

# Disability Employment Best Practice Guide

A Project of the Network's Center for Innovation and Research



Developed by



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# Section 1: Introduction

Persons with disabilities face tremendous barriers when seeking employment. Community-based organizations are often at the forefront of efforts to develop and implement highly effective program models that not only support employment goals for persons with disabilities but do so in a manner that supports employment retention and advancement.

With grant support from [The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation](#) and resulting from dialogue in the Jobs work group of the [National Affinity Group on Jewish Poverty](#), the [Network of Jewish Human Service Agencies](#) (NJHSA) developed a proposal to survey NJHSA member agencies and other community based organizations in order to identify the elements and/or design of different disability employment program models that could lend themselves to be considered as “Best Practice”.

The NJHSA Disability Employment Best Practice Guide, a project of the NJHSA [Center for Innovation and Research](#), was developed in accordance with the NJHSA definition of Best Practice. In keeping with this definition, NJHSA believes that Best Practice program elements or models are ones which meet the following criteria:

**DEMAND:** The best practice addresses a compelling need for the organization, or the communities served (could be programmatic or operational).

**RESPONSIVE:** The best practice incorporates client/user input/representation and is reflective of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

**IMPACT:** The best practice produces a high degree of impact and is supported by data.

**REPLICABILITY:** The best practice is replicable in other organizations, communities and/or service delivery settings.

**SUSTAINABLE AND COST EFFECTIVE:** The best practice uses resources effectively and has achieved a solid and reliable funding plan.

NJHSA partnered with the [Corporation for a Skilled Workforce](#) (CSW) and with [RespectAbility](#) to develop and administer the project. NJHSA also engaged member agency volunteers from its Best Practices Committee.

Themes and initial findings from the survey are summarized with this Guide. We hope the Guide and a related learning event are helpful resources for both practitioners and funders. We are most grateful for the generous support and partnership of The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation, the active engagement of the participating agencies that submitted program models, and the volunteer representatives of the NJHSA Best Practices Committee who supported the development of this project and participated in the thoughtful review of program data.

## Disability Employment Best Practice Guide Leadership

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## Survey and Analysis Process

The project partners designed an online survey to capture information about employment program participants, services, and outcomes as well as additional items of interest. Survey questions were also informed by input from the NJHSA Best Practices Committee and staff of the The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation. Because the survey was launched during the COVID-19 pandemic, programs were asked to respond with data based on a more typical pre-COVID one-year period. The final survey can be accessed [here](#).

NJHSA sent the survey to 35 of its members who have employment-related programs serving persons with disabilities. In addition, CSW invited 20 other community-based organizations to complete a survey, based on recommendations from RespectAbility, foundations working in the disabilities area, the national SourceAmerica provider network, and CSW's Workforce Benchmarking Network. Of those invited to participate, 30 organizations overall submitted 33 program surveys that met the initiative's "best practice" criteria (three organizations submitted surveys on two programs). Sixteen (16) were NJHSA-affiliated organizations and 14 were from outside the Network.

CSW followed up with programs as needed to clarify quantitative responses and then prepared an analysis and summary of both the quantitative and qualitative data. As part of the follow-up process, and with assistance from the NJHSA Best Practices Committee, programs also submitted additional descriptive information about their approach and key factors in their program's success.

## Organization and Use of This Guide

This Guide is intended to be a useful and practical resource for providers and funders of employment services for persons with disabilities.

**Section 2** includes the CSW analysis of the quantitative data provided in the surveys.

**Section 3** has more detailed summaries of practical information provided in response to some of the survey questions. This includes information on staff development resources; website and media accessibility efforts; current strategies related to diversity, equity, and inclusion, including data disaggregation and participant feedback; occupational certifications offered; and key types of partnerships established.

**Section 4** includes individual summaries for each participating program, with key data from their survey as well as additional descriptive information they provided.

In reviewing the summary responses for each program, it is important to note that the 33 programs included in this Guide represent a wide continuum of populations served, strategies used, and in some cases how results are defined. Furthermore, some agencies' services for persons with disabilities are a small component of overall services offered while in other cases these services are the priority focus for the agency.

Because of this, it is not recommended that individual program outcomes be compared to others, because these would not be "apples to apples" comparisons. Furthermore, the relatively small size of the dataset (33 programs) made it difficult in the analysis to conclude that a particular practice or program model correlates with better outcomes overall.

## Key Observations

The observations that follow are offered in an effort to motivate continued advancement of the program models that are summarized in the Guide. The data findings offer a springboard for further learning among agencies and suggest areas where further study could be helpful and/or additional resources provided.

### Who is Being Served?

- The populations served by the surveyed programs represent a fairly narrow profile, primarily focused on persons with an intellectual/developmental or cognitive disability or persons on the autism spectrum. **Populations served not nearly as much include those with vision or hearing loss or other physical disabilities, or those with more than a high school education.**
- **Men** are served more frequently than women.

## What Services are Provided?

- Almost every program specifically noted in its descriptive summary that it has a **person-centered approach**, customizing its service design to respond to the individual needs and interests of participants.
- Programs are **most frequently providing traditional workforce services** such as workplace readiness training, career exploration, job search and interview preparation, and job placement/job retention coaching, along with self-advocacy training.
- Slightly more than **two-thirds of programs report that they provide services to assist employers** with hiring and retention of persons with disabilities.
- A **quarter to a third of programs are offering work-based learning strategies and/or employer internships as** part of their core service for all or most participants.
- About a **quarter of programs also offer occupational or customized training** for all or most participants to support their employment.
- Only a **quarter to a third of programs are currently providing financial literacy coaching or benefits counseling** as a core service for most or all participants.

## Additional Observations

- While there is a strong commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion in program operations, **programs are still developing more specific DEI strategies** to advance and fully implement these values in a comprehensive and consistent manner.
- Based on reported staffing levels and participants enrolled, there is a **ratio of one FTE staff to seven client participants**, with 15 as the median number of participants per staff member.
- Only **two-thirds of programs noted that they had regular feedback loops** to ensure staff, participants, and others are satisfied with the accommodations and access they have.
- Related to the note above on who is primarily served by the programs surveyed, **less than half are using assistive technology and communications accessibility resources** that are currently available to support employment. There is opportunity for growth here.
- Programs **primarily have government funding support**, but there may be other public or private resources that could be leveraged to enhance program services and impact.

## Participating Agencies & Programs

Below are the NJHSA members and other organizations whose data is included in this report, with the specific programs that submitted surveys.

### NJHSA Members

- Israel Elwyn – Job Placement (Israel)
- JARC Florida – Community Works (Boca Raton, FL)
- JEM Workshop – Employment Services (Montreal, Quebec, Canada)
- JFCS Atlanta – Supported Employment (Atlanta)
- JFCS Minneapolis – Vocational Rehabilitation (Minneapolis)
- JFCS Pittsburgh – EmployAble (Pittsburgh)
- JFCS Southern New Jersey – Soups and Sweets Culinary Training (Cherry Hill, NJ)
- JFS of Atlantic & May Counties – Bridges to Employment (Atlantic City, NJ)
- JFS Colorado – Group Supported Employment (Denver)
- JFS Colorado – Individual Supported Employment (Denver)
- JFS Houston – Celebration Company (Houston)
- JFS Houston – Employment Services (Houston)
- JSSA – Employment Services (Rockville, MD)
- JVS Boston – Transitions to Work (Boston)
- JVS Human Services – Customer Service Training (Detroit)
- JVS Toronto – Path2Work (Toronto, Ontario, Canada)
- JVS Toronto – Project GOLD (Toronto, Ontario, Canada)
- Ometz – Supported Employment Service (Montreal, Quebec, Canada)
- RespectAbility – National Leadership & Apprenticeship Program (National – Rockville, MD)

### Other Organizations

- Ability Beyond – Career Development (Bethel, CT, and Chappaqua, NY)
- Aspire – Careers (Hillside, IL)
- Bancroft – Adult Employment Services (Cherry Hill, NJ)
- Bridges from School to Work – Chicago (National network – Bethesda, MD)
- Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center - Project SEARCH (National network – Cincinnati)
- Eastern Carolina Vocational Center – Employment Training and Placement (Greenville, NC)
- Goodwill of North Georgia – Opportunity Accelerator Model: Workforce Development (Decatur, GA)
- Grand Traverse Industries – Employment and Training (Traverse City, MI)
- Itineris – Meaningful Day (Baltimore)
- Jewish National Fund USA – Special in Uniform (New York)
- Judith Creed Horizons for Achieving Independence – JCHAI In-Home and Community Supports (Bryn Mawr, PA)
- National Ramah Commission – National Ramah Tikvah Network (New York)
- Tangram – Employment Services (Indianapolis)
- VISIONS – Workforce Development (New York)



## Section 2 - Survey Summary: Quantitative Data

Among the 33 programs surveyed, 17 (52%) provided actual data available for a pre-COVID one-year period, while 16 (48%) used estimates for a typical one-year group of participants, based on data.

### Who is being served?

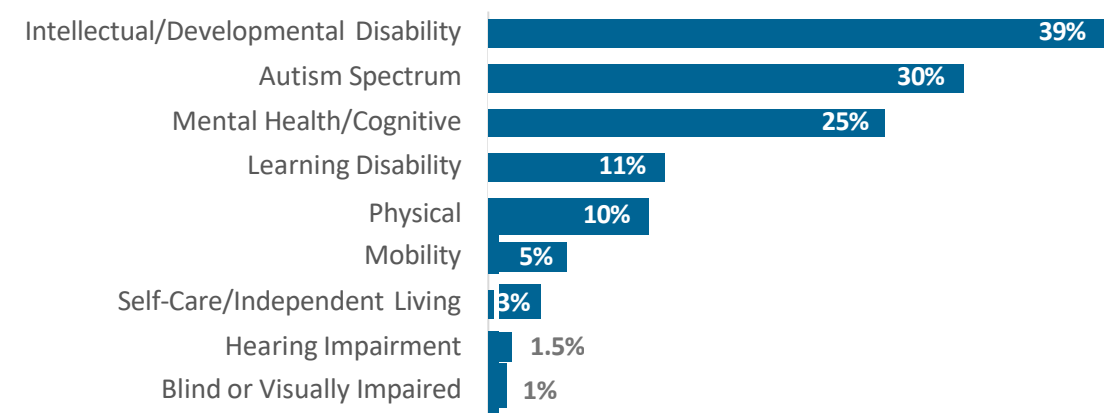
The median<sup>1</sup> number of participants enrolled in a one-year period among all programs is 95, with a large range of 4 to 1,566 participants.

### Primary Disability Type

Most programs serve participants who have more than one type of primary disability. Programs were asked to provide the percentage of participants they serve that identified with the types of disabilities in Figure 1 below, which shows the median percentage of participants across each primary disability type.

**Figure 1: Participants were more likely to have an intellectual/developmental or mental health/cognitive disability, or to have Autism spectrum disorder.**

Median percentage of participants by primary disability type



A handful of programs noted they also serve people with types of disabilities other than those in the chart above, including cancer, cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, fetal alcohol syndrome, and traumatic brain injury.

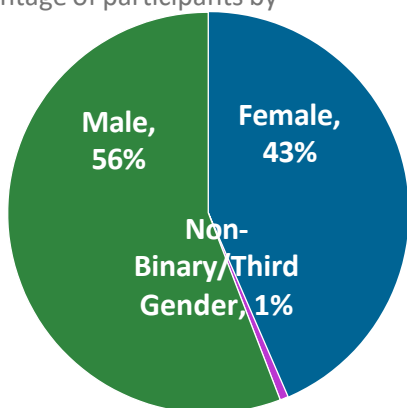
### Participant Demographics

Figures 2 through 6 below provide the average participant demographics from programs for which data were provided, including gender, age, ethnicity and race, education level, and religious status (Jewish/non-Jewish). Overall, participants were more likely to be male, between 25 and 50 years old, not of Hispanic, Latinx, or Spanish origin, White, and non-Jewish, and to have earned a high school diploma or equivalent. *Of note: only 21 of the 33 programs provided information on participants’ race, and 25 provided information on education level.*

<sup>1</sup> The median is the value located in the middle of the distribution of responses. Unlike means (averages), medians are resistant to very high or very low outliers that can “skew” the average.

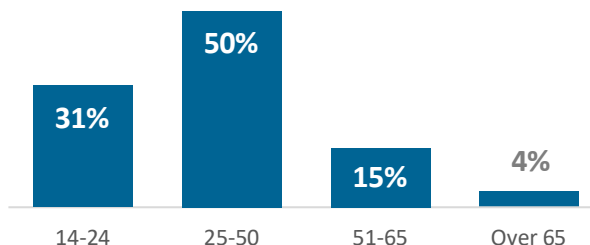
**Figure 2: On average, most participants identify as male.**

Average percentage of participants by gender (n=32)



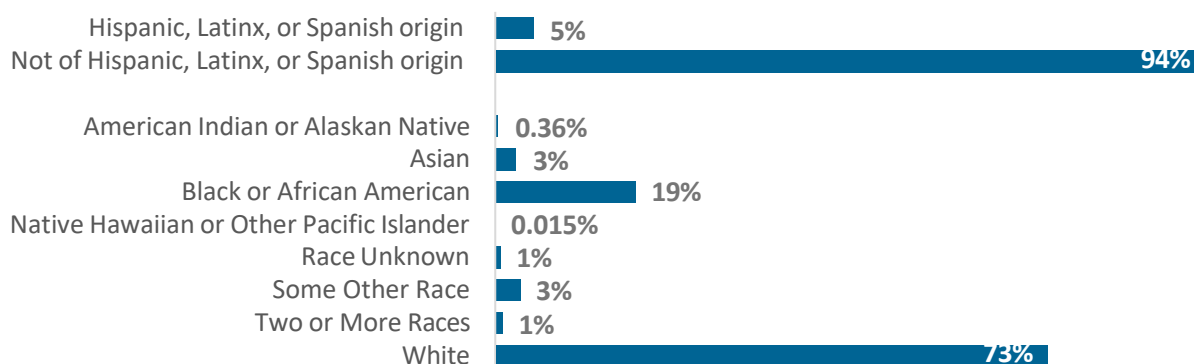
**Figure 3: On average, most participants fall between the ages of 25 and 50.**

Average percentage of participants by age group (n=31)



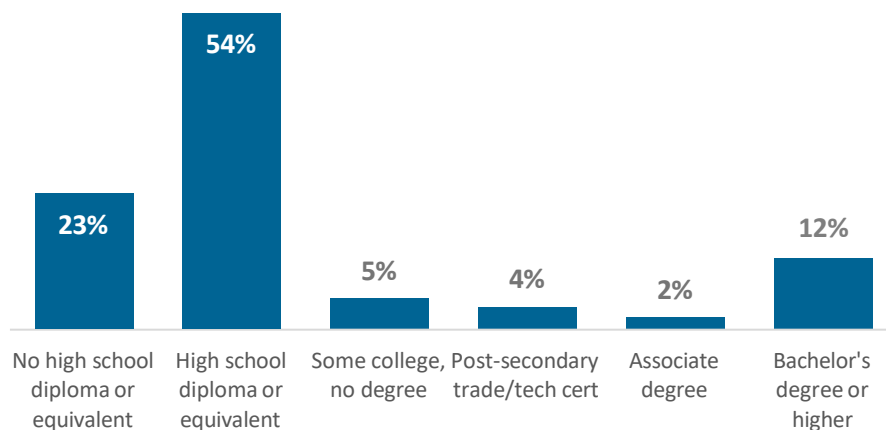
**Figure 4: On average, most participants identify as White and Not of Hispanic, Latinx, or Spanish descent.**

Average percentage of participants by ethnicity (n=19) and by race (n=21)



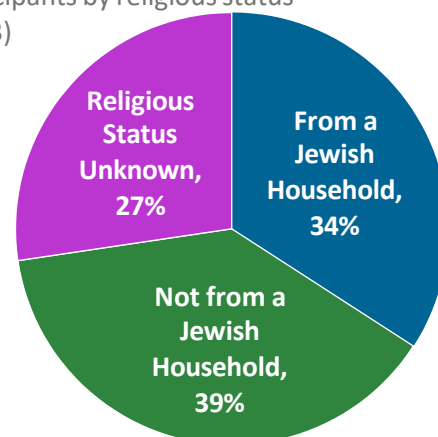
**Figure 5: On average, most participants have a high school diploma or equivalent.**

Average percentage of participants by education level (n=25)



**Figure 6: On average, most participants are not from a Jewish household.**

Average percentage of participants by religious status (n=23)



<sup>2</sup> "n" refers to the sample size, or in this case, the number of programs that provided these data. Unless noted, the "n" equals 33 (the total number of programs surveyed).

