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## **MITSUBISHI ELECTRIC AMERICA FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES \$569,500 IN NEW GRANTS**

*Focused on Empowering Youth with Disabilities to Lead Productive Lives*

**WASHINGTON, DC, March 1, 2018** — Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation announces \$569,500 in new grants as part of its national [M>PWR Initiative](#) designed to empower youth with disabilities to lead productive lives.

“By supporting innovative ability awareness, mentoring and on-the-job training opportunities, we can help empower youth with disabilities by providing the leadership and job skills they need to successfully transition to the workforce,” said Kevin R. Webb, senior director of the Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation.

As part of its national [M>PWR Initiative](#), the Foundation has awarded \$569,500 in new grants to eight organizations. Continuing, multiyear projects will receive \$498,500 in 2018 funds.

### **New Grants**

- \$122,000 renewal grant over the next two years to **The Arc of the United States** to continue to expand *The Specialisterne Model*, which provides career opportunities in information technology to youth on the autism spectrum, and helps develop a pipeline to introduce candidates to the field
- \$150,000 to the **DREAM Partnership** over the next two years to support its Growing Together: An Aquaponics Employment Transition Program at Slippery Rock University
- \$50,000 to **Blue Star Recyclers** to implement its *National Replication* plan to introduce this innovative social enterprise model focused on Employment Development, Environmental Stewardship, and Economic Opportunity (E<sup>3</sup>) impact for youth with autism throughout the U.S.
- \$150,000 over two years to the **Human Engineering Research Laboratories** at the **University of Pittsburgh** to build on its *Advancing Inclusive Manufacturing* program to develop a vocational supervisor training program in advanced manufacturing for students and veterans with disabilities
- \$45,000 to the **California Academy of Sciences** to support its *Museums4Inclusion* internship program for youth with intellectual disabilities

- \$32,500 to the **Hadley Institute for the Blind and Visually Impaired** to support the *Forsythe Center for Employment and Entrepreneurship/Youth* to design accessible employment training curricula
- \$10,000 to the **Blind Institute of Technology's Pipeline Generation Meets Job Creation** project, which focuses on inclusivity in K-12 education, and supports a Symposium for Global Accessibility Awareness Day
- \$10,000 to **Community Bridges** to support its *Career and Innovation Summit*, which introduces 6-12 grade girls to STEM college and career opportunities

### **Continuing Projects**

- \$85,000 for the second year of a \$255,000/three-year grant to the **American Association of People with Disabilities** to support the *Summer Internship Program*, which places college and recent graduate interns with disabilities in Congressional Offices and Federal Agencies in Washington, DC, and will pilot a state capital program in Atlanta, GA in 2018
- \$75,000 for the second year of a \$225,000/three-year grant to **Partners for Youth with Disabilities** to implement the *Campus Career Connect* program, which partners community college students with mentors from Business Leadership Networks in Connecticut, Kansas, Maine, Massachusetts, and Wyoming
- \$50,000 for the second year of a \$100,000/two-year grant to **PACER Center** to support the National Parent Center on Transition and Employment *Inspiring Possibilities* project, which will help youth with disabilities and their families understand how to navigate employment and post-secondary education so they can lead self-directed lives
- \$25,000 for the second year of a \$75,000/three-year grant to **Exceptional Minds** to prepare young adults on the autism spectrum for careers in digital animation and visual effects. The grant has helped fund the vocational school's job readiness and placement program, which is a contributing factor in the school's above average placement rate of graduates working in their chosen fields.
- \$24,000 for the third year of a \$248,500/three-year grant to **Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center** to support the expansion of the *Project SEARCH Program* to all 50 states, helping high school students with cognitive disabilities successfully transition to competitive employment

- \$54,500 for the third year of a \$200,000/three-year grant to the **University of New Hampshire, Institute on Disability** to support Dan Habib's new feature-length documentary film project, *Intelligent Lives*, which challenges perceptions about intelligence of people with intellectual disabilities, along with four short companion films focusing on effective practices in transition for youth with disabilities from secondary school to postsecondary education and employment

The Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation, based in the Washington, DC area, was established in 1991 by Mitsubishi Electric Corporation and the Mitsubishi Electric U.S. companies, which produce, sell and distribute a wide range of consumer, industrial, commercial and professional electronics products. The Foundation has contributed more than \$15 million to organizations that are empowering young people with disabilities to lead more inclusive and productive lives.

To learn more, visit the Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation's website at [www.MEAF.org](http://www.MEAF.org).

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