



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Annual Workability Job Fair draws hundreds of students**

**SAN JOSE, CA** – More than 400 high school and post-secondary students from throughout the county attended the Santa Clara County Office of Education’s (SCCOE) Annual 2016 Workability Youth Job and Career Fair to meet and interview with 50 local employers, including the City of Palo Alto, Starbucks, Santa Clara Parks and Recreation and Trader Joe’s. This annual event is one of the best and biggest opportunities for young people with special needs to connect with employers in the area, and represents the culmination of months of work on the part of students, teachers and job coaches.

WorkAbility is a program that assists students with the transition from school to work, allowing students aged 16-22 to stay in school while developing pre-employment and worksite skills. Throughout the year, students develop resume and interview skills, as well as more general skills such as punctuality and attention to detail. Once a student is placed in a job, they continue to receive follow-up coaching and guidance.

“The employers we work with keep coming back because our students are very well prepared,” said Cynthia Valadez, Education Coordinator of the Career/Vocational Education program. “They appreciate how committed and loyal our students are, and the extra support they receive is valuable for both the students and the employers.”

In addition to meeting and interviewing with potential employers, students participated in mini-workshops where job interview skills, resumes, cover letters and even handshakes were critiqued by professionals. This is particularly valuable for students who may not be looking for a job immediately, but have the chance to practice and acclimate for next year.

“I think it’s awesome to be able to provide youth with opportunities,” said Amal Aziz, Youth and Teen Services Coordinator with the City of Palo Alto. “There’s a lot to be learned at a career fair. It’s more than just dropping off a resume and filling out an application.” At her table, Aziz was promoting approximately 30 jobs for Foothills Fun Camp, a summer day camp which serves children ages 5 to 12 years old. After an hour, she had a page and a half of interested applicants who had signed up.

[Pictures](#) of the event are available. To learn more, Visit the Workability program [online](#).

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