## How are participants being served?

Twenty-seven of the programs surveyed (82%) said they **prepare participants for competitive integrated employment**.

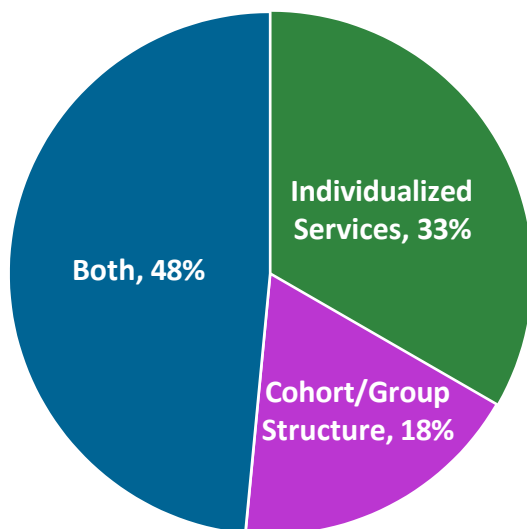


Eighteen of those programs (67%) target specific industries or occupations. Common industries and occupations include retail, food service, customer service/hospitality, healthcare, and distribution/logistics/supply chain/transportation/warehousing.

Other targeted industries and occupations include fitness/health/wellness, information technology, maintenance, and manufacturing.

**Figure 7: Many programs offer a combination of individualized services and cohort/group structured services.**

Percentage of programs by type of program structure



### Services

Table 1 on the next page provides a list of program services, the number of programs providing those services, and the percentage of those programs that provide the service to all/most participants or to fewer participants as needed.



**Table 1: Percentage of programs providing certain services**

Service	% of programs providing this service	% of programs providing to <i>all or most participants</i>	% of programs providing to <i>fewer participants as needed</i>
Job/career exploration counseling	100%	82%	18%
Workplace readiness training (“soft skills”)	97%	82%	18%
Job search preparation/interviewing skills	97%	79%	21%
Training on self-advocacy	94%	76%	24%
Job placement assistance and coaching	91%	76%	24%
Post-placement retention coaching	85%	73%	27%
Short-term work-based learning experiences	79%	33%	67%
Exploration of postsecondary education/training opportunities	76%	18%	82%
Supported employment services	76%	36%	64%
Customized training for specific jobs at specific employers	73%	27%	73%
Benefits counseling	61%	33%	67%
Paid internships with employers	55%	22%	78%
Volunteer opportunities in agency/community	55%	12%	88%
Financial literacy training and/or financial coaching	52%	24%	76%
Unpaid internships with employers	48%	25%	75%
Adult basic education services or high school equivalency preparation	45%	6%	94%
Occupational skills training	39%	24%	76%
Transitional employment (e.g., through a social enterprise/work contracts)	36%	12%	88%
Pre-apprenticeship training	33%	15%	85%
Training on entrepreneurship skills	30%	0%	100%

Regarding occupational skills training, some programs provide training for specific certifications or skills. See more details in Table 1 in Section 3 of this Guide.

### Length of Pre-Employment Services and Post-Employment Support

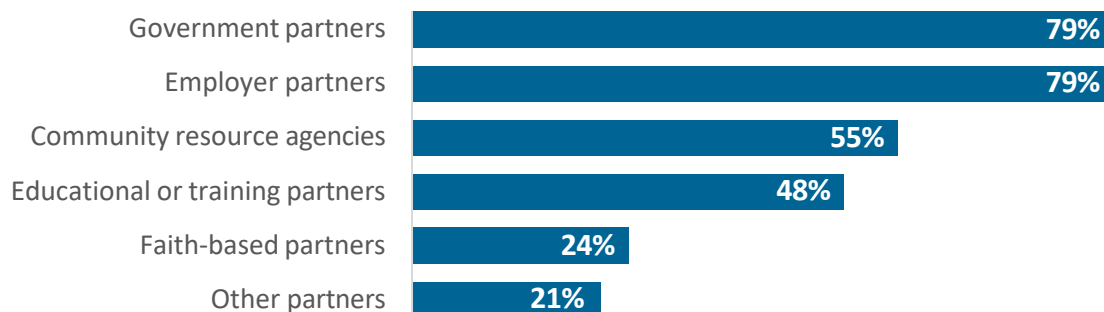
The typical length of time programs provide pre-employment services and post-employment support varies greatly, of course, based on participant needs and program goals. Programs reported some participants receiving services for as long as 10 years. But **the median length of time** that pre-employment services are provided **is 6 months**, while the **median** time **post-employment support** is provided **is 4.5 months**.

## Program Partnerships

Most of the programs surveyed have significant partnerships with at least one type of partner. Figure 8 below provides the percentage of programs reporting different types of significant partnerships.

**Figure 8: Most programs stated having significant partnerships with government entities and employers.**

Percentage of programs by type of partnership



## Program Results

Table 2 below summarizes the available data on enrolled participants securing competitive employment, the number of those participants who are retained in employment after 6 months and after 12 months, and the median starting wage. Figure 9 on the next page provides these participants' average hours of work per week.

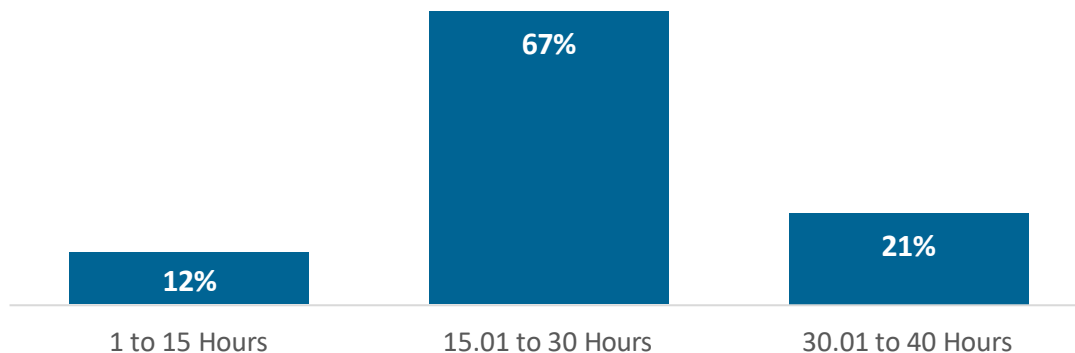
**Table 2: Program outcomes**

Outcome	n	Range: Lowest Value	Range: Highest Value	Median	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile <sup>3</sup>
Percentage of enrolled participants who secured competitive employment	27	15%	100%	65%	80%
Percentage of participants retained in employment <i>after 6 months</i>	22	33%	100%	79%	88%
Percentage of participants retained in employment <i>after 12 months</i>	20	25%	100%	73%	84%
Participant hourly wage at hire	24	\$8.75	\$21.63	\$13.74	\$15.88

<sup>3</sup> The 75<sup>th</sup> percentile, or entry into top quartile, can be used to further interpret the spread of results. Responses above the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile are considered "higher performers."

**Figure 9: On average, over half of participants were part-time, working between 15 and 30 hours per week.**

Percentage of participants by average hours worked per week (n=24)



## Program Staffing

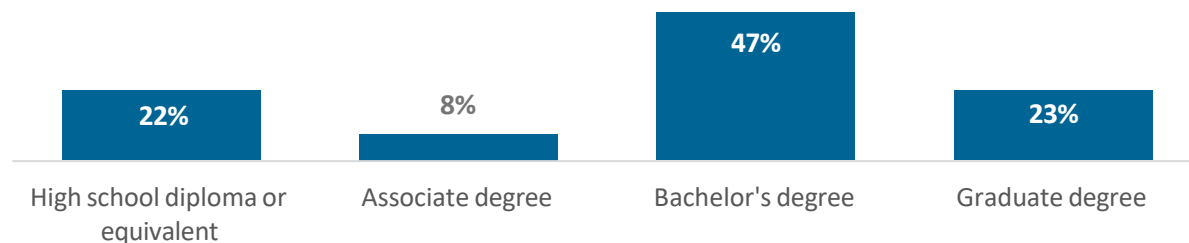
Among the 33 programs, there were 1,071 full-time-equivalent (FTE) direct service staff and 7,462 participants, or **one FTE for roughly every seven program participants**. The median number of participants per staff member was roughly 15.

Of the 28 programs that track staff's disability status, **18 (64%) have staff who identify as having a disability**. These staff members comprise 1 to 87 percent of staff among these programs, with a median of 12 percent of staff.

Figure 10 below provides the percentage of program staff by education level. Additional information on staff professional development activities is included in a compilation of narrative answers in Section 3 of this Guide.

**Figure 10: Over two-thirds of staff have a Bachelor's or graduate degree.**

Average percentage of program staff by education level (n=24)



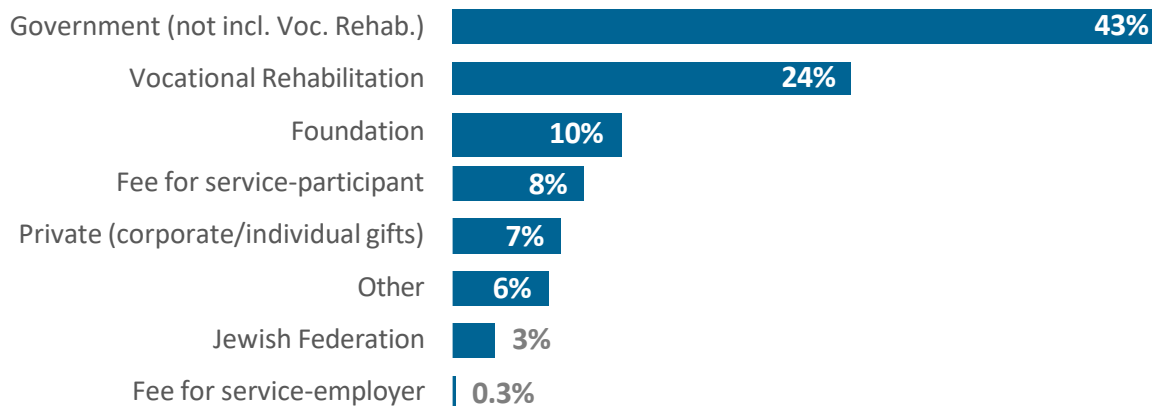
## Program Funding

Given their varying sizes and activities, the programs surveyed have a wide range of annual operating expenses. The **median annual operating expense** among the 32 programs providing data **was roughly \$549,000**.

Figure 11 below provides the average percentage of program funding by source. Government sources, including Vocational Rehabilitation, provided two-thirds of program funding.

**Figure 11: Two-thirds of program funding was provided by government sources, including Vocational Rehabilitation.**

Average percentage of program funding by source (n=31)



## Other compilations

Tables 3 through 5 below compile answers to several other “check all that apply” questions related to program accessibility, case management services for participants, and employer-focused services. *Of note: relatively few of the programs surveyed have a board that includes people with disabilities, provide videos and online meetings with captioning, provide content accessible to people who are blind or have low vision, or allow for requests for accommodations when registering for public events.*

*Q. What steps has your program taken to be more accessible to participants, staff, and other stakeholders?*

**Table 3: Percentage of programs carrying out certain accessibility activities**

Accessibility activity	% of programs carrying out activity
Offices are wheelchair accessible	100%
Staff are specifically trained in disability etiquette and accommodations	97%
Staff are trained in helping people with disabilities secure employment	91%
All in-person events are in physically accessible locations	91%
A process exists for participants, staff, board, and volunteers to request accommodations they need to succeed	88%
Organization has clear, stated policies and plans to achieve meaningful inclusion of people with disabilities at all levels	85%
Program staff include people with disabilities	73%
There are regular feedback loops to ensure staff, participants, and others are satisfied with the accommodations and access they have	67%
Organization board includes people with disabilities	58%
Videos and online meetings have captioning	52%
Website, social media, and other content are accessible to people who are blind, have low vision, and/or use assistive technology to read	45%
Registration for public events supports requests for needed accommodations (e.g., sign language interpreters, live captioning, food allergies)	45%

*Q. What other case management support do you provide program participants?*

**Table 4: Percentage of programs providing certain case management support**

Case management support	% of programs providing support
Transportation resources	91%
Mental health	67%
Clothing/equipment for work	67%
Food assistance or referrals	55%
Documentation assistance	52%
Housing referrals	45%
Childcare referrals	21%
Other	18%
Legal aid	15%
Addiction services	12%

*Q. In addition to referrals of qualified job candidates, what other services do you provide for your employer partners?*

**Table 5: Percentage of programs providing certain services for employer partners**

Service provided for employer partners	% of programs providing service
On site job coaching for individual employees as needed	82%
Training of employer staff around recruitment, interviewing, and onboarding practices through a disability awareness lens	79%
Assistance with job design or customized job supports	70%
Assessments to understand employer task and job requirements, organization culture, and retention issues	67%
Assistance in adapting existing training curriculum for job tasks	61%
Coaching employer staff around recruitment, interviewing, and onboarding practices through a disability awareness lens	61%
Assistance in connecting with existing networks of community resources	61%
Assistance in connecting with other employers about their disability hiring efforts and insights	61%
Assistance to employer with navigating available public or private funding resources	30%

### Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Of the 33 programs surveyed, **24 (73%) have a publicly stated commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion**, while nine do not have a stated commitment. Specific examples of how program strategies are informed by a commitment to DEI are included in a separate compilation of survey narrative answers in Section 3 of this Guide.

## Section 3: Survey Summary – Qualitative Information

The following sections and tables summarize more detailed information provided by survey respondents in response to specific survey questions. These details may be useful to support future planning by organizations and programs as well as networking between programs.

### Certifications and Skills Training

Table 1 below summarizes additional information provided by survey respondents who indicated that they offered occupational skills training for some or most participants as part of their services.

