

## What is Project SEARCH?

Project SEARCH was developed at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, a research environment that fosters visionary thinking and innovation. It all began in 1996, when Erin Riehle was Director of Cincinnati Children's Emergency Department. Erin felt that, because the hospital served individuals with developmental disabilities, it made sense that they should commit to hiring people in this group. She wondered if it would be possible to train people with developmental disabilities to fill some of the high- turnover, entry-level positions in her department, which involved complex and systematic tasks such as stocking supply cabinets. As a starting point, Erin presented her ideas to Susie Rutkowski, then the special education director at Great Oaks Career Campuses. Erin and Susie formed a partnership, and together they launched Project SEARCH.

Since its inception, Project SEARCH has grown from a single program site at Cincinnati Children's to a large and continuously expanding international network of sites. Project SEARCH's primary objective is to secure competitive employment for people with disabilities.