

Northwest University

Hay Esperanza

(There's Hope)

Mexico's Autistic Adult Employment Center

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## **Thesis**

This paper describes the start of a revolutionary autistic adult support employment center called Hay Esperanza (There is Hope), in Jalisco, Mexico, which could be replicated in other communities throughout Mexico. Our goal is to implement the inclusion laws already in place and provide legislative advocacy for more inclusion efforts in the workforce, while our autistic participants take courses to hone their skills and apply for jobs, lowering the unemployment rate within the vulnerable population and giving them the possibility for an independent, fruitful life.

This project thesis required much study and research. Following, the introduction is the context behind the project, the definition of autism and the expected life for those who live it. I use qualitative research to prepare the thesis so that the study is both factual and persuasive. In so doing, I have addressed governmental laws and policies in the U.S. and in Mexico in addition to personal stories and experiences to help explain this complex topic. Experiences with my son JJ and my cousin Esperanza also reinforce the importance of my topic; social, educational, and employment development for those with autism, Aspergers, and ADHA. Consequently, this thesis explains the vital of Hay Esperanza (Appendix A), a nonprofit that trains functional autistic and other disabled adults to become independent. It is my goal that Hay Esperanza succeeds now and then thrives for decades to come. There is hope.

## **Introduction**

Mexico's work towards a world of inclusion is decades behind when compared to that of the United States where I was raised and have raised my only autistic son as well. The state special education laws of the State of California where we lived and its parental rights to advocate for my child have long been backed "by three federal statutes: the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the

Americans with Disabilities Act” (Russo 3). Therefore, when my son started to actively use these laws for his benefit in 2006, it had already been about 31 years that the three federal laws had gained strength and popularity in the school systems. As part of the laws implemented in the school districts, JJ was provided with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for a district psychologist to evaluate his global delays immediately after his third birthday. The urgency to create an intensive early intervention program (EIP) is to provide the best hope for long-term behavioral management of an autistic child as soon as they are introduced to the school district (Teo 624). Since there is no cure for autism and the autism diagnosis rate in the United States is 1 in 59 children, educator’s have no choice but to quickly serve the children with their IEP so they can transition into the classroom properly and effectively (Teo 624).

Following the guide of the psychologist, I filled out question and answer surveys and participated in in-person observations, and following were various tests. Since autism is a broad spectrum of intellectual disorder affecting a child’s development and day-to-day activities it also affects the family’s function and how much time needs to be given to the child’s appointments (Teo 624). In May, the testers concluded his benchmarks and compared them to those of a “normally” developed child. By that summer in 2006, JJ had joined a special ed class in pre-K where he received occupational therapy, adaptive PE, speech therapy and fine motor skills therapy in a small classroom setting. As an added benefit, JJ qualified for a small yellow school bus to pick him up and drop him off at home, and he also ate breakfast and snacked at school. In general, JJ had an active IEP every school year until he graduated high school in 2021. Group meetings with the parents, school administrators, general ed and special education teachers plus the school psychologist and all the therapist involved. Every three years, JJ’s IEP went through a

Triannual IEP which globally evaluated him and his progress to show his improvement or not in many developmental stages.

Mexico, however, does not offer the same psychological and educational advances. Their educational system for autistic and disabled students does not work in a cohesive manner. Indeed, Mexico has five major laws that affect the students who present a disability, but these laws only began in 2000 with the “General Law for the Protection of the Rights of Girls, Boys and Adolescents (GLPRGBA)” (Russo 2). In 2011, the “General Law of the Provision of Services for the Attention, Care, and Integral Child Development” included several articles that addressed student rights to receive appropriate education and services by law, but it needed further editing. In 2012, the “General Law for the Inclusion of Individuals with Disabilities (GLIID)” was also amended which was then followed by the 2013 “Law of the National Institute for the Evaluation of Education” and the 2014 “General Law of Education” was reformed too (2-3). By observation only, I reason that between the first law of improvement to the next over fourteen years, many students of all ages had missed their protected rights to get a worthy education for their future.

In fact, many of the benefits and therapies that JJ received at a young age for free do not necessarily all exist in Mexico because “its system is still challenged by inadequate program implementation and evaluation in most states. More specifically, Mexico lacks the proper implementation of identification, placement, and assessment procedures as well as the necessary regulations about due process and dispute resolution” (Russo 4). At the same time, Mexico has not given up on improving itself. An example of their inclusion efforts happened on December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2015, when they marked their calendar as the “International Day for Persons with Disabilities and in Mexico the Government of the Republic through different instances has

programs that seek the inclusion and prosperity of the Mexican population in this situation” (Gob.mx. Government of Mexico Secretariat of Welfare). Two years later on February 27, 2017, the Federal Attorney for the Defense of Labor declared that day to be the “National Day for Labor Inclusion” as it looks to recognize people’s human rights to not discriminate and promote protection (Gob.mx. Government of Mexico Federal Attorney for the Defense of Labor).

Moving forward, today’s new leaders have seen and can consider the new challenges that people with disabilities are facing. By now, many generations of students with disabilities students have matured and grown into adulthood with the little education they received, with and without a diagnosis of their disability. Others were fortunate enough that their parents offered a different path to gain better education, therapies, and perhaps sports. All in all, students and their families have persevered in the best way that they could.

In this moving picture, they are all adults now and face a different challenge, the discriminatory workforce. As they look ahead, many probably ask “what’s next” in their lives? How can they meet their new needs? What about getting a job? They may also ask who can help them advance grow in specific areas of interest?

At this “questioning” point, the qualitative research begins. Mexico needs to implement and enforce its labor policies. Many laws already exist, and governmental support is there, but leaders and laws lack adequate education about the disabled society in general and lack understanding of the need for equal rights opportunities in the workforce. Therefore, it is necessary to create nonprofits that bridge the gap between that lack of education – both social and political – and the resulting overall pushback of employers to discriminate against the disabled in the hiring process. Hay Esperanza is a holistic support employment center that strives to fulfill the functional autistic workforce needs of today’s generation so that they can better

prepare for the job search stage by reviewing governmental policies. Hay Esperanza will also expose ways in which it will be an educative, living organism intertwined within politics, its community, human rights, and state agencies. As an inclusive nonprofit, it will stand with and train its autistic adults towards success.

### **Esperanza's Testimony**

Besides my duty to advocate for my autistic son in his schooling and beyond, I became interested in advocating for my intellectually disabled cousin Esperanza for whom part of the center is named. She had a condition that prevented her from thinking or speaking like others her age. Her reasoning never developed as a "normal" person's would, so my family always required her to manage the household chores and take care of her sister's children when they were born. In Mexico, she always lived in poor conditions, and the government never offered any hope. They discouraged Esperanza's family from investing in her, and she never finished elementary school. Yet, she could do many things as she grew into adulthood. Tragically, she was raped and got pregnant, but she persevered. She took full responsibility for the child she carried and tried to raise her the best way that she could. Her motherly instinct taught her how to get around the city using public transportation, and to make ends meet, she cleaned houses near her family's house where she had grown up. Raped a second time, she had another baby girl. Esperanza raised both daughters the best way she could. When I was younger, I vacationed in Guadalajara and visited Esperanza at my aunt's house. Esperanza and I went together via public transportation to pick up her first-born at school while she carried her second daughter in her arms. She endured a cycle of poverty, but I witnessed her strength to raise her daughters until the oldest was 18 years old. Sadly, she passed away two years ago at the age of forty-two due to a motorcycle accident while I was in my first year of the master's program.



When she passed away, I took Esperanza's death to heart. By this time, my son was graduating high school, and as a mother, I was furiously advocating for help with his career orientation classes and employment preparation skills, and I succeeded after a year. Meanwhile, I already had a nudge in my spirit that I wanted to open an autistic employment center to share with similarly independent, disabled people. Therefore, my first inspiration for the employment nonprofit grew from my son's situation and Esperanza's attempts to move ahead in life. Esperanza's expectations of life grew, but the people around her could not see her potential. As a mother of an autistic young man, I began experiencing what Esperanza had already gone through - the difficulty of a disabled person to receive educational and governmental support to enter the workforce whether in the United States or in Mexico.

Because I envisioned this nonprofit in Mexico, my son and I moved there in 2021. During that time, I have researched governmental laws and policies to know what is available to support JJ as a potential worker in Mexico. I also tried to locate a one-on-one job counselor to identify his personal skills and prepare him with job interview skills. At the same time, we applied for several job opportunities, only to end up with our hopes crushed. Mexico does not have a dedicated employment center for disabled adults who are functional and independent. Therefore, in honor of JJ and Esperanza, I am fully dedicated to bridging Mexico's unaddressed employment education/workforce gap for the disabled by creating the nonprofit, Hay Esperanza (There is Hope) (Appendix A).

## **Overview of Field Research**

### *Contextualization- Living with Autism*

The context behind my thesis and the business plan are quite personal. JJ is my only child. He was born physically and mentally different in ways that were noticeable when he was

an infant. He did not turn when you called his name, and he could not move his gross motor body parts as easily as could other children his age. He did not play with others, and he did not develop speech. He often fell to the ground, and his fine motor skills were very weak. By two years old, he was diagnosed with an overall global delay, and autism was on the radar. He had surgery to improve his ear drums and hearing, and soon after, doctors hoped he could hear better and begin to say his first words. But that did not happen. When he was three years old, I advocated for JJ at the local school district, and they found that his behavior showed the doctor's findings. JJ had severe speech delay, gross motor and fine motor delays, low social skills, plus mild autism. Immediately, the school's district psychologist wrote an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) for him. Afterwards, every year several teachers, therapist, school administrators, and JJ and I attended countless IEP meetings until he graduated from high school.

In high school, and throughout his school age years, he struggled to make friends, ate alone, and was bullied. Many times, he fell behind in class not because he was lazy, but because his teachers worked at a faster pace than he could manage. His gross motor skills improved with adaptive PE, so he did not constantly fall. Now and then, he still slips and loses his balance. Occupational Therapy also worked with him on his fine motor skills until he could finally press down hard enough with a pencil to write on a piece of paper. His social skills became as fluent as they could be, but the bullying always remained simply because others saw him as "different." Regardless, JJ's outlook on life has always been positive even though he developed a stuttering problem in sixth grade. He always volunteered and helped anyone he could just so he could feel useful. He has a kind heart, but when others hear him speak, they can tell he has about a three-to-four-year delay in some categories of his persona. When he finished high school, I knew my son needed more educational courses and career counseling to know which direction to take in life.

As his advocate, I also considered the school's mission to train adults for the working world, and I knew I had to act.

After his graduation, I often heard JJ cry alone in his room. Frustrated with himself and his "different" situation, he is also quite sharp in many areas; however, only a few people take the time to notice his abilities or those of other autistic people. I happen to be one of those people, and as an advocate for other parents of disabled kids, I have seen that their children are extraordinary and specialized in specific areas, too.

In fact, JJ's life has changed my own life for the better as it has encouraged the true "Juana" to blossom within me. Thus, I have earned my BA in Business Administration, finished an Interpreting Certificate as an English and Spanish speaker, and have also become certified to teach in six fields in high school and with adults in California. For several years, my drive has been to pursue advocating and changes in legal policies to improve autistic adults' opportunities in the workforce, and because of it, we moved to Guadalajara, Mexico, in May 2021. I consider it my God given calling to write a business plan that will serve functional autistic adults and others with similar diagnoses such as Aspergers and ADHD so that they may gain their own employment. Toward that end, I have planned to build a training center in Jalisco, Mexico.

#### *Contextualization- Change of Scenery*

Living in Mexico has been a challenge for us, but it soon also became a threat for JJ. The more I researched state and federal laws of inclusion in the workplace, the more discrimination we faced together as JJ applied for jobs. It was obvious that being different is not welcomed in Mexico's workplace, and the laws did not match reality. The bureaucratic Mexican government has created procedure after procedure for the disabled, using newly created

government branches to follow through on the passed legislation, but it has failed to established efficiency in these policies or in educating citizens about them.

It is with passion for Mexican law, policy changes, and the right to equal opportunity in the workplace for disabled people that I write this project thesis to fulfill part of my master's program requirement at Northwest University. Throughout this project, I have researched the essential points that affect an autistic life and the opportunities that the Mexican state and nation offer but then fail to give reasonable access to for those who need them. Consequently, Hay Esperanza (There is Hope) will function as an encouraging employment training center for all participants to prepare at their own speed. It will collaborate with state entities to advocate specifically for the autistic and others with similar disabilities to pursue politics that will help them join the workforce more easily than before. Attached is the holistic business plan for the support employment center which will become a reality in fewer than two years.

### *Qualitative Research Method*

After my autistic adult son and I moved to Guadalajara, Mexico, I began my research in earnest. I had based my prior research only on examining scientific data, by reading books, by advocating under US laws, and by studying investigations in the United States. The topic grew for me once I began talking with other parents and hearing their stories. Many of them with functional autistic adult children showed their fear and/or frustration when their son/ daughter tried to obtain a job. They mentioned their fear that the school bullying would continue into their adulthood, even into the workplace. The parents' dream, of course, was that their children could become independent and be able to support themselves. However, for the parents of an autistic adult, their fear extends into worrying about who will care for their special needs adults should

they, the parents, die first. Thus, as I dove more deeply into living the fieldwork experience firsthand, my qualitative research method guided my work.

By definition, “Qualitative research is based on the belief that knowledge is constructed by people in an ongoing fashion as they engage in and make meaning of an activity, experience, or phenomenon” (Merriam 22). Therefore, my activities and experiences in advocating for autistic functioning adults has led to my using a Theoretical Framework and Problem Statement Worksheet which Merriam and Tisdell have mentioned in their book, *Qualitative Research, A Guide to Design and Implementation* (83). The worksheet has helped me find the gaps in my research so that I could recognize “the gap in [my] knowledge and turn it into a purpose statement” (83). In this manner, my fieldwork became more concentrated by my “talking, listening, recording, observing, participating, and sometimes even living in a particular place” (Stone 1).

Since living in Mexico was new for my son and me, I took pictures of everything I saw as we rode the bus downtown. These included pictures of staffing agencies, government buildings, and “help wanted” signs, so as to continue my research at home. To learn about how businesses run in Mexico and how politics work, I joined a nonprofit of women entrepreneurs called AMEXME which invited government officials from every branch to come and speak to us about up to date laws. In this case, according to the book *Field Working, Reading and Writing Research*, I was a fieldworker trying to know the culture “by obtaining artifacts, evidence, and knowledge about their rituals, traditions and behaviors” (3). Thus, by observing and being an active participant of AMEXME, I met the people whom I interviewed in this paper. My participation also led me to advocate in Congress to pass any inclusion act that affected people with disabilities. By joining this new crowd, I have discovered “a culture’s way of being,

knowing, and understanding” how they view the disabled population. Some people delighted in my autistic employment center, while others knew that as soon as another law passed in my favor, they would need to restructure their human resources departments so as to give equal opportunity employment to the autistic for whom I was fighting.

Therefore, the more open I have become in using qualitative research, the more it has directed me in writing my business plan as a proposal to investors and politicians. Their support and willingness to strive for a better tomorrow helps close the unemployment gap, helps place people in formal jobs, and helps assist this vulnerable group who has previously had no support in obtaining employment skills.

### **What Is Autism?**

The International Journal of Disability, Development, and Education explains ASD, or autism spectrum disorder, as “a condition which ignores ethnicity, parental education level, socio-economic status of families, and economic status of countries (Cousins, 2014)” (Teo 623). ASD is “a developmental disorder appearing in early childhood characteristics by atypical affects in social, cognitive, and sometimes physical capabilities, to the point of significant adverse impact on an individual’s day-to-day activities” (Teo 624). Sociodemographic charts reflect that boys are more likely to be diagnosed autistic than girls by a ratio of “4:1” (Albores-Gallo 3). Studies also show that girls are either underdiagnosed or diagnosed at a later age; hence the ratio changes between males vs. females is “3:1” on the spectrum (Albores-Gallo 3). Also, under this category “almost 29% of the families were monoparental, [and] from these, 34.8% considered having a child with ASD was a major reason for separating” (Albores-Gallo 3). Of the autistic young adults with whom I have worked – Esteban, Timothy, Samantha, JJ, Hector, Fernando,

Teo, Micheal, and Mark – three of the nine have both parents. The other autistic adults had each seen their parents split when they were very young in elementary school.

Being diagnosed on the autism spectrum is not easy for the sufferer, much less for the parent(s). Research shows that “parents lose [an] average 6.3 days of work per month to attend for their children’s treatment appointments” (Albores-Gallo 1). Whether the child is young, a teen, or a young adult, each stage brings different needs and events for which the caregiver must provide some of their time each day. Student Perez Murcia says, “Satisfying the needs of a person with autism can cause high levels of stress for the family, emotionally as well as economically, and occasionally physically, too” (15).

### *Characteristics of Autism*

Being autistic has several characteristics, some of which are reasons why a parent seeks help in the first place. Often their child has “language delay or regression, [true] in 60% of the children” (Albores-Gallo 1). Perez Murcia’s paper from the University of La Laguna in Spain, *Trabajo Social Con Personas Con Trastorno Del Espectro Autista (Social Work with People On The Autism Spectrum)* explains that people on the spectrum “have difficulty in the area of communication, socializing, and in their behavior” (Student Perez Murcia 4). They tend to have very specific likings, and some of their conduct may be repetitive. For example, my autistic friend Hector, 18, eats only tacos asada and drinks horchata, a rice Mexican drink, for all three meals of the day. He loves to mention your name until you react, and that is because he wants to get your attention. He also carries a camera everywhere he goes and becomes infatuated with a certain thing when he likes it. But JJ, my son, an autistic, 19-year-old adult, “gets over stimulated” now when he is in a loud room. He gets a sensory overload, so he either walks out or snaps and acts in a negative way. When he was younger, he became very aggressive towards his

caregivers out of frustration because they did not understand him. When he was between two and four years old, he would hit his chest as in King Kong, the movie, to express his needs in the kitchen. He could not speak and pointed to the cabinets to say he wanted certain food from there. Therefore, it can be generalized to say that people on the spectrum “process information differently in their brains than do the rest of the people” (Perez Murcia 10). Over time, some of the early characteristics may change. Some grow out of some behaviors, as did JJ when he quit hitting his chest, but others such as Hector still eat the same things they ate when a child. During their lifetime, some people may outgrow some therapies but may still need help in other fields such as Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Fine Motor Skills Therapy, or Adaptive P.E. They may need to see a psychologist or schedule a psychiatrist to obtain some medications.

### *Levels of ASD*

The autism spectrum disorder has three levels (ASD). To explain these levels, I will use an article from the Lane Regional Medical Center Blog in Louisiana: “The 3 Levels of Autism Explained.” Many assume “that all children on the spectrum participate in repetitive behaviors, do not make eye contact, and are largely non-verbal. While these signs can certainly be present, there are many children who fall within the spectrum whose symptoms are far milder and even those whose symptoms are more severe” (Lane Regional Medical Center).

- ASD Level 1 - Level 1 ASD is currently the lowest classification. Those on this level will require some support to help with issues like inhibited social interaction and lack of organization and planning skills.
- ASD Level 2 - In the mid-range of ASD is Level 2. In this level, individuals require substantial support and have problems that are more readily obvious to others. These



issues may be trouble with verbal communication, having very restricted interests, and exhibiting frequent, repetitive behaviors.

- ASD Level 3 - On the most severe end of the spectrum is Level 3 which requires very substantial support. Signs associated with both Level 1 and Level 2 are still present but are far more severe and accompanied by other complications as well. Individuals at this level will have limited ability to communicate and interact socially with others.

### *Characteristics of Future Center Students*

Regarding these three levels, Hay Esperanza (Appendix A) will focus on working with the Level 1 tier. Those in this tier have mild autism and are often high functioning. It will also work with those who have the Asperger Syndrome which “is a pervasive developmental disorder that is widely described as a mild form of autism. People with ASD tend to have many of the social and sensory issues of those with more severe forms of autistic disorder but have average to above average IQs and vocabularies” (W). As a third perspective, the nonprofit will work with those who have attention deficit disorder or ADD.

People with Aspergers behave in similar ways to those with autism, so I am comfortable working with these two populations. They often have “trouble picking up on subtle forms of communication like body language, humor, and sarcasm” (W). At times they lack eye contact or conduct themselves with awkward body postures. Their gestures can also seem unusual especially in the way they respond to a certain situation. Similar to the autistic, people with Aspergers tend to have long, seemingly one-sided conversations, and they keep talking even though the listener has stopped paying attention. Their own social cues and their inability to understand different forms of subtle communication leads others to think they are self-absorbed or not catching on.

Our center will also welcome adults who have attention deficit disorder, an impulsive behavior. Two friends of mine have this disorder, and they are perfectly able to maintain a career and a marriage. They have raised their own children and have adapted very well to their therapies so as to control their extra energy. At the same time, they resemble the other two groups in that they have difficulty staying focused so that they retain necessary content. They tend to cut off people in mid-speaking, but their own thought process cannot always finish the conversation or move to best actions in a situation. Communication is a problem.

Thus, Hay Esperanza will be equipped and trained to help people in these three groups. Hay Esperanza (Appendix A) will work towards helping the participants build confidence within themselves and help them work well when they are placed in a group. The center's psychologist will meet with them on a weekly basis, and the special ed teachers together with the assistants will also teach specific employment topics. Our team will understand why the participants have also been bullied, thus forcing them to be marginalized and create their own social isolation. In return, we will ask the students to fully commit to the program, so they are able to learn quickly and implement the new knowledge. In doing so, we hope to inspire their families and caregivers to support them on their new journey. To help distinguish between some of the intellectual disabilities of these participants, more information is listed in Appendix B, C and D.

### **Why the Support Employment Center is Needed**

#### *Parents' Response to Society and the Workforce*

As mentioned above, a parent or a caregiver is usually involved in the autistic person's life. They support in a variety of ways depending on the autistic level of their child, teen, or adult. Nonetheless, there comes a point in the lives of the functional autistic, level 1, or high functioning, that they want to enter the workforce, and the parents need help from society.

Student Perez Murcia cites that parents crave access to the “labor market for the ASD person” (15). Parents feel like they need outside help to bridge the gap between economic situations so that their autistic adults can become employed in ways that give them access to reach their potential. A parent of an autistic adult also worries about their children not getting a fair chance to enter the labor market even though their son or daughter may be highly educated. It is because they cannot always compete because of their unusual, lower social skills (15). Some make eye contact rarely or do not at all, and many employers conducting an interview look for active social cues that allow people to communicate verbally and effectively. Hence, families express the necessity for an employment center that is adaptable to autistic people and job openings where an expert can supervise them and give them needed support to join the labor force successfully (15). Regarding the support that individuals can receive from professionals, they fall under different categories: guidance, information, safety measures, planning (career mapping), job hunting skills, correct internet job research skills, time management skills, mediation, resume building, self-esteem growth classes, opportunities for social interaction with other people, basic money management skills, improvement in communication skills, reviewing basic job protocols like how to use a timecard, asking for time off, learning to manage emotions or triggers in a public setting, and more. In all, Hay Esperanza’s structured lesson plan classes will offer the above topics and more within their quarterly classes (Appendix A).

#### *Autistic Professional Response to Autism*

Lorena Yarith Ramirez is a graduate student with several degrees under her belt in Jalisco, Mexico. Her heart captivated my attention even before I had met her when I bumped into her mom, Lorena, at a women’s event. When she heard me give a speech about advocating for autistic adults, she told me her daughter, who shares the same name as her, worked with the

autistic population. Soon after, Lorena Yarith and I connected to do a formal interview for my thesis project.

