported Employment" section); therefore, the majority of funding for this program is already in place through the Golden Gate Regional Center and the California State Department of Rehabilitation. The task will be

to recruit clients to this program to get it up and running. We suggest that the Associate Director of Education and Careers be responsible for recruiting potential clients and their families to this pilot program, leaning on the successful outcomes of its implementation in San Francisco.

Another key component of this program is to establish an educational partner who can provide ongoing skills development training, and post-secondary education to the interns. For that reason, we recommend that The Arc SF initiate a relationship with College of Marin and/or Dominican University to be responsible for providing access to tailored and expanded educational curricula (Issod, 2015).

We also recognize that the need for corporate support in this endeavor is significant, so finding companies with whom The Arc SF can collaborate will require a dedicated effort. We suggest that Kristen and Glenn take the lead in building these relationships, as they have worked closely with the existing internship host sites in San Francisco. When making contact with potential companies, we suggest that the expansion team take key representatives from the target business to one of the existing internship sites in San Francisco so they can see the program in action.

Businesses must understand, first and foremost, that this is a site-based program where Arc instructors deliver the curriculum to interns at the work site itself, five days a week. The desired outcome would be to establish an agreement where the business receives eight workers (Arc SF clients) and a job coach to accompany them, in exchange for using their site as a teaching lab (Goodwin, Pedersen & Chagall, 2014). The expansion team should highlight the proven, extensive, aforementioned advantages that this structure presents to the business. They should also emphasize

that The Arc SF pays the program costs; the partner corporations merely assist by allowing The Arc SF to use the worksite as a classroom. This, of course, translates to low administrative overhead for The Arc SF's program launch in Marin.

Once The Arc SF has come to an agreement with a host business, the expansion team will determine a site liaison to work through the legal component which will take the form a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the two entities. This will formalize the relationship between them. See Appendix C for a sample MOU for host sites in Marin County. The business liaison will also be responsible for informing the company's workforce about the launch of this program, coordinating the logistics of training space, and facilitating access to technology resources as necessary, depending on the nature of the internship rotations (Goodwin, Pedersen & Chagall, 2014).

The Associate Director of Education and Careers will be responsible for formalizing the curriculum using Project SEARCH's tools and resources and successful practices of the current internship program in San Francisco. That person should also perform ongoing project evaluation as the program gets up and running.

We conducted research on businesses based in Marin County and discovered that the three largest employers are Kaiser Permanente, Marin General Hospital, and BioMarin (see Appendix B). Project SEARCH began in a hospital setting, and many of their 300 sites across the country and internationally are in hospitals as well. This bodes well for the expansion team's presentation to these businesses as potential host sites. Based on this information and an existing relationship that The Arc SF has initiated with the Bay Area Children's Discovery Museum, we believe that by following this structure,

The Arc SF is capable of having one formalized internship site determined by March of 2016. They could then begin building capacity for two more sites in 2017.

Conclusion

For individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities looking to join the workforce, the career outlook is limited - if not bleak - as the current system commonly relegates them to low-skill, low-pay, and entry level positions without the opportunity for growth (The Arc of San Francisco Internship Expansion Goals, 2015). Research conducted through a literature review of vocational rehabilitation services proves that the internship model is an essential long-term component to a successful supported employment. A thorough program evaluation of The Arc SF's highly evolved supported employment model of workplace immersion internship, paired with the significant momentum that the San Francisco program has gained, proves that The Arc of San Francisco has the experience, capacity, and capability to broaden their impact by expanding this transformational program into Marin County. Marin County's adoption and implementation of the full-immersion workplace internship program promises an increased number of competitive job placements, thereby improving the quality of life for hundreds of transitional age and older adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Appendix A: Infographic of Partnership



