



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

SEEC Insider

July 2020 | Issue Twenty-Two



# VIRTUAL SUPPORTS

*By Abby Taylor and Kyra Harvey*

SEEC is focusing our efforts on offering virtual supports during this pandemic. Our goal is to make sure that we continue to provide services to help those we support learn and grow even while staying home. These virtual activities first began in March when we launched a virtual curriculum for the people we support.

In addition to the curriculum, which addressed a vital learning component, we recognized the need to engage people socially, in a platform that was more informal. A team of staff volunteered to work on Virtual Hangouts, which were daily opportunities for people receiving supports to engage with their peers in a variety of ways. There are Mindful Mondays where we discuss meditation, stress management, and anxiety; Tasty Tuesdays where we learn to make a simple dish (ex. Fruit pizza, pizza bagels, edible cookie dough, fruit salad); Workout Wednesdays where we do a light workout and talk about exercise; a rotating Tech Thursday and Thankful Thursday where we discuss apps/technology that is beneficial to work and everyday life as well as focusing on positive aspects of life in a time where it is so easy to think about the negative; and finally, Fun Friday where we play games, do art projects, go on virtual roller coaster rides, and tell jokes. Tasty Tuesday and Fun Friday are the most popular, but all of the hangouts offer an opportunity to share, learn, discuss, and have fun!

We invite community volunteers to facilitate a virtual hangout alongside a SEEC Staff Co-Facilitator. Community volunteers help expose the people we support to different experiences, interests and hobbies. Throughout this process, we are thankful for the people we support and their families who have been patient with us and offered great suggestions.

If you are interested in joining a [virtual activity](#), please visit the [SEEC website under the Virtual Support](#) tab. The calendar is updated every Friday afternoon.

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## Project SEARCH Graduations

Project SEARCH celebrated four graduations in the past month, all of which were virtual! The Project SEARCH Interns worked so hard this year and we were thrilled to be able to celebrate their successes during some innovate and fun zoom presentations! Please join us in congratulating the following graduates – graduation dates and programs listed below.



### Project SEARCH Montgomery County

Alisha Dey  
 Delevar Hedayati  
 Charles Hepp  
 John Paul Lane  
 Eniola Oniya  
 Guillermo Sanchez  
 Tiye Sharp  
 Nmandi Thompson



### Project SEARCH Embassy Suites/Capital Hilton

Denise Anderson  
 Crawford James  
 Montez Green  
 Jeremiah Griffin  
 Daniesha Pinkney  
 Barry Stevenson  
 Jose Villatoro  
 Jeanell Ward  
 Timothy Witherspoon  
 Joseph Woodland



### Project SEARCH Smithsonian

Chukwudumaga Ahanotu  
 George David  
 William Hudson  
 Hallem Martin  
 Cai Pavetti  
 Kevin Pope  
 Kavon Quattlebaum  
 Zaiyre Smith



### Project SEARCH NIH

Laura Pastel  
 Katherine Clement  
 Samuel Cunniff  
 Quincy Henry  
 Jose Mejia  
 Victoria Sorrondeguy  
 Justin Valenti

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## Celebrating Entrepreneurship

By Lennie Gladstone

My son, Scott Gladstone is a young man with Autism who is supported by SEEC in Silver Spring. Since the COVID Crisis, he like everyone else has seen his life change. Scott however, is not particularly concerned about not going out. He really likes being home - I have said often that he has been practicing social distancing his whole life!



Scott, who has excellent computer skills, often had trouble working in a close office environment. The staff at SEEC worked with him to figure out where he could apply those skills in a different setting. They looked at his strengths, challenges and interests, and helped him create a photo and document scanning business, SOS, Scott's Office Services. With a little investment in equipment, and his comfort with repetitive tasks, SEEC really hit on a perfect business model for Scott. He could work from home and still be connected to the community through his business.

He started with friends and family and a few years ago, and since have marketed his business more widely. With the stay home order currently in place in Maryland, he has been sought after. People, who have put off the task of organizing old family photos, finally have had the time to get into their basements and pull out the old albums of photos that they wanted digitized. He now has a waiting list of folks with photos and documents, just waiting for his availability! This crisis has been good for his bank account!

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## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

### Crisis Prevention and Intervention

by Dominic Okoji

#### What does crisis prevention and intervention mean to you?

To me, Crisis Prevention and Intervention means: Identifying a troubling issue that a person is going through, which can be mental, physical (such as a sickness or disease), or behavioral, and finding immediate and lasting solutions to deal with the issue before it escalates. For me to play this role effectively, it is pertinent that I get to know the person that I am trying to help. This boils down to knowing the person's family background, medical history, medical diagnosis, and everything else that I need to know about the person.



#### Why it is important?

Crisis Prevention and Intervention is important because the person's life could be at stake. Also, the organization under which the person is supported can be found legally liable if the person facing the crisis ends up losing his or her life. Likewise, as the support staff, I can be held legally responsible. This is a part of the NADSP (National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals) competencies that should not be overlooked or ignored.

