



(L to R) Bill Hunter, Joseph Lewis, Jose Campos, Vera Crenshaw, and Ryan Krajewski

## FOUR DAYS STRONG

Our transportation program has enabled so many Academy members to attend our Bradenton campus; those who wouldn't be able to get to us without it. We began tentatively with two days a week and eventually grew to three days. Now, we are thrilled to announce that we've added Mondays to our transportation schedule! Members who can't access other transportation options can now attend the Academy at Bradenton Monday-Thursday. We're committed to removing as many barriers as possible so that members can take advantage of all that we have to offer. Member Irene Lunt said "I'm grateful for the additional day to work and connect with others. I love it here!" We love that our members are so driven to succeed!

We are incredibly grateful to the Wilson Wood Foundation for funding our driver position, and to the Manatee Matches Giving Circle of the Community Foundation for granting us a 2025 KIA Carnival!

## WARM WELCOME TO ANDREW VASILAKI

by Andrew Vasilaki

Hello! I am a new member at the Academy at Glengary. I was a patient at Coastal Behavioral Health when my doctor recommended the Academy at Glengary to me. I was interested in seeing what I could learn at the Academy.



I was diagnosed with schizophrenia many years ago and it has been quite a recovery process. The Academy has helped me to learn some work skills and some very useful skills in multimedia.

I have been working in the multimedia team with instructors A.J. Ramirez and Jen Page and learning skills in computer graphics. It has been very easy to get along with others and get to know people at the Academy. If you are looking for a friendly place to learn work skills the Academy is the place for you!



Thank you to our guests from Empath Tidewell Hospice!  
(L to R) Academy staff Jen Page, Dana Eckensburg-McCarthy, Hope Allen, member Loriann Smith, Beth Still, and Academy staff Bailee Steury



Alex DeSanctis next to his creation, the hydroponics system

## “SPROUTING” FRESH IDEAS

by Alex DeSanctis

As I was building a new hydroponic system, I decided to donate it to the Academy. There are four herbs in it now – sweet basil, oregano, lavender and spearmint, which I thought would be perfect for the culinary team to add to our daily fresh meals.

Turning my imagination into creations is a passion of mine. I’ve always been interested in symbiotic and self-sustaining farming. I built my very first hydroponics system at just 17 years old and haven’t stopped building different renditions ever since.

Hydroponics is a soil-free, water-based method of growing plants by delivering nutrients directly to the roots via a mineral solution. This method uses 95% less water than traditional farming, creates faster growth (often 25-50% faster), higher



The Culinary Team and Alex DeSanctis next to his creation  
(continued at right)



yield, space efficiency (because it’s vertical farming), and no soil-borne diseases. Growers have control over nutrient solutions for maximum growth. Because hydroponic gardens can be set up indoors, they are a great way to grow healthy produce sustainably in a controlled environment year-round.

I’m looking forward to hosting a workshop to explain how Academy members and staff can benefit and instructions on how to maintain the system.

## MENTAL HEALTH IS A TEAM SPORT



Sneak Peek behind the scenes filming for our upcoming baseball themed March fundraisers. Thank you to the Baltimore Orioles for providing this opportunity!

(L to R) Academy staff Billy Elkins, members Brent Jephson, Aaron Williams, Irene Lunt and Academy staff Brooke DePuy.

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