Appendix B: Marin's Largest Employers

Company	FTE employees/Marin Local	Nature of Business	Benefits	Positions Most in Demand	Health Insurance	Top Local Executive
Kaiser Permanente San Rafael Medical Center 99 Montecillo Rd., San Rafael 94903, 415-444-2000, kaisersanrafael.org	1,340	Health Care: Hospital, Healthplan, Medical Offices	401(k), 403(b), dental, depend. care, emp. assist. prog., flex. spending accts., incentive prog., life, long-term disab., med. for depend., med. for emp., pd. holidays, pd. sick/pers. time, pd. vac., pension, short-term disab., tuition reimb., vision, dependent care, educ. leave, malpractice ins., parent coverage, retirement health, long-term care, legal services	Nurse Mgrs., Staff Nurses, Home Health, Physical Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Pharmacists	Kaiser Permanente	Judy Coffey
Marin General Hospital, 250 Bon Air Rd., Greenbrae 94904, 415-925-7000, maringeneral.org	1,102	Health care	403(b), AD&D, commuter benefits, dental, depend. care, emp. assist. prog., flex. spending accts., life, long-term disab., med. for depend., med. for emp., pd. holidays, pd. sick/pers. time, pd. vac., pension, tuition reimb., vision, na	Experienced specialty nurses and techs	Blue Shield of California PPO	Lee Domanico
BioMarin Pharmaceutical, 105 Digital Dr., Novato 94949,	850	Biopharmaceuticals	401(k), AD&D, dental, emp. assist. prog., long-term disab., med. for emp., pd. holidays, pd. sick/pers. time, pd. vac., stock purchase, tuition reimb., vision2, na	na	Blue Cross, Kaiser	Jean-Jacques Bienaime
Autodesk, 111 McInnis Pkwy, San Rafael 94903, 415-507-6101, autodesk.com	748	Software design	401(k), AD&D, adoption assist., commuter benefits, dental, emp. assist. prog., flex time, flex. spending accts., incentive prog., life, long-term disab., med. for depend., med. for emp., pd. holidays, pd. sick/pers. time, pd. vac., short-term disab., stock purchase, tuition reimb., vision, na	Engineering, cloud	Aetna, Kaiser, United Healthcare	Carl Bass
Fireman's Fund Insurance, 777 San Marin Dr., Novato 94945, 415-899-6500, firemansfund.com	721	Insurance	401(k), AD&D, commuter benefits, dental, depend. care, emp. assist. prog., flex time, flex. spending accts., incentive prog., life, long-term disab., med. for depend., med. for emp., pd. holidays, pd. sick/pers. time, pd. vac., short-term disab., stock purchase, tuition reimb., vision, na	Actuaries; underwriters; finance professionals; IT; marketing & communications 3	Kaiser, UnitedHealthcare	Art Moosmann

(North Bay Business Journal, 2015)

Appendix C: Memo of Understanding

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING between and The Arc of San Francisco

This Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) is entered into this ____ day of _____ (“Effective Date”) by and between The Arc of San Francisco (“The Arc SF”), a California 501(c)(3), located at 1500 Howard Street, San Francisco, California 94103, and _____, located at 55 Music Concourse Drive, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, California 94118 (“_____”), and collectively (the “Parties”).

I. Purpose:

The Arc SF helps adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families living in San Francisco, San Mateo, and Marin counties. Project SEARCH is a national program which pairs young adults who have developmental disabilities with business and education partners who provide training and employment opportunities in a real world, immersion setting.

The Parties to this MOU will collaborate and cooperate to create a Project SEARCH Transition program at _____. Through the Program, _____ will act as the host business for interns with developmental disabilities, and will foster and facilitate the acquisition of jobs by people with disabilities when possible. This MOU specifies the roles and responsibilities of the Parties as they work in partnership to increase opportunities for persons with disabilities. The Program will be titled _____/ The Arc SF San Francisco Project SEARCH. The Program is modeled after Project SEARCH at the Children’s Hospital Medical Center in Cincinnati, Ohio.

II. Roles and Responsibilities:

The Parties agree to the following roles and responsibilities.

