

Project SEARCH

Project SEARCH is a proven program model that helps people with intellectual and developmental disabilities transition from school or workshops to fulfilling, competitive employment. In FY16, IVRS expanded support to eleven Project SEARCH programs, nine of which are funded as part of an Occupational Skills training program. There are specific requirements for Project SEARCH programs, as well as ongoing supports costs, however the success of this program remains undisputed.

According to one of its founders, “The Project SEARCH model yields excellent employment outcomes by providing framework for public and private entities to collaborate and deliver services in a coordinated and productive manner. This collaboration allows for total workplace immersion, which facilitates a seamless combination of classroom instruction, career exploration, and relevant job-skills training. Project SEARCH is cost-effective and self-sustainable because it leverages the existing funding streams and expertise of partnering organizations in education, vocational rehabilitation, developmental disabilities services, and other agencies.”

Beginning in 2011, IVRS sponsored Project SEARCH services in Mason City working with Mercy Hospital, North Iowa Vocational Center, Area Education Agency 267, Mason City High School, Region 3 and the Department of Human Services. Since then, below are Iowa’s Project SEARCH programs, all of which IVRS supports with the exception of ChildServe.

- ChildServe - Johnston
- Des Moines Area Community College
- Hy-Vee – Des Moines
- Lucas County Health – Chariton (On hiatus for one year)
- Mercy Medical Center – Des Moines
- Mercy Medical Center - North Iowa (Mason City)
- UnityPoint Health – St. Luke’s Hospital (Cedar Rapids)
- UnityPoint Health – Methodist Hospital (Des Moines)
- Iowa State University - Ames
- Mercy Medical Center - Clinton
- UnityPoint Health – Trinity Hospital (Bettendorf)
- UnityPoint Health – Allen Hospital (Waterloo)

In FFY12, there was one individual who achieved an employment outcome from Project SEARCH and earned \$11.00 an hour. In FFY13, that number grew to 5 with average hourly earnings of \$8.03. In FFY 14, 7 Project SEARCH participants achieved employment, earning an average of \$8.98 an hour and working 20 hours each week. In FFY15, the number of successful Project SEARCH participants was 13 with an average pay rate of \$9.39 per hour, who worked 20 hours a week.

PROJECT SEARCH TOTALS

TOTAL (FFY2012-FFY2015)		
Successful Closures	Unsuccessful Closures	Rehab Rate S&I
26-0	28-0	55.8
26	20	56.52%

RETAIL EMPLOYEES WITH DISABILITIES INITIATIVE (REDI)

The Retail Employees with Disabilities Initiative (REDI) is a program through Walgreens that provides retail skills to *externs* or trainees with a variety of disabilities. The program works in partnership with agencies in a community to provide job coaches who help externs gain skills and the opportunity for future employment. Participants in the REDI program are not guaranteed employment, however, the purpose of the training is to educate *externs* with the skills and competencies required to be successful in the retail environment. IVRS works in conjunction with Walgreens with an interest in offering REDI within their store(s), in addition to providing funding support to CRP partners who oversee job coaching and training.

Externs who successfully complete the 120-hour REDI training have the opportunity to apply for openings at Walgreens or with a neighboring business. Since the initiation of REDI in 2012, IVRS has worked with eight Iowa providers (CRPs) to deliver REDI training in fourteen Walgreens stores across Iowa. The success rate for interns participating in REDI exceeds 60%.

IVRS supports REDI programs with:

- Candeo (Des Moines)
- Exceptional Persons (Waterloo)
- Goodwill of Central Iowa (Ankeny, Indianola, Marshalltown, Ottumwa)
- Goodwill of the Heartland (Cedar Rapids, Iowa City, Clinton, Davenport)
- Progress Industries (Newton)
- Van Buren Job Opportunities (Keokuk)
- Vocational Development Center (Council Bluffs)
- New Perspectives, Inc. (Sioux City)

In FFY12, 5 individuals were placed after REDI training and earned an average of \$8.28/hr. In FFY13, there were 7 REDI placements with earnings averaging \$8.33/hr. In FFY14, 11 individuals were placed after receiving REDI training and earned an average of \$8.14/hr. In FFY15, there were 19 individuals after participating in REDI for a rehabilitation rate of 79.17%! This past year, REDI participants earned an average hourly rate of \$8.69 working an average of 22 hours weekly.

REDI TOTALS

TOTAL (FFY2012-FFY2015)		
Successful Closures 26-0	Unsuccessful Closures 28-0	Rehab Rate S&I 55.8
42	20	67.74%