

B. PROPOSAL COVER/YOUTH PROVIDER INFORMATION FORM

ORIGINAL

Proposal Cover/Youth Provider Information Form

Legal Name of Applicant Agency	Parents Alliance Employment Project	
Number of Years in Business	46 years	
FEIN Number		
Type of Organization	<input type="checkbox"/> Educational Institution <input type="checkbox"/> Private for Profit <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community Agency <i>non-profit</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Describe) _____	
Address – Administrative Office	Address	2525 Cabot Dr. #205
	City, State ZIP	Lisle, Illinois 60532
	Web Site URL	parents-alliance.org
Address of Program Location – This is the location where the services described in this application will be provided.	Address	25 N. Winfield Road
	City, State ZIP	Winfield, Illinois 60190
Principal of Agency –CEO/Executive Director/President	Name	Kristen Sheffield
	Title	Executive Director
	Email Address	Ksheffield@parents-alliance.org
	Phone	630.697.8199
Program Contact Person	Name	Chloe Suter
	Title	Lead Skills Trainer
	Email Address	csuter@parents-alliance.org
	Phone	630.440.2805
Funding Amount Requested	\$138,728	
Primary Program Name and Target Population	Project Search <i>*in-school youth w/ disabilities</i>	
Number of Youth to be served	12	



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Parents Alliance Employment Project (PAEP) is a 501(c)(3), non-profit organization, with a mission to improve the quality of life of people with disabilities through individualized employment services that has existed since 1982. PAEP provides a variety of programs to individuals with disabilities including career counseling, job training, job readiness, job development, job placement and job coaching and support services. Each of these individualized services assists individuals with disabilities develop secure career plans, enter into and retain employment. PAEP is a leading provider of many employment programs for people with disabilities including the Illinois Department of Human Services/Division of Rehabilitation Services, local High School Districts, current Project SEARCH job training programs at Northwestern Medicine Central DuPage, Delnor and Huntley hospitals and its unique out of school Inspired by Ability job training and placement program.

PAEP has been implementing both in and out of school youth job training and placement programs for youth with disabilities encountering barriers with funding from Workforce Innovation and Opportunity (WIOA) since 2014. PAEP is extremely knowledgeable of WIOA youth services and resources. PAEP has been funded by DuPage County WIOA to implement the Inspired by Ability program since 2018 as well as the Project SEARCH program at Northwestern Medicine Central DuPage Hospital since 2014 and has been funded through Kane County WIOA for its Project SEARCH program at Northwestern Medicine Delnor Hospital since 2019. Additionally, PAEP is in its sixth year of receiving funding from McHenry County WIOA to run a Project SEARCH program at Huntley Hospital. PAEP has developed a well-founded reputation and strong presence in DuPage county and has built relationships with local high school districts and businesses to ensure success of the program.

PAEP proposes to continue to implement the nationally accredited, Project SEARCH program, an in-school youth job skills training and placement program to twelve (12) 18-22 year-old individuals with disabilities who are in their last year of high school transition, have barriers to employment and are unemployed. PAEP has selected to work with 12 individuals so that staff can provide one-on-one attention to each individual. Because society in general sets low expectations for people with disabilities, many people with disabilities do not have very high expectations for themselves, especially for employment. Working with individuals with disabilities requires more time and assistance as compared to working with the general population. Their ability to learn job skills takes longer and requires the use of one-on-one systematic instruction to ensure acclimation to the job tasks and job retention.

PAEP has partnered with Northwestern Medicine Central DuPage Hospital since 2014 to act as the business host site to offer work based learning internships to individuals with disabilities enrolled in the Project SEARCH program. The participants of the program are exposed to a

wide variety of job industries and career opportunities through work based learning internships throughout hospital departments that expose participants to various industries and occupations. The work based learning internships are intensive, offering 9 months of job skill training designed to introduce specific skills and build stamina of individuals with disabilities who have little to no work experience. Each participant will be exposed to 3, ten-week long internships within the hospital setting. The individuals served through this project need additional assistance to obtain employment and get them into entry-level workforce jobs; otherwise, they most likely would not. Internships skills are broken into three different categories: Hospitality, Clerical, and Operations. An example of work based learning internships and departments that are offered to participants include: Breast Health, Cart Running, Central Supply, Diagnostic Imaging, Emergency Room, East Surgery, West Surgery, Dishwashing, Stocking, Cashier, Food Preparation, Catering, GI-Endoscopy Lab, Guest Services, Linen, Interventional Radiology, Physical Therapy, Sterilization, Facilities/Parts, Housekeeping, Transport, Child Life, Receiving Dock, Inpatient Pediatrics, and Patient Floors. Although the skill training and acquisition is taking place within the hospital/health care setting, it is important to note that the array of skills they are learning can be easily transferred into many different jobs settings following the completion of the program.

The Project SEARCH program will have the following overall objectives:

- a) expose 12 in-school youth with disabilities to the world of work and to develop and gain job skills through work based learning internship training sites within Northwestern Medicine Central DuPage Hospital
- b) increase the knowledge and job readiness skills of 12 in-school youth with disabilities to prepare for employment,
- c) assist 12 in-school youth with disabilities gain employment
- d) assist 12 in-school youth with disabilities retain gainful employment.

All 14 identified WIOA Elements will be made available to the youth with disabilities that are enrolled in the program, many being delivered on-site through the direct program and some through a partnership or referral.

