

DDDS

EMPLOYMENT & DAY SERVICES

Part of the Department's mission is "to support lifelong planning and to join with others to create and promote meaningful opportunities."

Employment & Day Services (EDS)

The Employment and Day Services (EDS) division was created in 2018 to oversee the employment and day options provided by the Connecticut Department of Developmental Services. The division works with individuals, families, providers, community partners, and businesses to prepare individuals for competitive employment and match them with jobs that meet their interests, skills, and abilities. EDS currently offers a variety of day and employment services to individuals across the state of Connecticut. Learn more about the EDS division and services below.

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WELCOME TO PROJECT SEARCH

Presented by:
Brian Gresko

What is Project SEARCH?

- Project SEARCH is a business led, 9 month internship program geared toward transition age youth. Post grads are also eligible for many PS programs
- Project SEARCH takes place entirely in a community business. Ideal host sites are large business, 200+ employees, multiple departments to offer training in a variety of skillsets (hospitals are good examples)
- The program allows each student with a disability to be immersed in a workplace setting, given hands on experience that will increase their skills and abilities.
- These skills and abilities will enhance interns' chances at real competitive work thereby reaching their ultimate goals.



Project | SEARCH



Program Overview



- Program participants (interns) attend the program for a full school year (9 months) in the host business/hospital
- Three unpaid internship rotations (about 10 weeks each) take place at a host business
- The host business provides access to an on-site training room that can accommodate up to 12 interns for classroom training before, after and in between internship rotations.
- The site is staffed by a special ed teacher and up to three skills trainers to meet the educational and training needs of the interns.



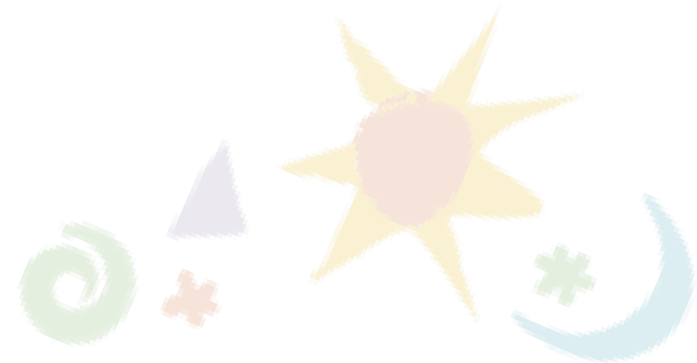
Project SEARCH



Program Overview

Once the program year begins...

- The first few weeks are focused on intern orientation, hands-on skill assessment, and familiarization with the business environment.
- Interns develop a career plan which guides internship selection process and individualized job search.



Annual Project SEARCH Calendar

mirrors host school calendar



Regular Employment Planning Meetings held and led by intern

Student Recruitment begins late fall/early winter



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Program Overview

Employment Skills Curriculum

Throughout the program year, the interns work on employability and functional skills for approximately one hour of their day.

- **Training room activities are designed around these focus areas:**
 - Team Building
 - Workplace Safety, etiquette & culture
 - Technology
 - Maintaining Employment
 - Self-Advocacy
 - Financial Literacy
 - Health and Wellness including hygiene & presentation
 - Preparing for Employment



Project SEARCH



Program Overview

Goal is competitive employment

- Skill assessment & job development
- Job placement (in host business or community)
- Ongoing support (Including natural supports)



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Daily schedule (typical)

8:00am - 2:30pm

- **Classroom:** 8:00 am - 9:00 am (Interns report to class, employability skills are taught at least 1 hour at the start or end of the day)
- **Internship:** 9:00 am - 11:30 am (Interns report to their internship site)
- **Lunch:** 11:30 am - 12:00 pm (with host site employees/peers)
- **Internship:** 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm (report *back* to their internship site)
- **Classroom:** 2:00 pm - 2:30 pm (Reflect on their day, plan for the next day, practice communication and other curricular skills)



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Project SEARCH By the Numbers

- Project SEARCH has over 730 programs in 48 states and around the globe
- Project SEARCH boasts 75% of interns find employment upon completion of their internship
- Graduating CT interns averaged 20.97 hours of work/week at \$13.97/hour
- From 2017-22, CT Project SEARCH Programs had an:

