FLORIDA GRANTOR

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ABLE TRUST

The Able Trust's mission is to be a key leader in providing Floridians with disabilities opportunities for successful employment.

Internships: A Proven Path to Employment

by Joey D'Souza



Las Gemelas Tortilleria is one of many Florida businesses that participated in Florida Disability Employment Awareness Month (DEAM) activities. Participants learned about manufacturing jobs in the food industry.

Internships are a short, defined term of employment that enable job seekers to explore a career while developing their skill set. They help individuals take knowledge from the classroom and apply it to actual work circumstances, allowing them to see how different real world situations can sometimes be. Internships ease the transition from an education setting to the workplace, develop professional and employability skills, build a professional network, and bolster a résumé.

Through research commissioned by The Able Trust, internships have been shown to increase the chances of employment for people with disabilities. For businesses, having an internship program mitigates the risks associated with new hires, increases productivity, and develops relationships with potential employees. Businesses also benefit from the low-risk exposure to the talent in the workforce of people with disabilities through such work experiences.

Able Trust employment initiatives like Florida Disability Employment Awareness activities (DEAM) help to address this problem. In 2016, more than 2,100 Floridians with disabilities took part in career exploration experiences at businesses throughout the state.

Las Gemelas Tortilleria, a tortilla manufacturing facility, is just one of the many businesses that opened its doors – and delicious smells – to individuals with disabilities. Located in the rural community of La Belle in Hendry County, Las Gemelas welcomed several high school students with disabilities to tour the facility and learn about the manufacturing and distribution of tortillas. The tour dispelled myths and preconceived notions about Floridians with disabilities. Las Gemelas learned that individuals with disabilities are capable of being productive employees in a manufacturing facility, and



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A Message from the President



The world of business is rapidly changing, with the acceleration of change and new technologies seeming to increase on a yearly basis; the pace is greater than ever before. The implication is that organizations such as The Able Trust need to find ways to reasonably project the jobs of the future and related education needs for those jobs, to effectively guide young job seekers with disabilities to employment that may lead to a career path. The Florida business community as a whole is also deeply interested in the development of skill sets for the jobs of the future, as business success or failure will depend on having access to a workforce with the needed skills.

The Florida Chamber Foundation has taken on the task of researching and projecting the workforce needs of industry sectors, to assist organizations such as ours and educational institutions in preparing job seekers with hard data that will assist them in making education and work choices. The Foundation has just released its report on Florida Jobs 2030, definitely worth a read by all who work with the development of tomorrow's workforce, workers with and without disabilities. The Report contains extremely useful data for planning of Florida's workforce and business growth. Here are some of the many facts in the Report.

- By 2030, Florida is projected to add six million new residents: 1/3 of them will need jobs.
- Florida's three key industries remain Agriculture, Tourism, and Construction (but the most jobs are in the government sector local, county, regional, state, and national governments.)
- Four other industry sectors are projected to generate job growth in 4-5 years.

 o Aerospace and Aviation: projected to have a 3% growth by 2021:
 35% of those jobs will require some post-secondary education
 - o Finance & Professional Services: a 6% job growth is projected, with 42% of those positions requiring education beyond high school.
 - o Health care & Life Sciences: estimated 9% job growth by 2021, with 66% of the jobs needing post-secondary education.
 - o Logistics & Distribution: a 4% job growth, with 21% of the jobs requiring some post-secondary learning.

By 2021, it is estimated that 64% of Florida's jobs will require some post-secondary education, up from the current 46% for the population of Florida. That's a major increase in just 4-5 years!

The Florida Chamber Foundation Report also emphasized business demand for "employability skills" - general skills that are valuable across professions and businesses. The general categories for these skills were identified as communication (speaking and writing, not just "screen" communications); critical thinking (able to develop a plan for one's "great idea"); problem solving (fixing without destroying the good parts); and collaboration and team skills.

The Jobs Report contains much good information, which will provide significant guidance to those organizations that work with the Able Trust to create successful employment for Floridians with disabilities. The full report is posted on the Chamber Foundation website, www.Flchamber.com, in the Foundation section, under research. Recommended reading from my desk to yours, and many thanks to the Chamber Foundation for taking on this initiative and preparing very important research results.

