

# GSIL Connections

A quarterly newsletter for GSIL's Consumers & Employees



## In Memory of Jeff Dickinson

It is with the heaviest of hearts that we let all of you know that our GSIL Director of Advocacy, Jeff Dickinson, passed away unexpectedly on December 4th. It seems like yesterday we were all gathered at our awards and recognition dinner where Jeff was a guest speaker and presenter. His smile, his warmth, and his eloquence will be fondly remembered and deeply missed.

Above all, Jeff epitomized ability. Despite battling Muscular Dystrophy, every single day, Jeff rose to every single challenge. He represented our organization with strength and capability during his many years representing GSIL at the legislature in Concord. He built deep relationships with state leaders that allowed GSIL consumers and the entire disability community to have a voice of a true advocate. Jeff was a shining example of grace and had a knack for persuasion with lawmakers... just ask them!

Jeff's disease started in early adulthood, which meant he knew life with full physical faculties... and he enjoyed his activities to the fullest. Anyone who knew him knew of his absolute love of fast cars. His model car collection was spread throughout his home and memories of driving his BMW on the road course at NH Motor Speedway were among his favorites. Jeff loved the adrenaline rush of life. And he appreciated the ride along the way. Never to be full of self-pity, Jeff greeted his disease with gusto and a sense of never letting it get the best of his spirit or his day. Embracing the mantra of being able to accomplish everything he wanted with help from others, Jeff set his focus on giving back to the disabled community. His mind, ever razor sharp, was focused on how to advance the causes of GSIL and help others in New Hampshire.

To his last moments, Jeff was focused on what's next. He was working hard to prepare for the upcoming legislative session in Concord, and was looking forward to holidays with family. Jeff, we will miss you dearly. Thank you for making us your life's mission. Thank you for the legacy of good deeds and kindness you leave with all of us. Rest in peace.



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## Community Services

*Submitted by: Michelle Cutting, Director of Community Services*

### Independent Living (IL) Skills

The IL team has some exciting news – after a long wait we are delighted to announce that we have a new full time Deaf and Hard of Hearing IL Coordinator joining our team in February! While I can't share this person's name yet, he is a member of the Deaf community, and has related experience that will help him be successful in supporting consumers with GSIL. Please be patient with us as we work to get him up and running, we will share more information, including contact information as soon as possible.

### Transportation

The transportation department is currently seeking to hire a second per diem driver for evening and weekend transportation in hopes of having a larger pool of drivers to better support the community.

Please remember if you call for transportation and no one can answer, leave a detailed message so Derek and/or Norm can return your call.

Did you know that Gary's Service Center offers a 10% discount on parts and labor to any GSIL employees? If you need work done on your vehicle, please reach out to them.

**Gary's Service Center**  
603-224-9541

323 South Main Street Concord, NH

Town Fair Tire is a GSIL donor that also offers a discount to our employees! Just ask for the "Friends & Family" discount at any of their locations!

**GSIL's  
Transportation  
provided  
831 Rides  
in FY2023!**



## Benefits Counseling

Deciding to join or rejoin the work force can be a scary proposition. The impact of earnings on necessary benefits is often cited as a reason people choose to not reengage or limit the number of hours they work. Many people believe that working will immediately mean a loss of access to Medicaid or Medicare, this is not true. If you receive a Social Security benefit (SSI/SSDI) in any amount, you'll keep your Medicare or Medicaid. Please look at the article below and reach out to a benefit counselor if you have questions about your specific benefits and how working might affect them.

GSIL provides services for beneficiaries receiving Social Security Disability (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits through our Work Incentive Planning and Assistance (WIPA) Program.

WIPA is a program designed to enable beneficiaries with disabilities to receive accurate information regarding their benefits and work incentives so they can make appropriate decisions when returning to work. This will hopefully result in a successful return to work for our beneficiaries.

There are several ways a beneficiary can become involved with our WIPA program:

1. They can receive assistance through calling the Ticket-To-Work Helpline at 1-866-968-7842. Calling this number will generate a referral through the helpline and it will go directly to the Community Work Incentive Coordinator (CWIC) for the county the beneficiary lives in. Once a referral has been initiated, the beneficiary will be contacted by a CWIC within 3-5 days of receiving the referral.
2. Another way a beneficiary can receive services through WIPA is if they are enrolled with Vocational Rehabilitation (VR). GSIL has been an approved vendor for VR for many years. VR counselors can refer their clients to a CWIC for either a Benefits Summary and Analysis (BS&A) or for basic Benefits Counseling.

No matter how a beneficiary comes to the WIPA program they will be provided with in-depth counseling about benefits and the effects of working on those benefits. They can also receive continued support throughout their employment regarding their SSA and other federal benefits.

