

February 2023

GOC GAZETTE



Gainesville Opportunity Center

(352) 224-5523

1210 NW 14th Ave, Gainesville, FL 32601

www.goclubhouse.org

Vol. 5. Issue 2

Gainesville.opportunity.ctr@gmail.com

Our Voice is Heard by Reid Schreiber



GOC staff and Members enjoy a moment with newly elected commissioner Ed Book.

On January 5, 2023, the GOC advocated for the needs of our Clubhouse at the swearing in ceremony for the Gainesville City Commission. We were a group presence who made sure the voice of the GOC was heard. GOC Members Pat Bateman, Marie Fishman, and Reid Schreiber attended this very important event with GOC staff Brett Buell, Mia Chisolm, and Deidra Simon. The support of our Gainesville community for our Clubhouse is growing. The new Gainesville City Mayor Harvey Ward has visited the GOC several times, and most, if not all, of the new City Commissioners have as well. Even if the new members of our City Commission

didn't know about the GOC before, they definitely do now. Why was it important for the GOC to be present at this event? Besides the new City Commissioners Bryan Eastman, Casey Willits, and Ed Book, the GOC Members and staff connected with individuals from the public to share about the GOC and how we're making a difference in Gainesville. We built on old friendships as well as established new ones. For instance, our Member Marie met Sheriff Clovis Watson. Since 1 in 4 individuals experience a mental illness in their lives, we would like everyone to know the GOC is a resource in Gainesville. Members of the GOC work side-by-side with staff on all work which is part of running our mental health Clubhouse. Members complete meaningful jobs here, which builds confidence and a sense of purpose. Individuals living with mental illness often experience isolation, and the GOC provides a place to come where Members do not feel alone.



GOC Member Marie Fishman is telling Sheriff Clovis Watson all about the GOC.

The GOC is a community within the greater Gainesville area, and we need local support to successfully change

lives. The GOC provides a means of recovery from mental illness. Yes, recovery from mental illness is possible, in which symptoms are minimal and one can make a significant contribution to society. Members who may have never worked in their lives or who haven't worked in a long time are becoming employed. Commissioner Ed Book mentioned in his acceptance speech that the GOC is one organization making a positive impact in our community. Thanks to everyone who supports us!

It is important to for everyone to know that their voice matters. By participating in the election process, we are advocating for the GOC and helping our Members become part of our community.

We have important work to do. We will do it together.

GOC GAZETTE

Member Spotlight: Kim Sugar

by David Stevens

Meet Kim! Kim started coming to the GOC about six months ago during the summer of 2022 because she thought it would be helpful to make friends. Kim also wants to go back to school to get her GED. She wants to volunteer and eventually begin working at a paid job. Preferably, she would like work with animals—such in an animal shelter. Kim's previous job was at Piccadilly's, but she stopped working when it closed. The classes she wants to focus on when going back to school are math and reading. Kim heard about the GOC through one of her friends she met at Meridian's PSR program. It sounded like a place she would want to check out. She did check out the GOC and liked it! Kim currently attends the GOC twice a week.



Kim likes to help out everywhere including data entry in our Office Unit.

The GOC has helped Kim in her recovery a lot! This is because the GOC has given her a place to be around people—and Kim likes to be around people! At the GOC, Kim plays basketball on the GOC Rockets, a Special Olympics basketball team, helps out in the kitchen cooking and preparing meals, enters data into the database, answers telephones, and posts photos on Instagram and Facebook. Participating at the GOC helps Kim because it gives her something to do during the day. When playing basketball, Kim likes stealing the ball from the other team! Referring to the most recent basketball game she was at, Kim said, “The other team held the ball—and I grabbed the ball and took off!” Kim enjoys playing basketball, and before coming to the GOC, she had never played basketball before.

Kim says, “GOC is a place where people with a disability can go to make friends!”

GOC Advocates at Shands



GOC Members went into UF Health Psychiatric Hospital to meet with patients. Many GOC Members have been patients there themselves. Our Members shared that there is help, there is hope, and the GOC can be part of their journeys. Members shared how they are working, how they are housed, and how they are productive. They shared their lives have meaning, and they have more friends than ever. Advocacy; helping others; doing something important: those are all things GOC Members do. It feels good!

