



DREXEL UNIVERSITY

Transition Pathways

Life Course Outcomes Research Program

A. J. Drexel Autism Institute

TRANSITION PATHWAYS

2024 Impact Report



TRANSITION PATHWAYS

SCHOOL-TO-WORK INNOVATIONS

2024
IMPACT REPORT



Transition Pathways participants celebrating their achievements at our annual closing ceremony.

Philadelphia's Unique Challenges

70%

of special education students are economically disadvantaged

32%

of special education students do not finish high school

26%

of students experience chronic absenteeism since COVID

Since 2016...



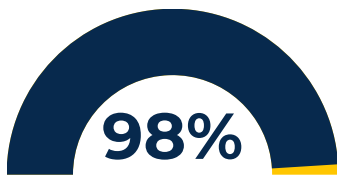
266

youth served



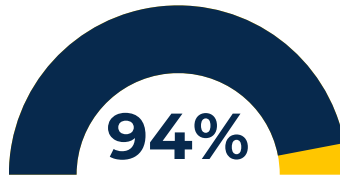
87%

connected to employment or further education/training within 1 year, compared to the national rate of 58%



98%

complete programs once enrolled



94%

report feeling ready to work after program completion



75

youth served



100%

connected to employment or further education/training within 1 year

Our Record of Success



277*

job placements



68%

retained employment for 1 year



\$13.95

median wage

**We help some youth get a second job placement if the first is not a good fit.*

TRANSITION PATHWAYS

OUR GROWTH

2024
IMPACT REPORT

Since 2016, Transition Pathways has grown to meet the changing needs of autistic youth—creating new programs, expanding access to jobs, and building strong partnerships. Our team has successfully leveraged over **\$4.7 million** in support services for autistic young people. This timeline highlights key milestones of our growth and innovation.

2016: Transition Pathways launches the **nation's first** autism specific Project SEARCH at a university, serving **8** youth with autism and intellectual disabilities.

2018: Based on our success, the School District of Philadelphia adapts its own Project SEARCH. We develop an innovative model for **full-time** summer employment.

2020: While other programs close across the nation, we keep ours thriving and open a new Project Career Launch cohort with the Community College of Philadelphia, nearly **doubling our annual impact**.

2022: Through our relationship with the Community College of Philadelphia, we offer students the opportunity to enroll in **college courses at no cost** - broadening access to postsecondary education.

2024: Our reach has increased to **75** youth per year. We pilot new program to train autistic youth in **advanced manufacturing**, opening pathways to well-paying careers. We begin planning for a third cohort of Project Career Launch, starting in 2025.

2017: We develop a cutting-edge **early paid work model** based on research that suggests that having a job in high school is key for long-term employment success.

2019: To meet the needs of more autistic youth, we develop our groundbreaking **Project Career Launch** model with the School District of Philadelphia, serving **12** more students annually.

2021: To meet growing demand for over **40** students annually, we establish our **Drexel Business Innovation Center** to build employer capacity and more job opportunities. We also start the Neurodivergent Young Adult Advisory Council to elevate autistic voices.

2023: To meet evolving student needs, we make our program offerings more robust—adding more paid internships, incorporating **digital and financial literacy training**, deepening peer mentoring programs, and focusing on self-advocacy and wellness.

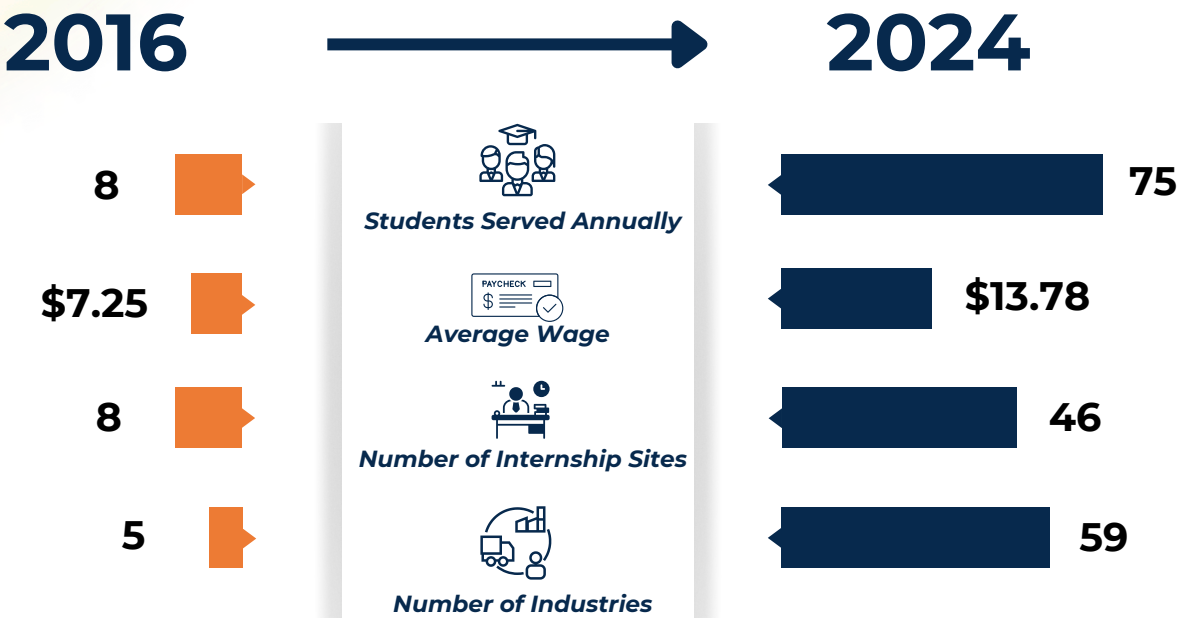
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BIGGER, BETTER JOBS

