FLORIDA GRANTOR

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The Able Trust's mission is to be a key leader in providing Floridians with disabilities opportunities for successful employment. Official Publication of The Able Trust · www.abletrust.org

Congratulations To The 2018 Jeannie Amendola Speech and Research Competition Winners!



Karen B. Moore - Able Trust Board Chair; David Campell - Broward County HSHT; ; Edward Grillo - Foster Care HSHT; Sharon McSwain - Gadsden County HSHT; Desiree Padua - Orange County HSHT; and Dr. Susanne Homant - President and CEO, The Able Trust

The Florida High School High Tech (HSHT) program is based on the nationallyrecognized Guideposts for Success developed by the National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth and adapted by The Able Trust. The Guideposts provide programmatic framework that focuses on high expectations and successful outcomes for youth with disabilities. In 2016, The Able Trust developed and implemented a sixth guidepost, Communication Skills. Whether applying for a new job or looking for a promotion, good communication skills are important. The ability to communicate both verbally and in writing with a wide variety of people, maintaining good eye contact, writing clearly and succinctly, demonstrating a varied vocabulary, and tailoring language according to the audience, are all essential skills that employers seek. Good verbal and written communication means getting the message across with less chance of misunderstanding. In 2016, The Able Trust created the High School High Tech (HSHT) Speech & Research Competition to help foster these skills.

The Able Trust's HSHT Speech & Research Competition was renamed this year to the Jeannie Amendola Speech & Research Competition in memory of Jeannie Amendola, who passed away on December 28, 2017. She was a longtime Disney employee and a passionate advocate for the inclusion of people with disabilities. She served as a leader with CastABLE, the Disney diversity resource group that promotes respect, equality, and appreciation of people with disabilities through awareness, education and inclusion. She also served on the Board of The Able Trust for 12 years and served as an Ambassador for The Able Trust until she passed away.



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A Message from the President - Summertime



A majority of the Floridians assisted through Able Trust programs and through community-based programs funded by The Able Trust are designed to help young adults with disabilities. Although we do not keep statistics on age, there is substantial, educated agreement that over 50% of those we serve are age 30 and younger. That is directly in line with our intent to be a significant influence on providing career opportunities for people with disabilities, and as early as possible, to allow a fast start on what will make a life for them that is independent and successful.

Working with many young Floridians, one might think the summertime is a more casual time for them, time off, at the beach,

going to concerts, sleeping in, texting and tweeting, waiting for high school or college classes to start again. Contrary to that concept, and truly inspiring, is that many of those served by Able Trust programs are taking the initiative to use summer time to further their opportunities for career preparation and learning about the world of work, through actual work experiences such as internships and part time jobs.

The Able Trust High School High Tech (HSHT) program, operating in 40 counties throughout Florida, stresses the importance of summer jobs, and the HSHT program managers in those counties effectively encourage their students to obtain employment. The jobs are paid employment and for most, entry level positions where they earn their first paychecks while learning what work is really like – the good, the tedious, and the rewards that lead to an improved self-image. Work results for the HSHT program students through the last school year show 533 work experiences, 100% of which were paid work experiences. Many of those jobs are part time jobs that will continue on through the summer, as studies tell us that the average employed high school student works 19 hours per week at his or her part time job.

In addition to paid employment, many of the young people we serve also put in volunteer time in the summer. In late June, a group of young workers with disabilities dedicated a weekend to Able Trust research, helping us to identify leadership skills they found were important to moving ahead in their careers. The Able Trust will use that input and that of Florida business executives to design its new Youth Leadership Training program, which will have a strong emphasis on the identification and development of skills necessary for employment and career advancement.

The Able Trust team is convinced that work experiences, and relevant pre-work training programs are the best way to serve young adults with disabilities, who very much want to be a part of Florida's economic future. We continue to encourage all Florida businesses to become a part of this growth and education process by hiring high school students and young adults for positions – part time and full time – whenever possible.

We will be providing more information on our new Youth Leadership Training programs in the next several months, with the inaugural program scheduled for the first half of 2019.

Have a wonderful summer, cherish the beauties of Florida, and do enjoy your work life!

