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Chesapeake launches program to train young adults with disabilities

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OKLAHOMA CITY — Metro Technology Centers students will begin developing marketable on-the-job skills in February as interns in the new Project SEARCH employment training program at Chesapeake Energy Corporation, the first corporation outside a medical facility to host the program in Oklahoma City.

This program facilitates the learning process for young adults with disabilities who are clients of the Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services by providing continuous feedback and application of new skills in a workplace environment. The goal of this curriculum is to achieve and maintain permanent competitive employment in the community.

Denise North, director of disability Services at MTC, believes that Project SEARCH and Metro Technology Centers exemplify a common mission of preparing for life. The Project SEARCH model encourages each partner to do what they do best, and the ultimate winners are the young people who gain employment skills and the confidence to become employed.

“Metro Technology Centers provides an instructor/coordinator and the classroom equipment to support Project SEARCH because this is our area of expertise. We are very excited about this program and look forward to celebrating the young peoples’ successes in the future,” North said.

Interns at Chesapeake will work job rotations throughout the company’s corporate headquarters in administrative services, the fitness center, restaurants, community relations and human resources.

New Project SEARCH programs also began this year in Enid at INTEGRIS Bass Baptist Health Center and in Oklahoma City at Mercy Health System. Programs for high school students with disabilities are entering their third year in Tulsa and Ada.

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