**Table 1: Certifications or skills training provided by programs**

Program	Certifications or skills training provided
Bridges from School to Work	ServSafe Food Handler Certificate
Eastern Carolina Vocational Center Inc.	North Carolina Department of Labor Custodial & Maintenance Pre-Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship
Goodwill of North Georgia, Inc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three types of welding certifications: Gas Metal Arc Welding, Flux Cored Arc Welding, Shielded Metal Arc Welding</li> <li>• OSHA30</li> <li>• Commercial Drivers License</li> <li>• Heavy Equipment Operator</li> <li>• Certified Logistics Technician</li> <li>• International Customer Service Association Certification</li> <li>• Scrum, Microsoft Azure</li> <li>• ServiceNow Administrator</li> <li>• Amazon Web Services</li> <li>• Salesforce Administrator</li> <li>• Cyber Security Certificate</li> <li>• Web Application Development Certification</li> <li>• Certified Apartment Maintenance Technician</li> <li>• National Retail Federation Certificate</li> <li>• Certified Healthcare Environmental Services Technician</li> <li>• International Executive Housekeepers Association Frontline Associate Certification</li> <li>• Medical Administration Certificate</li> <li>• Medical Coding and Billing Certification</li> <li>• Phlebotomist Credential</li> <li>• Flagging Certificate</li> <li>• Certified Forklift Operator</li> </ul>
Israel Elwyn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chef assistant course</li> <li>• Kindergarten teacher assistant course</li> <li>• Computer skills course</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language skills courses (Hebrew, Arabic, English)</li> <li>• Job preparation training focusing on 11 work skills</li> </ul>
Jewish Family and Children's Services of Southern NJ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ServSafe Food Handler Certificate</li> </ul>
Jewish National Fund-USA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Logistics</li> <li>• Food industry</li> <li>• Computers</li> </ul>
JVS Boston	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ServSafe Food Handler Certificate</li> <li>• NRF Foundation Retail Industry Fundamentals training course</li> </ul>
RespectAbility	Accessibility credential
VISIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customer service</li> <li>• Food Handler certification</li> <li>• Job coach training</li> </ul>

## Program Partnerships

Specific examples of agencies, companies, and organizations noted in the survey question about partnerships are provided in Table 2 below. Sample employer partners are also listed on each program's descriptive page in Section 3 of this Guide.

**Table 2: Examples of program partners by partner type**

Type of partner	Examples of partners
Employer partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food/beverage: PepsiCo, Portillo's, Levy Restaurants</li> <li>• Retail: Walmart, Target, TJX Companies, Walgreens, CVS, Kroger, Amazon</li> <li>• Finance: Bank of America, Fifth Third Bank, JPMorgan Chase</li> <li>• Technology: Google, Dish Network, Sony</li> </ul>
Government partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Various state departments focused on developmental services, labor, health/human services, and vocational rehabilitation</li> <li>• Support from state legislature through funding</li> <li>• Ready, Willing &amp; Able federal program</li> </ul>
Educational or training partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State universities</li> <li>• Public school systems</li> <li>• Technical colleges</li> <li>• Project SEARCH</li> </ul>
Community resource agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hospitals</li> <li>• Social services agencies</li> <li>• Food banks</li> <li>• Literacy Action</li> <li>• Local United Way</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AARP</li> </ul>
Faith-based partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local synagogues</li> <li>• Combined Jewish philanthropies</li> <li>• Catholic Charities</li> <li>• Salvation Army</li> <li>• St. Vincent de Paul</li> <li>• The Night Ministry</li> </ul>
Other partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unions</li> <li>• Family members</li> <li>• Literacy programs</li> <li>• Immigrant and refugee organizations</li> <li>• Career centers and programs</li> </ul>

## Staff Development

A survey narrative question asked respondents to briefly describe their organization's process for ensuring that all direct service staff receive the disability-specific training and feedback they need to be competent and inclusive in their work with participants. The following themes and examples emerged.



For most programs, staff professional development plans are guided by **local, state, or provincial requirements** related to competencies, experience, and ongoing training.



Most programs have initial **disability-related onboarding and training periods for new staff**. While these range from 5 hours to 90 days in length, most periods last one to two weeks.



Several programs mentioned using staff **peer shadowing, mentoring, or cross-training** as part of their onboarding and professional development processes, along with coaching by direct supervisors. In addition, Goodwill of North Georgia noted that each team member has a specific Professional Development Plan with an assessment of core competencies by position and developmental goals associated with each.



Some programs have additional **requirements for further education** each year, and most offer **regular (monthly, usually) professional development opportunities** in-house or through partners. In some cases, employees complete available **online courses**. Some specific examples of resources or partners programs use for professional development or to support further credentialing for direct service staff include:

- [Association for People Supporting Employment First \(APSE\)](#) and its [Certified Employment Support Credential](#) – Ability Beyond, Bancroft, Jewish Social Service Agency, JVS Boston
- [Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators](#) – Ability Beyond, Jewish Family Service of Colorado
- [Relias](#) database of online training courses – Aspire
- [National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals \(NADSP\)](#) towards DSP certification – Grand Traverse Industries
- [College of Direct Support](#) (Temple Univ.) – Jewish Family and Children's Service of Southern NJ

- [Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities](#) (Rutgers Univ.) – Jewish Family & Children’s Service of Southern NJ, Bancroft
- National Disability Initiative and [Pittsburgh Inclusion Consortium](#), as well as local United Ways and Vocational Rehabilitation agencies – Jewish Family & Community Services Pittsburgh, Tangram
- [University of North Texas](#), in a credentialing partnership with the Texas Workforce Commission-Vocational Rehabilitation – Jewish Family Service, Houston
- [Institute for Community Inclusion](#) (Univ. of Massachusetts) [ThinkWork](#) initiative – JVS Boston
- Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI) training available through the [Crisis Prevention Institute](#) – JVS Toronto
- Supported Employment Essentials training available through the [Canadian Association for Supported Employment](#) (CASE) – Ometz
- [Indiana Institute on Disability and Community](#) and [Level Up Indiana](#) – Tangram
- “Blindness basics” courses offered by the [Hadley School](#) and materials available through the [American Foundation for the Blind](#) and the [American Printing House for the Blind](#) – VISIONS

## Communications Accessibility

A survey narrative question asked respondents to describe the efforts they have made to ensure that your program marketing materials are accessible (e.g., alt-text, closed captioning, etc.). The following themes and examples emerged.



Nine programs (27%) said their materials were accessible or compliant with the [Americans with Disabilities Act requirements](#) and [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines](#); nine programs (27%) specifically said that review and updating was in process; and seven programs (21%) either did not answer the question or said “N/A.” Specific review tools or processes included:

- 508 compliance testing software (Bridges from School to Work)
- [Google Lighthouse](#) (Goodwill of North Georgia)
- CARF Survey Tools (Grand Traverse Industries)
- [Accessible Customer Service Standard](#) (JVS Toronto)
- Internal review by marketing departments (several programs)



Efforts to update program marketing materials (print, web-based, video, and other) included work in these areas:

- Alt-Text or text equivalent
- Closed captioning
- Web-based PDF forms
- Work on visual contrast
- Transcripts
- Flicker monitoring
- Improving screen reader access
- Auditory cues and site readers
- Subtitles and narration for videos
- 4<sup>th</sup> grade reading level for copy
- Braille business cards

- Large print/sizable fonts
- Use of interpreters and other language assistance for non-English speakers

## Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategies

Two survey narrative questions asked organizations to note what they were doing differently or more of because of their commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion—including any changes in their use of disaggregated data to understand gaps in services or results.

### Overall Strategies to Increase DEI

Most of the 33 programs are adding or expanding strategies to deepen diversity, equity, and inclusion within their organizations and services. Five organizations (15%) either did not answer the question or answered “N/A.” One indicated it was just starting to identify strategies. Comments shared by the remaining programs surfaced these types of strategies:

- Providing **training courses** or developing curriculum around DEI or cultural competency (15 programs)
- Reviewing and adapting practices related to **hiring, advancement, and pay** (10)
- Intentional work to increase representation and **diversity of organization boards** (9)
- Developing **organization-wide DEI plans** or updating existing strategic plans (7)
- Creating DEI **councils, workgroups, or Board sub-committees** (6)
- Using **internal self-assessments or surveys** of employees and participants to inform DEI work (5)
- Working with **external consultants** around DEI plans (5)
- Internal reviews related to **demographic data** about those served and staff (4)
- Creating additional **policies** or “codes of teamwork” (4)
- Sponsoring regular **events for dialogue**, e.g., town halls, anti-racism discussion groups (3)
- Creating **gender-neutral** bathrooms and signage, and **gender-preference** email signatures (3)
- Creating new types of **affinity groups** to provide employee support (3)
- Compiling and sharing **DEI resources** for employee use (2)
- Ensuring equitable access for those of **different religious groups** (2)
- Adding more **employee support services**, e.g., financial wellness (1)
- Focusing on **increasing access** to assessment and services for low-income clients (1)
- Revising **paid holiday options** to be more inclusive (1)
- Paying more attention to how **adverse life experiences** exacerbate issues around disability (1)

### Use of Disaggregated Data

Ten of the programs surveyed (30%) did not answer the question or said they were not currently using disaggregated data to understand and address service gaps. Another seven programs (21%) said they are intending to do more in this area or were working with consultants to strengthen their organizational data practices. Among other programs, here are examples of specific actions they have taken:

- **Aspire** is accredited with [The Council on Quality and Leadership](#) (CQL) and has a Quality Enhancement Committee that regularly reviews a vast repository of aggregate and disaggregated data.
- **Cincinnati Children’s Project SEARCH** has a research team that is currently working to understand some disaggregated data showing that their female participants were less likely to be employed.
- **Eastern Carolina Vocational Center** is using disaggregated data to improve specific population outreach efforts.
- **Goodwill of North Georgia’s** leadership team does quarterly reviews of outcome and impact data disaggregated by barrier, demographics, location, funder, and program to ensure equitable results; it uses that information to decide where to target improvement efforts over subsequent quarters.

- **Israel Elwyn** is using data to increase the number of people with disabilities employed from the Arab community.
- **Itineris** has used disaggregated data to ensure they recruit a sufficient number of female applicants with autism and to relocate services so that they provide better access to Black and Brown communities.
- **Jewish Family & Community Services, Pittsburgh** uses disaggregated data as an advocacy tool with government, employers, funders, and other providers, highlighting emerging population patterns they might have missed.
- **Jewish Family Service, Houston** also has an agency quality control committee. The committee and each department use disaggregated data from their online medical records to understand gaps in services or outcomes.
- **Jewish Family Service of Colorado** has made a new full-time hire to help strengthen their data collection practices. They are using disaggregated data to look at hiring practices (interviews, wages offered) as well as to increase representation of BIPOC-run companies among the employers they work with.
- **JVS Boston** reviews disaggregated reports on outcomes metrics quarterly and uses that to strengthen their approach, e.g., tailoring their support of students from BIPOC backgrounds after seeing that they were having lower success rates.
- **RespectAbility** is tracking several key demographics, including sexual orientation, for participants in its Leadership Program to ensure that its impact is equitable.
- **Tangram** is using data to help them assess their geographic footprint and marketing approaches after seeing higher service rates among Caucasian and male populations.
- **VISIONS** uses its data around participants' demographics and language fluency to understand where additional interpreters may be needed and to ensure program enrollments reflect the diversity of New York City.

## Feedback Strategies – Participants and Employers

Two survey narrative questions asked how both participant and employer input was used to inform program design and how programs incorporated ongoing feedback from both of these groups to inform and improve services.

### Participant Feedback



Most of the surveyed programs make use of **participant and other stakeholder satisfaction surveys**. These are usually conducted annually (if participants are receiving services for very long periods) or during and after shorter program experiences. Several programs noted that data from these surveys are then analyzed and reviewed by leadership and quality-focused board committees.



Most programs also use **individualized planning meetings** with participants, families, and other stakeholders to gather feedback that informs further service design.



Five organizations (Aspire, Goodwill of North Georgia, Itineris, Jewish Family Service Houston, and VISIONS) specifically mentioned **participant or alumni advisory groups** that provide regular feedback.

Other strategies mentioned for incorporating participant feedback into program design included:

- Focus groups with participants and families
- Town hall meetings with the executive team (no direct service staff present)
- Comment cards
- Secret shoppers
- Intentional monitoring of participant attendance for clues to where additional feedback is needed
- Visits by the company CEO and executive team to employment sites, soliciting direct feedback from participants on their experience

## Employer Feedback



Most programs surveyed said that they solicit **informal feedback** on an ongoing basis during follow-up conversations conducted by job coaches, employment specialists, and program management. This feedback is then shared with other staff in the organization.



One-third of the programs indicated that they also do **formal feedback surveys**, usually on an annual basis, and then share that feedback with staff and Board members.



A few programs use **employer leadership gatherings or supervisor training** as an opportunity to get additional feedback.



Goodwill of North Georgia mentioned several **additional strategies**:

- Ongoing labor market information review to understand where needs exist
- Business advisory councils
- Specific industry sector partnerships focused the healthcare, IT, and transportation/distribution/logistics areas
- Participation in the [Rework America Alliance](#) to promote skills-based hiring



Several programs gave specific examples of changes made because of employer feedback, including:

- Additional focus on specific soft skills (Eastern Carolina Vocational Center, Jewish Family Service Houston)
- Extending training periods (Itineris)
- Including ServSafe certification as part of the program curriculum (JVS Boston)



## Section 4: NJHSA Program Summaries—NJHSA Members

The following pages include key survey data from each of the NJHSA member organization programs that submitted surveys, along with additional descriptive information they provided.

- Israel Elwyn – Job Placement (Israel)
- JARC Florida – Community Works (Boca Raton, FL)
- JEM Workshop – Employment Services (Montreal, Quebec, Canada)
- JFCS Atlanta – Supported Employment (Atlanta)
- JFCS Minneapolis – Vocational Rehabilitation (Minneapolis)
- JFCS Pittsburgh – EmployAble (Pittsburgh)
- JFCS Southern New Jersey – Soups and Sweets Culinary Training (Cherry Hill, NJ)
- JFS of Atlantic & May Counties – Bridges to Employment (Atlantic City, NJ)
- JFS Colorado – Group Supported Employment (Denver)
- JFS Colorado – Individual Supported Employment (Denver)
- JFS Houston – Celebration Company (Houston)
- JFS Houston – Employment Services (Houston)
- JSSA – Employment Services (Rockville, MD)
- JVS Boston – Transitions to Work (Boston)
- JVS Human Services – Customer Service Training (Detroit)
- JVS Toronto – Path2Work (Toronto, Ontario, Canada)
- JVS Toronto – Project GOLD (Toronto, Ontario, Canada)
- Ometz – Supported Employment Service (Montreal, Quebec, Canada)
- RespectAbility – National Leadership & Apprenticeship Program (National – Rockville, MD)

**Organization:** Israel Elwyn

**Employment Program Name:** Job Placement

**Location:** Nationwide, Israel

**Typical # Enrolled in Program Annually:** 1200

**Primary Types of Participant Disabilities:** Intellectual/Developmental/Cognitive, Hearing, Physical

**Program Structure (Individualized Services/Cohort/Both):** Both

**Occupational or Industry Focus:** According to service recipients' desires, abilities and needs.

**Sample Employer Partners:** Aroma Espresso Bar, Dan Hotels, Knesset

**Typical Placement Rate in Competitive Employment:** 63% [750 of 1200], 75% of completers [750 of 1000]

**Typical 6-Month Job Retention Rate:** 73% [550 of 750]

**Typical 12-Month Job Retention Rate:** 60% [450 of 750]

**Typical Annual Program Budget:** US \$3,687,500

**Main Funding Source(s):** Government

**Other Notable Info:** Replicated within the Arab community and with young adults; industry credentials in chef assistant, kindergarten teacher assistant; partnerships with university, college, and other organizations that provide vocational training programs

**Website:** [www.IsraelElwyn.org.il](http://www.IsraelElwyn.org.il)

**Contact:** Sharon Ehrnwald, +972-52-602-0105, [sharone@IsraelElwyn.org.il](mailto:sharone@IsraelElwyn.org.il)

**Description:** For over three decades, Israel Elwyn has operated job placement programs to expand the number of individuals with disabilities who are gainfully employed in the competitive job market. The program focuses on providing on-the-job support and locating worthwhile jobs and professional accessible training, in collaboration with vocational and higher education institutions. With the onset of the COVID-19 crisis, staff conducted a survey process, finding that 50% of them had been furloughed or let go. This required adapting the program to support and prepare employers and employees with disabilities to a new world of work. IE launched the "Open-Door Employer" campaign, encouraging employers to open their doors to hire people with disabilities. The campaign includes publicly acknowledging or thanking employers who hire people with disabilities.

