

EXHIBIT 6
DATE 2-16-15
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Bozeman Deaconess
HEALTH SERVICES

Memo

To: Montana Legislature

CC: Christy Sofianek, Program Coordinator, MT Project Search

From: Rick Harden, Director of Human Resources
Rick Harden

Date: 11 February 2015

Re: Project SEARCH Testimony

Bozeman Deaconess Health Services is proud to host the first Project SEARCH in the State of Montana. We initiated the project in September of 2014 in collaboration with: Helena Industries Case Management (HICM); the Gilhousen Family Foundation; the Taishoff Center for Inclusive Higher Education; the Down Syndrome Research, Education and Advocacy in MT; Reach, Inc.; Montana DPHHS Vocational Rehabilitation and Developmental Disability Program; and Paul Brunswick.

We have six interns who have and are rotating through Rehabilitation Services, Human Resources, Cancer Center, Sterile Processing, Family Birth Center, Birchwood Dining Room and Programs, and Hillcrest kitchen. Our experience has been nothing but exceptional. You will be provided information on the benefit to the young adults participating in the program and to business. In my opinion, the information will most likely be understated. We have witnessed dramatic growth in our interns in such areas of independence, social relationships, and self-confidence. They are eager to come to work; eager to learn; and have made many new friends. However, the aforementioned is only half of the story. The positive effects on our staff have been amazing. Each intern has been welcomed with open arms; immersed completely in each work group; and has contributed surprisingly in each department with little disruption in operations. We even have two department

managers who have identified one intern for full employment after the end of this year's program.

Bozeman Deaconess Health Services has no plans to eliminate this program and is actively planning on the expansion into other areas. This program has so much to offer applicable young adults that it needs to be expanded throughout Montana; supported by the Legislature; supported by School Districts; and supported by business.



Bozeman Deaconess
HEALTH SERVICES

February 10, 2015

To: Montana Legislature
From: Colleen Hatcher, Physical Rehabilitation Manager

Bozeman Deaconess Hospital has had the pleasure of bringing Project Search to Montana. This program allows interns with disability to work in a structured environment, learn new skills, complete quality checks and follow through in a work environment where they can eventually become employed and earn a wage. We have had 2 interns in our department that have learned new skills and advanced their abilities to become an engaged employee.

It is my understanding that Montana currently does not have the funding available for schools to allow disabled students to remain in class till age 21. The school districts would benefit greatly if they were allotted funding for student's age 19 to 21; allowing them to participate in the Project Search program at local hospitals or businesses.

The ultimate outcome of Project Search is to teach interns skills that will allow them to become employed individuals in this state. Please consider passing this legislative bill to allow funding for schools to assist students with disabilities. Project Search has been very successful in many states in this country and it deserves the support from our leaders.

Colleen Hatcher, PT
Physical Rehabilitation Manager
Bozeman Deaconess Hospital
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Dear Sirs and Madams,

I write to implore your consideration to join the mass majority of States in the U.S. that fund students with disabilities through age 21. My center currently has the privilege and pleasure to have a young adult working with us, through the Project Search Program. This young person is truly an asset to our clinic. She is cheerful, attentive, capable of learning needed tasks quickly, and is genuinely proud to be making a contribution in our workplace. My staff and I have been greatly impressed with her capabilities and work ethic, and we are exploring how we might hire her to work with us after she finishes her Project Search internship rotations. This delightful young person is only one of many throughout Montana, that I am certain given the chance, have the potential to become actively engaged, self-sufficient and valuable members of our Montana community. They need only the proper opportunity to flourish.

Most Sincerely,

Spencer D. Green, MS MBA(HA)

Business Operations Manager

Bozeman Deaconess Cancer Center

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I am the manager of the Family Birth Center at Bozeman Deaconess Health Services. Since September we have had a Project SEARCH Intern in our department performing the duties of an aide. Both Mikelea and Charity have been successful in their work. However, the most value they have added to our department's high morale and joy. They come to work excited to work. Our staff love seeing their smiles. We have had premature babies born, and the parents have bonded with these interns, probably because they see that those who have disabilities can and do contribute to our department in work and spirit.

One young mother of a very premature baby brought her baby back to the hospital for "show and tell" a couple weeks after discharge. Our nurses and Mikelea, our SEARCH volunteer, gathered around the mom and baby to "ooo" and "ah". Then Mikelea said, "My, she has grown!" The mother got tears in her eyes. "Yes, Mikelea, she has." That first time mom has told her friends all over town how much it meant to her to see Mikelea again, and how Mikelea EVEN noticed the small growth in her newborn.

