

SKILLS TRAINING AND ENRICHMENT PROGRAM

An Overview

Goodwill Industries' Skills Training and Enrichment Program (*STEP*) is an adult learning environment for participants with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (*IDD*) to develop non-job-specific employment and independent life skills to reach their highest potential. Through training resources, skill-building in a variety of activities, and experiences within the community, participants are offered the opportunity to develop social awareness, build relationships and overcome barriers to employment. For many participants these skills lead to integrated community jobs and greater independence.



Participant Choice

GICW staff collaborate with participants and Individual Service Plan (*ISP*) team members to determine the activities of personal interest, providing participants both choice and control. Participants have the opportunity to explore many different areas of interest in the seven themed *STEP* rooms, including community integration and career exploration experiences. The training rooms focus on providing a variety of employment path, life skills and enrichment opportunities: classroom/computer lab, exercise room, art studio/garden station, room for ongoing volunteer projects, music skills/appreciation, a living skills center based on independent living, and a game room.



Training Skills Development Rooms



The Classroom and Computer Lab provides a wide variety of opportunities for participants to improve academic skills and overcome barriers to employment. Training and activities offered include: money handling, computers, cashiering, online applications, resume building, interview skills, dressing for success, effective communication, teambuilding and numerous other social skills. Training to increase academic levels in terms of literacy related to reading, math, and language is offered.

The Independent Living Room provides opportunities to participate in training on diet, nutrition, reading recipes/food labels, meal planning, hygiene, household safety, use of available appliances, independent and group living skills, laundry and household upkeep. It is an ideal training space for those participants interested in working in the food or hospitality industry by earning their Food Handler's Card and increasing general household skills. Whether the skills learned are employment or living skill focused, the intent is to provide training that is useful for the rest of life.



Training Skills Development Rooms - *continued*



The Exercise Room encourages individuals to become aware of their own attitudes toward health, food and exercise. Training activities are designed to increase participants' ability to make healthy choices, increase strength, balance and stamina thereby improving general health and employability. Specific activities include: benefits of exercise/nutrition and the correlation to health, basic anatomy/body types, learning types of exercise, team and individual sports, warm up and cool down, stretching, safety, personal goals, and instruction on a variety of exercise machines.

The Music Skills and Appreciation Room introduces participants to various instruments, musical styles, music history, dance, and the emotional impact that music inspires. There are academic benefits such as math, communication, and reading, as well as building critical thinking and problem-solving skills. This room provides a platform for learning self-discipline, collaboration with peers, patience, and motivation.



The Volunteer Experience Room offers participants the opportunity to complete volunteer work that contributes to their community. An example is GICW's "Book of My Own" that supports local literacy efforts. The process includes: quality inspection of books, packaging, labeling, and organizing. Participants meet together to discuss expectations prior to entering the community and then meet upon return to discuss what they learned and their contribution. Participants learn the meaning behind

supporting the work of local non-profit organizations and the benefits for everyone involved. Community volunteer partners include: Loaves and Fishes, Meals on Wheels, local food banks and the Oregon Humane Society for which participants donated dog biscuits that they baked in the Independent Living Skills Room.

The Studio provides opportunities for participants to convey creative expression and learn the emotional reaction art can engender. Art can increase the ability to recall facts, grasp main ideas, and sequential events. Classes and activities offered in the Studio include: gardening, painting in a variety of mediums, multiple craft projects with a focus on reuse, repurpose, recycle, decorating for special events, card making for volunteer projects, and learning design, and art styles/history. Similarly to the Music Skills room, this room enhances academics such as math, writing, reading, and communication. It also provides another platform for developing collaboration skills, motivation, and creative thinking.





The Game Room provides a fun, safe environment in which to practice social skills. Board games, puzzles, books, magazines, gaming computers, TV with DVD/Blu-ray player and Wii all provide opportunities to learn teamwork, take turns, communicate effectively, and practice patience.

Integrated, Thematic Lesson Plans

Each room has lesson plans that the STEP staff develop and implement. The year is split into quarters, and each has a theme. That theme is broken down each week and a topic is established. Lesson plans provide an outline of learning objectives, materials needed, description of the activity and procedure, transferrable skills, discussion suggestions, and space to note the experience of each participant.



Other Learning Opportunities

Additional learning opportunities in the STEP include Career Exploration, Community Integration Experiences (CIEs) and guest speakers. Community integration opportunities include business tours, job shadowing, libraries, schools, museum visits, and grocery or other shopping opportunities. Guest speakers are invited to speak on topics of interest chosen by participants. A range of topics have included: self-advocacy, pet care, organic farming, veterans, musicians and representatives from the local job market.

There are many different opportunities in the STEP program to build and develop skills toward community employment, integration and independence. Participant goals, skill sets, interests, and engagement have increased dramatically and drive the direction of this program. As the STEP continues to develop with the ideas and collaboration of stakeholders, we look forward to cultivating more classes and opportunities for participants.

PORTLAND

611 SE Harrison St.
Portland, OR 97214
503/238.6139

SALEM

3535 Lancaster Dr NE
Salem, OR 97305
503/375.0335

DALLAS

315 Orchard Dr
Dallas, OR 97338