One of IE's core values – "A Learning Organization" – requires us to be aware, learn and adjust quickly to local and global changes. Although no one around the globe could predict this crisis, IE's professionals immediately turned the COVID-19 crisis into new opportunities using a crisis management model, as part of its commitment to prevent the return of 600+ employees with disabilities to sheltered workshops. IE made use of its unique and professional specialists in marketing, public relations, IT, and therapies (OT, PT, etc.), while learning about the changes in workplace environments.



*Extraordinary people. Ordinary lives.*

**Organization:** JARC Florida

**Employment Program Name:** Community Works

**Location:** Boca Raton, FL

**Typical # Enrolled in Program Annually:** 75

**Primary Types of Participant Disabilities:** Intellectual/Developmental, Autism Spectrum, Learning

**Program Structure (Individualized Services/Cohort/Both):** Cohort

**Occupational or Industry Focus:** N/A

**Sample Employer Partners:** Burlington, Marshall's, Cheesecake Factory

**Typical Placement Rate in Competitive Employment:** 40% of enrollees [30 of 75]

**Typical 6-Month Job Retention Rate:** 33% [10 of 30]

**Typical 12-Month Job Retention Rate:** 33% [10 of 30]

**Typical Annual Program Budget:** \$450,000

**Main Funding Source(s):** Government, Foundation

**Other Notable Info:** Offers training in culinary, light manufacturing, and janitorial skills

**Website:** [www.jarcfl.org](http://www.jarcfl.org)

**Contact:** Nancy Freiwald, 561-558-2557, [nancyf@jarcfl.org](mailto:nancyf@jarcfl.org)

**Description:** JARC developed the Community Works Program to provide community-based training opportunities to larger numbers of individuals with disabilities, and to allow for an extended training period in an environment that promotes positive interactions with co-workers.

This program creates partnerships with local businesses. At the training sites, participants initially complete tasks assigned to them by JARC's vocational on-site instructor. As they become comfortable with the setting and tasks, the instructor will begin to transition to have participants receive their instruction and task assignments from the staff of the businesses.

Participants also receive training at JARC in the areas of pre-employment skills, how to create a resume, how to interact in an employment interview, how to use and secure transportation, and social skills in the workplace.

When employees at our partner businesses see the individuals with intellectual disabilities come every week and work side by side with them, they no longer see them as people with disabilities. They see them as co-workers. This in turn, ensures that natural supports are in place once a program participant is hired. Also essential to the success of the program is that when someone is hired, the training program continues with new participants. This ensures that support is still available to participants who have been hired, should the need arise. With no set time limit of training, participants can learn at their own pace, without pressure to learn skills in a set amount of time.



**Organization:** JEM Workshop

**Employment Program Name:** Employment Services

**Location:** Montreal, Quebec

**Typical # Enrolled in Program Annually:** 77

**Primary Types of Participant Disabilities:** Intellectual/Developmental, Mental Health/Cognitive, Autism Spectrum

**Program Structure (Individualized Services/Cohort/Both):** Individualized

**Occupational or Industry Focus:** N/A

**Sample Employer Partners:** Agence Ometz

**Typical Placement Rate in Competitive Employment:** N/A – not main program focus

**Typical 6-Month Job Retention Rate:** N/A

**Typical 12-Month Job Retention Rate:** N/A

**Typical Annual Program Budget:** \$3,000,000

**Main Funding Source(s):** Government, Jewish Federation, Sales of Products

**Other Notable Info:**

**Website:** [www.jemworkshop.org](http://www.jemworkshop.org)

**Contact:** Maia Cooper, 514-735-4217 x305, [maia.cooper@jemworkshop.org](mailto:maia.cooper@jemworkshop.org)

**Description:** JEM Workshop is an adapted workplace for adults with different abilities and living with intellectual, physical, or mental challenges. We offer high-quality, competitive packaging services to local businesses. Employees are supported in reaching their employment potential by acquiring new vocational skillsets, learning new job tasks, and practicing and perfecting their social skills. Employees benefit from one-on-one coaching and assistance from a qualified support team including production specialists, job coaches, and social counselors. Everyone is encouraged to develop at their own pace, with a succession plan tailored to their respective capacities.

JEM Workshop professionals work in multidisciplinary teams with various partners in and around the community, to develop appropriate and tailored plans meant to elevate all Employees and help them to achieve their employment potential.

JEM Workshop is unique in many ways, the most notable of these being its holistic approach to supporting our Employees. Every person is treated as a “whole person” and not just as an employee in an adapted workplace. As such, we invest time and resources on socio-recreational programming, holiday celebrations, intergenerational outreach and welcoming in volunteers and groups. We believe that the vocational success of each of our Employees is contingent on their positive well-being and mental health, which need as much care and attention as their occupational health. We commit to doing everything we can inside the workplace to ensure they have everything they need to feel safe, fulfilled, confident, and contented, thereby positively impacting their quality of life.



**Organization:** JF&CS Atlanta

**Employment Program Name:** Supported Employment

**Location:** Atlanta, GA

**Typical # Enrolled in Program Annually:** 26, 4 of whom complete job search readiness activities

**Primary Types of Participant Disabilities:** Intellectual/Developmental, Autism Spectrum, Self-Care/Independent Living

**Program Structure (Individualized Services/Cohort/Both):** Individualized

**Occupational or Industry Focus:** N/A

**Sample Employer Partners:** Home Depot, NOVO Health Services, Taziki's Mediterranean Café

**Typical Placement Rate in Competitive Employment:** 15% of enrollees [4 of 26], 100% of completers [4 of 4]

**Typical 6-Month Job Retention Rate:** 100% [4 of 4 placed]

**Typical 12-Month Job Retention Rate:** 100% [4 of 4 placed]

**Typical Annual Program Budget:** \$100,000

**Main Funding Source(s):** Vocational Rehabilitation, Other Government, Fee for Service--Participant

**Other Notable Info:**

**Website:** <https://jfcsatl.org/services/disabilities-services/supported-employment>

**Contact:** Kenya Smith, 770-677-9450, [kesmith@jfcsatl.org](mailto:kesmith@jfcsatl.org)

**Description:** Supported Employment at Jewish Family & Career Services Atlanta assists adults diagnosed with an Intellectual/Developmental Disability by age 22+ to develop an individualized plan for employment. The Individualized Employment Plan can include pre-placement, job development, job coaching, ongoing support while working, and/or Customized Supported Employment.

Jewish Family & Career Services Atlanta Supported Employment Initiative is unique in the personal and individualized care each client and family receives. The feeling is hard to explain when a client verbally expresses excitement working saying, "I love my job and my co-workers are awesome."

Often one of our employer partners has described suggestions to support a client. Our systematic approach to job tasks and communication has helped other employees of an employer be partners as well.



**Organization:** Jewish Family and Children's Service of Minneapolis

**Employment Program Name:** Vocational Rehabilitation

**Location:** Golden Valley, MN

**Typical # Enrolled in Program Annually:** 100

**Primary Types of Participant Disabilities:** Mental Health/Cognitive, Autism Spectrum, Learning

**Program Structure (Individualized Services/Cohort/Both):** Individualized

**Occupational or Industry Focus:** N/A

**Sample Employer Partners:** Not provided

**Typical Placement Rate in Competitive Employment:** 85% of enrollees [85 of 100]

**Typical 6-Month Job Retention Rate:** 88% [75 of 85]

**Typical 12-Month Job Retention Rate:** 76% [65 of 85]

**Typical Annual Program Budget:** \$350,000

**Main Funding Source(s):** Vocational Rehabilitation, Other Government

**Other Notable Info:**

**Website:** [www.jfcsmpls.org](http://www.jfcsmpls.org)

**Contact:** Cindy Uran-Woodruff, 952-417-2104, [curan@jfcsmpls.org](mailto:curan@jfcsmpls.org)

**Description:** The JFCS of Minneapolis Vocational Rehabilitation program has provided personalized services for persons with a very wide range of disabilities for over 50 years. Comprehensive vocational evaluation services include career testing and counseling as well as assessment of strengths, interests, abilities, and areas for further training or support. Employee development services assist participants in developing the functional capacities, skills, and work behaviors needed for good job performance. Employment planning services provide opportunities for career exploration through a job try-out, internship, or job shadowing. Community employment services include job development to match workplace demands with participant needs as well as long-term employment supports both on and off the worksite to meet participant and employer goals.

The program's success is due to a number of factors. As a small program within a large supportive agency, staff are able to focus on providing strong, individualized services while drawing on the broader career services and administrative resources available in the agency. This has contributed to high long-term staff retention and satisfaction. Leadership spends a lot of time maintaining strong relationships with referring case workers from government sources and ensures quick turnaround and response time for new referrals. Stable pay-per-interaction funding through state and county sources allows staff to provide extended post-placement case management support, sometimes for years. This helps achieve high participant job retention, as staff can intervene before issues become a crisis. During COVID, much of this case management support has been provided virtually, which has been an effective practice the program hopes to continue.





**Organization:** JFCS Pittsburgh

**Employment Program Name:** EmployAble

**Location:** Pittsburgh, PA

**Typical # Enrolled in Program Annually:** 120

**Primary Types of Participant Disabilities:** Autism Spectrum, Mental Health/Cognitive

**Program Structure (Individualized Services/Cohort/Both):** Individualized Services (There are group offerings in the form of workshops/support groups, but primary focus going forward is individualized services.)

**Occupational or Industry Focus:** N/A

**Sample Employer Partners:** UPMC, Giant Eagle, Amazon, Google, Argo AI

**Typical Placement Rate in Competitive Employment:** 58% of enrollees [70 of 120], 78% of completers [70 of 90]

**Typical 6-Month Job Retention Rate:** Not provided

**Typical 12-Month Job Retention Rate:** Not provided

**Typical Annual Program Budget:** \$135,000

**Main Funding Source(s):** United Way, Foundation

**Other Notable Info:** Large network of educational partners and community resources for literacy and immigrant services, youth programming, financial/entrepreneurship training

**Website:** [www.jfcspgh.org/services/career-development-center/](http://www.jfcspgh.org/services/career-development-center/)

**Contact:** Rebecca Johnson, 412-422-7200, [bjohnson@jfcspgh.org](mailto:bjohnson@jfcspgh.org)

EmployAble provides comprehensive career services to professionally-oriented young adults with invisible disabilities or mental health challenges to help them find success in today's job market. Through one-on-one career counseling, workshops and support groups, job seekers receive ongoing, tailored support through the job search, interview, hiring and retention processes. EmployAble also trains employers about the assets of hiring these individuals and how to accommodate them and be sensitive to their specific needs within the workplace. After securing employment, EmployAble participants receive continued support, meeting with their career counselors for at least six additional months, and longer, if needed. This ongoing support helps participants to achieve long-term job retention.

EmployAble help individuals with mental health challenges or other invisible disabilities to find and retain livable wage jobs. EmployAble partners with local universities to help students from the target populations transition from college into the workforce. Program staff also provide training to disability resources, veterans services, and career services staff to recognize the needs of students with disabilities and be best equipped to provide support. Additionally, EmployAble relies on a network of community partnerships and engagement with area employers to raise awareness about the barriers this population faces and to create resource connections. Critical needs counseling and direct assistant grants have long been integral to EmployAble and ensure that participants have the necessary support to be successful in achieving their long-term career goals.



**Organization:** Jewish Family & Children's Service of Southern New Jersey

**Employment Program Name:** Soups and Sweets Culinary Training Program

**Location:** Cherry Hill, NJ

**Typical # Enrolled in Program Annually:** 16

**Primary Types of Participant Disabilities:** Autism Spectrum, Learning, Intellectual/Developmental, Mental Health/Cognitive

**Program Structure (Individualized Services/Cohort/Both):** Cohort

**Occupational or Industry Focus:** Food service prep positions

**Sample Employer Partners:** Over 30 employer partners, none specified

**Typical Placement Rate in Competitive Employment:** 75% [12 of 16]

**Typical 6-Month Job Retention Rate:** 100% [12 of 12]

**Typical 12-Month Job Retention Rate:** 83% [10 of 12]

**Typical Annual Program Budget:** \$80,000

**Main Funding Source(s):** Vocational Rehabilitation, Private

**Other Notable Info:** Program provides food for agency's food pantry as part of the training program. Local high schools also contract with Soups and Sweets to provide a training program for transition age students (18-21).

**Website:** [www.jfcssnj.org/soups-and-sweets-culinary-training-program/](http://www.jfcssnj.org/soups-and-sweets-culinary-training-program/)

**Contact:** Cyndi Kleinbart, 856-424-1333, [ckleinbart@jfedsnj.org](mailto:ckleinbart@jfedsnj.org)

**Description:** Soups and Sweets Culinary Training Program was created to fulfill an important need in our community. Many of JFCS's supported employment clients had expressed a desire to obtain work in the food service industry but lacked substantive training opportunities. The Disability Services Department created a 200-hour training curriculum for individuals with developmental and learning differences, where they will learn specific food service competencies. This hands-on curriculum was designed to individualize the instructional needs of each student. Upon completion, individuals will have gained food prep and work readiness skills and become more marketable for employment in restaurants, cafeterias, hotels, and healthcare kitchens. In addition, the curriculum includes the ServSafe Food Handlers Certification Course and examination.

Soups and Sweets Culinary Training program is designed to meet the learning needs of individuals with I/DD. The curriculum has been developed by a trained chef/educator and occupational therapist to include pictures and detailed instructions for multiple learning styles. Class size is small with no more than four or five students at a time. Instruction is limited to three hours and spread over six months to allow for more practice and skill building. Volunteers are available to provide 1:1 attention when needed. Throughout the program, students receive classroom instruction in work readiness skills. In addition, a dedicated JFCS Employment Specialist observes the students throughout the training program, which ultimately leads to improved employment matches after program completion.