[Choose Work! Medicare-Related Work Incentives for People Who Receive Social Security Disability \(SSDI\) Benefits](#)

## Ticket to Work

Submitted by: *Jonathan Belmont*

A client who was referred to GSIL's Employment Services by the VR New Hampshire program had been working to develop his career as a biological scientist. The client had experienced some barriers due to not having a driver's license and being unable to find accommodations from potential employers. An Employment Coordinator worked with this client to revise his resume, cover letter, and provide informational interviews to encourage the client to learn about employment opportunities relating to his interest. The Employment Coordinator located and arranged an opportunity for the client to take a tour of the research laboratory for an educational institution, this led to a job offer for the client. The client is now working in a research lab, gaining valuable experience that will benefit him in furthering his long-term career goal.

## Peer Support

Submitted by: *Jen Crowell, Peer Support Mentor & Coordinator*

**Peer Bowling & Game Night** - GSIL, The Christopher & Dana Reeves Foundation, and United Spinal Association - NH Chapter organized a day of bowling, with food, games & raffles, at Leda Lanes in Nashua on February 6th, from 12 - 2 pm. They brought in 2024 with a BOWL! Fun was had by all that attended.



If you missed bowling, you can still join us for Games Day at Dave & Buster's, 1500 S Willow Street in Manchester, from 12 - 2 pm on April 4th! Enjoy great food and company at these peer events. You may bring a +1.

Kindly RSVP to [Jennifer Crowell](#)  
by Monday, March 25th.

Transportation is LIMITED for this event! Please RSVP to [Derek Lavoy](#) or call GSIL's Transportation Dept. at 603 568-9112 no later than March 15th.

## United Spinal Work Groups



**United Spinal  
Association**

*a program of Granite State  
Independent Living*

Submitted by: *Alexandria Teixeira, Peer Support Coordinator,  
Chapter Leader for NH United Spinal Association*

United Spinal Association Parking Workgroup: Help us advocate from your home! If you would like to join this group please email [me](#) for more information. In the recent meeting, we talked about various things including the DOT submitting a federal bill regarding standards for transportation facilities and invited the disability community to write about their transportation issues in NH. [Click here](#) to learn about the federal bill they are trying to pass and the tab to the right for comments that have been submitted.



## Save the Date!

Join us at this Peer Event on **May 26th for a 1:35pm baseball game** (Fisher Cats vs Summerset) at the Fisher Cat's Stadium Delta Dental Stadium, 1 Line Drive in Manchester! Keep an eye out for more information coming soon! This event is sponsored by the Christopher Reeves Grant through Peer Support and the United Spinal Association of New Hampshire.

**The USA-NH Chapter Coordinators  
met with 36 people**

**with spinal cord injuries for  
individual and group peer-to-peer  
mentoring sessions in FY2023!**



[Watch Alexandria in our recent  
Recruitment Comercial!](#)

## Living YOUR Best Life!

Submitted by: *Terri Voth, Donor Relations Specialist & Event Planner*

Got the winter blues? Looking for something to do?? Check out the links for [Northeast Passage Winter Events](#) and [North Country Adaptive Sports Partners](#) calendars or join in on the [SHEI](#) weekly exercise programs that are held in Concord, Dover, Laconia, Goffstown, Manchester and Portsmouth.

# LTS Skills Training

*Submitted by: Donna Potter, Statewide Director of PCSP Services*

## Consumer Training Guide

The GSIL Consumer Training Guide has been updated for 2024 and has been uploaded to GSIL.org for you to access. **The following is a link to the [Consumer Training Guide](#)**

Our policy is to review the Consumer Training Guide annually and upload the updated version to the same location on the GSIL website every January. You can expect your Long-Term Support Coordinators to review the Training Guide with you.

You do not have to wait for your coordinator to assist, you may access the Consumer Training Guide yourself as needed. The Consumer Training Guide was created to help you find answers to questions about your Consumer Directed Program and how to recruit, hire and manage your staff. You will also find information on our Compliance, Human Resource and Payroll departments as well as information on all the other programs that GSIL provides to help you live your life as independently as you choose.

## Missed Punch Form Process Update

Thank you all for your diligence in following the new Missed Punch Form (MPF) process GSIL implemented on November 20, 2023!

This process was created due to the Department of Health and Human Service implementing their Electronic Visit Verification (EVV) process, which only allows GSIL corporate staff to adjust an ACE's time worked.

While this has been a new process for everyone to get used to the process has been going very well. We have noticed a decrease in the number of MPFs submitted.

**Please contact your coordinator if you have any questions on the Missed Punch Form Process or the Consumer Training Guide.**



**GSIL wants to keep you safe from all slips and falls!**

If you need ice cleats for the upcoming winter weather, please reach out to your coordinator to request a pair.

When new employees attend ACE training they will be asked if they want/need a pair of ice cleats and will be provided with a pair if requested.

Whenever ice cleats are given to an ACE, the ACE is required to sign off that they received the ice cleats, and the signed and dated receipt is returned to HR.