In advance, I had prepared seven questions for her to answer. I immediately knew her experience of the field and her firsthand professional opinion would be invaluable. She could accurately assess Mexico's readiness to help raise an autistic person from childhood to successful adulthood. The interview followed a question-and-answer format that left her opportunity to expand on her answers if she wished. The questions were direct and pointed, and in this qualitative research method, I was looking for the raw truth without hesitation. (I presented the questions in Spanish but then translated them in English).

1. Question: As a professional, how do you see the future of the autistic person when they are growing into adulthood?

Answer: I believe that it is very important that this population gains the necessary tools so they can have a holistic development. Not only them but also their family and the people whom they are growing up with. I believe that with these tools, we can provide a favorable future for them and their families.

2. Question: What type of education do you believe the society needs so they can accept the autistic population?

Answer: The first thing needed is education on inclusion because you don't always see the differences directly affecting this population. Because autism does happen, it is believed that the autistic need to be in special specific sectors. And of course, there are specialized clinics, but we are still going to see the autistic population; clinics will not prevent that. The important thing is to ensure these teens and children start integrating with one another every day even more. Not just because they have to

integrate or be more considerate. It really just comes down to engagement and learning how to live with their autistic situation along with other situations.

3. Question: What are your degrees or your titles at the time of your graduation? What is the name of the university you attended, and how long have you worked with autistics?

Answer: First, I graduated as a Preculture Technician who focused on the Infant Development from zero to six years old. Then I studied Psychology in Enrique Diaz de Leon. Afterwards, I did a masters in Psychotherapy and Behaviors where I specialized in adolescents and adults even though my emphasis was on children. Because of my masters, I was able to work with this population, which I am doing now. Also, I was integrated with and certified by the JSPCC which is connected to the Institute of Psychology for the State of Jalisco.

4. Question: As a professional working with your colleagues, do you see interest in other people wanting to get the training you have received before working with people with an intellectual disability?

Answer: I believe that in my group of colleagues, there is interest, but not everyone is up for the challenge. And it is not because of disgust but because they might feel they don't have all of the elements needed to meet this challenge. However, I do know a sector that loves to work in these situations and problems.

5. Question: Why did you like to work with the autistics?

Answer: I liked it because I know there is a lot to be done. We need to reach new heights, especially when you walk with and guide teens in a correct format.

6. Question: How do you think we can support the parents when their children become adults?

Answer: I would suggest psychoeducation. Provide workshops where they can receive information and resolve any doubts. They can also have a space for dialog, a space for teamwork where they can be with other parents who are living in similar situations, and they can share amongst themselves what works. Also provide an agenda where the specialists are trustworthy, and they can share this information. Therefore, I believe we can support them and advocate for more spaces to be opened because there are too few such spaces now for these populations. I do find it important that school boards should also consider my suggestions to support the parents more under these situations.

7. Question: For how long did you work with the autistic?

Answer: Three and a half years.

Lorena Yarith's responses closely relate to facts in the book *Resisting Structural Evil*, by Cynthia D. Moe-Lobeda. Moe-Lobeda's work focuses on dismantling the truth or that which we call truth. Through Lorena's reactions to the questions, I could understand that her heart was speaking the real truth about accepting autism in society. She has noticed what the author points out in chapter four, "Unmasking Evil That Parades as Good," that many people pat themselves on their backs for the small things they call good. Moe-Lobeda adds that denial comes in many ways, and we often do not notice our own "othering" thoughts until someone points it out. In this case, the psychologist clearly sees the hidden segregation tradition operating in schools under the umbrella of providing education for all. When in reality, the regular students and the "others" are located in separated classrooms, often away from each other so that learning to socialize with

everyone does not really happen. It's impossible to learn to engage with and accept everyone for who they are when "denial then protects us from seeing injustice inherent in the reigning order of things and, thereby, seduces us into accepting it" (94). In other words, the psychologist sees it wrong to deny the children the right to engage with all "others." She sees it wrong to "exclude others and render them less than 'us.'" To the "normal" people, the "others" may be less important, less worthy, less real, or weaker," but in reality, both are losing out on opportunities to learn from and engage with one another (94). Then again, autistic people often live this same cycle of separation again and again as they grow up.

To resolve society's distrust and misinformation regarding this population, Hay Esperanza (Appendix A) will work to close the cycle of separation and bring inclusion into the workplace. Hay Esperanza is called to "sketch a shift to moral consciousness that" (1) perceives the world as inter-connected; (2) seeks persistently and humbly to perceive reality through the narratives and experiences of subjugated people and peoples; and (3) locates human life and morality within Earth's matrix of life, rather than outside of it" (Moe-Lobeda 118).

#### *Facebook Survey from Autistic Adults*

The world has received myths, misconceptions, and insensitive messages about being autistic. Consequently, many people are ignorant about it and do not realize they can make autistic people feel like a mistake, like an error for whom society needs to pour out public funds to support them. As a result, I conducted a focused qualitative structured online survey to a closed private Facebook group called, "Preguntale a los Adultos Autistas" (Ask the Autistic Adults) on January 24, 2023. Merriam and Tisdell, authors of *Qualitative Research*, approve of getting close to people by doing a research interview "[as] a conversation that has a structure and a purpose" (Merriam 107). This form of online interview/ survey was an "asynchronously

interview” (where there is a lag time) over email or an online discussion group” which “tend to be text-based or written interviews” (115). The method of collecting data by reaching out to a focused group of interested participants is called “purposeful sampling” because the people within the specific group who have firsthand knowledge about the topic will answer and even strangers’ answers will look surprisingly alike (114). To my surprise, when the group administrators accepted the four work-related questions located below (see table 1), the participants started to answer as they wished. Their answers were then placed in categories such as age range, country of development, time frame of longest time employed, gender, and the degree at graduation, if applicable.

Table 1

## Autistic Facebook Survey

Question:	Outcome:
1. Who currently works and who has worked in the past?	Everyone who answered the survey has had some sort of current work position or previous work experience.
2. How long have you been at your current job or for how long did you previously work?	Currently working or previously worked at their job for a long time: 6 years, 15 years, 6 years, 1 year, 9 years, 10 years, 4 years, 7 years, 8 years, 3 years, 9 years,
	Average length of time in a company: 7 years.
3. How old are you?	11 participants answered the question, 2 declined to say their age.



	Age range of participants: 21-43 years old
	Average age 33
4. What career did you pursue?	Participants identified a variety of careers:
	English Translator, Psychopedagogy, American Sign Language, Industrial Engineer, Child Psychologist, Audio Engineer, Communications, Graphic Design with a minor in Marketing, Pediatric Medical Surgeon, Medical Veterinary Zoologist, Professor, Family Business, Communications Sciences, Journalism, Marketing, Entrepreneur, Music
Miscellaneous information	
How many males answered the survey?	3 males
How many females answered the survey?	10 females
What nations are represented?	3 Mexico, 1 Argentina, 1 Chile, 1 Europe, 1 Peru, 6 declined to say

Source: 13 random autistic adults used their own Facebook profile name to answer the four questions being asked. The research took place from January 24, 2023 to January 28, 2023, on the Facebook platform called the private group “Preguntale a los Autistas Adultos.”

Based on the detailed responses of each adult, I could prove again in my research that some adults accept the way they were born and use their circumstances to move forward. It may

not be easy to suddenly be triggered by noise, light, a fast-paced environment, much less, rumors and disgusting looks from the people who pass by, but these autistic adults have demonstrated they are resilient people just like any other “normal” human being. The group of autistic adults who answered the four questions were all frank, and they grammatically wrote out their answers like the graduate professionals that they are today.

We need to help more and more autistic people to succeed in similar ways. To that end, my non-profit, Hay Esperanza (Appendix A), will bring awareness to the community by developing people’s skills and confidence and by placing one participant at a time in the Mexican workforce. I have read many other comments from other autistic Facebook groups where participants show frustration at being a high school graduate, a career certified person, or a university graduate, and still not being able to find a job because of how they come across. They are quickly judged here in Mexico. They face discrimination and exclusion. Hence, the non-profit needs everyone interested to get involved, get informed, and participate in lowering the unemployment number in Jalisco and in Mexico as a whole.

#### *Jalisco’s vulnerable definition, census, and growth opportunities*

The Governor and its officials are making a call to action on state level to elevate Jalisco’s disabled population. At the same time, by implementing and improving The General Law on Social Development and using government entities such as CONEVAL (Consejo Nacional de Evaluacion de la Politica de Desarrollo Social) (The National Council for the Evaluation of Social Development Policy), Jalisco works hard to bring up its most vulnerable populations by investigating poverty and its estimates from multiple levels. To provide a clearer definition, “Article 4 of the Social Assistance Law states that individuals and families who, due to their physical, mental, legal, or social conditions, require specialized services for their

protection and full integration into welfare, have the right to social assistance”

(Archivos.diputados.gob.mx). A more precise definition of a disabled person, according to the Federal and State General Law of Persons with Disabilities asserts, “Person with a disability: any person who presents a physical, mental or sensory impairment, whether of a permanent or temporary nature, which limits the ability to carry out one or more essential activities of daily living, which may be caused or aggravated by the environment economic and social”

(Archivos.diputados.gob.mx). The 2010 Mexican Census on Population and Housing estimated a total of 290,656 people with a disability which counts for 4% of the population in Jalisco (Ssas.jalisco.gob.mx. page 400 and 409). This census also noted that 17.8% of this population were born with their disability. However, the state reported that only 66.8% of disabled persons have access to health services (409).

The 2018 census reflected that the number of people with disabilities dropped 5.7 points between 2010 and 2018 (Consejo Nacional, 28). Additionally, compared with the 48.6% of the national poverty level for 2018, Jalisco ranked 11.3 points below the national average during the same year, respectfully 248,900 people (28). However, because the current President, Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, aka AMLO, has promised to “put the poor first” during his presidency (Linthicum), the overall future number of disabled people should be rising, not diminishing. AMLO’s presidency began December 1, 2018, at the end of the census year, and since then many exciting orders have been approved for the most vulnerable. One of his new executive orders announced the expansion of the nation’s welfare system, “giving cash transfers to 10 million older Mexicans along with millions of students, young workers and people with disabilities” (Linthicum). That bonus has led to an increase of long lines of people at EL DIF (Integral Family Development), for example, to get fully diagnosed, and medically certified so as

to apply for the national welfare system. But because the influx of people surpasses the personnel available to make such appointments and certificates, that system has a backlog of several months. Hence, with the creation and creativity of the nonprofit, Hay Esperanza (There is Hope), it is possible that the president's initiative will continue to allow more autistic people to obtain their diagnosis and come to our much-needed employment and training center for the functional autistic and similar diagnoses such as Aspergers and ADHD (attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder).

It is projected that Hay Esperanza in Jalisco, and many other states will need to work together to satisfactorily move the available, independent autistic population into the workforce. Such a move is necessary, as the 2010 census highlighted that only 28% of Jalisco's disabled population was employed (Ssas.jalisco.gob.mx. 410). Consequently, the state has understood that it is in debt to its disabled community and should help provide each a dignified job in which they can use their talents and skills (410). Toward that end, the Political Social Development Evaluation of 2018 created the following plan for inclusion of the disabled: "To count with educational facilities and workspaces that are accessible and are inclusive in their intake to facilitate the people with disabilities into society" (Consejo Nacional 29). Our center, Hay Esperanza, will help fulfill this plan; the government needs our help, and the people are ready to take advantage of the holistic employment center and its additional resources. Considering the increasing populations with autism and other disabilities, the state needs more than the six existing programs to join in this fight for aid (87). Jalisco's overall programs and actions plus Hay Esperanza (Appendix A) all fall under a multitude of positive categories such as education, workforce, lack of discrimination, and environmental safety, to name a few (86). Hence, Hay Esperanza should be allowed to gain protection under the General Law of Social Development as

a pivotal, original project ready to serve those disabled through autism in various areas that directly affect them.

### **Business Plan Outline**

#### *Hay Esperanza Business Plan (Appendix A)*

Autistic adults live in thirty-two Mexican states, and autism accounts for “one in every 115 people,” according to data from the UNAM (Gobierno de Zapopan). In another statistic the current Mayor of Zapopan which pertains to the largest municipality In Jalisco, testified last week that “in Mexico each year more than 6 thousand people are born with this disorder” (Gobierno de Zapopan). My project, the Hay Esperanza Business Plan, is a one-of-a-kind endeavor that will help diminish a national neglect based on biases against autistic adults: high unemployment rates, discrimination, and a lack of focus on autistic needs. To move forward for workable solutions, the Hay Esperanza Business Plan will create a place/center where autistic adults can engage with professionals and develop employment ideas and plans. At this center, parents can have peace of mind knowing that we are committed to further developing the functional autistic adult to join the workforce opportunities of life. Our goal will be to provide an unbiased center where judgement and criticism are not tolerated because we are all involved in improving one another for a better tomorrow. Our small student count established classrooms will let our instructors and aids get to know each individual’s “idiosyncrasies, habits, and triggers in order to optimize for behavioral learning, maintenance, and extinction, while working towards improving their own adaptability, creativity, confidence, communication skills, and conduct” (Teo 625). It will focus on teamwork for all.

Hay Esperanza, Centro de Talleres y Empleo (There is Hope Center for Workshops and Employment) is projected to be a fully functional Mild Autistic Adult Support Employment

Program backed by a Christian framework and two leadership approaches: a Collective Leadership focus and the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) idea. The strategy behind the ABCD concept is that the “assets that are already found in the community and mobilizes individuals, associations, and institutions to come together to build on their assets—not concentrated on their needs” (Collaborative for Neighborhood Transformation 2). Thus, the opportunity that the center will take on is to develop our students as assets within their community so the community later on can employ them in different locations. Adding that the more classes the students take at the center, we will be able to get to know them and their talents. To the student’s benefit “the identified assets from an individual are matched with people or groups who have an interest or need in that asset” and the employers are willing to work with them (2). It is a win-win situation.

The holistic center will provide participants with counseling, a year-long employment-focused curriculum, and a job coach to help them gain employment. Once available, transportation and a student donation closet full of clothes and accessories will help participants meet their unique needs. Employees and participants will engage and build meaningful relationships so that the center can better assist them and look for other essential resources. In addition, the staff will train the participants to improve their social and work-related knowledge to be successful employees. Community involvement employees will advocate for our ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder) clients; they will also find and place students in the workforce by training employers to accept autistic people as potential employees. Lastly, Hay Esperanza will raise community awareness and push for the autism inclusion acts to be fully implemented in Mexico as a society.

*What will the participants learn?*

The students of Hay Esperanza (Appendix A) will live out the nonprofit's values and purpose to lift their students, families, staff, firm, and society as a whole. Located in Appendix A, the Business plan of Hay Esperanza explains the five essential values that the students will learn: Appreciation, Collective Leadership, Talent, Advocation, and Purpose.



Appreciation We grow together and **appreciate** each other.



Collective Leadership In **collective leadership**, we all participate.



Talent We will discover, recognize, and enhance each other's **talent**.



Advocation Those who can **advocate**, advocate for others. Psalms 58:11



Purpose Our God has given us all a plan and a **purpose**. Jeremiah 29:11

Hay Esperanza has given each value represented above much thought because they also represent the nonprofit's pillars. Closely related is "The 5-D Cycle" as explained in the *Thin Book of Appreciative Inquiry*, by Sue Annis Hammond, where the cycle begins with Define, Discover, Dream, Design, and Deliver or Destiny (26). For each student, project, and event that takes place within the center or to promote and advocate, we will reprocess the frame of the 5-D Cycle and learn to put our values to practice seeing the beauty and positiveness in everything. As Hammond believed and lived through her successful entrepreneurial experience, "This cycle of

learning will not only keep the focus on successes but will keep reviewing the ‘frame’ they operate in, thus avoiding the danger of missing data that may no longer fits the frame” (26).

Hence, if a student or the students are not growing and do not feel appreciated, we will access the 5-D Cycle wheel and define/ discover where we are lacking. If the students have not discovered their talent, then based on the wheel, we may have to create lesson plans where we provoke them to dream; in return, they go onto the next stage to design a resume to apply for their dream job.

The plan is to keep moving forward and look for the positives.

## **Human Rights**

### *Who is the CEDHJ?*

The CEDHJ is the Human Rights Commission for the State of Jalisco. They are an autonomous Constitutional Organization in charge of the defense and promotion of the overall human rights of people living within the state. They have different state departments in which everyone leading a position is an attorney. The CEDHJ offers free, monthly classes to educate the population on many topics, and it would be a great idea to use one or more of these classes as a teachable lesson for Hay Esperanza. This organization is important to our participants at the NGO, and we need to show our appreciation for it, especially when the need is so great. It seems that everyone in the state is in a transition period where both citizens and employers are learning how to integrate autistic people into society. Differing opinions are bound to happen as everyone comes to understand that Mexico must enforce the autistic’s right to a non-discriminatory hiring process into the workforce. Such an entity as the CEDHJ is set to defend our “people against administrative acts or omissions by the authorities that do not respect the basic dignity of all women and men living in Jalisco” (CEDHJ.org.mx). They are also easily accessible to any citizen who needs a mediator because they are attorneys who deal with work-related issues.



Currently, our state human rights public representative for disabilities is Commissioner Claudia Chavez whom I interviewed in February 2023. I used her interview as part of my research methodology.

### *Autistic Diagnostic Centers for Adults*

The wave of the Inclusion era in Mexico is here to stay. People with different disabilities, in this case autism, are being supported across Mexico and in many states. A critical point and human right of any person is to access affordable healthcare. Thus, with the awakening of the inclusion movement, many states and federal healthcare agencies have found a way to provide a diagnosis for people who present with autistic symptoms. More specifically, our targeted audience of adults can go to any public institution or private venue to be tested. According to Claudia Chavez, some of the public federal entities available to provide a diagnosis are the following: DIF National System, IMSS (Instituto Mexicano del Seguro Social) The Mexican Institute of Social Security, ISSSTE (Instituto de Seguridad y Servicios Sociales de los Trabajadores del Estado) (Institute for Social Security and Services for State Workers), and CISAME Centro Integral de Salud Mental (Comprehensive Mental Health Center), located in Mexico City (Chavez).

On a state level, Jalisco's infrastructure has been revamped because of its covid healthcare collapse. According to many sources, today, Governor Alfaro has opened new hospitals and recently remodeled many clinics across the state. Claudia Chavez, as mentioned above, represents people with disabilities and listens to their concerns on the state level, and she provides the names of unique facilities that help people with autism. The healthcare facilities are called Sistema para el Desarrollo Integral de la Familia DIF Jalisco (System for the Comprehensive Development of the Family of the State of Jalisco aka DIF Jalisco), and they are

located in the biggest municipality of Jalisco, and the capital of the state offers public access to their exclusive autism center (Chavez).

Once the autistics are diagnosed by the DIF National System and receive their national credentials, disabled people can enjoy many benefits, and our students can take advantage of these as well. Their benefits include discounts for public transportation, paying property taxes, paying their water bill, obtaining a passport, and visiting public spaces such as the Guadalajara Metropolitan Zoo (Gob.mx. Gobierno de Mexico DIF National System). Also, by receiving their diagnosis, many can apply for federal aid which can provide them with some extra money.

It all takes time. However, on a global scale, of which Hay Esperanza (There is Hope) will be a significant part, the societal change for the autistic is monumental. The hidden population that has waited in the dark for services and mentoring can finally come out of their homes. The families, teachers, counselors, and psychologists will have an ally on their side. Hay Esperanza knows how difficult it has been to get any governmental support even though it is supposedly available. By creating Hay Esperanza (Appendix A), we will be able to encourage people across many sectors to get help for the autistic. It will be meaningful to see that many more people do get their diagnosis and consequently ask for their government IDs that state their disability. The labor laws are becoming easier to implement on their behalf through governmental agencies, and our organization can refer them, too. Such help can come by opening cases in federal or state courts, fighting against discrimination, and coming to monetary agreements in employment cases when the autistic are fired unjustly or injured on the job.

## **Federal and Legal Cultural Context**

### *Mexico as an Emerging Country for the Autistic Adult*

To understand how our Mexican autistic adults are currently living, we must consider the past economic and educational conditions of the autistic and their families. Research indicates that “in Mexico, the prevalence of autism has been poorly studied... [which has caused] the detection of Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) in Mexico” to be a challenge (Albores-Gallo 1). The people involved in the autistic child’s life often get stressed out and discouraged because when they do find someone who can help assess their child, they find the disease to be too complex and difficult. Parents want answers, but pediatricians and health centers are ill informed of the early symptoms of autism. To add to their frustration, “In Mexico and Latin America, very few diagnostic and screening instruments for autism have been formally validated” so that “most centers use non-validated Spanish versions of these tools which were designed in Anglo-Saxon countries...” (Albores-Gallo 1).

What continues to make Mexico decades behind understanding ASD and its different levels stems from the culture’s mental setback about it. When researching Hofstede’s insights and his conclusion about Mexico’s culture analysis, I learned that Mexicans score an 82% on the Uncertainty Avoidance category. Apparently, Mexicans “feel threatened by ambiguous or unknown situations and have created beliefs and institutions that try to avoid these” (Hofstede Insights). Mexican culture has rigid codes of beliefs and behavior, they do not easily tolerate unconventional behavior and ideas, and being disabled equals unconventional behavior. To prove Hofstede’s conclusion, the Global Journal of Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities describes a similar offensive view of how Mexican citizens view an autistic diagnostic. Their “stigma around mental health disorders” reflects that they want a perfect society where

everything runs in similar, acceptable ways. (Albores-Gallo 4). The culture gets disoriented when an autistic child is born and has such abnormal symptoms, sometimes ones with endless problems that no one seems able to trace. Additionally, the “educational and medical sector[s]” try to avoid autism, too, and may withhold the diagnosis of autism from the patient and the parents, which also adds to their denying of their child’s condition (Albores-Gallo 4).

“Uncertainty Avoidance” then has led to parents’ and patients’ lack of knowledge about autism, which makes matters worse because in many situations, they simply do not know how to respond.

#### *Labor Equality and Nondiscrimination Law*

In Mexico, it’s possible to update a set of national standards and law within a topic. The process, the Norma Oficial Mexicana, abbreviated as NOM, stands for a series of official standards and regulations that are nationally passed and that all citizens must adhere to. In the case of the Autistic disabled, the Labor Equality and Non-Discrimination law NMX-R-025-SCFI-2015 is not mandatory. As a result, this law needs to be changed from NMX to NOM so that our law of inclusion regarding employment with people of different disability capacities is mandatory and fully implemented everywhere.

The Norma Mexicana NMX-R-025-SCFI-2015 initiative strictly focuses on the Labor Equality and Non-Discrimination in the workplace (Chavez). It was nationally proposed and first approved in 2009, amended in 2012, only to be updated again in 2015. It was in 2009 that Mexico began focusing on bridging the gap between male and female work opportunities. The law first adopted a voluntary process where companies could become certified if they offered equal opportunities to male and female employees. This equality effort also expanded to include equal pay for males and females in public and private companies of any size or activity. Also, if

companies sought to become certified as equal opportunity employers, they had to use a third-party audit to authenticate their fair practices and procedures, meeting the standard of nondiscrimination and equality in the workplace (Chavez & Gob.mx. National Institute for Women).

