



*Seeking Employment, Equality and Community for
People with Developmental Disabilities*

SEEC Insider

October 2020 | Issue Twenty-Five

National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM)



October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM). In celebration of NDEAM, SEEC hosted our 6th annual employer recognition event on Wednesday, October 14th from 4-5pm with over 150 people in virtual attendance! In recognition of the 30th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and celebrating those who support an inclusive workplace, we were honored to have Judith Heumann as our keynote speaker! Judith Heumann is an internationally recognized American Disability Rights Activist, author and movie star and was incredibly powerful and enlightening.

During the ceremony, SEEC recognized those employers who had made a significant contribution to an inclusive workplace and their employees.

Rising Star Award: Vincent Williams at W.S. Jenks

Recognized: Mark McNeel, NIH

Alvandi Award: Michael Hamm and Jonathon Sumner at Safeway

Recognized: Matt DiGilio, PS Montgomery

Customized Award: Champions Oncology

Recognized: Haile Orchard, LLC

Mentorship Award: Jennifer J. Freese, NIH

Recognized: Machiko Whitaker & Thomas Romero, Courtyard by Marriott, Silver Spring

Recognized: Cambria Hotel Rockville

Inclusion Works Award: CVS and Yuchen Gu and Steve Brudin

Recognized: Big Lots, Montgomery Village, MD (Waid Lechner)

Recognized: Soulfull Café

Ambassador Award: Balance Gym

Recognized: Daniel Campos, Campos Financial Group

Thanks to everyone who was able to join us and all those who support inclusive hiring!

#ADA30 #NDEAM75

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W.S. Jenks & Son Hires a Third SEEC-Supported Staff Person!

By Pam Toole, Lead Employer Outreach Consultant



Two years ago, Mike Seigel at W.S. Jenks & Son hired Vincent to stock shelves at his family owned and run hardware store in Washington, DC. With the mentorship and support that Mike gave Vincent, Vincent grew in his job to quickly take on more responsibilities, even teaching himself the cash register. Two years later, Mike has now hired his third SEEC-supported staff person, Montez. Vincent is now helping to train Montez! A huge thank you to Mike and W.S. Jenks & son for showing how inclusion works and for giving back to the local community so all residents can #LiveWorkThrive!

Two New SEEC Employees are Project SEARCH Graduates!

Delavar and Sizhe are the newest additions to the SEEC IT department. With growing virtual needs within the organization, these two former Project SEARCH graduates are able to join the Help Desk team to assist with technology questions and assistance. We couldn't be happier to be able to utilize their skills within our organization!

Welcome to our new SEEC Employees!



Adjusting to A Virtual World: Working During COVID-19

October 22, 2020 | 8:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

This year marks the 75th anniversary of National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM). NDEAM celebrates workers with disabilities and the importance of inclusive hiring practices. This year's NDEAM month theme is "Increasing Access and Opportunity."

Please join SEEC, Kennedy Krieger Institute (KKI) and Companions Inc for two panel discussions on the employment experiences of individuals with disabilities and direct support professionals during the COVID-19 pandemic. Joe Postow with SEEC's Employment Services and Johnathon Sumner, an essential worker and member of the SEEC community, will be participating in the two panels to help discuss important topics highlighted by COVID-19 such as being an essential worker, furlough, and adjusting to new workplace practices.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

Our New Cohort of Project SEARCH Interns Started This Fall!

By Rebecca VanGuilder, Program Coordinator, Project SEARCH



Our new cohort of Project SEARCH interns started last week on 9/14/20 for the 2020-2021 program year. This year, Project SEARCH programs at the Smithsonian Institute, Montgomery County Government, and the National Institutes of Health have formed a combined intern cohort of 12 total interns. We have started with a new virtual platform for the beginning of the program year with a plan to add in-person components and internships

after the first couple of months. Although we are doing things a little differently for this program year due to COVID, nothing is going to stop us from having an amazing year!

We had an excellent first week and interns are learning how to navigate the class component of the program through the use of Zoom and other great technological tools and apps at their fingertips. This could not be possible without the truly wonderful partnership and collaborative efforts between SEEC, Ivymount, DORS, MD DDA, RSA, our host businesses and community partners, and of course the new interns and their families. We look forward to what this year will bring! Good luck to the new class of 2021! You are all rockstars!