Kind regards,

usanne F. Somant

Dr. Susanne F. Homant, MBA President & CEO

Florida High School High Tech Welcomes New Site

by Allison Chase

The Able Trust is pleased to welcome the Flagler Schools Foundation as the newest High School High Tech (HSHT) site and community partner. Flagler HSHT became a site in the spring of 2018 and served a total of 16 students during the school year who attended Flagler and Matanzas High Schools. The site has established numerous relationships with community and business partners, including the Palm Coast Observer, Marineland, Southeast Media Productions, Walt Disney World, Pelican Post Publishing, Publix and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.

Activities for this past year included students touring Flagler Hospital and the Sally Corporation, as well as participating in career exploration workshops related to these industries. The coming school year includes plans for a HSHT class in each of the three Flagler district high schools. An active HSHT student council has been established to contribute to program planning and student recruitment.

Core features of the Able Trust HSHT program – job shadowing, industry site visits, mentoring, and internships – are critical components that help students form postsecondary education and employment goals, which are crucial for transition from high school into the world of work. The HSHT program is based on the six nationally recognized, evidenced-based Guideposts for Success: School-Based Preparatory Experiences; Career Preparation & Work-Based Learning; Connecting Activities; Youth Leadership & Development; Family Involvement & Support and Communication Skills. Research has shown that each guidepost is essential to what youth with disabilities need to succeed in adulthood. The Florida HSHT Program operates in 43 sites throughout the state, including two juvenile justice facilities and a foster care site. For more information on the Florida HSHT Program, visit www. abletrust.org.



The Able Trust Welcomes The Flager Schools Foundation to the High School High Tech famiily.

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• Type "The Able Trust" in your search bar, then click FOLLOW on the bottom-right corner.



(continued from page 1)

The Able Trust hosts the annual Jeannie Amendola Speech and Research Competition to promote the development of effective communication skills among HSHT students. The goals of the contest are to develop research, public speaking, and communication skills of students, which are critical to successful employment and career growth. The Able Trust has been continuously operating the HSHT program for 19 years, and is staffed by two faculty at The Able Trust office as well as program managers at all 43 of the HSHT Florida locations.

The contest has three levels of competition: local, regional, and state. The winner of each regional contest advanced to the state competition which was held on June 22, 2018, at The Able Trust Board of Directors' meeting in Tallahassee, Florida, with the Directors acting as contest judges. Competitors were evaluated based on an eight-point scoring rubric that focuses on three main tenets – oral communication and presentation skills, evidence of research and non-verbal communication.

The Able Trust congratulates the 2018 Jeannie Amendola Speech and Research Competition winners.

All awardees are joined by The Able Trust President & CEO Dr. Susanne Homant (left) and The Able Trust Board Chair Karen B. Moore (right).



Edward Grillo, Foster Care HSHT, Orange County Topic: Letter to the Heroes of Tomorrow



Sharon McSwain, Gadsden HSHT, Gadsden County Topic: My Career Goal

3rd Place



Desiree Padua Orange HSHT, Orange County Topic: My Career Goal



David Campell Broward HSHT, Broward County Topic: My career Goal

Special thanks to everyone involved who made this year's event a great success!

Donor Spotlight: Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation

by Hans Kairies



When The Able Trust initially contacted the Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation's Florida Director, Mary Beth Geier, to thank her for the Foundation's recent grant for the High School High Tech program she didn't accept the thanks. Instead, Geier said the Foundation likes to thank its grant recipients since "they are really the champions making a difference in the community." The Schulze Foundation is supporting the High School High Tech Programs (HSHT) in Collier and Lee

counties after two years of helping underwrite other Able Trust youth programs in the area. Dick Schulze, the founder of the Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation, is also the founder and chairman emeritus of Best Buy Co., Inc. and has foundation offices located in Minneapolis, MN and Naples, FL.

"We are honored to receive the support and recognition of our programs from such a prestigious national foundation," said Dr. Susanne Homant, President and CEO of The Able Trust. "It speaks to the quality of our high school youth programs, which focus on providing high school students with disabilities the opportunity to explore jobs and postsecondary education leading to successful careers."

In 2017, 85% of Florida HSHT graduates entered higher education or employment compared to 43% of other graduates with disabilities. Additionally, 99% of participating HSHT seniors graduated high school.

