



Gainesville Opportunity Center

GAZETTE

March 2024. Volume 6, Issue 3

gainesville.opportunity.ctr@gmail.com
www.goclubhouse.org • (352)224-5523



At the GOC you will meet people working toward making their lives better. You will also see a lot of smiles.



**How to
Become a
GOC Member
(Page 2)**



**GOC and
Partners
Help Fight
Homelessness
(Page 6)**



**No Job
Is Staff
or Member
Only
(Page 7)**

How to Get Involved with the GOC

Join the GOC's mission to improve the lives of individuals living with chronic mental illness. Here's how you get involved with our Clubhouse: On April 25th, the Amazing Give combines good-natured competition between local nonprofits and peer-to-peer fundraising. Join GOC Board Members, Clubhouse Members, and staff in telling friends and family to encourage donations to show that

the GOC is one of the most worthy causes in our area.

On May 18th, join our field of riders as you circle depot park, ride the LaChua Trail, or race all the way to beautiful Hawthorne, Florida. Bike Day is the perfect day to raise awareness for mental health and enjoy the great outdoors. Registration is \$25.00 per person and includes a FREE Bike Day T-shirt. For our business partners,

Continued on Page 4

Becoming a Member

Y

By: Brett Buell

ou may have just read our front page article on how people in our community can get involved and help the GOC. But what about Membership? What does it take to be a Member here?

To become a Member you have to be at least 18 and you must have a mental health diagnosis. For everyone's safety we do a background check. That being said, a past crime does not prohibit you from Membership- if you can demonstrate positive growth and change. Another key factor is that you have to want to be here. Our program is based around recovery through work. No one can force you to be here. You are not in our custody. Members help us run our daily operations. This gives them confidence and a feeling of accomplishment that can propel them forward. Members get to see each other moving forward with their lives. They see others living with mental illness making similar strides. Often Members discover they can do things they were not aware they could do. If you are not interested in participating in our work day, the GOC is probably not the right place for you.

If you are interested in becoming a Member or referring someone to the GOC, we schedule tours on Wednesdays. If you are comfortable in our environment, we invite you back for three orientation periods where you get to try new things in our Office, Culinary and Media units. At that point, you can become a Member. There is no cost to Membership. However, we charge a nominal fee for meals.



Pictured: Daniel Crawford and Susan Thomas

At the GOC, we see our selves as a gateway into the community, not a final destination. It can be scary walking in the door for the first time. Zach Scarton shares about his first day, which was just a few months ago: "I was really nervous when I came in. The staff and Members' smiles made my anxiety go down. People were understanding, and answered my questions. I felt welcome here, and wanted to come back."

At the GOC, we follow the Clubhouse International Standards, similar to a bill of rights, for our Members. Please see our article on Page 7 for more about our Standards.



Members participate in all aspects of the GOC, including advocacy. Here Susan accepts a sponsorship check from Relax Salt Rooms for Bike Day.



Members depend on each other to help keep the GOC running. We need Members like Wendie to ensure we can serve lunch.

There are no jobs that are staff only or Member only. Members have the chance to participate in any task, regardless of level of functioning.

Involving yourself at the GOC will allow you to accomplish things that will give you the confidence needed to move forward.



Alina is working on packets for new Members. Her work is vital to the sustainability of the GOC.

New Members will have opportunities to experience all tasks in which they are interested in.

Our Members feel needed here because they are needed here. Their work leads to opening new doors in their lives.

How to Get Involved with the GOC

By: Reid Schreiber

sponsoring bike day is the perfect way to show that your business is serious about erasing the stigma around mental illness.

We all know someone who struggles with mental illness. Help us grow our Clubhouse by telling them about the GOC. Please see the article on page 2 about becoming a GOC member. Encourage them to call the GOC to learn more about our programs and see if we are the right fit for them. Mental health professionals can help us by making a formal referral to the GOC. The first step for a potential Member is to schedule a tour. Then, repeat visits will demonstrate if our program is a good fit to help someone meet their goals.

As you read in our newsletter last month, employment is the cornerstone of the Clubhouse Model. Partner with the GOC to help our Members obtain employment. We have a program called Transitional Employment (TE). No job is too big or too small for a TE position. Absence coverage guarantees someone works the job every day. With the support of the GOC and our community partners, our Members build the confidence needed to succeed in the workplace. After building confidence in our Transitional Employment program, our Members can continue receiving the full support of the Clubhouse while working in the community. Eventually, our Members will no longer need our support for successful employment.

After Transitional Employment, many Members want more permanent employment. We also offer Supported Employment, where we will work with Members and their employers as



The Amazing Give online giving day is coming up April 22. Please consider donating to the GOC at that time.

much or as little as needed. We are looking for businesses to partner with us. At the GOC, we are here to support both the Member and employer as we help adults living with chronic mental illness get back to work. We believe employment is the gateway to recovery, and you would offer this as an employer.

