



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

**SEEC E-News**

**May 2020 | Issue Twenty**



### **SEEC ON FOX 5 DC**

On Thursday, April 30, 2020, Fox 5 DC News featured a story about the work SEEC is doing to ensure that every DSP in the state of Maryland has a mask. Reporter Gwen Talbort first interviewed parent Rochelle Bobroff about why the work the Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) do every day is so important. They then interviewed Karen Lee about how SEEC has distributed over 2000 masks to local DSPs in Maryland. DSP Dominic Okoji was also featured and he spoke about how having the proper protective gear was so helpful to him to do his job safely.

The story aired four times over the course of the evening. [Click here to watch!](#)

### **Inside This Issue**

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**National Disability Provider Association Names Essential  
Frontline Worker Marie Bonnet Recipient of 2020 DSP of  
the Year Award**



The American Network of Community Options and Resources (ANCOR) announces that Marie Bonnet, an Essential Frontline Worker at SEEC, has been named the recipient of the 2020 Direct Support Professional (DSP) of the Year award. Bonnet joins 54 other recipients of ANCOR's 2020 Direct Support Professional of the Year awards, chosen from a field of 300 outstanding nominees.

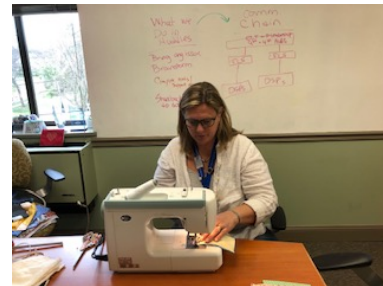
“SEEC is overwhelmingly proud of Marie for her award recognition of course, but more importantly for her dedication and commitment to those we support, especially during this Covid-19 crisis,” said Karen Lee, Executive Director. “We cannot think of anyone who more clearly demonstrates the power of person-centered supports, especially in these challenging times, and we’re so grateful that ANCOR has recognized Marie with this high-profile honor.” [Read more...](#)

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## SEEC Distributes Masks and Gifts to DSPs throughout Maryland

SEEC has already distributed over 3,000 masks for Direct Support Professionals in Maryland.

DSP's work with people who have intellectual and developmental disabilities to live independently and have become even more important now for those who are homebound. Executive Director Karen Lee came up with the idea of distributing masks to both DSP's in her organization, as well as across the state of Maryland, after doing research on ways to reduce the spread of the virus.



“It just dawned on me that if we can reduce exposure by even 25%, isn't that worth it? Especially since so many of our staff have to be physically close while doing personal care for people,” said Lee.

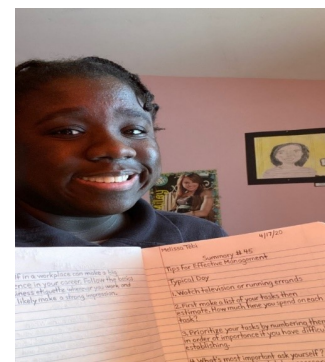
[Click here to read the whole story!](#)

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## Project SEARCH: Maintaining Schedules and Routines

By Meghan Dworschak, *Site Lead/Instructor* | SEEC, Project SEARCH-National Institutes of Health

Although COVID-19 has shut down worksites for individuals working at the National Institutes of Health, it hasn't stopped the amazing people we support from being their best selves and staying productive. Following a schedule or some sort of a routine is important for most people, but is critical for individuals with disabilities to help with maintaining skills and providing guidance for those who may otherwise struggle with organization or self-direction. Here are a few stories to highlight some of the things people are doing at home to continue professional and personal development during this time of crisis.



Melissa Tebi works at the National Institutes of Health as a Supply Clerk in the Clinical Center. Melissa's job duties include organizing, cleaning, and restocking the Operating Room and Post-Anesthesia Care Unit to help prepare nursing staff for patient care. During this time Melissa has done a really great job with adjusting to transitioning from on-site work to tele-working for the first time. She has learned new forms of technology and been successful at using Zoom, FaceTime, and her work issued iPad to complete virtual activities and telework tasks. Melissa's telework schedule consists of the following tasks: [Read more...](#)

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## Volunteering with SEEC

by Melissa Michaels, Volunteer Coordinator

This past March, SEEC's Spring Mock Interview event was cancelled due to the covid crisis. In our biggest event to date, 40 job seekers would have had the opportunity to practice their interviewing skills. The event sadly did not happen, but the show must go on – with a new twist!

Last week SEEC rolled out a week of virtual mock interviews for the people we support. Over 20 job seekers had the opportunity to practice in a virtual interview setting with the help of volunteer interviewers committed to supporting SEEC's mission. Thank you to all volunteers and staff who made the week such a success!

SEEC's Virtual Hangouts will soon begin incorporating volunteer facilitators to the hangout sessions! You can teach mediation, stretching, art, singing - the list of opportunities is endless! If interested in facilitating a 30-minute session for the people we support, contact [mmichaels@seeonline.org](mailto:mmichaels@seeonline.org).

SEEC continues to distribute masks and weekly care packages to DSPs. Community members and organizations can help by donating masks, hand written thank you letters for DSPs, and goodies for DSP care packages. For more info on how you can help, contact [mmichaels@seeonline.org](mailto:mmichaels@seeonline.org).



## The Communications and Development Team is Happy to Announce They Made Their Financial Goal for the Spring Gala!

By Katrina Kugel, Development Events Manager, SEEC

When the news arrived that gathering of 50 or more people would be banned in Maryland, the SEEC comms team acted fast. They started taking webinars about virtual fundraising, collected best practices from other non-profits who had successfully shifted to online events, held strategy calls with their event committee, and reached out to all of their vendors about their contractual obligations. Over the course of a week, they had set in motion a plan to host a virtual gala. But things were about to change again. It was decided at the end of March that SEEC's focus needed to be on our frontline staff and the people they supported and that the gala couldn't go forward in any form.

In early April, the team emailed all donors to let them know the event was cancelled and would they object to their sponsorships and ticket purchases being turned into 100% tax deductible donations. All but one sponsor was able to honor their commitment. [Read more...](#)

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### THANK YOU TO THOSE WHO HAVE DONATED PPE TO SEEC THIS PAST MONTH!

Mary Beth Bowden, Anna Morales, Mimi Ewan, Grace Su, Chris Walte, Miles Kreske, Sonal Gharde, Lisa Bloom, Marlene Gibbs, Denise Bonn, Elisa Zoltic, Caroline Sawyer, Becky Topol, Nancy De-Amelia, Patti Riggs

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