

September 2022

GOC GAZETTE



Gainesville Opportunity Center

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Support, Curiosity Continues



Fire Chief Joe Dixon, Cynthia Ramos, Yvette Carter, and City Manager Cynthia Curry met with GOC staff and Members about mental health services.

Every day, more and more people are taking notice of the GOC. And it's not just what we are doing today, but what we can do in the future as we continue to grow. We are making a huge impact on our Members' lives. What if we could help twice as many people? Or three times or more? This month leadership from all over Gainesville came by to see what we are doing and how we can help meet the public needs in our community. Working with people who live with chronic mental illness is a public service, and the GOC takes that seriously. The Clubhouse model is recognized as a best practice by many national organizations when it comes to recovery oriented services for those with mental illness.

As we help our Members, they can do more things on their own. They also do not have as much need for high cost crisis services that cost the taxpayer money and are not designed to facilitate long-term recovery.

The support and curiosity continues. We have more people coming to see the GOC and what we are all about. Leaders from all over the City of Gainesville visited the GOC this month to

learn more about our services. Mayor Lauren Poe, City Commissioner Adrian Hayes-Santos City Manager Cynthia Curry, Fire Chief Joe Dixon are just some of our recent visitors.



The GOC provides vital resources to the mental health community and beyond. People need to know we are here.

Commissioner Adrian Hayes-Santos watches our staff and Members complete the work of the day.

Board Grows, Changes

Part of having a healthy and thriving board is to bring on new board members with unique and distinct expertise and talents. This approach can shed a new light and bring fresh ideas to the table as we continue our tremendous growth pattern. Recently, we added two new Board Members who we are tremendously proud of: Leza Mueller, and Joanne Edde.

Leza Mueller

Leza Mueller owns her own Fashion business and is editor of a local magazine.



Leza has had a diverse career, with everything ranging from Alachua County Budget Director to stay at home mom. Currently she is the editor for City Lifestyle Magazine and owns her own fashion business. Leza is extremely active in our community, serving as a Diplomat for the Chamber of Commerce, and active in the Gainesville Rotary Club. Leza has been in Gainesville since the early 1980's. Leza has three daughters who are 21, 24, and 27.

Leza knows how important our mission is. Leza's husband, who lived with mental illness, took his own life. Leza wants people to know that there are support systems out there. She also wants to help strengthen those support systems in the community.

Joanne Edde

Joanne Edde of First Federal Bank has helped us plan and organize events.



Joanne Edde has a distinguished career as a community banker. She is Vice President and Financial Center Manager of First Federal Bank.

Joanne has been active in the community for many years, and has been active with the GOC for the past few. She has not only attended our events, she has helped us organize and plan them as well.

“I just feel passionate about what the GOC is doing to help people in the community. I am lucky enough to work for a bank that supports my ability to give back and it is wonderful.”

Joanne is active with the Chamber as well, and serves there as a Diplomat. We are so fortunate to have her on the GOC board.

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15 Years of Dedication by Reid Schreiber

Two of the founding board members rotated off the board this June due to term limits. Rotating off a board of directors is important for the health of a board by bringing in new ideas and insights from the expertise of new board members. Trish Sokol and Jodi Irving provided vital assistance to GOC early in its development. Trish and Jodi were involved in the conversations starting around 2004 to create a Clubhouse as another resource needed by individuals living with mental illness. Jodi really embraced the notion of the focus on strengths and the focus on mental 'health,' not mental 'illness.' As Jodi stated, "People living with mental illness often are only seen as they are labeled. They become undervalued as people. They are invisible and never get the environment to support their strengths, which a Clubhouse does."



The GOC is now a strong and thriving organization. That was not always the case. When asked why she stayed on the board for 15 years, Trish said, "I didn't want to leave when things were bad. Many of us stayed when there wasn't a lot of support, and we were dedicated to its success. We didn't want to give up."

Jodi and Trish saw the GOC go from the early ideas through many struggles and triumphs. When Trish was asked how the GOC has grown, she said, "The GOC is in a really good place and moved forward a long way. It now owns the building where it's located and now has the funding to be a fully functioning Clubhouse. I'm proud to have been a part of seeing it become that." Jodi said, "It is thrilling to see where we are. I have goosebumps talking about it." Now we can see how far the GOC has come! The growth has been tremendous compared with how we started. Thank you, Trish and Jodi, for your service to the GOC for so many years!



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Member Spotlight Pat Bateman by David Stevens

Meet Pat! If there was a story about Pat, it would be a story of new experiences. Everywhere Pat turns, there are new experiences!

As far as Pat's story with the GOC goes, it started with The GOC Thanksgiving party in 2017. Her therapist wanted her to socialize and suggested the GOC as a safe and supportive environment.

Pat got a taste of GOC, but was not ready to come back for a while. She was very shy around new people, but eventually got out of her "hermit shell." Once Pat got to know the GOC Members, she enjoyed their friendship. This has helped her feel more comfortable here.

