

Innovative Practice 2017 on employment, work, and vocational education and training: 1896

## TITLE

Providing a variety of career services for high school students with disabilities

USA: Georgia's High School/High Tech (HSHT) programme

## PROJECT SUMMARY

The mission of the Georgia Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities, Inc. is to provide information, programmes, and transition activities designed to enhance equal opportunities for young people with all kinds of disabilities. Now in its 18th year, HSHT has served over 10,000 high school students with disabilities and is currently serving 86 high schools in 48 counties of Georgia. .

## FACTS & FIGURES

- Beneficiaries in 2014: 3,167 students provided with services
- Beneficiaries in 2015: 4,756 students provided with services
- Beneficiaries in 2016: 6,997 students provided with services

## PROBLEMS TARGETED

The state of Georgia has the third lowest graduation rate in the United States for students with disabilities, at just 36.5 per cent compared to the nationwide average of 78.8 per cent. Georgia High School/High Tech addresses the needs of these students by providing them with the tools to transition from "learning to earning."

## SOLUTION & METHODOLOGY

Georgia's High School/High Tech (HSHT) programme is a collaboration of the Georgia Committee on Employment of Persons with Disabilities, Inc., the Georgia State Vocational Rehabilitation Program agency, and local school systems. It offers high school students with disabilities (aged 16 to 21) comprehensive, community-based exposure to academic and career services such as:

- Mentoring
- Industry tours
- Work internships
- College fairs
- Family engagement

HSHT collaborates with government agencies, school systems, non-profit and community organizations, and companies to provide these services. In 2015, students had a graduation rate of 88 per cent.

## OUTLOOK & TRANSFERABILITY

Each year the HSHT programme receives a contract from the State of Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Program, which in 2016 is for US\$486,000. The average cost per student is US\$385 to cover the costs of field trips, laptops, assistive technology, and technical assistance to high schools that want to know how to set up and operate a programme. The vision of HSHT is to have one programme in each of Georgia's 159 counties, and to engage graduates as persons who can contribute to society in paid positions. One programme graduate currently serves as an HSHT board member.

## QUOTE

"The HSHT programme gave me the resources and support I needed to navigate my path through college and on to success."

— Ms. Kayla Wilson, Accounting Manager, Sherman & Hemstreet

## CONTACT

Ms. Karen ROYSTON

+1-706-353-7987

[Royston.Karen@gmail.com](mailto:Royston.Karen@gmail.com)

[www.gacomm-hsht.org/](http://www.gacomm-hsht.org/)