As Hay Esperanza's future President, I foresee myself continuing to advocate for public policies at the state Congress level and attending federal Senate hearings on this initiative and any other laws that work in our favor. Author Bryant L. Myers of *Walking with The Poor, Principles and Practices of Transformational Development*, asserts that to make an effective systematic change and see positive results in our developmental program, it "usually requires effective policy and advocacy work" (271). I am prepared to advocate so that Hay Esperanza (Appendix A) remains sustainable. It is also extremely important to follow the strong wave of inclusion that is happening right now and take advantage of this hot topic. If Hay Esperanza doesn't pursue equality for all, our center will face many closed doors with employers, and the need for disabled employment within our community will build into a backlog. Of course, Hay Esperanza wants to train a lot of adults so that they have sustainable employment, and we will pursue that goal. As Hay Esperanza stands in the gap for autistic adults in government matters, we will become a vehicle to move all governmental, pertinent information and vital education opportunities to our families and students.

This initiative has already led some companies to become more ethically correct in respecting the autistic's human rights to earn a fair decent living, and that means obtaining a job. During my research process, I attended a work hub center for entrepreneurs where I came across Paulina the President of BEFAM and talked with her about Hay Esperanza. She then took me into a conference room to explain that three human resources recruiters from top companies of

the state had approached her that morning to ask how to hire people with disabilities so that their businesses could become equal opportunity employers. Paulina further intensified the need for a center like mine to develop and train disabled people so that they had the real and social skills to seek employment. When I explained that Hay Esperanza will train autistic functional adults in the hiring process of interviews and paperwork, she was really excited. Jalisco needs a center like Hay Esperanza (Appendix A) that will equip its vulnerable population and network with companies on their behalf to fill the gap between potential employee and employer.

#### *Ministry of Labor and Employment Promotion*

As an added national boost in equality and to ensure that the Norma Mexicana NMX-R-025-SCFI-2015 law is being promoted, Article 41 describes the position of The Ministry of Labor and Employment Promotion, (La Secretaria del Trabajo y Prevencion Social [STPS]) and their intended involvement. The Labor and Employment Ministry agency intervenes to protect and defend the labor human rights of employees. Their job also consists of overseeing companies to assure that employees are provided with a decent work environment as well as protection and security to prevent workplace violence (Gob.mx National Institute for Women). Such phrases as “Institution Committed to Inclusion” will reinforce that no discrimination of any kind will be tolerated or carried out (Gob.mx National Institute for Women).

#### *CONAPRED*

CONAPRED, known by its acronym, is the National Council to Prevent Discrimination in Mexico, created in 2003. This federal entity is similar to the Ministry of Labor except that they focus on cultural and social Mexican development that contributes to the progress of social inclusion and guarantees the right to equality while it eliminates discrimination. In August 2014, CONAPRED agreed with both the Ministry of Labor and Employment Promotion and Inmujeres

to sign a collaboration agreement to ensure actions “aimed at promoting, disseminating and encouraging labor equality and non-discrimination in the workplaces of the public, private and social sectors” (Gob.mx National Institute for Women). It works toward a good cause for all.

Included in their ICI (Institution Committed to Inclusion) Guide Handbook, CONAPRED uses the following methodology, all of which favor Hay Esperanza in our growth opportunities to place autistic adults into the workforce:

CONAPRED has established five categories of institutional environment: Contracting, Conditions of work, Professional development, Work environment and Attention to beneficiaries or customers. With the aim that the institution or company identify, from different indicators, the degree of progress in incorporating the conditions that favor non-discrimination: Equality, Inclusion, Accessibility and Diversity. (Conapred.org.mx)

This commitment to equality, inclusion, and more, further ensures the protected rights of the autistic to a fair chance at obtaining a workable job situation.

Of all the governmental entities that exist for this protection, CONAPRED will be a close ally for our organization. Their guided handbook and its five categories that support our class content are essential for both the growth of the students and our organization. As part of our ABCD methodology to incorporate the community to help develop and give opportunities to our students, CONAPRED will offer excellent training for our staff on a regular basis.

### **Hay Esperanza Collaboration Efforts**

Hay Esperanza will work intelligently with different government entities as mentioned above and with Congress to ensure that NMX-R-025-SCFI-2015 becomes a NOM instead of an NMX, which means that the regulations and standards of this law are voluntary not required for companies to follow. Because Hay Esperanza will strongly focus on its autistic participants, it

will encourage companies to consider that it's in their best interest to hire the autistic population whose turnover rate is low. Their absenteeism is also low, and they are a dedicated population who seek the opportunity to shine and to keep their employers happy. Hay Esperanza will know this NOM law well so we can go into various human resources departments and promote our people. By both knowing the law and also advising companies to hire from the employment training center, we will be able to invite HR Directors onsite to teach them different hiring techniques regarding the autistic. Once it is time to advocate for the law to be formalized, our pursuit of employment equality will resonate with the organizational employers. Instead of thinking we want to impose changes in their companies, employers will see their image in society improve and they can engage more positively with other organizations. Their newly implemented equality policies will reflect a diverse population that sustains the company's growth, and the autistic will find their voice and be heard.

#### *Federal and State Job Boards*

Online job boards and social media have taken over the world of recruitment. Job seekers can often control how and where they would like to apply and compete for the desired position. Employers on the other hand, can have potential candidate resumes at their fingertips by looking up profiles that fit their needed job description. The state website of Jalisco**trabaja.com.mx** is one example of an employment website, and the current elected Governor Enrique Alfaro has put this project into place. This new job website is similar to other websites where a job seeker needs to create a profile, yet its focus is on creating and offering "formal jobs" (<https://movimientocudadano.mx/jalisco/noticias/conoce-el-programa-jalisco-trabaja>). The government also plans to take specialized vans to the 125 municipalities across the state so that prospective job seekers can connect with "trained personnel" to provide a chance for questions



and answers and to build relationships (<https://movimientocudadano.mx/jalisco/noticias/conoce-el-programa-jalisco-trabaja>).

However, websites can be difficult to use. For example, another Jalisco digital job search platform is the state's original Employment Portal found at [Jalisco.gob.mx](http://Jalisco.gob.mx). It doesn't seem user friendly because while it lists many benefits, it doesn't provide a place to job search or create an account. Inspecting it again, I found I had missed a hidden link that took me to <https://www.empleo.gob.mx/PortalDigital>, but this link leads to a national job search, not a local one. I tried to 'job hunt' by inputting autism or government administration as key words in the search bar under the state of Jalisco, but I had no luck.

It was a confusing trial and error online job hunt, and I know how to use a computer. Many uneducated or low skilled autistic adults do not know how to navigate even a simple job search engine. We need to question the effectiveness of any resources the disabled might use in job searches. For example, the Jalisco Trabaja employment vans may go out into the neighborhoods, but will those involved actually knock on doors and ask a disabled person to apply for a job? The odds of that happening are slim to none not only because of the discomfort at being around the disabled but because the vans do not go out often. As a citizen in the metropolitan area who drives everywhere, I have never heard of nor seen the orange vans, much less the name. However, a holistic support employment center like Hay Esperanza will specifically help with job coaching its participants and by offering one-on-one counseling. Staff at the center will be better prepared and educated to work with a population that may have never been asked to work or may never have thought that they could be hired.

They may have never thought about it at all. In reading an autistic investigation on understanding career goals in autistic youth, I have found "self-determination" is a personal

characteristic that needs to be taught or reinforced in this population (Dean 2). When the young autistic adult already has a higher degree of self-determination, their employment rate goes up, they can find better opportunities, their quality of life rises, and the possibility to live independently increases (2). More so, they tend to have more community access, problem-solving skills, and higher thought processes. Still, there's no promise of success because even though they might be willing to succeed in life, statistics continuously show "low rates of competitive and integrated employment" (2). Therefore, depending on the individual need of each autistic participant, Hay Esperanza's staff will also need to work on transition planning and goal setting to help our participants grow.

Included in that transitioning growth is helping with job searches. People say it's a 24/7 job to actually look for a job, and for autistic applicants, many details need to be aligned. Hay Esperanza will teach the students how to use the correct key words for their job hunt so that they do not run into a dead end and get discouraged. We will teach them how to read a job description, observe deadlines, write a resume, upload documents, and write a cover letter. In addition, many people, especially those who possibly have never had a formal job, might not have an active email account. In worst case scenarios, many vulnerable individuals do not even own a personal cell phone to keep up with emails and recruiters. Thus, our organization is a much-needed resource for the community and for the state.

### *Formal and Informal Jobs*

In Mexico, two types of employments – formal and informal – affect the SAT (Servicio de Administracion Tributaria) (Tax Administration Service) which could be compared to the IRS of the United States. In the employment world of trying to lessen the unemployment rate among autistic adults and those with similar intellectual disabilities, it is important to receive health

benefits, perhaps housing, food vouchers, and most important, to be backed by the law in case there is any discrimination. The problem with informal employment is that both new employees and employers do not pay taxes on both ends. Therefore, they are not registered under government entities that provide support to the employee because they are not enrolled in payroll. It is also easier to get hired for informal employment without showing proper government identification such as an RFC (Registro Federal de Contribuyentes) (Federal Taxpayer Registry Code), the Mexican social security number people need to be employed.

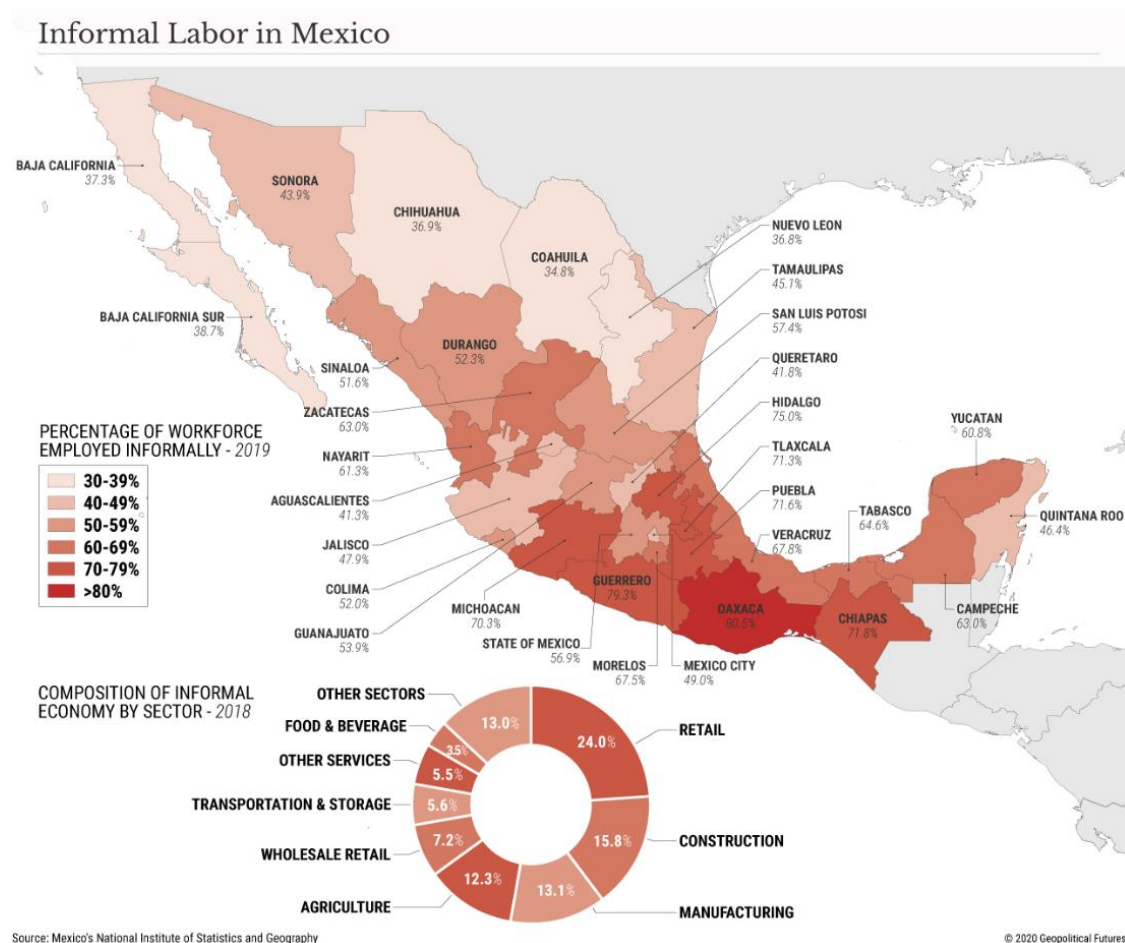
To get the RFC, people need to show several pieces of personal documentation in person. They must make an appointment with the agency, too, which presents a challenge for a person who most likely does not often get out into society. Many autistic people may find it more difficult to obtain their RFC because they suffer sensory triggers such as lights and/or noises. They may also need assistance to arrive at the location for their official appointment. Many disabled people do not have an RFC, because they need a companion, their parents, or caregivers to attend the meeting with them. On the other hand, because the system is slow and saturated, it may take months to get an appointment at the nearest location, and once there, the lines are long and tedious. To take this challenge a step farther, many autistic people deal with anxiety on a daily basis because they always need to follow a set schedule. The thought of waiting outside or being sent home or arriving late because they have gotten upset and thrown a tantrum can cause the whole day to go sour.

Regarding Mexican formal and informal employment, the map below (figure 1) shows individual states with each workforce that is statistically informally employed. Jalisco ranks with 47.9% of its population in informal jobs, so these people are not registered with the government. In depth, this chart also shows the numbers of people who are not working towards a retirement

plan or a pension plan for their future, which in many cases means they may live in poverty after they retire or quit working. Additionally, informal workers may not receive any new hikes in minimum wages, the most recent beginning in January 2023. Their employers are not required to give them a raise.

Figure 1

Informal Labor in Mexico



Source: Mexico’s National Institute of Statistics and Geography

Consequently, Hay Esperanza will educate the families by doing a good job with our participants. They will learn the beneficial differences between informal and formal employment, and they will learn that they, too, can contribute to the household and its economy.

This learning helps end different types of poverty in which they may live. It would be wonderful for one of our students – empowered through our program – to be the main contributor for their caregivers once the caregivers are older or ill. Our participants will learn to find employment that enables them to “manifest reciprocity” to their family and community that have helped them grow for many years (Myers 111). As for the employers who hire the autistic or disabled, many will realize that “in a world filled with so much creative potential, it is dangerous to assume that all the good ideas are found at the top” (Kelley 207). They learn to recognize the top potential in their autistic employees.

*Federal Senator Miguel Angel Osorio Chong Promise*

The concern of society’s supporting the ASD population’s access to their human rights starts from the very top of the Mexican government. I was privileged to be invited to a meet and greet with Mexican Federal Senator Miguel Angel Osorio Chong on January 26, 2023, at the Guadalajara, Jalisco Chamber of Commerce private event. His chief conversation topic was geared to all the attending mega businessmen and businesswoman of the Group Suma, plus the state enterprises of Jalisco. He implied that he wanted the people in the room to start a conversation about what it is that they do not like about Mexico and its current condition. He reminded everyone of the power of social media which can cause waves and start a movement when you want to get people involved on a subject. He emphasized the importance of demanding any Mexican leader in power nationwide, statewide, and in the municipalities or towns that they keep their promises stated when they ran for office.

After his speech when he was answering the public’s questions, I decided to use my Mexican mother voice, as an autistic advocate to represent the minority. I briefly gave my background and asked two questions:

1. “In the master’s program in which I am currently enrolled, I just turned in a final in December about voting rights for the disabled. As politicians, how do you believe that the disabled voice can be raised so that they can/will vote when the INE (Electoral National Institute) process doesn’t even use commercials or pamphlets to encourage the disabled to vote? Some can vote but don’t feel they are accepted.”
2. “How is it that we can raise and help the adults who have a disability, who can work, but who often still need help obtaining a job? I want to open my own nonprofit and go throughout Mexico to bring awareness and uplift the disabled, especially the autistic. Ironically, in the United States these people can make up to 100k a year if they are functional autistics, as is my son” (Juana questions recording 1:13).

Senator Osorio Chong answered both of my questions immediately in front of all the audience and reporters:

About the disabled, well on Monday I was at the INE (Electoral National Institute), and we were talking about this subject. How can we gather more people because there is a lot of potential when they can get involved in politics and collaborate. I do not know about the labor sector. But we have to start there in the election process where there can be more gatherings, processes to give out information about their participation and making laws. Which I publicly pledge myself to, because as a Senator, I have two fundamental themes: the topics of women, and I have declared myself a feminist not just in debates but throughout my life, and, of course, the support towards the disabled. I compromise myself to make more visible laws to correspond to people who have less of an opportunity than us. That is my personal promise. (Senator Osorio Chong response recording 1:03)

I appreciated his response and will hold him accountable for his promise.

In all, on the government floor of any cabinet, autism is a hot topic, and the rise of the disabled power will no longer be ignored. Mexico may be decades behind enhancing the lives of its citizens, but it is just the beginning. As more and more politicians are receiving a push from the human rights committees, the public and the United Nations, the autism theme keeps rising. It is for this reason that if Jalisco, where Hay Esperanza will first be founded, focuses on driving public funds to support us, then it is very possible that we may receive national attention and perhaps the world's attention by being the first Mexican adult autism support employment center.

### **State Legal Cultural Context**

*What does it mean to be Socially Responsible?*

The initials which indicate that a company is Socially Responsible are ESR which stands for “Empresa Socialmente Responsable.” Claudia Chavez shares that these companies generally follow a model that reflects active participation in caring for the environment when there are consequences from their company behavior that affects the society in any shape or form. Hence, firms must follow these board categories under one umbrella: “social impact, economic and environmental health” all of which “impulses their productivity with based standards of quality, ethics, and morals” (Chavez).

The importance of registering every company under this standard maximizes the positive environment for its workers and especially for autistic workers. Therefore, the exclusive badge should also provide the company with the flexibility to implement a continuous improvement model which enhances the growth of its employees. With that said, it is the intention of our

holistic support employment program that we find “ideal” employers whom we can train as they hire our participants as employees.

To enhance the prestige of the company, we build our trust with the employment center participants in striving to place them in good standing companies under the Socially Responsible certification. Cemefi, the Mexican Center for Philanthropy, shares that one of the biggest indicators of a company’s success is being able to “strengthen(s) human capital” especially when “more and more people are looking for companies that have a social purpose and that address issues such as labor inclusion or gender equity” (Cemefi). Therefore, as Hay Esperanza is in its initial stages of researching the Mexican labor market, it is a benefit to know about the ESR program which focuses on environmental and ethical principals in its operations.

### **Workforce Benefits**

#### *2023 New Federal Minimum Wage*

Raising the minimum wage for all Mexicans across the republic this year is a triumph because the need is there. People with disabilities are especially prone to higher living expenses because some have a special diet, their sensory senses are heightened by different textures, lights or sounds, and their different forms of therapies also have a cost. When President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador signed the increased of the minimum wage in December of 2022, many hard-working people were very happy. Below are facts from Banorte and a chart (figure 2), that explains the national Bank of the Mexican Republic on the effects of the rise in minimum wage:

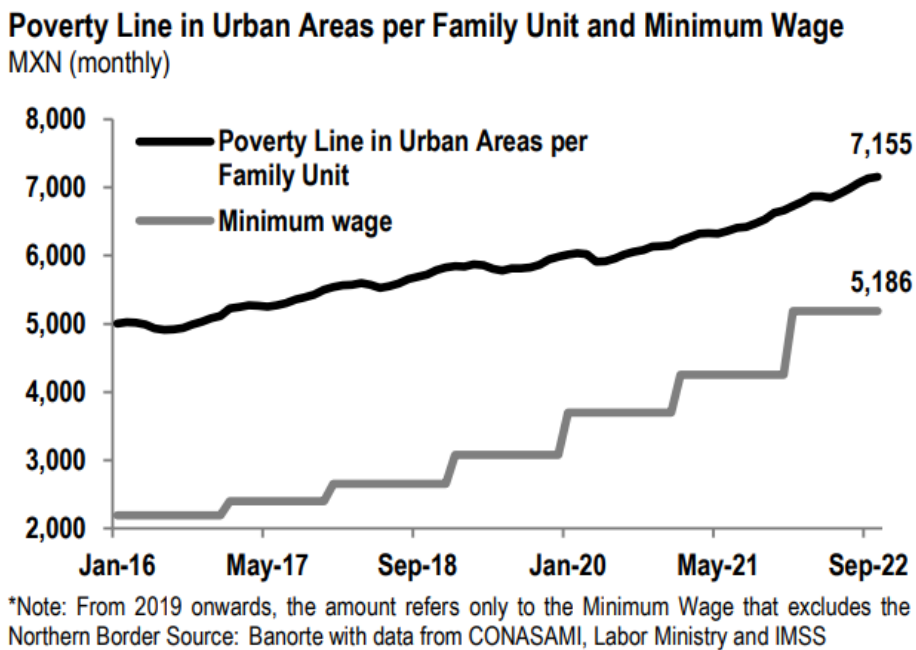
- “Minimum wage set to increase 20% in 2023. Today, the National Commission for Minimum Wages (CONASAMI, in Spanish) announced a 20% increase in the minimum wage (MW) starting on January 1st, 2023” (Banorte).



- “Minimum wage (MW) for 2023, [went] from \$172.87 to \$207.44 per day” (Banorte).
- “On the other hand, and similar to previous years, this hike would benefit a greater share of the population” (Banorte).
- “Around 6.4 million formal workers will be benefitted. Assuming all of them are workers affiliated to IMSS, this would correspond to close to 29.6% of total employees. In our view, this distinction is important as enforcement is likely to be much stronger in the formal than the informal sector.” (Banorte)

Figure 2

Poverty Line in Urban Areas per Family Unit and Minimum Wage



For Hay Esperanza as an organization that helps advocate for our vulnerable autistic group, this news complements our vision. We must all work towards a better future where people are not only hired, but they are also respected and paid accordingly. It is of great benefit for our

clients to know that legally, they cannot be paid lower than the national amount set by the Mexican President. This great news should also urge our population to strive to obtain a formal job instead of an informal one so they can reap the benefits of being paid more and more justly, according to the law.

### *Standard Benefits of a Job*

In Mexico qualifying for and receiving benefits through a formal job is called “Prestaciones De Ley.” The first thing people receive is Seguro Social which becomes the workers’ medical insurance. This insurance is obtained through their employment which pays for their employee’s medical benefits; an additional amount is deducted from the employee’s paycheck. Secondly, employees are qualified for IMSS, the right to access a government hospital and access to medications. A special housing benefit, Infonavit, is a worker’ right or a housing credit process in which an employee earns points as they work for a certain amount of time. These points add up as time progresses and build qualifying points that allow employees to borrow from the government to purchase a home on a 30-year plan.

Another benefit as an active employee on payroll, is the ability to receive, by federal law, an “Aguinaldo.” An Aguinaldo is an extra paycheck bonus given every December as a Christmas bonus to an employee. Also, many employees receive “Vales Para Comida” which works like a food voucher. Some employers such as AT&T and others, offer a monthly salary that includes food vouchers. In other cases, the food vouchers are in addition to their monthly salary. Similarly, restaurant vouchers allow the employees to go out to a selected groups of restaurants connected through the card. Aside from food, in some cases, the retirement plan benefit, or “Alfore,” is also added to an employee’s package. Normally, once an employee has been working for the company for a specific time determined by human resources, the company will

pay up to two to three thousand pesos per month toward an employee. “Plan de ahorro” is another benefit accumulated for a formal employee depending on where they work. It provides a way to save money in which the employer pays a certain percentage to double what the employee saves per check. Another possible benefit is a pension from the employer when the employee has worked for one business for a long time. This benefit is different from Alfore. In most cases the person receives the money until they retire, and it can be up to 10K a month or more. The right to vacation hours/ days was also modified and updated nationally on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023, adding more days for people to be with their families.