Outcomes:

1. Youth Placement in Employment: The proposed program has substantial emphasis on job placement following the work-based learning and job training. Participation in the work based learning environments refine their skills and allow for transferring of skills into gainful employment. 100% (12) participants will be placed into unsubsidized employment.
2. Youth Retention in Employment: 100% (12) participants will retain employment post exit for 6 months (2nd quarter) and one year (4th quarter) with a median average wage of \$6300
3. Median Earnings: 88% (10) participant's earnings will be reported at or above the \$6300 target goal.
4. Credential Attainment: 100% (12) participants will receive their high school diploma during participation within the program.
5. Skills Gain: The participants will engage in intensive skills training at each worksite that will lead to skills acquisition and gainful employment.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Parents Alliance Employment Project (PAEP) proposes to continue to implement the nationally accredited, Project SEARCH program, an in-school youth job skills training and placement program to twelve (12), 18-22 year-old individuals with disabilities who are in their last year of high school transition, have barriers to employment and are unemployed. The participants of the program will be exposed to a variety of job industries and career opportunities through work based learning internships throughout Northwestern Medicine Central DuPage Hospital that will lead to unsubsidized, competitive employment within the community, and acceptance of their high school diploma.

1) Outreach & Recruitment: In preparation for PY 25-26, PAEP began outreach and recruitment this past fall and successfully recruited 12 in-school youth with disabilities ready to start the program in September. PAEP has identified key local schools and community partners (the Division of Rehabilitation Services, workNet DuPage, and the College of DuPage) along with key events that is part of its extensive outreach and communications plan to ensure stakeholders are aware of the services and opportunities for young adults with disabilities available through PAEP. All activities of the program, including the recruitment and outreach efforts are led by PAEP's current full time LEAD Skills Trainer, Chloe Suter who has successfully led the WIOA funded program for the last 2 years. The following is a detailed timeline and outreach plan that was conducted in an accessible, youth and family friendly manner to recruit participants for the program:

<u>DATE</u>	<u>RECRUITMENT/PROGRAM ACTIVITY</u>
October 2024	Presentation at Options Fair at Glenbard North High School
December 2024	Presentation to Hinsdale, Addison and Wheaton Parents with Special Needs Committees
January 2024	Open house flyer sent to community partners and high school district vocational coordinators about the program overview and application opening
February/March 2025	Program application opened; Hosted in person and virtual open house for families, school partners, community entities; Presentation to DuPage County Transition Planning
April 2025	Presented at the Future Begins Resource Fair; Families of special needs: Next Steps
April 2025	Presented to Adult Down Syndrome Center families, Meeting with College of DuPage and Division of Rehabilitation Services
May 2025	Applications accepted, reviewed and potential participants invited for interview;
June 2025	Hosted working interviews to assess and accept eligible participants into the program; outreach to NM departments to secure work based learning internship sites
August/September 2025	Contingent offers made; Intake, assessment and development of Individual Service Strategy to be completed
September 2025 through Spring 2026	Participants engage in orientation session/begin program; attend classroom/educational instruction M-F for 1.5 hours each day; begin work based learning internships at NM Central Dupage Hospital to gain work skills-individualized job coaching and support
March-May/June 2026	Begin job development and secure job placement for each participant

2) Intake-Eligibility

a) PAEP will determine eligibility for participants through a review of the application and interview process. In addition to the application, applicants must submit proof of disability, a resume and any additional required documentation per grant specifications. Eligibility for the program includes the following: 1) Youth with disabilities between the ages of 18-22 who are in their last year of transition, 2) reside in DuPage County, 3) individuals who have a strong desire to work competitively at the end of the worksite training, 4) individuals who will benefit from participation in a variety of work based learning and job training skills, 5) individuals who will benefit from a behavioral skills training method, 6) individuals who are independent with self-care and medication management, 7) individuals who can self-monitor on a 1:6 ratio of support and 8) individuals

who have access to transportation (ability to utilize public transportation or rely on family members) to and from classroom setting and community job sites.

PAEP has selected a total of 12 participants that will fulfill a caseload for the Project SEARCH program. After participants are accepted into the program, the LEAD Skills Trainer will conduct an intake assessment to officially enroll each participant. During the intake, participants will be required to bring in all requested documentation such as state identification, social security card, proof of disability, birth certificate, proof of state benefits, and emergency contact residing outside of the participant's home. The LEAD Skills Trainer, Chloe Suter will be responsible for maintaining all files/records and ensuring that PAEP is in compliance with the WIOA guidelines and requirements.

b) In addition to completing the required intake and assessments, PAEP will utilize and administer the Basic Skills Screening Tool that was internally developed by the workNet, as well as the Basic Skills Assessment that was internally developed by PAEP-both the screening tool and assessment are specific and appropriate for individuals with disabilities to measure basic math and reading skills and needs of participants. If required through the grant, PAEP will also administer the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) assessment. All assessments will be administered individually with each participant in person. Given that individuals with disabilities present unique social, communication, behavioral and learning deficiencies, the program emphasizes on-the-job skill acquisition. There is no one-size-fits-all solution for skills remediation for youth with disabilities. Each participant is unique, and their learning needs will differ based on the specific disability they face. Therefore, PAEP will utilize the guiding principle for effective remediation of tailoring the teaching method to the individual participant learning style and strengths, understanding how each participant learns best. PAEP will implement academic reading and math skills remediation through a portion of the curriculum that is used during the classroom sessions on a weekly basis utilizing a learning style through visual or auditory means based on each participant's learning needs.