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

As a staff member providing supports for a person receiving services, it means putting the organization that I represent (in this case, SEEC) and the person supported, first before anything else. I should be able to pay close attention to the person's mental, physical, and behavioral well-being. I should be able to identify areas wherein the person may be experiencing crisis and offer immediate help.

**What advice would you give staff members that are learning about Crisis Prevention and Intervention?**

The advice that I would give fellow staffers are:

- 1) Learning about Crisis Prevention and Intervention will get you out of any legal problems, when and if it is applied to the person supported.
- 2) You will be able to effectively face any crisis situation that comes your way.
- (3) You will be able to support any person that you are assigned to.

**Describe the last time you became involved in a conflict or crisis situation?**

Sometimes, I face crisis situations in my work with persons receiving services. However, I recall one occasion which occurred couple of months ago at the residence of the participant that I rendered supports to...

**What was the situation?**

This particular person became highly agitated as soon as his father stepped into the family restroom where we were. Immediately he sighted his father, his hands started trembling. I paid particular attention to his hands trembling as this was one of the ways to know that he was about to experience some agitations.

**What did you do?**

I was still paying close attention to his trembling hands, when suddenly, he shouted and attempted to jump on his father. His mouth was wide open, a sign that he wanted to bite his father. Sighting this behaviors, I quickly stepped between him and his father, and grabbed him as he jumped!

**How well did it work?**

His unsuspecting father was shocked! I grabbed the participant and quickly took him out of the restroom! I was cautious with the way I held him, so as to not inflict any injuries on him because he was making an attempt to bite me! His father thanked me and exited the restroom.

**What would you have done to prevent the situation from occurring?**

When I observed his hands trembling, I should have quickly taken him out of the restroom. Actually, I made efforts to do that, but he resisted. Hence, I had to step in between him and his father as I perceived a worst case scenario.

**Describe a difficult situation you remember encountering with that person?**

For me, the difficult situation occurred because the participant's home staff was withholding vital information concerning the participant's health issues from me and from the organization that I represent as a DSP (Direct Support Professional). The participant had dental and digestive issues which later culminated into a very serious health crisis. It got to the stage where he would eat and vomit everything! The home staff never informed me that the participant had problems digesting the food he ate.

**How did they react to you?**

The home staff was very indifferent to me because the participant vomited all that he ate, and I kept informing this staff that it's important the participant undergo a medical check-up as I did not want to keep supporting this participant when I was ignorant of his full medical diagnosis.

**How did you deal with the situation?**

I reported the health issues of the participant to the operations manager at the time. The step I took was extremely necessary because of any legal liabilities that could occur. Besides, I did not want the organization that I worked for to be in any type of legal tussles. It was my duty as a DSP to protect my integrity and that of the organization that I work for.

**What did you do about your own feelings?**

I had to put my feelings aside, so to speak. As a professional, I had to put my experiences and training to work in order to achieve a positive outcome from the health crisis that the participant was experiencing at the time. Thank goodness that it all worked out. Though the participant passed on, the organization that I represented and I were absolved of any blame. Feelings can either be positive or negative. It's important to always display positive feelings.

As a professional, the need to know much about Crisis Prevention and Intervention is crucial in our daily supports to the people or persons receiving services from the organization that we represent, and from us as DSPs. The need to be able to identify the crisis, defuse the situation, evaluate and determine an intervention strategy is very important and cannot be under-emphasized. Thank you.

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## Job Club

by Kyra Harvey

Job Club is back with a bang and **virtual!** Job Club is hosted weekly by Kyra Harvey and The Employment Outreach Team. The employment outreach team is filled with, Pamela Toole, Linda Hoyt, and Katie Smeltz. Job Club focuses on providing awesome discussion about discovering skills, maintaining a job, and while also sharing the ups and downs of the job searching process.



Job Club launched on June 8th, We had an first excellent session. Job Club has featured speakers that have shared about their profession. We also have GAMES!

In June our Speaker series featured sessions on how to start a business on Etsy, a goal setting series, and improving financial literacy. In July we plan to continue with speakers and skill development sessions. We hope to provide a virtual tour soon.

We are thankful for our volunteers that come from the community and are willing to give their time to speak with our Job Seekers. It is so important for myself and EOT that Job Club serves as safe space for the people we support. With recent events happening surrounding COVID-19, we are hoping that this space can help offer structure during what seems like a chaotic time. **Job Club is open to all**, the zoom link to join us for a session is located on the [SEEC website under the Virtual Supports](#) tab. Join us soon!

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**FootGolf Save the Date**  
**Saturday, September 26, 2020**

SEEC's Socially Distanced FootGolf Event will be held at Sligo Creek Golf Course!

Come enjoy the outdoors while socially distancing! More information to follow.



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**Giant Food Community Bag Program**



SEEC has been selected by local Giant Food store leadership as the benefiting non-profit in the Community Bag Program!

For the month of August, SEEC will receive a \$1 donation from each purchase of the \$2.50 reusable Community Bag at the Giant Food store located at:  
1280 East-West Highway, Silver Spring MD.

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301.576.9000 | [www.seeconline.org](http://www.seeconline.org)



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