In all, the different potential employee packages for our clients are extraordinary, but the lack of employment benefits education often hinders their joining the workforce. Our nonprofit, Hay Esperanza (Appendix A), is a much-needed holistic support employment center to help the high functioning autistic adults become financially and personally successful in our ever-developing nation, Mexico.

#### *2023 New Vacation Law*

Formal jobs also reward their employee’s hard work and dedication by giving them vacation privileges. A decree to amend articles 76 and 78 were presented to the President by the Honorable Congress of the Union a few days before the end of the year 2022. The President, Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, signed in favor of the decree allowing employee’s vacation rights across the nation to be incremented, and the decree enacted on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023. The amended articles, 76 and 78, are a part of The Federal Labor Act on Holidays (Dof.gob.mx.).

Articles 76 and 78 read as follows:

- Article 76.- Workers who have more than one year of service shall enjoy an annual period of paid vacation, which in no case may be less than twelve working days, and

which shall increase by two working days, until reaching twenty, for each subsequent year of service. From the sixth year, the holiday period will increase by two days for every five of services.

- Article 78.- Of the total period that corresponds to him in accordance with the provisions of article 76 of this Law, the worker shall enjoy at least twelve days of continuous vacation. This period, at the discretion of the worker, may be distributed in the manner and time required.

It was the president's preference to help positively change the lives of poor Mexicans, and many businesses responded well to this good national deed. Opposition came when businesses sought loopholes to avoid providing such vacations in their company policies. Hence, in our stance as a non-profit, we will need to acclimate to national new decrees constantly and also find a way to educate and enhance our commitment to the employers with whom we work so that they remain in favor of the autistic and those with a similar diagnosis.

#### *The Positives to Hire and Keep*

It is my belief that the government and the people who make up society are in charge of eliminating discrimination on all levels. "Structural violence" and "culture violence" has to end in each individual who finishes our program so they can move on successfully with knowledge and power (Moe-Lobeda 74). In other words, "Resistance to structural violence calls for change not only in individuals' lives but also in the structures of society-public policy, corporate rights, and institutions" (74). With that said, as an educator, I believe people are born with different talents and ways of communication, and everything we need we can cultivate. The Government of Mexico also agrees with the concept of educating everyone about what is "Labor Inclusion" and how it applies to the labor sector (Gob.mx. Government of Mexico: National Council). They

are in favor of equal opportunities for a disabled person to work and for companies to reap the benefits of opening their hiring processes. Intrinsically, without education for the highest and lowest population levels, Mexico would miss what other countries have found to be so beneficial to strengthen their workforce and economy. Hence, the National Council for the Development and Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities have written an article defining labor inclusion, saying it “is to actively provide work to people with disabilities, on equal terms, leaving behind discrimination” (Gob.mx. Government of Mexico: National Council). Below is (table 2) designed to reflect the benefits that a person with a disability would receive from a job and the benefits that an employer would reap to hire a person with a disability to work for them.

Table 2

## Implementing Inclusion Laws Benefits for Employee and Employer

<u>Benefits For the Person with Disabilities</u>	<u>Productive Benefits for the Company</u>
Feel useful, productive and satisfaction in their work situation	Tax benefits for the employer
Opportunity to improve their quality of life	Improves work environment and increases diversity when inclusion is reinforced
Obtain more autonomy and independence	Others learn from person with the disability
Incorporated into society	Increase in overall productivity
Create new interpersonal relationships	Motivated to work
Less of an economic burden and now become a contributor to the household income	Statistics reflect low turnover rates, absenteeism, accidents, loyalty, and stable

	workers among hired people with disabilities
--	--

Source: Government of Mexico: National Council

Helping an autistic person to grow and be employed at a company brings joy to the giver and the receiver. The new employee is glad to attend to their duties, and employers are relieved to find good positions for the disabled/autistic in their companies. As Kelley and Kelley described in *Creative Confidence*, the employers in these new scenarios are “gaining empathy in learning to work with a person who can actually do the job for which they were hired... [and] there is nothing like observing the person you’re creating something for to spark new insights” (85). Toward that universal goal, Hay Esperanza will train participants in ways they can advocate for themselves in the workplace. The participants will be hand selected by their job coach and teacher to apply for jobs which will reflect their strengths and capabilities, thus avoiding danger and job loss. Then to close the gap and make employers feel confident in their selection of our participants, Hay Esperanza will facilitate an interview onsite and provide HR training to help smoothen the hiring process. Such advances make Hay Esperanza (There is Hope) (Appendix A), a one-of-a-kind support employment center for both the future employer and employee.

### **Conclusion**

The high functioning autistic population has great potential. Hay Esperanza is a nonprofit devoted to helping equip and train autistic participants to seek jobs and live a full life, so it is time to add its support to the state budget of Jalisco. Myers, an expert working with the poor, explains, “The development process belongs to the people; relationships are the critical factor for change; we need to keep the end of transformation in mind; we promote truth-telling, righteousness, and justice” (202). Myers adds that “only changed people can change history. If

people do not change, little else changes in the long term (218). Thus, it is with great knowledge and conviction, I argue that Mexico needs to own that “change.” It must be realized it already has the basis to support many people with autism, Aspergers, and ADHD as they seek employment. However, the Mexican government still needs to shift “from a model of running programs and purchasing services from low-cost providers to a model of investing in and providing different forms of assistance to high-performing institutions led by entrepreneurs” (Bornstein 95-96). Hay Esperanza (Appendix A) whose business plan details the many resources that the center will need to promote and advance the students’ skills in a tight quarterly system for a full year. Whatever the participant’s initial “readiness”, Hay Esperanza’s employment preparation classes will specifically empathize their skills and talents. Career testing, self-esteem elevating, appearance and social skills learning via our classes, personal therapies, and Friday fieldtrips will help our vulnerable disabled population escape the poverty trap of their lives. Laws in their favor are in place, and we will educate their families as well. It will help provide a “win win” for both the participants and their families as participants reap benefits of a formal job and contribute to their households. Through Hay Esperanza, we can show that advocacy works for all – the employers, the employees, families, and society. It will be an honor and a joy to help our participants unveil their hidden strengths and talents. There is Hope.

**Appendix A: Hay Esperanza A.C. Investors Proposal Business Plan**

Hay Esperanza A.C.

Centro de Talleres y Empleo

(There is Hope: Center for Workshops and Employment)

Investors Proposal

Autistic Adult Support Employment Center

A Holistic Nonprofit Business Plan for Jalisco, Mexico

Juana Frias

December 20, 2021



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## **Executive Summary**

Hay Esperanza, Centro de Talleres y Empleo (There is Hope Center for Workshops and Employment) is projected to be a fully functional Mild Autistic Adult Support Employment Program. It's backed by a Christian framework and two leadership approaches – a Collective Leadership focus and the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) concept. The holistic center will offer the participants counseling, a year-long employment-focused curriculum, and a job coach to help them gain employment. Once it is available, transportation and a student donation closet full of clothes and accessories will be available to meet their unique needs. Employees and the participants will engage and build meaningful relationships so that the center can better assist them and look for other essential resources. In addition, the staff will train the pupils to improve their social and work-related knowledge to be successful employees. Community involvement employees will advocate for our ASD clients, and they will find and place students into the workforce by training employers to accept autistic people as potential employees. Hay Esperanza will also raise community awareness and push for the inclusion acts to be fully implemented into Mexican society.

As a female entrepreneur going into the nonprofit world and trained in an American educational background, I am excited to demonstrate in detail the support employment center I intend to open within the following year in Jalisco, Mexico. My intent is that this comprehensive business plan will reach many compassionate investors who want to make a difference in Mexico's autistic adult population entering the workforce. This project is a one-of-a-kind endeavor that will fulfill a national necessity based on high unemployment rates and discrimination. Currently, it is greatly under researched. By reading my goals and strategies, I hope that you will picture yourself as part of the project one way or another, supporting our

initial start, and committing to partnering with us for the long run. For further inquiries, I can be reached at hayesperanzazapopan@gmail.com.

### *Background*

In 1993, the Mexican government revised their General Law of Education to integrate disabled student rights receive education in their national public school system. It was the first national victory for all disabled children to become educated, as every state in the nation now had to follow this federal law. Soon after, the government created two federal special education programs to diagnose and educate school-aged children until graduating middle school.

I worked on part of my research the summer of 2021 When I visited one of the special education government programs called CAM (Centro de Atencion Multiple), Center for Multiple Attentions. During my visit, I had the privilege to interview the principal and see the school facility. Concealing her identity, the principal explained that some autistic students do not graduate from middle school until they are 18 years old, and sadly, their education support ends there. At the same time, I received a phone referral from a desperate father looking for additional help to develop his 17-year-old son's further education as he had just graduated from the CAM center. This child's father and mother felt as if their lives were in limbo because they were now responsible for helping their son transition into adulthood without his having speaking or reading skills (Garza). It was difficult to comprehend that these parents and school administrators lived with scant resources to help support and guide their disabled loved ones and students.

Restless about this situation, I knew there must be laws that protect and guide the disabled autistic from living in deeper poverty within their communities. After much research, I concluded that since 2011, many updates had been made to the general laws that protect disabled people, and the protection for autistic people on the spectrum has also been updated since 2015,

when it was first passed on a federal level and in the state of Jalisco, too. Each bill has been previously signed by presidents and has specific articles that support the inclusion of disabled people in the workforce.

However, because Mexican government delayed approval of such laws, the unemployment rate of the disabled is large. More so because the government did not then conduct national surveys that included them as part of the population. In 2005, the United Nations made a worldwide report, more specifically the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, on a global scale and published the following:

In developing countries, 80% to 90% of persons with disabilities of working age are unemployed whereas in industrialized countries the figure is between 50% to 70% ('Disabled still face hurdles in job market', The Washington Times, 5 December 2005) ...[In] Mexico[,] the country reports that 14% of persons with disabilities who are working receive no pay, and another 22.6% receive less than the minimum wage. (International Disability Rights Monitor, 'Regional Report of the Americas', 2004) (United Nations)

It was a dire situation for the disabled Mexican population.

Hay Esperanza is therefore being positioned to fill the gap between governmental intent and social acceptance of disabled workers. We will specifically aid autistic adults and those with similar disabilities. Hay Esperanza will advocate for their rights and encourage others to do so as well. This advocacy is essential because of the current lack of trust, time, investment, and interest in training this vulnerable, isolated group to reach its full potential. According to Mexican Federal Senator, Nancy de la Sierra in her 2021 speech directed to all legislators, "One in every 115 Mexicans is born with this disorder and, although they can live independently, there

are acute cases that have a high level of family and social dependence, and that suffer frequent discrimination by society, mainly as a result of ignorance” (Senate of the Republic).

*Mission, Vision, and Values of Hay Esperanza (There Is Hope)*

- **Hay Esperanza’s mission** is to meet the employment needs of mild autistic adults and those with similar disabilities by providing community and state advocacy on their behalf so that their quality of life improves along with that of their community. They will accomplish this goal through a year-long support employment program center that provides one-on-one job coaching, small classroom size teams, and ties with a licensed psychologist to provide individual therapies and class sessions. Hay Esperanza is a holistic program that encourages the autistic adult to look towards the future, dare to dream, and accomplish independent personal goals. Hay Esperanza will recognize, value, and reward the efforts that each participant demonstrates to complete each quarter class. As a collective of individuals, Hay Esperanza will research job opportunities and train employers and society to accept their participant as people who can bring honor, loyalty, skill, and benefits to the workplace.
- **Hay Esperanza’s vision** includes goals for the participant and the organization.

Our vision is to raise the capacity of every individual by self-discovery through the training to meet the minimum qualifications of a job and be placed in an area where the participant can succeed.

Our vision is to see all autistic citizens free from employment discrimination and to be accepted in the workforce as bright individuals with unique gifts and talents.

In the long run, if Hay Esperanza is successful, we envision the four following changes: Hay Esperanza will revolutionize the inclusion concept that the Mexican

Republic has already ordained as a law by training employers to set up an employee-employer successful relationship program. Our direct community-building approach will create confidence within families to support their loved ones in the program and open opportunities to make poverty less of an impact in their lives. We will work hard to encourage and support a lower unemployment rate within the adult autistic community. We also hope to grow in multiple states.

- **Hay Esperanza’s values** will shape the autistic individual and transform higher practices and processes around the country by training and guiding new employers on serving and maintaining a relationship with their autistic employees. We will appreciate the talent and advocate for their needs by collectively working together.

Hay Esperanza’s five values are Appreciation, Collective Leadership, Talent, Advocation, and Purpose.



Appreciation We grow together and **appreciate** each other.



Collective Leadership In **collective leadership** we all participate.



Talent We will discover, recognize, and enhance each other’s **talent.**



Advocation Those who can **advocate**, advocate for others. Psalms



Purpose Our God has given us all a plan and a **purpose**. Jeremiah

29:11

## **Operations**

### *Employer Education*

Employer education regarding relationships with hired disabled workers will be fundamental to the success of students' obtaining a job. Those relationships will not flourish if we don't step in as a facility and help educate them about our population. As a training center, Hay Esperanza may face anxiety and hesitation from employers who want to steer away from implementing the federal and state inclusion laws because they may think it takes too much work to train an ASD person in the workplace. Some fears may include the hire's "potential resistance to change, social skills deficits, physical impairments and limitations, and difficulties performing the breadth of work tasks" (354). The author of *Vocational Support Approaches in Autism Spectrum Disorder: A Synthesis Review of the Literature*, David Nicholas, and his team also recognized in their investigations the hesitant fears that both new employers and experienced employers still have, such as safety risks, quality control risks, reduced productivity, and behavioral-related issues (Morgan & Alexander, 2005) (354).

Employers may also fear needing external support services and knowing where they can get that help. The employer may think the new ASD employee may need that help forever when it may only be required in the beginning when the adult is going through a transition phase. Hay Esperanza will hire job coaches to support the employer and employee probation period during this time. Once both parties are satisfied with our support, the new employee and the employer



“eventually transition to internal support once members of the employment team (including the employee) became familiar with one another” (Hagner & Cooney, 2005) (354).

Our goal as a center is to close the gap of misunderstandings and fear towards a talented group of capable citizens. Currently in Mexico, “It appears that inclusive employment requires greater community and employer awareness, and a range of strategies and actions that foster employment opportunity. There is limited research addressing employer experiences and perspectives relative to hiring, supporting and supervising persons with ASD” (353). There is definitely room for growth in this area.

People need to learn that there are advantages to hiring people with disabilities, and these include “regular attendance, long-term tenure, and meaningful co-worker relationships that in turn supported the employee with a disability” (Morgan & Alexander, 2005) (Nicholas 355). More important, research shows that after employers build a relationship with their new employees, their fear of hiring an autistic disabled person dwindle. Studies find that “employers who were themselves familiar with working with individuals with disabilities, revealed greater willingness to inclusively hire and, in turn, tended to promote flexibility and respectful communication in the workplace (Lindstrom, Hirano, McCarthy, & Alverson, 2014; Unger, 2002) (355). A better way to nurture a new relationship at work can work with the following:

The following accommodations are implemented by supervisors of employees with ASD: consistent scheduling and duties, manageable and predictable social demands, support with organization, and limiting unstructured time... Supervisors reportedly supported employees with ASD by ensuring direct and specific instruction, verifying that instructions were understood, providing assistance with transitions, supporting awareness

of social rules and cues, and engaging co-workers in supporting social interactions and work-related tasks (Hagner & Cooney 2005) (354).

These practices are practical and manageable.

### *Student Qualifications for the Program*

The admissions process will take place in three steps. First, the community liaison will meet and have a brief interview session with the prospective participant to get to know them and see if they meet the minimum qualifications to pass to the second phase of the admissions process.

Second, the community liaison speaks with the center receptionist to inform them of the candidate's visiting the facility to fill out the Official Screening Welcome Packet. Once the packet has been filled out, the receptionist will look over the pages and pass it along to the psychologist to complete their assessments as part of the Official Screening Welcome Packet. Some psychological testing will include questions about their observational skills, social interactions, communication skills, sensory skills, behavior, motor skills, personal interests, and some miscellaneous questions. Other subjects may include hobbies, educational background, family support, past work experience, and a mental health assessment. The student will then be sent home until they receive confirmation from the program director stating if they were admitted into the program.

The last phase of the Official Screening Process will take place internally. The program director will revise the notes from the initial community liaison interview and review the database with the information from the Screening Welcome Packet to include the documents provided. A meeting with the psychologist will see if the prospective participant is a good fit for the program and if they meet all the minimum requirements.

### *Student Program Requirements*

The minimum requirements start with being a functional autistic adult from 20-30 years old. In the future, the center will help older autistic adults who had missed Mexico's federal law that implemented special education classes in the public education system. It was not until "after, 1993 the government embraced a policy of inclusiveness and mainstreaming, to the maximum extent possible, for all children with disabilities" (Tuman 2). In 1996, another radical effort called for reports to be made after many parents answered a survey reporting their disabled minors, which was the first of its kind in the Mexican registry (3). The discrimination against the disabled has lasted a long time, and Hay Esperanza is willing to raise the age cap to 40 years if we find a significant demand from this group who want to attend our classes. If enough interest is shown and Hay Esperanza has been stable for at least three years, and if the Board of Directors is ready to take on another project, we will welcome new older students.

The second requirement will be to have a middle school graduate certificate or higher. Whether adolescents or adults received the certificate, it is essential to recognize their effort to accomplish such a task. Mexico's basic job requirements require the applicant to have a middle school certificate which informs the employer that the adult has basic writing skills, math skills, some teamwork experience, and can complete tasks with a positive mindset. Under the discretion of the program director and depending on extreme cases in which the future participant shows extraordinary skills, we will accept those without middle school certificates to learn if they can succeed in our program.

The third requirement is to have been diagnosed with mild autism or a similar disability such as ADHD or Aspergers. The student must need to move around independently and safely. They must be able to communicate their needs so that others may understand them enough to get

their point across and respond. In the workplace and at the center, they will need to use comprehensive skills to understand commands, answer, and ask questions. Once again, their reasoning and abilities will be classified when the center psychologist assesses and determines their eligibility.

The last requirement is that participants must be a Mexican citizen. The student will be required to show proof of address, an identification card, and a birth certificate. If the student is admitted into the program, these primary forms of ID will help the job coach put together their job application and ease their hiring process.

#### *Student Program Cost*

The cost of the program per week will be \$850.00 pesos, roughly \$41.00 US dollars. The program fee includes two courses for the quarter, Monday to Thursday. Friday will be community awareness day/ hands-on experience day. The \$850.00 pesos also covers seeing the psychologist during the week at the center. The weekly rate will be reduced to \$575.00 pesos for severely low-income families, roughly \$28.00 US dollars. The reduced rate in extreme cases will be monitored every quarter when the student re-registers for the next quarter. The reduced rate will offer the same program rights as the students who pay the regular rate. If the student is still struggling to pay the low-cost fee, they will be given the option to look for their own “Padrino,” a donor. The center will accept third-party payments on behalf of any student, making it feasible for them to start classes soon.

#### *Schedule for Student Classes and Operations*

The center will run from 9 am to 6 pm (table 1). One hour each day before classes start, the psychologist and teachers will have the opportunity to meet with their students and can do so several times a week if needed. Staff meetings and new student enrollments will occur on

Monday and Thursday mornings. We will offer two morning classes and one after the lunch break. The students can choose from three different time slots to build their schedules, providing them a consistent, structured class schedule for the whole quarter. Each time slot will provide two classes per week, and each is a two-hour class.

The two-hour classes have been planned to meet the needs of a variety of students. Some students who have a hard time waking up in the morning or have busy parents will attend a later morning class or in the afternoon. Other students who still live at home and are dependent on their families or caregivers will benefit from our multiple courses because they depend on someone to take them into the city. Each classroom will hold only 12 students so as to personalize the training. Two classes will run concurrently in each time slot, one in the regular classroom and the other in the computer lab, for a total of 24 students per time slot and 72 students trained per day, once we are 100% fully operating.

The classes will have tables and individual chairs, and students will learn from a special education teacher, an aid, and other support once we get volunteer interns from a local university. We have set a staff lunch break for 1.15 hours after the second class of the day, and the center will close during that time.

Table 1

Schedule for the Center and Student Classes

Schedule for the Center and Student Classes					
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9 am Center Opens	Staff Meetings New Inscriptions	Psychologist Appointments	Psychologist Appointments	Staff Meetings New Inscriptions	Free Friday Casual Dress
10 am- 12:00 pm  Group A	Social Skills Class Lesson	Interview Body Language Class	Social Skills Class Lesson	Interview Body Language Class	Fieldtrip/ Group Activity for Students
12:15 pm- 2:15 pm  Group B	Social Skills Class Lesson	Interview Body Language Class	Social Skills Class Lesson	Interview Body Language Class	Fieldtrip/ Group Activity for Students
2:15 pm- 3:30 pm	1.15 Hour for Staff Lunch and Teachers Prepare for Next Class The Center will be Closed for Lunch to the Public Psychologist will conduct student appointments				
3:30 pm- 5:30 pm  Group C	Social Skills Class Lesson	Interview Body Language Class	Social Skills Class Lesson	Interview Body Language Class	Fieldtrip/ Group Activity for Students
5:30 pm	Students Go Home or Attend Appointments with Staff Center Close by 6 pm				
5:45 pm 7:45 pm Group D	Social Skills Class Lesson	Interview Body Language Class	Social Skills Class Lesson	Interview Body Language Class	Fieldtrip/ Group Activity for Students
8 pm	Center closed in the future if group D is added.				

As a bonus, if we get enough demand for a night class from an older population, we will offer two additional courses in the evening from 5:45 pm to 7:45 pm, closing the center at 8 pm as table 1 shows.

### *Preview of Lesson Plans*

The center's one-year curriculum will be a unique set of courses that inspire, develop, and mature autistic adults so that they can pass their employment interview, get hired, and establish personal goals to improve their lives. Some classes will develop their social, emotional, self-care, and body language skills. At the same time, others will enhance independent life skills,

team building, job searching skills, resume building, interview practice, and work experience through a volunteer position or a job. Below are two types of curricula for the center. One uses a lesson plan template (Choosing the Right Job), while the other uses a more creative approach Aspirations beyond Limits.

### **Choosing the Right Job**

Many students may have never heard of a famous autistic person making a difference in working with animals or in business. This lesson will provide a little bit of autistic history with a well-known activist who has influenced others nationwide. Our participants' backgrounds will all be different, but each person will be looking for an opportunity to be employed. The lesson's objective is to further expand their cross analytical skills, teamwork ability, independent skills, and following classroom protocols. The lesson will provide interactive classroom activity in various ways so the student can potentially find the right job for themselves just like the famous person found their passion. The students will experience the use of technology, a printed article they can reference back too by manipulating it and conducting coral reading as a classroom effort. To see the entire lesson plan and article, go to Appendix A.

On a deeper level, one must recognize that ASD adults have challenges in browsing and researching the correct type of job that fits their style of engagement because very few know about their strengths in the workplace. The hiring process can be a daunting task because of their lack of responsiveness and narrow mindsets. The challenges at work are unimaginable if they have not been accustomed to working. Hence, they may not have realized their limitations or skills in managing any job.

An example of this lack of understanding has happened personally to me with my son JJ who is autistic. When he was 14 years old going into freshman year, we spent so much time

looking for the perfect engineering program because he was sure he wanted to be an engineer. I failed to ask my son if he knew what an engineer was, and he wound up having a very stressful first semester of high school. Because of my mistake and the counselor's not giving us the correct orientation, I later had to beg the counselor to change his four-year plan, and JJ needed to adjust again to a new schedule.