3) Individual Service Strategy

a: Tools, methods and assessments: After participants are accepted into the program, PAEP staff will conduct a variety of assessments that will help define and develop each participant's Individual Service Strategy (ISS). All results from the assessments will be the defining goal and measure for each participant as the ISS is developed. The results will identify employment barriers, skills deficiency, and job preferences that will assist in defining key areas to identify the necessary training, and appropriate job settings for each participant. A Person-Centered Planning (PCP) approach will be utilized when providing services throughout the program. PCP is a life-planning model designed to enable individuals with disabilities to increase their personal self-determination and independence. The intake assessment will involve gathering the information of each participant's contact information, emergency contact or other contact information, private information, medical/physical characteristics, other characteristics and barriers, learning and memory characteristics, self-care, medical and psychological history, family and home environment, education background, information on previous employment/volunteer services and work history, work-related information, transferable skills, availability, employment goals and priorities, job preparation and readiness, references, strengths and abilities, behaviors, skills gaps, personal needs and job preferences, career interests, barriers, desired outcomes, public assistance, and any other issues as identified. PAEP will also gather and create career readiness goals, educational goals, and employment goals, and milestones for each participant during the intake.

i. Basic Skills: PAEP will administer the Basic Skills Screening Tool and an appropriate assessment for individuals with disabilities to determine their basic skills and need.

ii. Employability: During the intake, PAEP will discuss the participant's employment goals and employment expectations. Participants will discuss what availability they have, if they want full-time or part-time, how

many days they can work, and how long of shifts can they handle. PAEP will use this information to determine what department within the hospital the participant will be placed for their work based learning internship site. It will be customized to the participant's employment needs. The LEAD Skills Trainer will also administer the Job Search Attitude Inventory (JSAI) this assessment tool is used to determine a job seeker's attitude and views about the job search process.

iii. Interest and Aptitudes: The LEAD Skills Trainer will administer the Picture Interest Career Survey (PICS). The PICS is a language-free assessment of occupational interests. It uses the RIASEC occupational interest theory developed by John Holland as its theoretical framework. It is a way for individuals with limited reading ability or special needs to explore their career interests and find a job that fits. Instead of using text-based items, PICS uses pictures to help individuals identify their interests. Test takers are presented with 36 sets of 3 pictures and choose which of the three portrayed occupations seems most interesting. Based on the pictures selected, PICS creates a profile of the individual that leads directly to career info and potential job matches.

iv. Prior Work Experience: During the required intake assessment, the LEAD Skills Trainer will have the opportunity to get more information on the participant's prior work experience, as well as review any additional documents that may be provided such as a resume or a portfolio.

v. Digital Literacy: During the intake, PAEP staff will have participants complete some of the required assessments on the computer. This will allow staff to see how participants are able to navigate a computer and evaluate what supports will be needed for each participant. Before being accepted into the program, participants engage in a working interview to determine if they are appropriate or not for the program. During this working interview the participants complete a typing test and an email activity. This part of the program will also be taking into consideration while assessing the participant's digital literacy.

vi. Occupational Skills: During the required intake assessment, the LEAD Skills Trainer will ask a wide variety of questions getting to know the participants interest, skills, aptitudes, and any transferable skills the participants may have for the ISS. The LEAD Skills Trainer will use this information to determine which department within the hospital the participant will be placed for their work based learning internship. The internships will allow the participant to work in a real life employment setting at an entry level occupation that meets their interest and skill set. The LEAD Skills Trainer will also administer the Interest Determination, Exploration, and Assessment System (IDEAS) is administered to help identify career interests for individuals with limited work experience and to assist with planning meaningful work experiences. The IDEAS test has 16 Basic Scales that are organized according to the widely accepted RIASEC themes: Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and Conventional.

vii. Supportive Service Needs: Historically, individuals with disabilities encounter barriers to transportation related to employment. During the required intake assessment, the LEAD Skills Trainer will ask a variety of questions to determine who will need supportive services. PAEP is requesting supportive services for participants to receive reimbursement for transportation funding to support these needs.

viii. Developmental Needs: During the required intake assessment, the LEAD Skills Trainer will ask a variety of questions to determine what type of supports or accommodations may need to be put into place to assist each participant based on their development need.

b. Career Exploration: Participants in the program will complete a variety of assessments to evaluate skills and career interests before starting the program. The results of the Picture Interest Career Survey (PICS) will also provide a good pathway towards different types of careers to explore.

c. Barriers: The LEAD Skills Trainer will administer the "Barriers to Employment Success Inventory" (BESI) to identify barriers that exist in areas of personal/financial, emotional/physical/career, decision-making/planning, job-seeking knowledge, and training and education. The inventory consists of 50 questions/statements that are rated to assist in identifying major barriers to success in the participant's job

search and recommended ways in overcoming the barriers. PAEP will provide support and accommodations based on each participant's individual needs and offer job coaching and job support to participants while they participate in work based learning internships and during the classroom portion of the day.