Students in the HSHT program participate in activities, including career workshops, industry and campus tours, summer internships, community service projects, and leadership development. Over the past two years, Brevard-Bayside HSHT has been involved in a unique project: the building of a tiny house. The goal of the project was for The Able Trust to explore a learning model called Project-Based Learning (PBL). PBL is a teaching method in which students gain knowledge and skills by working for an extended period of time to investigate and respond to a complex problem. Seventy-five students worked together as a team to build this fully-functioning "Tiny House" in order to learn more about the construction industry.

Geier indicated the Foundation appreciates The Able Trust's filling a real need in Southwest Florida where resources to empower and enable those with disabilities are limited. "We value the work The Able Trust is doing to address a specific challenge and the fact that it is making an impact. The Foundation sees the HSHT program as being a viable model that has proven itself to be replicable and believes it is sustainable. We are pleased to invest in the ongoing achievements of the program and the students who benefit from it," she said.

With important support from foundations like the Schulze Family Foundation, the HSHT program has enjoyed tremendous success. In the 2017-18 school year, HSHT provided services to 1,336 students with disabilities in 40 Florida counties. Students from 137 high schools received services across Florida, as well as alternative education settings like Department of Juvenile Justice facilities.

The 2018 Able Trust Ability Awards Ceremony will be held Friday, September 21 at the Rosen Shingle Creek Resort



Rosen Shingle Creek Resort

2017 The Able Trust Ability Award Winners

Disability Employment Awareness Month 2018: A Call to Action

by Joey D'Souza



October is Disability Employment Awareness Month (DEAM), which kicks off a season of job shadowing and career exploration activities for people with disabilities. During DEAM, all levels of people with disabilities partake in career exploration: high school students, college students, out of school youth, and job seekers. The goal of DEAM is not employment in itself, but rather engagement, exploration, and education. Last year over 1500 Floridians with disabilities participated in DEAM.

Now is a great time to begin planning for DEAM! While DEAM does help participants, it also serves as a powerful tool for disability service agencies. DEAM is a great ice breaker and way to introduce yourself and your consumers to a business in your community. Its flexibility, no risk and fun atmosphere that many businesses look forward to participating in, make it a great Florida-wide program. Businesses and organizations that would like to participate in DEAM 2018 should contact The Able Trust to get connected. Also, visit The Able Trust website and social media accounts to get information on the fall DEAM kick-off in Orlando.

Recent Grant Awards

by Guenevere Crum

The Able Trust Board of Directors is pleased to announce new awardees for its three-year Strategic Employment Placement Initiative.

Miami Dade College, in Miami-Dade County was awarded \$250,000 for MEED+ (Model for Enhanced Employment Development Plus). MEED+ will increase internship placements for students with disabilities, career development sessions and career services sessions. Additionally, MEED+ will enhance disability awareness efforts with metro area employers.

Independent Living Resource Center in Duval County was awarded \$250,000 for Careers360: Opportunities in Every Direction. This program will increase employability of job seekers, employment placement in sectors slated for growth, and the retention rates for individuals involved in the program. The Careers360 program will expand during the three-year grant to include the four surrounding counties of Clay, Baker, Nassau and St. Johns.

A one-year General Support for Employment Placement Initiative grant was also awarded.

Quest, Inc. will receive \$53,000 for Project SEARCH, which will support internship and job experience training for young adults with disabilities in the hospital and hospitality industries. It will provide Job Coach staffing necessary for success, including extensive follow-up and employment opportunities after initial employment.

The Able Trust Welcomes New Director of Communications

Todd Schimpf recently joined The Able Trust staff, and has assumed the role of Director of Communications. Schimpf comes to The Able Trust after more than five years as Director of Strategic Marketing and Communications at The Florida Institute of Certified Public Accountants. He also served as a director for Moore Consulting Group (now Moore), leading numerous integrated communications programs for clients, including raising more than \$100 million in reoccurring state funds for Florida's trauma centers.

Schimpf holds a Bachelor's Degree in Public Relations from Florida State University. He resides in Tallahassee, Florida with his wife and daughter.



Success Stories: Carlos Aponte and Daysi Perlata

by Guenevere Crum

The MacDonald Training Center received a \$65,000 grant last summer for its Hearing, Education, Advancement and Recruitment (HEAR) initiative and has spent the past year serving the employment needs of individuals with hearing impairments in the Hillsborough County area. The grant enabled them to recruited two new professionals and the Center staff started to make connections in the community right away.