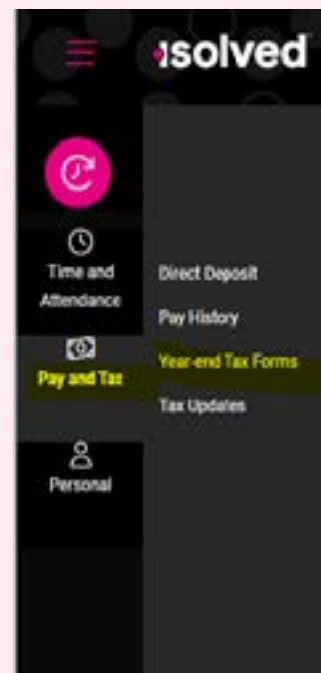
## Payroll Notices

*Submitted by: Julie Smith, Payroll Specialist*

The 2023 W-2 tax forms have been completed. These forms are available electronically through iSolved self-service for download. 2023 W2's were also mailed on 01/12/24.

**To access your form:**

1. Log into iSolved "Pay and Tax"
2. Click on "Year-end Tax Forms"
3. Then click on the blue "W-2" which is a link to download the form.



## Recruitment and Retention

Submitted by: Kelsea Moyses, Recruitment Manager

With our best foot forward, we are excited to share the recent process changes within recruitment, in efforts to enhance our candidate's application experience, and to better streamline and expediate our onboarding practices.

As you may be aware, attracting and retaining reliable, long-term Attendant Care Employees comes with many challenges. Our screening, interview and hiring processes are extremely unique but necessary to ultimately promote the independence of our consumers. We are currently focusing our energies on what we can do to set ourselves apart from our local competitors.

Our most immediate goal was to implement a more versatile and user-friendly Applicant Tracking System (ATS). Most recently, we were able to complete this build within the walls of iSolved, working hand-in-hand with members of Human Resources and LTS teams to tailor the database to our exact needs. Super exciting!

The ATS is now our main tool for advertising, communication and driving candidates through the pipeline of a successful onboarding. We now have the ability to list openings across dozens of online platforms with one swift click and are able to make notes and keep tabs on an applicant as we start communication. The system also allows us to track trends amongst our job listings to better determine where the majority of our applicants are applying from, and what is ultimately working or may need some extra attention.

We are very excited to see our new tracking system being utilized to its full potential and we look forward to the opportunity to better serve our recruiting consumers. We look forward to utilizing the system for our corporate roles as well.

**In FY23, GSIL served  
1,353 consumers  
statewide!**



## Community Outreach

Submitted by: Val Kidder, Director of Community Partnerships

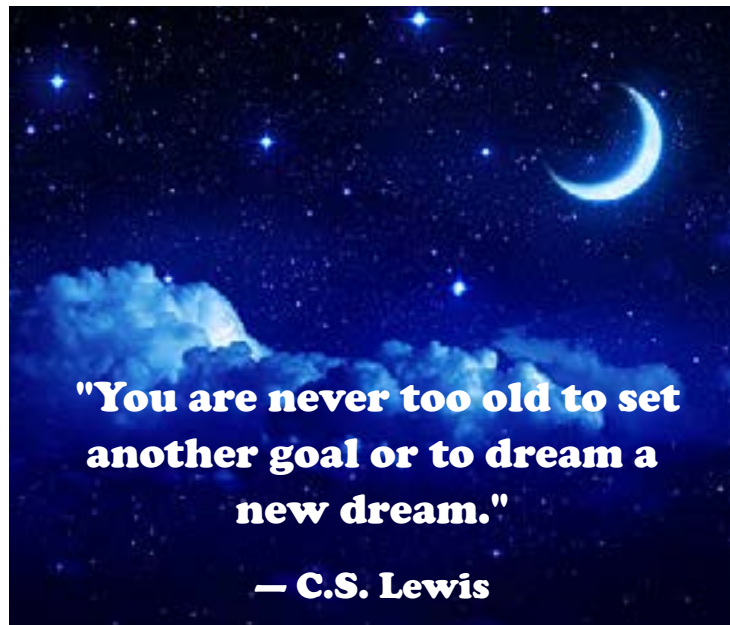
We have several dates scheduled, and many more in the works! A few highlights are listed below. If you know of someone who would like to hear about our services and programs, please contact us at [development@gsil.org](mailto:development@gsil.org)

- In February we will present to the Keene Lions Club on our services, with an emphasis on Accessible Home Modifications and the funding process. We are also scheduled to present to the AmeriHealth Caritas NH Case Managers in their Manchester Office.
- In March we will host an outreach table at the State House for their Developmental Disability Day luncheon, to educate our State Reps & Senators about all things GSIL.