Project SEARCH is worth every penny! I thank Christy and our Human Resources Department for allowing them to be with us! I would be happy to hire either of the interns we have had this year! And look forward to ALWAYS having a Project SEARCH intern in our department!

Susan Connell, RN

Project SEARCH has helped me be a fast learner and learn how to do my job. I like being in Project SEARCH because I get to get out of the house every day. It makes me feel great and excited. It is fun to see new places and meet new residents at Hillcrest. In my first rotation I learned how to lead yoga, chair exercises, set-up for nail care, answer phones at the front desk, help with I-Play, lead Name that Tune, make copies and file papers. In my second rotation I am learning how to set tables, make coffee and pour water for residents. I am learning teamwork, how to have good appearance and have a "Yes I can" attitude. My goal is to get a part time job at the end of Project SEARCH!

Molly Wyatt
Project SEARCH Intern



Project SEARCH

The First day Of Project SEARCH was September 2nd and I worked as a waitress at Birchwood and it was fun being with the residents. I learned very quickly. I did drinks and salads and soups and folding napkins and taking orders. Being with my coworkers like Tabitha, Amanda, Ashley, Hilary and Mary was fun!!!!

Now I am working in Hillcrest kitchen and I like it there and I like all of my coworkers. Their names are Ausman, Bruno, Andy, Max, Erica, Amy, Phil, Natalie, Jessica, Tia, Jesse, Matt, Rob, David and Margo. I am gaining a lot of skills. I prepare the salads, ice the salad bar, fold the napkins, set up the salad bars in Birchwood and Aspen point. I assist with setting up the food line and then I garnish the plates with fruit during lunch time. I plate the food, too, when someone teaches me. I wash some dishes. I assist with breaking down the salad bar. So I did all the skills and I am learning a lot.

Project SEARCH is fun and I love it so much!!!!
I learned a lot of fun things like being healthy, communication, following Directions and professionalism. and I love it so much !!!!

Thank you for your time and letting me share this with you.

Lucile Brunswick
Project SEARCH Intern



My name is Alison Bowers

I am a project SEARCH intern. Project Search is important to me because of the people that I work with. Project Search has helped me learn how to do different tasks. I like Project SEARCH because of all of the nice people that work in PT. I work in the PT department. I have learned how to put CPM's together, how to do the temp checks, stock the cupboards, deliver kits to people that are getting surgery and tidying up the areas. I also take gait belts to the ER and to ICU and to the medfloor and to the 2nd floor.

Alison Bowers
Project Search Intern



Please adopt HS 451, AN ACT ALLOWING SPECIAL EDUCATION PUPILS UP TO 21 YEARS OF AGE TO BE INCLUDED IN AVERAGE NUMBER BELONGING CALCULATIONS; REVISING THE DEFINITION OF "PUPIL"; AMENDING SECTIONS 20-1-101 AND 20-9-311, MCA; AND PROVIDING AN IMMEDIATE EFFECTIVE DATE AND AN APPLICABILITY DATE. Students with disabilities begin transition services to develop vocational services at age 14, yet in the state of Montana their educational processes end by the fall of their 19th year. As a result, a human resource within the state of Montana remains underdeveloped. Federal law and almost all other states in the union provide for the education of students with special needs until they reach their 22nd birthday. Those extra 3 years are critical and do make a difference in quality of life for the individual with disabilities as well as the economic contributions that these individuals are able to make within their communities.

Currently, a vocational education partnership, is being piloted in Montana for the first time. It is Project SEARCH. My daughter, is a 30 year old with cognitive impairment. For more than a decade, she has been working in a sheltered job environment comprised of other with varying degrees of disability, doing routine and simple tasks, such as sorting materials or counting items to be bagged. Project SEARCH has demonstrated her ability to work in a complex job environment, Bozeman Deaconess Hospital, where most employees are not disabled. Furthermore, she is learning to make meaningful contributions to that complex environment. Emily's involvement in Project SEARCH has provided her with challenges and in overcoming these challenges, she is now able to make a more meaningful contribution to the community.

In allocating funding for the additional three years of schooling for students with special needs, the students with special needs would be more mature and thus be able to benefit from programs such as Project SEARCH offered in their local high schools.

Bill Ruff, Ed. D
Montana State University