Sometimes making a switch in employment can be a difficult task to undertake. Carlos was able to accomplish this goal with the support of tri-lingual specialist Patti Sanchez. Carlos had a stable five-year work history but longed to make a change. Carlos faced significant barriers in the interview process, including his hearing impairment and the need to sign in Spanish as well American Sign Language. Ms. Sanchez was able to help facilitate the process and Carlos won the interview and the job.

Daysi was able to gain her very first job with the assistance of the MacDonald Training Center. Recently relocated to Florida from Puerto Rico, she also needed a tri-lingual certified sign language interpreter to communicate and to assist her in gaining job readiness skills. Daysi

indicated that she wanted to pursue a position in housekeeping so the staff at the MacDonald Training Center began to work with her to help her achieve this goal. Staff members helped her complete applications, develop her resume and assist her in practicing her interview skills. Her diligence paid off, she was offered her current position during her first interview. Daysi was ecstatic to overcome these challenges and secure her first job.

The MacDonald Training Center is continuing to develop employment opportunities for their participants, including the growing sectors of health care and medical-based facilities. Without the grant funding from The Able Trust, the MacDonald Training Center would not have been able to hire the highly-trained professionals the program needed to support individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing. No matter if it is a first job or an employment change, it is always a good time to work!



Carlos Aponte



Daysi Perlata



Corporate Champions

The Able Trust created the award category of "Corporate Champion" to recognize those businesses that support its mission through workforce inclusion policies, welcoming people with disabilities as customers and employees, and through financial support that has exceeded \$100,000 over the years. Darden, Publix, Walt Disney World Resorts, and Wells Fargo have exemplified these traits through a strong commitment to supporting a diverse and inclusive workforce that includes workers with disabilities, and supporting organizations like The Able Trust as it strives to be a key leader in providing Floridians with disabilities opportunities for successful employment. The annual support of these organizations has helped sustain Able Trust grant initiatives and other employment-related programs such as Disability Employment Awareness Month in addition to nationally-recognized youth programs such as Florida High School High Tech. The Able Trust is proud to recognize its distinguished list of Corporate Champions.



Eddie V's

Yard House

Publix





MAKE A DONATION TO THE ABLE TRUST





Make A Difference With Your Donation to The Able Charitable Foundation, the Fundraising & Develpment Arm of The Able Trust!

There are many ways you can support he goals of making successful employment available to Floridians with disabilities, and a gift of any amount will make a difference. For general contributions in support of our youth, mentoring and grant programs, you may click the "Make a Donation" button on our website, www.AbleCF.org, or mail your gift with the form below to:

The Able Charitable Foundation, 3320 Thomasville Road, Suite 200, Tallahassee, Florida, 32308-7906

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The Able Charitable Foundation supports The Able Trust's mission to be a key leader in providing Floridians with disabilities opportunities for successful employment. Since its establishment, The Able Trust has awarded more than \$37 million in grants to nonprofit agencies throughout Florida for employment-related purposes, enabling thousands of Florida citizens of all ages with disabilities to enter the workforce. The Able Trust youth programs provide career development and transition for thousands of high school students with disabilities, helping to reduce the dropout rate and prepare young adults for life beyond high school.

For more information about The Able Trust visit www.abletrust.org.

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The Able Trust Holds Youth Leadership Training Retreat

by Todd Schimpf

Remember when you got your first serious job? Not the job to get you through school, but the job you worked really hard to get and were so happy when you landed it. Recall how excited you were to enter the workforce. You were working hard at your job, but you soon realized school did not always cover the skills and knowledge you needed to truly excel at your job. Skills like budgeting, project management, and time management. If only you had known ahead of time, you might have taken some time to learn those skills. The Able Trust is taking measures to help young adults with disabilities be better prepared to enter the workforce. What are these measures? We asked those that have recently gone through it.

The Able Trust held its first Youth Leadership Training Retreat in ChampionsGate, Florida on June 29-30, 2018. Thirteen exceptional young adults with disabilities from around the state met to provide insight into the knowledge and leadership skills young adults would like to have as they move into the workforce.



