

# Growing Enrollment by Engaging Overlooked Students

A presentation on expanding inclusive education opportunities through The Uniquely Abled Academy.



# The Uniquely Abled Project

## Our Mission

To create inclusive vocational career opportunities for individuals with employment barriers by matching their unique abilities to well-paying jobs in high demand.

## Our Vision

A world where all individuals, regardless of employment barriers, thrive in fulfilling careers that recognize and celebrate their unique abilities.



# Our Impact

230+

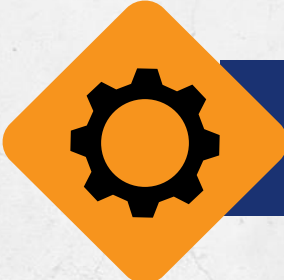
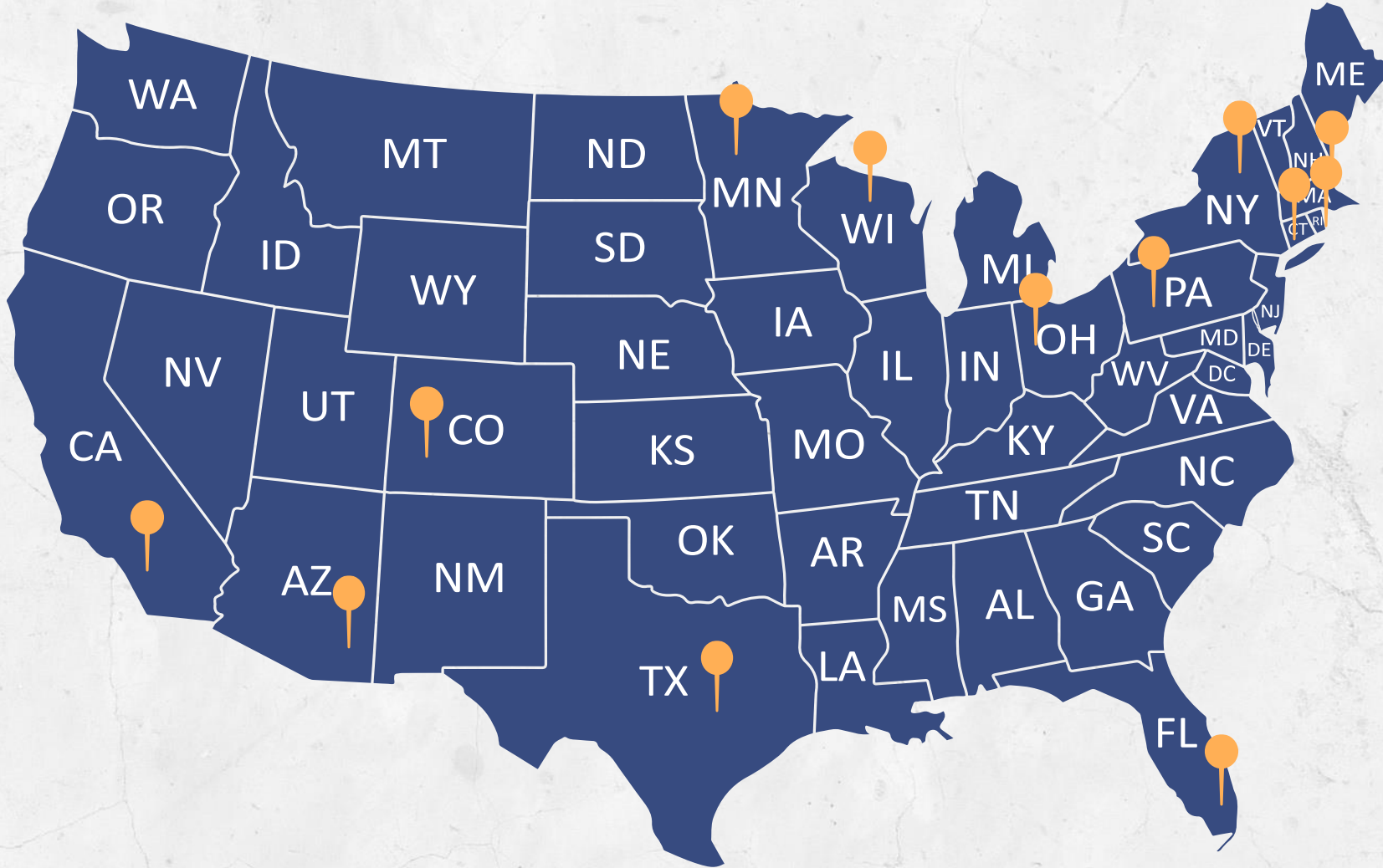
Uniquely Abled Academy graduates.