With your support, Members of the Gainesville Opportunity Center will become valuable citizens of their community who are employed and living independently. The GOC helps individuals form relationships that are vital for their recovery. Our Members are a part of something important. By getting involved

How to Get Involved with the GOC



with the GOC you will have an impact on the sense of purpose and meaning in the lives of our Members. You will make our community stronger.



Gainesville Opportunity Center

BIKE DAY

Saturday, May 18th First Magnitude Brewing Co.

8:30 AM Registration
Ride at 9:30 AM

There are three lengths for beginner, intermediate and advanced riders. You can even walk to Depot Park if you don't have a bike. Music and food trucks are available after the ride.

Scan or click the link below



GOC Partners with Meridian, Others



Thank you to Shawnta Walker and Anna Epifano for touring the GOC as we launch this important initiative.

GOC is proud to announce our partnership with Meridian Behavioral Healthcare, Inc. City of Gainesville, Gainesville Fire Rescue Community Resource Paramedics, and GRACE Marketplace. We will be participating in the Treatment for Individuals Experiencing Homelessness (TIEH)

program managed by Meridian. A multi-agency approach will get people the mental health services, housing, and support they need in order to rebuild their lives. At the GOC we don't do it alone. We need to work with other agencies in order to ensure our Members get all of the services they need and deserve.

The Treatment for Individuals Experiencing Homelessness (TIEH) program by SAMHSA aims to broaden the reach of mental health and substance use disorder treatments for individuals facing homelessness, especially those grappling with serious mental illness, emotional disturbance, or co-occurring conditions. Administered through SAMHSA's Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS) as a competitive grant initiative, TIEH strives to enhance access to evidence-backed programs, peer assistance, recovery-oriented services, and pathways to secure permanent housing.

The GOC does not provide therapy, counseling or medications. Our model has us work side-by-side with Members to help build stamina and confidence so they can be more independent. We don't employ case workers either. The GOC is a very unique service where Members are a part of our community. Their participation in our work day helps build confidence as they prove their abilities to themselves.



Meridian is the lead agency in the Treatment for Individuals Experiencing Homelessness grant. Grace Marketplace and the City of Gainesville will partner with the GOC for additional services.

Membership Standards

Clubhouse Standard 4:



"All members have equal access to every Clubhouse opportunity with no differentiation based on diagnosis or level of functioning."

At the GOC, there are no tasks that are staff only or member only. That means that no matter your experience or ability you can help.

The work that goes into this newsletter is a great example: Some members bring their great ideas to the table, others have vast experience or education in writing, graphic design, and print production.

By bringing all of these skill levels and abilities together, we are able to create the newsletter each month. All contributions are valuable.

The GOC is a fully accredited Clubhouse. We follow the International Clubhouse model of psychosocial rehabilitation.

From Executive Director Deidra Simon

Get Involved with the GOC



*Deidra Simon,
Executive Director*

It's time to be amazing! In the upcoming months, you will see a lot of activity and excitement around the Clubhouse as we gear up to promote and celebrate the power and impact of Clubhouse!

The GOC is one of hundreds of Clubhouses that join in this effort to create a more inclusive world for persons living with mental illness. Clubhouse motivates Members to bring their best selves to the Clubhouse and share their best with the community. They accomplish this every day! We are so proud of their accomplishments!

With that said, please consider standing beside the GOC in our effort to increase inclusion and reduce isolation and stigma by participating in our upcoming Amazing Give on April 25th and Bike Day on May 18th! Thank you in advance for your support!

With gratitude,

Deidra

Gainesville Opportunity Center



Reid Schriber, Zach Scarton, Paul LeBlanc, Brett Buell, (in front) Wendie Selene, and Karen Lovely work in Media.



Joevan serves lunch with a smile.



The GOC reception desk team greets everyone who arrives.



Claudia has been a volunteer here for many years. She is baking cookies with Kyana.

Gainesville Opportunity Center



Members not only enjoy eating lunch, they enjoy cooking it, too.



Mia Chisholm with Daniel Crawford at a recent job fair.



GOC Members went out to Hatchett Creek to help prepare for the Rotary Wild Game Feast.



Gainesville Opportunity Center

**For Florida
clubhouse
Members that
attend for at
least a year:**

98%

achieved fewer
(or no) psychiatric
hospitalizations

97%

report fewer
interactions with
law enforcement

89%

report improved
quality of life

***DONATE NOW
TO HELP PEOPLE
FIND A COMMUNITY
LEARN NEW SKILLS
GAIN CONFIDENCE
GET BACK TO WORK***

**Point your smartphone's
camera at this code to
donate!**

