

THRIVE 2021

Bruce Kowalski, Tutor

I have been a tutor with Seeds in several stints, most recently for the past 2 ½ years as a math tutor on the west side.

I was asked to reflect on what is it about Seeds that brought me to Seeds initially and that brought me back to Seeds, and then to share these thoughts with you today.

For me it is a combination of two factors – the first is more of a big picture look at the impact of Seeds on our students and also our local community that I want to be part of, and the second factor is on a personal level, as a tutor I appreciate being able to interact with our students and hopefully have a small part in our student's successes.

First the big picture.

I appreciate how the investments made by Seeds in its students are ultimately paid back many times in the form of improvements in our students' skills and lives and also through a positive impact on our community.

Our hard working students take the initiative to join us.

Once our students are with us Seeds invests in its students through offering classroom time and providing learning materials.

Our students then utilize these investments and make the value of these investments grow in the form of improved math skills for our students, and improved reading comprehension skills, and increased confidence for our students, all of which positively impact their daily lives.

Then many of our students will continue on to additional schooling, and the ultimate hoped for end result for our students is fulfilling careers and increased earnings potential over many years.

We start here with the Seeds investment in our students (hand gestures), and for each student we hope to wind up here (hand gesture).

If this is the investment growth and return on Seeds' investment for one student once we extrapolate this growth and return on investment:

- over 90+ June graduates,
- and for 11 students that completed the program in October alone,
- and for over 350+ active students,

then we can appreciate how the initial Seeds investment in our students grows many times over and has a wonderful favorable ripple effect through our local community.

To me this is the beauty of Seeds – we invest in hard working students that take these investments and grow them significantly in the form of improved skills and higher earnings potential.

I want to be part of this.

THRIVE 2021

Bruce Kowalski, Tutor

The second reason I appreciate my affiliation with Seeds is I enjoy working with our students and watching them reach their goals, and if I am able to play some small part in their success that is personally very gratifying.

I have had the privilege of working with many wonderful students, and I'd like to share the stories of two of them with you. The results for these two students are a good example for me of the positive impact of Seeds on our students' lives.

The first student story is of a Mom who was working on math at Seeds. Mom had not completed high school.

Mom commented to me that the reason she wanted to improve her math skills was because her son was working on the same math at school and Mom's goal was to help her son with his homework.

What really made an impression on me was how happy Mom was that she was able to bond with her son over his homework. And personally for me I was grateful I could be part of this for Mom.

And you know, maybe without even realizing it Mom was instilling in her son the importance of learning and school, and hopefully this is a lesson that will stay with him as he makes his way through grade school and high school.

The second student story I'd like to share is of a gentleman we worked with this spring.

This individual told me he was in his current job for 17 years and he was frustrated and unhappy in that position and he desperately wanted to get into a better job but he was limited because he did not have his high school diploma.

Ultimately this student's hard work and tremendous effort resulted in him receiving his GED and we were all thrilled for him.

For me this gentleman's story is a wonderful example of how a Seeds investment pays off many times over in the form of increased skills and confidence, which we observed in this student as he progressed through his math studies, and ultimately more employment opportunities that will be available to him hopefully leading to a more fulfilling job with increased earnings possibilities.

Finally, I'd like to close by mentioning that one of the perks of being a tutor is we receive a lot of thank yous from our very appreciative students.

I share these thank yous with you today.

Without your support the investments being made in our students, and the wonderful return on these investments realized by our students and our community, would not be possible.

Thank you for being with us today and thank you so much for your support.