85%

job placement rate.

24+

locations established nationwide.



## Industry Pathways

- Computer Numerical Control (CNC)
- Robotics
- Soldering (Coming Soon)

# Academy Locations

## Western Region

College of the Canyons (CA) - CNC

College of the Canyons (CA) - Robotics

Glendale Community College (CA)

Long Beach City College (CA)

MiraCosta College (CA)

San Bernardino Valley College (CA)

Cherry Creek Innovation Campus (CO)

Dallas College (TX)

## Eastern Region

Middlesex Community College (CT)

Broward College (FL)

Bridgewater State University (MA)

South Central College (MN)

Hudson Valley Community College (NY)

Rhodes State College (OH)

Crawford County Career & Technical Center (PA)

Erie County Community College (PA)

AmSkills, Tampa, (FL)

Milwaukee Area Technical College (WI)

Palm Beach State College, FL

Polaris MEP, Providence, RI

Hennepin Tech, MN

Gateway Community College, AZ

Gateway Technical College, Kenosha, WI



*Scan to see updated locations and statuses.*

# The Uniquely Abled Academy (UAA)

The Uniquely Abled Academy was built to bridge the gap between jobs and skills while fueling the workforce pipeline.



## 01 Training

Provides hands-on vocational and skills training for technical careers in the manufacturing industry.

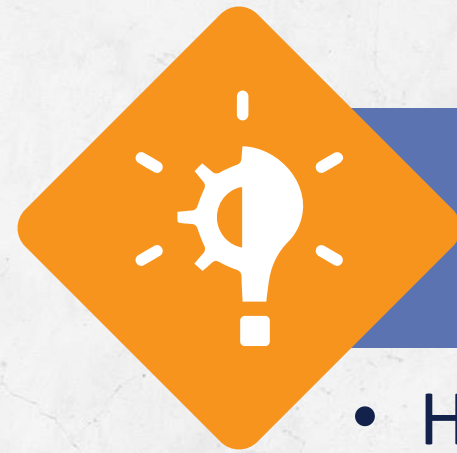
## 02 Support

Personalized job readiness curriculum with soft skills, resume building, and interview preparation.

## 03 Employment

Supports job placement through partnerships with social service agencies, educators, and disability specialists.

# Program Details



## Participation Criteria

- H.S. Diploma or GED
- Basic understanding of Algebra and English (may be assessed through pre-tests).
- Able to attend M-F (up to 8 hours per day).
- Comfortable working with machinery.
- Capable of participating in activities independently.



## Completion Benefits

- Certificates of Completion from accredited institutions or specialized training programs.
- Industry-recognized credentials, including safety certifications.
- Professional readiness or workforce development certifications.



## Prerequisites to Become a UAA Host

Join a community working to create a more inclusive educational environment.



### **Cohort Readiness**

Have the necessary equipment, instructors, and ability to run a separate cohort.



### **Demonstrated Demand**

Ability to demonstrate the need for the program and local career opportunities.



### **Commitment to Serve**

A willingness to work with a frequently misunderstood and undeserved population.

# Ways We Offer Support

The Uniquely Abled Project offers a variety of services to assist you with launching a Uniquely Abled Academy (UAA) and connecting you with our UAA programs throughout the country.