89% Graduation Rate

79.8% Employment Rate

Graduating CT interns averaged 20.97 hours of work/week at \$13.97/hour

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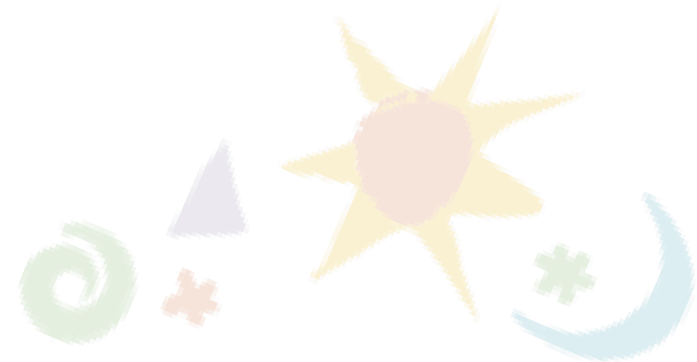


Funding Streams

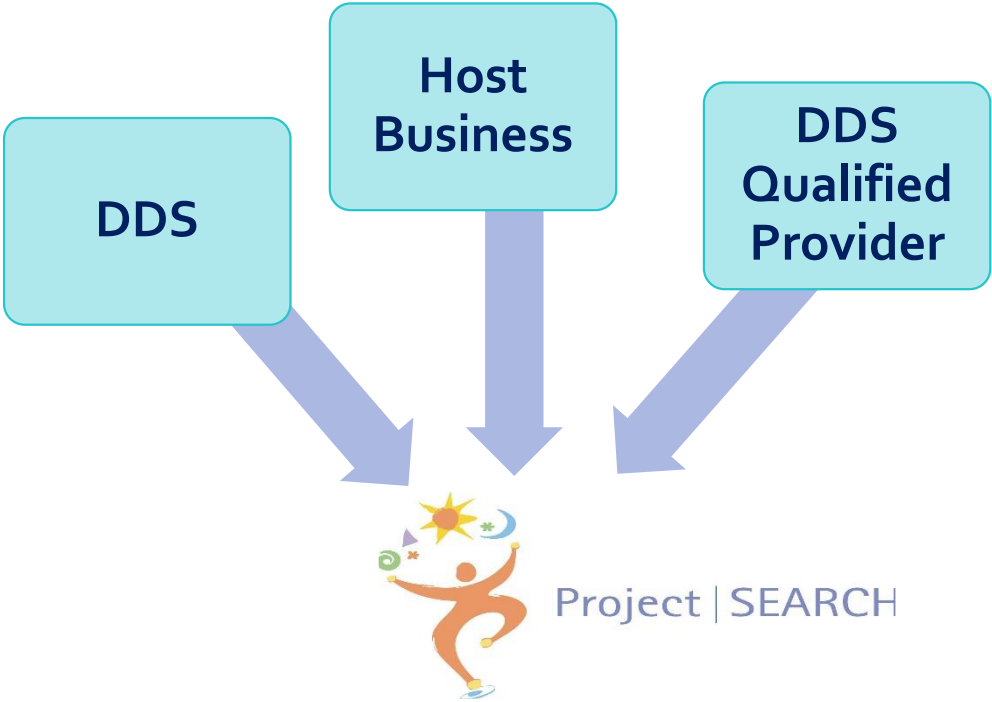
School Districts

DDS

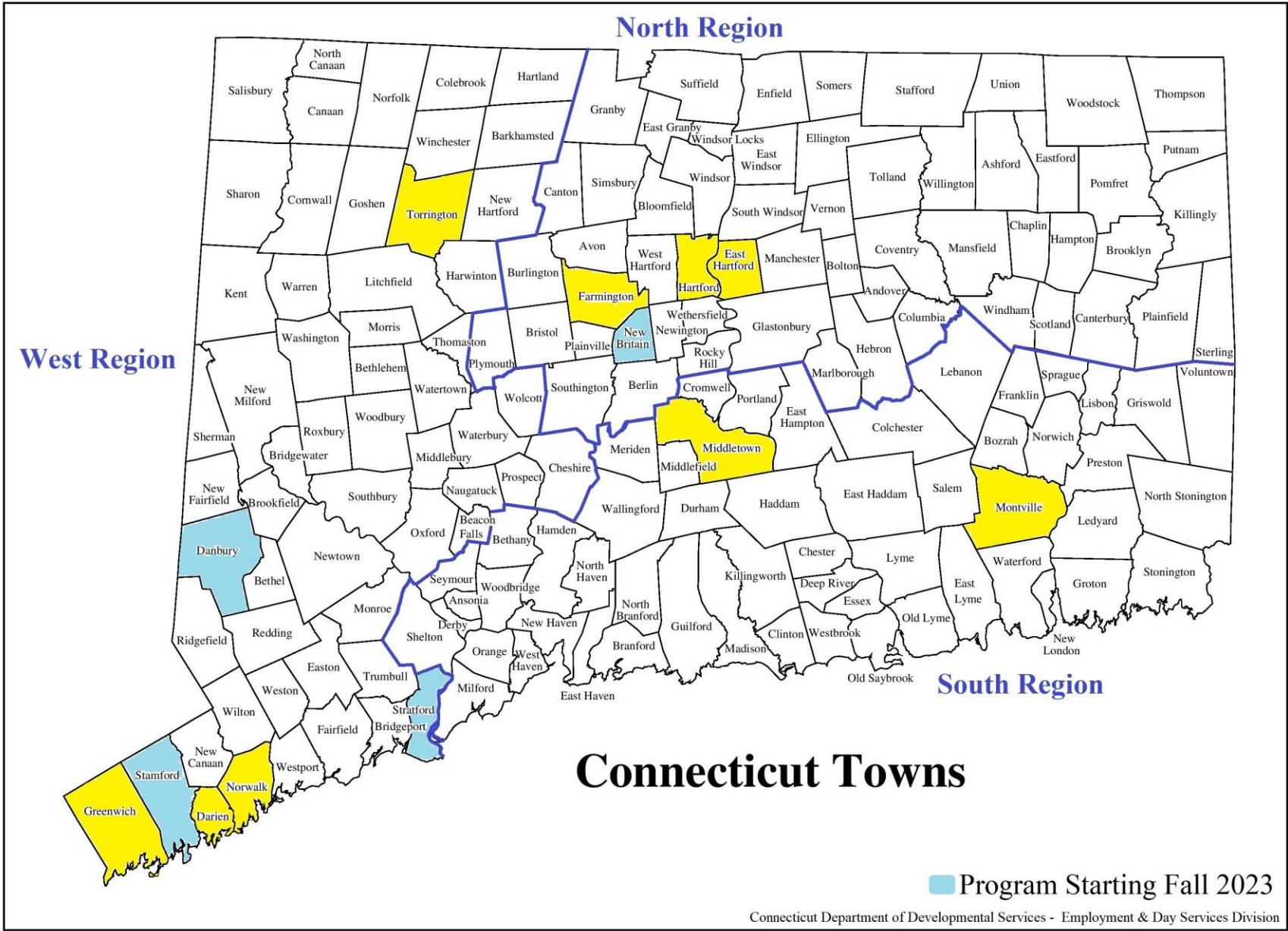
Private Pay



Project SEARCH Host Sites



NORTH REGION	SOUTH REGION	WEST REGION
UConn Health <i>FAVARH</i>	Mohegan Sun <i>UCP Eastern CT</i>	Norwalk Community College <i>Ability Beyond</i>
Hartford Hospital <i>MARC of Manchester</i>	Middlesex Hospital <i>MARC Community Resources</i>	Nuvance Hospital <i>Ability Beyond</i>
Goodwin University <i>MARC of Manchester</i>		Darien YMCA <i>Abilis</i>
		Greenwich Hospital <i>Abilis</i>
		Charlotte Hungerford Hospital <i>Litchfield ARC</i>



North Region

Host – UConn Health, Farmington (since 2015)

Provider – FAVARH

Host – Goodwin University, East Hartford (since 2019)

Provider – MARC of Manchester

Host – Hartford Hospital, Hartford (since 9/2021)

Provider – MARC of Manchester

South Region

Host -Mohegan Sun, Uncasville (since 2019)

Provider – UCP Eastern CT

Host – Middlesex Hospital, Middletown (starting 9/2022)

Provider – MARC Community Resources

West Region

Host – Charlotte Hungerford Hospital, Torrington (since 2020)

Provider – Litchfield ARC

Host – Greenwich Hospital, Greenwich (since 2019)

Provider – Abilis

Host – Darien YMCA, Darien (start 1/2022)

Provider – Abilis

Host – Norwalk Community College, Norwalk (since 2018)

Provider – Norwalk school district

Co-Provider – Ability Beyond

Host – Nuvance Hospital, Norwalk (start 1/2022)

Provider – Ability Beyond

Project SEARCH Expansion

- Upcoming Project SEARCH programs for the 2022-23 year include:

Danbury Hospital/Ability Beyond

Stamford Hospital/Abilis

Stratford YMCA/The Kennedy Collective

Hospital of Central CT (New Britain)/CCARC



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Questions?