A. _____ will:

- Provide conference room space for a classroom (with white board or chalk board, small tables to be used as student work areas, chairs) and separate work space for a Site Coordinator from The Arc SF.
- Provide a business liaison that is available to assist with job site development, introduce the Project interns to _____’s business staff, market the Project internally, and attend periodic meetings to discuss, evaluate program progress, and work with the Program instructor to enforce workplace rules.
- Develop a minimum of four (4) intern work rotation sites and a point of contact at each site for the purpose of teaching competitive, marketable skills to the

Program interns. Facilitate job analysis of those sites for the The Arc SF's Program staff.

- Provide access to hiring opportunities if a Program intern is appropriate for an internal job opening.
- Provide badges for The Arc's Program staff.
- Provide accessibility to _____'s department managers that are being used as work sites for the purposes of direction, feedback and evaluation to interns during their work site rotations.
- Provide access to conference space for Open Houses (for families and interns).
- Provide assistance to The Arc's Program staff through the marketing department, including marketing materials and public relations expertise.
- Establish intern eligibility guidelines and select interns for Program as a participating partner of the Program's Advisory Committee.
- Assist with intern job development activities.

B. The Arc SF will:

- Provide a Director to assist in coordinating the efforts of _____ and The Arc SF staff, to supervise The Arc SF staff, to ensure that the Program is moving forward within the framework of the projected timeline, and to assist in any way necessary to facilitate success of the Program.
- Provide Job Coaches to work with interns on work sites throughout _____.
- Work with participating departments to identify intern work site opportunities for individuals with disabilities and perform job analysis.
- Examine existing open positions and determine their applicability for people with disabilities; and predetermine high turnover, entry-level support positions, or other applicable positions for proactive job analysis.
- Establish intern eligibility guidelines and select students for the program as a participating partner of the Advisory Committee.
- Provide travel training for students as necessary before program begins.
- Provide expertise in adaptations and accommodations, and implement as necessary.

- Work with Vocational Rehabilitation to assist with obtaining adaptations and accommodations as necessary, and to help secure funding for job coaching and job development.
- Provide education and training to host business employees regarding supporting people with disabilities in the workplace as necessary.
- Attend regular meetings with team members from the Parties to this Agreement to discuss and evaluate program progress.
- Assist with public relation activities to promote the Project SEARCH program.
- Liaison with Cincinnati Project SEARCH for technical assistance, data collection and other issues related to model integrity.
- **Work with _____ to:**
 1. Provide an Instructor with transition experience to coordinate/teach the Program.
 2. Develop and provide curriculum and instructional materials that encompass employability skills, functional academics, transition, job development and job readiness.
 3. Provide expertise in adaptations and accommodations, and implement as necessary.
- **Work with The Arc's funding agencies: Golden Gate Regional Center, and Vocational Rehabilitation, to provide:**
 1. Funding support for individuals to participate in the Program;
 2. Attend regular meetings to discuss and evaluate the Program's progress; and
 3. Assist with public relation activities to promote the Program.

III. Measurable Objectives:

The Parties will work collaboratively to follow a Project Schedule as proposed in Exhibit A of this MOU, and to:

- Provide work rotation opportunities for a minimum of four (4) interns with developmental disabilities for the first year and to provide employment opportunities when available to people with disabilities whenever possible, also during that time period.

- Provide support necessary to maximize success of the Program participants.
- Develop a minimum of four (4) intern work sites, as possible, and expand the opportunities in various departments the first year of the Program, and continue to develop work sites rotations as the Program progresses, with the goal of ten (10) work site rotations.
- Publicize the collaboration and Program activities with a minimum of two written materials and two public presentations.

IV. Term:

The effective date of this MOU will be October 31, 2014 to September 30, 2015.

V. Limitation of Agreement:

It is understood between the Parties that nothing in this MOU is to be construed as legally binding.

VI. Relationship of Parties:

No agent or employee of either Party shall be deemed an agent or employee of the other party. Each Party will be solely and entirely responsible for the acts of its agents, subcontractors, and/or employees.

