

COVID-19 UPDATE: The Academy is open regular hours of Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. using screening and safety protocols. For more information about our Phase I Safety Guidelines on the Academy's website: AcademySRQ.org.



MY WHIRLWIND TOUR

by Rick Pardo

When I was asked to travel with William to Tallahassee to advocate for the Florida Clubhouse Coalition, I was extremely excited. I have always loved politics, and this felt like such an honor. On the day of the trip, William picked me up at my house, and, first thing, he commented on my sharp attire. On the six-hour ride up, I started overthinking a bit, and I became a little nervous. But as soon as we arrived, it felt like it was my calling. I had prepared myself by practicing good self-care the day before by getting a good night's sleep, and when we walked into the State Capitol, I felt confident and ready.

The day was a whirlwind experience. After arriving at noon, we met with our lobbyist and she began taking us from representative to representative. Each time we met with someone new, I was amazed at how engaged each of the legislators were. They listened attentively as I told my recovery story. They seemed interested, and asked great questions, both about me and about the Academy and what we do. We spent two days in Tallahassee and I told my story at least sixteen times. I felt awesome! It made me feel like a true part of the legislative process.

Since returning from this trip, I have reflected upon it quite a bit. I feel proud of my ability to overcome my disability. It was not only impactful in the moment, but I feel that it gave me renewed confidence and greater self-esteem. My Academy friends have taken notice! It was an opportunity of a lifetime. Not only will I cherish these memories forever, but I know now that I can build upon this experience. I felt like this was my moment, and it changed me!



Rick Pardo and William McKeever in front of the Capitol Building



Senator Joe Gruters (center) with Rick Pardo, Carolyn Kreuzpaintner and William McKeever



Representative Michelle Salzman (center) with Carolyn Kreuzpaintner, Rick Pardo and William McKeever



On their way home from Tallahassee, Rick Pardo and William McKeever visited with Gainesville Opportunity Center

MY DAY AT THE ACADEMY

by Sandra Teperman

I have been a member of the Academy since June 2021, and I really like it.

I enjoy being in a challenging environment. I like working in the Culinary Arts team and participating in cooking. I work as part of a team, learning skills such as chopping and dicing. I enjoy the lunches the kitchen prepares.

There are many other things to do here at the Academy in the other teams. In the Graphic Design team, I send out the bulk mailings for our newsletters, and make cards and flyers. In the Business & Technology team I type up the daily attendance and help create the PowerPoint for News at Noon. I also really enjoy the Writer's Workshop on Fridays. I like the staff here, and it feels great to be meeting my goals.



Sandra Teperman

TAKING A JOB INTERVIEW SERIOUSLY

by Candy El-Azzaoui

Mitch Leon has kindly given the Academy his time and experience in mentoring us in interviewing skills. Mock interviews were conducted and filmed in our multimedia studio so that later we can watch objectively to see where we can improve. This is a useful tool in getting a job.

It was my first videotaped interview. I was not nervous as Mitch made me feel so at ease. I was very curious as to how I would carry myself in an actual interview. Mitch asked questions that an employer would ask, and I tried to focus and answer his questions while putting my best foot forward. There were four of us who went through this process. Next, we will review the tape with our job coach.

I want to thank Mitch Leon so much and I hope he understands how much I appreciate this exercise in focusing and paying attention.



Candy El-Azzaoui



All events take place on-site at the Academy and through the Zoom app. Watch Slack for Meeting ID and Password.

NOTE: Morning meetings begin at 8:45 a.m. on Mondays - Thursdays.

Monday, February 14

Typing with Rima Workshop - 8 a.m.
Morning Meeting - 8:45 a.m.
Individual Team Meetings - 9:15 a.m.
Graphic Des/Multimedia Team Meeting - 1:15 p.m.
Bus & Tech/Culinary Team Meetings - 1:30 p.m.

Tuesday, February 15

Morning Meeting - 8:45 a.m.
Individual Team Meetings - 9:15 a.m.
Academy Meeting - 1:30 p.m.
Individual Team Meetings - 2 p.m.

Wednesday, February 16

Morning Meeting - 8:45 a.m.
Individual Team Meetings - 9:15 a.m.
Newsroom Meeting - 11 a.m.
Menu Planning Meeting - 11:45 a.m.
Graphic Des/Multimedia Team Meeting - 1:15 p.m.
Bus & Tech/Culinary Team Meetings - 1:30 p.m.
Multimedia Project Planning - 2 p.m.
Wellness Wednesday Workshop - 3 p.m.

Thursday, February 17

Morning Meeting - 8:45 a.m.
Individual Team Meetings - 9:15 a.m.
Graphic Des/Multimedia Team Meeting - 1:15 p.m.
Bus & Tech/Culinary Team Meetings - 1:30 p.m.

Friday, February 18

Morning Meeting - 9 a.m.
Individual Team Meetings - 9:30 a.m.
Writer's Workshop - 11 a.m.
Graphic Des/Multimedia Team Meeting - 1:15 p.m.
Bus & Tech/Culinary Team Meetings - 1:30 p.m.
Spanish Workshop - 3 p.m.

>>>> HYBRID WORK-ORDERED DAY <<<<

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AcademySRQ.org

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