Dimitar Tashkovski – Project SEARCH Manager

Nicholas Gibertoni – Project SEARCH Intern

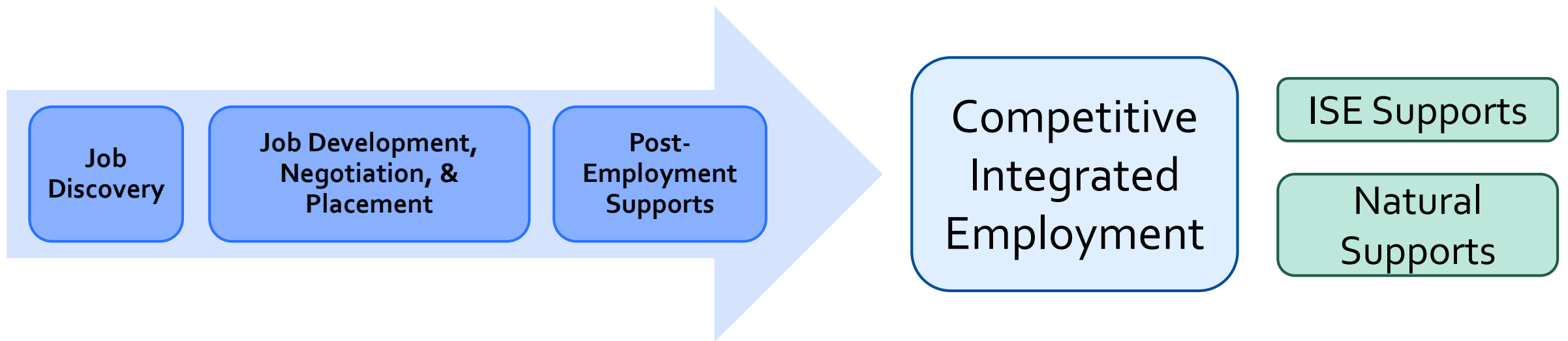
CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT (CE) SERVICES

Presented by Trever Rogers

The logo for the Department of Disability Services (DDS) features the letters "DDS" in a bold, dark blue, sans-serif font. The letter "D" is significantly larger than the "S". A small, dark blue silhouette of the state of Indiana is positioned within the upper right portion of the second "D". The entire logo is contained within a white square with a thick blue border.The logo for Aging and Disability Services features a stylized graphic on the left consisting of a white, curved shape resembling a person's profile or a wave, set against a teal background. To the right of this graphic, the words "Aging and", "Disability", and "Services" are stacked vertically in a white, sans-serif font. The entire logo is contained within a white square with a thick blue border.

What is Customized Employment?