# Tips for Implementing a UAA Program on your Campus



## **Kristin Underwood**

South Central College  
North Mankato, MN



## **Goldhmong Vang**

Milwaukee Area Technical College  
Milwaukee, WI



# Process Timeline

**Jan**

## **Advertise**

Website, social media, conversations with schools and industry partners.

**Feb**

## **Recruit**

Applications open for UAA and Success Coach Role.

**Mar**

## **Applications Due**

Applications due, but will be accepted on a rolling basis until program is filled.

**Apr**

## **Open Houses**

2 held with families, support personnel, DEED-VRS, faculty and UAA alumni.

**May**

## **Candidate Selection**

Semi-finalists interviews/assessments & finalist selection and communication.

**Jun**

## **Program Start**

Program starts.



# Getting Started at MATC

EDUCATION

## MATC is launching a program for autistic students to 'unlock' their skills and launch careers

Devi Shastri Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

Published 6:00 a.m. CT May 17, 2021 | Updated 2:15 p.m. CT May 18, 2021

[View Comments](#)



### Working group:

- Employers (Advisory Group)
- Faculty in our Pathway
- MATC Leaders

### Fundraising

- Student Scholarships
- Equipment
- Outreach



# Benefits of Hosting a Uniquely Aabled Academy



## Increased Enrollment

Attracts a new population of students interested in specialized training, boosting enrollment numbers.



## Student Success

Supports student achievement by offering pathways to meaningful employment and career development.