For that reason, David B. Nicholas and his team wrote a "synthesis review of the literature" for "Vocational Support Approaches in Autism Spectrum Disorder," which describes "The pervasiveness and multiplicity of barriers invite greater understanding about key issues and ameliorative ways to navigate vocational possibility for persons with ASD" (236). As a center, Hay Esperanza is compromised as it seeks – sometimes without necessary details – to help our population navigate the employment world and help create multiple job opportunities to see which one fits. In JJ's case, the counselor could have supported us by "careful planning to ensure that adolescents are well prepared prior to leaving school" and engaging in the workforce, making their time in their high school studies prosperous (235).

### **Aspirations beyond Limits**

The second lesson is one that uses a creative approach so that students broaden their experiences. At Hay Esperanza, we will push the limits beyond what the student may believe will be their future and challenge them to look at new ways of being inspired to reach new aspirations. To keep the inspirational atmosphere going, teachers will create some quarterly lessons to generate a spark that will help students envision "new solutions," and this will happen as each class will "cultivated, [it] over and over again" (Kelley 74). Being an inspiration to others is not easy, but at Hay Esperanza, we will intentionally operate our center this way. Kelley and Kelley say that we "can create an "epiphany-friendly" environment within ourselves and our



organization to cultivate the seeds of creative energy” (105). With that said, Hay Esperanza teachers will have the permission to create fun learning experiences for the students whose aspirations will flourish. They will not look back at their dire circumstances but believe that they have a new life of possibilities ahead of them.

According to Merriam Webster dictionary, the definition for disability is “a physical, mental, cognitive, or developmental condition that impairs, interferes with, or limits a person's ability to engage in certain tasks or actions or participate in typical daily activities and interactions.” That said, the disabled can still aspire for more normal lives. Aspirations is defined as “a strong desire to achieve something high or great” (Merriam-Webster). The illustration below (figure 1) explains the information that Doris Melugbo and her team have found in their study about aspiration. Many students have been taught to focus on their disability and limitations, determining their future by having low aspirations in life. Thus, our lessons will lead them to look at their circumstances differently by highlighting their talents and dreams and making a new future for themselves.

Figure 1 (Melugbo 4)

Career Aspirations Model

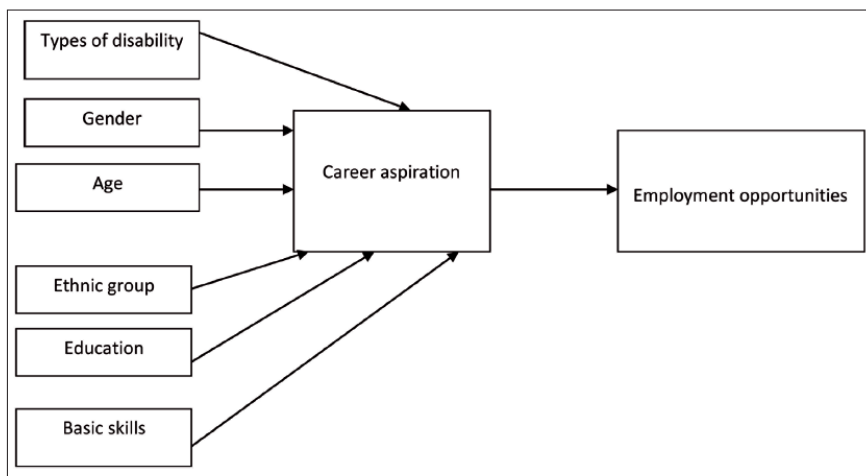


Figure 1. A Conceptual Model Showing the Effect of Disability Type, Gender, Age, Ethnic Group, Education and Basic Skills of People Living with Disabilities on Employment Opportunities as Mediated by Their Career Aspiration

Melubo further explains her topic:

According to the study, adolescents living with learning disabilities did not desire to secure high-paying jobs and were not so particular about which future jobs to do as an alternative. The study also reported that young women with learning disabilities were particularly at a higher risk of giving up on their dreams of getting meaningful employment in the future... Thus, one of the focuses of this study was to investigate the relationship between socioeconomic characteristics of persons with disabilities and their chances of engaging in meaningful employment. (3)

As previously mentioned, figure 1 shows the factors that influence a person with a disability, and these contradict the mission, vision, and values of Hay Esperanza. As an asset builder, we will turn around all the negative thoughts by significantly “improving on the expectations, self-efficacy, goals, and aspirations of people with disabilities in the bid to increase their employment chances,” and we will definitely see a positive return on our investment (11).

#### *Friday Community Awareness Day/ Hands-On Experience*

Creating opportunities and building our “assets,” as expressed in the ABCD model, makes for a win-win situation on different levels. By working with our Activities Director, Hay Esperanza will strive to create a bond with the community so that business owners want to provide various opportunities for our students. For example, a business could welcome one or more of our students at their location when place when there are no classes at the center or on the weekend. Another idea could be to start a small student-led business to earn funds to pay for their classes, earn donations for our center, or receive employment experience, while building their social skills and self-confidence. Also on Community Awareness Friday, we plan to make field trips to take tours of corporations so that students see where they could potentially obtain

jobs. Along with the center's many options and activities, students will significantly benefit during our Friday outings as well.

At the same time, employers who participate in Community Awareness Friday will learn first-hand about autistic people. They will see for themselves that the autistic people's talent and their innovative gifts go beyond their diagnosed title. The prospective employer can see the students' capacity to do focused work, and they will learn to think beyond autistic "looks" to see the benefits that an autistic person brings to an organization. Along the same lines, the student's family members will have peace of mind that their loved one is growing in the program while the participant is living a more independent life with a purpose.

#### *Student Donation Closet*

Prepping for an in-person interview is a big task for anyone, but for some autistic people, even deciding on an outfit becomes a headache. Leaving their homes can also be a challenge because autistic people can feel overwhelmed with lights, noises, busy places, or simply too many options to choose from. Regarding the dress code, when the students have not even known that there is an ideal, proper interview dress code, they may feel overwhelmed or inadequate for a job interview. For some, dressing up may feel more like a hassle than a necessity to present themselves adequately to future employers.

An added stressor could be their adverse reaction to texture and textiles during this process. From my experience working with autistic young adults, I have seen their inability to wear anything that feels tight or rough on their body. The shopping experience can be cut short when their body is triggered by itchiness or by touching fabrics repeatedly that irritate their skin. It overstimulates them, and some people want to leave the store as soon as possible, not wanting to talk about clothes again.

At Hay Esperanza, one important goal is to communicate with future employers about work clothing necessities for our clients during the interview process and perhaps during employment. For example, if our participants must wear a uniform or follow a certain dress code, they may react negatively at first. Hence, to ease both parties regarding this clothing factor, Hay Esperanza will look for donors who will provide clothes and accessories for the special occasions. One of the student's goals within the organization will be to work on their personal dress styles as they grow with each class, so that when they use our Student Donation Closet, they will enjoy looking through the options there. The center will offer items such as belts, socks, shoes, pants, shirts, blouses, cardigans, sweaters, and blazers at no expense.

## **Marketing**

### *Who is the ASD Person in the Interview/ Hiring Process?*

Autistic people have a tighter control at staying focused when they are doing something. They can detect errors, see patterns, and be precise in their attention to detail. They are more creative with their hands and body than with words. A regular standard interview that moves at a fast-pace and expects them to use social movement and body language to engage with their future supervisor puts them at a disadvantage. They can find themselves in an awkward position where they may sit silent, may not know what to say, or may want to walk away because there are too many things to focus on and think about all at the same time.

In an interview, asking autistic people to answer broad questions puts up an immediate barrier. The same situation applies to a sit-and-speak interview; it's more suited for them to do a show and tell interview. So, a successful interviewer will ask them to do something, create, or demonstrate why and how they can do the job. Regarding this topic, Melissa Scott and her team of researchers explain the following:

Individuals with ASD possess strengths and abilities, which can be harnessed in the work environment, often performing well in jobs requiring systematic information processing and a high degree of accuracy, precision and repetition (Baldwin et al., 2014; de Schipper et al., 2016; Walsh et al., 2014). Capitalizing on these strengths (Clifton and Harter, 2003) and focusing on the person-job-environment fit (Lorenz and Heinitz, 2014) could support successful outcomes for people with ASD in a variety of employment contexts (Hendricks, 2010; Mawhood and Howlin, 1999) (870).

Thus, it takes planning on both sides for successful interviews.

Their social cues are low or probably not as fast as one expects. Perhaps some lack much practice doing interviews, and they become nervous. Another example of their character is their deficit in making eye contact. Many of them do not look at the person when speaking with them or look at them in the eyes. Some tend to look downward, but that does not mean they are not paying attention. It remains a given that allowing them to “do something” or to offer a creative solution to a problem often works for the best interview. They can draw out their concepts or present a prototype. Many such options will lead to a successful interview.

### *The Impact Effort Matrix*

In marketing, it is important to identify projects and consider them individually. Hay Esperanza recognizes this fact, and its team will work collectively. Each of our departments will always have its own incentives, but the team has to decide which ones will make the most impact on the organization (table 2). Some ideas will generate fast results while others will bring in long-term success. Some projects will be complex but will be rewarding in the end. At the same time, effortless propositions can also bring in high-impact results. To further explain, I will present the Impact Effort Matrix recommended by Asela Burgos, Coordination of Business

Projects & Associate Professor at ITESO Consultancy in Planning & International Trade, and I have named 14 projects (figure 2 and 3) that will need to be ranked and placed on two axes (Burgos). One axis will represent the impact, and the other will be effort. The items will be scored from low to high on each axis and placed somewhere on the matrix (figure 2 and 3).

Table 2

## 14 Possible Projects for the Hay Esperanza Team

1. Create website for organization	2. Create LinkedIn page for staff	3. Create social media accounts for center	4. Put together a job fair for the students
5. Put together job fair to promote business	6. Create awareness campaigns about organization	7. Attend online parent autism club	8. Create campaign for World Autism Day April 2
9. Get interview clothes donated for closet	10. Engage with a hairdresser to do free haircuts once a month	11. Go to universities to promote intern volunteer program	12. Create business campaign to find volunteer opportunities/ tours for our students
13. Raise money through a concert	14. Create small student videos to promote Classes		

Once we see all of the ideas put together, as the President I realized that two categories needed to be formed because they will each serve a different purpose. Some ideas will benefit the organization's mission and vision, while the others will help the students. This first category grouped directly impacts Hay Esperanza's mission and vision. Those projects that fall into this

area are 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 13, and 14 (figure 2). The second category refers to the student's development and growth projects: 4, 9, 10, and 12 (figure 3).

Figure 2

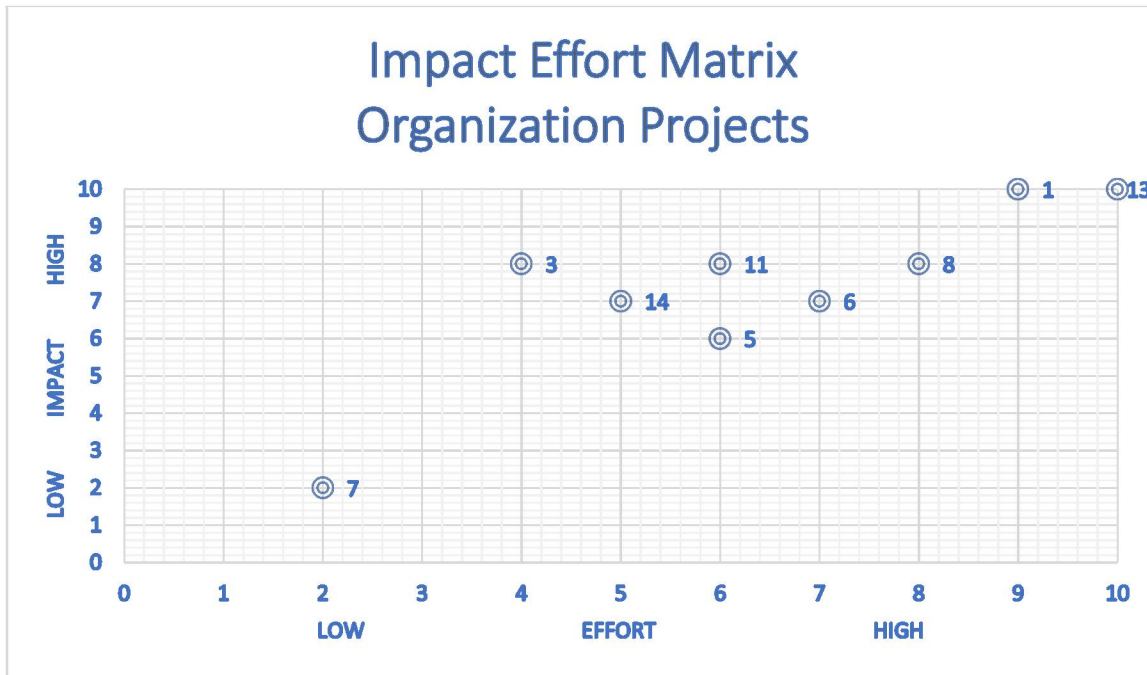
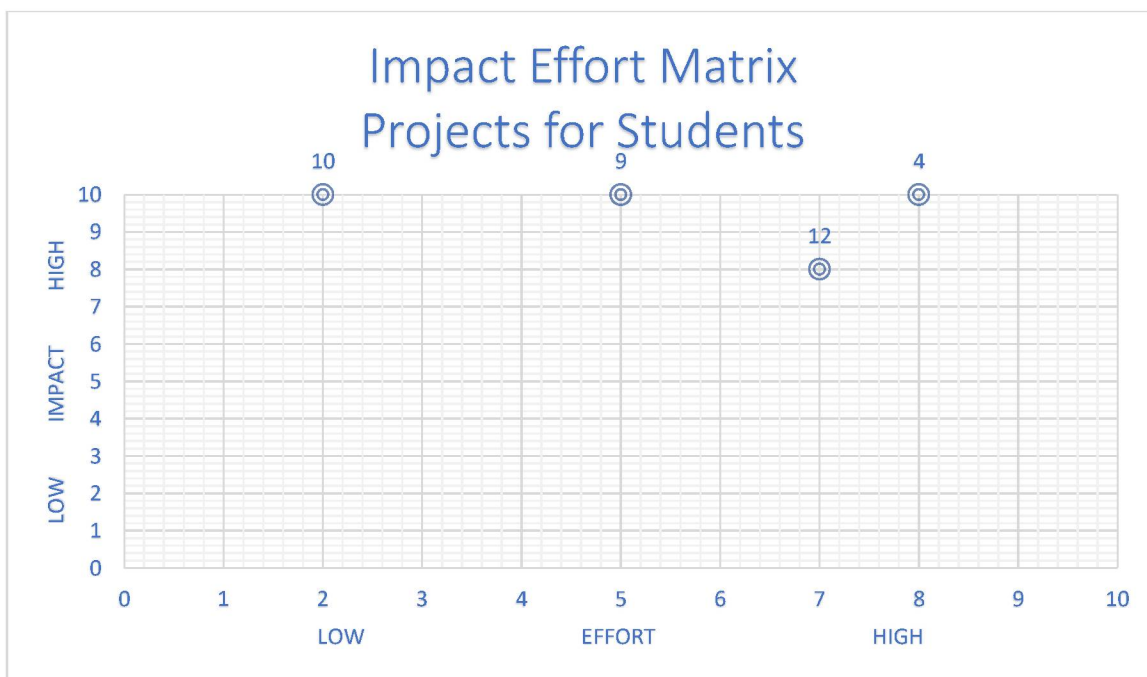


Figure 3



### *Private/ Local Support*

The following are marketing project ideas for Hay Esperanza's growth as mentioned in the matrix (table 4 and 5).

- Promote our university volunteer intern program in the counseling and career center and in the dining halls. Also, find a way to promote our opportunities on their school webpage and in department meetings.
- Recruit a hairdresser from the community to cut hair for our students once a month for Friday Community Awareness Day.
- Build a closet for donated clothes for both females and males; these will become interview clothes for the students in the business. By promoting our employment center to support the vulnerable, we could ask a clothing company like Xilvan in Guadalajara, [www.xilvan.com](http://www.xilvan.com), support us and donate female clothes. Their CEO Georgina Cantu, a chapter president of the AMEXME Mexico nonprofit of woman entrepreneurs, is a significant component member who likes to donate to nonprofits.

### *President's Role to Create Awareness Campaigns*

Hay Esperanza's CEO in the Marketing Department will hold in person meetings with community businesspeople to introduce the company's mission and vision to others. We will promote radio shows, tv shows, online platforms, and will work with magazine editors. Together with the Marketing Director, the CEO will organize our support to celebrate World Autism Awareness Day every April 2<sup>nd</sup>, as "published in the Official Gazette of the [Mexican] Federation" (ResearchGate). The State of Jalisco Congress Autism decree also states that it will carry out information and awareness campaigns about the characteristics of the Autism Spectrum Disorder (The Congress of the State of Jalisco). World Autism Awareness Day is when autism



advocates and nonprofits worldwide wear blue to bring public awareness of the autism spectrum disorder. In some cases, large rallies are held and march down main streets in big cities, with many families supporting the movement to raise money and publicity.

During this time, too, our Marketing Director can include our nonprofit's name in various hashtags on social media, hashtags like #Autismawareness, #LightItUpBlue, and #Autism. In Mexico, the common hashtags used on Instagram, Twitter, or Facebook are published by autism activist Alejandra Aceves named “#SoyAutista, #ActuallyAutistic, #Autismo, #TEA, #CEA” (Aceves). On a similar note, by connecting with outside groups and the state in which the center is located, we hope to capitalize our exposure, increase traffic to our website, and boost donations.

By creating autism awareness campaigns, the President can also join parent social autism clubs where they support each other by sharing experiences and give helpful tips all about life as an autism parent. The CEO can join the Instagram group called “@reflejo.autismo,” which Paty and her husband started; the couple has three kids, and their son is autistic (Paty). Paty's friend Mago (an autistic parent of a child) and she manage an Instagram chat page every Wednesday which includes topics and participants from across the world: Chile, Guadalajara, Guatemala, across Mexico, and the United States. Their mission is to inform others about autism and its symptoms and discuss ways to live with it. If Juana Gomez, CEO of Hay Esperanza, can create a beautiful synergy with this group of parents, she can also give presentations to continue building awareness of helping autistic adults gain employment. Paty believes that Gomez can build the power to open doors for her son and others if she tells others.

*Future Local Job Fairs*

Hay Esperanza's out-of-the-box approach to discovering their population's talents will make the students feel accepted and unique. As a business, we will have something extra that other talent agencies won't provide to any sector looking for keen, focused people. Our ABCD approach will let companies know that we have prepared our "asset," the participant, to pass the interview and hiring process by tailoring the process to fit their way of communication.

For example, Hay Esperanza could recruit businesses to participate in an in-person local job fair and demonstrate our population's analytical skills. Their ability to follow a structured process, to retain knowledge and skills, and to repeat what they know can be powerful for a business. Additionally, a job fair exclusively for autistic people will help them sell their skills more easily because the employers already know they have a disability. The surprise factor will have been removed, and in a fair, participants don't have to struggle to sit quietly in a room with other candidates applying for the same position. Hiring managers at the local job fairs will have the opportunity to do on-the-spot interviews, which many students may never have experienced because they may not have passed an initial telephone interview in the first place. As an added benefit for the job fair, it serves as good publicity for the association and the employers who decide to join. In Mexico, this activity is called being socially responsible which helps build a diverse, inclusive environment one company at a time.

#### *Social Media Accounts and Website*

To start several social media platforms, the President of Hay Esperanza and the business will need to create a page as will each Hay Esperanza executive. We will create a LinkedIn page so that anyone in the public can quickly locate the nonprofit online. We will create Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook pages and update them frequently to share information about donation use

and requests. Our social media accounts will present live events and pictures of our activities to encourage others to help and donate in any way they can.

Our websites, of course, will be autism-friendly, which means user-friendly too. Every link created and attached will need to work. The tabs for the website will be easy to locate, and the drop-down menu for each category will be clear and concise. Livingautism.com suggests that the “website design should use soft, mild colors and contrast clearly between the font of any text and the background to ensure a clean message” (McNair, 2021). In addition to the design of the webpage, we will also implement simple forms that those interested can fill out on their own time without feeling overwhelmed by doing so in person. This process needs “to ensure maximum user uptake, [so] web pages should also provide navigation via both the mouse and the keyboard while highlighting progress bars for time-consuming actions such as filling out application forms or responding to surveys” (McNair, 2021). Our webpage will also feature text and photos that will catch the interest of those browsing through it.

## **Strategy**

### *SWOT Analysis*

It is recommended that Hay Esperanza have a SWOT analysis, or strategic planning management technique, to identify its internal strengths and weaknesses. The study also identifies any opportunities and threats that may open or close doors for the organization. Each section below will point out many ideas and situations that the program may experience.

### **Strengths**

- Once established in Mexico, the company will have American access to educational resources, help, and donations.

- The founder is fully invested in the big plans of the organization plus is a parent of an autistic son.
- At the start, Hay Esperanza will have a network of people and support from the United States/ Mexico, and that network will continue long term.
- Autistic people have many and diverse talents. In fact, “The more diverse the community is, the greater the possibilities for growth” (Rocke 111).
- Hay Esperanza will serve a known customer/ population whose unemployment is high.
- Hay Esperanza’s Board of Directors will execute transparency, avoid conflicts of interest, and be a part of the hiring process for executives and directors.
- Juana, as president, has already invested in a sanitary system to help the airflow and surfaces of the building remain free of mold, bacteria, and more.
- The center will have a dedicated central facility located in an accessible area for her participants to reach.
- Hay Esperanza will develop a website will be developed with the autistic population in mind.
- The center will offer social media accounts to communicate with students, families, and the public.
- A director of donations position will be created to cater to and nurture the new and long-term relationships of the nonprofit both domestically and internationally.
- Hay Esperanza will be a one-of-a-kind support employment center specific to functional autistic adult needs.
- The nonprofit will hire specialized, compassionate special education educators to work with our families and uplift our student assets.

- Hay Esperanza will have a recognized attorney on the board of directors.
- Soon, Hay Esperanza will purchase vehicles to help transport students to and from the center, creating a known route.
- The founder has solid Christian roots and a creative vision for the future.
- The pillars of the organization are based on the State and Federal Inclusion Laws for the disabled and autistic people, laws that already exist.
- Currently, many autistics initiatives are being heard and voted on to go to the next level on the Federal Senate floor before becoming a law, so now is a good time for Hay Esperanza to begin its work.
- The program's one-year curriculum has already been proven effective in the United States.
- The nonprofit class schedule will introduce new students every quarter, approximately every three months, and the student will be given three-time slot options to attend class.
- Students will be provided a job coach and therapies from a psychologist.
- No one person will be indispensable in the organization as teams will work together.

### **Weaknesses**

- Hay Esperanza is one of a kind. It can't learn directly from another center's structure, strengths, and weaknesses.
- Hay Esperanza will be pioneering a new way to support and employ autistic adults.
- Since the program will be the first of its kind, we may come across many families who will be hesitant in supporting their loved ones to enroll or stay in the program.
- Self-awareness of the program idea will be unusual.
- A barrier for the student and the public could be their poor mentality mindset.

