



## HARVESTING HOPE

Academy members know a thing or two about overcoming obstacles. Despite high wind and rains, our Harvesting Hope Luncheon was an affair to remember. Members showed up, dressed to the nines and ready to serve, to host, and to share the ways in which our community has offered them hope.

Member Ian Churchill and Academy staff Cathy Dexter provided beautiful ambiance on the piano as the four-course plated meal, sponsored by Gulf Coast Community Foundation, was served by members donning crisp black uniforms. A short program followed the meal, emceed by Academy staff Idanes Paredes and one of our newest members, Maureen Flaig. Maureen spoke exuberantly about the changes she has made in her life since joining us, and the newfound hope she has moving forward.

Guests were treated to a slide show that showed the progress we have made in our newly opened Academy at Bradenton, and they heard from Academy of Bradenton director Jeffrey Jean and member Curia Murray about our expansion and what it means to bring mental health recovery to the Manatee community. Academy member Stephen May also presented. His story of transformation was vivid, entertaining, and deeply engaging (he may give new meaning to “Academy awards”). A hard act to follow, our esteemed director, William McKeever, closed the program with a message of hope.

This event was our way of saying thank you to just some of our closest supporters. It also serves to remind us of the formidable talents and skills of those affected by a mental health diagnosis, and the power of hope to restore purpose and personhood to each and every one of us.



## WELCOME Heavenly Rutledge

Hello, my name is Heavenly Rutledge. I’ve been in the Academy at Bradenton for a few months. I’ve been going through depression for a long time now. When I was a young girl I was in an accident where I had to be hospitalized and undergo multiple surgeries. I had to learn how to eat, talk and walk again. I learned about the Academy from my case manager at Centerstone. My case manager and family like that I attend the Academy at Bradenton. I hope to learn how to cook recipes and become independent. This program started making things a little bit better for me, things are looking up!



*Heavenly Rutledge*





## LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY

The Academy was privileged to host the 2022 Legislative Presentation Event, organized by the Community Alliance of Sarasota County. The purpose of the Summit was to reach consensus on funding priorities to bring to our local, regional, and state legislators. At the presentation at the Academy, sector leaders from nine human services categories presented this year's focused priorities.

The event kicked off with several testimonials from those whose lives have been improved by these community services. The room was packed, and the first to speak was none other than our own Maureen Flaig. When she spoke of her experience at the Academy, the whole room could feel her energy and passion. All of the peer testimonials were impactful, and a striking reminder of the resilience of the human spirit and the power of community connection.

Academy members were consummate hosts, providing a gorgeous spread of hors d'oeuvres and sweets, and warmly welcoming guests into our building. It was another wonderful opportunity for them to shine and served to further demonstrate the talents and capabilities of those who live with mental health and other social challenges.



(left to right) Maureen Flaig and William McKeever



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## HYBRID WORK-ORDERED DAY

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

### Monday, November 21

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

### Tuesday, November 22

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

### Wednesday, November 23

Morning Meeting - 9 a.m.  
Individual Team Meetings - 9:30 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.  
Wellness Wednesday Workshop - 3 p.m.

### Thursday, November 24

Thanksgiving Day  
- Open for Holiday Meal - 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

### Friday, November 25

Academy Closed



### Friday, December 2

Art of Recovery Show and Sale - 5-7 p.m.



Gardening available daily through Culinary Arts

## TO MAKE A DONATION

visit our website

[AcademySRQ.org](https://AcademySRQ.org)

and click on the  button

*Thank you for transforming lives!*

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