This MOU is executed for the benefit of the Parties and the public generally. It is not intended, or may it be construed, to create any third party beneficiaries.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties have hereunto duly executed this MOU on the date and year above-written.

THE ARC OF SAN FRANCISCO

By: _____
Kristen Hickey Petersen
Director of Employment Services

By: _____
Alison Brown
Chief of Staff and CFO

EXHIBIT A

Proposed Schedule for _____ / **The Arc of San Francisco Project SEARCH** (the "Program")

Rotation One

1/5-1/15: Workshop week (Project Search Prep)

1/19-3/27: Rotation 1

Rotation Two

3/30-4/3: Workshop Week

4/6-4/13: Rollout

6/12: Last day of rotation two

Rotation Three

6/15-6/19: Workshop Week

6/22-6/29: Rollout

9/4: Last Day of Rotation three

Graduation week of 9/7

Keywords Workshop Week: *Workshop week is the week at the beginning of each rotation where interns are in classes on site at _____ to prepare for their next rotation. During this time we work on resumes, any issues that may have come up in previous rotations and long term employment plans for interns. Workshop week is required for all interns.*

Rollout: *Rollout is the two weeks when interns are placed in their rotations. We onboard two interns at a time, four per week, to ensure that each intern settles into their new position and receives the supports needed. This would only be done in the second two rotation when interns are in multiple departments.*

Intern Day at Glance

M/W

8:30 Arrive

8:45 Morning Meeting

9:15 Class Starts

10:15 Break

10:30 Work in Department

12:30 Lunch

1:00 Work in Department

2:45 End of day huddle

3:00 Go Home

T/TH

8:30 Arrive

8:45 Morning Meeting

9:15 Class Starts

9:45 Break

10:00 Work in Department

11:45 Lunch break and travel to city college

1:15 City College Job Club

3:00 End of Day

Friday

TBD Academic Day

Appendix D: Mentor and Manager Guidebook

The Arc of San Francisco

Project SEARCH

Mentor and Manager Guidebook



What is Project SEARCH?

Project SEARCH is a collaborative program between an employing company or organization, The Arc of San Francisco, a nonprofit program for adults with developmental disabilities and City College of San Francisco (CCSF). Project SEARCH provides training and education that may lead to employment for individuals with developmental disabilities. Applicants apply to the program and are accepted as interns through a selection committee process. All applicants must be eligible for services with the Regional Center and the California State Department of Rehabilitation. Each intern participates in three internships during the school year. During the internships, the intern learns job specific skills while having the opportunity to put employability skills into practice. Interns participate in on-going review of progress with a Coordinator/Job Coach and the CCSF teacher, to help define career goals and plan necessary steps to achieve those goals.

The cornerstone of Project SEARCH is total immersion in a large business. Interns report to the host business for part-time work five days a week. Managers at the internship sites work with the Project SEARCH staff to support the interns during the day. Interns get ongoing feedback from the internship manager, co-workers and Project SEARCH staff. Each program has a certified special education teacher providing instruction twice a week at a nearby campus. Interns end their day by reflection, problem solving, planning and journaling their key learning's. The ultimate goal upon program completion and graduation is to utilize their internship skills for gainful employment.

How did Project SEARCH evolve?

Nurse J. Erin Riehle, then the Director of the Emergency room at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, developed Project SEARCH in 1996. She was in need of a reliable worker to stock supplies. She worked with Jennifer Linnabary, a job developer with the Hamilton County Board of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities and Susie Rutkowski, Great Oaks Manager of Disability Education. They selected Annie Sublett, who has Down Syndrome, to work in the emergency department. Annie now works full time at Children's Hospital 15 room Dental Clinic where she sterilizes/sorts instruments and is very successful. Since then, the program has grown nationwide and is replicated in many industries including Banks and Universities. There are over 160 Project SEARCH sites nation wide. PG&E was the first Project SEARCH Utility site in Northern California.

Your company's Project SEARCH is collaboration among five entities:

- Your company
- The Arc of San Francisco
- City College of San Francisco (education partner)
- Regional Center (funding)
- California State Department of Rehabilitation (funding)

What does Project SEARCH Program offer Interns?

