DEAR SITE FAMILIES

Happy Holidays and welcome to the December edition of SITE Happenings!

Mindfulness, Meditation and the Holiday Season
Mary Eleanor Esposito, Certified School Psychologist

The holiday season can bring about feelings of peace, love and joy. With that, it can also bring feelings of being overwhelmed, anxious and stressed. When this happens, it can be beneficial to practice mindfulness and meditation. Mindfulness is bringing your attention to the present moment; the art of returning, again and again, to the present moment. Mindfulness is something we naturally possess, but we typically ignore on a daily basis. When you bring awareness to what you’re directly experiencing via your senses or to your state of mind via thoughts and emotions, you’re being mindful (mindful.org).

Another form of mindfulness is Meditation. Meditation can be done through a variety of practices, as we venture into the workings of our minds: our sensations, our emotions, and thoughts (mindful.org). Whether you follow a formal meditation program or allow yourself a moment of quiet to breathe, meditating can help change our mindsets. A helpful technique is to use your breathing as an anchor to the present moment. Mindfulness and Meditation can give us perspective and decrease stress. When feeling overwhelmed or stressed by our environment, practicing mindfulness and/or meditation can help a person refocus or re-center themselves.

Some simple tips for Meditation:

1. Sit comfortably. No fancy equipment needed, just a comfortable position.
2. Notice what your legs are doing. Again, sit comfortably.
3. Straighten your upper body.
4. Notice what your arms are doing. Rest your palms on whatever feels most natural.
5. Soften your gaze or close your eyes. Feel your breath. Bring in your attention to the physical sensation of breathing: the air moving through your nose or mouth, the rising and falling of your belly, or your chest.
6. Notice when your mind wanders from your breath. Be kind to your wandering mind. Come back to your breath over and over again.

Some informal ways to practice mindfulness include:

1. Accept Imperfection. “It is okay if something is not perfect”. Imperfection is healthy and normal.
2. Don’t lose sight of what really counts. When feeling overwhelmed, reflect on what positives you have going on in your life. Somethings are out of our control.
3. Respond with kindness. When things get tense, remember to take a few deep breaths, this can help shift your mindset.
4. Always be kind to yourself.

Resources:
https://www.mindful.org/meditation/mindfulness-getting-started/
https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention/4-mindful-tips-to-destress-this-holiday-season
EXEMPLARY EMPLOYEES!
Throughout the school year, SITE staff meet and choose an Exemplary Employee. This intern is chosen based on the workplace character traits. Additional criteria can be showing great improvement in any area below or at a job site.

Help us congratulate November's Exemplary Employees!!

Essien H. earned Exemplary Employee for his flexibility, patience and hard work

Kyaire J. earned Exemplary Employee for his hard work in obtaining an apprenticeship with Delaware Laborers Local 199!

UPCOMING EVENTS
Wednesday, December 7, 2022 - FULL DAY for SITE Interns

Thursday, December 22 through Monday, January 2, 2023: Brandywine School District Closed - Winter Break

Adult Agency Spotlight
Kaleidoscope Family Solutions

Kaleidoscope Family Solutions (KFS) serves children and adults with developmental disabilities by supporting individuals to live healthy, independent and productive lives.

KFS offers at home and community services in the areas of community participation and supported employment. KFS is a Pathways to Employment provider, making referrals and coordination of services more streamlined.

Kaleidoscope utilizes a person-centered model to ensure that individuals are supported to achieve the highest level of independence desired by the individual and their families. KFS works one on one with individuals and their families to assist them in working through their specific challenges as well as connect them with resources and supports in their communities.

To learn more about Kaleidoscope Family Solutions, please contact them at 302-246-5520, ext. 5520 or online at https://www.kfamilysolutions.org/kfs-delaware/

*For informational purposes ONLY. Neither SITE nor the Brandywine School District endorses any specific adult agency. Families are encouraged to tour and research agencies to best fit their needs.
Featured Job Site- Claymont Community Center Food Closet

Last year SITE began a wonderful partnership with the Claymont Community Center’s Food Closet. The Food Closet, which is located in the community center, provides food and groceries to Delawareans in need, with priority given to those living within the Brandywine School District feeder pattern. SITE interns work at the Food Closet on Mondays, where they are responsible for sorting and organizing the food shelves, checking expiration dates and removing food that has passed this date. Not only are interns learning valuable skills, they are helping their own communities through this experience. We are very pleased to have this partnership!

December Team Building Activities

The following team building activities are on the calendar for December:

12/2/2022: YMCA AM, Bowling PM
12/9/2022: Yuletide at Winterthur
12/16/2022: YMCA AM, Holiday Celebration PM
12/23/2022: No School - Winter Break
12/30/2022: No School - Winter Break

Check out a few photos from our November Team Building Activities

James C. playing bocce at the Special Olympics Tournament

Visit from DonutNV Food Truck

Fourth Year Student Profiles

With the passage of HB 454, SITE had several students who chose to remain with BSD through their 22nd birthdays. SITE is aiming to individualize programming for these interns to make the most of their fourth year and help them obtain gainful employment. Here’s a look at what a few of our interns are doing this year:

Brendan P.
Brendan has an interest in working with young children. Over the summer he worked as an Educational Aide for BSD Summer school. This school year he has spent his mornings helping out in Mr. Brown’s 6th grade BSAP classroom at PS. Brendan is also taking childcare courses through the University of Delaware’s Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood.

Armon M.
Armon has been working at ShopRite for over a year. What started as an internship with SITE has turned into nearly full-time employment. Armon is working most days of the week and is starting to move up within ShopRite. Armon was also able to study and obtain his driver’s license while at SITE.