

MAY 2018

VOLUME 9, ISSUE 5

GOC GAZETTE



Rebuilding lives
Removing stigma
Restoring dignity
Resource
for mental health recovery

The GOC is located at 102 E. 10th Ave., Gainesville, FL 32601



Alachua County is Stepping Up

A lot of good things are happening in the mental health community here. On May 16th, It was uplifting to see fifty or more mental health professionals, peers, and other supporters at the Hall of Heroes in the Gainesville Police Department. The Stepping Up Initiative is a national organization focused on reducing the number of people with mental illnesses in jails. Over 400 counties have passed resolutions to develop and implement a systems-level, data-driven plan that can lead to measurable reductions in incarcerations.

Leah Vail, Meridian Behavioral Healthcare's Vice President of Forensic Services, asked me to speak at the recent Stepping Up event. And, as I stated in my talk, I showed up. This, I think, is a huge part of mental health advocacy, just saying "yes" when people ask you for help. You get the reputation of being available and dependable.

Everyone who struggles with a mental health condition has a story to tell. You don't have to speak in front of a lot of people. Simply explaining one's condition to someone who is looking to understand, can help grow awareness.

Even though public speaking is often frightening for me, I enjoy telling my story so that others can see mental health from my perspective as a peer and ex-offender. The Stepping Up Initiative is important to me because I know how those with a mental health condition are often treated when incarcerated. Alachua County is making strides. There is Mental Health Court and Meridian Behavioral Health's Forensics Department which both seek to help offenders who have a mental health condition. It is comforting to know that there are plenty of resources available, however sometimes you have to know where to look.

I have learned much since my move to Gainesville four years ago. I am glad to have landed in such a forward-thinking, supportive community. I hope more see our progress and decide to follow.

- Lloyd B.

34th Street Wall Mural

On May 1st, 2018, the AnARTists hosted their 3rd annual painting of the 34th Street Wall. Some GOC members and staff, as well as other members of the mental health community, showed up to help. This year's theme was meant to showcase the resources here in Alachua County. Each of the flower petals has on it an icon signifying important aspects of recovery and advocacy. Of the nine petals, one petal contained "C50", for Coalition 50. Another has a heart, and one petal contained a picture of a house, because having a safe space is crucial for those with a mental health condition. Included on the right side of the wall section are numerous web addresses to illustrate how many organizations provide services in the area. Stigma is a huge obstacle to overcome for people living with a mental health condition. Education and awareness are important tools to combat this problem.

Thank you to all who came out to help with this event.



Grace Clothing Closet

Going to Grace Market Place is an interesting experience. I went there with Kenny W., and we were helping the homeless receive clothing from the clothes closet. When entering the room, it is full of clothes, shoes, and other clothing items. To pick out their items, people line up in a line which becomes long very quickly. The people coming in to receive the service seem happy to see clothing, but some of the clothes goes very fast! Grace Market Place receives clothing donations from ordinary people who are happy to place the clothes in the clothes closet. Overall, I enjoy the experience and am happy to give back to the community any way I can.

- David D.

GOC Daily Calendar

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
10:00 - Morning Meeting	10:00 - Weekly House Meeting	10:00 - Morning Meeting	10:00 - Morning Meeting	10:00 - Morning Meeting
10:30 - Lunch Prep	10:30 - Lunch Prep	10:30 - Lunch Prep	10:30 - Lunch Prep	10:30 - Lunch Prep
12:00 - Lunch	12:00 - Lunch	12:00 - Lunch	12:00 - Lunch	12:00 - Lunch
12:30 - Lunch Clean-up	12:30 - Lunch Clean-up	12:30 - Lunch Clean-up	12:30 - Lunch Clean-up	12:30 - Lunch Clean-up
1:00 Web development Class	1:00 - Craft Class	1:00 - Art Class	1:00 - Job Readiness Workshop	1:00 - Newsletter Workshop
3:00 - Garden Harvest				1:00 - Social Activities
3:30 - Closing Clean-up	3:30 - Closing Clean-up	3:30 - Closing Clean-up	3:30 - Closing Clean-up	3:30 - Closing Clean-up

Newsletter

We now have a weekly and monthly Newsletter!
 We need members to come help us work on them each week.
 Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays at 1pm.

We will have meetings focused on content and technology regarding the Newsletter, our website, and social media.

We celebrate May birthdays on the
LAST Friday of each month.
 Come join us on May 25th, 2018
 to celebrate. There will be cake!



May Birthdays