- An environment that embraces diversity and demonstrates a strong commitment to the program.
- A professional work environment that teaches transferable skills and marketable skills.
- An opportunity to be immersed in a real life work environment, to build a resume for future job placement.
- Mentors/coworkers to assist with training and feedback.
- Your company's Project SEARCH Program Liaison.

What does Project SEARCH offer to your company?

- Demonstrates to your management and personnel that your company embraces diversity and equal opportunities.
- Interns serve as great role models.
- Interns complete work assignments that support your services.
- No cost: There are no costs to your company for Project SEARCH, which is funded by Golden Gate Regional Center and the Department of Rehabilitation supplemented by The Arc of San Francisco fundraising.

How do Interns get enrolled?

Interested applicants should contact The Arc San Francisco at (415) 255-7200 or info@thearcsf.org.

How do other Companies get involved?

Project SEARCH has gained national attention as an outcome oriented transition program that benefits businesses, rehabilitation agencies and youth with disabilities. Using a single point of entry, education and rehabilitation partner to utilize a business oriented approach to supported employment. The model has been written about in such publications as HR Magazine, Diversity, Family Circle and the Journal of Rehabilitation. Cincinnati Children's Hospital and other Project SEARCH business sites have received local, statewide and national awards for this unique program. Fifth Third Bank was recently awarded the "Distinguished Service Award" from the Ohio Association of Career Technical Education, Special Needs Division, for their support of youth with disabilities. Businesses who are interested in hosting a Project SEARCH internship program should contact The Arc of San Francisco at (415) 255-7200.

How do I host a Work-Site Rotation?

Work-site rotations, departments, are an integral part of the Project SEARCH program. These rotations sites promote valuable skill building for the intern and an opportunity for manager's to preview the intern's skills as they consider employment. The ultimate goal upon graduation is employment at the host business or in the community.

Steps:

1. Contact your company's Liaison, and express your desire to be involved. Michael will explain the process and introduce you to one of the Project SEARCH partners.
2. A member(s) of the Project SEARCH team will visit the Department to introduce the program and assess the work available for the intern.
3. A member(s) of the Project SEARCH team will match intern skill set to job assessment and communicate a start date as well as logistical details to the host department supervisor.
4. A member(s) of the Project SEARCH team will help with coordination of:
 - Interns along with their Job Coach participate in a "mock" interview.
 - Interns participate at the worksite with the support of the job coach/coordinator.
 - Interns are evaluated by the job coach and the supervisor twice during the rotation.
 - Supervisors will go over the evaluation or performance review with the intern on the last day of the rotation.

What is the Project SEARCH Internship Schedule?

Program Year runs September early September through June.

Project SEARCH team will begin introducing interns to their internship sites.

First internship rotation: September through December.

Second internship rotation: January through March.

Third internship rotation: March through June.

Project Search Graduation will be hosted the third week of June.

The Project SEARCH team will begin introducing interns to their internship sites early September. We will work with you to determine the best dates. Please note that not all interns begin their new internship sites on the same day. Interns and department managers will be alerted to the actual start date on August 31st.

Holidays

All Project SEARCH interns and staff are off these dates:

