



## INCLUSION INSIDER

### December 2025 - A Season of Belonging

**Welcome to the Year End Inclusion Insider**, our special edition highlighting how belonging showed up across SEEC during a year marked by challenge, creativity, and community strength.

In 2025, statewide funding cuts and a shift in the employment of the people we support created real uncertainty for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Yet despite a difficult landscape, SEEC's community continued to show up: building relationships, creating opportunities, and nurturing spaces where people felt seen, valued, and connected.

With input and leadership from people with lived experience and people from the community as a part of the selection committee, SEEC awarded its first round of Innovation Fund grants—supporting creative, grassroots ideas that break down real-world barriers to inclusion, independence, and joy.

Each project was selected for its alignment with SEEC's mission: to help people live, work, and thrive in the community.

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### Belonging Through Stories: DC Doers Spotlight

This year, belonging was exemplified not only by the people we support, but by our SEEC **colleagues who champion belonging every day**. SEEC team members **James Williams and Sean Adams**, key leaders within our Project SEARCH program in Washington, DC, were featured on **DC News Now's DMV Doers** for their commitment to ensuring young adults with disabilities feel seen, supported, and fully included in the workforce.

James and Sean spoke passionately about their work, highlighting that supporting interns is about far more than job coaching: **“We are much more than job coaches,”** Sean shared. **“We are mentors and advocates and career developers.”** Their efforts to build authentic relationships, with interns, families and caregivers, employers, and community partners are reshaping how workplaces understand and practice inclusion.

James reflected on how these partnerships break down barriers across the region: **“We are all about knocking these walls down. We want them to build independence... because it is all about inclusion.”**

In the interview, they emphasized that inclusive employment is **not charity**, but a genuine **win-win** that strengthens teams, workplaces, and communities.

Their leadership is a powerful reminder that **belonging is created by people**, by colleagues like James and Sean who model everyday advocacy, and the values at the heart of SEEC’s mission.

**Watch their full feature:**



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## **INNOVATION & OPPORTUNITY: BUILDING WHAT’S NEXT**

### **SEEC’s Assistive Technology Campaign**

In a year marked by funding cuts, SEEC focused on strengthening the future. Our **Assistive Technology fundraising October campaign** supported two major initiatives:

**The Assistive Technology Library** :A lending hub where people can try out Assistive Technologies before committing to using them following SEEC’s person-driven technology approach.

**SEEC’s Tech Maker Space**: The person-driven technology team is excited to announce that SEEC’s Tech Maker Space will open in 2026. The space will have a hands-on creative studio, a place for designing and customizing assistive tools, and will be a hub for

innovation driven by the collaboration between Direct Support Professionals (DSPs), people we support and community.

**Your support this year prepares SEEC to build the Tech Maker Space in 2026,** ensuring people we support can imagine, prototype, and create what they need to thrive.



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## Family Education Workshops

### Belonging for Families

With service systems shifting around them, families needed tools, information, and community more than ever. In 2025, SEEC launched its **Family Education Workshops** to meet that need.

**Topics Included:** Understanding person centered planning, Navigating services in shifting funding environments, Relationship building and communication, Wellness and caregiver support, and Supporting transitions and life planning.

Families shared that these workshops created connection, clarity, and most importantly, belonging. Family workshops will also be offered in 2026. [Living and Thriving with Supports](#) will be offered January 14th from 5:30-7p at the SEEC Office and Funding Fundamentals will be offered February 11th.



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**Help us build a future where everyone belongs!**

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## PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

### SEEC Adapts to Change: Community-Based Internship Program Expands Opportunities

When traditional Project SEARCH host sites faced new limits, **SEEC quickly adapted to ensure interns did not lose access to critical career-building experiences.** The result is SEEC's Community-Based Internship Program (CBIP), a practical expansion designed to keep internship opportunities strong and flexible.

**CBIP follows the same structure as Project SEARCH (three rotations from September to June) but places interns directly in local community businesses across Montgomery County.** This shift allows SEEC to offer more internship slots, access a broader range of industries, and maintain continuity when large sites cannot host enough interns.

Through CBIP, businesses receive support at no cost, interns gain real work experience, and SEEC strengthens its network of inclusive employers. **This adaptation ensures young adults with disabilities continue developing job skills, confidence, and community connections.**

To learn more or host an intern contact Meghan Lebow, [mlebow@seeconline.org](mailto:mlebow@seeconline.org).



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## BELONGING THROUGH ENTREPRENEURSHIP

### SEEC's 2nd Annual Business Fair

This year's SEEC's Business Fair was a joyful reminder that creativity and entrepreneurship flourish when people feel supported. Entrepreneurs showcased their talents, gained confidence, and connected with community members eager to learn, purchase, and champion their work.

### Meet DJ Mad Max: SEEC's Newest Entrepreneur

The business fair was the occasion for SEEC's community to meet and learn more about **Max Rubenstein — DJ Mad Max**, who recently joined the self-employment program.

Max develops playlists and music programming for events with a special focus on servicing a growing neurodivergent audience of adults and teens in Washington DC and Maryland. Max has a wide variety of clients from colleges, non-profits and companies. Max is passionate about music and will work with anyone personally to create the perfect playlist to make events successful. He has also honed his skills by providing technical support for live performances and using complex high-grade commercial equipment for production.

Learn more about DJ Mad Max here: [DJ Mad Max | Montgomery County, MD Party DJ](#)



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#### Our Contact Information

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