d. Career pathway/Identified industries: The ISS will clearly identify the participant's career pathway, educational and employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives and goals, responsible parties, end dates, and job development plan as well as other supportive services that may be needed in order to achieve the goals. The LEAD Skills Trainer will also administer the Vocational Fit Assessment (VocFit). The VocFit assessment is a job matching program that matches the participant's abilities to the WBL/Paid Job Site Training demands. This program uses an algorithm to match participants to appropriate WBL/Paid Job Site Training placements, as well as employment opportunities. The Job Match Report will identify the pros and cons of each potential job match and also assist with areas of improvements to assist in developing goals for the participant. Using the Person-Centered Planning (PCP) approach and utilizing the assessment results, PAEP will be able to place participants into internships that match their skills, interest, and location. Each participant will spend 5 hours per day at the internship. Participants complete three, 10-week long work based learning internships in three different departments within the hospital, totaling 30 weeks of work based learning to acquire a variety of competitive, marketable and transferable skills in different occupations. The greatest part of Northwestern Medicine being a host site for the skills building is that they offer a variety of skill building internships that can be easily transferred into other industries and job settings following the program. An example of work based learning internships and industries that are offered to participants will include: Cart Running, Central Supply, Diagnostic Imaging, Emergency Room, East Surgery, West Surgery, Dishwashing, Stocking, Cashier, Food Preparation, Catering, GI-Endoscopy Lab, Guest Services, Linen, Interventional Radiology, Physical Therapy, Sterilization, Facilities/Parts, Housekeeping, Transport, Child Life, Receiving Dock, Inpatient Pediatrics, and Patient Floors.

4) Service Delivery:

a.) To ensure there are no gaps in services for all participants throughout the duration of the Project SEARCH program, PAEP staff will have in person contact with participants for the entire duration of their participation. It is a requirement for each participant in the program to report to the business host site for the program-NM, Central DuPage Hospital-Monday through Friday from 7:30am-2:30pm. A classroom has been built out at the hospital for the program to be conducted. PAEP staff are on-site providing all program participants with intensive job coaching and support during their time at the hospital. To ensure each participant is receiving proper services and ensuring that goals are being met, the LEAD Skills Trainer will host an individualized monthly meeting for each participant. Additionally, at the start of the program, each participant receives a program handbook that clearly states the attendance expectations and policies as well as consequences of not following the policy.

b.) The LEAD Skills Trainer will provide intensive case management throughout the duration of the program for each participant. The LEAD Skills Trainer will document all case management from application through exit for the program. All monthly progress notes will be recorded electronically in the Illinois Workforce Development System (IWDS) by the LEAD Skills Trainer. The LEAD Skills Trainer will also maintain two complete files for each participant being served throughout the duration of the program. One of the files will contain all WIOA required documents and another file containing all PAEP required documents, both files will be housed with PAEP facility. These files will be kept locked and kept separate file drawers to ensure no HIPPA violations. All documentation that is collected and prepared for each participant will be kept in these files. The LEAD Skills Trainer will ensure that WDD staff receives all original required forms and documentation that is needed. All required reports by the Illinois Workforce Development System (IWDS) will be submitted in a timely manner and the LEAD Skills Trainer will provide status reports to ensure progress on the program.

5. Training Description and Outline:

a.) The following outlines the range hours of services necessary to complete the elements of the program successfully. (Hours based per participant.)

• Intake/Assessments	20-25 hours
• Classroom Instruction	250-300 hours
• Work Based Learning/Job Site Training	750-800 hours
• Competitive Job Support	350-450 hours
• Follow-Up	20-25 hours
Total Range per Participant	1390-1600 hours

b.) The program will use the National Project SEARCH curriculum. ***Please see attached curriculum inventory.***

c.) Program length and start/end dates: The program will run from October 1, 2025 through September 30, 2026 and beyond with year follow up.

d.) ***Please see attached customer flow chart.*** The following is a timeline and sequence of all activities:

July/Aug/Sept 2025	Meeting with NM department managers to develop internship sites for incoming participants; Individual participant initial intake interview; comprehensive assessment; career exploration and employment goals identified. Program orientation and expectations, accountability and benefits of the program reviewed.
August/Sept 2025	Individual Service Plan developed for each participant; career exploration activities to determine work based learning internship placement
Sept/Oct 2025 through March/April 2026	Participants engage in work readiness classroom instruction M-F, 7:30-9am at Central DuPage Hospital. Participants begin work based learning internships at designated departments of the hospital, M-F 9:30-2:15pm (Placed into 3, 10 week long rotations to expose participants to 3 different skill industries) PAEP provides intensive job coaching, task analysis, identification of possible job accommodations/modifications at each of these worksites-including the use of skill acquisition evaluations (monthly Employment Planning Meetings completed to evaluate progress completed)
April/May 2026	Continue work based learning internships; PAEP staff begin competitive job placement development for participants; participants transfer skills into paid, competitive job settings; PAEP provides intensive job coaching and follow up at new competitive jobs attained by participants. Participants receive High school diploma. Connect participants to community resources as requested/needed.
2026-2027	One year follow up

e.) Industry-recognized credentials will be pursued through on-the-job training opportunities or partnerships with training providers. As PAEP identifies and secures placement sites, staff will continue to prioritize credential-earning opportunities wherever possible to strengthen long-term employment outcomes for these young adults.

f.) Labor Market Information (LMI) plays a crucial role in helping individuals, including those with disabilities, make informed career decisions. PAEP recognizes and takes into consideration current job openings within the hospital setting, often ones that are high turnover to support the program's training requirements that will offer more opportunities and chances for individuals with disabilities to enter the workforce, that will require

minimal experience, and ones that offer a practical setting to try out accommodations that will ultimately lead to long-term success of the participants.

