NCCDD INITIATIVE 2017

NCCDD
North Carolina Council on
Developmental Disabilities

Expansion of Employment Opportunities for People with I/DD

System Gap Addressed	- The 2016 Annual Disability Statistics Compendium estimates that in 2015 only 32.2 percent of North Carolinians with disabilities were employed. - According to the Cornell University Yang Tan Institute and the U.S. Census Bureau's 2014 American Community Survey data, the employment rate of non-institutionalized North Carolinians with a cognitive disability was 22 percent, while the employment rate of non-institutionalized North Carolinians with a self-care disability was 14.8 percent. - According to the U.S. Department of Labor, in July 2016, the national labor force participation rate for people with disabilities was only 20.4 percent, and the unemployment rate among people with disabilities (11.1 percent) was more than double the unemployment rate among people without disabilities (4.9 percent). - Project SEARCH, a successful internship program designed to prepare high school students and young adults with intellectual and other developmental disabilities (I/DD) to obtain employment after graduation, has grown from four North Carolina sites in 2013 to 12 sites in 2016. Sustainable expansion is important for Project SEARCH in North Carolina. - NCCDD sees opportunities partner with businesses to develop paid apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships for individuals with I/DD interested in a specific career field. - NCCDD has a goal to ensure that traditional and non-traditional partners are working together to improve employment opportunities for people with I/DD in North Carolina.
Initiative Goals and Timeline	- Element I: Establish apprenticeships for individuals with I/DD in North Carolina. - Element II: Continue to support the expansion of Project SEARCH in North Carolina. - Element III: Form a coalition/partnership tasked with increasing employment opportunities for people with I/DD.
Description of Activities	- The Employment Services Coordinator has identified apprenticeship replication sites in Chapel Hill and Marshall, NC. - Applications for new Project SEARCH sites were approved, and technical assistance and a statewide training meeting strengthened all existing sites. - A coalition has met at North Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation (NCVR) in Raleigh to identify a sustainable funding solution for the instructor position in the Project SEARCH community college programs across North Carolina.
Achievements and Outcomes to Date	- Feeding assistant apprenticeships were established in Marshall. - Two groups have purchased a license to establish Project SEARCH sites in Charlotte with Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools and Hendersonville with Blue Ridge Community College.

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(continued)

Achievements and Outcomes to Date	• The coalition has worked with the NC Community College System and industry partners to establish a list of industry-endorsed work-based competencies for Project SEARCH community college graduates to receive a credential. • NCVR has dedicated a position to handle Project SEARCH statewide coordination. • Hosted the "Making Work WORK for Families and Guardians" mini-conference with more than 50 participants on September 22, 2017 in Cary.
Expected System Change as Result of Initiative	• More apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships that are registered with the North Carolina Department of Commerce will be available to individuals with I/DD in North Carolina. • Project SEARCH will continue to expand sustainably in North Carolina with more community partners working together to fund the license fee to establish new Project SEARCH sites. • The Project SEARCH community college programs will identify a sustainable way to fund the instructor position, thus enabling more community colleges to provide Project SEARCH internships to students with I/DD. • Traditional and non-traditional partners will strengthen their partnerships to provide more opportunities for competitive, integrated opportunities and careers to individuals with I/DD.