Kind regards,

Dr. Susanne F. Homant, MBA

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President & CEO

Tiny House Project Teaches High Tech Skills

by Ray Ford, Jr.

Many of us remember watching shows like "Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous", or its contemporary cousin MTV "Cribs", where large, extravagant homes are put on display for the viewing audience to admire. But the reality is that most of us will never live in a mansion. However, a key component of The American Dream has always been home ownership. Interest rates are the lowest they have been in several years, and more and more Americans are taking steps in making that dream come true.

Some Americans are doing it a little differently.

The tiny house concept is a social movement where people are choosing to downsize their living space. The typical American home is around 2,600 square feet, whereas the typical tiny house is between 100 and 400 square feet, resulting in simpler living in a smaller, more efficient space.



Florida High School High Tech students Luke, Ryan, and Kevin visited the WESH-2 Orlando studios to talk about the tiny house project, and how it is having a positive impact on the lives of everyone involved.

Florida High School High Tech (HSHT) students at Brevard-Bayside High School are in the process of building a tiny house from the ground-up. All aspects of construction – from the CAD designs illustrating the building plan, to the actual building of the structure – will be done by HSHT students.

For 18 years, Florida HSHT has improved postsecondary outcomes for youth with disabilities. The program achieves this goal by setting high expectations; encouraging youth to consider technology-related careers; and promoting the involvement of family members and other caring adults. Core features of the program – job shadowing, industry site visits, mentoring, and internships – are critical components that help students form postsecondary education and employment goals and transition from school into the world of work.

Brevard-Bayside students are working on an 18' x 8', two-story house that will be placed on a trailer that can be towed by a medium-sized vehicle. Approximately 30 students are work-

ing on the project. One would think that so many hands might be a problem, but team-leader Ryan disagrees. He believes that the increased input will ultimately result in a better end product.

"It would be much more difficult to complete the work without the input of so many," he said. "In fact, having so many students involved makes the work easier."

The goal is to not only introduce students to high-tech jobs and teach them the skills necessary to attain those jobs after graduation, but to also show the world that people with disabilities are quite



2016 TINY HOUSE PROJECT





capable of accomplishing great feats and contributing to society. This is something that project leader Luke takes very seriously.

"As president of the club, it's my job to make sure that we complete the project by the end of the school year, and that hopefully we all learn something in the process," He said.

For more information about the Brevard-Bayside tiny house project, or to see the WESH 2-Orlando interview mentioned above, visit www.abletrust.org.

job seekers learned that manufacturing does not always take place in large cities, or that the end product is a car or fancy electronic device, but can just as easily be the food Americans consume.

Think your business might be interested in offering an internship opportunity? The Able Trust has some tools available to assist businesses with developing an internship program of their own. Visit www.abletrust.org for more information about internship seminars in your area.

Puppy Party Promotes Micro-enterprise Initiative for Intellectual Disabilities

by Angela Fortunas

The Able Trust supports various employment placement program initiatives across the state through single-year, General Support for Employment Placement Grants. One grant recipient, Barkin' Biscuits, is a culinary micro-enterprise and vocational training program out of Jacksonville for young adults with intellectual disabilities at the North Florida School of Special Education (NFSSE). Barkin' Biscuits is an all-natural dog treat baking operation that is operated by NFSSE, attracting chefs ranging from 18 to 40 years of age.

Dr. Elizabeth Blount, founder of At Home Veterinary Care in Tallahassee, and her pet Molly joined a Puppy Party in February to learn about The Able Trust and Barkin' Biscuits. Molly is a member of the Animal Therapy Program at Tallahassee Memorial Healthcare (TMH), as are other the other

Barkin' Biscuits organic, all-natural dog treats are a big hit with veterinarian Elizabeth Blount, founder of At Home Veterinary Care in Tallahassee, and her pets Molly and Gabe. Funded in part by The Able Trust, Barkin' Biscuits is a culinary micro-enterprise and vocational training program for transition students and post-graduates at the North Florida School of Special Education in Jacksonville.

canines who attended: Bogey, Daisy, and Margot - naturally, their best friends (owners) were there too.