6. Job readiness training: Job readiness is the process of preparing individuals for employment, including preparing them for interviews, sharpening skills and so forth that are needed to be successful in a work environment, a much needed activity for individuals with disabilities. The components of the classroom instruction include all areas of soft skills and workplace preparation, resume writing, interview preparation, job search skills, industry-specific vocabulary, workplace communication, work ethic, and contextualized math and writing. All of these areas are addressed when participants meet in the classroom, M-F from 7:30-9am. Please reference the attached curriculum inventory that includes a complete list of job readiness topics that are presented to all participants.

7. WIOA Program Elements: All 14 identified WIOA Elements will be made available to the participants that are enrolled in the program, many being delivered on-site through the direct program and some through a partnership or referral. ***Please see attached WIOA 14 Elements Delivery Plan Form.***

1. PAEP will provide direct classroom instruction and on the job training, job coaching, job support, and instruction with work based learning opportunities that will lead to job placement. This will lead to completion of their High School diploma.
2. Participants will be referred to the local College of DuPage for resources in the area of exploring secondary school offerings. PAEP has a relationship with the Manager of Career Services of the College of DuPage, as well as on-site College of DuPage staff located within WorkNet DuPage.
3. PAEP will provide paid work based learning experiences to the participants through the proposed program. There is a substantial emphasis in providing unpaid work experiences through the proposed program. PAEP will work closely with Northwestern Medicine Director of Community Health Services to provide these services. Each participant will be placed into 3, 10-week long internships within the hospital to gain work experience. A large portion of PAEP staff time (at least 50%) will be spent on meeting with hospital department managers to identify internships and provide support to them throughout the program to support the participants in the program. As the proposed program is following the Project SEARCH model, all work experiences are unpaid. PAEP will also provide job shadowing opportunities to participants to expose them different available careers and job opportunities.
4. PAEP will provide occupational skills training along with workforce preparation activities. The workforce preparation is provided through a structured program that includes a set curriculum, group classroom training that follows the national Project SEARCH model. All work based learning internships will be provided at Central DuPage Hospital throughout different departments within the hospital that will offer participants a variety of competitive, marketable and transferable skills in different occupations. The greatest part of Northwestern Medicine being a host site for the skills building is that they offer a variety of skill building internships that can be easily transferred into other industries and job settings following the program. An example of work based learning internships and industries that are offered to participants will include: Breast Health, Cart Running, Central Supply, Diagnostic Imaging, Emergency Room, East Surgery, West Surgery, Dishwashing, Stocking, Cashier, Food Preparation, Catering, GI-Endoscopy Lab, Guest Services, Linen, Interventional Radiology, Physical Therapy, Sterilization, Facilities/Parts, Housekeeping, Transport, Child Life, Receiving Dock, Inpatient Pediatrics, and Patient Floors. Internships skills are broken into three different categories: Hospitality, Clerical, and Operations.
5. Participants will receive classroom instruction 5 days a week for 1 ½ hours each day for 30 weeks concurrently with participating in their work based learning internships. The classroom activities are designed around job readiness and employability skills including team building, workplace information, social skills, communication, interviewing skills, money management and job search skills. Participants will meet one on

one with the LEAD Skills Trainer on a monthly basis at Employment Planning Meetings to ensure that the identified employment goals are occurring at each internship.

6. PAEP will provide the opportunity for each participant to engage in outside peer-centered and leadership activities and report back to and share with other participants about their experiences and how it has positively affected their behavior. Specifically, how it has assisted them in their employment goals. PAEP will provide a classroom portion for the program that is designed for job readiness and employability skills including; hard and soft skills, team building, workplace safety, career exploration, goal setting, self-advocacy, technology, portfolio building, health and wellness, workplace information, social skills, communication, interviewing skills, money management, positive social behavior, decision making, job search skills, and preparing and maintaining employment.

7. PAEP will provide supportive services to participants in the program. Supportive services provided will include transportation.

8. PAEP has established contact with a provider identified to provide adult mentoring and comprehensive guidance and counseling. PAEP recognizes the importance of their service to assist young adults with mental health and anxiety related issues. Individuals with disabilities especially can benefit from mentorship to build and develop social relationships. Given the uniqueness of our participants, PAEP has developed a relationship with the Director at Kids Matter to provide these services.

9. PAEP will provide follow up services for at least 12 months after the completion of the program to assist participants in maintaining employment and succeeding in their position. Based on the individual needs of each participant, PAEP staff will provide follow up services in the form of monthly check-ins at the employment sites, or a monthly call/email to both the employer and the participant to find out how employment is progressing. PAEP staff will be readily available and act as a resource to identify and address any challenges or changes to their employment situation. This follow up will be thoroughly documented in their case files.

10. PAEP will provide overall guidance and career counseling to participants in the program during the intake assessment phase and throughout the program during the monthly Employment Planning Meetings. PAEP staff is also certified in Adult Mental Health First Aid USA and will utilize this training on an as needed basis for participants. During the programs classroom portion, mental health will also be covered, due to the stress and anxiety that can arise due to starting a new opportunity or new job utilizing the Mighty Minds Mental Health Toolkit that was developed by PAEP. Beyond career guidance and counseling, PAEP will utilize 211 to assist in specific areas in identifying referrals to additional areas of guidance and counseling as appropriate for each participant. Areas related to mental health will be referred to DuPage NAMI.

11. PAEP will provide financial literacy and money management education within the classroom portion of the program. This assists participants with creating budgets, learning how to save, wants vs. needs, reading a paycheck, address banking and other financial literacy education. Participants will also receive a literacy education presentation from PAEP bank partner, BMO Harris. If participants require more assistance beyond the classroom portion that covers this area, PAEP will refer to the College of DuPage for additional resources.