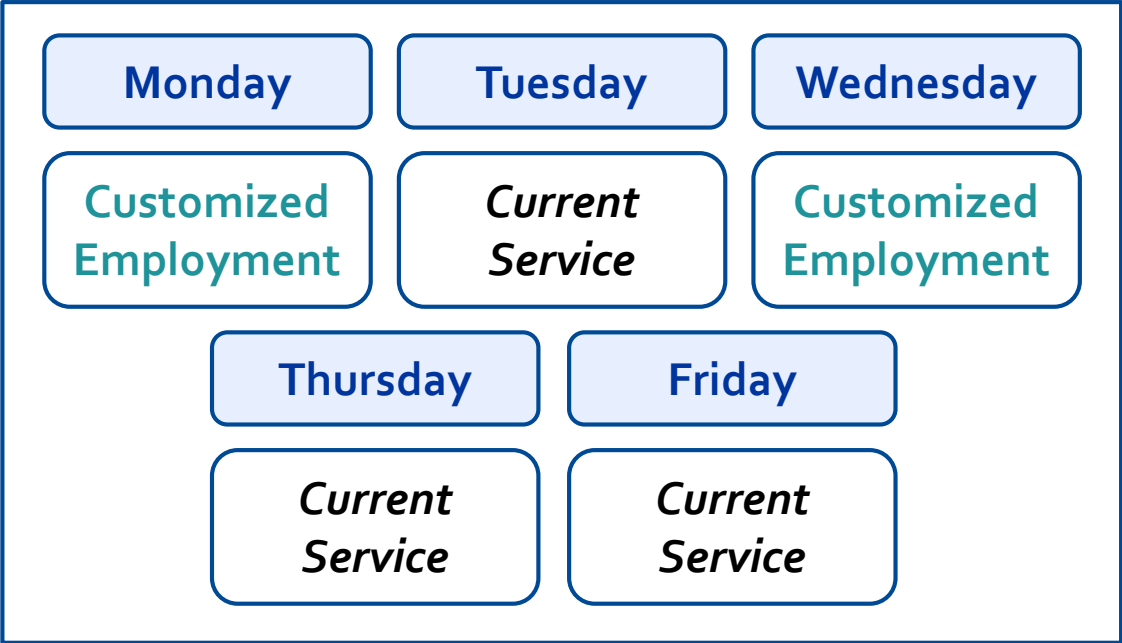
Customized Employment (CE) is an alternative method of finding **competitive integrated employment** for individuals with significant disabilities. CE focuses on the strengths, skills and abilities of the individuals and the unmet needs of employers. It is a highly structured, person-centered process, carried out over time.



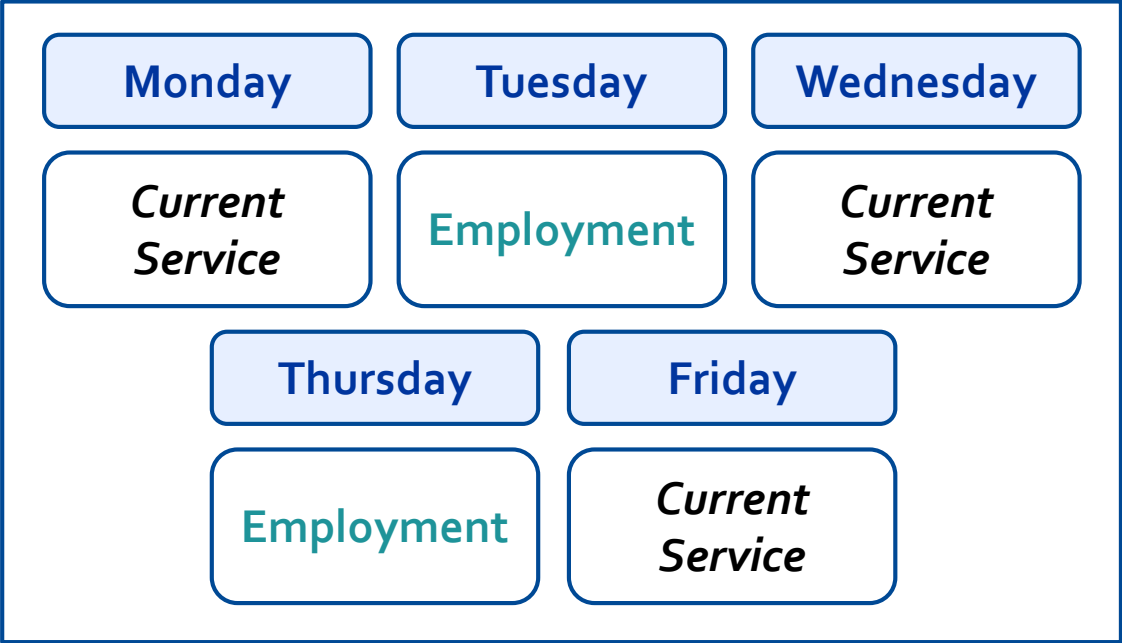
How can CE look?

- The Customized Employment Process is meant to be carried out over time.
- Job seekers continue their current service options while in the CE process.