September 5, 2016 Labor Day

October 10, 2016 Indigenous Peoples Day

November 11, 2016 Veterans Day

November 24 and 25, 2016 Thanksgiving

December 23, 2016 - January 3, 2017 Holiday Break

January 16, 2016 Martin Luther King Jr. Day

February 20, 2016 President's Day

March 31, 2016 Cesar Chavez Day

May 29, 2016 Memorial Day

Intern's Day at a Glance

9:00-2:15 Monday/ Wednesdays/Friday

9:00 – 12:00 Tuesday and Thursday

- **9:00am – 12:30pm Internship Sites:** Interns participate in non-paid internship sites throughout the host business. Interns will be assigned to three different internship sites during the year.
- **12:00pm – 12:45pm Lunch (Mon/Wed/Fri) and 12:00 – 12:30pm Lunch (Tues/Thurs):** Students may purchase a lunch or pack a lunch. Students are encouraged to have lunch whenever and wherever their co-workers at the internship sites eat. However, interns must check-in with their job coach before and after lunch each day. We also ask that interns not leave the business site without a job coach unless it has been prearranged and approved.
- **1:15pm – 2:15pm Monday, Wednesday and Friday Internship sites:** Interns return to their assigned internship sites.
- **1:00pm – 3:15pm Tuesday and Thursday Employability Skills Class at City College:** Students sign in, lessons are based on employability skills and workplace academic skills, i.e., problem solving, teamwork, decision-making, resume writing, reflection/planning, and journal writing.

What are the Roles & Responsibilities of the ALL Program Participants?

Your Company's Liaison –

- Markets the program internally
- Give preliminary information about Project SEARCH
 - The Arc SF Staff provides follow up information
- Coordinates for training space as needed, computer use (as possible)
- Seeks departments to host internship sites
- Introduces Project SEARCH staff to other key departments
- Works with internship managers to identify a department mentor to the intern
- Introduces job coaches and instructors to departments
- Negotiates hiring opportunities
- Networks at like businesses for employment opportunities based on skills learned
- Market successful internships and outcomes
- Serve on the Project SEARCH Advisory Committee –
 - (Committee of all the partners of Project SEARCH)
- Host tours of Project SEARCH

Your Company's Sponsor – The person who invited Project Search into your department.

- Volunteer department for internship site
- Identify tasks that build core skills, works with team to develop job description
- Allow instructor and coach to observe
- Choose an Intern Supervisor

Your Company's Supervisor

- Provides supervision to the intern (possibly shared with peer mentor)
- Gives constructive feedback/evaluations
- Provides natural support
- Works with the peer mentor, job coach, instructor to address areas of additional skill development
- Gives exit interview and evaluation
- Writes letter of recommendation if requested and appropriate
- Provide instructor with employment suggestions
- Market successful internships and outcomes internally at your company
- Advocates for hiring in open positions when appropriate

Your Company's Co- Workers or Mentors:

- Provides on-the-job support as needed
- Answers questions/ assists with problem solving
- Assist with orientation/mandatory education on safety, etc.
- Assists with assimilation into the work environment
- Notifies manager and job coach of any concerns or issues
- Suggests new skills as intern masters essential functions/core skills

What are the Roles & Responsibilities of the ALL Program Participants?

The Arc of San Francisco Job Coach

- Conducts Job/Task Analysis of the worksites during internships and if or when the intern is hired by your company.
- Teaches the essential tasks of the internship and reinforces employability skills.
- Provides support to the intern during internships to understand the job and duties.
- Develops tools or suggests modifications of tasks as needed (label cabinets, simplifies written instructions, etc.).
- Attends orientation with the Intern and clarifies information with the intern as necessary.
- Regularly discusses issues and concerns with department supervisor.
- Supports interns during interviews, resume development and classroom activity.
- Reinforces and reviews behavior and performance consistent with your company policies and procedures.
- Assists with travel training or other pre-program needs.
- Evaluates and gives feedback to intern on skill acquisition

The Arc of San Francisco Project Search Coordinator

- Schedules introductory meeting with department to discuss possible intern duties
- Observes department work
- Identifies core skills and essential functions for the intern to learn
- Assess interns interest, skills and values
- Provides employer education:
 - Disability information
 - Supervision strategies
- Development and implements curriculum for employability skills, interview training
- Provides classroom instruction during orientation, breaks between rotations, and two hours weekly
- Acts as the onsite liaison for any intern related issues and problem solving
- Coordinates all logistics and ongoing contact with host departments
- AND acts as a job coach to half of the interns

Project Search Intern

- Interview for position
- Notify Job Coach and Supervisor about absences and tardiness
- Follows rules and regulations at host business, including code of contact, dress code
- Attends huddle meetings Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 2:30pm – 3:00pm
- Receives continuous feedback and assessment
- Participate in exit interview with Supervisor and Job Coach
- Write Thank You letter
- Update portfolio and resume

What are the Roles & Responsibilities of the ALL Program Participants?

