

March 2021

GOC GAZETTE



Gainesville Opportunity Center

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GOC, Alachua County Expand Employment Partnership



Pat Bateman, Joanna Broaudes, Susan Thomas, and Andy Bernard are now working for Alachua County. Three of the four lost their jobs due to COVID-19.

Meaningful work: It's a basic need that gives our lives purpose.

So many of us have it. So many of us don't.

Chronic mental illness is the number one cause of work-related disability. People living with chronic mental illness often live with chronic unemployment. We are proud that Alachua County has partnered with us to give support to those who need it.

Starting this month, four GOC Members will split a 40 hour per week job handing out masks at the Alachua County Administration Building. These Members will receive various levels of support from GOC staff.

The GOC supports three different types of employment for our Members: 1) Transitional, 2) Supported, and 3) Independent. With Transitional Employment, the GOC makes a deal with an employer. We pick the candidate, and the employer agrees to hire that person. If that member can't come to work, the GOC actually sends a GOC employee to cover the shift. Our first job with the County is a Transitional Employment Position.

With "Supported" Employment under the Clubhouse model, the GOC establishes a communication with the Members' employer. We help communicate if/when the Member has difficulties on the job. We advocate to the employer when the Member has special needs requests.

Independent Employment comes when a GOC Member gets a job on their own. We may help with the resume or with sage advice, but we do not interact with the employer. We're always here for our Members, and they get plenty of support along the way.

Being productive gives us dignity and pride. Work can give life meaning. At the GOC, we're not just helping others. We are helping others help themselves.

Member Spotlight - Akeem

Interview by David Stevens

Meet Akeem Johnson! He learned about the GOC at Meridian Behavioral Health, where he recently graduated their psycho social rehab program.

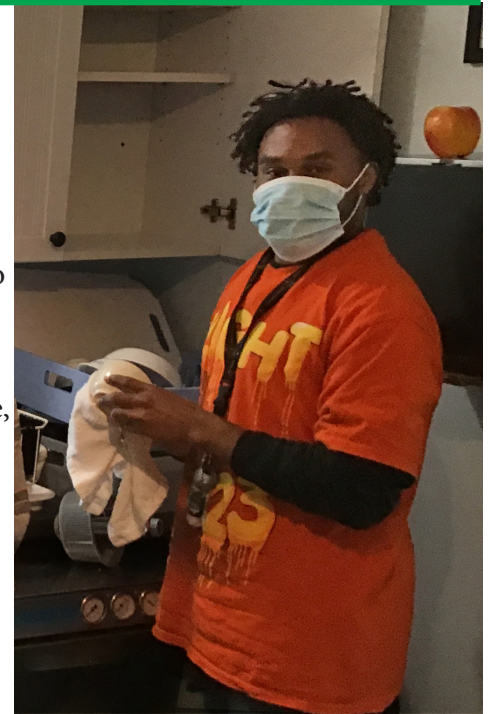
What he likes about the GOC is the work he is doing in the kitchen and garden, and the help he is getting looking for a job. But what he likes most of all is being around other people with similar experiences and people who accept him for who he is. "There's a lot of good people here," Akeem said.

His favorite dish that he has learned to cook so far is chili with corn bread, greens and cabbage. Akeem says, "I heard about GOC, and when I got here, I realized it's something I like."

Akeem would like to get a part-time job, either at a fast food restaurant or doing physical labor jobs.

When visiting Akeem at the GOC, you will probably find him in the kitchen. He helps us for several hours at a time with cooking and cleaning up, and seems to really enjoy himself.

Akeem is grateful that he found the GOC and the impact it is making on his life.



Member Spotlight - CJ Wagoner

Interview by Jared Aul

CJ Wagoner says that in the three short months he has been here, the GOC is already making a difference in his life.

Although a bit shy to jump in when he first arrived, CJ has been taking responsibility with important daily tasks. By regularly cleaning our table surfaces, he is helping make sure everyone is safe. He is also performing a job-related skill that is used by nearly every business that serves the public. CJ also enjoys helping out in the culinary unit preparing and serving food to our members. Through the jobs he performs here, he is learning how to work with others, how to follow directions, and how to complete tasks. He hopes that this work-related socialization will help him take the next steps into employment. Though he has never had a tax-paying job in his life, CJ's goal is to work in a restaurant. The work he is doing at the GOC will help him reach that goal.

That being said, his favorite part of coming to the GOC is making friends. He can relate to other Members and feels comfortable participating in our work-related activities.

CJ says he experienced bullying in the public school system. He was home schooled most of his life, but that made it difficult to make friends and acquire important social skills. Coming to the GOC is helping CJ in both of these areas.

Working is a realistic goal for everybody. Some people need more support than others. CJ is happy he found the GOC and is hopeful about the future.



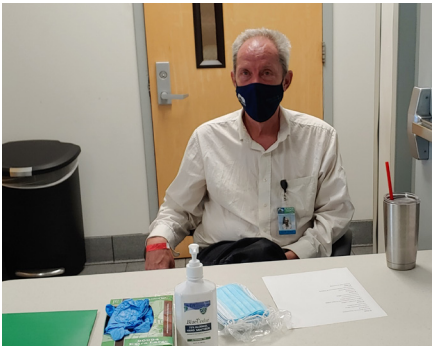
GOC GAZETTE

Unit Update:

Employment

The GOC now has 3 Members in Transitional Employment, 5 in Supported Employment and 16 in Independent Employment. That is more than the total number of Members we see in a a day, and more than 1/3 of the Members we see each month. These employment

numbers are another sign that the GOC is having the impact we are supposed to.