You can help empower and educate Floridians with disabilities by contributing to The Able Trust at http://www.abletrust.org/about-us/donations, and/or ordering your favorite pup Barkin' Biscuits from https://www.berrygoodfarms.org/product-category/barkin-biscuits/.

<u>2017 Able Trust General Support for Employment</u> <u>Grant Deadline Approaching!</u>

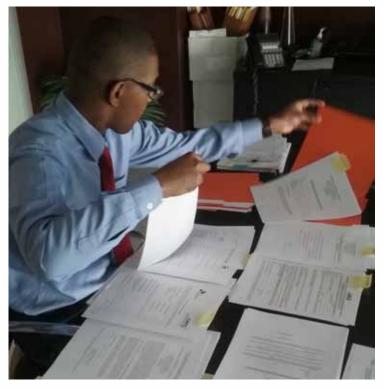
Grant proposals are due no later than <u>Wednesday, April 5, 2017.</u>
Visit www.abletrust.org for more information or contact us at 850-224-4493.

Grantee Spotlight: The Dan Marino Foundation

by Guenevere Crum



The Dan Marino Foundation's Career Launch Program has made a positive impact on the lives of several participants in their pursuit of employment. Long-range strategic grant funding from The Able Trust ensures that successful employment initiatives such as this continue to bolster Florida's economy while helping Floridians with disabilities find meaningful careers.



Internship opportunities such as this help students like Julius (above) gain valuable work experience that will lead to employment.

The Dan Marino Foundation received a 2014 Strategic Grant award from The Able Trust for its Career Launch Program. The three-year time frame of the \$250,000 grant allowed the Foundation to create an employment program to improve the lives of participating young adults, offering employment training, support, and placement which has allowed them to gain independence. This funding allowed the Foundation to tailor delivery strategies to the individuals that needed them most, increasing one-on-one time and other job supports for success, in addition to paying attention to the needs of the businesses hiring them. By addressing the barriers to employment – both large and small – on-site relationships with employer partners were strengthened, resulting in increased success for businesses hiring workers with disabilities.

Ivan is an example of what hard work, commitment to a career goal, and a dynamic support system can do. Fascinated by computers, Ivan enrolled at the Marino Campus to study Computer Technology and earn a Microsoft A+ Certification. Ivan's goal was to pursue a career in the IT field. He was a dedicated student, and often stayed late after class reviewing information to make sure he understood it fully. Ivan earned his certification with the support of the Marino Campus' instructional staff, and began to experience the world of work through internship experiences. His first internship was with a large company that offered a wide array of computer services, and although the commute was more than 90 minutes long, he was usually the first intern to arrive for the work day. Ivan's second internship was at a smaller company that had more focused IT support needs, and he flourished in that environment as well. After experiencing both large and small companies with different IT programs, Ivan and his intern mentor had a clearer focus for his job searches. Empowered by his practical on-the-job internship experiences, Ivan is now employed and thriving in his current position.

The Able Trust Strategic Employment Placement program was created to support organizations designing new employment program services, with a focus on forging deeper connections with employers and individuals throughout the state. It is important for Florida's businesses to have access to a talented labor pool, and equally important for individuals with disabilities to be a part of that pool. The next deadline to apply for a Strategic Employment Grant is November 10, 2017. Organizations interested in submitting a proposal or with questions about how to apply should contact The Able Trust at 850-224-4493.

The Able Trust has awarded more than \$37 million to grantees across the state of Florida, enabling Floridians with disabilities to enter the workforce each year.

Florida High School High Tech: Providing Pathways to Education & Employment

by Allison Chase

Each year, the Able Trust hosts an annual conference as a professional development experience for local program coordinators of the Florida High School High Tech (HSHT) Program. Objectives of the conference are to provide training on the successful implementation/ continuation of a HSHT site; introduce and provide information on HSHT program partners, including institutions of higher education and industry/business leaders; and to generate new ideas for program planning and resources.



