



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Goodwill NCW's Project SEARCH site in Oshkosh graduates 2025 interns

*Intensive internship program in Oshkosh hospital
prepares people with disabilities for work*

Oshkosh, WI—On May 30, Goodwill of North Central Wisconsin (Goodwill NCW) celebrated the 6 interns who graduated from its Project SEARCH site at Ascension Mercy Hospital in Oshkosh.

Project SEARCH is a nine-month program that prepares people with disabilities to enter the workforce. The national program has a local presence in Oshkosh, thanks to a partnership with Goodwill NCW, the Oshkosh Area School District, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Ascension Mercy Hospital, TMG Wisconsin (IRIS) and Lakeland Care Inc. The program is built to provide direct experience that is transferrable to jobs and culminates in a graduation ceremony, after which participants seek employment in the community.

"This is a testament to how a successful partnership and innovative thinking can provide opportunities for any student of any ability", said Kayla Countney, Manager of Mission Relations of Goodwill NCW. "It is extremely rewarding to see students gain confidence and become empowered to showcase their skills, talents, and abilities as they move into the workforce as young adults. They really embody our mission of Elevating People by Eliminating Barriers to Employment."

"I think it's a really good program. A nice opportunity to go out and work with people", said graduate Gabriella Faust, who was recently hired. "I got a job part time at Fleet Farm as a cashier. I'm excited."

The Oshkosh Project SEARCH program is a hybrid site, welcoming both students referred by the School District of Oshkosh and other local school districts, and adults enrolled with the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation. While participating in Project SEARCH, the interns rotate through various departments within the hospital to gain hands-on skills that will help them in their future employment. The hospital setting provides a variety of different training experiences. Based on their career goals and interests, interns have opportunities to train in various departments including facilities, the gift shop, the cafeteria or with the nursing staff. Nationally, 72% of those who participated in Project SEARCH in 2022-23 secured employment after completing the program. [\(Source\)](#) Since the beginning of the program at Ascension Mercy Hospital in 2016, 96 students have graduated from the program

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About Goodwill North Central Wisconsin (Goodwill NCW)

Goodwill NCW is a nonprofit organization with a mission of Elevating People by Eliminating Barriers to Employment. We are committed to understanding and addressing the unique needs of our communities. We empower individuals and families, creating a lasting impact by breaking cycles of poverty and transforming lives through skill-building for sustained employment and improved financial stability. We see people for who they are and believe in the power of work, within our retail stores and workplaces throughout our community. We are proud of the life-changing impact we make in our communities and to our planet with the help of our donors and shoppers. Learn more at goodwillncw.org

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