- Funding relationships are still being established as the word gets out about the program.
- Start-up costs are usually high initially; therefore, the available funds could be limited afterward for a while.
- The center may come across some resistance from employers who don't understand the benefits of hiring autistic people as part of their workforce.
- Some employers may not want to conform to the new inclusion laws that already exist and that our lawyers will need to enforce to reduce discrimination.
- We may see many people who want to enroll, and we have to set a firm number of participants we can train. Placing some students on a waiting list for the next quarter may discourage them.
- In the first set of staff meetings, it may take some time for Hay Esperanza employees to get to know each other and start working on the Collective Leadership Compass together.

### **Opportunities**

- Our program will train family members to support their loved ones.
- We will provide outside job coaches who will mutually engage in the new job training of the employee at their job site.
- We will seek donors from clothing stores to supply our Interview Clothes Closet for our students.
- We will have speakers give specialized training on the students' health and human rights and offer one-on-one interview practices.
- The activities director will look for places that can offer volunteer experiences.

- The activities director and the students will have the opportunity to start their own business so our students will receive first-hand job training, increase their job skills, confidence, and maybe be employed during their free time.
- We can write contracts for big venues like concerts, theatres, sports events, and expos so our students can get a volunteer or paid work experience.
- If the demand is there, an additional 2-hour class time slot will open for 24 students from 5:45 pm to 7:45 pm.
- The founder and President of Hay Esperanza will have a personal opportunity to give her testimony to churches and venues to receive new donors or donations.
- We will educate society and employers on the benefits of hiring autistic talent.
- Our director of donations will look for corporate sponsorships.
- Hay Esperanza will have the opportunity to become a research and investigation center by connecting to international autistic nonprofits and research foundations.
- When we have written business internship contracts, we will bring in university student volunteers, which lowers our staff costs.
- We will plan open house events to bring in new prospective donors, create community awareness, or recruit new students.
- We will find ways to advertise for free by speaking in radio talk shows, creating awareness campaigns on International Autism Day, April 2, and more.
- We will seek to attend the United Nations human rights reunions to raise awareness of our mission to employ autistic adults and establish support with our network.
- The endeavor may naturally evolve into getting state certified to provide the students with a recognized program diploma.

- The nonprofit will need to create a follow-up process for students who make a complaint against their new employer.

### **Threats**

- The threat will always exist that our participants will be exposed to malicious behavior/ bullying or violence in the workplace.
- We do not have the power to control or help a participant in a dangerous situation if they do not speak up or communicate to say they are being mistreated at their new workplace or school.
- We may face retaliation from business owners who don't want to follow the inclusions law or implement them.
- There may be cases when some students may shut down and quit the program, affecting our quarterly income and creating a financial liability for the nonprofit.
- There is a threat that employers won't accept or recognize the student's training at our nonprofit, which will discourage them.
- There is a possibility that government officials will try to micromanage our enterprise by doing recurring audits or demand kickbacks to leave us alone.
- We could receive threats from random people who discriminate against people with disabilities.
- The facility runs the risk of being vandalized even though we have a good security system.
- Slander could arise against the business or board members from random people.
- Misogyny could come against Juana, the founder of Hay Esperanza, from prejudiced people who are against such strong, female advocates.



- Misconceptions and false accusations can arise from fake news posted on social media platforms, affecting the image of Hay Esperanza.

### *Strategy Tools to Guide the Nonprofit*

According to the Merriam Webster Dictionary, the word strategy means “a careful plan or method for achieving a particular goal usually over a long period of time.” With the experience and knowledge of my professional, humanitarian career, I have come to value people, their talents, and teamwork in my work. In developing the business plan, I have realized that our focus will be divided into three sections: the building of the students, expectations of the staff, and my passion for the program.

God is a significant figure in my life, and God has equipped me with many talents and gifts to share. My family and I are Christ-centered, and I trust He will lead this project as He has promised during my prayer time. The Holy Spirit is the one who has revealed to me my calling in life to open a center for autistic adults and those with similar disabilities so that I may better prepare them for a full life. I will tell my staff that no one has to be a Christian to work at Hay Esperanza, but I would like for them to feel comfortable saying the name of God in the center. The program will not be limited to only Christian candidates but will be open to include a diverse student body. The environment will be conducive towards a positive atmosphere of learning, respect, and support.

### *President's Inspirational Calling*

As the future president of an exclusive support employment center for autistic adults and those with similar disabilities, my main spiritual job will always be to stay in prayer and continue my relationship with God. During my role as president, I will continue to nurture my relationship with my autistic son. He will also be involved in the program, and it will be essential to spend

some quality time with him outside of work. Similar to my calling, Julius Walls, Jr. shared in his co-author book, *Mission Inc.* the same feelings I have towards life:

My work today is a combination of business, priesthood, leadership, and advocacy. I am not easily defined... My experiences have shaped me into someone who wants to contribute my energies, skills, and efforts toward positive, life-changing impact... Serve my people with the guidance and wisdom of God. Be sensitive to their needs, wants and desires. Help them grow in spirit and understand all that the world offers... My God-given mission influences my decisions of what I will do and what I will not do. (xvii)

His heart is in his work, as is mine in my work.

Another quote describes my connection to God and my calling in a different way to accomplish this beautiful project. Street Psalms, creators of *The Incarnational Training Framework* explain it well:

One of the telltale signs of an incarnational call is that when it knocks on the door of our heart, it seems impossible to achieve and brings us to our knees. Very often our heart leaps with joy and says “yes”, and our head hurts with the complexity of it all and says “no.” Eventually peace settles in, which is the sign to proceed. It is God’s delight that we participate in something bigger than we can achieve on our own or in our lifetime. This keeps us on our knees, true to the ever-expanding nature of God’s mission. (111)

In all, the staff, students, and the community will get to know who I am as we all implement the three following strategies in the nonprofit: The Incarnational Training Framework, Collective Leadership Compass, and Asset-Based Community Development.

### **The Incarnational Training Framework (ITF)**

The staff hired by Hay Esperanza will use the ITF framework as a compass to reinforce their mission of why they had applied for the job in the first place. Staying focused and committed to the mission at Hay Esperanza will not be an easy task. Still, a road less traveled offers the greatest rewards because of the difficulty and obstacles that will present themselves. It may be the case in a staff meeting where the passion may become unclear or doubtful to proceed with the task at hand. The ITF diagnostic tool will help refocus and reignite the “Leaders and organizations [to] examine their own approach” to transformation by asking a “series of questions concerning the message, method, and manner of Jesus’ mission” (11). We would do this is by using the three reflecting questions below.

1. Message: A Way of Seeing—Does your message call people from scarcity to abundance?
2. Method: A Way of Doing—Does your method call people from theory to practice?
3. Manner: A Way of Being—Does your manner call people from rivalry to peacemaking?

Ultimately the framework is designed to help all involved to know what is important as they help train and place students in the workforce.

The President and other colleagues may encourage those who struggle to believe in the process. Still, when they look towards God, the questions above will hopefully encourage the team to move forward in practice and peacemaking.

### **Collective Leadership Compass**

Petra Kuenkel, the author of “The Collective Leadership Compass,” has formed six dimensions with three competencies attached to each dimension. Collective Leadership allows all the leaders in the organization to contribute and deliver their very best by working together

for the common good of our mission and vision. The compass encourages personal development, brings balance between staff members to tackle problems, envisions the future, and solves each hurdle by being flexible, open-minded, and resourceful. Collective Leadership is about going beyond our limits to bring in new ideas and resources from local, state, and national levels. The chart is available in Appendix D.

The following contains a brief description of each dimension that forms the Collective Leadership Compass:

- Future Possibilities- Every chance, desire, new adaptation, or modification must enhance the staff to provide a brighter future for all in a leadership position. That means everyone can influence and share. Hence, “inspiring others and actually leading future possibilities” to be a reality and not just a dream (00:05:49).
- Engagement- The art of engagement accepts possibilities, and it aligns the team with trying new activities and being unafraid to tailor an idea until it works. In broad terms, engagement means “fostering a dialogic way of change and engaging different stakeholders” (00:08:07).
- Innovation- Sustainability in our organization will primarily derive from our human capacity to be innovative, outspoken, and open with each other, trusting that everyone has something to bring to the table and work together to build upon endless possibilities. Therefore, innovation means “developing our potential to spot innovative solutions to sustainability challenges” (00:10:59).
- Humanity- Our level of humanness will require us as staff to listen to one another regardless of the story shared so that we get to know and respect one another as individuals. In my philosophy, the best way to look at any situation is to think, “What

would Jesus do?” or “What does the bible say?” Being human and seeing people with eyes of love brings out the best in us to serve others and keep going “acknowledging diversity in the world and in humanity and accessing our humanity in ourselves and others” (00:13:13).

- Collective Intelligence- Language in our center will take place in different ways. Part of our sustainable growth will be to accept each other’s differences which includes communication and numerous styles to see beyond our interpretation to realize the true situation unravel. Moreover, since our program will be the first of its kind and we will not be following any other kind of blueprint; Hay Esperanza will be on a learning curve where our collective intelligence should work with enthusiasm, experts, bringing growth, “respecting differences and communicating in a way that furthers collective intelligence” (00:16:17).
- Wholeness- A wholeness point of view allows us to see the full function of the center from a holistic point of view, where we can stand back and review all the processes in place. Wholeness allows us to see the fragility of the organism and recognize how one thing depends on the other. Wholeness also makes us reflect on our role in shifting the center into a new phase or project. Aside from analyzing only Hay Esperanza, we will evaluate how we bond with our community, the businesses we interact with, and the families we serve. This process will allow us to view our position holistically as we jointly serve our population, “opening up to see the world as a whole and acting for the common good” (00:19:30).

In all, the compass fits perfectly with Hay Esperanza’s staff collaboration techniques.

We will function like a family in which everyone pulls their weight, activating each dimension

and encouraging someone else to give their best to complete the full circle. It will take a whole “football team” as some would say to make it to the championships, and our championship ring will be when we open new business contracts, and they agree to employ our students. Better yet, our collective leadership compass will also shine when we have a successful job fair event where others notice our efforts and our students land jobs.

### **Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD)**

The Asset-Based Community Development approach is a grassroots perspective because it “is a strategy for sustainable community driven development” (Collaborative for Neighborhood Transformation 2). Instead of trying to solve problems to improve community development, the ABCD approach focuses on “asset building” where our participants are our “asset,” and their personal growth will be our priority (2). Our leaders at Hay Esperanza will find hidden talents and skills that our population already possesses. The nonprofit is being formed to sharpen their skills and place them in the workplace they choose after our job recruiters match our students with people “who have an interest or need” of their knowledge (2).

Through the ABCD focus, we promise to create new synergies from surrounding neighborhoods that previously have not supported our autistic population. Our organization’s capacity will grow in favor of our students through political connections, enterprise contracts, financial resources, and better facilities. Our personalized services for each student will enhance their ability to trust their neighborhood because we will teach our community to care and provide jobs for them.

### **MANAGEMENT**

*Location of the Hay Esperanza Building*

The search for the Hay Esperanza building is still underway. The location has been narrowed to Zapopan, Jalisco, but there is a possibility that it could open in Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico, as it is the capital of the state. Both municipalities are next to each other and feature a high autistic population. The municipality of Zapopan has a dedicated government resource center called EL DIF (Sistema para el Desarrollo Integral de la Familia) which stands for The System for Integral Development of the Family. They also have a dedicated Center for Autism that helps children and families from three to fourteen years of age but does not offer employment classes to this vulnerable group. Hence, locating a place to rent or a place to buy would be ideal within the two cities.

### **Floor Plan Layout**

In the beginning, the floor plan will be small. I might have to rent space before I buy a building to hold classes and provide an office for each employee. In any case, to begin, I will need tables and chairs for the students and another table for a projector for PowerPoint lessons and videos. We need a blackboard or whiteboard and a desk for the teacher. In another room close to the classroom, the psychologist will offer private counseling. Close to the entryway, a desk will allow the receptionist and/or executive assistant to sit to enter data, and contact new participants, among other things. The board meetings may first occur in the classroom or in another proper place where everyone feels comfortable. Some sessions may take place online on a video platform.

Once the organization has reached its full enrollment capacity, the board and the CFO will need to approve the finances to move the center to a new, larger, permanent location. Once the new location is secured, it our plan that each employee will have their own office space and desk. The new site will offer a staff breakroom, numerous restrooms, a computer lab, a

classroom, a reception area, as well as private rooms for the job coaches, psychologists, and job recruiters. In addition, we plan for several conference rooms and office space for each executive and director. The executive assistant will locate at the entrance of the presidential office where other directors will also have their offices. Finally, the facilities and IT departments will have large workspace and copious materials. The full-floor plan can be seen in Appendix B.

### *Human Resources*

#### **Organizational Chart**

The Hay Esperanza Center will start small in staff numbers but will provide the essential support for the students' success. The President's initial duties will be to oversee domestic and international donations as she continuously promotes the mission and vision of the nonprofit. Secondly, she will work closely with the accountant, keep accurate reports, create the quarterly program for each class, and teach one or two student courses. The executive administrative assistant will work together with the President to enroll all students into the program and insert their information into a database. She will also speak with parents, look for job opportunities for our students in the workforce, and help them apply. A psychologist will provide private counseling to students as they prepare to go into the workforce. As soon as it is possible, we plan to hire a part-time teacher who offer additional classes in the afternoon.

The center will start with five board members including a president, a treasurer, a secretary, and two community citizens. In addition, we plan to invite fellow American professionals on the board of directors. Mr. Sergio Baez, a Mexican Public Notary, has notified me that we can invite others outside Mexico to become involved (Baez). The initial role of the members is to promote the mission and vision of Hay Esperanza in various ways. They will use their influence to promote various donations to the center, provide support for legal matters, and



look for ways to expand the organization. Once the organization is ready for its expansion, the board will be a part of the hiring process for key positions. In addition, each board member will write business contracts to connect with the public and private sectors. Everyone at Hay Esperanza, in leadership or staff positions, must follow the Collective Leadership Compass as we begin to create a strategic awareness campaign about autism in adults and their inclusion in our initial marketing projects.

An organizational chart of the full nonprofit development can be viewed in Appendix C.

### **Job Descriptions of Primary Roles**

In this section, the primary roles of the center are explained, including ways in which each position will interact those of with the rest of the organization. The full description of the organizational chart is located in Appendix C.

- **Certified Special Education Teachers** will run their classrooms according to student classification. We will have to differentiate between age groups and abilities to function. The teacher will receive support from her classroom aid and volunteer interns. The teacher will follow the quarter lesson plans outline that the nonprofit will adapt from the President. The teachers will implement the course outline for the quarter and execute the lessons they see fit for their classroom. The teachers will not provide grades per student. Instead, the teacher and the student will fill out a qualitative survey regarding their class progress each quarter. The teachers will advise the program director about student problems, and any staff problems will go to the human resources department. Each class will last two hours, Monday to Thursday.
- **The Human Resources Officer** will create and maintain personal data. They will follow all state and federal hiring practices and laws. They will oversee training staff and

conducting professional development opportunities. The human resources department will remind all department directors to conduct their annual staff evaluations and turn them into HR to file. All reports and complaints from staff and volunteers will go directly to them. In some situations, the human resources officer will be the mediator. They will promote a culture of peace and follow the Collective Leadership Compass. If the authorities need to be contacted, HR will also contact the secretary of the Board of Directors, the president, and the corporate attorney.

During the interview process for open positions, the board of directors will be involved when there is a vacant executive position. If the president needs to take a vacation, the Board of Directors will decide if the COO (Chief Operating Officer) will step in as vice president or someone from the Board of Directors.

- **The CFO (Chief Financial Officer)** will manage all monies from public and private entities. They will collect program fees from the office manager when the student or their families make a payment. CFO will make bank deposits and send bi-weekly reports to the board of director- treasurer and president. The CFO will meet monthly with the board of directors and the president to discuss monthly expenses and the budget(s). The CFO will be prepared for random government audits, IRS audits and board of directors' audits, among the completion of other tasks.
- **The Accountant** will be responsible for collecting staff timecards after their responding director and executive have signed them. The accountant and the CFO will pay all the staff on time and confirm with human resources if any staff has taken paid time off, non-paid time off, vacation, etc. The accountant will collect purchase orders, invoices, and enter data into the accounting system working closely with the CFO to create reports.

When a donation is received, the accountant and CFO will provide the IRS forms and donation receipt.

- As part of their roles, the office director, marketing director, human resources, COO (Chief Operating Officer), and the CFO will have private meetings with the president about their office operations. They will provide updates on staff contracts, the student population, the community, or parent issues.
- **The COO** (Chief Operating Officer) will work with three directors: activities, facilities, and program director. They will manage the school calendar and all the yearly events at the center. The COO will also collaborate with the office director to support any event, such as an Open House to the public. This position could potentially be considered the vice president seat, given approval of the board of directors. They will also manage and schedule volunteers with the activity's director. The COO will conduct random quarterly customer service surveys from each department and the students.
- **The Receptionist** will provide quick facility tours for walk-in prospects. The community liaison will continuously speak with the receptionist letting them know who will arrive and receive the Official Screening Welcome Packet. The community liaison will share the information collected from the prospect interview with the receptionist. The receptionist will work with the families in the waiting room to make sure the packet is filled out correctly and insert the data into a database, including documentation like a copy of the middle school certificate. The receptionist will create the student's files. Once the Official Screening Welcome Packet is complete, the receptionist will schedule the prospective student to meet with the psychologist to be tested. Lastly, the receptionist will work together with the program director to take daily attendance, and the program

director will print out the reports. A volunteer opportunity will be offered to a student to help the receptionist make copies, file, call families to set up appointments, etc.

- **The Facilities Director** will ensure the building is up to code and conduct any needed maintenance. He will work closely with all technical support, such as IT services, to ensure things are running smoothly. In addition, this director will offer several volunteer opportunities for students who have computer knowledge and maintenance experience. This position reports to the COO.
- **The Activities Director** will work closely with the COO and the program director to establish the school year calendar and student activities for Fridays. They will coordinate tours of possible employers, explore student volunteer opportunities, and run the small business that the students will be involved in if they choose to sell a product or a service. The activities director will collaborate closely with the business recruiter to set up all career fairs and invite employers. The activities director will manage her team of student interns from higher education facilities.
- **The Director of Donations** will be in charge of interacting with our donors in various ways. They will open new donation accounts and work closely with the accountant and the CFO to receive the amount of the donation. The donations director will arrange open house tours to potential donors and give professional presentations onsite and offsite. This position will require regular meetings with department directors to know the facility and program needs. Their closest support staff member will be the community liaison position since both will be interacting with the public and the community outside the facility. A situation may occur where the community liaison meets a parent or a caregiver of a student who is willing to donate, and the director of donations will make it possible.

The director of donations will focus on the business side of the community while the community liaison will recruit students in the field.

As a prerequisite for this position, it will be necessary for the director of donations to have high academic writing skills and a grace to meet with people. Their responsibility will also include applying for free grants when the government or companies offers them. The board of directors will revise their grant proposals before their submission to any contest.

- **The Community Liaison's** primary role will be to go out to the community and seek potential participants for Hay Esperanza. In most cases, he or she will be the first contact that the family or adult will have, and they will collect brief information about the potential student to see if they meet the minimum requirements for the program. The community liaison will have their desk in the reception area, so when the family members arrive, they recognize a familiar face whom they have previously meet. It is the responsibility of the community liaison to notify the receptionist of the arrival of a prospect student so they can prepare the Official Screening Welcome Packet in advance. Lastly, the community liaison will also be in charge of creating a waiting list for the new quarter every three months. As a whole, every staff member is responsible for spreading the word about Hay Esperanza, potentially finding new students who can be referred to our community liaison. To ease the stress of this position, the staff member can coordinate with the COO open house dates to establish these events for parents, caregivers, and new prospective students.
- **The Program Director** will support the teachers, job coach, and psychologist. This person will have a background in special education and in running an educational

program. They will be in contact with the job coach and the enrollment screening process for each student. The program director will revise the notes from the community liaison, the database and speak with the psychologist if the prospective student is suited for our program. It will be at the program director's discretion if a student is admitted into the program or not. If a teacher knows of someone who could be a good fit, their suggestion will be considered. The program director will sit with each student at the beginning of the enrollment process and go over official paperwork to be admitted as a student. During the meeting, the program director will ask the student to sign several papers when accepted into the program: commitment letter, cost of the program, Code of Conduct, and a form of Release of Liability, to name a few.

Lastly, the program director will provide each student with their class schedule every quarter. Hay Esperanza will not grade students' class work because we believe grades do not reflect the best measure of their intellectual, social, and emotional growth. Rather we will use a qualitative survey so that students can express what they have learned in each class. The teacher, in return, will also evaluate the student based on a non-grading system and use the following words: exemplary understanding, proficient, developing understanding, and does not understand. The teacher will comment on the student's growth in each category from the syllabus objectives and meet to discuss their evaluation and opinions. Every course evaluation and survey will remain in the student's profile.

The program director will also assume each student's reward and discipline. They will enforce the Zero Tolerance Policy for Bullying and Sexual Harassment, on and off-

campus. Lastly, the program director will work closely with the receptionist to take daily attendance and provide attendance reports in director meetings.

- **The Executive Assistant** will work hand in hand with the CEO/President of the organization. In the initial phase of the nonprofit, the executive assistant will play multiple roles such as receptionist, job coach and the community liaison. As time progresses and more positions are filled, she will train the new employees in their role. Once the roles are more distributed, she will help manage the CEO's schedule, make travel arrangements, take notes at every meeting, accept any complaint that needs the president's attention, etc. Once the human resources department is filled, and if time permits, she will also lend a hand in that department.

### **Hay Esperanza Student Volunteers**

Hay Esperanza looks forward to giving the students real-life job experiences through volunteering in various departments within the center. The purpose of the volunteer program will be to boost the student's self-confidence, improve their accountability and communication skills allowing them to build rapport with others and work in a team. As an added benefit for our students to be a volunteer, our job coaches and their supervisors will write a letter of recommendation on their behalf, one they can also use as a reference letter in their resumes. The volunteer opportunities will occur in the reception area, IT department, working with the facilities director, being involved in the communications department, and working with the business recruiter. The psychologist and the teacher will have firsthand knowledge of the students they believe can excel and will sharpen their skills in different departments when a director offers a volunteer opportunity. The student can express their interest in an opportunity by letting his teacher or psychologist know.

Secondly, many students may already have firsthand knowledge of computer software and social media platforms because they have taught themselves or have taken classes before. Their help would save the center money in maintenance costs such as for computer research and light building maintenance work. At the reception desk area, the students can help alphabetize items, file, make copies, take messages, share handouts, and act as a runner within the facility. The business recruiter position will be unique as it is directly related to the marketing director, and both attract employers to employ our students. The student who helps in this area will be, in a sense, the voice of the nonprofit through a student's point of view. They will be able to explain in person what they are learning at the support employment center and describe how to successfully hire someone with autism. This volunteer position may also engage with the president's son, as he is autistic, too, and seeking a good fit in the workforce. As their leader, the business recruiter will schedule the outings or meetings with them.

### **University Internship Volunteers**

We will create university educational contracts that mutually benefit undergraduates and graduate students who want to volunteer to work at Hay Esperanza to help its mission and vision succeed. It is envisioned that the program director, activities director, and the COO will work together with the president to attend the recruiting events at the different universities to speak about the employment center. We will convince university program directors and counselors to allow their students to earn internship opportunity credits while participating with us. As a center, we will welcome students in the following majors: special education, social work, counseling, and information technology. We hope that the interns are intrigued by the real-world experience we offer them to work with disabled adult students and to apply their schools' teachings.