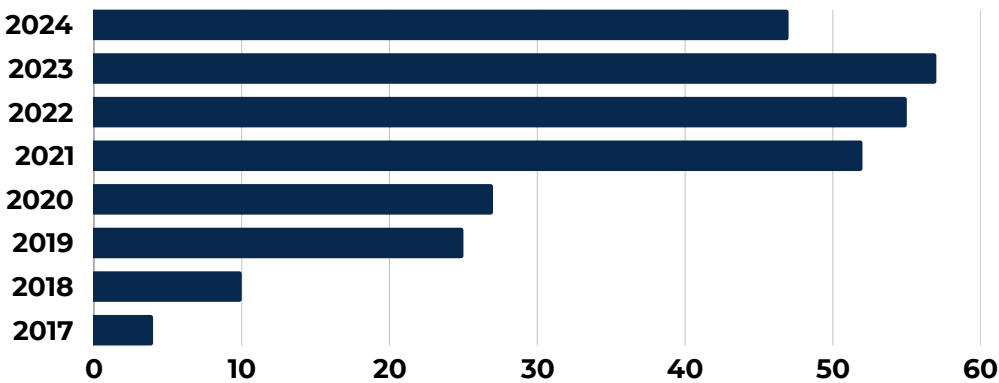
2024

IMPACT REPORT

We have increased the number of youth we serve each year, connected youth to higher paying jobs, increased the number and type of internship sites, and developed more job opportunities in more diverse industries.



Job Placements by Year

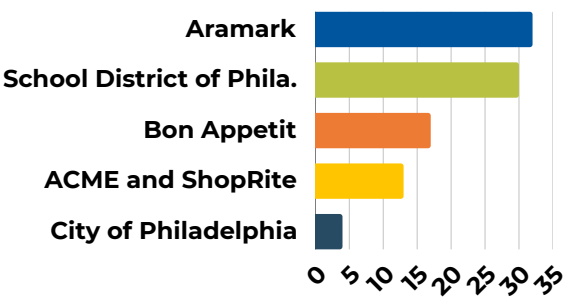


After program completion, our support continues. Through ongoing assistance, we help many participants succeed in employment and advance in their careers.

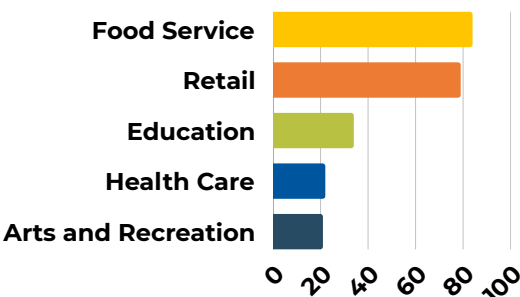
A Variety of Jobs

- Administrative Assistant
- Assistant Manager
- Data Assistant
- Dietary Aid
- Climate Support Staff
- Warehouse Associate
- Inventory Specialist
- Help Desk Agent
- Machine Operator
- Stock/Freight Associate
- Security Guard
- Seafood Clerk
- Store Associate

Top Employers



Top Industries



TRANSITION PATHWAYS

OUR PROVEN SUCCESS

2024
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We are a small, highly skilled team that designs and implements innovative school-to-work programs that meet the unique needs of youth with autism in Philadelphia.

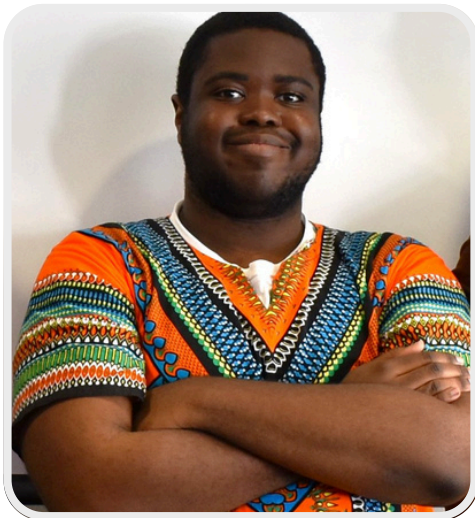
Without Transition Pathways, the youth we reach would likely be left completely disconnected and unemployed. We leverage existing public funding streams to support the services in our programs.

It is **crucial** that we ensure young people with autism in Philadelphia have support and resources to transition to adulthood. **Luckily, our students and partners can always rely on us to find creative solutions.**

Real world impact

"It had a huge impact on me. I'm really glad I joined this program, and it's probably the **best thing that ever happened in my life."**

- Project Career Launch student



Moses completed Project Career Launch in 2021. Our team helped him apply and **enroll at Temple University**, where he is studying to be a paralegal. Moses is also a valued member of our Neurodivergent Young Adult Advisory Council and is provided a stipend for providing guidance to our programs.



Nghi, a current Project Career Launch student, has completed **over 100 internship hours** across several internships, including MANNA, Broad Street Love, and St. Christopher's Hospital for Children. Her goal is to work in a hospital.



Giovanni participated in several Transition Pathways programs, including summer employment and Project Career Launch. Now, he is a valued member of his team at Cintas, working as a Production Associate and **making over \$15 per hour.**

Contact Us



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Visit our website using the QR code:



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