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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## ***Cumberland County Begins ‘Project Search’***

**Cumberland County, PA** – Seven individuals from Cumberland and Perry counties are exploring employment opportunities through Project Search. This is the first year for Project Search in Cumberland County, which kicked off Dec. 20, 2017. This program is a collaboration between Cumberland County government as the business partner, Goodwill Keystone Area as the job coaching partner, the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR), and the Cumberland/Perry Office of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. The program provides work experience and training to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Throughout the program, the participants will spend their first two weeks learning soft employment skills, such as career exploration, searching for employment, the job application process and interviewing skills. Starting January 8, 2018, participants will begin their first of three, 10-week internships working in Cumberland County government departments.

Various County departments will participate in the program including Claremont Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, the Library system, the Facilities department, the mailroom, and several clerical positions in the Human Services departments. The participants will begin each day with a one hour class then spend four hours working at their internship and end the day with a short debriefing session.

“This program has an 80-85% success rate in assisting individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities find a job,” said Susan Carbaugh, director of the County’s Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities department. “We have an instructor and two job coaches, as well as a mentor in each department. By the end of the program, the goal is for each individual to find a competitive job in the community.”

One of the focuses of the program is encouraging and assisting individuals living with an intellectual and/or developmental disability to find a job they enjoy and to be able to live independently in their community if they choose to do so.

For more information on Project Search, visit [www.ccpa.net/Adults-IDD](http://www.ccpa.net/Adults-IDD) or [www.projectsearch.us](http://www.projectsearch.us).

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