



HEALING THROUGH CONNECTION

by Ray Reilly



Excerpts from Ray's member testimonial at our "Field of Dreams" Spring events:

I'm Ray Reilly, a 53-year-old member of the Academy at Bradenton since July 2025.

I grew up in a tight-knit middle class family. I was a good student but at a heavier weight, I was a target for bullies. When my dad passed we could no longer afford the house I had grown up in. My mom bought a trailer and we lived there together until she too passed from COPD. It nearly destroyed me.

Ray Reilly giving his member testimonial

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Join us for our
2nd Anniversary
Open House
Celebration

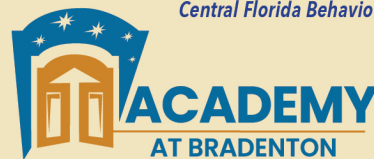
THURSDAY, APRIL 9, 2026
11:30 am - 1:30 pm

Remarks at 12:15 pm by:

Amanda Ballard, Manatee County Commissioner

Judge Gilbert Smith, Jr., 12th Judicial Circuit

Alan Davidson, President and CEO of Central Florida Behavioral Health Network



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941-929-2800 / info@academysrq.org

Parking is available in the Judicial Center Parking Garage located at 615 12th St. W., Bradenton, or on street.



R.S.V.P. preferred.
Please scan the QR code.



Thank you to our recent Academy at Glengary guests, W.O.W. Women of Wisdom! W.O.W. is deeply committed to serving community with love, compassion, dignity, and practical support.

Interested in scheduling a Lunch & Learn?
Please contact Patty Haltinner at 941-921-9932.

(continued from front page)

The next two years included many suicide attempts and hospitalizations. I was considered a high user, meaning I had attempted suicide so many times that I got routine wellness checks from Emergency Medical Services. It was my case worker who suggested the Academy.

When I reluctantly joined, I was living alone in the trailer with no electricity. I didn't get out of bed unless I absolutely had to. Becoming a member was not an easy transition. Being around people was awkward. I was unpracticed. But everyone was so positive and welcoming. Now I have a routine. On any given day I might staff the front desk, answer phones, give tours of the facility, conduct data entry, and attend meetings where my ideas are considered equally among all the voices. I'm even mentoring other members now! This was not on my bingo card a year ago! Instead of sleeping all day, I help move the Academy's mission forward. And, by the way, I've had no hospitalizations since becoming a member!

My life is still far from perfect, but it's a life I want to live. I couldn't have said that a year ago. Without all the support, I would not have become a functioning member of society, much less a leader. Sometimes you just have to take a chance and let others in. I did and it saved my life.



Join us in celebration!

Our very own program coordinator Vanessa Alcantara wed her sweetheart Joseph Mangrum at a beautiful ceremony this past Saturday.

We wish the happy couple many decades of love and laughter.

Congratulations to The Mangrums!

2026 GIVING CHALLENGE
Be The One

Presented by the Community Foundation of Sarasota County

The Academy provides a pathway to success, friendship and careers for adults seeking mental health recovery.

#BE THE ONE

ACADEMY AT GLENGARY **ACADEMY AT BRADENTON**

Noon April 15 - Noon April 16
GivingChallenge.org

SARASOTA CAMPUS

1910 Glengary Street
Sarasota, FL 34231
(941) 921-9930



BRADENTON CAMPUS

601 12th Street West
Bradenton, FL 34205
(941) 929-2800



AcademySRQ.org

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visit our website

AcademySRQ.org

and click on the **Donate Now** button

Thank you for transforming lives!

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