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MEDIA RELEASE

Ruttger's hires students through Brandon Project

Deerwood, Minn. – April 3, 2018 – In a partnership with the Brainerd School District's Special Education Department, Ruttger's Bay Lake Lodge will hire a handful of students through a new workplace transition program called the Brandon Project.

The Brandon Project is a program that helps students to transition into the workforce by providing job training specific to the resort industry, transportation to and from the resorts, and on-the-job supervision.

Ruttger's is one of two area resorts who will participate in the Brandon Project and will hire a total of up to seven Brandon Project students. The students will work in both housekeeping and in various capacities in the kitchen, including dishwashing.

"Ruttger's is thrilled to partner with the Brandon Project," Ruttger's Human Resources Director Paula Soderberg said. "For us it's a major win-win. We get much-needed, high-quality help in critical areas of our operation, plus we get to support a great program."

As part of the Brandon Project, school space at Brainerd High School's South Campus was transformed into the Brandon Project Training Academy - replicas of guest rooms and a kitchen similar to Ruttger's so the students can be trained in a realistic setting.

STARS Transition Coordinator Teresa Christiansen and other staff from the Brainerd School District have been training the students throughout the school year. She said that the students have done very well and will be ready to begin work when the school year ends in June.

"It's exciting to see the potential for the students and their families," Christiansen said.

The Brandon Project was the brainchild of Director of Special Education (Paul Bunyan Education Cooperative) Heidi Hahn who saw a need for students to transition into the workforce and a resort industry in need of quality workers. She pursued and was awarded a grant from the National Joint Powers Alliance (NJPA) that allowed for the purchase of two vehicles that will transport the students to the resorts and pay for school district staff to help supervise the students while at work.

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About Ruttger's Bay Lake Lodge... Ruttgers' Bay Lake Lodge is a premier golf and fishing resort on the shores of Bay Lake in Deerwood, Minn. The Ruttger family has owned and operated the resort since its opening in 1898, making it among the oldest resorts in Minnesota. Priding itself on treating all guests like family, Ruttger's features 27 holes of golf, full marina service, fine dining, retail establishments, meeting and convention space, a spa and more.