Design Statement
The Rise Center is a vocational training and transition space for adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). With the support of the community, people with autism are being integrated into society as independent individuals. The Rise Center seeks to cultivate these individuals by giving them a space that addresses their sensory needs to promote wellbeing and growth. This is a comforting and inviting atmosphere that supports individual success while facilitating interactions with others.

Research Findings
People with autism can be hypersensitive, meaning they are overly bothered by background noise, bright lights, being touched, and distracting movement. Other people can be hypo-sensitive, meaning they enjoy bright colors, lively noises, and certain scents. They can be comforted by tactile interaction and rocking or swaying. While these two states are most common, each person can be triggered by different sensations. Additionally, they tend to be more reactive to natural or artificial irritants (Gaines et al., p. 5).

Program Goals + Objectives
For many design considerations specific to people with autism, it is important to focus on space planning. We kept our layout straightforward by maintaining an unobstructed circulation flowline in a space can create a sense of comfort and accomplishment. The main circulation space is a transition zone to ease the passage from high to low areas of stimulation. To promote wayfinding, we implemented visual cues, such as lighting and color. The space is organized in a clear manner with all of the highly stimulating areas adjacent to each other.

To prevent distractions in the space, we chose a muted color scheme with a matte finish. Our color palette consists of muted blues, greens, and neutrals, with an accent of subtle pink. When considering flooring, we selected materials that did not have contrasting patterns and designs. We chose a neutral-colored tile that is neutral in color and has an organic, yet minimal pattern.

To control the acoustics in the space we specified Saint products to absorb sound. The felt products are 100% biodegradable, 100% VOC free, and contain no chemical retardants or harmful chemicals. This is important to eliminate the possibility of a person having an allergic reaction.

Primary Research + Conclusions
We visited an Independent Living Center in Southeast U.S. on October 5, 2018. This primary research study included a training on how to properly interact with people living with disabilities. It stressed the importance of accessibility and independent living for such an opportunity in society. We learned about the importance of spatial adjacencies in terms of the training room, work area, and kitchen. Clutter can be a stressor for people with ASD so custom casework is implemented to promote organization.

We reviewed Eden Autism Services as a guiding case study. Our research emphasized the importance of compartmentalization of spaces to provide unobstructed paths. Training and kitchen spaces require attention to detail when it comes to accessibility. We also learned it is important to use lighting controls such as dimmable fixtures and filtered sunlight. Fluorescent lighting can be distracting because they tend to flash. Additionally, it is imperative to avoid using transparent materials such as glass partitions in high traffic areas (Meacock).

The kitchen area is fully enclosed to prevent distraction and avoid any unnecessary sights from entering the rest of the building. Commercial grade appliances are used, with an under the counter fridge, freezer, and dishwasher as well as height adjustable sinks, cook tops, and prep tables for easy accessibility. An angled mirror mounted above the stove top allows for complete visibility for those using wheelchairs.
The outdoor courtyard provides an additional sensory area with tactile activities such as a water feature, wind chimes, and a texture path to walk on. The garden is a place for people to decompress and experience the gratification of growing their own plants. There is an enclosed respite area outdoors as well to provide a quiet space for relaxation. The sensory courtyard is not directly connected to the interior sensory space because the door to the outside could be a distraction.

**Interface Carpet**
- Urban Retreat
- Wilsonart Laminate

**Texture Woodgrains**
- Park Elm

**FilzFelt**
- Lagune
- Asche Fringe

**1. Plywood Slats on Steel Frame**
**2. Gypsum Board**
**3. Felt Upholstery**
**4. Recessed Lighting**
**5. Extended Soffit**

**Transition Space Bench Detailing**
1. Plywood Slats on Steel Frame
2. Gypsum Board
3. Felt Upholstery
4. Recessed Lighting
5. Extended Soffit

**Sun Study**

The Rise Center sits on a busy street corner in Boston, Massachusetts, one of the few states that requires insurers to cover treatments for autism without restrictions on age or price (NCSL). Additionally, based on a survey by Autism Speaks, people with autism are more likely to live closer to treatment and respite facilities. The close proximity to the Boston Medical Center makes The Rise Center more easily accessible to those who need it most.

**The Rise Center's Logo**
The logo of the Rise Center is a semi-circle with a dot ascending along its path. This represents the individually reaching their full potential and ascending along their own path towards success. The muted blue chosen for the branding is simple and memorable.

**Branding**
The Rise Center is inserted into the fabric of the community, providing space for development and flexibility for the future. The calming blue chosen for the branding communicates safety and tranquility to the community.