### **Adults on Medicaid need more dentists, especially adults with disabilities** - *Excerpt from NH Bulletin*

If there was any question about whether adults with Medicaid would take advantage of having preventative dental care for the first time, consider this: In the program's first eight months, more than 8,000 people have seen a dentist, oral surgeon, or hygienist. [Read more](#)





**"You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream."**

**— C.S. Lewis**

## Holidays Observed

GSIL's corporate office will be closed on the following date:

**February 19, 2024** in observance of President's Day



## March Fun Facts

- Daylight Savings Time starts in March
- International Women's Day is in March
- "If March comes in like a lion, it will go out like a lamb"
- March's birth flower is the daffodil and the birthstone is aquamarine



## Linkables

*Submitted by: JoAnn Miller,  
Administrative Assistant*

### [Signs & Symptoms of Stroke](#)

[The Day George Washington Became President](#)

[Why George Washington never smiled](#)

[History of Abraham Lincoln](#)

[Abraham Lincoln's Murder Trial](#)



[When is the next Leap Year?](#)

[How to weather the extreme cold: NH emergency shelter info, safety tips and more](#)

[DRC NH December ENews](#)

[Blind instructor teaches carpentry](#)

[Disability Inclusion Makes Financial Sense](#)

[Health Care for Young Adults with Disabilities is Complicated, but here are resources to help](#)

[Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services Program Gets \\$37 Billion Boost](#)

[Hospitals may be assessed on age-friendly care. Here's how to weigh in](#)

[No 'island of old people': North Conway project embraces shared spaces for all ages](#)

[The Clothing Library - Dover](#)

["Barbie" now has ASL as an option](#)

[CMS provides critical tools to help improve access for millions who receive Medicaid Home-and-Community-based services](#)

## Congratulations on ACE Anniversaries!

We appreciate the commitment and dedication of our attendant care employees who have a long service record at GSIL. Thank you for all that you do in service to consumers. You are valuable members of the team. Congratulations on your service milestones!

Name	Years of Service
Brigitta Karl	26
Wayne Newman	24
Clayton Glover	22
Paul Gagnon	22
Jason Gross	20
Carol Ferland	15
Tamara Gawley	15
Ashley Robbins	10
Sherri Hill	10
Amanda Murray	5
Angelo Ramirez	5
Carrie Ducharme	5
Dawn Cilley	5
Francis Gardner	5
Jason Gardner	5
Kendra Howe	5
Laura Briere	5
Ross Colby	5
Steven Barker	5

Name	Years of Service
Albert Emery IV	1
Cathiann Evans	1
Christine Gutkowski	1
Colette Beaulieu	1
Daniel Revits	1
Denise Halen	1
Erin Harris	1
Gerry Cushing	1
Hayley Very	1
Janel Klein	1
Jessica Largesse	1
Kaila Monbleau	1
Keri Steeves	1
Lucinda Healy	1
Skybind Smith	1
Tanya Rooney	1
Theresa Lorette	1
Timothy Reardon	1

**GSIL is Hiring!**  
Check out our listings on the GSIL Website's [Career page](#)

**If you are an ACE looking for more hours, please contact your Long Term Services Coordinator!**

## Contact Us

### GSIL's Main Office

21 Chenell Drive, Concord, NH 03301  
**(603) 228-9680** | [info@gsil.org](mailto:info@gsil.org)

### Programs

Cheryl Pinheiro, *RN, CCM*  
*Senior Director of Long Term Supports* x1158 or [cpinheiro@gsil.org](mailto:cpinheiro@gsil.org)

Donna Potter, *Statewide Director of PCSP Services*  
x1609 or [dpotter@gsil.org](mailto:dpotter@gsil.org)

Michelle Cutting, *Director of Community Services*  
x1502 or [mcutting@gsil.org](mailto:mcutting@gsil.org)

Brianna Smith, *Director of Education Services*  
(603) 931-0456 or [bsmith@gsil.org](mailto:bsmith@gsil.org)

Valerie Kidder, *Director of Community Partners*  
x1111 or [vkidder@gsil.org](mailto:vkidder@gsil.org)

Terri Voth, *Editor*  
x1103 or [development@gsil.org](mailto:development@gsil.org)

### Human Resources

#### Work Related Injuries & Verification of Employment

Ann Malburne, *HR Director*  
x1151 or [amalburne@gsil.org](mailto:amalburne@gsil.org)

#### ACE New Hires and Onboarding

Melyssa Willis, *HR Generalist*  
[mwillis@gsil.org](mailto:mwillis@gsil.org)

Justina Johnson, *HR Coordinator*  
[jjohnson@gsil.org](mailto:jjohnson@gsil.org)

#### Recruitment and Retention

[Recruitment@gsil.org](mailto:Recruitment@gsil.org)

Kelsea Moyle, *Recruitment Manager*  
(603)268-2596 or [kmoyle@gsil.org](mailto:kmoyle@gsil.org)

### Payroll

Julie Smith, *Payroll Associate*  
x1144 or [payroll@gsil.org](mailto:payroll@gsil.org)

# Advocacy Awareness

Submitted by: Ryan Donnelly, GSIL Advocacy Coordinator

## Additional Public Information Sessions on HCBS Case Management Training

The NH Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Bureaus of Elderly and Adult Services (BEAS) and Developmental Services (BDS), in partnership with the Human Services Research Institute (HSRI), the UNH Institute on Disability, and the University of Missouri at Kansas City Institute for Human Development, will hold two additional public information sessions to seek input on training priorities for case managers and service coordinators who support NH's Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) for older adults and people with disabilities.

