

YOUR  
AUGUST 2018  
NEWSLETTER



Park  
Center  
Recovery From Mental Illness



Meet Sekou and Alisia.  
You changed their lives.

# Thank You

YOUR gifts made recovery possible for Sekou.

Sekou has been a member of Park Center for a few years. Last fall, Sekou's symptoms became more severe and he had hallucinations while he was at work. His symptoms were so unexpected; Sekou had been thriving for the last two years. He had his own apartment and a job as a lifeguard at Vanderbilt University. Unfortunately, he lost his job because his symptoms became too difficult to manage. Soon afterwards, Sekou lost his apartment, too.

For the next 4 months, Sekou was in and out of the hospital treating his mental illness. Sekou's symptoms became more stable over time and he was discharged for the last time in February. He moved back into his apartment and set one very important goal for himself: to find a job as a lifeguard. He believed that a major part of his stability would depend on his continued employment.



Your support  
helped Sekou return  
to his passion of  
being a lifeguard

## "Work gives me purpose"

Sekou began the job search with support from Park Center's Supported Employment program. With 15 years of lifeguard experience, Sekou was an excellent candidate. He applied for a lifeguard position at a YMCA and immediately received a phone call from the aquatics director. She told Sekou that she was very impressed with his work experience and wanted to interview him for the position!

Sekou was confident during the interview and he was offered the job on the spot! He decided to disclose his mental health struggles to his new employer, because he feels that if he had done so with his previous employer, he may have had a chance to save that job. Sekou persevered through a very difficult time and is now a stronger person because of it. He's even decided that he wants to switch from part-time to full-time employment!

# *Because You Care,*

## Alisia has a job she loves and now owns a car!

Alisia has been a member of Park Center's Murfreesboro Supported Employment Program since last year. Despite having multiple sclerosis, Alisia was more than ready to get back to work again when she first met her employment specialist, Sangita. Alisia has professional experience as a caregiver, so she wanted a job in that field. Alisia got a job as a Resident Assistant at a group home for adults with developmental and intellectual disabilities. Alisia has been working there for 4 months and is loving her job!



As a Resident Assistant, Alisia is responsible for cooking, cleaning, and assisting the residents with daily tasks. She has been doing so well at her job that she was recently invited to speak on a panel at the Tennessee Mental Health Consumers' Association Conference. She spoke about her job and her experience working with an employment specialist. Through this job, Alisia has achieved personal growth by becoming more independent and confident.



Alisia is doing amazing in her recovery and we are excited for her as she continues to accomplish all her employment goals. In fact, after numerous attempts of going from dealership to dealership, Alisia recently bought a car!

Your support helped Alisia get to where she is now, thriving at her job and in her recovery

# Celebration of COURAGE

*A Breakfast for Park Center*

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 2 | 7:30-9AM  
**W.O. SMITH MUSIC SCHOOL**

GUEST SPEAKER: SHERIFF DARON HALL

Join us at Celebration of Courage! This is an annual event to raise awareness and funding for Park Center's programs for adults in our community struggling with chronic mental illness, homelessness and addiction. The event will also feature stories of hope and recovery from Park Center members. We hope to see you there!

**WANT TO BE MORE INVOLVED WITH THIS EVENT?**

**BECOME A SPONSOR!**

**To RSVP or learn more about sponsorship opportunities, please contact Amy Shurden at [amy.shurden@parkcenternashville.org](mailto:amy.shurden@parkcenternashville.org).**

There is no cost to attend the event, but reservations are required.

## COMMUNITY DINNERS

We recently had the first ever Park Center Community Dinner in the Supported Women's home! The dinner was a great opportunity for residents and volunteers to get to know each other. Volunteers on Park Center's Associate Board brought home-cooked dishes and the residents also prepared a dish.



Want to get involved? Organize a group of your friends and join in on this chance to give back! If you're interested in planning a Community Dinner at our men's or women's supported home, contact Amy Shurden at [amy.shurden@parkcenternashville.org](mailto:amy.shurden@parkcenternashville.org).