

# SMEC Spotlight Fall/Winter 2023

## From the desk of Catherine Cooper, SMEC Executive Director

Happy New Year!

Now that the busy holiday season has ended, we enter into a quieter winter season while looking forward to the return of warmer weather. In this issue of the Spotlight, we have highlighted a few of our programs and the activities that our students and consumers participated in during the fall and leading into the holiday period. Going forward, each Spotlight issue will highlight a few different programs on a rotating basis. We hope you enjoy seeing what we've been up to.

We were saddened by the sudden passing of one of our adult members, Rachel DeMello, over the Christmas holiday weekend. Rachel had been a member of SMEC for many years having attended both our Transitional Services Program and our Adult Day Health Program. She was a shining light to all who knew her, and she will be sorely missed. Our thoughts and prayers are with her family and friends.

As we enter 2024, we wish you all good health, good friendships, and good fortune. We are grateful for everyone who is a part of SMEC and we want to continue to offer the very best services to everyone who chooses to be part of our SMEC family. We are growing and are in the process of recruiting talented professionals for additional positions, such as special education teachers, paraprofessionals, occupational therapists, speech pathologists, therapy assistants, adult service direct care staff, van drivers, RNs and more! Please spread the word to encourage folks to come to speak to us to find out why SMEC is where they want to be!

*Catherine*

## What's Inside This Issue



**SMEC Students Volunteer at End Hunger New England's Meal Packaging Event**



**Winter Weather Alerts**



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# Students Volunteer at End Hunger New England's Meal Packaging Event



On Wednesday, Dec. 13, 10 students from SMEC's Transitional Services Program and volunteers from the SMEC's Supporting Adults for Inclusive Living Program (SAIL) spent the morning packaging meals ready to eat at the Fort Taber Community Center in New Bedford.

At the event, students measured portions of non-perishable food products which were then placed in boxes to be distributed to food pantries in the New Bedford area. Meals packaged during the event helped to feed approximately 30,000 families in the New Bedford community.

The students were excited to participate and expressed how they felt taking part in the event.

"We worked as a team," said Ryan Hurst-Dumont.

"It was fun. Are we going again?" said Derrick Reynolds.

Transitional Services Program students, ages 18-21, regularly participate in community events to enhance their social skills, learn functional job skills and practice following directions, while fulfilling their transitional goals and learning independence.

"I would like to recognize the students and staff who participated in our End Hunger event," said Executive Director Cooper. "These types of events encourage our students to become more involved in their community and help to develop and grow their communication skills."





# “Voices in Time” with Students in ADH

Students in the ADH program have been enjoying great performances during our “Voices in Time” program run by Sharon Jensen.

Throughout the school year, ADH students, ages 8-18, have been visiting ADH classrooms to put on musical performances. Students have a wide array of music to choose from, belting out tunes from Taylor Swift and other great artists.

Through this program, students have started to form relationships with the ADH students and staff.

Additionally, Sharon Jensen comes into the ADH program once a month to do Karaoke with the members.

ADH members enjoy getting the opportunity to perform their favorite songs. ADH is thankful to have such a great connection with the “Voices in Time” students and Sharon Jensen.







# ISPII Students Explore Their Community

SMEC's ISPII classroom has been very active for the first quarter of the school year 2023-24.

The classroom has been busy with academics as well as some fun field trips that included pumpkin and hayrides at Silverbrook Farms, seeing the Hallamore Clydesdales Horses in Lakeville, a visit to Roger Williams Zoo, and a monthly breakfast at Mystic Cafe.

The ISPII Classroom would like to wish everyone a Happy New Year!





# PLP Students Study Rock Cycles



During the autumn season, students in the PLP program started studying the rock cycle.

Students were taught about the processes involved in forming and breaking down the three major rock types: igneous, metamorphic and sedimentary. Upon completing the bookwork part of their learning, students visited a nature trail in Rochester, where they found eight different rock types.

Students then categorized and identified each rock based on its type and characteristics.







## SMEC Art Program Creates Holiday-themed Artwork for the Child and Family Services New Bedford Crisis Intervention Center

During December, SMEC Art Programs students created holiday-themed artwork to hang up at the Child and Family Services New Bedford Crisis Intervention Center. Artwork included paintings, collages, and drawings, which reflected different holiday topics.

Before class started each morning, students discussed how artwork can make a positive impact on the artist and on its viewers.

The artwork was then hung in the center residents' hallways, kitchen area and in the living room. As the artwork was hung up, residents gathered around and smiled at the students' creations.

SMEC would like to thank our student participants and Child and Family Services for collaborating to create more joy through art in our community!



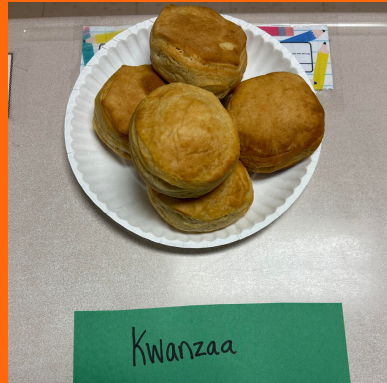




# TSP Students Give Back to Community

The TSP students have been spending time volunteering and giving back to their community. Students collected donations for Gifts to Give and those in our community in need. They performed volunteer work for End Hunger New England, St. Lawrence Food Pantry, and the Salvation Army. Our students are gaining a sense of purpose by serving those in need. Through this work students are developing important life and job skills while helping better the world.

# TLC Celebrates the Holidays



TLC students recently learned about Christmas, Hanukkah, and Kwanzaa during social studies class. Students had the opportunity to eat different food from each holiday. Treats included gingerbread cookies for Christmas, latkes for Hanukkah, and buttermilk biscuits for Kwanzaa.

## Weather Alerts

We've had some crazy weather lately and are entering into the prime months for winter weather alerts. Please be sure to review our inclement weather policy, which can be found on our website, [www.smecollaborative.org](http://www.smecollaborative.org), and also make sure that you've opted-in to receive our text notifications through our School Messenger system.

Decisions about program schedule changes and other time-sensitive announcements are generally sent by email and text message as soon as the decisions are made, however, the system will not text you if you haven't opted-in. The easiest way to opt-in is to text "YES" or "Y" to 67587. You can opt-out again at any time if you no longer wish to receive our texts.