12. PAEP will have a guest speaker from the College of DuPage present information regarding entrepreneurial skills. PAEP will refer participants interested in learning about entrepreneurial skills to the College of DuPage.

13. PAEP will research and provide labor market information during the intake process. PAEP will also work with employers to provide HR guest speakers to talk to participants about various occupations, resources, and employment and what the current openings and market looks like. This will assist each participant in making an informed decision about the career pathway and employment goal they establish.

14. PAEP will provide direct classroom instruction and on the job training, job coaching, job support, and instruction with work based learning opportunities that will lead to job placement. This will lead to receiving

their high school diploma. PAEP will refer participants to College of DuPage and workNet for additional postsecondary training opportunities. ***Please see attached WIOA 14 Elements Delivery Plan Form.***

8. Partnerships: PAEP has identified key partners to share resources and fulfill the elements of the program that would otherwise remain underserved. Collaboration and sharing of resources to meet each of the WIOA services is a key component of the program to generate successful outcomes. The following partners have been identified to assist in obtaining the performance measures and WIOA elements: PAEP, Northwestern Medicine, The School Association of Special Education in DuPage (SASED). A detailed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) (***See attached***) has been adopted between all entities since 2014 to assist participants in the program maximize their success. As the business host site, NM provides classroom space and work based learning internships at Central DuPage Hospital, assists with the selection of participants of the program, and provides assistance to PAEP staff for any needs of the program while on site. As a partner with the Project SEARCH program, SASED serves as the educational institution/cooperative to provide a full time instructor staff to provide the job skills, daily living and full Project SEARCH curriculum.

9. Work-based Learning: Over 75% of the program is concentrated on providing paid work based learning experiences to the participants through the proposed program.

Length and Structure: The work based learning internship activities will be 9 months out of the 12, M-F from 9am-2pm.

Employer Partnerships: The LEAD Skills Trainer works with Northwestern Medicine, Human Resources to target and meet with department managers of the hospital to create potential internship worksites. A thorough job analysis is completed for each department to identify job tasks, and potential job opportunities.

Skill Development: An example of work based learning internships and departments that are offered to participants include: Breast Health, Cart Running, Central Supply, Diagnostic Imaging, Emergency Room, East Surgery, West Surgery, Dishwashing, Stocking, Cashier, Food Preparation, Catering, GI-Endoscopy Lab, Guest Services, Linen, Interventional Radiology, Physical Therapy, Sterilization, Facilities/Parts, Housekeeping, Transport, Child Life, Receiving Dock, Inpatient Pediatrics, and Patient Floors. Internships skills are broken into three different categories: Hospitality, Clerical, and Operations.

A few examples of each department skill building experience for transferrable skills:

Linen Department: counting and filling linen carts for delivery, delivering clean linen and supplies to floors, deliver and alphabetizing doctor and surgeon lab jackets, sanitizing and cleaning the linen department.

Guest Services: delivering supplies to registration departments, making copies of registration forms, highlighting important areas of forms, bundling hospital wristbands, taking inventory of supply closet, cleaning the waiting areas.

Receiving Dock: unloading shipments from trucks, checking boxes for purchase order numbers/direct shipments, comparing item numbers and quantity of items in box with packing slip, and making deliveries around the hospital.

Emergency Department: Sanitizing rooms upon patient discharge, sanitizing high touch areas, stock patient rooms with necessary supplies, stock caddy's and stocking the blanket warmer.

Dish Room: Unloading and organizing dirty items onto belt, loading dirty items into dish machine, checking and stocking clean items, taking out garbage, prepping clean trays with paper, and rolling silverware.

Sterilization: Checking expiration dates, peeling pouch supplies, returning unused items to shelves, picking items for the operating room.

Supervision and Mentorship: PAEP will work with each department manager to provide adequate orientation and onboarding to each participant. PAEP will provide personalized and hands-on support and job coaching to the participants during the early stages of work-based learning internships. PAEP will identify workplace accommodations so the supervisor can adequately support the participants.

Alignment with Career Pathways: Using the Person-Centered Planning (PCP) approach and utilizing the assessment results, PAEP will be able to place participants into WBL/Paid Job Site Training that match their skills, interest, and location.

Assessment and Feedback: PAEP utilizes a systematic instruction and data collection forms to track skill acquisition that will be discussed with each employer supervisor on a weekly basis until the participant becomes independent. Monthly goals and progress meetings are then held to evaluate the participant and employer expectations to ensure success.

Employer Engagement Plan: PAEP has long-term relationships with employers that are dedicated to increasing workplace diversity and inclusion. PAEP plays an important role in providing expertise and education to assist them in achieving this. PAEP provides each employer with a clear framework in how to support individuals with disabilities, schedules, evaluation templates and clear goals and outcomes that reduces uncertainty and administrative burden for them.

Participant Preparation: Through the expose to 3 different internships, participants engage in scenarios similar to those they will encounter at a job, and allow for repetition to practice industry-specific skills. It allows for PAEP staff to provide intensive job coaching and systematic instruction to assist participants learn tasks, identify challenges and implement accommodations to prepare the individual to be successful prior to moving into on-the-job training and competitive job placement.

Wage Management: The work based learning internships through this program are unpaid.