**JFS**  
Strength in Community

**Organization:** Jewish Family Service of Atlantic & Cape May Counties

**Employment Program Name:** Bridges to Employment

**Location:** Margate, NJ

**Typical # Enrolled in Program Annually:** 48

**Primary Types of Participant Disabilities:** Autism Spectrum, Mental Health/Cognitive, Learning

**Program Structure (Individualized Services/Cohort/Both):** Individualized

**Occupational or Industry Focus:** N/A

**Sample Employer Partners:** Not provided

**Typical Placement Rate in Competitive Employment:** 83% of enrollees [40 of 48]

**Typical 6-Month Job Retention Rate:** 86% [30 of 35]

**Typical 12-Month Job Retention Rate:** 80% [28 of 35]

**Typical Annual Program Budget:** \$231,000

**Main Funding Source(s):** Vocational Rehabilitation

**Other Notable Info:** Participant base includes transgender individuals, individuals with legal history and those with dual diagnosis.

**Website:** [www.jfsatlantic.org](http://www.jfsatlantic.org)

**Contact:** Nina Stolzenberg, 609-822-1108 x135, [nstolzenberg@jfsatlantic.org](mailto:nstolzenberg@jfsatlantic.org)

**Description:** The Bridges to Employment program supports individuals with disabilities and their families (as applicable) to navigate the transition into employment. Services start with an assessment to identify career goals, aptitudes, resources, barriers, and preferences. Case Managers meet with participants to discuss their aptitudes, interests, and future aspirations. In addition to the vocational preparation and training needed to secure employment, the plan also includes the comprehensive services they need to ensure that other parts of their life – including their family relationships, health and wellbeing, and recreational activities – are conducive to their success in the workplace setting. Interventions might address having a transportation plan, ID and clothes, the time of day people work best, and family concerns such as the impact on Social Security benefits.

The transition from school to work has been described as falling off a cliff. Supports and boundaries need to evolve for an effective transition to being a working young adult. Case managers work with youth and families to identify what is needed for success beyond supports needed on the job. Interventions might include making sure a youth has all the things needed to get out the door to work on time, including an alarm clock and an evening check list to review for the next workday. Families may need to learn how to support their young adult in keeping track of their work schedule with a parent interfacing with the workplace.



**Organization:** Jewish Family Service of Colorado

**Employment Program Name:** Group Supported Employment

**Location:** Denver, CO

**Typical # Enrolled in Program Annually:** 12-14 for 2 worksites, with an average of 4 new per year

**Primary Types of Participant Disabilities:** Intellectual/Developmental, Autism Spectrum, Physical

**Program Structure (Individualized Services/Cohort/Both):** Cohort

**Occupational or Industry Focus:** N/A

**Sample Employer Partners:** Cardinal Health, SCRAM (worksites)

**Typical Placement Rate in Competitive Employment:** N/A – not a program goal

**Typical 6-Month Job Retention Rate:** N/A

**Typical 12-Month Job Retention Rate:** N/A

**Typical Annual Program Budget:** \$1,028,111

**Main Funding Source(s):** Medicaid and County Mill Levy Dollars

**Other Notable Info:**

**Website:** [www.jewishfamilyservice.org/services/services-for-people-with-disabilities](http://www.jewishfamilyservice.org/services/services-for-people-with-disabilities)

**Contact:** Melissa Mascarenas, 303-332-3986, [mmascarenas@jewishfamilyservice.org](mailto:mmascarenas@jewishfamilyservice.org)

**Description:** While enrolled in a community worksite our participants have the opportunity to learn and improve their work skills by working and earning minimum wage in an integrated group employment setting. We work with participants on learning to successfully arrange transportation to get to work on time and how to have effective and appropriate communication with their co-workers and employees of the businesses we are working in. Participants are also trained on how to solve difficult workplace situations that may arise. Once a participant has been successful in their employment at a community worksite and expresses interest in individual integrated employment, we meet with their interdisciplinary team members and make a plan to refer the participant to our workforce developer, who will work on job development, placement, and stability in an individual setting within the community.

The program has been a staple to individuals and families within our community for over two decades. The community trusts our agency and employees to successfully train and provide a safe place for individuals to learn, work, and earn money. Individuals have choices within our agency. We support positive change, and we work with many members and businesses within our community to offer different opportunities.



**Organization:** Jewish Family Service of Colorado

**Employment Program Name:** Individual Supported Employment

**Location:** Denver, CO

**Typical # Enrolled in Program Annually:** 14, including 12 in Pre-Employment and 2 in Job Coaching

**Primary Types of Participant Disabilities:** Intellectual/Developmental, Autism Spectrum, Mental Health/Cognitive

**Program Structure (Individualized Services/Cohort/Both):** Individualized

**Occupational or Industry Focus:** N/A

**Sample Employer Partners (if relevant):** Advance Auto, Dish Network, Prologis, Jefferson Farms, Arc, Zaidy's Deli & Bakery, Ekus Parts, Atlas Real Estate, Colorado Cider Company

**Typical Placement Rate in Competitive Employment:** 42% [5 of 12] Note: this was the first year of program operation and not necessarily "typical".

**Typical 6-Month Job Retention Rate:** 100% [5 of 5]

**Typical 12-Month Job Retention Rate:** 100% [5 of 5]

**Typical Annual Program Budget:** \$410,588 (including additional job coaching and mentoring expenses)

**Main Funding Source(s):** Vocational Rehabilitation, Other Government

**Other Notable Info:**

**Website:** [www.jewishfamilyservice.org/employment/disability-employment](http://www.jewishfamilyservice.org/employment/disability-employment)

**Contact:** Leah Wing, 720-459-3885, [lwing@jewishfamilyservice.org](mailto:lwing@jewishfamilyservice.org)

**Description:** JFS uses a one-on-one person-centered approach to assist job seekers in making informed choices regarding employment. Employment Specialists (ES) put emphasis on understanding each job seeker's skills, motivation, interests, criteria, and barriers to employment. ES use a gap analysis tool to identify job matches and appropriate accommodations/job carving options/interventions to lead to mutual job seeker/employer success. In addition to typical job search tasks required, ES also perform individualized weekly business outreach. ES are in frequent communication with family members and other team members to gather feedback. After placement, the job seeker receives job coaching (fade out methods) while the employer receives consultation, to support the job match and to narrow the gaps between job expectations and current state.

JFS has hired and grown a small team of Employment Specialists (ES) who value the big picture when it comes to competitive, integrated employment. When strategizing, ES constantly revisit how their work can be used to advocate for human rights, alleviate stigma, provide opportunities that promote feelings of self-worth, create economic opportunities, teach employers, and challenge unconscious bias. The practice of reflection is key. Building employer trust through ES being a consistent presence and source of collaborative support has been another essential element in increasing successful outcomes since FY19. This promotes placed employees' happiness in their roles, supervisors feeling confident, and employers welcoming more job candidates. Also essential to success is active listening. All parties have valuable input that greatly contributes to successful outcomes.



**Organization:** JFS Houston

**Employment Program Name:** Celebration Company

**Location:** Houston, TX

**Typical # Enrolled in Program Annually:** 25

**Primary Types of Participant Disabilities:** Intellectual/Developmental, Autism Spectrum, Mobility

**Program Structure (Individualized Services/Cohort/Both):** Both

**Occupational or Industry Focus:** N/A

**Sample Employer Partners:** Jewish Community Center

**Typical Placement Rate in Competitive Employment:** N/A – not program goal

**Typical 6-Month Job Retention Rate:** N/A

**Typical 12-Month Job Retention Rate:** N/A

**Typical Annual Program Budget:** \$700,000

**Main Funding Source(s):** Foundation, Fee for Service—Participant, Product Sales

**Other Notable Info:** Celebration Company serves as participants' main employer. It is a social enterprise focused on services and products that "celebrate the good of life."

**Website:** [www.jfshouston.org/services/disability/celebration-company](http://www.jfshouston.org/services/disability/celebration-company)

**Contact:** Jamie Weiner, 713-986-7851, [jweiner@jfshouston.org](mailto:jweiner@jfshouston.org)

**Description:** Celebration Company is a strengths-based, person-centered social enterprise program that makes gift items and offers varied opportunities for participants/employees to lead and be a part of the decision-making process. Many participants are not "ready" for competitive employment, and this may be their job for an extended period of time. The 28-30 participants per day spend six hours divided between vocational skills training and paid work.

We work with each person to see what their vocational desires are and design smaller, attainable goals that support and build on that larger vocational goal. We believe that to be successful at work you also have to be successful at home, so we combine social and life skills training into our daily routine to optimize each individual's level of independence that they desire.

The program is small and intimate. The work is considered fun, and participants feel engaged and part of the community. JFS staff are committed to the participants and the program. They know participants/ employees well and also build strong relationships with participants' family members.





# JFS Houston Employment Services

**Organization:** JFS Houston

**Employment Program Name:** Employment Services

**Location:** Houston, TX

**Typical # Enrolled in Program Annually:** 250

**Primary Types of Participant Disabilities:** Mental Health/Cognitive, Autism Spectrum, Intellectual/Developmental, Learning, Physical, Hearing Impairment, Vision Impairment

**Program Structure (Individualized Services/Cohort/Both):** Individualized

**Occupational or Industry Focus:** Healthcare, Retail, Administrative, Oil & Gas

**Sample Employer Partners:** Walgreens, CVS, Rice Epicurean, Goodwill Industries of Houston, Harris Health, Compass Group USA, Exela Technologies, Helfman Ford Dodge, Morrison Healthcare, HEB Grocery Store

**Typical Placement Rate in Competitive Employment:** 40% of enrollees [100 of 250]

**Typical 6-Month Job Retention Rate:** 55% [55 of 100]

**Typical 12-Month Job Retention Rate:** 40% [40 of 100]

**Typical Annual Program Budget:** \$150,000

**Main Funding Source(s):** Government, Jewish Federation, Private

**Other Notable Info:** Partners with Houston Community College, University of Houston, AARP, Dress for Success, Career Gear, Catholic Charities, The WorkFaith Connection, Texas Workforce Commission, Workforce Solutions

**Website:** [www.jfshouston.org](http://www.jfshouston.org)

**Contact:** Laura Alter, 713-986-7842, [lalter@jfshouston.org](mailto:lalter@jfshouston.org)

**Description:** Jewish Family Service (JFS) Employment Services assists individuals in finding and maintaining part-time and full-time employment. We have programs targeting clients with disabilities, young adults, senior adults, and anyone trying to determine their next career move. Whether you have a clear vision of where you want to be, need help finding your way, have had large gaps in employment or face other obstacles, we are here to help. We empower job seekers to present their qualifications and experience with confidence. We provide individualized, person-centered services that match the client to the job. We encourage career choices that meet clients' vocational, financial, and personal needs. The JFS staff are patient and "never give up," working for as long as two years to find the right job for someone's success.

Our strength is in our blend of public and private partnerships. The program employs a business developer who has strong relationship with many businesses in the community, ranging from healthcare and university to retail. These employers also help us offer informational interviewing, job site tours, and internships for participants to clarify work goals. Our relationships with teaching institutions can lead to employment or education when desired and appropriate. We help individuals not coming right from high school to navigate the education landscape and find needed accommodations. All employees are certified by the Texas Workforce Commission, which provides additional capacity and options for participants.



**Organization:** JSSA (Jewish Social Service Agency)

**Employment Program Name:** Employment Services

**Location:** Rockville, MD

**Typical # Enrolled in Program Annually:** 425, including 190 in job search activities

**Primary Types of Participant Disabilities:** Autism Spectrum, Intellectual/Developmental, Mental Health/Cognitive, Deaf or Hearing Impaired

**Program Structure (Individualized Services/Cohort/Both):** Individualized

**Occupational or Industry Focus:** Food Service, Hospitality, Business, Fitness, IT

**Sample Employer Partners:** CVS, Enterprise, Sodexo, United States Government

**Typical Placement Rate in Competitive Employment:** 74% of enrollees [140 of 190]

**Typical 6-Month Job Retention Rate:** 89% [124 of 140]

**Typical 12-Month Job Retention Rate:** Not provided

**Typical Annual Program Budget:** \$1,200,000

**Main Funding Source(s):** Vocational Rehabilitation

**Other Notable Info:**

**Website:** [www.jssa.org](http://www.jssa.org)

**Contact:** Tom Liniak, 301-610-8405, [tliniak@jssa.org](mailto:tliniak@jssa.org)

**Description:** JSSA utilizes visual and experiential training programs and train to hire programs. This learn by doing approach leads to significantly higher employment and retention rates. We are also immersed in and highly attuned to the needs of employers, which greatly assists in matching the right candidates to open positions.

Our staff combines a wide array of experience in law, business, HR, workforce development, sales and recruiting in addition to a wealth of experience in traditional vocational rehab, autism, and disabilities. This allows us to assist clients who seek jobs from first-time part-time jobs to IT and professional positions. We offer a wide array of training and train to hire programs at employer sites which can impart lasting skills, judge interest and success, and forego traditional interview pathways. We also have an extensive number of employer site work-based learning opportunities for those who are still in the school system where they can learn “how work works.”



SKILLS . JOBS . CAREERS

**Organization:** JVS Boston

**Employment Program Name:** Transitions to Work

**Location:** Boston, MA

**Typical # Enrolled in Program Annually:** 68

**Primary Types of Participant Disabilities:** Autism Spectrum, Learning, I/DD, Mental Health

**Program Structure (Individualized Services/Cohort/Both):** Both

**Occupational or Industry Focus:** Retail Industry, Food Industry, Service Roles in Healthcare Industry

**Sample Employer Partners:** Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital, CVS Health, Boston Children's Hospital, NewBridge on the Charles, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center

**Typical Placement Rate in Competitive Employment:** 65% of enrollees [44 of 68], 68% of completers [44 of 65]

**Typical 6-Month Job Retention Rate:** 80% [35 of 44]

**Typical 12-Month Job Retention Rate:** 75% [33 of 44]

**Typical Annual Program Budget:** \$680,000

**Main Funding Source(s):** Government, Foundation, Vocational Rehabilitation

**Other Notable Info:** 80% of participants are in the 16-24 age range; numerous school partnerships including Boston Public Schools; ServSafe Food Handler credential; on-site, targeted internships at employer partners; leverages agency-wide business relationships

**Website:** [www.jvs-boston.org/our-services/disability-services/](http://www.jvs-boston.org/our-services/disability-services/)

**Contact:** Jeff Gentry, 978.590.4466, [jgentry@jvs-boston.org](mailto:jgentry@jvs-boston.org)

**Description:** The Transitions to Work program provides unemployed or underemployed young people with disabilities (ages 16-35) with industry-focused job readiness training and life skills needed to secure meaningful employment in the field of their choice. Transitions to Work sessions provide current high school students and young adults with disabilities with hands-on internships at employers in industries including healthcare, retail, and food service (or in virtual training sessions as needed). After young adults complete the program, they are provided with 1:1 career coaching for 12 months so they can secure employment and position themselves for future career growth. The career coaching and job placement services are tailored to a client's specific interests, preferences, strengths, and challenges. Ongoing supports are also provided post-placement. Transitions to Work has a strong placement rate of graduates (65%) and staff are committed to supporting our alumni's career advancement. Keys to the Transitions to Work program's success include:

- A commitment to equipping high school youth with the skills and experience required to secure paid employment before graduation. Research based on the National Longitudinal Transition Survey and our own experience has shown that early access to paid employment is a key indicator of long-term success;
- An ability to work with different ages, abilities, and skill levels while maintaining individualized supports;
- JVS's strong employer connections, which allow the program to provide internship training at employer sites while preparing students to meet our employer partners' current hiring needs; and
- A commitment to our students' success in employment and our career coaches' intensive approach to 1:1 Career Training and Placement Services. Coaches are able to provide in-person initial job coaching, ongoing supports, and whatever else it takes to see students succeed.



