



NEWS RELEASE
September 24, 2018

The Resource Exchange (TRE) launches a social enterprise to help teenagers and young adults with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (IDD) prepare for, find and thrive in a career of their choice

FUTURES will connect trained candidates with potential employers and then provide one-on-one support in the workplace

FUTURES is a new social enterprise, created by The Resource Exchange (TRE), a Colorado Springs non-profit, that partners with people who have developmental delays or intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (IDD), to support them in achieving the life they want to live. Intellectual and developmental disabilities include autism, Down syndrome and cerebral palsy, among many others.

TRE's programs are designed to partner with individuals throughout the course of their lives. FUTURES provides support at a crucial time in a person with IDD's life: when they reach the age of 18 and no longer have access to services provided by the school system. Their support system suddenly ends. It is at this age that many people with IDD "fall off a cliff." Most of them end up living at home or going to a day program or care center.

People with IDD have an 80% unemployment rate. Most people with IDD who do work, work part-time and for less than minimum wage. FUTURES embraces the reality that people with IDD, once provided the opportunity to aspire, will create a far greater quality of life for themselves and bring incalculable value to the community.

The traditional system of services focuses on what a person with a disability can't do. FUTURES invites people with IDD to dream, plan and create a future of their choice, just like everyone else. FUTURES demands that people with IDD be treated like every other high school student, looking at the rest of their lives with excitement and possibilities.

At FUTURES, clients decide what course they want to take. The FUTURES team walks alongside them to help them explore, plan and prepare for a career of their choice. Then, a FUTURES job coach accompanies them in the workplace with a one-on-one partnership, ensuring a successful transition and integration with their fellow employees.

FUTURES works with business partners to prepare their job environments with workplace modifications and employee inclusiveness training, to ensure a successful experience for everyone involved. They also educate organizational staff about disability etiquette so they have the tools for a successful team environment.

The FUTURES office is located at 4207 Centennial Blvd near the corner of Garden of the Gods Road and Centennial Rd. The first class of students began training mid-September. Students spend 10-15 hours a week in the classroom and once they are ready to integrate into the workforce, they will spend approximately 10 hours a week at their job. Skills training continues as the FUTURES employees transition into the workplace setting.

FUTURES is funded by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) and private donations, corporate sponsorships and grants. A percentage of the profits will be returned to TRE to continue to help the people they serve throughout the course of their lifetime.

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