Example Calendar while in CE



Example Calendar after Job Placement



Job Discovery

- Discovery is **time spent between the job seeker and CE Certified Staff Member** to gain a more in-depth understanding of the job seeker's interests, likes, dislikes, knowledge, strengths, skills and abilities.
- The **focus of Discovery is not to find a job, but to engage with the job seeker and identify up to 3 areas of interests.**
- Evidence-based practice indicates that the average timeframe for **Discovery is over 5 to 7 weeks.**



Discovery

We take time to discover your:

interests

strengths

skills

support needs

social and support connections

Job Development, Negotiation, & Placement

- This phase begins with identifying businesses that match the individual's vocational themes.
 - Informational interviews
 - observations
 - Walkthroughs of the business
- These activities help learn more about the business needs and if the business needs also meet the needs of the job seeker.



Job Development and Negotiation

We work with you and
potential employers to:

discuss work experience
and employment
opportunities

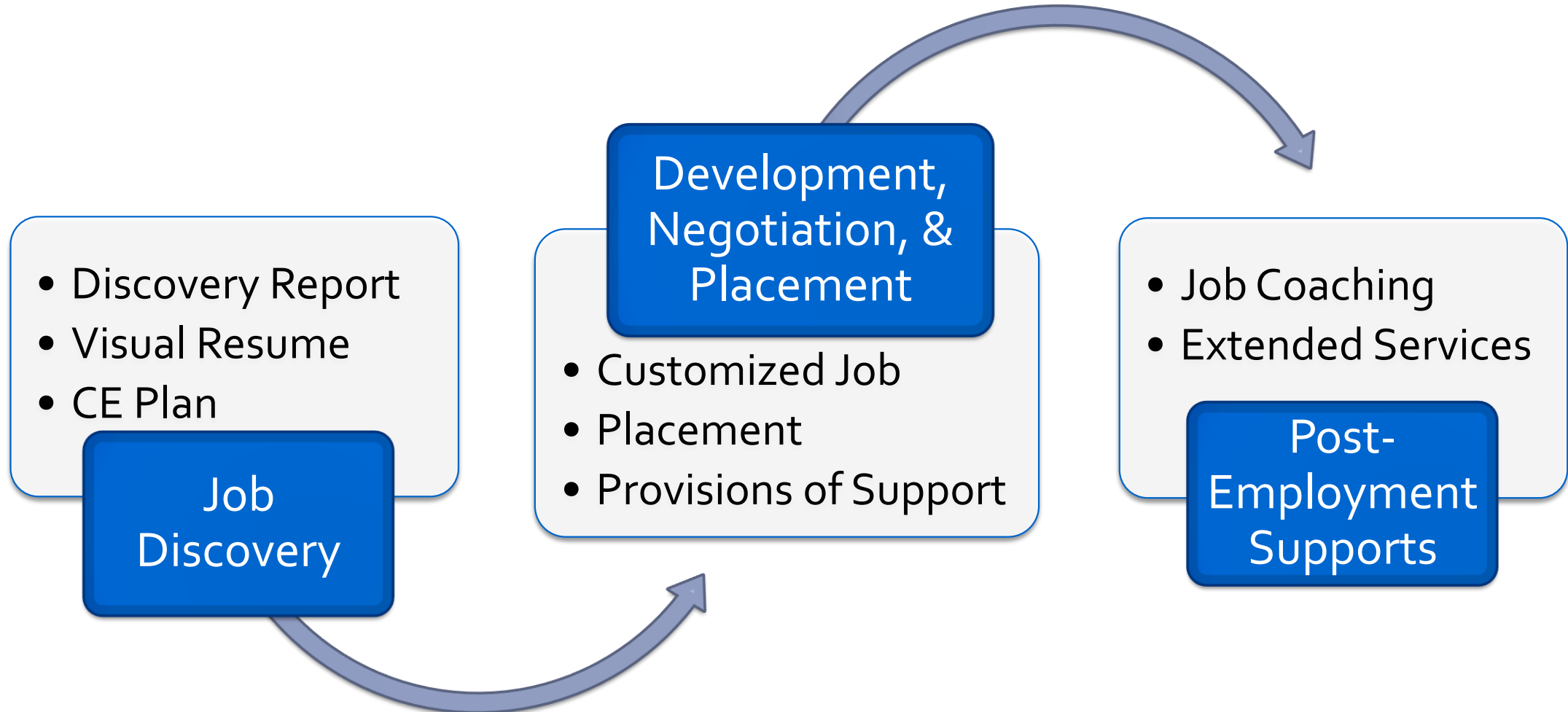
develop job roles that fit
your skills and interests

