



## TA-DA! ACADEMY MAGIC!

by Erica Siegel



Erica Siegel and David Meyersburg making the magic happen!

Fellow member David Meyersburg and I spent several days at the Bradenton campus last week, filming a sketch for our upcoming livestream on August 13. The theme of the livestream is "magic deconstructed," and David and I play a couple of magicians who also happen to

be an old married couple, bickering and quarreling throughout a live performance. The video is lighthearted but serves to illustrate that the "magic" of mental health recovery is actually lots (and lots!) of hard work.

Despite years of acting in live theater, I have never done anything like this. Unlike stage work, when you work in film, you shoot several takes of a single piece of dialogue from varying directions so that in post (the editing phase), there are different angles to choose from. There were wide shots and close-ups, and lights and microphones to navigate as we managed to stay on our marks, all while staying in character. Filming days can be really long, and they require patience, but it has been so fun! I'm having a blast!

## WELCOME TO AUSTIN AZEVEDO

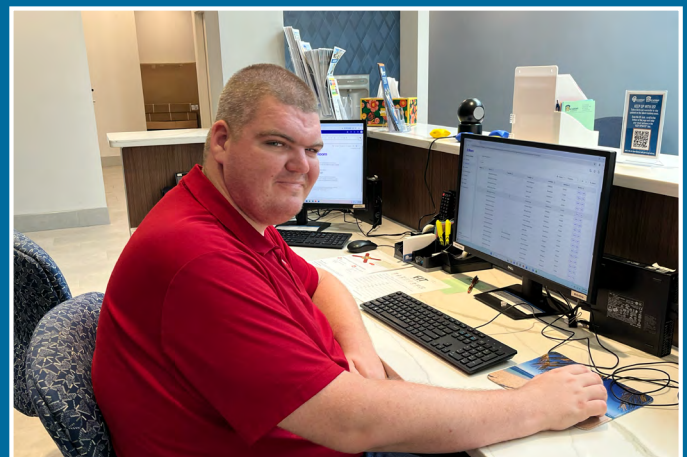
by Austin Azevedo



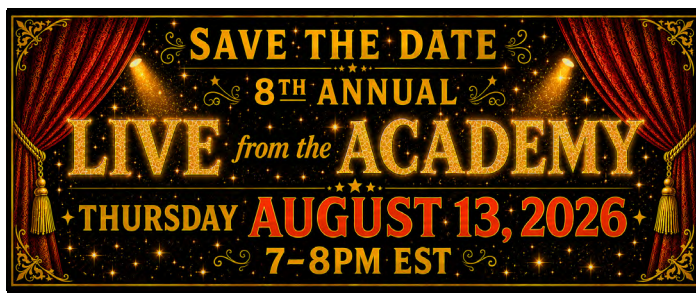
I first learned about the Academy at Bradenton from my psychiatrist at Centerstone and my life coach Melissa Tuller from Volunteers of America. Melissa brought me here for my tour. I was pretty nervous, but everyone was so friendly; it really made me feel more at ease.

I was drawn to the Business & Tech team because I love working on computers and I want to learn more advanced skills. I've learned how to use our new database Bloom to input data and run reports. I also create written protocols so that other members can learn the steps too.

Skill-building aside, I think my favorite aspect of being an Academy member is that our community is a safe haven where I can be myself and be accepted for who I am. Just being here puts me in a good mood. I've made new friends here as well, so it's another reason to look forward to coming in. The staff here is tremendous; they help me grow every day!



Austin Azevedo at the front desk of the Academy at Bradenton



## COMMITMENT TO GROWTH

by Rima Ghalieh



Rima Ghalieh facilitating her wellness workshop

Back in 2023, I was overweight and not feeling so good, and I decided to take my health into my own hands and get serious about fitness. I joined a gym, changed the foods I eat, and

lost 65 lbs. At the same time, thanks to a grant from the Charles & Margery Barancik Foundation, the Academy at Glengary was launching its FIT (Fully in Transformation) program, and I was asked to be a FIT Champion, assisting our wellness coordinator in running health-related workshops. Since then, I have even developed my own wellness workshops such as self-esteem, communication, confidence, active listening, assertiveness and more.

This week, wellness coordinator Brooke DePuy asked me if I would help her present on a Zoom call with the California Clubhouse Coalition. Along with Brooke and fellow member Preston Zorn, we explained our commitment to the 8-Dimensions of Wellness (social, occupational, intellectual, financial, spiritual, environmental, emotional and physical) and how we integrate wellness into every day. We also told them how we track outcomes in our database, and use a detailed survey, created by our awesome researcher from the University of South Florida, Dr. Roxann Taormina, to follow members' progress over the years.

The Clubhouse programs in California were very interested in the data collection process, and we were happy to share our knowledge with them. We also learned a lot from them. These meetings with other Clubhouse members really help us all strengthen our programs and help us to get and stay FIT!

## COMPASSION NEVER TAKES A HOLIDAY

by Loriann Smith



Glengary members and staff showing off their completed Juneteenth service projects

I have had the privilege of being a volunteer at Empath Tidewell Hospice for the past five years. I'm constantly amazed at how much this organization helps the families and loved ones of those who are on hospice with their end-of-life care.

Our Juneteenth holiday service project benefited Tidewell this year. I was so happy to help arrange their Legacy Books to be designed and created by members of the Academy at Glengary. These journals are so special as they create lasting memories between the hospice patient and their families. We worked closely with Tidewell representatives Dana McCarthy, Hope Allen and Elizabeth Still.

The Legacy Books are unique in their designs and reflect the care taken in creating them by our members. The Academy at Bradenton also was involved and made beautiful cards for the Blue Butterfly program which reaches out to the children grieving the loss of a loved one. Being part of the Academy and Tidewell is something I will always be grateful for.



Bradenton members and Tidewell Hospice staff beginning their Juneteenth service project

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