



NEWSLETTER

Seeking Employment, Equality and Community
for People with Developmental Disabilities

Internal Newsletter April 2024

From the Desk of Karen Lee, SEEC's CEO

Eclipsing Barriers: How Volunteers Illumine the Path to Belonging

The recent celestial eclipse served as a powerful metaphor for the **invaluable role volunteers play in the lives of the people we support**. Just as the moon's shadow temporarily alters our view of the sun, the presence of volunteers casts our services in a new light.

Direct support professionals working at SEEC are very knowledgeable on how to encourage meaningful interactions and promote independence while partnering with the people we support. But **when volunteers briefly "eclipse" the staff's role, they facilitate something truly special - the opportunity for genuine connections and natural support to develop organically.**

This **National Volunteer Month**, we celebrate those who choose to share their light, time, talents and compassion through volunteerism. In doing so, they help create an inclusive community where the people we support not only live but belong.



Each volunteer brings a unique perspective that expands the horizons of those we serve. From joining the Friendship matching program, the mock interview sessions or offering classes to support the development of life skills like cooking in a friendly and open atmosphere, volunteers are bringing invaluable new experiences to the people we support. Their commitment eclipses the routine, highlighting paths to deeper engagement, new experiences, and greater self-determination. Just as the moon's shadow was fleeting yet profound, a volunteer's presence can be transformative.

We are deeply grateful to every volunteer who has joined us in our mission. By forging authentic relationships, they illuminate the remarkable potential in every person and blaze a trail toward a brilliantly inclusive future.

The eclipse has passed, but the miracle of human connection it symbolized endures through our incredible volunteers. Thank you for ensuring no light goes unseen in our community.

Cheers,

Karen Lee, CEO

Top Things to Know at SEEC for April

- **SEEC organized its annual Gala on April 13th.** This year's theme was "**Alliance**". Together we raised over \$190,000 for our important work to empower people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to live, work and thrive in the community!
- **SEEC hosted a Disability Voter Education event in partnership with [Jubilee Association of Maryland](#), [Upcounty Community Resources, Inc.](#), and [Catholic Archdiocese of Washington Deaf and Disabilities Ministry \(ADW\)](#).** The event was supported by REV UP the Vote and [American Association of People with Disabilities \(AAPD\)](#) with over 40 people in attendance. The group heard from Tracy Wright of [People On The Go of Maryland](#), Greg Hume from the Montgomery County Board of Elections, and [Barry Jackson, Rockville City Councilmember](#). Attendees practiced on voting machines, learned about their voting rights, and more. Everyone received their own "My Plan to Vote" to prepare for the May 14th Maryland primary.
- **Congratulations to DSP II Mentor Training Cohort 7!** This professional development equips DSPs with essential mentoring skills, empowering them to effectively support coworkers. The program was created by SEEC with support from a consortium of agencies including [Ardmore Enterprises](#), [Compass, Inc.](#), [Jubilee Association of Maryland](#), and [Spring Dell Center, Inc.](#) Additionally, the program is backed by [Maryland Department of Health - Developmental Disabilities Administration](#), the [Maryland Association of Community Services \(MACS\)](#), and the [Maryland Department of Labor](#).



DSP Making a Difference: Genevieve Callands



Genevieve Callands stands out as an exceptional Direct Support Professional (DSP) with 15 year of experience! Her innovative support, including teaching the people we support how to take public transportation and communicate with MetroAccess drivers and using iPads for safety check-ins with family member while independently navigating the community, has greatly empowered the people she supports. **Congrats, Genevieve!**

HR Update

SEEC will have “**Bring Your Child to Work Day**” **this April 25th at the office.** This annual event gives your child an opportunity to see what you are doing during a workday. Participating in this tradition can be rewarding for both children and adults alike and give your child exposure to your work environment, inspiring them to make an impact in a non-profit industry as well as making positive and social impact in their lives and community. “Bring Your Child to Work Day” is a great way to instill the mindset to your child that they can choose their own future, help them explore what is possible in their future, and ensure they are lifelong learners.

Join us in welcoming:



Fatmata Bangura
Lionel Bongkiyung
Janice Davis
Adebayo Idowu
Amaizeen-Grace Laine
Alain Lambo
Joy Raymond
Ibrahim Sesay

And saying goodbye to:

Thomas Lorendo



New Hire Orientation



L to R: Kathlene Ola-Williams, Jacqueline Neal, Mandela Ebot Orck Egbe, Abisola Babatunde-Adeoti, Christophe Galley, and Amin Yansaneh.



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{{Organization Name}}

{{Organization Address}}

{{Organization Phone}}

{{Organization Website}}

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