



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

SEEC Insider

April 2020 | Issue Nineteen



We're In This Together

COVID-19 Update

Dear SEEC Staff,

I hope this communication finds everyone healthy and safe.

It's hard to believe it's been a month since we suspended our day services. Since that time it has been incredibly busy at SEEC as we work hard not just to react to what is happening now, but to prepare for the future. SEEC was one of the first agencies in the area to proactively close our office and suspend our day services and to institute wearing masks, even before the order came from state and federal government. We anticipated the stay at home ruling and proactively set up a schedule to minimize exposure by decreasing the number of staff in and out of homes and increasing the number of hours worked. We have been soliciting donations of masks, hand sanitizers, gloves, wipes and protective coverings for weeks and have been so impressed and grateful for the way the community has come together for us. We are constantly revising our policies and procedures to keep up with the way things are changing, whether it's increasing sick pay for our employees, encouraging remote work or closing the office to all but essential staff.

I continue to be incredibly impressed and proud of the way everyone is coming together to make sure that the people we support are safe and healthy. Our employees continue to be out in the community and in private residences daily making sure the people we support are well taken care of, getting to the jobs that are still open, and staying healthy. Thank you to each and every one of you for the work you are doing each and every day.

On a positive note, I am incredibly optimistic about how SEEC has grown bigger, better and stronger as a result of this experience. For example, staff are taking the time to do trainings they otherwise would not have been able to prioritize, and learning how to use technology in new ways including email, video conferencing and sharing of information quickly and efficiently. We are having daily morning check-ins with the leadership team to stay on top of every change as it happens and to react in a way that is strategic and

coordinated. We are developing processes and procedures and tracking accountability in new ways. This has certainly been a stressful time, but it's also been one of growth and improvement.

Many of you have asked how you can help. We are always looking for donations of masks, protective coverings and hand sanitizers and wipes. Having secured enough masks for our Direct Support Professionals (DSPs), we are now working to make sure that every DSP in the state of Maryland has a mask.

Additionally, due to COVID-19, we have had to cancel the SEEC gala, our biggest fundraiser of the year. We are still trying to raise money to reach our goal before what would have been the date of the gala, April 25th. Funds will be used to help cover rent, groceries, personal protective equipment for our staff and those we support, enrichment activities for people to do while in their homes and care packages for essential staff who are working around the clock during this crisis!

We received feedback that many people found the resources from last month's newsletter helpful, so once again we have provided a list of resources below we hope you'll find useful.

These are unprecedented times, and our top priority remains keeping the people we support and our employees healthy and safe. I hope you and your families are keeping well. Thank you all for the work you are doing. I am incredibly proud of this organization and the staff working here.

Best wishes,

Karen Lee
Executive Director

Inside This Issue

- Coronavirus Communications
- SEEC Gala is Cancelled
- Donations Are Coming In
- Engagement and Comfort during COVID-19
- Compass Pro Bono Grantee
- Resources



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Person Centered Supports NADSP Competency 14

by *Deborah Lawrence, Direct Support Professional, CEN*

Q: What does Providing Person Centered Supports mean to you and why it is important?

Providing Person centered support means providing an enabling environment for the persons i support to thrive. This form of support takes person's rights, choices, preferences, gifts, talents, skills, and fears into full considerations with the aim of empowering them to be as independent as they possibly can and fulfill their set goals and dreams. It ensures that persons are

- treated with dignity and respect,
- are able to have and build meaningful relationships,
- advocate for and pursue community inclusion,
- encouraged to maximize their talents and contribute to the community.

Q: What does it mean to you as a staff member providing supports for a person receiving services?

It means I have have a commitment to advocate and encourage self-advocacy, ensure that they are heard, provide the support they need in order to achieve their goals, ensure that they are at the core of plans, activities, with their needs, desires and values taken into consideration.

Q: What advice would you give staff members that are learning about doing Person Centered



Supports?

Person Centered support requires that there is nothing for the person without the person's needs, values, desires, and goals being heard. Support must be provided based on the person's needs

Q: What types of person centered supports are you most comfortable using?

Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope (PATHS). This method of support looks at the person's dreams, goals, needs, desires, preferences etc and helps to create goals to achieve these dreams following structured plans, using the resources and relationships available to equip and empower them to fulfill their goals/vision.

Q: Describe a time you used person centered practices to help a person set goals or outcomes?

One of such times was being present at their Individual Plan meetings. While reviewing the previous year's plan with regards to seeking employment, progress had been recorded with the volunteer job the person had and together we set a new goal to get a paid job.

Q: Describe a time you had to challenge a co-worker or supervisor to use person centered practices.

This happened a couple of years back when an activity schedule was drawn up for the person without checking with her and did not reflect her preferences.

Q: What was the reason and the result of the interaction?

There was a information about the person's activities but it was resolved and her favorite activities put back on her schedule.



Masks donated by Girl Scout Troop 834

The Donations Are Coming In!

Thank you to SEEC's dedicated employees who continue to provide critical supports to make sure the people we support are well taken care of and staying healthy. With difficulty gaining access to personal protective equipment (PPE) for our staff, we asked the community to come together to help provide those we support and our staff with homemade surgical masks and other PPE.

The overwhelming generosity of the community in response to this crisis has been truly inspiring! We have collected over 1,000 masks and other PPE that has since been distributed to SEEC employees providing supports, and next to our partner organizations and other DSPs throughout Maryland and DC. Our goal is



Derrick Wilson, a SEEC staffer, delivers activity kits made possible through the grant.