The Arc of San Francisco Employment Director & Assistant Director

- Works with intern/team to explore competitive employment based on individual needs
- Works with Project SEARCH team to create internal and external marketing for business and community such as “lunch and learn” events, newsletter articles, and outreach and recruitment efforts
- Provides overall support for Project SEARCH Program and available to assist your company’s management and staff with concerns or information
- Obtains necessary funding and referral for interns
- Supervises and provides staff development for Project SEARCH Coordinator/Job Coaches
- Develops marketing materials for program
- Assists with recruitment, screening, and intake of Project SEARCH interns
- Obtains intern eligibility for State Department Vocational Rehabilitation
- Provides support to Project SEARCH team during Job Development
- Supports Project SEARCH Job Coaches on individual service plans and career plans

What occurs after Graduation?

The goals of the Project SEARCH Program include:

- Career Exploration
- Participation in employability skills curriculum
- Documentation of skills and knowledge in a portfolio
- Job Placement in an entry-level job matching their skill set and interests

Steps

1. Interns complete the Project SEARCH Program
2. Interns receive a Certificate of Career Exploration
3. Interns receive a Project SEARCH Career Passport (portfolio of work-site rotation evaluations, work-site manager letters of recommendation, updated resume, etc.)
4. Interns receive a Summary of Performance document (list of gained competencies) outlining skills gained and services needed for successful transition from intern to employment
5. Once a job is secured, a Job Match meeting is held to clarify roles and responsibilities as the intern changes from the Project SEARCH Internship Program to Project SEARCH Supported Employment with The Arc of San Francisco
6. NOTE: It is possible for a work-site rotation manager to hire an intern while they are in the program

What is the Process to Hire a Project SEARCH Grad?

Steps

1. Let Project SEARCH staff know if your company is interested in hiring an intern, and they will provide support and information to support both you and your new employee
2. Interns will preview and apply for positions offered, completing all necessary steps as specified by assigned manager.
3. The Project SEARCH Job Coach will assist the intern with applying for jobs, preparing for interviews and will attend the interview with the intern
4. The intern is offered and accepts the job
5. Manager would provide all on boarding as with any new employee including providing a job description, job expectations and goals
6. Project SEARCH Job Coaches will provide on-going job coaching support and the new employee will exit the Project SEARCH Internship Program while continuing to receive support through The Arc of San Francisco

Tips for Communicating with People with Disabilities:

Some argue that the single, greatest barrier to persons with disabilities participating in society is the attitude of the public (Lautenschlager, 1992). Many agree, and argue that one of the most important aspects of educating people about those with disabilities is how to interact with members of this population (U.S. Department of Education, 2003; Walcott, 2000; Understanding Disabilities Creating Opportunities, 2003; National Organization on Disability, 2001). People who are experienced in this respect offer the following suggestions:

- Do not be afraid to ask people about their needs or accommodations
- Do not judge
- Seek to help not to perform their tasks
- Speak directly to the individual
- Offer to shake hands when introduced, people with limited hand use can usually shake hands and offering the left hand is an acceptable greeting
- Treat people as adults
- Focus on the individual not their disability
- When conversing with someone in a wheelchair for longer than a few moments, attempt to sit down in order to see one another at eye level
- Listen attentively when talking with people who have difficulty speaking. If necessary, ask short questions that require short answers. Never pretend to understand, instead repeat what you have understood and allow the person to respond
- Many people with intellectual disabilities may say they understand an instruction when they may not – it is a good idea to ask them to repeat the instruction back or watch them complete the task to be sure they understand
- Don't be fearful of making a mistake when interacting so much so that you avoid attempting to communicate at all
- Relax – don't be embarrassed if you happen to use common expressions such as "See you later", or "Did you hear about this?"

Contact Information:

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