



ALBERTINA
KERR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**ALBERTINA KERR AND EMBASSY SUITES BY HILTON PORTLAND AIRPORT
ANNOUNCE GRADUATION CEREMONY FOR PROJECT SEARCH PARTICIPANTS**

PORTLAND, Ore. (October 25, 2016) – Albertina Kerr and Embassy Suites by Hilton at the Portland Airport will be hosting a graduation ceremony for their Project SEARCH participants on November 4, 2016 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Embassy Suites, 7900 NE 82nd Ave., Portland, OR 97220. Five adults with intellectual or developmental disabilities participated in the nine-month internship and employment training program receiving classroom instruction, career exploration and learned technical and soft skills including communication, accountability and customer service.

Albertina Kerr’s Project SEARCH employment program helps young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities gain professional skills, find jobs and transition to careers in integrated work places. While the nationally recognized program holds an employment outcome rate of 79 percent, Albertina Kerr has exceeded that by placing 85 percent of its interns in integrated workplaces. Albertina Kerr’s Project SEARCH is the first successful program of its type in the state of Oregon. Next month, the Oregon Resource Association will recognize Embassy Suites by Hilton Portland Airport as the Private Employer of the Year.

“Project SEARCH not only exposes interns to an integrated work place, but it increases independence, confidence and self-esteem in each of them,” said Mer Stevens, Program Manager. “Albertina Kerr is breaking down negative stereotypes of people who have an intellectual or developmental disability by offering them the opportunity to develop their careers.”

This will be Albertina Kerr’s third Project SEARCH graduating class. Their first program was introduced in 2015 in partnership with Kaiser Permanente Westside Medical Center, which hosted two classes and is now on its third. Embassy Suites by Hilton at the Portland Airport will be welcoming a second class starting November 2016. Furthermore, Kaiser Permanente Sunnyside Medical Center began its first program in September 2016.

For more information about Project SEARCH, contact Steve Zeiden at 503.408.4721 or SteveZ@AlbertinaKerr.org

About Albertina Kerr

Since 1907, Albertina Kerr has strengthened Oregon families and communities. Today, we provide programs and services to children and adults with developmental disabilities and mental health challenges, empowering them to live richer lives. For more information about Albertina Kerr, call 503.239.8101 or visit www.AlbertinaKerr.org

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