### **Red Cross Trainings**

Part of the human resources department role will be to comply with state and federal laws when training our staff in CPR and first aid classes. The state of Jalisco now requires staff to be certified in both trainings since the violation cost is over \$13,000 pesos. The Red Cross of Jalisco headquarters provides this training at a reasonable cost for businesses owners, and we will consider taking this training. In addition, it may also be beneficial to train our staff in self-defense in case we have an emergency and need to protect our students. Lastly, as a certified California teacher, I intend to provide yearly mandated reporter training for recognizing and revealing any abuse even though Mexico's reporting system is different from that of the US. Typically, people focus on recognizing child abuse and ignore the disabled's challenges of adult abuse. At Hay Esperanza, we will acknowledge that we work with a vulnerable group of adults who most likely have been exposed to many sad situations in the past. One of our focuses as a holistic center will be to provide a safe place for learning and growth opportunities. If an adult is being abused, they will have a psychologist to speak with to receive help.

#### *Culture of Partnerships*

### **Connecting with Autistic Nonprofits Around the World**

After reading many articles, I have often seen information on the lack of qualitative investigations done on autistic adults around the world. Many articles reflect the lack of employer, family, and government support to promote social inclusiveness, particularly in Mexico since the federal inclusion laws were passed only in 2011. Hence, the idea of connecting with autistic nonprofits in the United States and around the world will be to increase the knowledge available about this group to the world. People with autism exist around the world,

and the United Nations has explained that it does not distinguish between race, nationality, or gender.

Moreover, Hay Esperanza looks forward to building a relationship with experts who can provide professional development material that our staff can use with the students. Part of our mission and vision is to advocate for our student's rights in the workforce. Hence Hay Esperanza is open to becoming a worldwide research center at which experts may come and investigate the best ways to integrate the autistic population into the workforce. With luck, maybe through this process, the investigators in this field will discover an autistic genius and take them to new heights in another country to work for them. The sky is the limit to the help, resources, information, and donations Hay Esperanza can receive if we open our doors to international autistic researchers.

### **Connecting with Autistic Nonprofits in Mexico**

From personal research in the state of Jalisco and other associations in the country, I have found no exclusively autistic adult support employment center like the one that I want to establish. Many nonprofits exist to help diagnose children with autism and to provide therapies and life skills classes. Often, these services end when adolescents turn eighteen years old, making it the perfect opportunity to pitch my nonprofit program to them. Since the providers are not designed to use the inclusion laws and articles to place the students in the workforce, the community liaison can create synergies with those nonprofits to pass along our information to the families in need.

Similarly, Hay Esperanza will contact orphanages and shelters where we can find potential students to join our classes. Unique donors from those places may appreciate that our staff has reached out to offer our services, and they may pay for their student classes because it is

in their adult's best interest to gain independence. At the same time, we can reach out to private non-profit high schools and middle schools where parents pay for their adolescents to receive individualized education, and we can continue those services at our facilities.

## Financial Information

### *Projected Staff Salaries*

### Hay Esperanza Projected Staff Salaries

Staff	Pesos			USD		
	Full-time		Part-time	Full-time		Part-time
	High	Low	Cost	High	Low	Cost
Psychologist	\$12,000	\$9,000	\$5,500	\$575	\$430	\$263
Special Ed. Teacher	\$12,000	\$9,000	\$5,500	\$575	\$430	\$263
Program Director	\$16,000	\$13,000	\$7,000	\$766	\$622	\$335
Activity Director	\$10,000	\$9,000	\$4,500	\$479	\$431	\$215
IT	\$8,000	\$7,000	\$3,500	\$384	\$335	\$168
Janitor deep cleaning 2x per wk	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$192	\$192	\$192
Marketing Director	\$18,000	\$15,000	\$8,500	\$862	\$718	\$407
Business Recruiter paid monthly transportation \$800 exp.	\$11,000	\$9,000	\$5,000	\$526	\$431	\$239
Job Coach	\$10,000	\$9,000	\$4,700	\$479	\$431	\$225
COO	\$18,000	\$15,000	\$8,500	\$862	\$718	\$407
Director of Donations	\$10,000	\$9,000	\$4,700	\$479	\$431	\$225
Human Resources	\$18,000	\$15,000	\$8,500	\$862	\$718	\$407
Board of Directors \$5000 bonus if avail.	\$0	\$0	\$0			
Receptionist	\$8,000	\$7,000	\$3,500	\$384	\$335	\$168
Community Liaison paid monthly transportation \$800	\$8,800	\$7,800	\$4,300	\$421	\$374	\$374
Volunteer Intern	\$0	\$0	\$0			
Volunteer Student	\$0	\$0	\$0			
Office Director	\$10,000	\$9,000	\$4,700	\$479	\$431	\$225
Accountant	\$10,000	\$9,000	\$4,700	\$479	\$431	\$225
Communications Social Media Accounts	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$2,000	\$192	\$192	\$96
Teacher Assistant	\$8,000	\$7,000	\$3,500	\$384	\$335	\$168
CFO	\$18,000	\$15,000	\$8,500	\$862	\$718	\$407
President	\$25,000	\$20,000	\$10,000	\$1,198	\$958	\$479
Executive Assistant	\$15,000	\$14,000	\$7,000	\$718	\$670	\$335
Driver/ Facility Director	\$12,000	\$9,000	\$5,500	\$575	\$431	\$263

JJ, President Autistic Son, Project Assistant	\$8,000	\$7,000	\$3,500	\$384	\$335	\$168
<b>Monthly Total</b>	<b>\$273,800</b>	<b>\$231,800</b>	<b>\$127,100</b>	<b>\$13,117</b>	<b>\$11,097</b>	<b>\$6,254</b>
<b>Total Yearly</b>	<b>\$3,285,600</b>	<b>\$2,781,600</b>	<b>\$1,525,200</b>	<b>\$157,404</b>	<b>\$133,164</b>	<b>\$75,048</b>

Based on actual monthly salary cost in half/ full operations

\*\* Additional government information: Vacation days per year are set.

1st year anniversary = 6 vacation paid days

3rd year anniversary = 10 vacation paid days

4th - 8th year anniversary = 12 vacation paid days

2nd year anniversary = 8 vacation paid days

days

*Income from Individual Student Enrollment*

**Hay Esperanza**  
**Income from Individual Student Enrollment**

**Student Weekly Fee in Pesos (20 Pesos/1 USD)**

Status	Class price per day	Class Mon-Thurs	Friday Field Trip	Psychology	Total Payment per Week	Total US Dollars Per Week
<b>* Low Poverty</b>	\$100	\$400	\$100	\$75	<b>\$575</b>	<b>\$28.75</b>
<b>Regular</b>	\$150	\$600	\$100	\$150	<b>\$850</b>	<b>\$42.50</b>

\* Family under extreme poverty and at the discretion of Program Director and CFO

**Group Income for Regular Payment in Pesos**

					Totals		
Full Enrollment Students		Class Fee	Friday Field Trip	Psychology	Weekly	Monthly	Yearly
<b>Group A</b>	24	\$14,400	\$2,400	\$3,600	<b>\$20,424</b>	<b>\$81,696</b>	<b>\$980,352</b>
<b>Group B</b>	24	\$14,400	\$2,400	\$3,600	<b>\$20,424</b>	<b>\$81,696</b>	<b>\$980,352</b>
<b>Group C</b>	24	\$14,400	\$2,400	\$3,600	<b>\$20,424</b>	<b>\$81,696</b>	<b>\$980,352</b>
<b>* Group D</b>	24	\$14,400	\$2,400	\$3,600	<b>\$20,424</b>	<b>\$81,696</b>	<b>\$980,352</b>

\* This time slot will open for students ages 31-40 years old if there is a demand for it

Total in Pesos all four groups	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$81,696</b>	<b>\$326,784</b>	<b>\$3,921,408</b>
US Dollar		<b>\$4,085</b>	<b>\$16,339</b>	<b>\$196,070</b>
Group A-C	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$61,272</b>	<b>\$245,088</b>	<b>\$2,941,056</b>
US Dollar		<b>\$3,064</b>	<b>\$12,254</b>	<b>\$147,053</b>

**Group Income for Regular Payment in Pesos**

					Totals		
¾ Enrollment Students		Class Fee	Friday Field Trip	Psychology	Weekly	Monthly	Yearly
<b>Group A</b>	18	\$10,800	\$1,800	\$2,700	<b>\$11,700</b>	<b>\$46,800</b>	<b>\$561,600</b>
<b>Group B</b>	18	\$10,800	\$1,800	\$2,700	<b>\$11,700</b>	<b>\$46,800</b>	<b>\$561,600</b>
<b>Group C</b>	18	\$10,800	\$1,800	\$2,700	<b>\$11,700</b>	<b>\$46,800</b>	<b>\$561,600</b>
<b>* Group D</b>	18	\$10,800	\$1,800	\$2,700	<b>\$11,700</b>	<b>\$46,800</b>	<b>\$561,600</b>

\* This time slot will open for students ages 31-40 years old if there is a demand for it

Total weekly all four groups	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$46,800</b>	<b>\$187,200</b>	<b>\$2,246,400</b>
US Dollar		<b>\$2,246</b>	<b>\$8,983</b>	<b>\$107,791</b>
Group A-C	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$35,100</b>	<b>\$140,400</b>	<b>\$1,684,800</b>

US Dollar		<b>\$1,684</b>	<b>\$6,737.00</b>	<b>\$80,843.00</b>
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**Group Income for Regular Payment in Pesos**

					<b>Totals</b>		
<b>½ Enrollment Students</b>		<b>Class Fee</b>	<b>Friday Field Trip</b>	<b>Psychology</b>	<b>Weekly</b>	<b>Monthly</b>	<b>Yearly</b>
<b>Group A</b>	12	\$7,200	\$1,200	\$1,800	<b>\$10,200</b>	<b>\$40,800</b>	<b>\$122,400</b>
<b>Group B</b>	12	\$7,200	\$1,200	\$1,800	<b>\$10,200</b>	<b>\$40,800</b>	<b>\$122,400</b>
<b>Group C</b>	12	\$7,200	\$1,200	\$1,800	<b>\$10,200</b>	<b>\$40,800</b>	<b>\$122,400</b>
<b>* Group D</b>	12	\$7,200	\$1,200	\$1,800	<b>\$10,200</b>	<b>\$40,800</b>	<b>\$122,400</b>

\* This time slot will open for students ages 31-40 years old if there is a demand for it

Total weekly all four groups	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$40,800</b>	<b>\$163,200</b>	<b>\$489,600</b>
US Dollar		<b>\$1,958</b>	<b>\$7,831</b>	<b>\$23,493</b>
Group A-C	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$30,600</b>	<b>\$122,400</b>	<b>\$367,200</b>
US Dollar		<b>\$1,468</b>	<b>\$5,873.00</b>	<b>\$17,620.00</b>

*1 & 3 Year Enrollment Income in Pesos*

**Hay Esperanza**  
**1 & 3 Year Enrollment Income in Pesos**

Three and Four Scheduled Time Slots

Three Groups A-C	1 Year Enrollment Income			3 Year Enrollment Income		
	Full Enrollment	<sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> Enrollment	<sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> Enrollment	Full Enrollment	<sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> Enrollment	<sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> Enrollment
Months						
January	\$245,088	\$140,400	\$122,400	\$735,264	\$421,200	\$367,200
February	\$245,088	\$140,400	\$122,400	\$735,264	\$421,200	\$367,200
March	\$245,088	\$140,400	\$122,400	\$735,264	\$421,200	\$367,200
April	\$245,088	\$140,400	\$122,400	\$735,264	\$421,200	\$367,200
May	\$245,088	\$140,400	\$122,400	\$735,264	\$421,200	\$367,200
June	\$245,088	\$140,400	\$122,400	\$735,264	\$421,200	\$367,200
July	\$245,088	\$140,400	\$122,400	\$735,264	\$421,200	\$367,200
August	\$245,088	\$140,400	\$122,400	\$735,264	\$421,200	\$367,200
September	\$245,088	\$140,400	\$122,400	\$735,264	\$421,200	\$367,200
October	\$245,088	\$140,400	\$122,400	\$735,264	\$421,200	\$367,200
November	\$245,088	\$140,400	\$122,400	\$735,264	\$421,200	\$367,200
December	\$245,088	\$140,400	\$122,400	\$735,264	\$421,200	\$367,200
<b>Total Yearly</b>	<b>\$2,941,056</b>	<b>\$1,684,800</b>	<b>\$1,468,800</b>	<b>\$8,823,168</b>	<b>\$5,054,400</b>	<b>\$4,406,400</b>
<b>\$1 US Dollar/ 20 MX. Pesos</b>	\$147,053	\$84,240	\$73,440	\$441,158	\$252,720	\$220,320

All Groups A-D	1 Year Enrollment Income			3 Year Enrollment Income		
	Full Enrollment	<sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> Enrollment	<sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> Enrollment	Full Enrollment	<sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> Enrollment	<sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> Enrollment
Months						
January	\$326,784	\$187,200	\$163,200	\$980,352	\$561,600	\$489,600
February	\$326,784	\$187,200	\$163,200	\$980,352	\$561,600	\$489,600
March	\$326,784	\$187,200	\$163,200	\$980,352	\$561,600	\$489,600
April	\$326,784	\$187,200	\$163,200	\$980,352	\$561,600	\$489,600
May	\$326,784	\$187,200	\$163,200	\$980,352	\$561,600	\$489,600
June	\$326,784	\$187,200	\$163,200	\$980,352	\$561,600	\$489,600
July	\$326,784	\$187,200	\$163,200	\$980,352	\$561,600	\$489,600
August	\$326,784	\$187,200	\$163,200	\$980,352	\$561,600	\$489,600
September	\$326,784	\$187,200	\$163,200	\$980,352	\$561,600	\$489,600
October	\$326,784	\$187,200	\$163,200	\$980,352	\$561,600	\$489,600
November	\$326,784	\$187,200	\$163,200	\$980,352	\$561,600	\$489,600
December	\$326,784	\$187,200	\$163,200	\$980,352	\$561,600	\$489,600
<b>Total Yearly</b>	<b>\$3,921,408</b>	<b>\$2,246,400</b>	<b>\$1,958,400</b>	<b>\$11,764,224</b>	<b>\$6,739,200</b>	<b>\$5,875,200</b>



<b>\$1 US Dollar/ 20 MX. Pesos</b>	\$196,070	\$112,320	\$97,920	\$588,211	\$336,960	\$293,760
<b>Difference Pesos of 3 groups vs 4 groups</b>	\$980,352	\$561,600	\$489,600	\$2,941,056	\$1,684,800	\$1,468,800
<b>Difference USD of 3 groups vs 4 groups</b>	\$49,018	\$28,080	\$24,480	\$147,053	\$84,240	\$73,440

*Payroll Tax Expenses in Pesos*

**Hay Esperanza**  
**Payroll Tax Expenses in Pesos**

<b>Government Dues</b>			
<b>Employer Cost per Employee per Month in Pesos</b>			
	<b>Salary per month</b>	<b>* IMSS</b>	<b>Infonavit</b>
<b>Staff</b>	<b>Full-time Minimum</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Psychologist</b>	\$9,000	\$1,980	\$450
<b>Special Ed. Teacher</b>	\$9,000	\$1,980	\$450
<b>Program Director</b>	\$13,000	\$2,860	\$650
<b>Activity Director</b>	\$9,000	\$1,980	\$450
<b>IT</b>	\$7,000	\$1,540	\$350
<b>Janitor deep cleaning 2x per wk</b>	\$4,000	\$880	\$200
<b>Marketing Director</b>	\$15,000	\$3,300	\$750
<b>Business Recruiter paid monthly transportation \$800 exp.</b>	\$9,000	\$1,980	\$450
<b>Job Coach</b>	\$9,000	\$1,980	\$450
<b>COO</b>	\$15,000	\$3,300	\$750
<b>Director of Donations</b>	\$9,000	\$1,980	\$450
<b>Human Resources</b>	\$15,000	\$3,300	\$750
<b>Board of Directors \$5000 bonus if avail.</b>	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Receptionist</b>	\$7,000	\$1,540	\$350
<b>Community Liaison paid monthly transportation \$800</b>	\$7,800	\$1,716	\$390
<b>Volunteer Intern</b>	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Volunteer Student</b>	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Office Director</b>	\$9,000	\$1,980	\$450
<b>Accountant</b>	\$9,000	\$1,980	\$450
<b>Communications Social Media Accounts</b>	\$4,000	\$880	\$200
<b>Teacher Assistant</b>	\$7,000	\$1,540	\$350
<b>CFO</b>	\$15,000	\$3,300	\$750
<b>President</b>	\$20,000	\$4,400	\$1,000
<b>Executive Assistant</b>	\$14,000	\$3,080	\$700
<b>Driver/ Facility Director</b>	\$9,000	\$1,980	\$450

JJ, President Autistic Son, Project Assistant	\$7,000	\$1,540	\$350
Monthly Total	\$231,800	\$50,996	\$11,590
Total Yearly (Pesos)	\$2,781,600	\$611,952	\$139,080
Total Yearly (USD)	\$139,080	\$30,598	\$6,954

\* IMSS covers government health insurance, disability, and retirement fund

### Hay Esperanza Payroll Tax Expenses in Pesos

Pay Once A Year		Annual Total Payroll Taxes
Xmas Annual Bonus 2 Weeks Payout, Dec.	Every Yr Worked Per Employee	
** <u>Per Employee</u>	*** <u>25%</u>	
\$4,500	\$563	\$34,223
\$4,500	\$563	\$34,223
\$6,500	\$813	\$49,433
\$4,500	\$563	\$34,223
\$3,500	\$438	\$26,618
\$2,000	\$250	\$15,210
\$7,500	\$938	\$57,038
\$4,500	\$563	\$34,223
\$4,500	\$563	\$34,223
\$7,500	\$938	\$57,038
\$4,500	\$563	\$34,223
\$7,500	\$938	\$57,038
\$0	\$0	\$0
\$3,500	\$438	\$26,618
\$3,900	\$488	\$29,660
\$0	\$0	\$0

\$0	\$0	\$0
\$4,500	\$563	\$34,223
\$4,500	\$563	\$34,223
\$2,000	\$250	\$15,210
\$3,500	\$438	\$26,618
\$7,500	\$938	\$57,038
\$10,000	\$1,250	\$76,050
\$7,000	\$875	\$53,235
\$4,500	\$563	\$34,223
\$3,500	\$438	\$26,618
<b>\$115,900</b>	<b>\$14,488</b>	
<b>\$115,900</b>	<b>\$14,488</b>	<b>\$881,420</b>
<b>\$5,795</b>	<b>\$724</b>	<b>\$44,070.98</b>

\*\* By law if an employee worked all year, then as the employer, I have to payout a Christmas bonus of 2 weeks

\*\*\* Potential expense depending on employee. By law an employee gets a 25% bonus by December 20th for every year they are employed based on 6 days of vacation

*Expense List*

### Hay Esperanza Expense List

	<u>Expense Type</u>	<u>USD</u>	<u>Pesos</u>	<u>Description</u>
<b>Start-Up Cost to Register Company as Nonprofit</b>	Start Up Costs	\$450.00	9,000.00	Register Company in Mexico NGO
<b>Proposed Rent for Building</b>	Rent	\$3,300.00	66,000.00	5500/Month
<b>Create Website</b>	Marketing	\$400.00	8,000.00	Website Creation for Autistic
<b>Start-Up Marketing Campaign</b>	Marketing	\$200.00	4,000.00	Material for Marketing
<b>Car Insurance</b>	Auto	\$480.00	9,600.00	800/Month Car Insurance
<b>Car Maintenance</b>	Auto	\$600.00	12,000.00	1000/Month Car Maintenance
<b>Car- Gas</b>	Auto	\$2,400.00	48,000.00	4000/Month Gas Auto
<b>SIAPA- Water Company</b>	Utilities	\$250.00	5,000.00	Year
<b>Phone and Internet Package</b>	Utilities	\$420.00	8,400.00	700/Month Internet
<b>Electricity Bill</b>	Utilities	\$480.00	9,600.00	800/Month Energy
<b>Building Insurance</b>	Insurance	\$2,500.00	50,000.00	Year, Flood, Earthquake, Fire Insurance
<b>Building Security Cameras</b>	Building Costs	\$900.00	18,000.00	Year Building Costs
<b>Office Food</b>	Office Exp.	\$360.00	7,200.00	600/month Cafeteria Expenses
<b>Office Supplies and Classroom Lessons</b>	Office Exp.	\$1,800.00	36000.00	3000/Month Office Supplies
<b>Program Database Plus Annual Service</b>	Office Exp.	\$100.00	2100.00	Year Subscription
<b>Accounting Program Quickbooks Plus</b>	Office Exp.	\$577.00	12000.00	1000/Month Quickbooks Subscription
<b>Total Cost per Year</b>		<b>\$15,217.00</b>	<b>304,900.00</b>	

*Income Statement*

**Hay Esperanza  
Income Statement  
Year 1**

<b>Income</b>	<b>Pesos</b>	<b>USD</b>
Full Enrollment Tuition (Groups A-C)	2,941,056.00	\$147,052.80
Operating with Full-Time Employee Salary Minimum		
<b>Expenses</b>		
<b>Payroll Expenses</b>		
Salaries	2,781,600.00	\$133,164.00
Payroll Taxes	<u>881,419.50</u>	<u>\$44,070.98</u>
Total Payroll Expenses	<b>3,663,019.50</b>	<b>\$177,234.98</b>
<b>Other Expenses</b>		
Autos	69,600.00	\$3,480.00
Building Costs	18,000.00	\$900.00
Insurance	50,000.00	\$2,500.00
Marketing	12,000.00	\$600.00
Office Expenses	57,300.00	\$2,837.00
Rent	66,000.00	\$3,300.00
Start Up Costs	9,000.00	\$450.00
Utilities	<u>23,000.00</u>	<u>\$1,150.00</u>
	-	
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>304,900.00</b>	<b>15,217.00</b>
<b>Net Profit/(Loss)</b>	<b>(1,026,863.50)</b>	<b>(45,399.18)</b>

**Summary**

Creating Hay Esperanza will be a big project and a game-changer for the people of Mexico as a society. The public's view of the most vulnerable will transform. The employers' resistance to allowing inclusion and bringing about change to their hiring processes will change for the positive and be refreshing to see. The families will likely come to view their autistic loved ones with a new pair of eyes and not worry if their caregivers pass away or get sick because they

have confidence the student can become independent. Hay Esperanza will reach its overall goals as it works collectively using its three strategies to create new systems to strengthen our assets in the workforce.

Hay Esperanza will teach its participants to take advantage of the employment preparation classes, enhance their best talent, and amaze others with the new knowledge they have gained. The autistic adult will learn to demonstrate to their communities that they can contribute and not be a burden. The students and Hay Esperanza will bring down stigmas and put the word out there that we are a nonprofit center created to help others succeed.

## Appendix A: Lesson Plan: Choosing the Right Job

### *Hay Esperanza*

#### Lesson Plan: Choosing the Right Job

Instructor Juana Course \_\_\_\_\_ Title of Lesson Choosing the Right Job

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Class Duration 2 hours

**Objective:** This is what you want your students to be able to do by the end of your lesson. You may have more than one objective.

The learner will learn about a famous autism activist, Temple Grandin, who has done much research in handling livestock, the autism spectrum, and who has listed recommended jobs for autistic students. The students will work with a partner to compile the job opportunities that interest them and compare them to the recommendations of Temple Grandin.

