In 1995, the American College of Healthcare Executives adopted a policy statement that reads, in part "… healthcare executives must take the lead in the organizations to increase employment opportunities for qualified persons with disabilities and to advocate on behalf of their employment to other organizations in their communities."

Project SEARCH, a collaboration between AISD and Seton Family of Hospitals serves people with disabilities through innovative workforce and career development to provide employees that are well suited for positions that often experience high turnover in healthcare facilities.

What is Project SEARCH?
Project SEARCH is a year-long training internship for students with developmental disabilities receiving AISD's special education services. Project SEARCH will be located at the Dell Children's Medical Center of Central Texas (DCMCCT) in the Mueller development in central Austin. The first Project SEARCH in Texas was developed in the fall of 2007 with a partnership between Seton Family of Hospitals and the Marbridge Foundation.

How does Project SEARCH work?
AISD students who are accepted into Project SEARCH will participate in the training internship Monday through Friday at DCMCCT. Each day the students will participate in an hour of independent skills training followed by 4 hours of job training within a designated worksite in the hospital. Through three rotations, approximately 10 weeks at a time, the interns will learn specific job tasks while practicing invaluable work-related life and social skills. Upon completion of the internship, DCMCCT will have the option of offering employment to the interns who have successfully completed the internship and/or will provide them with a certificate of completed hours and a portfolio of references and recommendation letters. Students accepted into Project SEARCH will maintain their enrollment and eligibility as special education students in AISD while participating in Project SEARCH.

Why is Project SEARCH so unique?
The program is innovative because it looks at employing people with disabilities from a business perspective. By diversifying the workplace with one select organization, the employer omits the confusion of dealing with multiple agencies with numerous job coaches, follow-alongs and job coordinators. The individual with a disability receives daily, hands–on training in the actual business setting with the opportunity to build relationships, employer references and real-world job, life and social skills. Project SEARCH is a win-win for everyone!

What is the goal of Project SEARCH?
The goal is to provide a mixture of classroom employment skills training and hands-on training in different rotations within the hospital to individuals with special needs. The desired outcome of Project SEARCH is competitive employment.

How did Project SEARCH originate?
Project SEARCH, a collaboration between AISD and Seton Family of Hospitals, is modeled after the original Project SEARCH, which was established at the Cincinnati Children's Hospital. Now in its 12th year of operation, Project SEARCH has successfully replicated in more than 100 locations across the U.S. For more information about Project SEARCH at Cincinnati Children's Hospital, visit www.cincinnatichildrens.org/ps.

Project SEARCH at Dell Children's Medical Center of Central Texas is a collaborative partnership between AISD and Seton Family of Hospitals.

Austin Independent School District

Project | SEARCH

What are the eligibility requirements for Project SEARCH?

- AISD students currently receiving special education services.
- Have an identified significant disability.
- Must be 19-22 years of age.
- Have met minimum graduation requirements.
- Student whose primary, ongoing needs are not related to a severe or profound emotional or behavioral deficit.
- Must provide DCMCCT with proof of immunization records for the following:
  - Current Hepatitis B Vaccinations or proof that these vaccinations were made available and rejected by student.
  - PPD within the three months immediately prior to student's on-site placement.
  - Chest x-ray within the two years immediately prior to student's on-site placement, if such student has ever tested positive for tuberculosis.
  - Measles vaccination for two dates, which must be after January 1, 1968, or positive titer.
  - Mumps vaccination for one date, which must be after January 1, 1977, or a positive titer.
  - Rubella vaccine or positive titer.
  - Varicella (chicken pox) vaccination, titer, or a history of this disease.

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DID YOU KNOW?

- The average hire rate for interns who have graduated from Project SEARCH is 82.5%
- The average starting wage for an intern hired in a hospital position upon completing Project SEARCH is $9.91/hr.
- The average length of employment for individuals who have successfully completed Project SEARCH is 5.5 years.
- Departments that have hired individuals after completing the internship include:

Sterilization	Courier
Clerical	Stocking
Environmental services	Assembly

- Currently, the Project SEARCH model has been replicated in over 100 hospitals and businesses throughout the country.
- Project SEARCH was awarded the 2004 Secretary of Labor's New Freedom Initiative Award from the Department of Labor.