This newsletter is the result of a Service-Learning project between Opportunity Works and Northern Essex Community College students in Theresa DeFranzo's Composition I class this summer.

If you would like to receive a copy of this and future newsletters, please email Melissa Merrow at: Melissa.merrow@opportunityworks.org

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed, is the only thing that ever has.

- Margaret Mead
Introducing Project Search

Grace Sullivan has a message she wants to deliver to others. In our interview, she expressed how she wants to share her experience with Opportunity Works to inspire others to do the same. She feels as though others may not know about the amazing services provided, and she hopes that through sharing her story that she can encourage others to participate so they can experience it too.

HELLO EVERYONE!

My name is Grace Sullivan. I was born in Florida and moved to Massachusetts in 1990. My birthday is June 2 and I am now 30 years old. I love to dance tap, ballet, jazz and hip hop music. I also love to sing in the chorus. One of my favorite songs to sing is The Story by Sara Ramirez, which is from my favorite show Grey’s Anatomy. I still remember my first job too. I worked at Sylvan Street Grille for over seven months and I loved it.

I spent the past eight years being a part of the Opportunity Works community. I started Project Search at Opportunity Works in August 2016 and just graduated this past May, 2017. I practiced different activities such as public safety, student engagement, secretary jobs, public speaking, and cashiering. I was the second female ever to complete the public safety component! I participated in three internships at Northern Essex Community College while attending Project Search. The first internship was in Lawrence where I helped to file paperwork. At the second internship, I worked as an administrative assistant at NECC. And the third internship consisted of me stocking shelves at the NECC Bookstore and also working in the public safety sector. I plan to attend NECC myself, for the fall 2017 semester.

Sadly, the last day of project SEARCH was May 26, 2017. We had a graduation and I even gave a speech! I was very nervous and excited about that. I received my award and made many life decisions. With all the help I received, I was able to go to Marshalls for an interview. I am still waiting to hear back from them but I am excited to learn how to deal with money and save lots of it for the future.

I loved being at the college every day for the internships. Also I have a lot of things that I want to learn about. In the fall I plan on coming to NECC as a student and I want to take classes for health, science and knitting. I might even throw in a dance class.

Project Search helped me to find jobs, gave me a lot of support, and

For more information on Project Search Please Contact:

Jamie Nadeau
Project Search Manager
978-420-8799
Jamie.nadeau@opportunityworks.org
Tom Brazil cares about your public safety. Tom has been on the Health And Safety Committee at Opportunity Works, since 2015.

According to the Opportunity Works website, the mission of Opportunity Works is to enhance “the quality of life of people with disabilities by empowering individuals and promoting a culture of dignity and respect through integration, inclusion, and independence.” Tom said Opportunity Works has helped him “by learning all different ideas about public safety and learning about different kinds of people and learning about their helpfulness and learning about other people who need help.”

On a typical day, Tom arrives at Opportunity Works at about 9 a.m. Either after morning meeting or break time, he and Andrew start their inspection of the building.

“This usually takes us about an hour or two,” Tom said. Andrew and Tom walk around the building and go into the classrooms, kitchen and bathrooms looking for any items such as water damage, cracks in the ceilings and broken lights. If Tom sees any damage, he reports it to the highest safety officer at Opportunity Works. He also makes a note of it on his checklist sheet.

Tom doesn’t just worry about public safety at Opportunity Works. He also takes care of it at home. Tom lives in Dracut with his sister, brother-in-law and two nephews, aged 19 and 13. At home, Tom checks the carbon monoxide detectors, the fire extinguishers, and whether the smoke detector needs a new battery.

As for his nephews, Tom does talk to them about their safety. “I want them to learn if there is smoke in the house, go low and if their clothes are

Please Meet Preston

Preston H. is part of Opportunity Works Club 22 program, that is on the days he’s not working.

Preston has a job a working as a landscaper a couple of days a week. When he’s not working he goes to Opportunity Works. Preston loves to be outside so he says working as a landscaper is the perfect job for him.

“I love landscaping,” he says. “I loving being outside.”

When he’s at home he’s like to watch sports with basketball being his favorite.

When asked what is his favorite thing to do at Opportunity Works, he replied, “Probably going out
Please Meet Madeline H.

We have had the great opportunity to talk to Madeline H. She is a 23 year old woman from Methuen. Madeline has faced incredible challenges, like getting a liver transplant at the age of ten years old. She also reports that she has “anxiety and hates being yelled at”. Madeline also has a learning disorder which she overcomes daily with a brave face and a friendly smile. She is actively involved in the programs here at Northern Essex Community College and also at the Opportunity Works program in Haverhill. In the future, Madeline hopes to work in a nursing home as an activities coordinator.

Madeline underwent a liver transplant at the age of ten that changed her life. She wears a tag around her neck to show what she went through and how meaningful that experience has been in her life. She also has a learning disability that has affected her. She describes it as being a bit of a struggle and how in high school there were bullies who she had to face.

Madeline describes what her day is like in detail. She often works as the receptionist at Opportunity Works and enjoys her job tremendously. She starts out her day by usually getting up at 6:45 a.m. She has breakfast and enjoys a few minutes with her parents. At 8:30 a.m. she is picked up and brought to Opportunity Works. Madeline spends time with a developmental specialist in Club 22 program as well as her job coach.

Club 22, is a community based program for young adults who have transitioned out of high school at the age of 22. According to Madeline, it is a great program, especially for individuals with disability that would like assistance overcoming their challenges. Opportunity Works has changed Madeline’s life and given her a sense of family and community that gives her strength and goals.
Heather B. is a free spirit who has held a passion for fashion since she was young. She always loves to look her best and go shopping with her mother at her favorite stores, Sears and JC Penny. She says that if she could turn back time, she would have gone to fashion school or became a fashion blogger.

What’s In Her Bag?

Heather never leaves home without scented hand sanitizers, lip gloss, gum and perfume.

What’s her inspiration?

One of Heather’s biggest inspirations is the famous Disney character from Frozen, Elsa. She loves the way she dresses, from her makeup to her dress which is one of her favorite colors: turquoise.

Tips on keeping Cool During The Season?

- Skirts
- Dresses
- Shorts
- Sunscreen
- Hats
- Sunscreen
- Sunglasses
- Flip Flops

My personal story is rough but it hurts more when I am treated different from the others. I had an issue with another student who wrongly called me the R-word. However, I did not address it at the time. My parents gave me the courage to stand up for myself. Courage is very important when standing up to others who wrongly label us. We must stand together to be courageous in our fight to make sure no one else is called the R-word. Best buddies give me the courage to address this subject and the ability to untie with others like me in the fight to spread the word to end the word, like Antony Shriver said, “everyone has a