A Vocational Training Center for Individuals with ASD
and other cognitive disabilities

The design aesthetic for ROOTS will be driven by the motifs of nature. Like nature, the focus of this vocational training center will be the growth and nourishment of post-high individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder looking to further develop themselves and sprout up into the professional world. Individuals will be given the opportunity to learn new skills in an environment that has well-planned acoustics, adjustable lighting, and thoughtfully designed space planning for an optimized learning environment. This center will be universally designed to meet the needs of ASD individuals, family members, and staff that will be utilizing the space.

### Design Statement

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The materials used in the Flexible Use Room were chosen for acoustical qualities and cleanability. Dr. Thomas S. Higbee stated in one of the primary interviews that acoustics can be one of the biggest distractions when it comes to people with ASD. Acoustical ceiling tiles, a cork wall, and felt acoustical panels address the function of sound in this space. In another primary interview Tashina Meaker mentioned that easily cleanable surfaces and movable furniture make for a more functional learning environment. The tables and chairs chosen for this space are movable and LVT flooring makes cleaning simple.

The inspiration for this room came from Dr. Thomas S. Higbee mentioning that a room for deprivation could be more valuable to an ASD individual than a stimulation room. The materials chosen for the sensory deprivation room are meant to provide a calm and comfortable experience. LVT flooring is used for ease of cleaning, and the deep blue paint in accordance with research showing a positive correlation to blue within the ASD population. An adult vestibular swing is placed in a nook of the room, and a built-in bench is upholstered for the main seating fixture of the room. The LED lighting fixtures in this room are fully adjustable and can be changed to different brightness settings depending on what a client's needs are. A water fountain station with an ADA dual drinking fountain is placed in the hallway. There are proper wheelchair turn around areas at every niche in the hallway.

The reception area has a custom built-in bench with fabric upholstery. The reception desk has an ADA side approach and a normal standing height. The LED lighting fixtures in this room are fully adjustable and can be changed to different brightness settings depending on what a client's needs are. A water fountain station with an ADA dual drinking fountain is placed in the hallway. There are proper wheelchair turn around areas at every niche in the hallway.