

## Project SEARCH High School Transition Program

In 2013, the Vermont (VT) State Personnel Development Grant supported the creation and implementation of two new VT Project SEARCH sites. The VT Project SEARCH Leadership Team included representatives from the VT Agency of Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, Developmental Disability Services, and host businesses. Local teams included representatives from these same organizations, as well as personnel from area schools and community organizations.

At each site, a classroom teacher and 2 job coaches established intern opportunities for Project SEARCH student interns. Each class day, there was at least one hour of class time and five hours of internship time. Interns rotated through at least three internship sites, each year. At the beginning of each rotation, there was a two-week period of full class time that allowed interns to debrief the previous internship, and to plan for their next internship site.

### VT Project SEARCH Sites (2014 - 16)

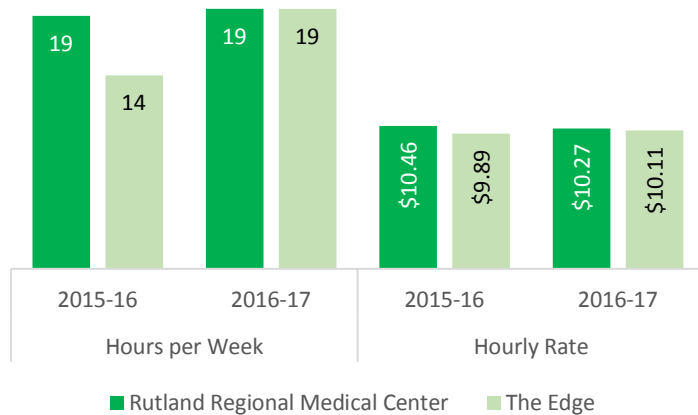
Across the two years, 12 high school students with disabilities from Chittenden County completed a Project SEARCH internship at The Edge. The Edge is a sports and fitness company, with five locations in Burlington, VT. Internships included: administration, front desk, child care, pre-school, indoor/outdoor maintenance, aquatics/pool maintenance, fitness department, group exercise, & day care. Ten of the 12 graduating interns were employed upon graduation, in these settings:

- The Edge (2)
- Food Service (3)
- Eco Car Wash
- Grocery
- Retail (3)

After two years, 12 Rutland County high school students with disabilities completed Project SEARCH internships at Rutland Regional Medical Center (RRMC). The RRMC is a 123-bed hospital. Internships included: outpatient rehabilitation, finance, human resources, education and training, gift shop, medical records, IT, heart center, print shop/mail room, & food & nutrition services. The 12 graduating interns were employed in these settings:

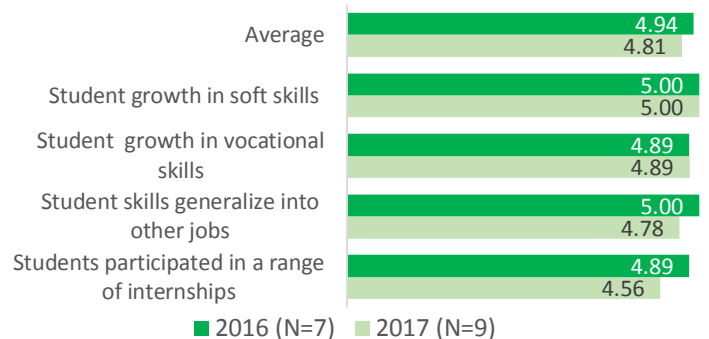
- RRMC (4)
- Food Service (6)
- Green Mountain Power
- Day Care

### Project Search Intern Outcome Information



### Impact of VT Project SEARCH

Leaders of the VT Project SEARCH sites were surveyed in 2016 and 2017. The respondents felt that Project SEARCH activities had a high impact on student outcomes.



Scale: 1 = Very Dissatisfied, 2 = Dissatisfied, 3 = Mixed Opinion, 4 = Satisfied, 5 = Very Satisfied

### Testimony

- *The growth of self-confidence and independence in the interns is clear. The support and mentorship of the interns by the employees is incredible. They genuinely want to see our interns succeed and look for opportunities for growth.*
- *Seeing the interns at the beginning of the program and at the end is transformative. They gain and demonstrate skills and growth throughout the year which will transfer into their paid jobs.*