discuss your conditions
of employment, such as
job responsibilities, work
hours, dress code, salary

understand your
support needs at work

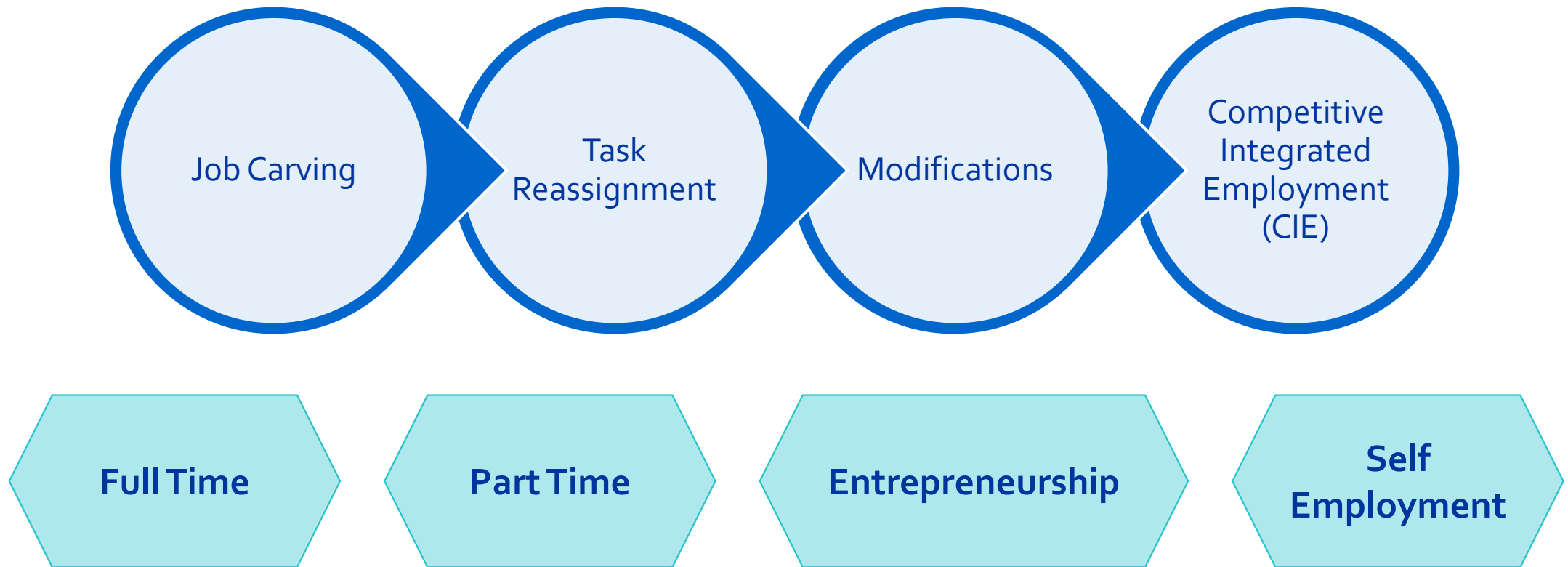
understand the
employer support needs

Customized Employment Process



What's the Goal?

The end goal is placement in a competitive integrated employment position in whichever shape or form works best for the job seeker.



Who is Customized Employment for?

- CE is a good strategy for those who need **more intensive support** than typical individualized or group models and who may need to utilize more intensive discovery strategies for career and job direction.
- CE is effective for individuals with complexities that make it difficult to utilize traditional job search strategies.

DDS



Group Supported
Employment
(GSE)

Individualized
Day Vocational
(IDV)

Employment
Transition
Services (ETS)

Trial Work
Experiences

On the Job
Training

Industry Specific
Training
Placement
Programs
(ISTPP)

Individualized
Employment
Supports (ISE)

One-Time
Employment
Incentives

Other DDS
Employment
Experiences

Work
Attachments

Work Based
Learning



Kara Pfeifer – Vocational Services Manager

Michael Gaynor – Job Coach, Employment Specialist, CE Certified



Independent Living Solutions

- Community Rehabilitation Provider for 10 years providing Vocational Services to BRS clients
- Servicing clients all over Connecticut, we are team of 30+ dedicated employees
- Recruitment model of services to ensure the fit is right
- Successful in longevity of placements for our clients