Florida High School High Tech Annual Conference attendees in Tallahassee.

This year's training included STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) industry tours to simulate the planning, facilitation, and debriefing activities required for a successful tour. Staff participated in the tours for a full morning and afternoon of culminating experiences designed to replicate hands-on STEM workshops for HSHT students. Coordinators chose from the following opportunities:

City of Tallahassee, Water Reclamation Facility and Water Quality Lab

The Floridan aquifer and fresh water is one of the state's most precious and threatened resources. Every local community and municipality has a water treatment system to help process and protect the water. Jobs in this industry include a wide range of skills from maintenance, science, and administration. A large majority of water treatment operators in the state are reaching retirement age, creating a need to recruit new and younger operators. This tour highlighted careers in the water industry; provided a tour of a water treatment facility; and hands-on activities in the water quality lab.

Tall Timbers Research Station and Land Conservancy

Tall Timbers is a widely-regarded information resource for the areas of fire ecology, game bird management, vertebrate ecology, and forestry. The Research Station is recognized as the home of the study of fire ecology, and is an advocate to protect the right to use prescribed fire for land management. This tour highlighted careers in fire ecology, forestry, and land management, while providing an up-close look at one of Florida's treasured land conservancies.

City of Tallahassee, Power Generation Station and Hydroelectric Dam

Florida is home to 40+ municipal electric utilities, and even more for- and non-profit utility companies. The field of electric utilities employs a wide range of professionals, including linemen, administrators, finance professionals, engineers, ware house staff, and many more. Participants learned about a variety of utility careers, and experienced two types of electric facilities at work, including one of the oldest hydroelectric dams in the southeast.

Florida State University, National High Magnetic Field Laboratory

The only facility of its kind in the United States, the National High Magnetic Field Laboratory (MagLab) is the largest and highest-powered magnet laboratory in the world. Every year, more than a thousand scientists from dozens of countries come to use the unique magnets, with the support of highly-experienced staff scientists and technicians. The MagLab also provides education programs for secondary school students. A tour of the lab, along with a hands-on education experience, engaged participants about the field of science.

Partners Making a Difference: Universal Orlando Resort

by Angela Fortunas

Floridians with disabilities benefit greatly from the inclusive employment philosophy of Universal Orlando Resort. This organizational culture mirrors the mission of The Able Trust in providing Floridians with disabilities opportunities for successful employment, and has resulted in a successful partnership as Universal serves as a major financial contributor to Able Trust initiatives.

Universal's commitment to this mission has resulted in the sponsorship of many Able Trust programs, including Florida Disability Employment Awareness Month (DEAM). Able Trust DEAM activities are a part of an annual national initiative each October, highlighting career paths with the help of participating businesses. Students and job seekers with disabilities receive hands-on career experience through on-site job shadowing, and other career exploration experiences leading to increased knowledge for participants.



The Able Trust's Florida High School High Tech (HSHT) program has worked closely with Universal for many years, helping students prepare for life after high school – post-secondary education, careers, and community involvement. By providing behind-the-scenes tours and mentoring, Universal introduces students with disabilities to a myriad of technology-related career options, and the education they need to achieve their goals.

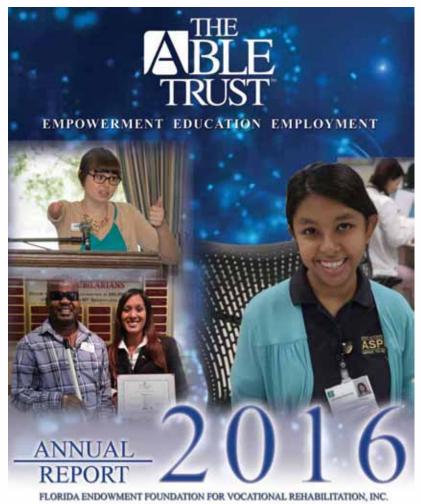
Universal continues to build upon its legacy as a 2012 recipient of Governor Rick Scott's Exceptional Employer Award for Excellence in Hiring Persons with Disabilities. Through its work with The Able Trust, Universal continues to support the inclusion of persons with disabilities in Florida's workforce.

