

Proposal Summary
Meeting Date: 6/7/2016

Have Dreams
Request # 115009

Project Title:	Have Dreams Academy
Duration:	12 months
Request Date:	4/21/2016
Request Amount:	\$125,000
Recommended Amount:	\$125,000
Program Area:	Human Services\Jobs Program (not E)
Population Served:	Developmentally Disabled
Type of Support:	Salary Support
Grantee Location:	Evanston, IL
Primary Contact:	Ms. Sara LaMontagne

Project Abstract

The proposal is to continue the Have Dreams Academy workforce development program that trains adults with autism to work in light-manufacturing industries and to pilot the Academy for Adults with High Functioning Autism, funding in collaboration with the Grandy Foundation.

Organizational Background

Annual Revenue Sources

Grants	14%	Government	0%	Earned Income	0%
Fees	32%	Private Support	54%	Other	1%

Finances

	Budget	Actual	Actual
	12/31/2016	12/31/2015	12/31/2016
Revenues	\$2,209,495	\$1,957,928	\$1,992,261
Expenses	2,207,571	\$2,073,149	2,061,099
Surplus (Deficit)	1,924	(115,221)	(68,838)
Net Assets		\$287,194	\$402,415

Have Dreams was founded in 1996 by seven visionary families, two teachers, and a university researcher seeking to fill a void in the community for children with autism. Have Dreams helps individuals with autism improve their abilities to learn, function independently, and socialize so that they may realize their full potential and develop into contributing members of their communities. Have Dreams offers programs for individuals diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder from the age of 16 months through young adulthood from Chicago and 23 surrounding communities. Programs address

autism's core deficit areas of communication and socialization, and help individuals develop skills to the best of their capability and function at their greatest level of independence.

Program Description

Individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) have an information processing disorder that presents challenges in their ability to develop critical soft skills needed to get or keep a job. Some of these challenges stem from their inability to fully comprehend the unwritten social rules in school or at work, to adjust to unpredictability in their daily routines, and their difficulty with time management skills. Individuals with ASD do, however, demonstrate many characteristics that translate into employability. Some of these characteristics include: attention to detail, ability to notice variances, schedule driven, goal of completion, consistent performance, intense focus on preferred activities, enjoyment of repetitive tasks, strong visual skills, good rate and long-term memory, adherence to rules, and understanding and retention of concrete concepts, patterns and rules.

Have Dreams Academy (HDA) and the Academy for Adults with High Functioning Autism (HFA) will address the many challenges that adults with autism face in attaining and maintaining meaningful employment. These programs will serve to reduce the social isolation experienced by many adults with autism, and prepare them for workplace success by helping them develop a toolkit of skills that they can transfer and utilize across environments to demonstrate their full potential and capacity.

HDA

Have Dreams Academy is a semester long workforce training program that equips adults with autism spectrum disorder with the requisite job skills and soft skills to prepare them for competitive employment within the light-manufacturing sector. All HDA training and learning activities are based on the light-manufacturing curriculum co-developed by Have Dreams staff and bakery owner Jean Kroll. Participants are provided with internships at Evanston-based ILOVESWEETS commercial bakery, and receive classroom instruction onsite at Have Dreams. Individuals will learn and practice appropriate social skills for the workplace, and develop skills in the areas of time management, communication, problem solving, initiative, teamwork and adaptability.

Direct classroom instruction will help individuals with ASD build workplace and soft skills. Instructor-led group and individual discussion will address the overall challenges individuals face in their inability to fully comprehend the unwritten social rules in school or at work, adjust to unpredictability in routines, and difficulty with time management skills. Instruction will utilize a variety of workplace scenarios to teach how to appropriately navigate a difficult co-worker or workplace problem such as running out of materials to complete a job, or what to do once a specific assigned task is complete, when, how and who to approach at the workplace if unsure about a job task or job responsibilities, identifying appropriate shared topics of conversation, and managing impulses to interrupt co-workers or supervisors in conversation. Fundamental skills that address the challenges that individuals with autism have in the area of social skills will be developed including learning to use the proper tone when corresponding through email or text message and ways to safely and appropriately utilize social media will be addressed. Classroom instruction will utilize worksheets with multiple choice answers to assess each participant's knowledge of appropriate workplace behaviors and standards, what are the workplace/behavioral expectations when taking a work break, appropriate hygiene, workplace attire and general appearance, as well as who in the workplace to seek out when more information is needed about a specific work task.

Participants will be provided with instruction to create their own e-portfolios, hard copy resumes, and provided with opportunities to participate in practice job interviews. They will be instructed on how to gather and create a digital portfolio comprised of their name and contact information, how to write a summary of their education, training and work experience, how to identify and summarize their strengths and interests, goals for employment, and how to assemble pictures and videos of their work tasks for placement in their digitalized portfolio.

