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October 9, 2018:

The National Conference Center Welcomes 10 Interns to National Jobs Program, Project SEARCH

Leesburg, VA, October 2018 – For the third year in a row, [The National Conference Center](#) partnered with Loudoun County Public Schools and [Didlake](#)[®] to host Project SEARCH. [The National is the first and only hospitality organization in the county to partner with the program this 2018-2019 academic school year.](#) Ten students from Loudoun County began work and training at The National Conference Center in early September. The National hired two students in June 2018 and three students in 2017. These five students hold full time jobs in the housekeeping, culinary, guest dining and events departments.

“The National Conference Center’s involvement with Project Search started in 2016. The program was so successful for all concerned that we continued it thru 2017 and are currently in 2018 program. We don’t intend to stop”, said Geoff Lawson, Vice President/General Manager at The National.

[Project SEARCH](#), a national high school transition program for students with developmental disabilities, is a workplace immersion program combining classroom instruction, career exploration, and relevant job-skills training through strategically designed internships. It includes long-term job coaching and continuous feedback from teachers and employers. The ten interns placed at The National learned time management, social interaction, and a variety of stockroom, culinary, maintenance, and housekeeping skills.

“This is an excellent program to help young adults transition from home and school to being in the real world,” says Emily Meyers, Didlake Employment Specialist. Project Search, which is funded by the Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services, began in Virginia during the 2009-2010 academic school year. Since then, more than 700 students across the Commonwealth have gained valuable work experience and skills through their internships.

Caption: Project Search’s 2018-2019 Loudoun County Interns start work at The National Conference Center

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Front row: Ezequiel Hernandez, Talha Usmani, Waleed Shahbaz, Rachel Chung, Asloob Atiq, Helen Kendall, HR Manager, The National

Back row: Heather Brewington, LCPS; Joanne Carroll, LCPS; Pravin Khatri, Orsis Canas, Thomas Liuzzi, Jackie Doherty, LaKota HR; Yousuf Riyaz, and Geoff Lawson, VP & GM at The National