- Have been engaging in CE strategies for years and customizing employment
- Always had detailed and client focused approach to finding “just right” jobs
- Important to consider passions, interests and strengths matching job tasks
- Excited to now be able to provide CE services and officially funded by State Agencies



Independent Living Solutions

- Many cases over the years with successful outcomes and most still there today
- 100's of clients placed this way before Customized Employment in this iteration of state funded cases
- 2 special PLACEMENTS, SUCCESS stories
- Client: wanted to work "in the water", passion for everything "water", not really Life Guard or Pool Monitor or similar, considered options and came up with **Underwater Construction** position. Wading in the water with the team, ecstatic, matched skills perfectly = success
- Client: liked to "be constantly moving" or "doing", fascinated with medical facility, walk to work, limited hours of availability, **Food Runner in a Hospital**. Providing service between cafes, kitchen and bistro, moving items between floors, time of essence. Refilling vending machines, building boxes, – one of our FIRST, perfect match = still working 10 years later



Independent Living Solutions

- Michael Gaynor, Leading CE, Certified, Father, understands from both sides
- Excited to be part of CE; collaboration of agencies to serve clients that require “extra” care and time seeking “just right” work opportunities
- Opening doors for individuals who didn’t have a service option that met their specific needs in the past.
- Client focused and driven with many innovative strategies, many we used in the past, emphasis on the FIT and JOB MATCH = SUCCESS



Independent Living Solutions

- Providing services to many and excited as we move through Discovery (foundation)
- Building profile, seeing from all angles and points of view
- Collaboration with local community
- Appropriate Resume (visual or video or traditional) given vocational objective
- Moving into job development and carving out the pieces that match the client
- Provide supports for as long as needed for ongoing SUCCESS
- Gives people that want to work an opportunity to place the final piece in their life puzzle, everyone deserves to be a part of something greater, team, earn money, feel worthwhile and wanted/needed. ILS Vocational Services; LOVE being a part of this



Innovative Employment Opportunity

Presented by:

DDS Employment & Day Services Division

Brian Gresko, TA





The Innovative Employment Opportunity

- Designed to support small businesses and entrepreneurs promote Competitive Integrated Employment for people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities
- Offers both an exploratory grant for small “seed money” and implementation/expansion grants at larger amounts

Exploratory Grant

- Provides funding “seed money” for business ideas that need an opportunity to explore the development of a viable business plan
- The creation of competitive integrated employment opportunities for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities must be an integral component of the business concept

DDS will award up to \$4,000 for this grant


Exploratory Grant: *Who Is It For?*

- Good candidates for the IEO Exploratory Grant include:
- Individuals & Families
- Entrepreneurs interested in starting a small business dedicated to employment for people with IDD



IEO Implementation/Expansion Grant

For those who have:

- A business, product or service (includes business plan, targeted market & goals)
 - The ability and intent to implement or expand their business to create employment opportunities for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities
- 



IEO Implementation/Expansion Grant

DDS will award grants in three brackets for this type of grant:

\$10,000; \$25,000; or \$50,000



A viable business plan directly tying the funds to employment for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities must be included

IEO Implementation/Expansion Grant

Examples of appropriate use of funds include, but are not limited to:

- funds for marketing & research
- consultant fees
- Securing a storefront location
- procurement of equipment and assistive technology, and development of technology systems

IEO Requirements

12 months of quarterly reporting to DDS, as well as targeted program evaluation, data sharing, and routine quality monitoring and improvement practices

Completion of a yearly report for fiscal years 1, 2 and 3.

Return to DDS any grant monies that have not been exhausted by the end of the first fiscal year.

Connection to a small business assistance program for 1 year upon awarding of IEO funds.

Questions?

Please contact the DDS Employment & Day Services Division at:

dds.employment-dayservices@ct.gov

Or

Brian Gresko at:

brian.gresko@ct.gov



Ryan C – Employment Success Story

Interested? – NEXT STEPS

The first step in pursuing Project SEARCH, Customized Employment, or other DDS employment & day services is to talk to your DDS Case Manager.

Customized Employment is an interagency process with the Department of Aging & Disability Services (ADS) including the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS) and the Bureau of Education Services for the Blind (BESB). If you don't have a DDS Case Manager, contact your Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Counselor.

Program questions?

DDS.Employment-DayServices@ct.gov

Questions about starting services:

Contact your Case Manager