

# Project SEARCH Works for Michigan



MICHIGAN

Project SEARCH is more than just a school-to-work program—it's also an economic solution. By connecting Michigan businesses with trained workers, the program adds to the workforce, creates choices for families, and creates savings for communities. Expanding Project SEARCH will save state funds, strengthen our talent pipeline and help young adults with disabilities become more independent. Continued funding is critical to meeting the growing demand and ensuring more families have the choice to participate.



## Immersive Real-World Training

- A partner business is the classroom.
- Interns gain essential job skills directly in the workplace.
- 85% of Michigan's graduates secured employment 25 hours per week, \$15/hour and in an integrated setting.



## Economic & Workforce Growth

- An expanded workforce contributes to Michigan's labor supply.
- Employed individuals reduce reliance on public assistance.
- 4-5x return on investment for local schools and communities.

## What Makes Project SEARCH Different?



### Public-Private Partnerships

Matches workforce needs with trained candidates.



### Return on Investment

Over 58% program growth and 29% employment rate increase in 5 years.



### Cost Effective Solution

Graduates contribute to Michigan's economy and reduce need on public assistance.

## Project SEARCH Needs Your Support

The demand is growing for innovation—let's ensure every student and family can choose this life-changing program.

Continue \$1.5M ongoing funding to expand choice and independence for Michigan's young adults with disabilities.



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# Invest in Michigan's Workforce with Innovative Programming

Project | SEARCH



Project SEARCH is a research based, business-led school-to-work program that prepares young adults with disabilities for competitive, integrated employment. With classrooms located inside of partner businesses, students receive training and real-world experience that helps them get jobs. The program provides savings to schools and more choices for students and families. Student interns become taxpayers in the workforce with discretionary income while making valuable contributions to their communities.

## Did You Know?

State funding began with Lt. Governor Brian Calley in the Michigan Health & Wellness Commission

Michigan has seen a 58% growth in the number of programs while employment outcomes increased from 66% to 85% over the last 5 years

The average age of Project SEARCH graduates across the state is 21.5, at which time they leave school and enter the workforce.

- THE ASK:**
- Restore Funding to \$1.5 million
  - Designate as ongoing funding
  - School Aid Fund: Sec. 99aa

**85%**  
Employment Rate  
Up from 66%!



## Why Funding Matters?



Expand public-private partnerships



Workforce development as interns find competitive integrated employment



Local program control with clear, significant return on investment



## The Challenge

The employment-population ratio is only 22% for people with disabilities. The unemployment rate is 2x more than people without disabilities.

## The Cost-Effective Solution

In Michigan, 85% of Project SEARCH participants found competitive, integrated employment leading to increased independence and a reduction in usage of public programs.

On average, interns complete the program at age 21.5, reflecting the program's focus on preparing young adults for meaningful careers. While special education services remain available through age 26, Project SEARCH equips participants with the skills and experiences needed to successfully enter the workforce when they are ready.

## Project SEARCH creates choices, workers and efficiencies



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