



INSIDER

Fall 2020

Dear Friends,

I want to thank my Our Space team and family for their dedication and hard work during this year of many challenges. Our Space Peer Support Specialists have worked throughout the pandemic to give clients stable support when so many other resources are unable to provide services. Even during adversity and trying times, Our Space is prepared to help those who struggle with mental health and substance abuse challenges. I am very proud of all my staff, and especially those who have been in the trenches every single day.

I would also like to thank our donors, and the other community providers who have worked tirelessly so we can continue to serve our community. Without your support and partnerships, this would not be possible. Our Space looks forward to maintaining these important partnerships as we move towards brighter days ahead.

Be well,

Nora Hitchcock

Our Space Executive Director



The Our Space Peer Support Model – Somebody to Lean On

Walking a mile in someone else's shoes isn't as much about the walk or the shoes; it's to be able to think like they think, feel what they feel, and understand why they are who and where they are. Every step is about empathy.

Author: Toni Sorenson

Day in and day out, this is the role of the Our Space Peer Support Specialist – empathetically walking in someone else's shoes. But it goes even deeper than that.

It starts with an innate understanding of what someone is struggling through, not because they have read it in a book or observed it in a classroom setting, but rather because it is at the core of who they once were, because they have been in those shoes themselves – they have lived that life and traveled that road.

The Our Space Peer Support model utilizes individuals with lived experience, walking alongside a consumer who has not yet journeyed as far down the road to recovery. The Peer Support specialist uses their personal lived experience to demonstrate hope and success. According to Our Space Peer Support Specialist, Jessica Burns, it is a holistic approach utilizing mind, body and spirit. It is a 'do with, not for' mindset. "We meet them, without judgement, where they are in their recovery journey, and work to build skills and goals based on their personal needs. We work alongside our peers to remind them what they are capable of, instead of doing the work for them." [READ MORE](#)



Keep Striving for Greatness – Shalene's Story

"Just because my eyes don't work doesn't mean that I am not a human being, capable of offering the same support and help that anyone else can."

Shalene Fayne – Our Space Peer Support Specialist

There are people we have the privilege of meeting that just make us want to be better. They cause us to focus less on our problems, and the things we cannot do, and make us strive to work harder and seek to attain greater heights. Our Space Peer Support Specialist, Shalene (Shay) Fayne, is one of those people.

Shay grew with full vision of the world around her; and it wasn't always an easy world to see. Some of her earliest memories include extreme unrest. "Because of my experiences as a child, living in an area where violence and gunshots were everyday occurrences, I struggle with PTSD. It was a difficult place to live, but it helps me to have empathy for the people I work with now." [READ MORE](#)

What's Happening Around Our Space?

Despite the uncertain times, Our Space continues to safely serve our members. Check out some of the activities that Our Space members have been enjoying in recent days!





Thank you to the following organizations, foundations, and individuals who generously support the Our Space mission of empowering individuals living with mental illness and substance abuse issues to achieve their full potential by providing recovery-oriented, person-person centered services and programs in a safe and accepting environment.

Erica P. John Foundation
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