

# News You Can Use

Your monthly resource for news and information about behavioral health and intellectual/developmental disabilities in western North Carolina and beyond

## Project SEARCH: Young adults explore careers at Mission Health

Eleven young adults with developmental or intellectual disabilities are learning how to succeed in a competitive workforce this fall through internships at Mission Health.

Mission is western North Carolina's newest host site for Project SEARCH, a national nonprofit program that's spread to 400 sites in 46 states and six countries.

Project SEARCH, supported by local agencies, including Smoky, creates business-based internships designed to help participants learn transferrable skills relevant in today's jobs market. Fall internships began Aug. 15 and last 10 weeks.

Mission is Project SEARCH's second site in the region. In 2014, Smoky helped launch a site at Harris Regional Hospital in Sylva. To date, 13 participants have graduated from that site, and most have already found jobs. Smoky provides both financial support and arranges for vocational supports for participants after their internships end.

"We've seen participants gain unique benefits from their immersion in the host business," said Smoky Employment Specialist Kari Kopp.

"Not only do they gain marketable skills, they also gain additional opportunities

in life, including the opportunity to be seen as who they are – valuable members of society."



Project SEARCH participants are between ages 18 and 30 and take part in three different, unpaid internships at the site. Internships are matched to the participant's interests and abilities. Additional partners in the Mission site include Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College, the Arc of North Carolina, the N.C. Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services and the N.C. Council on Developmental Disabilities.

Learn more at <http://www.projectsearch.us>.