



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

SEEC E-News

February 2022 | Issue Forty

What's Up with Services?!

A monthly update on re-envisioning SEEC services post pandemic

By Sherry Beamer, Director of Services



In June we reported that we held a “Visioning Lab” of people supported, families, and a variety of staff to expand the planning of returning to service. Key themes that we are focusing on from the Lab were: supports for the person and relationships they build but not focused on places they go, as well as quality service plans developed for each person based on SEEC values, and stable, trained, empowered staff. At the time we invited people who were interested in an ongoing commitment to be a part of a group to re-envision our services.

On January 26, we kicked off the Re-envision Stakeholder Group. This group of volunteers have agreed to work from late January through June. We will keep you posted of the ideas that come from our work. This Group is staffed by Sherry Beamer, Director of Services and Donne' Allen, Director of Projects.

Here is the current list of participants:

- Leslie Eure, Family member
- Arlene McCrehan, Family member
- Anna Perrone, Family member
- Nmandi Thompson, Self-advocate
- Simone Taylor, Direct Support Professional, Community Engagement/Personal Supports
- Tamnika Gaulden, Supported Living Operations Manager
- Cimone Coulbourn, Behavior Support Specialist
- Bobby John, Community Engagement Mentor
- Kyra Harvey, Instructional Resource Coordinator
- Kelly Paparazzo, Community Engagement Program Director
- Jessica Neely, Knowledge Management Director
- Eric Schwab, Director of Finance
- Steve Blanks, Partnerships Director
- Karen Lee, Chief Executive Officer

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SEEC's Growing Connections Spring Gala



We are excited to gather in person on April 2nd for our SEEC “Growing Connections” Gala! The event will take place at Kogok Hall in Potomac, Maryland. If you interested in becoming a sponsor of the event, click [here](#)! For safety reasons, we will be limiting in-person attendance to sponsors but anyone can join us online for free.

During our main program, we are excited to highlight some of the amazing connections and partnerships that SEEC has grown in the past year with the people we support, staff, employers, and community partners. We will kick off the event with a cocktail reception and silent auction then continue into the evening with music, dinner, dancing, and more! We hope you can join us!! Mark your calendars!

[Become a Sponsor](#)

SEEC Received a SpArc Grant!

By Audrey Metzler, Communications and Grant Writer

In January, Sherry Beamer (Director of Services) and Kelly Paparazzo (Program Director – Community Engagement) represented SEEC in a “Shark Tank” like competition organized by The Arc of Maryland.



The competition called “SpArc Tank” funds innovative initiatives to enhance the lives of children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Maryland. Sherry and Kelly shared information about SEEC’s innovative approach to socialization and inclusion through neighborhood walks. In partnership with Neighbours International, people supported have started to engage with their surrounding community by talking walk around their homes. SEEC made it to the final stage of the competition and will be receiving a \$7,000 grant to create a community of practice to support other providers in this innovative support. The jury appreciated how the neighborhood walks would give people supported an opportunity to benefit from a natural circle of supports while growing local connections. This grant will allow SEEC to produce a video to share what is happening during the neighborhood walks and inform what staff and people supported gain from this re-envisioned service at SEEC to live, work and thrive.

Virtual Wine Tasting a Success!



We were honored to have award-winning Sommelier William (Bill) Jensen lead our online wine tasting event on Thursday, February 3rd. We sipped our way through France, learning what foods to best pair with the wines we sampled and more about each of the grapes and wine regions. Bill, a native of

Montgomery County, Maryland, owns two Michelin-starred restaurants in Washington, DC; Tail Up Goat and Reveler's Hour. He generously donated his time and handpicked the four wines that our attendees tasted. Thank you to Bill and everyone who supported the event!

What is Plain Language?

SEEC uses plain language to make sure the way the agency communicates about its services is clear and understandable by people we support.

plainlanguage.gov

The logo for plainlanguage.gov. It consists of a red and blue stylized speech mark icon followed by the text "plainlanguage.gov".

You can learn more about this during the Family Think Team meetings. In the meantime, here is a definition of the concept from

<https://www.plainlanguage.gov/>:

Plain language is communication your audience can understand the first time they read or hear it. Language that is plain to one set of readers may not be plain to

others. Material is in plain language if your audience can:

- Find what they need.
- Understand what they find the first time they read or hear it.
- Use what they find to meet their needs.

An example to illustrate how using plain language can make information accessible and useful for a diverse audience:

- Annually => Every year (plain language)
- Cardiovascular => having to do with the heart (plain language)

Volunteer Corner

As we embark on the new year, we have exciting ideas and goals for our 2022 volunteer program. With your support we can continue to create a robust volunteer program at SEEC together. Some of our goals are outlined below:

- Strengthen community connections.
- Increase the number of active volunteers.
- Increase the number of volunteer activities and volunteer hours.
- Elevate our educational programming.

If you are interested in helping to grow our volunteer program, please reach out to our Volunteer Coordinator, Ethan Litvin at elitvin@seeconline.org.

Mock Interviews

We have been able to secure a space to host in-person mock interviews with an anticipated date for the **week of March 14th**. If you are interested in participating, we are requesting that you please [complete this survey](#) so that we can evaluate your comfort level with the new in-person mock interview structure. All staff and interviewees will be fully vaccinated and masked for the mock interviews. Additionally, we will be asking all volunteers to be fully vaccinated for in-person volunteer activities moving forward.



For more information, please contact Ethan Litvin at elitvin@seeconline.org

Wellness Corner



February is National Heart Month. Let's all try to observe National Heart Month by taking up at least one heart-healthy habit. Staying active, eating healthy, and watching your weight are all important parts of maintaining a healthy cardiovascular system. Try a new heart-healthy habit this month, like jogging, walking, or subsisting soda with water. Challenge yourself this month to engage in 30 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise five days a week. Substitute

your afternoon sugary treat with water or a heart healthy snack like raisins, apples, almonds, or oatmeal.

Educate yourself and learn the risk facts for heart disease, the ways you can prevent them, and the lifestyle choices that can help you stay healthy. If you are worried that you might be at risk for heart disease, talk to your doctor about performing a simple cholesterol test to let you know if you're at risk and if you should make any adjustments to your diet.

Heart Healthy Recipe: White bean Hummus Wraps with Avocado and Bell Pepper
(Courtesy of American Heart Association)

- 1 can low-sodium white beans (cannellini) drained and rinsed
- 1 Tbsp Lemon Juice
- 3 Tbsp. water
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp ground sweet paprika
- $\frac{1}{4}$ group black pepper
- 1 Medium tomato thinly sliced
- 1 medium cucumber thinly sliced
- 1 Avocado peeled pit removed and sliced
- Handful of lettuce
- 4 whole grain low fat wraps

Drain and rinse the beans; add into the bowl of the food processor, add lemon juice, water, paprika and pepper. Puree until the mixture is smooth- about 1 minute. Chop all the vegetables; slice the tomato, cucumber, bell pepper, and avocado. Spread about 1/3 cup white bean hummus over each wrap leaving about a $\frac{1}{2}$ inch border around the edges. Divide vegetables onto each wrap, placing over the hummus. Fold each side of the wrap up and roll it. Serve with extra vegetables.

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