Cindy Kauffman Inducted Into ANCOR Foundation Legacy Leaders Circle



Cindy Kauffman, SEEC's Director of Strategic Operations, was inducted into the **2020 ANCOR American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR) Foundation's Legacy Leaders Circle**! Cindy has been steadfastly involved with ANCOR's government relations advocacy through her role on ANCOR's Board of Representatives. This honor recognizes significant contributions to the landscape of supports and services for people with intellectual, developmental disabilities.

Please join us in congratulating Cindy!

SEEC's FootGolf Event Raised a Record Breaking \$17,000!

By Katrina Kugel, Events Manager



We celebrated SEEC's 3rd Annual FootGolf fundraiser presented by HUB International on September 26th. This was our first hybrid event; 15 teams played in person at the Sligo Creek golf course in Silver Spring, and another 10 teams and people we support played from home. For safety reasons, people signed up for the event as a pre-formed team and everyone had their own assigned tee time.

[Click here to watch a video with photos and highlights from the day. Fun was had by all!](#)

Congratulations to the day's winners:

- The staff at ResInnova and the new ResInnova Labs for being on the winning team on the course
- The Niedner family who won for their play-from-home photos
- Ted McCrehan, who had the winning ticket for the Silver Branch Brewing Company gift basket
- John Bogasky and family who won the FootGolf Fan basket in the raffle

Everyone was a winner for enjoying a safe outdoor activity to raise money for SEEC! We are thrilled to announce that we raised over \$17,000, a FootGolf event record.

The day was also special because it was Karen Lee's birthday! Thank you to Nothing Bundt Cakes for providing sweet treats, ResInnova for being our Promotional Sponsor, and all of our sponsors for their amazing support!

We hope you can join us next year!



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SUPPORTERS



Seth & Barbara Kaplan

Sheila, Ed & Bridget Novak

Team Great Scott



Maryland DSPs of the Year!



Congratulations to Silvia Villadeleon and Melissa Scales-Hamilton, both of whom were selected as Direct Support Professionals of the Year by the State of Maryland, the MD Department of Disabilities (MDOD) and the MD Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA). We at SEEC are very proud and appreciative of their hard work and dedication to Marylanders with disabilities.

This year the winners were presented with a Governor's Citation at a drive-thru event! Leaders from MDOD and DDA were on hand to present the winners with citations in a socially distanced way!

It's Important You Get Your Flu Shot This Fall

Employees are strongly encouraged to get their flu



shots sooner rather than later! It's especially important this year because the symptoms of COVID-19, a seasonal cold, and the flu have a lot of similarities, and mild cases of COVID-19 may go undetected! Be protected and protect those around you! Act now!

[Click here for more information!](#)

DSP of the Year: Melvin LoveJones

Each year SEEC recognizes two outstanding DSPs during DSP Appreciation Week, one as the DSP of the Year and the other as the DSP Rising Star (runner up).

Congratulations to Melvin LoveJones for winning this year's DSP of the Year award! Melvin is our fitness instructor and was chosen for the energy and passion he brings to each and every exercise class. Melvin is a part of the Community Engagement program but his class includes people SEEC supports across all programs.

Melvin's fitness classes are filled with excitement. Not only do the people we support keep moving during this time, but family members also share that they have been joining the classes too! Melvin has a way of making everyone in his class feel welcome and engaged. Thank you Melvin for supporting our SEEC families in their health and wellness!

Congratulations to Silvia Villadeleon for winning this year's Rising Star award! Silvia was selected for the incredible dedication to the people she supports and the initiative she demonstrates. Silvia is a member of the Rockville Team in the Community Engagement program.

With the transition to virtual learning, Silvia has developed creative virtual lessons, one of which was called "A Day at the Beach." A teacher at heart, Silvia has helped the people she supports in familiarizing numbers on a cellphone, learning American Sign Language and Spanish, using interviewing skills, and reading traffic signs and self-advocacy. Thank you Silvia for your imaginative and engaging supports while many are now at home!



301.576.9000 | www.seeonline.org

