

THE
ABLE
TRUST™

*Crossing
the
Stage*





Passion found me. When I chose Rehabilitation Services as my major at Florida State University, it ignited a 30+ year journey helping Floridians with disabilities pursue their career aspirations. Today, as the President and CEO of The Able Trust, I am proud to lead an organization dedicated to addressing a critical issue: the perceived lack of postsecondary education and career opportunities for young people with disabilities.

For too long, many high school students with disabilities have not realized the possibility of postsecondary education and meaningful employment. This reality stems from low expectations from others, a lack of awareness or exposure to postsecondary options, and their own limiting beliefs.

This should not be their reality.

At The Able Trust, we believe in challenging and changing these limiting perceptions. Research and firsthand experience show that with the right support and opportunities in high school, students with disabilities have a much higher chance of succeeding in postsecondary education and employment.

The Able Trust's High School High Tech (HSHT) program is a testament to the potential of these students. Our program boasts a 54% postsecondary education entry rate for high school graduates, surpassing the 51% rate for all Florida public school graduates.

I've had the extraordinary privilege of watching a student's eyes go wide when introduced to new career possibilities they never imagined for themselves. The words, "I never knew . . ." have become some of my favorites, as in, "I never knew I could be a nurse;" "I never knew a career in manufacturing is well paying and not always dirty!" or "I never knew I could go into the military."

The Able Trust youth programs provide the awareness, support, and encouragement necessary to set students on the right path to career success.

I invite you to join us in fostering a future where "Crossing the Stage" becomes a celebration not just of graduation but of countless moments of triumph and fulfillment for students with disabilities.

Together, we can make a profound difference.

Warm regards,

A black ink handwritten signature of Allison Chase.

Allison Chase
President & CEO





When I started high school, I was terrified and felt utterly alone, especially with the added challenge of a learning disability. Everything changed in my sophomore year when I joined High School High Tech. Over the next three years, my confidence grew, and I was excited to think about my future. In my senior year, I became a High School High Tech Ambassador, speaking to local communities about the program's impact. Now, I dream of attending college and becoming a teacher, and I wholeheartedly credit HSHT for helping me envision and plan my future.

-Jaycee Moser

PREPARING TO CROSS THE STAGE

Jaycee's experience is not unique. The Able Trust's High School High Tech program has been changing the lives of students with disabilities for more than 30 years.

To be successful in today's competitive world, high school students must continue with some type of education or training. Unfortunately, only 28% of Florida's students with disabilities go on to the next level.

These students face an uncertain future.

Without a path forward, they risk missing out on the education and training that is crucial to finding a job. They're faced with limited career opportunities that leave them feeling hopeless about achieving their full employment potential.

High School High Tech opens a world of possibilities for these students. Dedicated HSHT professionals work with students to ensure they graduate high school, and they learn about education and employment opportunities that fit their interests. High School High Tech prepares students with disabilities for the next step after they cross the stage during graduation and shows them the path forward.

54%

Percentage of High School High Tech Students Enrolling in Postsecondary Education or Training

28%

Percentage of Florida Students with Disabilities Enrolling in Postsecondary Education or Training

1990

The Able Trust was established to increase and improve employment opportunities for Floridians with disabilities.

1994

Partnered with the Dole Foundation for Employment of People with Disabilities to fund start-up of High School High Tech (HSHT). The first HSHT program included six students.

1997

Named Florida's official liaison to the US Department of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy.



When I started High School High Tech, I was shy, reserved and I avoided joining any school clubs. I had already decided that college wasn't for me and planned to go straight into the workforce after graduation. But the HSHT coordinator saw something special in me and encouraged me to join. Over the next three years, I became more sociable, professional, and driven. Now, I am enrolled at Tallahassee State College, and I plan to transfer to Florida State University to major in Computer Science. HSHT gave me the confidence, leadership skills, and ambitious career goals that have set me on the path to success.

-Jakel Baker

OUR VISION FOR FLORIDA STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

In 1994, The Able Trust launched High School High Tech with just one program and six students. Today, we proudly serve over 1,200 students in High School High Tech programs across Florida.

However, our vision extends far beyond our current reach.

We aim to quadruple the number of students in our youth programs each year, serving 5,000 students with disabilities across Florida by 2028.

By expanding High School High Tech, more students with disabilities will explore their interests, learn how they connect to different careers, and participate in industry tours and college visits. They will leave high school with a clear plan.

Students like Jaycee and Jakel will shed the stigma of being different and find a community where they can experience a sense of belonging. They'll remember high school as a positive time in their lives that prepared them for the future.

