



Depression and Bipolar
Support Alliance

Position Title: PEER APPRENTICE

ORGANIZATION SUMMARY

The Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA) is the leading peer-directed national organization focusing on the two most prevalent mental health conditions, depression and bipolar disorder, which affect more than 21 million Americans, account for 90% of the nation’s suicides every year, and cost \$23 billion in lost workdays and other workplace losses.

DBSA’s peer-based, wellness-oriented, and empowering services and resources are available when people need them, where they need them, and how they need to receive them—online 24/7, in local support groups, in audio and video casts, or in printed materials distributed by DBSA, our chapters, and mental health care facilities across America.

Though our extensive online and print resources and our more than 700 support groups, DBSA reaches millions of people each year with in-person and online peer support; current, readily understandable information about depression and bipolar disorder; and empowering tools focused on an integrated approach to wellness.

DBSA is led by and created for individuals living with a mood disorder, and that experience informs everything that we do.

OUR VALUES

1. **Community**—DBSA creates the opportunity for meaningful lives by compassionately engaging with individuals and providing peer-led support groups, educational materials, and wellness tools that focus on resiliency, achievement, creativity, and connection.
2. **Inspiration**—DBSA celebrates peers’ accomplishments, including those of the many talented, successful individuals recognized by the public for their contributions to the world.
3. **Wisdom**—DBSA advances learning through research and experience while promoting a transformative understanding of mental health through wide, timely dissemination of information about the latest treatments, wellness practices, and lived experiences.
4. **Responsibility**—DBSA advocates for the right of peers to choose their own paths to mental, emotional, and physical wellness while promoting structures and practices that advance whole health and accessible care for everyone.



Depression and Bipolar
Support Alliance

SCOPE OF ROLE

Unique opportunity for a member of the Black community living in Cook County with the lived experience of recovery from a mental health or substance use disorder to join our Peer Specialist Apprenticeship Program. Thanks to a grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), DBSA is pleased to offer a paid apprenticeship to qualified individuals.

As a person who has traveled a similar path, a Peer Specialist fosters hope for recovery from a mental health or substance use disorder and models that reality to the peers they serve by providing evidence-based services.

More about DBSA's Peer Specialist Apprenticeship Program

- Provides Scholarship to enroll in the 80-hour *DBSA Peer Specialist Course*
- 2-year part-time paid apprenticeship to qualify for the Illinois Certified Recovery Support Specialist (CRSS) credential

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Applicants must be committed to completing the 2-year apprentice program.
- Dedicate 20 hours weekly to receiving required training through DBSA
- Provide Peer Services (i.e. co-facilitate Support Groups, use personal recovery story as a tool, staff DBSA 800 Info-line)
- Develop skills required to be industry leaders in field of Peer Support (leadership development, community organizing, strong communication skills {written & verbal}, professional development, etc.)
- Learn to use and teach effective, science-based Mental Wellness tools and methods (WRAP/WHAM)

First Year of Program

- DBSA Peer Specialist Course: 80-hour course providing skills in using lived experience to offer hope and inspiration to another peer.
- Form and lead a peer council in the Black community to understand the peer support needs of the community.
- Form and facilitate DBSA support group meeting for the Black community.
- Mentor peers and provide one-on-one peer support.
- Provide mental health workshops in the Black community.

Second Year of Program

- Placement at a Cook County behavioral health center provides supervised, hands-on experience.



Depression and Bipolar
Support Alliance

QUALIFICATIONS

These recommended qualifications and related work experience are suggestive in nature only and are not intended to limit or restrict applicants in any way. Alternative qualifications may be substituted if sufficient to perform the duties and responsibilities of the position. We encourage all applicants who believe their skills and experience are sufficient to do the job well to apply.

- A member of the Black community living in Cook County and interested in becoming a Peer Specialist (Certified Recovery Support Specialist-CRSS)
- Identify with the SAMHSA definition of a peer support specialist:
 - People who have been successful in the recovery process from a mental health or substance use disorder who help others experiencing similar situations. Through shared understanding, respect, and mutual empowerment, peer support workers help people become and stay engaged in the recovery process and reduce the likelihood of relapse.
- A desire to use your lived experience with a mental health or substance use disorder to help others in the Black community.

SALARY AND BENEFITS

Salary Information: This temporary employee position is compensated at \$15.00 per hour.

DEDICATION TO AN EQUITABLE WORKPLACE

DBSA is committed to equal employment opportunity for all employees, and to providing employees with a work environment free of any form of discrimination and harassment. DBSA is committed to achieving a diverse workforce through our equal opportunity and nondiscrimination policies in all aspects of employment including recruitment, hiring, promotions, transfers, discipline, terminations, wage and salary administration, benefits, and training.

At DBSA, we make a point to celebrate our differences and respect each other's unique perspectives. In fact, it is core to the work we do. DBSA encourages our employees to bring their authentic selves to work, where they receive a wholehearted welcome.

HOW TO APPLY

Please direct resumes and cover letter to rdabney@dbsalliance.org.