



Open House: Science Prep Academy launches internship program in partnership with Banner Desert Medical Center

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PHOENIX, ARIZONA, UNITED STATES, February 23, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Open House: [Science Prep Academy](#) launches internship program in partnership with [Banner Desert Medical Center](#)



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Kenneth Mims, M.Ed.

Science Prep Academy, Arizona's first STEM school for students with autism, has launched its [Project SEARCH](#) internship for students after 12th grade in partnership with Banner Desert Medical Center in Mesa, AZ, and the University of Arizona Sonoran Center for Excellence in Disabilities.

Please join us at Banner Desert Medical Center to learn about Project SEARCH. This open house will allow you to learn about the internships within the hospital setting from facility leaders.

The Project SEARCH program is an intensive work skills developmental program designed to facilitate a successful post-high school transition to the workforce for young autistic adults between the ages of 16 and 24. This program provides a unique business-led, one-year employment preparation program that occurs entirely in the workplace with hands-on learning.

Project Search Open House

Date: Thursday, February 29th, 2024

Location: Banner Desert Medical Center

1400 S. Dobson Rd., Mesa, AZ 85202

Time: 5:30 PM

Science Prep Academy's partnerships will give student interns a remarkable opportunity to prepare for future full-time employment. These interns complete three 10-week rotations in

various departments at Banner Desert, which includes workplace immersion, classroom instruction, career exploration, and job-skills training.

The goal of the program is to increase economic stability and provide better career opportunities for neurodivergent students, particularly those on the autism spectrum. Neurodivergent is a term used to describe those individuals with atypical mental and behavioral traits. This project acknowledges the importance of neurodivergent as an inclusive term, recognizing the diversity of human abilities and experiences.

These individuals may face many challenges as they transition out of high school, so this project will enhance workforce education opportunities by providing social and emotional support, workforce preparation, and promoting self-advocacy.

In addition to real-life work experience and employability training, Project SEARCH helps students with disabilities learn about independent living skills needed to transition to adulthood successfully. Students who complete the program can find employment in career paths that match their skills and interests.

Kenneth Mims, M.Ed., Superintendent of Schools at Science Prep Academy says, "Our collaboration with our program partners is a strategic move, as it allows us to have more time with our transitioning neurodivergent high school graduates to teach and monitor their learning of life skills which will increase their overall quality of adult life. Increased independence, self-esteem, and social interaction will be observed, along with employment and earnings outcomes for program participants and cost savings for society from reduced public benefit dependence and increased tax revenues."

Neurodiversity Education Research Center (NERC) is an independent nonprofit research center dedicated to improving access to quality education and workforce development for Neurodivergent humans. Science Prep Academy is NERC's flagship STEM private school in Phoenix that has validated our innovative research-based education model designed to support neurodivergent students with Autism transitioning into college and careers. NERC received a \$25,000 grant from the Arizona Community Foundation to launch this program for neurodivergent youth.



**Science
Prep
Academy**

PROGRAM OF THE
Neurodiversity Education Research Center

For more information, please visit <https://bit.ly/3T6SF3o> or contact Kenneth Mims, M.Ed., at 480-939-6013.

About Banner Desert Medical Center

Banner Desert Medical Center is a nonprofit hospital in Mesa, Arizona, providing a range of inpatient and outpatient services, including emergency services, Level I trauma care, cancer care, heart care, orthopedics, women and infant services, rehabilitation, neurological care and more. The medical center is one of the most comprehensive hospitals in Arizona and serves as a regional referral center in the East Valley of metropolitan Phoenix. The medical campus is also home to Banner Children's at Desert. Both facilities are owned and operated by Banner Health, the largest provider of health care services in Arizona. For more information, visit bannerhealth.com/desert

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