Scott Hesch, Joanna Broaudes, Kim Sugar, Reid Schreiber, Brett Buell, and Susan Call spoke to patients about the GOC's support services once they're back in the community.

GOC GAZETTE

Updates

Employment

Alachua County is restarting our employment agreement. We now have 2 Transitional Employment positions. One is janitorial and the other is in the mail room. Members will be working 15 hours per week with heavy support from the GOC staff. Joanna, pictured below, went through this program a couple years ago and is now working at Goodwill.



Meridian Visit

This is Brian Wilson, the Program Manager at Meridian Behavioral Healthcare, Inc. He refers a lot of people over here and wanted to catch up with some familiar faces. It is wonderful to see the care and dedication our mental health professionals have. Brian was thrilled to see the progress of some of the people he once treated. What we do matters. We need people like Brian, the teams at Meridian, and people like you. Together we are stronger.



Basketball

Commitment. Responsibility. Teamwork. You need all of that to be part of something. You need all of that to build a community. The GOC fielded a team for the Special Olympics. Members wanted to participate. They had to practice. They had to be there for each other. It was a lot of hard work. Was it worth it? You betcha!



Walgreens

We're participating in the myWalgreens donation program! You can donate your myWalgreens cash rewards to the Gainesville Opportunity Center through 02/28/23. At Walgreens, you'll earn unlimited 1% Walgreens Cash rewards when you shop and you can choose how much to donate. It's that easy. Whether you'd like to contribute \$1, \$5, or more of your Walgreens Cash rewards, you'll be making a big difference. It really adds up!



<https://www.walgreens.com/mywalgreens/donation.jsp>

GOC GAZETTE

Monthly Calendar and Events

February 18 Social Saturday

February 22 Employment Dinner

February 24 Birthday Party

February 24 Art Walk

February 28 Art For All at UF HealthStreet

March 18 Car Wash and Cookout at the GOC

Newsletter Credits:

Brett Buell
Producer / Writer/
Layout/Photos

Rob Ellis
Photographer

Marie Fishman
Photographer

Reid Schreiber
Writer/Editor/
Layout

David Stevens
Writer/
Photographer

David Turull
Layout/Consultant

Monday 2:00 pm- House

Tuesday 2:00 pm- Culinary, Wellness, Garden

Wednesday 2:00 pm- Website

Wednesday 3:00 pm- Newsletter

Thursday 1:30 pm- Computer Workshop

Thursday 2:00 pm- Adobe/Media

Thursday 2:30 pm- Wellness

Daily Events and Meetings

8:30 am Clubhouse Opens

9:00 am Breakfast starts

9:30 am General Membership Meeting

9:45 am Unit Meetings

10:00 am Work Day Commences in Office,
Culinary, Media and Garden

12:00 pm Lunch

1:00 pm Work Day Continues

4:30 pm Clubhouse Closes

Birthdays

February 3 Deidra Simon

February 8 Lana Blischak

February 8 Rob Ellis

February 20 CJ Wagoner

February 27 Ben Thurston

February 29 Susan Call



GOC GAZETTE

GOC Proudly Supported by:



LUTHERAN
SERVICES
FLORIDA



COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
of North Central Florida

**Click here to donate with a bank card
through the Community Foundation-
Philanthropy Hub**

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.

GOC GAZETTE

Month in Pictures



David Stevens, who writes the Member Spotlight articles for this publication is taking pictures of Joe Van Jenkins, who is hard at work.



Marcelle is on our kitchen team.



Kristy has taken a liking to running our cash register. Meals are only \$1 at the GOC.

Amanda is working full time at HCA North Florida Hospital. She helps with office duties when she comes to the GOC.



Bonnie (left) helped make lunch for guests Marcia Staples, Nancy Parks, and Barzella Papa. Claudia (4th from left) volunteers in our kitchen twice per week.