Pat has strong organizational skills. At the GOC she has taken a lead in organizing several closets and work spaces to help Members and staff work more efficiently. By showcasing her skills, Pat has been able to gain confidence, form relationships and get back into the work force.

Pat has seen other Members making positive strides. This has helped her appreciate the talents of others, and helps her gain the confidence to take similar steps forward. "I have seen other Members who are working become happy and energized. That feeling spreads."

Recently, Pat was hired by Publix for her new job as a Bagger! GOC staff helped Pat get the job from a connection with Publix, as well as helped her fill out her application online. As a Bagger, Pat bags groceries, helps customers, gets carts from outside and brings them inside, and does whatever is needed. Pat has prior experience in grocery retail. She says at Publix people are friendly and kind to her!



Pat says, "The GOC is a great place to come to and be a part of." Despite the fact that work will fill up part of her week, she plans to continue coming to the GOC. And, "If you are struggling with mental issues, it's a great place to come and get help!"



Pat is not only getting out of the House, she is participating in Rotary Meetings with GOC staff. Here he is working the sign in table and meeting new people.

Pat worked in Supported Employment with GOC staff. Now she is permanently employed with Publix.

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Updates

Friends Event

We had a Friend-raising Event at Culver's, the site of our successful Transitional Employment Position. The Rotary Club of Downtown Gainesville made it an official event and Culver's was packed. We gave Megan Olson an award for her dedication to our employed GOC Members like Susan, who is working for the first time since 1995.



GOC Fall Fest Nov 4

The 2nd Annual GOC Fall Festival will take place Friday November 4 from 11am to 6pm here at the GOC. The all day social event will consist of an open house, food, games, and entertainment. Please stop by if you can. We will cook out on the grill, and have outdoor tents and seating.



NAMI Walk

The NAMI Walk will be held October 2 at Westwood Middle School. Registration begins at 12pm. Opening ceremonies start at 1pm, with the walk following immediately.

To register or donate visit [NAMIWalks.org/Gainesville](https://www.namiwalks.org/gainesville) There is no registration fee.



Founder's Video

Ever wonder how the GOC came to be? Whose idea was it to put something like this here? To celebrate our 15 year anniversary we made a video that allows some of our founders to tell the story of the GOC.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zb6-wKCkmCs>



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Want to help? Below are various ways that you can help us help others.



United Way
of North Central Florida

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!!!!

When you shop on Amazon, think of GOC!



Any and all help is appreciated. Simply search for us on Amazon or click the images to the left and to the right. (Wishlist-> <https://tinyurl.com/yum48cu3>)



Please use our email info@goclubhouse.org as the recipient.

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Month in Pictures

Kim loves working in our Culinary Unit. Our food is full of fresh ingredients.



The day the power went out, we still kept working.



Lloyd shows off flyers we made for our Culver's event.



Lana is back in town after a hiatus.



Bill is working at Gator Dining with one of our employment partners.



John and Rob are taking breakfast orders.



Community Partner Pictures



GOC GAZETTE

Monthly Calendar and Events

| | | |
|--------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| September 3 | Social Saturday | 10:00 am-2:00 pm |
| September 5 | Labor Day BBQ | 10:00 am-2:00 pm |
| September 17 | Social Saturday | 10:00 am-2:00 pm |
| September 30 | Artwalk at GOC | 5:00 pm-8:00 pm |
| October 2 | NAMI Walk | 12:00 pm - 3:00 pm |

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Weekly Meetings

- Monday 2:00 pm- Programming
- Tuesday 2:00 pm- Culinary, Wellness, Garden
- Wednesday 2:00 pm- Website
- Wednesday 3:00 pm- Newsletter
- Thursday 2:00 pm- Adobe/Media

Daily Events and Meetings

- 8:30 am Clubhouse Opens
- 9:00 am Breakfast starts
- 9:30 am General Membership Meeting
- 10:00 am Work Day commences in Office, Culinary, Media and Garden
- 12:00 pm Lunch
- 2:00 pm Work Day Continues
- 4:30 pm Clubhouse closes

Birthdays

- September 5 Karen McKay
- September 7 Sharon Douglass
- September 13 Daoud Rana
- September 14 Davide Turrull
- September 27 Shamel Houston



Gainesville Opportunity Center

Friends of GOC Event



GPD and Meridian Co-Responders Ofc. Sarah Reeves, Cpl. Bill Gough, and Clinician Victoria Blass



(Left) GOC Member Joanna helps bus tables. Staff Cristina Quiroga and Board Member Manny Quiroga run orders.



(Left) Gail Childs, Eve Cater, Bill Childs
(Right) Former and current Executive Directors Pam Demers and Deidra Simon.



(Left) Marina Jordan, Marta Hartman. (Right) UF's Dr. Regina Bussing with her sister and niece who live in Germany.