10) Post-Exit Follow-Up Services: PAEP will provide follow up services for at least 12 months after the completion of the program to assist participants in maintaining employment and succeed in their position. Based on the individual needs of each participant, PAEP staff will provide follow up services through monthly check-ins at the job sites, or monthly calls to both the employer and participant to find out how employment is progressing. PAEP staff will be readily available and act as resource to identify/address any challenges or changes in their employment. This follow up will be thoroughly tracked and will include employment retention wage progression, credential attainment and be documented in their case files and the IWDS system.

11) Physical Location-EO/ADA: All aspects of the program including the classroom portion of the program and work based learning internships will be conducted at Northwestern Medicine Central DuPage Hospital located at 25 N. Winfield Road, Winfield, IL 60190 in DuPage County. The hospital is an ideal location as a host business site, as they have a classroom built out specifically for the Project SEARCH program as well as a variety of industry job skill training opportunities available for the participants. Northwestern Medicine Central DuPage hospital is ADA compliant and accessible to individuals with disabilities.

PAST AND PLANNED OUTCOMES

Program History: PAEP is extremely knowledgeable of WIOA youth services and resources. PAEP has been funded by DuPage County WIOA to implement the Project SEARCH program at Northwestern Medicine Central DuPage Hospital since 2014 and the IBA program since 2018. Additionally, PAEP has been funded through Kane County WIOA for its Project SEARCH program at Delnor Hospital since 2019. PAEP is in its sixth year of receiving funding from McHenry County WIOA to run a Project SEARCH program at Huntley Hospital. PAEP has developed a well-founded reputation and strong presence in the communities which it serves and has diversified and increased its funding sources to meet the needs of these communities. Its existing contracts with both in school and out of school youth programs through WIOA programs demonstrates PAEP's ability to administer the required WIOA elements. To date, since 2014, the Project SEARCH program administered through PAEP, supported through WIOA funding has cumulatively served over 280 individuals with disabilities, with an employment placement and retention rate of 93%.

<u>QUANTITATIVE DATA</u>	KANE WIOA- Out of School	McHENRY WIOA- Out of School	DuPAGE WIOA- Both Out and In School
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Program Description	Project SEARCH	Project SEARCH	Project SEARCH/IBA
PY 19-20 Benchmark vs. Outcomes	Benchmark: 12 Outcome: 9 75% of students obtained employment.	N/A	Benchmark: 24 Outcome: 21 88% of students obtained and retained their employment.
PY 20-21 Benchmark vs. Outcomes	Benchmark: 12 Outcome: 10 83% students obtained employment.	Benchmark: 8 Outcome: 8 100% students obtained and retained employment.	Benchmark: 26 Outcome: 23 88% of students obtained and retained their employment.
PY 21-22 Benchmark vs. Outcomes	Benchmark: 12 Outcome: 12 100% students obtained employment	Benchmark: 8 Outcome: 5 63% students obtained employment.	Benchmark: 27 Outcome: 25 93% of students obtained and retained their employment.
PY 22-23 Benchmark vs. Outcomes	Benchmark: 10 Outcome: 10 100% students obtained employment	Benchmark: 7 Outcome: 7 100% students obtained employment	Benchmark: 29 Outcome: 28 96% of students obtained and retained their employment.
PY 23-24 Benchmark vs. Outcomes	Benchmark: 10 Outcome: 8 80% students obtained employment.	Benchmark: 10 Outcome: 9 90% students obtained employment	Benchmark: 33 Outcome: 29 87% of students obtained and retained their employment.
PY 24-25 Benchmark vs. Outcomes	Benchmark: 10 Outcome: 8 80% students obtained employment.	Benchmark: 11 Outcome 6 54% students obtained employment thus far 100% skills gain	Benchmark: 40 Outcome: 34 85% of students obtained and retained their employment. 100% skills gain.

Documentation of Outcomes: PAEP utilizes an on-line case management system Casebooks to track all activities/outcomes. PAEP is in good standing with all current funding sources, meeting performance measures.

Please see attached Proposed Planned Outcomes Form.

Employer Collaboration: Partnerships with employers are vital to the success of the program. The program implemented by PAEP will assist businesses in identifying gaps in employment needs, change corporate business culture and help add diversity to the workforce. The program assists businesses realize that by hiring individuals with disabilities, performance and retention in some high turnover, entry level positions will increase dramatically increase.

Staffing and Capacity: The program will be led by our current full time LEAD Skills Trainer, Chloe Suter. Ms. Suter has been with PAEP since 2022 and worked as an Employment Specialist at the CDH Project SEARCH

program prior to taking on the lead role last year. She successfully led all aspects of the program including the management of performance tracking, reporting and case management.

ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION

PAEP is a 501(c)(3), non-profit organization that provides a variety of programs to individuals with disabilities including career counseling, job training, job readiness, job development, job placement and job coaching and support services. Each of these individualized services assists individuals with disabilities develop secure career plans, enter into and retain employment. The mission of PAEP is to improve the quality of life of people with disabilities through individualized employment services. PAEP is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF). CARF accreditation is evidence that PAEP strives to improve efficiency, fiscal health, and service delivery, creating a foundation for consumer satisfaction.

