



Teacher's aide Sherrie Frayer works on the active board with Michelle, a high school student at Selby School on Wednesday.

STAFF PHOTO / DAN WAGNER

By [Gabrielle Russon](#)

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On a recent day, students practiced counting money on a smart board. In a neighboring classroom, there were shelves stacked with books and board games as well as tools used to teach vocational skills. Already, there are six students and the school could potentially expand to 14 later this year, said Carolyn Marchbank, a coordinator at Community Haven.

Tuition ranges between \$11,000 to \$15,000 a year, although the students are eligible for McKay Scholarships that cover some or all of the cost. The high school expanded program is important because the students learn academics but also how to work with customers, count money and be dependable workers, the school organizers said.

"For our students, it was a niche. They needed that vocational training," Marchbank said. As adults, they will likely go on to work part-time jobs in the community or get involved in another Community Haven adult program, similar to a group across the hall from the Selby School. The daily grind was slowing down as a group of adults in the day program finished their work earlier this week. A man shot hoops at an arcade game; another played with a jigsaw puzzle.

The next day, the adults would return to their jobs assembling 400 hinges for commercial refrigerators. The building that housed the small high school had been part of a \$204,000 renovation project. Using private donations, Community Haven remodeled the school, built a new roof and added a technology room filled with nine computers and a smart board. Included in the revamped space is a new upscale resale shop that will help fund Community Haven programs. To donate items or check store hours, contact Julie Audet at 941-685-8224.

SARASOTA - With a renovation project completed and a new private school opening, Community Haven leaders say they have much to celebrate. The agency, located on a 32-acre shady campus on a quiet street near University Parkway, is holding a ribbon-cutting ceremony next month. The nonprofit is known for housing, training and teaching people with disabilities. As part of its latest endeavor, the Selby School opened Aug. 19 as a private school for high schoolers with disabilities. "We've wanted to grow this dream," said Carolyn Johnson, the school's director. "We're a nonprofit agency. We need the funding sources. It's a dream that's finally coming to fruition."