Culinary

The Culinary Unit is staying busy while preparing two meals a day. We are averaging 5 people a day for breakfast and 15 for lunch. As we get used to our new home, Members are taking greater responsibility in the meal preparations.



Education

With the help of volunteers from The American Medical Student Association at UF, we are bringing tutoring to the GOC. Kayla Sloan is the first of our volunteers helping our Members. Kayla is teaching language arts to improve Members' reading and writing skills.



Office

March will be a busy month for the office unit and our media area. We are organizing for the Amazing Give. Members will be hard at work making testimonial pages about what our program has meant to their lives. Our media unit will be hard at work producing a video to show people what a typical day is like here at our Clubhouse.

AMAZING GIVE

April 22, 2021

7 a.m. - 7 p.m.

GOC GAZETTE

How You Can Help

If you are a regular reader, you know the GOC is growing every month. Do you want to help? Below are various ways that you can help us help others.



United Way
of North Central Florida

United Way Campaign and Link

If you work for a business that's part of the United Way, you can donate pre-tax through your employer. The United Way has a sign up period near the end of the calendar year. Think GOC!!!!



If you are a UF employee, you can donate pre-tax directly from your paychecks!

The campaign is held each fall and is divided into a Leadership Campaign and General Campaign. In 2021, the Leadership Campaign will run from September 7th - 24th, and the General Campaign will run from September 27th - October 15th.

Please visit <https://ufcc.ufl.edu> to sign up.



When you shop on Amazon, think of the GOC! You can designate us as your charity on Amazon Smile. A small percentage of every purchase will go to the GOC.



We are in need of specific items. Check out our wishlist at

<https://tinyurl.com/yum48cu3>



Paypal Donate

You can also donate through the Paypal button above. Or, use our email info@goclubhouse.org as the recipient.

AMAZING GIVE

April 22, 2021

7 a.m. - 7 p.m.

The Amazing Give is coming up!

The Amazing Give will be taking place on April 22 from 7am to 7pm.

Keep an eye on our page:

<https://www.theamazinggive.org/organizations/gainesville-opportunity-center>

GOC GAZETTE

Monthly Calendar and Events

March 6 - Art Saturday 10a-2p
March 13 - Roadside Pickup with Rotary; 9am-11am.
March 13 - GOC Games with Sandy, 11-3pm
March 17 - Employment Dinner, 5pm
March 20 - Art Saturday 10 -2p
March 27 - River cleanup with Rotary 8:30am

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Weekly Meetings

Monday 2:00 p.m.- Programming
Wednesday 2:00 p.m.- Culinary, Wellness, Garden
Thursday 2:00 p.m- Website
Thursday 3:00 p.m.- Newsletter
Friday 3:00 p.m.- Adobe/Media

Daily Events and Meetings

8:30am Culinary Unit Arrives to start Breakfast
9:00am Clubhouse Opens, Breakfast is served.
10:00 am General Membership Meetings
10:30 am Work Day commences in Office, Culinary, Media, and Garden
12:45 pm Wellness Walk
1:30 pm Office Unit Meeting
5:00 pm Clubhouse Closes

Birthdays

March 3 - Jacqui Dunbar
March 7 - Chris Pave
March 11 - Jason Holtet
March 19 - Joe Sherrill
March 23 - Jimbo McCook
March 29 - Dominic Orsini
March 30 - Terrica Nelson-Gent
March 31 - Ella Tabares



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Month in Pictures



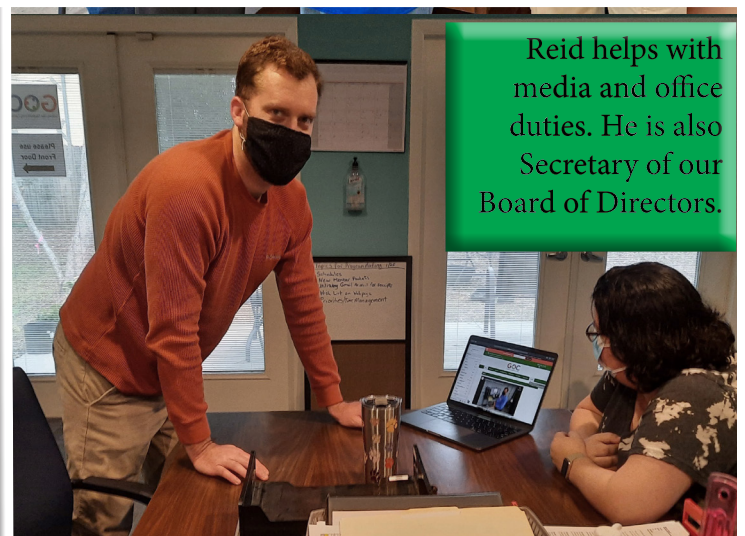
Susan, Cristina, Kyana and Joanna made Cuban recipies in our kitchen every Thursday.



The team behind our first Transitional employment position with Alachua County.



Jimbo is helping Rob count the proceeds from our meal program.



Reid helps with media and office duties. He is also Secretary of our Board of Directors.



Amber and Brett are working on GOC publications.



Mark is enjoying his job at Culver's where he takes great care of his customers.