Pictured from left to right Back row: Todd Schimpf, Joseph Murray, Katelyn Molter, Dwayne Ingram, Rachael Christian, Melisa Lewis, Robert Noren, Holly Williamson, Renzo Burga and Allison Chase Front Row: Whitney Harris, R.J. Curtis, Sarah Goldman, Dr. Susanne Homant, Pastiche Graham, Joey Chica (with Gunner), Devin Alvarez and Bonnie Ingram

The 2018 Youth Leadership Retreat was designed to gather information directly from the young adults with minimal outside influence. Dwayne Ingram, Operating Partner at Morgan Hill Partners, and Ambassador for The Able Trust, moderated the event along with Bonnie Ingram of Tampa Innovation Partners. The attendees participated in various exercises and workgroups that helped them look at and analyze what leadership skills and knowledge they thought were important now and when they first started their careers. Attendees also developed an agenda for a youth leadership training program they would like to see held and presented their ideas to the other attendees.







Rachael Christian and Whitney Harris



Sarah Goldman, R.J. Curtis, Joey Chica, Melisa Lewis, Katelyn Molter and Dwayne Ingram

The Able Trust will meet with business owners to garner their input into the knowledge and leadership skills they would like to see in young adults who are current or potential employees. The information gathered at these two events will be used to revise The Able Trust's youth leadership program for 2019 so it better meets the needs of the youths participating in the program, and the human resource needs of Florida's businesses.

Special thanks to the John Pettengill Ability Fund and Wells Fargo for sponsoring the Youth Leadership Retreat. Their generous contributions enabled The Able Trust to hold this important event.

Since 1998, The Able Trust has been providing youth leadership programs to young Floridians with disabilities in the form of the Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) and through the nationally acclaimed High School High Tech (HSHT) program. The HSHT program is operated at 43 sites in 40 counties and boasts a graduation rate of 99% of those eligible.

Attendees at the event included:

			Participants					
Devin Alvares Pembroke Pines	Renzo Burga Ft. Lauderdale	Joey Chica Miami	Rachael Christian Orlando	R.J. Curtis Land O'Lake	Sarah Goldman Tampa	Pastiche Graham Orlando		
Whitney Harris Tallahassee	Melisa Lewis Daytona Beach Shores	Katelyn Molter Bradenton	Joseph Murray Del Ray Beach	Robert Noren Ft. Pierce	Holly Williamson Tallahassee			
Faculty								
	Dwayne Ingram St. Petersburg	Bonnie Ingram St. Petersburg	Dr. Susanne Homant Tallahassee	Allison Chase Tallahassee	Todd Schimpf Tallahassee			



Pistiche Graham, Devin Alvares and Renzo Burga



Dr. Susanne Homant



Sarah Goldman, Joseph Murray and Whitney Harris

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Make a Deductible Gift and Receive Life Income

You may wish to make a memorial gift while providing current life income for yourself. If your memorial gift is made to fund a charitable remainder trust, you can receive income monthly, quarterly or annually. You receive a charitable deduction for your gift this year and avoid paying capital gains tax on the sale of your appreciated assets. The remainder passes to us as a gift in memory of your loved one. Please contact us for more information on charitable trust plans.

A Memorial Gift of Cash or Property

A gift of cash is one of the simplest ways to remember your loved one or friend. You receive a tax deduction for the value of your gift to The Able Trust. Please designate the person you wish to remember and the best way that we can honor them. If you are making a memorial gift of non-cash property, your deduction may depend on the type of property proposed for gifting. Please call us to discuss the treatment of your gift and the best way to transfer your property to us.

Contributions are deductible according to applicable IRS guidelines. The Able Charitable Foundation is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization and in compliance with the Florida Solicitation of Contributions Act.

Upcoming EVENTS & MEETINGS

August 21

Youth Leadership Business Focus Group Tampa, Florida

September 5-7

High School High Tech Program Managers Training Wesley Chapel, Florida

September 20

Able Trust Board of Directors Meeting Rosen Shingle Creek Resort Orlando, Florida

September 21

Ability Awards and DEAM Kick-Off Rosen Shingle Creek Resort Orlando, Florida

September 26-27

Florida Chamber Foundation Future of Florida Forum Orlando, Florida