This work is one of several initiatives in the state's evaluation of NH's home- and community-based services. DHHS is working with HSRI and its partners to assess training and support for case managers and service coordinators and develop a plan to ensure equitable access to high-quality, person-centered case management and service coordination across the state.

Anyone who has feedback about HCBS case management and service coordination is encouraged to attend a listening session. For additional information about the listening sessions or to provide direct feedback, please email [NHCMassessment@dhhs.nh.gov](mailto:NHCMassessment@dhhs.nh.gov).

### In-person listening session:

Thursday, February 22, 2024, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm

Northeast Delta Dental Conference Center

Two Delta Drive, Concord

### Virtual listening session:

Wednesday, February 21, 2024, 6:00 – 8:00 pm

Zoom Link: <https://bit.ly/48GjOiZ>

Or by telephone: Dial: 1-646-931-3860

Meeting ID: 854 1798 7066

*People who need accommodations for communication access to in-person sessions such as interpreters, CART (captioning), assistive listening devices, or other auxiliary aids and/or services, can contact DHHS at 603-271-9203 or [NHCMassessment@dhhs.nh.gov](mailto:NHCMassessment@dhhs.nh.gov) five business days before the listening session. At least five business days' advance notice is requested in order to assure availability of accommodations; requests made fewer than five days prior to the event will attempt to be accommodated but cannot be guaranteed.*

# Accessible Voting

Currently, the accessible one4all voting system is available to use during all statewide federal elections, including both primaries and general elections. Every polling place in New Hampshire has a one4all system.

**We want to hear about your experiences using the one4all.**

**Email [mail@drcnh.org](mailto:mail@drcnh.org) or call us at (603) 228-0432 to share.**

[Learn More About the One4all](#)

**Take a look at the 2024 NH Bills!**

[Kangaroos, squirrels, and treasure hunting: The unique bills of the 2024 session](#) (NH Bulletin)

## Feds Move to Enforce Accessibility Standards for Medical Equipment

*(excerpt from Disability Scoop, written by Michelle Diamant, published January 17, 2024)*

Doctor's offices often lack examination tables, weight scales and other diagnostic equipment that are accessible to people with disabilities. Now, the U.S. Department of Justice is trying to change that.

The agency is proposing a rule under the Americans with Disabilities Act that would adopt technical standards spelling out the responsibilities that hospitals and health care clinics operated by state or local governments have under the law.

The Justice Department said that the proposal published this month in the Federal Register comes in response to numerous complaints from people with disabilities who have been denied basic services by health care providers due to a lack of accessible equipment.

Complaints cited cases where doctors failed to obtain an accurate weight before administering anesthesia, a doctor who told a patient who remained in his wheelchair for the entirety of his annual exam that "I assume everything below the waist is fine," and a patient who was afraid to go to the doctor after being placed on a standard exam table with no side rails.

"Individuals with disabilities often experience great difficulty...."

[Click Here to read the full article!](#)



# Bringing Independence to Life!

Submitted by: Jessica Morris, TCB Agency (GSIL's Marketing Consultants)

Homes are personal sanctuaries that reflect individual personalities and needs. Safety, functionality, and control help establish one's physical and emotional connection to a living space. GSIL understands how feeling comfortable and independent at home provides confidence, which is why home modification is a top priority.



For Marie, a GSIL consumer with limited mobility, GSIL brought renewed functionality, light, and independence to her life. She shares a home with her caregiver Mona, who has also been a friend for more than three decades. The pair repeatedly tried, without success, to hire someone to make their kitchen and bathroom wheelchair accessible. Within two weeks from when GSIL became involved, Marie and Mona's home modification dreams turned to reality.



**"If I lost GSIL's services I would be devastated. Without GSIL I wouldn't be where I am today physically or mentally. GSIL is always there!"**

Lowered countertops. Accessible sinks. Height-appropriate appliances. Supportive mechanisms. Those features and more were taken into consideration by GSIL's project manager and contractor for the kitchen and bathroom. In addition, a state of the art ramp was built onto the house. Easy access in and out, as well as the ability to wheel onto her favorite place – the enclosed porch – elevated Marie's living experience in a way she wasn't sure was possible. GSIL gave back a piece of her life she felt she had lost.

[Watch Marie and her ACE Mona in our recent Recruitment Comercial!](#)



[Watch Ryan, featured in our last edition, in our recent Recruitment Comercial!](#)

## REFURBISHED EQUIPMENT MARKETPLACE

### USED EQUIPMENT, LOVINGLY RESTORED

We have a wide selection of durable medical equipment including but not limited to: canes, walkers, wheelchairs, power wheelchairs, commodes, shower chairs, bed canes, rollators, cryo cuffs, lifts and many more. Our inventory changes daily so some items not listed may be available and some items may be out of stock. Check the website for an up-to-date list of our inventory.