**Organization:** JVS Human Services

**Employment Program Name:** Customer Service Training Program

**Location:** Southfield, MI (Detroit)

**Typical # Enrolled in Program Annually:** 25

**Primary Types of Participant Disabilities:** Autism Spectrum, Intellectual/Developmental

**Program Structure (Individualized Services/Cohort/Both):** Cohort

**Occupational or Industry Focus:** Customer service (in-person, in call centers, virtual)

**Sample Employer Partners:** Kroger, Amazon, SourceAmerica

**Typical Placement Rate in Competitive Employment:** 84% of enrollees [21 of 25]

**Typical 6-Month Job Retention Rate:** 86% [18 of 21]

**Typical 12-Month Job Retention Rate:** 81% [17 of 21]

**Typical Annual Program Budget:** \$74,000

**Main Funding Source(s):** Vocational Rehabilitation

**Other Notable Info:** Partnerships include Oakland Community Health Network, Detroit-Wayne Integrated Health Network.

**Website:** [www.jvshumanservices.org](http://www.jvshumanservices.org)

**Contact:** James Willis, 248-233-4483, [jwillis@jvshumanservices.org](mailto:jwillis@jvshumanservices.org)

**Description:** The customer service training program is a seven-week program where the following topics are covered: soft skills, accepting feedback, teamwork, managing stress, conflict resolution, verbal/no-verbal communication, face to face and telephone skills, databasing basics and job seeking skills. The topics referenced above are covered during the first two weeks of the program. Week 3 involves research and job shadowing of one or more customer service settings. Weeks 4-6 include 20 hours per week paid work experience in a customer service setting. Weeks 6-12 include job seeking skills training and weekly meetings with a job developer to assist each student in securing and negotiating employment.

The success of the program can be attributed to the idea that securing a job in a customer service setting starts in Week One. As opposed to waiting to complete the training, the facilitator and students start developing and reaching out to potential employers at the start of the program. Additionally, the job shadows not only provide insight into job expectations, but also assist the students in widening their network of potential contacts and employers in the field of customer service.



**Organization:** JVS Toronto

**Employment Program Name:** Path2Work

**Location:** Toronto, Ontario

**Typical # Enrolled in Program Annually:** 30

**Primary Types of Participant Disabilities:** Intellectual/Developmental

**Program Structure (Individualized Services/Cohort/Both):** Cohort

**Occupational or Industry Focus:** Warehouse, Retail, Food Services

**Sample Employer Partners:** Not provided

**Main Funding Source(s):** Provincial Government

**Other Notable Info:** Program replicated across Ontario province

**Website:** [www.jvstoronto.org](http://www.jvstoronto.org)

**Contact:** Matthew Rodrigues, 416.649.1586, [matthew.rodrigues@jvstoronto.org](mailto:matthew.rodrigues@jvstoronto.org)

**Description:** The Path2Work program enables adults with developmental and intellectual disabilities to move into paid employment. Program participants prepare for and find employment by understanding their personal strengths and challenges and developing strategies that align with them to ensure their success in the workplace. Through Path2Work, individuals receive a Personalized Return to Work (RTW) action plan and one-on-one employment counselling, attend employment and life skills workshops, are introduced to employers, undergo job interview preparation, and receive on-the-job coaching and support. In addition, participants are provided with supports to cover the cost of transportation, clothing, devices, and accessibility needs. Employer incentives are sometimes provided to offset the cost of taking on a Path2Work client and training them.

JVS Toronto has a deep understanding and knowledge of individuals living with a wide range of disabilities and the support needed to obtain meaningful employment. We leverage our years of experience and connections in the community to ensure individuals receive in-depth, holistic, and wrap-around support. Compounding low levels of income supports, support needs can vary drastically depending both on the disability and its severity. While competitive unsupported employment in the community is the focus of government ministries, history has shown that people with disabilities are not well served by generic, mainstream programs. The individualized support provided through this program opens the opportunity for this particular group of individuals to attempt mainstream employment in the future, and for some, this is the first step to alleviating poverty.

In addition to assisting in post-pandemic economic recovery by enabling individuals to become gainfully employed, the project will also serve as a preventative measure by reducing participant risk of reliance on community resources.



**Organization:** JVS Toronto

**Employment Program Name:** Project GOLD

**Location:** Scarborough, Ontario

**Typical # Enrolled in Program Annually:** 120

**Primary Types of Participant Disabilities:** Learning

**Program Structure (Individualized Services/Cohort/Both):** Individualized

**Occupational or Industry Focus:** Finance, Administrative, Customer Service, Warehouse

**Sample Employer Partners:** Not provided

**Main Funding Source(s):** Provincial Government

**Other Notable Info:** Program replicated across Ontario province

**Website:** [www.jvstoronto.org](http://www.jvstoronto.org)

**Contact:** Matthew Rodrigues, 416-649-1586, [matthew.rodrigues@jvstoronto.org](mailto:matthew.rodrigues@jvstoronto.org)

**Description:** The Project GOLD program enables adults with learning disabilities or ADD or ADHD to achieve and retain meaningful employment. Program participants prepare for the workplace by developing a better understanding of how their learning disabilities, ADD, or ADHD affects their lives both in and out of work. Through Project GOLD, individuals develop an understanding of their unique strengths and abilities, receive support to modify their resume to match employment goals, receive job search and on-the-job coaching support, attend employment and life skills workshops, receive a Personalized Return to Work (RTW) action plan and are assisted with disability disclosure to employers.

Project GOLD distinguishes itself from other disability programs due to its tailored approach to this particular client group that is typically not well served by generic, mainstream programs. Participants are able to secure meaningful employment that is in line with their career goals at a faster pace than they would in a more general employment program for individuals with disabilities.

JVS Toronto has a deep understanding and knowledge of individuals living with a wide range of disabilities and the support needed to obtain meaningful employment. We leverage our years of experience and connections in the community to ensure individuals receive in-depth, holistic, and wrap-around support. Compounding low levels of income supports, support needs can vary drastically depending both on the disability and its severity. While competitive unsupported employment in the community is the focus of government ministries, history has shown that people with disabilities are not well served by generic, mainstream programs. The individualized support provided through this program opens the opportunity for this particular group of individuals to attempt mainstream employment in the future, and for some, this is the first step to alleviating poverty.

In addition to assisting in post-pandemic economic recovery by enabling individuals to become gainfully employed, the project will also serve as a preventative measure by reducing participant risk of reliance on community resources.



**Organization:** Ometz

**Employment Program Name:** Supported Employment Service

**Location:** Montreal, Quebec

**Typical # Enrolled in Program Annually:** 100

**Primary Types of Participant Disabilities:** Mental Health, Intellectual and Learning Disabilities, Autism Spectrum Disorder

**Program Structure (Individualized Services/Cohort/Both):** Individualized

**Occupational or Industry Focus:** N/A

**Sample Employer Partners:** Local businesses, social enterprises

**Typical Placement Rate in Competitive Employment:** 60%

**Typical 6-Month Job Retention Rate:** N/A

**Typical 12-Month Job Retention Rate:** N/A

**Typical Annual Program Budget:** \$260,000

**Main Funding Source(s):** Government (Provincial level)

**Other Notable Info:**

**Website:** [www.ometz.ca](http://www.ometz.ca)

**Contact:** Edina Markovitz, 514-345-6441, [Edina.markovitz@ometz.ca](mailto:Edina.markovitz@ometz.ca)

**Description:** Incorporating Ometz's mission of empowering individuals to move toward self-sufficiency, a client-centered approach is used to help clients meet their employment objectives. Together with the client, the employment specialist develops an individualized action plan touching on relevant aspects of job search and job retention. This includes identifying transferrable skills, help with CV writing, interview preparation, coaching clients to conduct the most effective and comprehensive job search, job placement and additional support in the form of accompaniment to job interviews. A job coach helps clients integrate at their new job or assists with troubleshooting at an existing job. Employment specialists also dedicate time to job development by advocating on behalf of particular clients as well as educating prospective employers about the benefits of inclusive hiring.

The investment of our professional team in our clients' success and well-being, along with the ongoing support that we provide, are the key ingredients leading to successful outcomes. Clients receive support throughout their entire job search journey, and this continues once a job match has been made. Our job coach will accompany a client to their new job site to ensure the client feels comfortable and knows to whom to turn for help. Importantly, the job coach works with the client to ensure they can complete their tasks to the satisfaction of the employer before systematically stepping back. Our job coaching service provides long-term support to clients as needed, and guidance to their employers, to ensure a successful outcome for all.





**Organization:** RespectAbility

**Employment Program Name:** National Leadership & Apprenticeship Program

**Location:** Virtual

**Typical # Enrolled in Program Annually:** 30 (2 cohorts of 15)

**Primary Types of Participant Disabilities:** Physical, Mental Health/Cognitive, Learning

**Program Structure (Individualized Services/Cohort/Both):** Cohort

**Occupational or Industry Focus:** Nonprofit leadership, philanthropy, public policy, development, communications, and faith organizations

**Sample Employer Partners:** The Walt Disney Company, JPMorgan Chase, Sony Pictures Entertainment, The Kresge Foundation, government, and other foundations

**Typical Placement Rate in Competitive Employment:** 83% of enrollees [25 of 30], 86% of completers [25 of 29]

**Typical 6-Month Job Retention Rate:** 92% [23 of 25]

**Typical 12-Month Job Retention Rate:** 88% [22 of 25]

**Typical Annual Program Budget:** \$735,390

**Main Funding Source(s):** Foundations

**Other Notable Info:** 60% of participants are in the 21-30 age group. Others have newly acquired disabilities due to accidents, injuries, or aging.

**Website:** [Leadership - RespectAbility](#)

**Contact:** Tonya Koslo, 540-903-5179, [TonyaK@RespectAbility.org](mailto:TonyaK@RespectAbility.org)

**Description:** RespectAbility's apprenticeship is a 15-person virtual "earn-while-you-learn" cohort model for college-educated disabled jobseekers who want to go into public policy and advocacy, communications and entertainment, nonprofit management, philanthropy, civic engagement, or faith inclusion. Our program is an innovative model of how virtual cohort-based job training, work experience, and placement efforts can prepare talented people with diverse disabilities for succeeding in family-sustaining careers in the knowledge economy.

Our 5.5 month apprenticeship program groups jobseekers with disabilities together to learn and work remotely. They gain concrete professional skills, contacts, and experience. This program offers in-house job coaching, skills development, writing coaching, networking opportunities, experience with assistive technology, and job placement. Participants learn and practice accessibility tools and methods while doing real work in their career subject areas. There is ongoing training, real work assignments, deadlines, and continuous feedback on their skills. Apprentices have access to the program director and staff leaders as mentors.

Some apprentices start in-house (virtually) with us and then move to doing their work virtually inside a host-employer who may hire them at the end of the program. Alumni become force-multipliers in decision-making roles where they can open hearts, minds, and doors for others with disabilities to have jobs. Our model could succeed with almost any type of knowledge work and is ripe for replication as job seekers can come from anywhere and be placed in jobs anywhere.

## Section 4B: NJHSA Program Summaries—Other Organizations

The following pages include key survey data from each of the non-NJHSA organization programs that submitted surveys, along with additional descriptive information they provided.

- Ability Beyond – Career Development (Bethel, CT, and Chappaqua, NY)
- Aspire – Careers (Hillside, IL)
- Bancroft – Adult Employment Services (Cherry Hill, NJ)
- Bridges from School to Work – Chicago (National network – Bethesda, MD)
- Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center - Project SEARCH (National network – Cincinnati)
- Eastern Carolina Vocational Center – Employment Training and Placement (Greenville, NC)
- Goodwill of North Georgia – Opportunity Accelerator Model: Workforce Development (Decatur, GA)
- Grand Traverse Industries – Employment and Training (Traverse City, MI)
- Itineris – Meaningful Day (Baltimore)
- Jewish National Fund USA – Special in Uniform (New York)
- Judith Creed Horizons for Achieving Independence – JCHAI In-Home and Community Supports (Bryn Mawr, PA)
- National Ramah Commission – National Ramah Tikvah Network (New York)
- Tangram – Employment Services (Indianapolis)
- VISIONS – Workforce Development (New York)



**Organization:** Ability Beyond

**Employment Program Name:** Career Development

**Location:** Headquarters in Bethel, CT, and Chappaqua, NY (with other CT/NY locations throughout both states)

**Typical # Enrolled in Program Annually:** 1100

**Primary Types of Participant Disabilities:** Mental Health/Cognitive, Developmental Disabilities, Autism Spectrum, Learning

**Program Structure (Individualized Services/Cohort/Both):** Both

**Occupational or Industry Focus:** N/A

**Sample Employer Partners:** PepsiCo, Duracell, Target, Walmart, TJX

**Typical Placement Rate in Competitive Employment:** 59% of enrollees [650 out of 1100]

**Typical 6-Month Job Retention Rate:** 79% [515 out of 650]

**Typical 12-Month Job Retention Rate:** 79% [515 out of 650]

**Typical Annual Program Budget:** \$2,975,000

**Main Funding Source(s):** Vocational Rehabilitation, DD, and MH State Departments (CT and NY), Other Govt.

**Other Notable Info:** Multiple offices in CT and NY State; has a national consulting division to assist corporations with disability services; partnerships with colleges and hospitals

**Website:** [www.abilitybeyond.org](http://www.abilitybeyond.org)

**Contact:** Carrie O'Connell, 203-788-8754, [carrie.oconnell@abilitybeyond.org](mailto:carrie.oconnell@abilitybeyond.org)

**Description:** At Ability Beyond, our mission is in our name. We "discover, build, and celebrate the ability in all people," with a focus on promoting independence, community integration and social justice. To that end, we deliver award-winning continuum-of-life services in 90 communities across the Northeast, with a major focus on employment services locally and nationally. Individuals are referred through their schools, other practices, or self-referred. All clients begin with an individual assessment and are then assigned to an employment specialist, a college level position. The employment specialists works to explore the client's specific wants and needs and identify possible job options. Once assigned to a job, the client will soon be transferred to a job coach, who will continue to monitor as needed. We work with individuals with any type of disability, including mental illness, developmental disabilities, physical disabilities, and substance use disorders.

Ability Beyond is committed to employment as an integral part of recovery and independence. We believe that competitive, integrated employment is the first and preferred choice for all individuals served, regardless of severity of disability, perceived job readiness, substance use, symptoms, etc. Everyone supported is truly treated with an individualized approach, and customized planning. All Ability Beyond team members demonstrate the belief in employment for all and exhibit the actions "employment as everybody's business", speaking up about employment and encouraging referrals and services for anyone interested. Our impressive employment rates are shared as key performance indicators across the agency, and with all stakeholders. When Ability Beyond has a creative idea to help improve the lives of people with disabilities, there is nothing we won't try to see if there is a better way to do. Efficiency, collaboration, innovation, and determination are key to all of the successful ways the organization has expanded their depth over the past 65 years. Our "secret sauce" is our leadership, which has been stable for 40 years, and who does an excellent job of thinking "ahead of the curve" in terms of where the field is going.