The Able Trust urges companies, large and small, to follow the lead of Universal Orlando Resort.



Universal Orlando is not only a financial contributor to Able Trust programs, but a participant as well. Supervisor of Staffing, Sherri Meyer, and Vice President of Human Resources, Scot Laferté, serve as career mentors during The Able Trust Florida Youth Leadership Forum.

Visit www.abletrust to download the 2016 Annual Report



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



Able Trust 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 and the Florida Youth Leadership Forum. The Able Trust is proud to recognize its distinguished list of Corporate Champions.





Eddie V's

Yard House







Alumni Corner: Renzo Burga

by Rachael Moulton



Renzo Burga is a founding member of the Able Trust Alumni Association and serves on the Alumni Association Planning Committee. He has been active with Able Trust programs since 2009, when he first attended the Florida Youth Leadership Forum. The following year, Renzo was invited to return as a Support Staff member, and has volunteered every year since, eventually joining the Adult Staff and serving as a group facilitator. In 2013, The Able Trust awarded the Young Adult Leadership Award to Renzo in recognition of his growing leadership qualities and dedication to the cause of disability empowerment for students with disabilities. That same year, Renzo served as the "face" of The Able Trust Disability Employment Awareness Month.

Renzo is currently employed with Policy Works, and is a mentor at the Stand Among Friends office on the campus of Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton. His position began with an internship, which led to the opportunity for part-time employment. Renzo's path to employment was not always smooth. He applied for many part-time jobs at different locations without success. However, he continued to apply for different employment opportunities, updating and refining his résumé. Renzo also attended presentations on different companies that he was interested in, so that he could network with a variety of potential employers.

In the future, Renzo hopes to attain his master's degree and work for a larger company full-time in Information Technology. Renzo also plans to remain an advocate, serving as a resource for other Floridians with disabilities.

The 2017 Florida Youth Leadership Forum

by Ray Ford, Jr.

Paith is a fragile, yet powerful thing. Oftentimes, simply believing in one's own abilities is the single deciding factor between success and failure.

For more than a decade-and-a-half, The Able Trust Florida Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) has provided high school students with disabilities the opportunity to harness and hone their abilities, preparing them for life after high school. Over the course of five days, students learn about disability resources that will help them find a career, go to college, and live independently.

"YLF helped me see how my disability affects not only me, but those around me," 2016 participant Jose said. "I gained a sense of independence at YLF, learned how to make friends, and learned about the many resources that can help me and others with disabilities."

Applications are now available for YLF 2017, which will take place July 19 - 23 in Tallahassee.

Visit www.abletrust.org and select the Youth Programs tab for more information about YLF. ■



Youth Leadership Forum participants debate on a bill in the House Chambers of the Florida Capitol.



Make A Difference With Your Donation to The Able Trust!

There are many ways you can support The Able Trust's programs to make 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. AbleTrust.org, or mail your gift with the form below to:

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

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| ☐ In memory of someone | |
| ☐ For a special occasion | |
| Name: | |
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| City, State, Zip: | |
| Credit Card Type: Credit Card Number: | |
| Credit Card Expiration Date: — Credit Card CSV: — | |
| E-mail: | |
| Please add me to The Able Trust's \square email list \square mailing list (check one or both). | |

The Able Trust's mission is 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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There are many ways for you to make a gift in remembrance of someone special that will have meaningful significance for years to come. Here are a few options to consider:

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 Trust is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization and in compliance with the Florida Solicitation of Contributions Act.

Upcoming EVENTS & MFFTINGS

March 2, 2017

Able Trust Alumni Association Steering Committee Meeting

March 16, 2017

Able Trust Board of Directors Meeting Tallahassee, FL

April 5, 2017

Able Trust General Support Grant Application Deadline

April 7, 2017

Able Trust Internship Seminar Martin County Chamber of Commerce

June 1, 2017

Able Trust Alumni Association Steering Committee Meeting

June 16, 2017

Able Trust Board of Directors Meeting Boca Raton, FL