[Shoprem.com](http://Shoprem.com)

Refurbished Equipment Marketplace | 57 Regional Dr | Concord NH 03301 | (603) 226-2903



**\*REM relies on donations  
to serve our clients\***

**Open M-TH 9-2**

# GSIL's Education Programs & Services

The Earn & Learn Opportunities Program is a partnership between the Manchester School District, Vocational Rehabilitation New Hampshire and Granite State Independent Living. The IMPACCT Program is a partnership between New Hampshire Vocational Rehabilitation and Granite State Independent Living in response to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). IMPACCT was created to help augment and support the transitional services that schools are already providing their students with disabilities.



## Student Success Stories

Submitted by: Brianna Smith, Director of Education Services

### IMPACCT Fall 2023

**Wayne**, a 17-year-old from White Mountains Regional, completed the Fall 2023 IMPACCT Academy at Lancaster in the Berlin Region. He struggled with attendance and got frustrated extremely easy. We were told he had been kicked out of class because of anger and frustration issues. During our interview with Wayne, he came in with a hood covering most of his face, an “I-don’t-care” attitude and was slumping half way down his chair. His mom expressed the frustration that she didn’t know what else to do and any direct questions to him were met with a “humph”.

Wayne started IMPACCT very quiet and reserved. He followed directions without much interaction, sitting off by himself. He started to open-up when we did our fitness time playing basketball and was able to interact positively with his peers. Gentle questions and making sure to say “Good Morning” and “Have a nice day”, further allowed him to interact without conflict. A few weeks into the program he got sick and had to take a day off. He texted me in the morning and was very worried we were going to kick him out of IMPACCT. I reassured him that he was fine and though he would lose his stipend for the week and he would be required to catch up on his work, he would still be allowed to finish the program. His first day back, I saw a marked difference in how he related to us. He was more open and helpful. He continued to be quiet and reserved in class, but he was also more relaxed and self-assured. He was one of the first ones done with his assignments and first to offer to help clean up. By the end of the program, he was assisting others and talking to us at length about his favorite things. His worksite was also pleased with his work. Saying he worked without complaint and finished tasks faster than expected while still maintaining quality work. At his exit meeting, there were several comments about his thoughtful insights and professional looking presentation.

Wayne plans to return to White Mountains Regional High School and graduate in the Spring of 2024. He has chosen to continue to work with the GSIL staff to get a driver’s license. While he hasn’t settled on plans after graduating, we know his new found soft skills and self-confidence will allow him to soar!

**Brian** completed Manchester IMPACCT in the Fall of 2023. He attends Salem High School and is anticipated to graduate in June of 2024. Outside of school, Brian enjoys video games and playing with his pet cat. Brian is very passionate about cars and animals.



*The photo shows Brian at his work experience, Auto Envy Detailing*

Brian is a kind, honest student and brought ample positivity to the IMPACCT classroom. Brian struggled with confidence, time management and advocating for himself, but made considerable progress in these areas during his time at IMPACCT.

Brian completed his work experience at **Auto Envy Detailing** in Hudson, NH. Brian was consistently on time and attentive to his worksite supervisors. He was able to pick up tasks quickly and could easily handle hard tasks after just one demonstration from his supervisors. Brian was so successful in his worksite that his supervisors offered to have him work for them after graduating! It was evident through his demeanor that Brian was confident in himself and his ability to work and be independent in his job.

Brian earned full credit for his time at IMPACCT and completed all of his assignments. Brian is eager to finish high school and graduate, so that he can go on to potentially work with animals. Brian’s main focus is transitioning from high school to a career, and it is visible that he has grown through the IMPACCT program. We can’t wait to see where he goes!

*"Brian was consistently on time and attentive to his worksite supervisors."*

**Mac**, a 16-year-old from Dover High School, completed the Fall 2023 IMPACCT Academy in the Portsmouth Region. Mac attends Dover High School, where he receives traditional instruction. Mac is an individual who cares very deeply about his family and friends. He values trust and loyalty. Mac came to IMPACCT Academy to earn important credits that will put him on the path to high school graduation.

Mac was invested in his experience at IMPACCT Academy. He bonded well with the other students and communicated well in group situations. He practiced advocating for himself in the classroom, at the workplace, and at home. Mac challenged himself to stay on track and make up missing assignments, and he succeeded in his goal of earning all of his IMPACCT credits.

Mac completed his work experience at **Seacoast e-Bikes** under the direction of Steve and Annie. There, he learned the basics of retail, like restocking products, setting up displays, and keeping the store clean. He also learned about e-Bike maintenance and took on tasks like building side mirrors, assembling racks, inspecting bikes, and checking tire pressure. He was a dedicated worker who took initiative and asked great questions of the service team. Steve was so impressed with Mac's progress that he has offered Mac a paid summer job working at Seacoast e-Bikes.

Mac earned full credit for his IMPACCT experience this fall. He will return to Dover High School to continue his junior year. This experience has put him further on the track to graduation. Mac is also considering attending New Hampshire Job Corps, which he learned about through IMPACCT and at Dover High School. After he finishes school, Mac would like to work at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, hopefully in the capacity of a police officer. He has not yet decided if he wants to pursue a civilian role or enlist in the Navy. We at IMPACCT wish Mac success in all of his future endeavors.