**Organization:** Aspire

**Employment Program Name:** Careers

**Location:** Hillside, IL

**Typical # Enrolled in Program Annually:** 280

**Primary Types of Participant Disabilities:** Intellectual/Developmental, Mental Health/Cognitive, Autism Spectrum, Learning

**Program Structure (Individualized Services/Cohort/Both):** Both

**Occupational or Industry Focus:** Hospitality, retail, warehousing/supply chain, food service, wellness/fitness/health, office, technology

**Sample Employer Partners:** Walgreens, Bank of America, Portillo's

**Typical Placement Rate in Competitive Employment:** 21% of enrollees [60 of 280], 80% of completers [60 of 75]

**Typical 6-Month Job Retention Rate:** 95% [57 of 60]

**Typical 12-Month Job Retention Rate:** 90% [54 of 60]

**Typical Annual Program Budget:** \$470,048

**Main Funding Source(s):** Government, Foundation, Vocational Rehabilitation

**Other Notable Info:** Replicated in Lake County, IL, and southeastern WI

**Website:** [www.aspirechicago.com](http://www.aspirechicago.com)

**Contact:** Danielle Hollis, 708-236-0979, [dhollis@aspirechicago.com](mailto:dhollis@aspirechicago.com)

**Description:** Through our Careers program, Aspire delivers individualized job training, job placement assistance, and on-the-job technical support for adults with disabilities to increase their financial self-sufficiency, access community resources, and build a network of social support—all while working with employers to create inclusive work environments that lead to increased job retention rates, high-performance, and professional growth. The goal of Aspire's Careers program is to address the high unemployment rate among people with disabilities and create more inclusive workplaces where people with disabilities are recognized, represented, and valued. We aim to achieve this goal by delivering job readiness training to improve vocational skills, assisting in securing community-based employment in a job of their choice earning equal to or above minimum wage, and providing on the job support to support high performance, retention, and overall satisfaction for both the employee and the employer.

With bold and enterprising initiatives, Aspire is making our communities better by redefining what is possible for people with disabilities. We envision a community where people of all abilities live, learn, and grow together. Our vision calls for us to extend our work into communities—working with companies, volunteers, and other community organizations to promote the promise of inclusion. Aspire's unique and innovative approach to service delivery empowers people with disabilities to identify, address, and overcome socio-economic barriers, while elevating the public's mindset about the benefits of disability inclusion to drive our mission of inclusion forward.



**Organization:** Bancroft

**Employment Program Name:** Adult Employment Services

**Location:** Cherry Hill, NJ

**Typical # Enrolled in Program Annually:** 115--30 in Supported Employment/85 in Transitional

**Primary Types of Participant Disabilities:** Intellectual/Developmental, Autism Spectrum, Self-Care/Independent Living

**Program Structure (Individualized Services/Cohort/Both):** Both

**Occupational or Industry Focus:** N/A

**Sample Employer Partners:** Wawa, TJX Companies, Shoprite

**Typical Placement Rate in Competitive Employment:** 95% [27 of 30 in Supported Employment]

**Typical 6-Month Job Retention Rate:** 100% [27 of 27]

**Typical 12-Month Job Retention Rate:** 93% [25 of 27]

**Typical Annual Program Budget:** \$1.8 million

**Main Funding Source(s):** Fee for service (participant), Vocational Rehabilitation

**Other Notable Info:** Active diversity, equity, and inclusion focus with 26 strategies and tactics, including virtual "Courageous Conversations" events

**Website:** [www.bancroft.org](http://www.bancroft.org)

**Contact:** Avi Glickman, 856-874-8332, [avi.glickman@bancroft.org](mailto:avi.glickman@bancroft.org)

Description: Our Adult Employment program is made up of 2 tiers: Transitional Employment Services and Supported Employment Services. Transitional employment is designed for individuals who are not yet ready to pursue independent employment in the community. The program focuses on small-group job training and career planning supported by a job coach, with emphasis on teaching employment-related soft skills. Services are provided through partnerships with local businesses or within Bancroft Employment Enterprises – a network of small, community based entrepreneurial endeavors that provide employment training, experience, and support. With Supported Employment Services, Employment Specialists provide individualized support with resume writing, interview preparation, job searching and on-the-job training for those who are ready to pursue competitive, self- or customized employment. Supported employment also offers individual career planning and community-based work evaluations to assess work-related skills, adaptive behaviors, interests, strengths and needs to determine the level of support needed for competitive, integrated employment.

Our program focuses on using the principles of Applied Behavior Analysis to teach and generalize critical adaptive behavior and social skills in order to maximize independence and success at work and in the community. Using ABA as a foundation of our work, we have developed a robust network of small businesses (e.g., a copy and print shop, a grab and go café, a wash and fold laundry service, a mobile car detailing service, a lawn care service, custom apparel printing business and store, janitorial services, culinary training group, etc.) that provide real-world employment training and experience to individuals who need greater support. We also have partnerships with a variety of local businesses that support our small groups with onsite employment opportunities. These two variables allow us to provide innovative employment training opportunities in a variety of settings and contexts.



**Organization:** Bridges from School to Work

**Employment Program Name:** Bridges from School to Work of Chicago

**Location:** Chicago, IL

**Typical # Enrolled in Program Annually:** 260

**Primary Types of Participant Disabilities:** Learning, Autism Spectrum, Intellectual/Developmental

**Program Structure (Individualized Services/Cohort/Both):** Both

**Occupational or Industry Focus:** N/A

**Sample Employer Partners:** Jewel Osco, UPS, Aramark, Levy Restaurants

**Typical Placement Rate in Competitive Employment:** 95% of enrollees [246 of 260]

**Typical 6-Month Job Retention Rate:** 74% [182 of 246]

**Typical 12-Month Job Retention Rate:** 43% [105 of 246]

**Typical Annual Program Budget:** \$2,100,000

**Main Funding Source(s):** Government, Vocational Rehabilitation, Foundation, Private

**Other Notable Info:** Focus on 14-24 age group; sites in 11 other cities; active community partnerships

**Website:** [www.bridgestowork.org](http://www.bridgestowork.org)

**Contact:** Allen Brown, 404-395-4956, [allen.brown@bridgestowork.org](mailto:allen.brown@bridgestowork.org)

**Description:** Through established relationships with U.S. school districts, Bridges works with educators to prepare young adults with disabilities for and connect them to competitive, integrated employment with local businesses. Following an intake and assessment process, youth receive tailored job readiness instruction that culminates in job searches, job applications, job interviews, and Bridges personnel matching them to entry-level jobs ideal for their interests, aptitudes, and abilities. Once hired, Bridges personnel mentor and coach the youth for up to one year, sometimes placing them in more than one job to aid them in achieving their professional goals. Bridges provides an additional focus on opportunities for advancement beyond the initial placement in an entry-level job. Bridges seeks to meet the needs of youth and the employers who hire them.

One Bridges staff member provides a full range of workforce development services to a small caseload, an approach that avoids fragmentation and promotes continuity. Youth do not get lost in a shuffle between staff members. Employment success is enhanced because of high frequency and high intensity interactions with staff members. They function as instructors, mentors, life coaches, and case managers who remove some of the logistical and psychological barriers that overwhelm and intimidate youth with disabilities who want jobs but have trouble finding them. Employer Representatives affirm the abilities of youth, many who enter the program feeling stigmatized because of physical, sensory, or cognitive limitations. Bridges helps youth navigate the precarious transition between late adolescence and the adult workforce.



**Organization:** Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center

**Employment Program Name:** Project SEARCH

**Location:** Cincinnati, OH

**Typical # Enrolled in Program Annually:** 6,508 nationally / 8 per school program

**Primary Types of Participant Disabilities:** Intellectual/Developmental, Autism Spectrum, Learning

**Program Structure (Individualized Services/Cohort/Both):** Both

**Occupational or Industry Focus:** N/A

**Sample Employer Partners:** Cincinnati Children's Hospital, Dow Chemical, TD Bank, Dover Air Force Base

**Typical Placement Rate in Competitive Employment:** 70% of enrollees [2907 of 4066], 75% of completers [2907 of 3868]

**Typical 6-Month Job Retention Rate:** Not provided

**Typical 12-Month Job Retention Rate:** Not provided

**Typical Annual Program Budget:** \$200,000 per individual school program

**Main Funding Source(s):** School Partners, Vocational Rehabilitation, Other Government

**Other Notable Info:** 87% of participants are in 14-24 age group; targets medium to large employers with a variety of internship opportunities; 650 school-based programs in 48 states and 10 countries

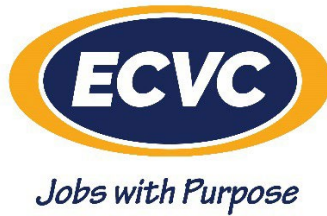
**Website:** [www.projectsearch.us](http://www.projectsearch.us)

**Contact:** Erin Riehle, 513-304-9644, [erin.riehle@cchmc.org](mailto:erin.riehle@cchmc.org)

**Description:** Project SEARCH is designed for young people with intellectual and developmental disabilities who desire competitive, integrated employment. The program is sustainable and can be offered free-of-charge because it leverages existing funding streams. Program participants experience a full academic year of hands-on employment preparation in an actual workplace. Total workplace immersion facilitates a seamless combination of classroom instruction, career exploration, and training in specific, marketable job-skills. The program culminates in individualized job development.

Project SEARCH's model fidelity criteria are the key to providing consistent quality and results throughout a large network of program sites. Model fidelity is maintained via an online Member Portal that facilitates the dissemination of new materials, notifications, and trainings to all program sites. In addition, the Member Portal provides access for data entry. Timely and accurate data entry allows Project SEARCH leadership to monitor employment outcomes and drives continuous improvement.





**Organization:** Eastern Carolina Vocational Center

**Employment Program Name:** Employment Training and Placement Program

**Location:** Greenville, NC

**Typical # Enrolled in Program Annually:** 234

**Primary Types of Participant Disabilities:** Intellectual/Developmental, Mental Health/Cognitive, Physical, Substance Abuse, Any

**Program Structure (Individualized Services/Cohort/Both):** Both

**Occupational or Industry Focus:** Apprenticeships available for Custodial, Maintenance, Furniture Finisher. Employment supports in any field of interest: Manufacturing, Hospital, College, Retail, Service

**Sample Employer Partners:** Vidant Medical Center, Aramark, FedEx, AccuLink, Lowe's Home Improvement, AMC Theaters, Target, Food Lion, Village Point Market, Physician East, Carolina Caliber Co., A Kidz Place Child Care Center

**Typical Placement Rate in Competitive Employment:** 39.5 % of enrollees (during COVID)

**Typical 6-Month Job Retention Rate:** Not provided - 90-day job retention success rate = 72% of placed

**Typical 12-Month Job Retention Rate:** Not provided

**Typical Annual Program Budget:** \$627,125

**Main Funding Source(s):** Vocational Rehabilitation, Division of Services for the Blind, Department of Social Services, contracted goods/services business earnings

**Other Notable Info:** Partnerships with Pitt Community College and numerous community-based and faith-based agencies

**Website:** [www.ecvcinc.com](http://www.ecvcinc.com)

**Contact:** Christina Bell, 252-758-4188, [cbell@ecvcinc.com](mailto:cbell@ecvcinc.com)

**Description:** ECVC offers a comprehensive array of CARF-accredited services focused on employment soft skills readiness and the identification of needed employer-specific skills to create a strong match. ECVC's employment partners share the shifting knowledge base and skills needed for their workforce's success. This allows participants to identify, explore, demonstrate, and address gaps through the individual Discovery process. Open to those referred by multiple referral agencies, our services provide individual learning experiences with one-on-one staff interventions and on the job supports throughout the employment process. ECVC has experienced staff with a range of educational and hands-on training experience in benefits counseling and community resources like transportation to reach employment goals.

ECVC has a proven placement track record of success with our community businesses since 1965, offers a variety of services for support, and acts as proof that a community employer can excel in their business while employing individuals with disabilities. ECVC believes in Discovery and identifying participants' and employers' needs for success through multiple styles of intervention. We then focus on the right fit. ECVC's diverse staff are knowledgeable in workforce development and build employer relationships that allow for support. Finally, ECVC focuses on connections with other workforce development programs and a variety of opportunities to advance the employment of people with disabilities.



**Organization:** Goodwill of North Georgia

**Employment Program Name:** Opportunity Accelerator Model, Workforce Development

**Location:** Decatur, GA headquarters; services in 13 locations, serving 45 counties of North Georgia

**Typical # Enrolled in Program Annually:** 1,566

**Primary Types of Participant Disabilities:** Physical, Mental Health/Cognitive, Learning

**Program Structure (Individualized Services/Cohort/Both):** Both

**Occupational or Industry Focus:** Healthcare, IT, TDL & Supply Chain Mgmt., Construction, Maintenance/Skilled Trades, Hospitality, Retail, Micro-entrepreneurship

**Sample Employer Partners:** Amazon, Walmart, Anthem

**Typical Placement Rate in Competitive Employment:** 77% of enrollees [1206 of 1566]

**Typical 6-Month Job Retention Rate:** 75% [909 of 1206]

**Typical 12-Month Job Retention Rate:** 67% [808 of 1206]

**Typical Annual Program Budget:** \$5,514,672

**Main Funding Source(s):** Government, Vocational Rehabilitation, Private

**Other Notable Info:** Replicated in 13 GA career centers and Goodwills nationally; training for multiple industry credentials; partnerships with technical colleges, literacy groups, food banks, housing resources

**Website:** [www.goodwillng.org](http://www.goodwillng.org) or [www.careerconnector.org](http://www.careerconnector.org)

**Contact:** Jenny Taylor, 706-540-5221, [jtaylor@ging.org](mailto:jtaylor@ging.org)

**Description:** Goodwill of North Georgia's mission is to put people to work. We have nearly a decade of experience successfully operating an earn-while-you-learn model where people can immediately earn wages practicing the skills they learn in the classroom. Most programs are less than a semester (two to sixteen weeks, depending upon career pathway) and focus on our ABCs: A first job, a Better job, and a Career. We provide job training, placement, case management, work supports, paid internships, registered apprenticeships, staffing services, and opportunities to anyone who wants to work. We serve all job-seekers, but provide priority to people with disabilities, veterans, women in non-traditional occupations, people receiving public benefits like SNAP and TANF, returning citizens, youth with justice involvement, and low income households.

There are many contributing factors to our success at Goodwill of North Georgia. A few that we have been recognized for as best practices include:

- Incentivizing the right thing: the performance ratings and annual merit increase for all staff are tied to the success of the people we serve.
- Deep employer engagement: hiring managers drive the job training we offer and provide paid internships, apprenticeships, and paid working interviews tied to jobs people want in high demand in our community.
- College co-enrollment: many of our credential programs at Goodwill count for college credit and are taught by technical college faculty and we help navigate enrollment.
- We teach people how to not get fired. Soft skills/essential workplace skills are our primary focus.



