

Mentoring

Because visual impairment can be an isolating and a low incidence disability, the Mentoring Program has been created to offer young people a friend and advisor who has faced and overcome similar challenges.

Students will be matched with a successful and confident adult who also experiences limited vision. The mentor will provide guidance in areas that include dealing with attitudes about blindness, becoming an active member of the community, identifying resources for assistance, offering techniques and tips for living independently, and enhancing job exploration through valuable insight.

Mentors have gone through an interview process, a background check, and have participated in a mentor training session.



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PA Toll Free: 800-706-5050

Competitive Employment

Competitive employment is the primary objective that students are working toward in this program.

In this final phase, students work with a job developer to seek and find paid, part-time work. When that is achieved, students receive on-the-job training and any necessary job accommodations. Once a student is independent at work, follow up services are provided to monitor the student's performance and foster job retention.

The Employment Opportunities Project provides invaluable services and unforgettable experiences for the student in the Allegheny Intermediate Unit's Blind and Visually Impaired Support Program.
—Sandra Finkel, Allegheny Intermediate Unit Supervisor, Blind and Visually Impaired Support Program

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*The Office of Community Services/WorkForce
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Employment Opportunities Project



*A Transition Program for
High School Students who
are Blind or Vision Impaired*



**Blind & Vision Rehabilitation
Services of Pittsburgh**

Phone: 412-368-4400
www.BlindVR.com

The Employment Opportunities Project

This school to work program is designed to prepare students for employment. We do this by providing a variety of services that include job readiness classes, job shadowing, community-based work experiences, mentoring, and job coaching that help students develop the skills they need to find and keep jobs.

We accept students who are blind or vision impaired between the ages of 14 to 21 and who receive services through the Allegheny Intermediate Unit.



Job Readiness Classes

In these core classes, students learn the basics such as time management, self awareness, ADA employment rights, job accommodations, the job application process, how to market themselves to employers, and interviewing techniques.

Students enjoy weekly guest speakers who include business professionals and successful adults who are blind or vision impaired. Students also have the opportunity to connect with peers who share their disability. Classes culminate with a mock interview with a Human Resources professional, followed by a graduation celebration.

Job Shadowing

Students have the opportunity to observe a successful employee performing a job in a field that interests them. Experience range from shadowing entry level employees to career professionals.

Community-Based Work Experiences

BVRS partners with businesses, universities, stores, restaurants and other nonprofit agencies to provide students with on-the-job experiences that can last from one day to several weeks. Students receive a training stipend.

Our Partners Include:

- Carnegie Mellon University
- Giant Eagle, Inc.
- Pittsburgh Pirates
- Greater Pittsburgh Food Bank
- PA CareerLink
- Marian Manor
- Carnegie Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped
- Pizza Hut
- Friendship Village