*The photo shows Mac working with the bikes at Seacoast e-Bikes.*

### **Manchester Earn and Learn Fall 2023**

**Alexia** attends Manchester West High School and joined the Earn and Learn program for the Fall of 2023. Alexia was interested in the program to help better her education and

life skills. Alexia recognized that for her to be successful she would benefit from the smaller working environment.

From day one Alexia was a student who participated in everything that the Earn and Learn program had to offer. She was a serious and quiet student who consistently presented herself as a young lady eager to learn as much as she could about courage, adaptability, honesty, contemplation, decision-making and initiative. Alexia's contributions to the Fall Earn and Learn Community were respectful, she was never a participant of the misguided intention of others in the training room. She communicated with a quiet thunder that was exceptionally kind and wise.

When circumstances got bumpy for her (absent or late) Alexia communicated with staff and her work site supervisor and apologetically explained the reasons for her not showing up. When her attendance was a concern, she reached out to develop a plan to catch up on missing instruction and work. Alexia stood out above her Earn and Learn Peers because she consistently engaged in absorbing all that the program had to offer her. She worked diligently to master the seven extended learning opportunities, never taking any of it for granted, demonstrating an appreciation and gratitude for each lesson,



*"Alexia communicated with a quiet thunder that was exceptionally kind and wise"*

presenter, tour, and fitness activity. Alexia demonstrated loyalty to her learning, to her friendships, and to her future and that was a big part of her Earn and Learn success.

Alexia returns to Manchester West High School with all her credits and is in a better position than she was prior to graduating Earn and Learn.

Alexia advocated in her exit meeting to continue having support from GSIL in the form of credit recovery to be supported in the way she was successful in through the Earn and Learn program. Alexia is still interested in pursuing art in a college or trade school setting and trying to find an internship or job as a tattoo artist. Alexia got a job shortly after the program, but still wants to work with GSIL staff to find a better job that capitalizes on her strengths and better suits her personality. GSIL staff are more than happy to help continue supporting Alexia's goals and help her take those next steps in her life. We wish Alexia nothing but the best and hope she achieves all of what she wants to achieve.

## Cyber Security Corner

Submitted by: Cheryl Boette

### Top 5 Smartphone Security Fundamentals

Protecting smartphones is a vital part of maintaining security, both at home and at work. To make that process simple, adhere to these five smartphone security fundamentals:

- 1. Manage App Permissions:** Mobile applications need to be granted various permissions in order to function, but even legitimate apps sometimes request more permissions than necessary. For example, why would a music player app need to access your contacts or pictures? Always take note of those situations to prevent apps from accessing more data or personal information than needed.
- 2. Prioritize Physical Security:** Not only should smartphones be protected with a unique PIN or code, it's also a good idea to have the screen automatically lock after a few seconds. Even better, lock it immediately when you're done with it or before putting it down. That way, if someone steals your phone, they won't get access to any information stored on it without knowing the passcode.
- 3. Beware of Malicious Apps:** Malicious applications steal data and spread malware. You can avoid them by only installing apps from legitimate app stores and developers. A way to tell if an app is trustworthy is by checking out its reviews and total downloads. One with millions of downloads and thousands of reviews is most likely legitimate.
- 4. Enable Find My Device Services:** Most modern phones offer "find my device" services. If you lose your phone, use a second device to locate your phone via an online map or prompt it to ring. If you determine that the phone has been stolen or is not recoverable, you can use the erase function to completely remove all personal information and reset the device to factory settings.
- 5. Keep it Updated:** Updates are often issued to address crucial security concerns. By keeping your phone and all apps on the latest versions, you avoid potential threats associated with outdated software. Ideally, enable automatic updates so you never miss an important fix. It's also a good idea to occasionally review the apps you have installed and remove any you no longer need.

## Your Voice Matters!

Submitted by: Donna Potter, Statewide Director of PCSP Services

GSIL's Consumer Advisory Committee has a new email address: [CAC@gsil.org](mailto:CAC@gsil.org)

**We want to hear from you! Your voice matters!**

The CAC is a GSIL sponsored committee that serves to make recommendations and/or provide key information to GSIL to improve consumer directed services and consumer benefits. If you have ideas or suggestions on how we can improve our services to better serve the needs of our consumers, please email your suggestions to [CAC@gsil.org](mailto:CAC@gsil.org).

We are also looking for consumers of any GSIL program who are passionate about helping others and affecting positive change to our programs to join the CAC.

**Contact us today to become a member!**

GSIL Consumer and Committee Chair,  
Kevin Ennis at [kmu2783@gmail.com](mailto:kmu2783@gmail.com)  
or GSIL Staff Representative and  
Co-Chair, Donna Potter at [dpotter@gsil.org](mailto:dpotter@gsil.org)  
or 603.228.9680



**5,913** Extended Learning Opportunities  
have been completed by IMPACCT Academy Students.

Inspiring the Mastery of Post-Secondary Achievement in College, Careers & Training



*Submitted by: Terri Voth, Donor Relations Specialist & Event Planner*

We are **Whooping** It Up! Our 13th annual Hoops on Wheels wheelchair basketball tournament where over 200 community members and business leaders will gather on the courts and experience the challenges of the game from a sports chair – all while raising funds and awareness for our mission - is back at NHTI in March.