Engagement and Comfort During Covid-19 Crisis

Thanks to a generous grant from the Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council administered by the Arc of Maryland, SEEC staff delivered activity kits to more than 40 people who receive our Supported Living supports. Each kit contained an array of games, art supplies and sensory items designed to give people the means to continued learning, social engagement and comfort as they adhere to our current stay at home order. This forward-thinking grant was awarded to multiple service

to ensure that every DSP in Maryland and DC has access to PPE. This virus is not going away anytime soon, and our need for resources and assistance continues.

providers in March to benefit hundreds of people with developmental disabilities in Maryland. We are grateful for this support as we continue to purchase items for additional activity kits to benefit others receiving SEEC supports.

The SEEC Gala is Cancelled

We have made the difficult decision to cancel the SEEC Gala.

With each passing day it became more clear that **right now we need to focus on the health and safety of our staff and the people we support.**



While so many things have been cancelled or postponed, the needs of the people we support remain and we are committed to helping them persevere through this difficult time. Many of the people we support have been suddenly taken out of their routine. Visits to the community centers, volunteer jobs, and parks have been cancelled and jobs and internships have been put on hold. In addition, you our employees continue to be out in the community and in private residences daily making sure the people we support are well taken care of, getting to the jobs that are still open, and staying healthy.

Some examples of new items that we are funding include:

- Activity boxes for Supported Living department participants who receive 24/7 supports, including puzzles, craft supplies, stress toys, and weighted blankets
- Creating specialized curriculum for our participants, which will also be utilized by other area disability organizations
- Extra support for the people we support including virtual support from job coaches and assistance with unemployment insurance if needed
- Protective equipment for Direct Support Professionals
- Technology for the people we support and staff to stay connected

Despite cancelling our major fundraiser, we are still trying to reach our gala fundraising goal of \$135,000 in net donations. We have currently raised \$109,000 and are working hard to try to make up the difference!



SEEC Recipient of Compass ProBono Grant Board Development: Assessment and Planning

SEEC is proud to have been selected as a Compass ProBono Micro Project. Compass recruits, trains and supports teams of business professionals who then volunteer at different nonprofits. Each nonprofit micro project client receives approximately \$40,000 of strategic consulting services – free of charge. Volunteers not only deliver focused analyses and recommendations, but also provide advice along the way.

SEEC is working with Compass ProBono on a Board Development project to perform a board gap and performance assessment. We look forward to sharing with you the learnings from the analysis later in May.

RESOURCES:

World Health Organization (WHO)

When and How to Use Masks and Other Advice for the Public

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public/when-and-how-to-use-masks>

No Sew Face mask

https://m.youtube.com/watch?list=RDCMUctQVy5IY7TjSBMo-IGigfnQ&v=1r2C1zGUHbU&feature=emb_rel_end

Johns Hopkins Medicine Coronavirus (COVID-19) Self-Checker and Information on COVID-19

<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/coronavirus/covid-19-self-checker.html>

American Red Cross Blood Donation

<https://www.redcrossblood.org/donate-blood/blood-donation-process/donation-process-overview.html>

STAY ACTIVE!

VIRTUAL Spirit Club Fitness for All! Free Live and On-Demand Classes

<https://spirit-club.com/online-classes/>

FOR FAMILIES WITH A CHILD WHO EXPERIENCES DISABILITIES

Distance Learning for Special Education

<https://sites.google.com/view/distance-learning-specialed/home>

EDUCATIONAL TOOLS FOR PARENTS

Distance Learning for Special Education

<https://sites.google.com/view/distance-learning-specialed/home>

Prince George's County Memorial Library System Student Card Applications for non-PGCPS students

<https://ww1.pgcmli.info/teacher-resources-444>

Brainfuse HelpNow

Live tutoring is available in English and Spanish from 2 pm - 11:55 pm ET. Subjects include math, reading, writing, and more. http://www.brainfuse.com/highed/helpNow.asp?a_id=D25BDBAC&ss=&r=

10 Teacher-Recommended Online Learning Resources Your Kids Will Actually Enjoy - Her View From Home

<https://herviewfromhome.com/kids-10-online-learning-resources-for-kids/>

FOOD

Can I still do takeout? Yes. You can read this link for more information.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/stay-at-home-maryland-virginia-dc/2020/03/30/167cba86-72a0-11ea-85cb-8670579b863d_story.html?arc404=true.

COVID-19: Local Food System Resources

<https://mocofoodcouncil.org/covid-19-local-food-system-resources/>

ACTIVITIES & ENTERTAINMENT

Free Streaming

<https://ew.com/tv/coronavirus-quarantine-deals-stream-for-free/>

"Crip Camp: A Disability Revolution" on Netflix

<https://www.netflix.com/title/81001496?s=a&trkid=13747225&t=more>

Prince George's Memorial Library System + Creativebug Present Online Video Classes

<https://www.creativebug.com/lib/pgcmli>

Library of Congress Engage! https://loc.gov/engage?mc_cid=6d11576200&mc_eid=e559fb28a6

Audible Stories: Free Audiobooks for Kids <https://stories.audible.com/>

STAY POSITIVE!

Coping with Stress and Anxiety During this time of heightened anxiety, EveryMind understands that you or a loved one may need someone to talk to. Phone, text, and chat call specialists are available 24/7 to listen and provide support. This service is free and open to all members of our community. You do not have to be in crisis to connect with them – reach out even if you are just looking for ways to support someone you are concerned about. Call 301-738-2255 or visit

<https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/chat/>

For a list of additional resources <https://www.every-mind.org/>

Warrior Canine Connection Live Cams

<https://explore.org/livecams/warrior-canine-connection/puppy-whelping-room>

301.576.9000 | www.seeonline.org