#### **Materials and Supplies:**

Load website [https://www.ted.com/speakers/temple\\_grandin](https://www.ted.com/speakers/temple_grandin), <http://www.grandin.com/temple.html>, [http://espectroautista.info/tg\\_trabajo.html#lista1](http://espectroautista.info/tg_trabajo.html#lista1). Students will take notes with a pen or pencil of their choice. Need projector, white board, white board markers, and board eraser. [http://espectroautista.info/tg\\_trabajo.html#lista1](http://espectroautista.info/tg_trabajo.html#lista1) – The teacher will print 7 copies; 6 copies for the students and 1 copy for the teacher to use. The teacher will place the full article under a sheet protector so the activity can be cleaned and used again afterward.

**Assessment:** How will you know that your students have accomplished your objective?

The students will be assessed by evaluating how they follow directions plus work on their own and with a partner. We will also analyze their classroom participation and their work with their



partner. Lastly, they will do a cross analysis applying knowledge and skills they have just learned.

**Standards:** Teachers will inform students of expected performance and the knowledge or skills they should be able to demonstrate and in specific ways. Teachers will identify the curriculum standards that their lesson addresses.

In the beginning, the students will write out their list of jobs individually, and then they will need to find a partner to do their cross-analysis. In the end, the students will present their work in front of the class.

### **Teaching with Guided Practice Simultaneously**

**Input or Content:** Key information that teachers will present or provide for students to accomplish their objective. These include class assignments or practices that will help students accomplish the lesson objective. Students will demonstrate learning by working through an activity or exercise under the teacher's direct supervision and assistance. The teacher will monitor students' initial practices to catch errors and to provide specific feedback on their progress.

- The teacher will present and read the web page to the students  
[https://www.ted.com/speakers/temple\\_grandin](https://www.ted.com/speakers/temple_grandin)
- The teacher will pass out the copies for [http://espectroautista.info/tg\\_trabajo.html#lista1](http://espectroautista.info/tg_trabajo.html#lista1), and as a class, the students will take turns reading it. The teacher will interject when the student reads a word that should be added to their vocabulary or explain on a deeper level what they are reading to check for comprehension.
- The student independently will write out their dream jobs and then look for a partner. Teachers will encourage them to work with someone they have not worked with before.

- Once with chosen partners, the two students will compare their lists and speak about their writing.
- The teacher will return to the board to fill out the T-chart with the jobs that the students have identified. It will be a classroom effort to fill the board.
- Then, the teacher will add the different lists that Temple Grandin wrote noting the better jobs for autistic people of different levels, ones for which they have a better chance to be hired.
- The students will then work with their partner again to compare it with the charts to see if their chosen list has actual jobs that they can do. If necessary, the students will cross out jobs that most likely will make them not succeed once they finally know the actual work it takes to do that job.
- The students will share their findings with the class.

**Modeling:** Showing examples of what is expected as an end product or demonstrating a process you want students to use.

The teacher will draw a T-chart on the board, and the students will copy the example on their notebooks. Secondly, the teacher will model specific ways in which the students will analyze the charts after the teacher explains it.

**Instructional Strategies:** Teachers will skillfully present the content and information necessary for the students to achieve the lesson objective. Examples: PowerPoint, brainstorming, small groups (cooperative learning), webpage, demonstration, role-play, graphs, charts, and videos.

The students will have something in their hands that they can manipulate and reference anytime they need to go back. The students will conduct cooperative learning as a class and with their

partner one-on-one. The teacher will use the board to explain what activities they need to demonstrate, and in turn, the students will listen to the teacher and enhance their auditory skills.

Lastly, the student will receive a copy of the chart with simple definitions of each job task.

**Checking for Understanding:** Teacher will evaluate students' understanding regarding the lesson taught. Along the way, they will ask questions and monitor student understanding by asking them for a "thumbs up or down." Teachers may also ask students to use a graphic organizer or learning log?

To check for understanding, the teacher and the classroom aid(s) will move around in the class to check in with each group individually.

**Independent Practice:** After students have completed guided practice successfully with teacher supervision and feedback, they are ready to work alone. Teachers can assign relevant activities or assignments for students to practice alone, without the teacher's help or supervision. Independent Practice, or working alone with limited assistance, can be practiced at home, in class alone, at work, or in community classrooms.

The students first work on their own before working with a classmate. For homework, the student will receive an assignment to develop three job opportunities that they can apply for.

These job descriptions should be different from the ones they developed with a partner in class.

They should turn in that homework the next time they come to class.

**Closure:** Actions or statements designed to bring a lesson presentation to a conclusion. Closure helps students make sense out of what they have recently learned. To close well, teachers should review the key points of the lesson.

Teacher can also show pictures of different people working in different occupations. The teacher will ask students if they see themselves doing that job, and if they do, ask them to raise their

hand and explain why. The same question applies to students who did not raise their hands so they can explain why they would not be able to do that line of work.

Attached is the main article that will be used during the lesson.

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## Choosing the Right Job for People with Autism or Asperger's Syndrome

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**Temple Grandin**

**1999**

**Translation: Jimena Drake**

Autistic/Asperger's applicants should choose the job regarding their strongest talents and skills. That said, knowing and remembering these skills may be a challenge. Both high- and low-functioning individuals have very poor working memory (short-term memory), but they almost always have good long-term memory, better than normal people. I have big problems with tasks that require working with working memory. I cannot attend to several tasks at the same time. The [Schedule 1](#) is a ratio of "bad" jobs, with which I have much difficulty. The [Schedule 2](#) contains easy jobs for visual thinkers like me. I find it difficult to do mathematical abstractions like algebra, and most of the tasks in [List 2](#) they do not require mathematical complications. Many of the jobs for visual thinkers also work for people with dyslexia. [List 2](#) jobs do not require rapid information processing or use of working memory. But they would take full advantage of my visual thinking and long-term memory. The [Schedule 3](#) It contains works that non-visual thinkers, but good with numbers, music, or concrete activities, can do well. For all types of Autism and Asperger's Syndrome, tasks that require working with working memory should be ruled out. If I were a computer, I would have a hard drive capable of storing ten times more information than an ordinary computer, but my processor would be small. Using computer terminology, I have a 1000 Gb hard drive and a 286 processor. Normal people can only

have 10 Gb of disk space and a Pentium for a processor. I can't do two or three things at the same time.

Some guidelines for the work of people with autism or Asperger syndrome:

- Tasks must have goals and a well-defined ending
- Sell your work, not your personality. Make a portfolio of your work.
- Your boss must understand your social limitations.

It is important for people with autism or Asperger's syndrome to obtain a specialization degree in an area that allows them to find work. Computer science is a good choice, because many programmers likely have Asperger syndrome or some of its traits. Other specializations may be Accounting, Design, Library Science, Art (with an emphasis on commercial art and designs). Political Science, History, Pure Mathematics, Commerce, Language should be avoided. However, you can study (for example) Librarianship with a specialization in History, but it will be the title of librarian that will help you get a job. Individuals still in high school education should be encouraged to take courses in drawing, computer programming, or commercial art. This will help them feel motivated and serve as a refuge from boredom. Low-income families may wonder how to access a computer for their children. Used equipment can be obtained from companies that renew their machines. Many people do not know that there are unused computers in the warehouses of schools, banks, or offices. They won't be state of the art, but they are more than adequate for a student. In conclusion: people with Autism or Asperger Syndrome have to compensate for their lack of social skills by specializing very well in tasks in which they are skilled, so that managers want to "buy" that skill despite social weaknesses. That is why it is so important to make a good portfolio to present your work. You will need to learn some minimal social skills, but you can make friends at work by sharing common fields of

interest with other people in your field. Most of my social life is related to my work. I am friends with people with whom I share an interest in the same job.

### **List 1 - Bad jobs for people with High Functioning Autism or Asperger Syndrome: tasks that require a lot of working memory**

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- **Cashier:** giving change quickly requires too much working memory.
- **Restaurant Cook** - Too many orders need to be remembered and cooking different things at the same time is difficult.
- **Waiter:** especially difficult if you have to remember orders from several tables.
- **Dealer in a casino (Croupier):** too much to remember.
- **Taximeter dealer:** too much to remember.
- **Stenographer:** problems processing information.
- **Airline Agent** - You are dealing with angry people when flights are canceled.
- **Merchant:** totally impossible.
- **Air traffic controller:** excessive information and tension.
- **Receptionist and telephone operator:** problems when the switch is busy.

### **List 2 - Good jobs for visual thinkers**

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- **Computer Programming** - An open field for many jobs, especially in industrial automation, software design, business computing, and network systems.
- **Draftsman:** designs, computer drawings. This job offers many opportunities. Drawing is an excellent gateway to technical work. I know people who started out as draftsmen in a company and then went on to design and install entire factories. To be really good at drawing, you need to know how to draw with a pencil. I observed that most of the people who make beautiful drawings on computers first learned to draw by hand.

- **Commercial art:** advertising and magazine layout, which can be done as freelance work.
- **Photography:** Still photo and video, television camera, as freelance work.
- **Equipment design:** in various industries; sometimes those who start out as a draftsman then go on to design industrial machinery.
- **Animal Trainer or Veterinary Technician** - Dog training, behavior problem consultant.
- **Auto mechanic:** they can visualize the integral operation of the vehicle.
- **Computer repair:** they can visualize problems in computers and networks.
- **Appliance repair:** they can start a small business.
- **Handicrafts of various kinds:** ceramics, jewelry, wood carving, etc.
- **Laboratory technician:** to modify and build specialized equipment.
- **Web Designer** - Finding a Small Market for Freelance Tasks.
- **Construction worker:** carpenter or welder. They can be good jobs for visual thinkers, but some may not be trained due to motor or coordination problems.
- **Videogame designer:** leave this field out. The market is crowded, and jobs are scarce. There are many better jobs in the areas of industry, communication, and software design. Another bad thing about this task is exposure to violent images.
- **Programmer:** Visual thinkers would be very good at this, but there is more competition in this sector than in industrial or commercial programming. The business is employing immigrants because there is little supply of good programmers.
- **Building maintenance:** repair of pipes, windows and other elements in apartment buildings, hotels or offices.
- **Factory maintenance:** repair of machinery.

### List 3 - Good jobs for non-visual thinkers: those who are good at math, music, or concrete activities

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- **Accounting:** they can be good at specializing in areas such as income tax returns.
- **Librarianship:** reference librarian. Help people find information in the library or on the Internet
- **Computer programming:** those with little visualization can work on independent tasks.
- **Engineering:** electrical, electronic, or chemical engineer.
- **Journalist:** with great accuracy for the facts, they can do freelance work  
**Editor:** manuscript correction. Many are employed independently by large publishers.
- **Taxi driver:** know where each street is
- **Inventory controller:** remember the goods stored in a warehouse.
- **Tuner for pianos and other musical instruments:** can be a separate task.
- **Bank teller:** accurate to count money, requires less operational memory than a commercial teller that must make change quickly.
- **Clerk in archives:** knows where everything is archived.
- **Telemarketer:** You must repeat the same phrase over and over again, speaking on the phone. It can be a problem if the environment is noisy. Telemarketing avoids many social problems.
- **Statesman:** works in many fields such as census offices, investigations, industrial quality controls, departments of agriculture, etc.



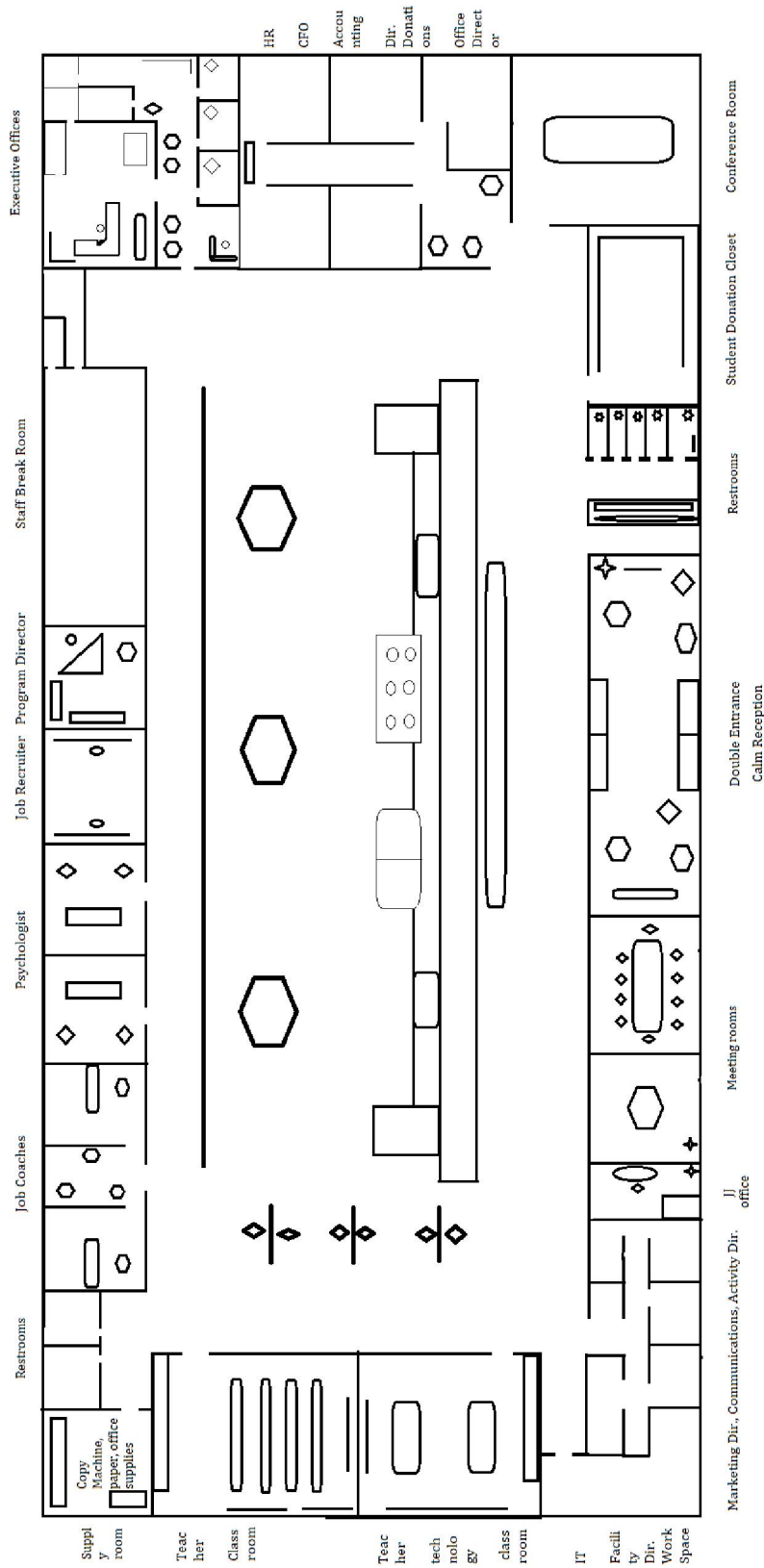
- **Physicist or Mathematician:** There are very few jobs in this area. Only the very bright can get and keep their jobs. There are more job openings in accounting or computer programming.

#### **List 4 - Jobs for autistic non-verbal or with low verbal skills**

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- **Sorting books in a library:** They can memorize the record system and the location on the shelves.
- **Assembly tasks in a factory:** especially if the environment is calm.
- **Photocopist:** make photocopies. Print jobs can be ordered by someone else.
- **Cleaning tasks:** wash floors, windows, bathrooms and offices.
- **Shelving restocking:** in various stores.
- **Recycled silver:** sorting tasks.
- **Warehouses:** entry of trucks, stacking of boxes.
- **Gardening:** mowing the lawn, taking care of gardens.
- **Data entry:** a bad job if you have fine motor problems.
- **Fast food restaurants:** cleaning or cooking tasks that require little immediate memory.
- **Plant care:** watering plants in large buildings.

## Appendix B: Hay Esperanza Floor Plan

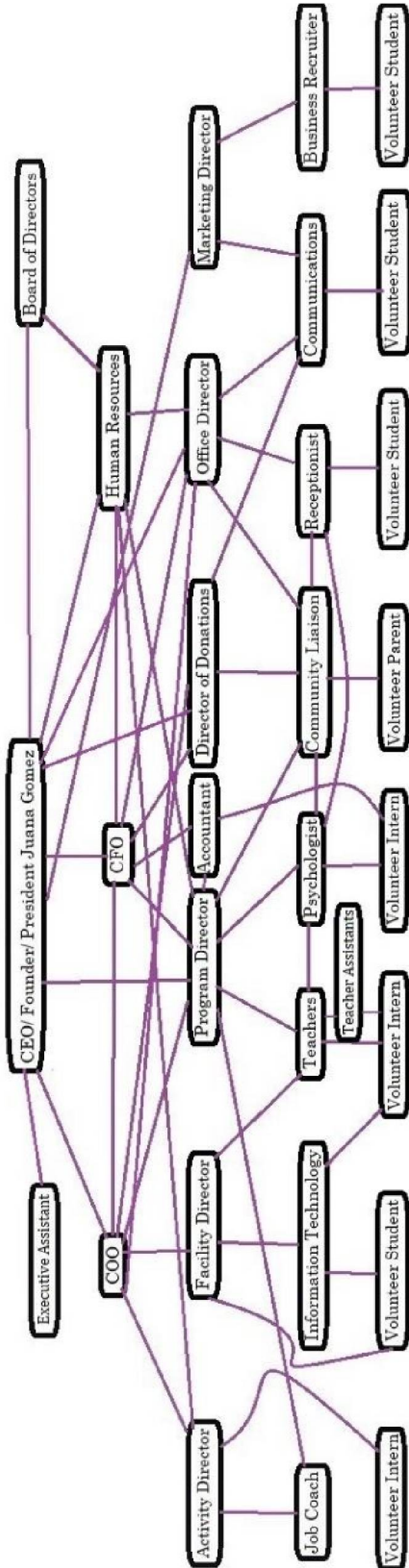


## Hay Esperanza Floor Plan

In the middle of the floor plan:  
 8 cubicles for individual study/ eat  
 Dining Hall Area / Community Kitchen

In each work area dedicated storage/ filing cabinets  
 Long reception desk to accommodate 3 people  
 Receptionist, Community Liaison, Phone Assistant

## Appendix C: Hay Esperanza Organizational Chart



## Hay Esperanza Organizational Chart

\* As the President's son, Jamie Jonathian (JJ), he will assist with various projects in which he feels comfortable in. He has autism with a great heart. He will have his own office to do his assigned projects and have his own space.

This is the vision for once the organization is fully operating on its own.

Appendix D: Collective Leadership Compass

# COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP COMPASS



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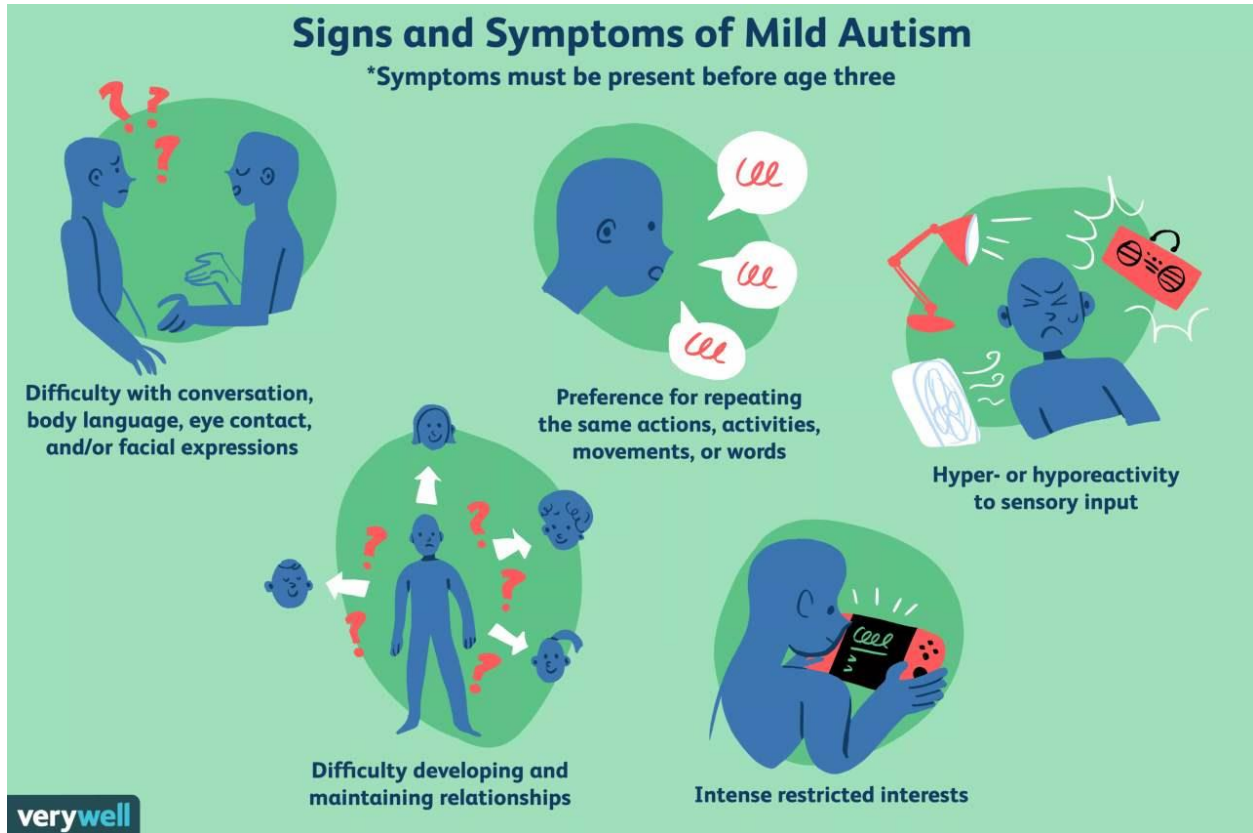
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## Appendix B: Signs and Symptoms of Mild Autism



[Mild Autism in Adults and Children: Symptoms & Support \(verywellhealth.com\)](https://www.verywellhealth.com)



## Appendix C: Asperger's Versus High Functioning Autism

### ASPERGER'S VERSUS HIGH FUNCTIONING AUTISM

Characteristics	ASPERGER'S	HIGH FUNCTIONING AUTISM
Definition	Usual autistic symptoms but obsessed with one field or area	Usual autistic symptoms but not obsessed with one field or area
Language	Language skills development is not delayed	Language skills development is delayed
Motor skills	Quite poorly developed	Not as poorly developed
Independence	More likely to live independently	Less likely to live independently
Diagnosis	Diagnosis is made at about 7 or 8 years of age	Diagnosis is usually made by 3 years of age
Treatment	Cognitive behavior therapy	Cognitive behavior therapy, and language and speech therapy

## Appendix D: Signs and Symptoms of ADHD

Signs & Symptoms of ADHD		
Inattention	Hyperactivity	Impulsivity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difficulty Concentrating</li> <li>• Makes mistakes in schoolwork</li> <li>• Unrelated thoughts</li> <li>• Appears to not be listening when spoken to directly</li> <li>• Performance is task dependent</li> <li>• Often loses things</li> <li>• Poor self-regulation of behavior</li> <li>• Problems learning new things.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unable to sit still</li> <li>• Appears restless and fidgety</li> <li>• Bounces from one activity to the next</li> <li>• Often tries to do more than one thing at once.</li> <li>• Often talks excessively</li> <li>• Fidgets with hands or feet in seat when sitting still is expected</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has difficulty thinking before acting</li> <li>• Problems waiting his/her turn</li> <li>• Blurts out answers before questions have been finished</li> <li>• Often interrupts or intrudes on others</li> </ul>

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