**Organization:** Grand Traverse Industries

**Employment Program Name:** Employment and Training

**Location:** Traverse City, MI

**Typical # Enrolled in Program Annually:** 250

**Primary Types of Participant Disabilities:** Intellectual/Developmental, Mental Health/Cognitive, Autism Spectrum

**Program Structure (Individualized Services/Cohort/Both):** Both

**Occupational or Industry Focus:** N/A

**Sample Employer Partners:** Plascon Group, Venturi, Lear sub-contracts, FAA, US Coast Guard, Traverse Connect (local economic development organization), Northern Michigan Supply Alliance

**Typical Placement Rate in Competitive Employment:** 8% of enrollees [20 of 250], 67% of “completers” [20 of 30]

**Typical 6-Month Job Retention Rate:** 90% [18 of 20]

**Typical 12-Month Job Retention Rate:** 75% [15 of 20]

**Typical Annual Program Budget:** \$2,500,000 (about 50% of the overall GTI budget)

**Main Funding Source(s):** Other Government, Manufacturing/Production Income

**Other Notable Info:**

**Website:** [www.grandtraverseindustries.com](http://www.grandtraverseindustries.com)

**Contact:** Steve Perdue, 231-620-2778, [sperdue@grandtraverseindustries.com](mailto:sperdue@grandtraverseindustries.com)

**Description:** First and foremost, to GTI all employment that a worker does earning a paycheck is authentic employment...no matter the location. Therefore, GTI works with the individual where they are in terms of their choices, skills, likes, dislikes, etc., and helps them design an individual plan that fits those criteria. The options can include job search/development in the community outside GTI which would include job placement, with or without a job coach, depending on need, or it could include working in an enclave in a community business like hospitality, manufacturing, or on a work crew in GTI’s custodial business. It could also include working in a GTI manufacturing or industrial assembly/packaging plant.

Our program’s “secret sauce” includes this element of individual choice, as well as the amount of family support involved, community and business support of our GTI operations, the wide variety of work options we provide, and our trained, dedicated staff.



**Organization:** Itineris

**Employment Program Name:** Meaningful Day

**Location:** Baltimore, MD

**Typical # Enrolled in Program Annually:** 10 new - total is 106; we have halted admissions for the past year, so these numbers are agency-wide

**Primary Types of Participant Disabilities:** Autism Spectrum

**Program Structure (Individualized Services/Cohort/Both):** Individualized

**Occupational or Industry Focus:** N/A

**Sample Employer Partners:** Not provided

**Typical Placement Rate in Competitive Employment:** 70% of enrollees

**Typical 6-Month Job Retention Rate:** 86% of those placed

**Typical 12-Month Job Retention Rate:** 86% of those placed

**Typical Annual Program Budget:** \$3,500,000

**Main Funding Source(s):** Government, Private, Foundation

**Other Notable Info:**

**Website:** [www.itinerisbaltimore.org](http://www.itinerisbaltimore.org)

**Contact:** Ami Taubenfeld, 443-275-1100, [ataubenfeld@itinerisbaltimore.org](mailto:ataubenfeld@itinerisbaltimore.org)

**Description:** Itineris utilizes a person-centered model to guide our employment services. We work with each individual to assess and identify their strengths and preferences, and then connect them with employer partners who have needs that match their skills. This leads to finding meaningful employment that benefits both parties. We use an individualized approach that includes Discovery, Job Development, Ongoing Job Support, and Self-Employment support. Our Job Developers spend a tremendous amount of time cultivating employer partnerships, so that we get a strong sense of their needs and how our talent pool can benefit their business. We remain onsite until the business feels that there are natural supports in place, or if that is not possible, we will provide ongoing support to the individual at the worksite.

Individuality is a major step towards success. Getting to know the client and the employer partner well is critical. In advance of our clients beginning their new role, we assess what ongoing supports and accommodations are needed to best ensure on the job success. What is the culture at the workplace, how do they recruit and onboard, are the expectations aligned? This may include training on how to rethink traditional onboarding processes and autism specific training for new co-workers.

Itineris supports two partners – the job seeker and the employer. The focus is on creating a job match that is mutually beneficial with long term success. Our ongoing coaching is another important facet, so we are able to address any potential needs such as teaching a new skill, assisting with additional training on a specific task or helping the individual interact with their team.



**Organization:** Jewish National Fund USA

**Employment Program Name:** Special in Uniform

**Location:** New York, NY

**Typical # Enrolled in Program Annually:** 450

**Primary Types of Participant Disabilities:** Intellectual/Developmental, Autism Spectrum, Mental Health/Cognitive, Physical

**Program Structure (Individualized Services/Cohort/Both):** Both

**Occupational or Industry Focus:** Initial preparation is for service in Israel Defense Forces

**Sample Employer Partners:** Not provided

**Typical Placement Rate in Competitive Employment:** 32% of enrollees [144 of 450], 40% of completers [144 of 360]

**Typical 6-Month Job Retention Rate:** 75% [108 of 144]

**Typical 12-Month Job Retention Rate:** 25% [36 of 144]

**Typical Annual Program Budget:** \$3,910,000

**Main Funding Source(s):** Foundation, Private, Government (non-Voc. Rehab.)

**Other Notable Info:** All participants are in 14-24 age group; replicated in Israel Army; skills training in logistics, food industry, computers

**Website:** [www.specialinuniform.com](http://www.specialinuniform.com)

**Contact:** Yosef Kahana (Yossi), 718-208-8258, [ykahana@jnf.org](mailto:ykahana@jnf.org)

**Description:** Special in Uniform integrates young people with disabilities into the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), and in turn, into Israeli society. It focuses on the unique talents of each individual participant to help them find a job within the IDF that is a perfect fit, based on the belief that everyone belongs and has the right to reach his or her full potential. Special in Uniform focuses on the ability, not the disability, of each individual, encouraging transformation, independence, and integration into society. The military service for participants in the program is up to 3 years long and begins with a 10-day pre-induction training program course, including group formation by professionals. Afterwards, the soldiers are integrated into a variety of jobs as part of the military manpower; once they complete their Army service, we start preparing them for job searches and employment. The job experience and the ability to work during army service (in a non-paid work setting) assists our participants in developing work readiness skills that can lead to paid employment in integrated community settings.

To date Special in Uniform has integrated four hundred youths with disabilities in several IDF bases. It has shown to be successful at breaking down barriers. The experience doesn't end with the service, which can last several years. The soldiers enter the workplace with this invaluable expertise, and companies such as Intel seek them out. The Israeli military serves as a great equalizer where youth from all walks intersect and those who do not enlist can find themselves at a handicap once they hit the job market. One's military career can often be a key determinant for employers. The program also helps prepare young adults with autism for their futures, with training on how to deal with challenging situations related to their civilian life such as public transportation. Our goal is simple: better training experience and employment that will be a win-win-win for people with disabilities, employers, and taxpayers alike.



**Organization:** Judith Creed Horizons for Achieving Independence

**Employment Program Name:** JCHAI In-Home and Community Supports

**Location:** Bryn Mawr, PA

**Typical # Enrolled in Program Annually:** 175, of whom 95 are seeking employment

**Primary Types of Participant Disabilities:** Intellectual/Developmental, Self-Care/Independent Living, Autism Spectrum, Mental Health/Cognitive

**Program Structure (Individualized Services/Cohort/Both):** Both

**Occupational or Industry Focus:** N/A

**Sample Employer Partners:** Not provided

**Typical Placement Rate in Competitive Employment:** 75% of those seeking employment [71 of 95]

**Typical 6-Month Job Retention Rate:** Not provided

**Typical 12-Month Job Retention Rate:** Not provided

**Typical Annual Program Budget:** \$3,000,000

**Main Funding Source(s):** Fee for Service-participant, Government, Private

**Website:** [www.jchai.org](http://www.jchai.org)

**Contact:** Stacy Levitan, 610-922-2480, [stacylevitan@jchai.org](mailto:stacylevitan@jchai.org)

**Description:** JCHAI is uniquely differentiated from traditional vocational agencies because vocational learning and development is interwoven across an ecosystem of experiential services that organically and directly impact all facets of the member's life. JCHAI members participate in a collaborative planning process to achieve their professional and personal pursuits. Based on our community integration social workers' comprehensive, expert assessment, teaching strategies are tailored and designed to address immediate needs and skill levels, while fueling continuous growth. A continuum of teaching modalities in home, classroom, and community settings builds fundamental skills and provides advanced opportunities to apply skills in real world employment settings. JCHAI's vocational services do not end with competitive, integrated job placement, but are a continuous process of career development.

JCHAI sees limitless potential and possibilities for our members, inspiring and empowering them to fulfill their life aspirations and be valued contributors to their community. Our network of self-advocates, local leaders, and strategic partners help us build new paradigms of excellence to support innovative programming for the development of our members and the people who live, learn, work, play and give back to the community alongside them. Our members are successful in finding work and maintaining that work because our services are provided in a holistic, wrap-around fashion. Our staff knows what the real interests of our members are, so they find jobs that fit them -- not just a job for a person with a disability. Moreover, as they work, their employers know that they can work with us to deal with any issues that arise and that we understand the nuances of the individuals with whom we work. We are true partners with the employers and our members to ensure that they will all be successful.



**Organization:** National Ramah Commission

**Employment Program Name:** National Ramah Tikvah Network

**Location:** New York, NY

**Typical # Enrolled in Program Annually:** 450

**Primary Types of Participant Disabilities:** Autism Spectrum, Intellectual/Developmental

**Program Structure (Individualized Services/Cohort/Both):** Both

**Occupational or Industry Focus:** Food Service, Hospitality, Hotel/Guest House, Child Care Assistant

**Sample Employer Partners:** Dan's Coffee Roasters, children's museum, day care center

**Typical Placement Rate in Competitive Employment:** N/A – not a program goal

**Typical 6-Month Job Retention Rate:** N/A

**Typical 12-Month Job Retention Rate:** N/A

**Typical Annual Program Budget:** \$400,000

**Main Funding Source(s):** Fee for service (participant), Jewish Federation, Private

**Other Notable Info:** 90% of participants are in the 14-24 age group; replicated in most Ramah camps

**Website:** [www.campramah.org/tikvah-programs](http://www.campramah.org/tikvah-programs)

**Contact:** Howard Blas, 413-374-7210, [howard@campramah.org](mailto:howard@campramah.org)

**Description:** The Ramah Camping Movement includes people with disabilities in its network of 10 overnight and four day camps in the US and Canada. Camps also offer vocational training programs which include job sampling, soft skills training, and leisure activities. In some camps, participants are trained and supervised by area heads/managers in the guest house, front office, mail and package room, kitchen, dining room, and camper activity areas such as arts and crafts and sports. Some programs provide job coaches for participants. In some camps, participants are transported to local businesses including coffee shops, childcare centers, museums, grocery stores, and hotels.

Ramah camps provide a 24/7 community for all campers and staff members, including those with disabilities. Our campers and participants are seen as valued and contributing members of those communities. They work, play, and pray alongside neurotypical peers. Many essential camp services are provided by people with disabilities. These include delivery of mail and packages, provision of supplies (toilet paper and brooms), meal set-up, and food preparation. The camp community learns that people with disabilities often have unique abilities. The program fills an important need for participants in transition and their families; most have "aged out" and are "falling off the cliff" and have an opportunity to acquire transferable job skills in a safe, familiar, Jewish setting.





**Organization:** Tangram

**Employment Program Name:** Employment Services

**Location:** Indianapolis, IN

**Typical # Enrolled in Program Annually:** 53

**Primary Types of Participant Disabilities:** Autism Spectrum, Hearing, Intellectual/Developmental

**Program Structure (Individualized Services/Cohort/Both):** Individualized

**Occupational or Industry Focus:** N/A

**Sample Employer Partners:** Goodwill Retail

**Typical Placement Rate in Competitive Employment:** 45% of enrollees [24 of 53], 100% of completers [24 of 24]

**Typical 6-Month Job Retention Rate:** Not provided

**Typical 12-Month Job Retention Rate:** Not provided

**Typical Annual Program Budget:** \$283,493

**Main Funding Source(s):** Vocational Rehabilitation

**Other Notable Info:**

**Website:** [www.thetangramway.org](http://www.thetangramway.org)

**Contact:** Curt Sutterfield, 317-968-9049, [csutterfield@thetangramway.org](mailto:csutterfield@thetangramway.org)

**Description:** Tangram is committed to helping individuals find competitive, inclusive employment where they can use their individual talents and skills to succeed. Tangram's team of employment services professionals employs a person-centered approach for participants to identify their employment goals, conduct skills assessments, assist with job readiness, and provide job search and on-the-job support that is tailored to the unique needs of each person. Tangram believes in equipping both the individual and their employer with the tools they need to ensure that employment of people with disabilities is successful and sustainable. Our team helps our clients find the work that brings them joy and vocations that utilize their strengths, while working to reduce barriers to that career path so that each individual can achieve their employment goals.

Each jobseeker who enrolls in Tangram's services benefits from the full range of experience and expertise of the entire employment services team. In addition to providing individualized services for job seekers, Tangram is proud of the supports we offer to the business community and those who employ our clients. This focus on equipping employers with the tools, strategies, and knowledge they need to be confident employers of people with disabilities is what sets Tangram apart from other providers and helps us dismantle the unconscious bias and misconceptions that stand in the way of fulfilling employment opportunities.



**Organization:** VISIONS

**Employment Program Name:** Workforce Development

**Location:** New York, NY

**Typical # Enrolled in Program Annually:** 160

**Primary Types of Participant Disabilities:** Blind/Visually Impaired, Autism Spectrum, Intellectual/Developmental

**Program Structure (Individualized Services/Cohort/Both):** Both

**Occupational or Industry Focus:** N/A

**Sample Employer Partners:** Amazon, Northwell Health, City of New York

**Typical Placement Rate in Competitive Employment:** 34% of enrollees [55 of 160]

**Typical 6-Month Job Retention Rate:** 89% [49 of 55]

**Typical 12-Month Job Retention Rate:** Not provided

**Typical Annual Program Budget:** \$750,000

**Main Funding Source(s):** Vocational Rehabilitation, Foundation

**Other Notable Info:** Offers customer service and food handlers certification, job coach training

**Website:** [www.visionsvc.org](http://www.visionsvc.org)

**Contact:** Michael Cush, 212-625-1616, [mcush@visionsvc.org](mailto:mcush@visionsvc.org)

**Description:** The VISIONS workforce team provides a very thorough and comprehensive assessment of each of the clients interested in workforce services. The evaluation focuses on a participant's strengths, abilities, and interests. In addition, we identify any barriers that a client may have to being successful in employment and can offer additional job readiness services such as work readiness and technology training, interview practice, resume and cover letter development and employer awareness training.

The VISIONS workforce department takes a team approach to service delivery. Our job seekers are well prepared to enter the workforce, which is very much appreciated by the employers that we work with. Our services are also very individualized, where a very detailed plan for job seeking and job development is constructed for each participant. The participant is given the tools to manage their own job search, with VISIONS workforce team serving as a strong support to them in their quest for permanent, competitive employment. The workforce team will also provide ongoing assistance to the job seeker, if necessary, once they start their new position, which is very much appreciated by the employer.