HFA

Academy for High Functioning Adults with Autism is a one-year, intensive, business-based workforce training pilot program that will equip adults with high functioning ASD with the requisite job skills and soft skills to prepare them for competitive employment in office-based positions. Eligible participants must demonstrate foundational skills that indicate they will benefit from the program. This includes them being college capable, interested in working within a business environment, qualified for professional positions, the potential to achieve sustainable employment with opportunities for advancement, intelligent but may have unique issues that hinder social engagement, and ready, willing and able to secure competitive employment. The profile of individuals who have indicated interest in the HFA include recent college graduates from NIU and DePaul.

All HFA training and learning activities will be based on the best practice autism-specific curriculum to be developed by Have Dreams. Have Dreams will build on methods developed for the HDA to create curriculum and structure specific programming goals and objectives for the HFA program. Have Dreams will collaborate with corporate partner organization Swoon, a staffing and recruitment firm based in Chicago, to provide a variety of office-based internship experiences for program participants where they will learn and practice a variety of activities in real corporate work environments. Internship locations and positions are to be determined and will vary extensively. Have Dreams will utilize company policies in developing manuals for the expectations required for each internship position.

Participants will also engage in classroom instruction onsite at Have Dreams that will help them build workplace skills relative to the type of employment in which they are engaged. HFA will utilize the protocols established for soft skill development in the HDA program, helping them develop skills in the areas of time management, communication, problem solving, initiative, teamwork and adaptability. There will be a greater concentration on the refining of soft skills and social skills that are required for individuals to conduct successful and professional workplace interactions within office-based settings. Participants will develop skills to search and secure competitive administrative employment. They will be provided with instruction on how to gather and create a digital portfolio comprised of their name and contact information, how to write a summary of their education, training and work experience, how to identify and summarize their strengths and interests, goals for employment, and how to assemble pictures and videos of their work tasks for placement in their digitalized portfolio, and will be instructed in how to develop hard copy resumes. They will also be provided with opportunities to participate in practice job interviews.

Expected Outcome

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• HDA will serve a total of 12 adult participants with autism during the course of one year• 100% of HDA participants will complete the semester-long program• 90-100% of HDA graduates will successfully secure employment in light-manufacturing industries. |
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- HFA will serve 5 adult participants with high functioning autism during the one-year program
- 80-100% of participants will complete the full year of HFA programming
- 80-100% of HFA graduates will successfully secure employment in corporate or business environments

Program Budget

Major expenses include:

- Program Supervisor (0.9FTE) to oversee HDA and HFA (\$30,000 or 24% of request)
- One Autism Employment Specialist for each program (2.0FTE) to lead education and training for each program (\$80,000 or 64% of request)
- Development of the HFA curriculum (\$10,000 or 8% of request)
- Design and capture of HFA program metrics (\$5,000 or 4% or request)

Prior Grants

Last Grant Date:	1/19/2016	Number of Prior Grants:	3
Last Grant Amount:	\$15,000	Total Amount Granted:	\$176,000

Recommendation

We have seen strong results from the launch of the HDA program as all of the graduates from the program are currently employed. This grant would enable the program to continue to build towards greater self-sufficiency. Additionally, it would lever HDA staff and knowledge to pilot a similar program targeted to individuals with higher function. This population is of great interest to the Grandy Foundation and its founder Jack Miller, founder and former President/CEO of Quill Corporation. We have been working for many months with Mr. Miller and Have Dreams to identify a potential collaborative program that advances the interests of all three organizations. HFA is based not just on HDA but also on Project Search, an internship-based program model which is national in scope. Have Dreams has operated a Project Search initiative in partnership with Northwestern University and this experience will be helpful as it develops the HFA program.

We recommend approval of this award intended to help discern the employment goals of individuals with varying forms of autism and provide training so that they might achieve them.

<i>Have Dreams</i>			
<i>Have Dreams Academy and Academy for Adults with High Functioning Autism</i>			
<i>21-Apr-16</i>			
			<i>Total Project Budget</i>
<u>REVENUE</u>	<u>Funds Needed</u>	<u>Funds Requested</u>	<u>Funds Committed</u>
Coleman Foundation (\$75M - HFA; \$50M - HDA)	125,000	125,000	-
Grandy Foundation (HFA)	95,000	-	95,000
Organizational contribution	36,200	-	36,200
Program Revenue	28,800	-	28,800
Revenue Total	285,000	125,000	160,000
<u>EXPENSE</u>	<u>Project Budget</u>	<u>Coleman Funds</u>	<u>Other Sources</u>
Project Supervisor	72,000	30,000	42,000
Autism Employment Specialists (1/program)	80,000	80,000	-
Vocational Coordinator (HFA)	50,000	-	50,000
Outreach (\$7M/program)	14,000	-	14,000
Curriculum Development (\$20M HFA)	22,000	10,000	12,000
Materials/Equipment (HFA)	12,000	-	12,000
Additional Staff Support (\$15M/program)	30,000	-	30,000
Metrics (HFA)	5,000	5,000	-
Total	285,000	125,000	160,000