

PARTICIPANT PROFILES

A-PLUS APPRENTICE LLC

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About the Organization

A-Plus Apprentice creates community-based employment to address unemployment and reskilling to improve socio-economic outcomes for high school students up to age 21, especially those with autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

With New Jersey Training Provider status pending, we are in the process of recruiting a sponsor and other employers to join us in making a local socio-economic difference by accepting special needs students for on-the-job training in official apprentice programs. For many students, this is



<https://www.aplusapprentice.com>

their only path to escape the futility of job seeking while
“different.”

Project Lead



**Helena van der
Merwe**

Founder and CEO

Featured in Innovate® New Jersey's, inaugural publication, Helena is an accomplished international and domestic marketing leader, strategist and solution provider in a number of disparate fields. With A-Plus Apprentice, her vision of matching differently-abled students with real-world employers is poised to commence its pilot program. Helena is also a Rutgers Entrepreneur Pioneer Initiative graduate, a Summer Technology Entrepreneurship Program (STEP) instructor, a NASA Blue Sky Space Radiation participant, a presenter at the Committee on Space Radiation 2021 and at the first-ever small business showcase at the 2021 Space and Missile Defense Symposium. In the apprentice business, her firm is a licensed temporary employee and training provider. Another venture is a Hudson County traffic sign and paint supply prime contractor.

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