The proposed program is currently integrated into the current structure and services of PAEP. ***Please see attached organizational chart.***

The program will be led by our current full time LEAD Skills Trainer, Chloe Suter. Ms. Suter has been with PAEP since 2022 and worked as an Employment Specialist at the CDH Project SEARCH program prior to taking on the lead role last year. She successfully led all aspects of the program including the management of performance tracking, reporting and case management. Ms. Suter also holds a certification in Adult Mental Health First Aid USA to address the social-emotional needs of the program participants. Ms. Suter will be responsible for all documentation and case management from application through exit for the WIOA grant. Ms. Suter will be responsible for internally monitoring performance, collecting data, reporting and general oversight on-site for the Project SEARCH program with the assistance of PAEP Program Manager, Kiersten Lira. All staff hired to work under this program will be trained by PAEP Program Manager, Kiersten Lira.

All programs implemented by PAEP are driven by the mission and vision of the organization. The Executive Director of PAEP, Ms. Sheffield will provide overall leadership for the program. She has been with PAEP for over 23 years and has extensive knowledge of WIOA programming. Ms. Sheffield holds a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling, and is a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor. Additional management is provided by Associate Director, Roger Cave, who has been with the agency for over 22 years, holds a Bachelor's Degree in Communicative Disorders and had a brother with Down Syndrome. Finance Director, Brian Suste is a retired Senior Accountant from the County of DuPage. Mr. Suste will oversee the financial aspects of the WIOA funding and has extensive experience with grants administration, primarily WIOA.

Please see attached job descriptions and staff resumes.

FINANCIAL STRUCTURE AND COST EFFECTIVENESS

1) PAEP is requesting \$138,728 for the program. Costs were thoughtfully calculated based on the necessary line items to effectively implement the program that includes: 1) personnel, 2) fringe benefits and 3) Operating costs including payroll services, professional services, auditing services, rent, equipment, phone, electric, supplies, internet, printing and mileage. The total cost also includes direct training costs for specialized classroom instruction, work based learning, as well as transportation reimbursement for supportive services. The identified costs are necessary and reasonable for proper & efficient operation of the proposed program based on WIOA regulations and guidelines. They are attributable to the benefit of the program. The program year will run October 1, 2025 through September 30, 2026.

The average cost per participant (12) is \$11,560.67. There will be a 6:1 participant to staff ratio. The program serves individuals with disabilities, individuals that typically require one-on-one assistance to ensure adequate supports are in place to be successful. It guarantees that the participants will get the support they need to reach their highest potential.

2) PAEP is an experienced agency, working with and utilizing WIOA funding since 2014. Fiscal controls are well established for all the grant funds to ensure proper and timely obligation and expenditures. PAEP utilizes a

financial policies manual that serves as the guide for the financial policies and procedures of the agency. PAEP is financially responsible and solvent, conducting fiscal management in a manner that supports the mission, values and annual performance objectives. PAEP demonstrates good business practices and complies with applicable legal requirements to maintain and retain financial. The total annual budget for the agency for FY 24-25 was \$1,715,525. The following chart provides grants over \$100,000 and their descriptions/purpose.

SOURCE	PERIOD	\$ AMOUNT	PURPOSE/PROGRAM
DHS/DRS	July 2024-June 2025	\$163,146 \$363,040	Supported Employment Job Placement, Training Support
DuPage County WIOA	July 2024-Jne 2025	\$124,000 \$434,000	NM Central DuPage Hospital Project SEARCH Program (in-school youth) Inspired by ABILITY (out of school youth program)
Kane County WIOA	July 2024-June 2025	\$215,000	NM Delnor Hospital Project SEARCH Program (out of school youth)
McHenry County WIOA	July 2024-June 2025	\$117,750	NM Huntley Hospital (out of school youth)

3) Fiscal Department: Name: Brian Suste, Finance Director, Address: 2525 Cabot Drive, Suite 302, Lisle, Illinois 60532, Phone: 630-631-9751, Email: bsuste@parents-alliance.org

4) A large percentage of the program budget contributes to personnel and participant operational work based learning costs. Please see aforementioned work based learning section. All work based learning activities (as listed in provided job descriptions-attached) will be properly obligated and reported on staff timesheets (sample included in Cost Allocation Plan) as Work Based Learning Costs and separated from other duties. Participants will also receive paychecks for their time engaged in work based learning job site training. Hours will be logged and tracked through timesheets. PAEP has acted as the employer of record for WIOA participants for the last 7 years, successfully implementing the program. PAEP utilizes PayChex to administer payroll and ensure participants are paid accordingly. The agency has in place all lawful requirements for payroll processing, tax withholding and payments utilizing PayChex payroll services.

5) No costs charged to this budget is shared between other funding sources. All costs for the program will be covered by the WIOA grant. Indirect costs for all grants of the agency are allocated based on benefit received as delineated in the Cost Allocation Plan.

6) ***Please see attached Cost Allocation Plan***

7) PAEP does not have an approved indirect cost rate and has elected the federally recognized de minimus rate for indirect costs.

8) ***Please see attached most recent audited financial statements.***

9) PAEP audit did not have any opinions or recommendations regarding internal controls, therefore no response was provided.

10) No leveraged funds will be used or provided for the program.

11) If funding is reduced, PAEP would run a shortened version (5-10 participants) of the program as to not completely terminate the program for the next program year, utilizing its existing DRS milestone contract and other community resources (donations and other foundations/donations) to serve individuals with disabilities.

12) PAEP will comply with the Uniform Administrative Requirements and the Cost Principles as delineated in title 29 of the Code of the Federal Regulations Part 95 or Part 97 as the applicable Office Management Budget circulars, as required. PAEP is in compliance with all Federal regulations and circulars.