This vision will soon become a reality.

High School High Tech Programs in Florida 2024



2001

Partnership with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) expanded HSHT to 12 programs.

2003

Received \$990,000 grant from US Office of Disability Employment Policy to expand HSHT over 5 years. In FY 2003-04, HSHT had grown to 20 programs statewide serving 510 students.

2005

Received \$350,000 from the Florida Legislature and the Florida Department of Education, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (FLDOE/VR) to add 10 new HSHT programs.



THE ABLE TRUST'S FOUR-YEAR GOALS

- **Quadruple Impact:** Expand from serving 1,200 to 5,000 students annually, empowering thousands to achieve their career potential.
- **Futures in Focus:** Expand this new program which offers flexible career and postsecondary exploration activities.
- **Secure the Future:** Grow our endowment to ensure long-term support and opportunities for future generations.
- **Enhance Facilities:** Improve our office facilities to boost productivity and provide a welcoming environment for staff and visitors.

ABOUT THE ABLE TRUST

The Able Trust, through a public-private partnership with the Florida Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, has been working with students with disabilities and helping with their transition out of high school for more than 30 years. The type of disabilities in Florida students varies, from hearing impairment to developmental delay, language impairment and specific learning disability. The largest percentage of Florida students with disabilities have a learning disability, and this is also true for students in our youth programs.

*Our vision
is to quadruple
our current number
of students over
the next four years.*



2006

Launched a national pilot project in partnership with CVS and US Department of Labor to provide internships for students with disabilities.

2008

HSHT expanded to 35 programs in 36 counties across Florida.

2013

Exceeded \$30 million in grants awarded to communities throughout the state.

THE ABLE TRUST CAMPAIGN BUDGET

OPERATIONS	CURRENT YEAR	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4
High School High Tech	\$3,523,501	\$4,119,302	\$5,182,863	\$7,772,961
Futures in Focus	\$303,357	\$388,472	\$540,409	\$1,371,699
Total	\$3,826,858	\$4,507,774	\$5,723,272	\$9,144,660
Current Revenue	\$3,201,090	\$3,297,122	\$3,396,035	\$3,497,916
Funding Gap	\$625,768	\$1,210,652	\$2,327,237	\$5,646,744
One-Time Capital Projects				
Lease/Renovations	\$100,000	\$-	\$-	\$-
Total	\$100,000	\$-	\$-	\$-
Endowment Funding	\$350,000	\$600,000	\$900,000	\$1,150,000
Total Program	\$23,202,564			
Total Capital	\$100,000			
Total Planned Giving/Endowment	\$3,000,000			
Total Existing Revenue	\$13,392,163			
CAMPAIGN TOTAL	\$12,910,401			

High School High Tech
cost per student =

\$1,000

per year

2016

Expanded HSHT to 43 programs in 40 counties.

2017

Partnered with the Brevard Education Foundation to pilot a project-based learning model for HSHT. Students and mentors designed and built a Tiny House which was sold for \$30,000.

2023

Received an additional \$550,000 from FLDOE/DVR for the HSHT program. Expanded HSHT to 45 programs.

My son Jakel struggled in school. He had trouble making friends, socializing with his peers, and he lacked confidence. When he was 13, we found out he had Autism and ADD. I knew there would be a lot of challenges ahead of him and as he entered high school, I was worried that he wouldn't be ready for what the world had to offer. I was afraid he wouldn't be ready to go to college or find a good career path.

After joining High School High Tech (HSHT), Jakel blossomed. It gave him the opportunity to open up and make new friends. High School High Tech helped Jakel plan for the future by allowing him to visit different universities and talk to people about various careers. That's when he figured out what he wanted to study.

Jakel has grown into a great young man with a lot of potential and a bright future ahead of him. He's a problem solver and he takes the initiative to help other people. Jakel is currently enrolled in Tallahassee State College and will transfer to Florida State University for computer science. Without High School High Tech, he would not have had these opportunities. It's a wonderful program and has made a tremendous difference in his life.

- Crystal Jackson



Our commitment remains unwavering:

To empower students with disabilities to achieve their full potential and build brighter futures.

Join us in making this vision a reality.

2024

Launched Futures in Focus in partnership with the Consortium of Florida Education Foundations. The program builds on HSHT principles and increases student enrollment capacity.





THE **A**BLE TRUST™

WWW.ABLETRUST.ORG



THEABLETRUST



ABLETRUST



ABLETRUST



THEABLETRUST