Teams are responsible for raising \$1,000. They can do that with a corporate sponsorship or raise funds! Teams are made up of 8-10 fun seeking individuals, so if they are fundraising, it breaks down to around \$100 per player. That is each player asking 10 of their family and friends for \$10 each! Facebook Fundraising is also a great way to get the event supported. Jenny will be Captain of the Peer Pressure team again this year, and Alexandria is working on a 2nd team!

## Health Awareness - March

*Submitted by: Diana Bailey, RN Coordinator*

### *March is National Developmental Disability Awareness Month*

[National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month](#) (D.D.A.M.), observed throughout March, is a nationwide event to raise awareness about the inclusion of people with developmental disabilities and address the barriers that those with disabilities face.

On February 26, 1987, President Ronald Reagan officially declared March as National Disabilities Awareness Month. The proclamation called for people to provide understanding, encouragement and opportunities to help persons with disabilities to lead productive and fulfilling lives.

Wear Orange! Orange is a color symbolizing energy and positivity. It is also the official color of DD Awareness Month. So grab your orange attire, and let's celebrate!

Everyone wants and deserves to enjoy life, feel productive and secure. But in March, we take extra steps to raise awareness about the supports and rights of the people with disabilities and to celebrate their contributions to our communities and society as a whole.

If you would like to play on their teams, or support their fundraising efforts, reach out!! If you would like to register your own team, that is even better!! The Development Team is always happy to assist, so please do not hesitate to reach out to us should you have questions or ideas!

So, if you have 8 fun-loving friends, or your spouse/partner has 8 adventurous co-workers, or you are a family of sports nuts – pull a team together and enjoy a day of laughter, all while knowing you are doing something for a great cause. This is the ride of a lifetime – get everyone you know involved! Please help us get the word out and share it with your community. You can also like and share the Facebook posts that we have in support of the event and its sponsors.

We are always looking for volunteers too, if you are able to give us a hand with setup or announce, keep score, referee or maybe one of your kids is looking for some community support time – we can use you!! **Admission is free**, so don't miss out on GSIL's signature event! Come down and support us at NHTI on March 23rd!

For more information or to register your team, visit our website: [www.gsil.org/hoops](http://www.gsil.org/hoops)

Interested in putting a team together or playing? Reach out to us at [development@gsil.org](mailto:development@gsil.org) ...  
...and get the ball bouncing!

## Granite State Independent Living 2024 Payroll Calendar

January							February							March						
SA	SU	M	T	W	Th	F	SA	SU	M	T	W	Th	F	SA	SU	M	T	W	Th	F
		1	2	3	4	5					1	2							1	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29		23	24	25	26	27	28	29
														30	31					
April							May							June						
		1	2	3	4	5					1	2	3							
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
27	28	29	30				25	26	27	28	29	30	31	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
														29	30					
July							August							September						
		1	2	3	4	5					1	2		1	2	3	4	5	6	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	29	30				
							31													
October							November							December						
			1	2	3	4						1		1	2	3	4	5	6	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
26	27	28	29	30	31		23	24	25	26	27	28	29	28	29	30	31			
							30													

Corporate Offices Closed

Pay Date

PAY WEEKS	PAY DATE	PAY WEEKS	PAY DATE
12/16/23 – 12/29/23	01/05/24	06/29/24 – 07/12/24	07/19/24
12/30/23 – 01/12/24	01/19/24	07/13/24 – 07/26/24	08/02/24
01/13/24 – 01/26/24	02/02/24	07/27/24 – 08/09/24	08/16/24
01/27/24 – 02/09/24	02/16/24	08/10/24 – 08/23/24	08/30/24
02/10/24 – 02/23/24	03/01/24	08/24/24 – 09/06/24	09/13/24
02/24/24 – 03/08/24	03/15/24	09/07/24 – 09/20/24	09/27/24
03/09/24 – 03/22/24	03/29/24	09/21/24 – 10/04/24	10/11/24
03/23/24 – 04/05/24	04/12/24	10/05/24 – 10/18/24	10/25/24
04/06/24 – 04/19/24	04/26/24	10/19/24 – 11/01/24	11/08/24
04/20/24 – 05/03/24	05/10/24	11/02/24 – 11/15/24	11/22/24
05/04/24 – 05/17/24	05/24/24	11/16/24 – 11/29/24	12/06/24
05/18/24 – 05/31/24	06/07/24	11/30/24 – 12/13/24	12/20/24
06/01/24 – 06/14/24	06/21/24	12/14/24 – 12/27/24	01/03/25
06/15/24 – 06/28/24	07/05/24	12/28/24 – 01/10/25	01/17/25