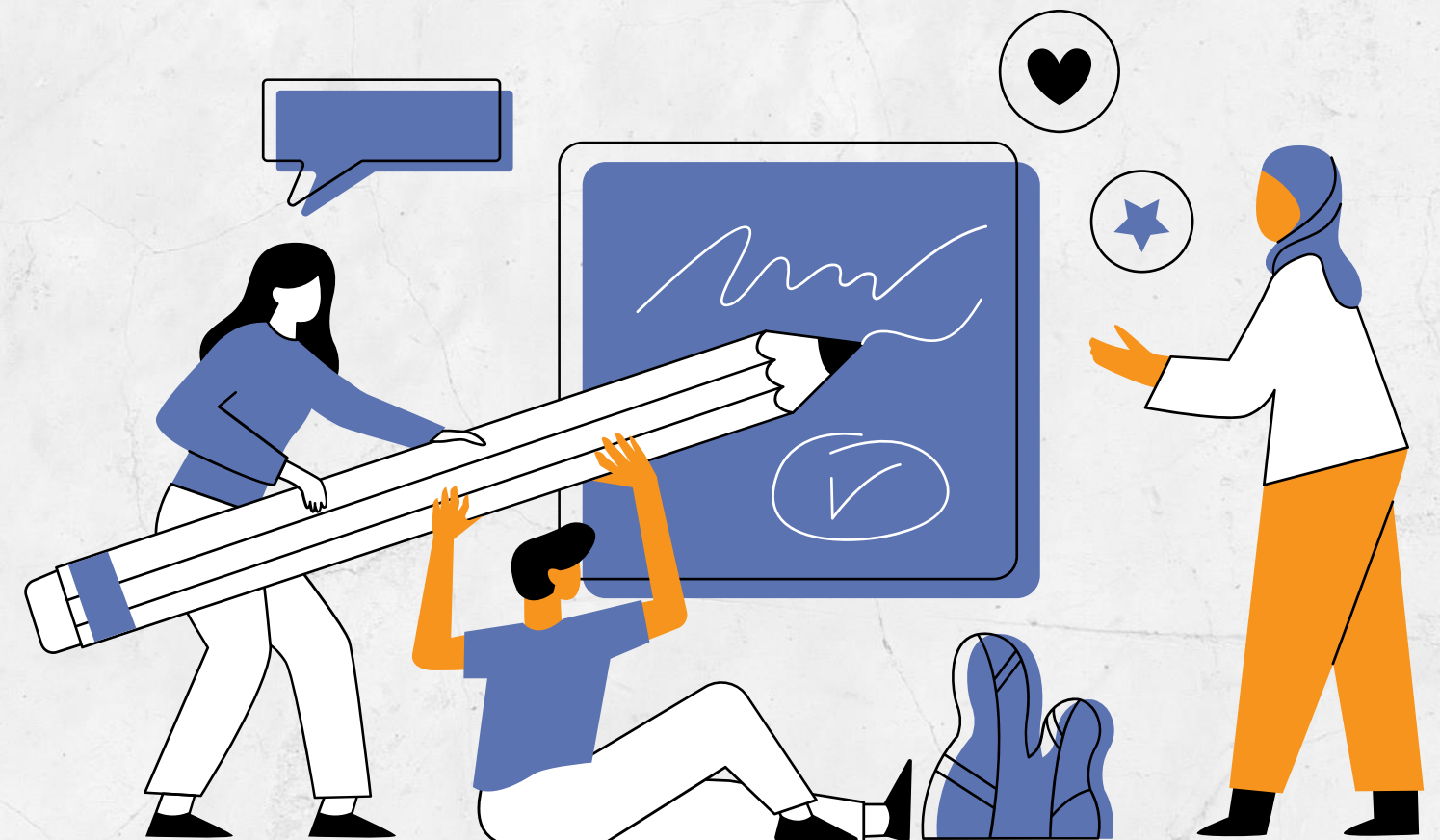
## Enhanced Diversity

Promotes a diverse and inclusive learning environment that enriches the educational experience for all students.



## Community Impact

Strengthens ties with local businesses and the community by preparing students for in-demand careers.



# Daily Schedule (example)



## Monday-Thursday

- 8:00am-2:30pm
- Lecture then lab philosophy
- Tours of local manufacturers with job shadow time



## Friday

- 8:00am-12:00pm
- Employability skill development
- Catch up
- Set expectations for following week

# Learning Outcomes & Curriculum

## Right Skills Now Certificate

- **Manual machines**
- **CNC Mills**
- **CNC Lathes**
- **Job planning, benchwork and layout**
- **Measurement, materials, and safety**

<https://southcentral.edu/Award/cert3518-2449.html>

## Credentials & Outcomes

- **NIMS Credential-Measurement, Materials & Safety**
- **Job as a CNC machine operator**
- **3 credits for prior learning in MTT program can be used as an elective at SCC**



# Curriculum

## CNC Set up and Operations Certificate



- **Manual Vertical Milling**
- **CNC Vertical Machine Centers**
- **Blueprint Reading**
- **Machine Trades Math**
- **Metrology**
- **Intro to CNC Programming**

## Career Readiness

- **Resume Building**
- **Interview Skills**
- **Critical Problem Solving**
- **Team Work**
- **Communication Workplace**
- **Workplace Values**
- **Self Advocacy**



# Support Services

## Success Coach

- **Present in the classroom full-time**
- **Paraprofessional** from the school district
- Assists with **behavioral interventions**
- Leads **employability skill development**
- Helps instructors develop skills for working with

## Uniquely Abled students

- Provides communication to **Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS)** and support personnel
- Collaborates with **industry partners**

## Department of Employment and Economic Development-Vocational Rehabilitation (DEED-VRS)

- **Establishes relationship** prior to program start
- **Infuses sessions** with coach, counselor, and student through the program
- **Works with students** to find and apply for jobs, prepare interviews, and ensure job success
- **Follows up** to document student outcomes





# Employer Engagement



# Best Practices

- **Promote** applications and funding opportunities
- **Identify problem-solving** partners
- **Leverage** UAP consultants and resources
- Prioritize **internal faculty** over contract vendors
- Ensure **individuals coordinate transportation**
- **Engage DEED-VRS** earlier in the process
- **Include DEED-VRS** in interviews and 1:1 meetings
- **Develop reporting** mechanisms for student outcomes
- **Involve industry partners** from the beginning
- **Assess** career interests
- **Recruit former students** as lab assistants



Connect with us to create opportunities that empower and inspire.



**Goldhmong  
Vang**



**Kristin  
Underwood**



**Toni  
Neary**

## KEEP IN TOUCH



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**We look forward to working with you!**