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8th Annual LIVE from the Academy TELETHON

Thursday
August 13, 2026
7-8pm EST

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ACCREDITATION IN ACTION

by David Meyersburg



Members and staff listen to preliminary findings presented by Clubhouse International Faculty (in person and via Restream)

As part of the Clubhouse model, the Academy holds a 3-year accreditation by Clubhouse International. This is an important distinction that provides us with a “stamp of approval” and gives potential members, donors, and community partners assurance that we are consistent with the global model as detailed in Clubhouse International’s 37 Standards. As three years have passed, we had accrediting Faculty from Clubhouse International visit us once again to “kick the tires” and ensure that we continue to meet expectations.

Clubhouse International Faculty spent two full days with us meeting members, staff, our Board, employment partners and more. They joined on our meetings and went through our financial records. When Faculty member Randy Redlinger arrived from Gateway, an international training base in South Carolina, I had the opportunity to docent his tour of the facility and act as his concierge, connecting him with whomever or whatever he needed to see. Unfortunately, Faculty member James Sweet from High Hopes Clubhouse in Maine would be visiting remotely because his flight had been canceled. He didn’t miss a beat; attending our meetings on Zoom and Restream and seeing the facility virtually.

As the member liaison, I was invited to join Academy at Glengary Program Director Billy Elkins at the preliminary meeting where the accreditation process and goals were explained. I also attended the precursory meeting with leadership where they presented their findings before presenting them to our entire community. My hope was that we would do well, and I was pleased as they announced almost every section of the Standards for which we are in compliance. They did present us with a few recommendations as well. One such recommendation, to increase our attendance, led to a lively discussion about defining the work-ordered day and what it means that membership is voluntary.

I believe that we did a good job of representing ourselves honestly and demonstrating our commitment to the model. The verbal findings are not an official determination of our accreditation status; that could take a month, but it gave us a good idea of how we fared.



Members and staff listening to the preliminary accreditation findings

HEALTHY SOLUTIONS

by Ray Reilly



(L to R) Joseph Lewis and Jose Campos making an electrolyte drink

We recently held two informative physical wellness workshops at the Academy at Bradenton. We first learned the importance of hydration and how to prepare a house made electrolyte drink. The following week we made granola bars. We used nothing processed; just all natural ingredients. Both recipes used honey as the sweetener, which is a healthier alternative to sugar. The drink contained aloe and coconut water as the hydration base.



Ray Reilly making healthy granola bars

I found our processes went well and showed that we can do things naturally and effectively, and it was a lot of fun to do together.

The difference between the store-bought and homemade products was significant. Ours tasted much better. The benefits of making homemade healthy snacks and drinks is that you know exactly what's in it- and what's not. Ours had no added coloring or anything chemical. Plus, it's more cost effective than buying those neon-colored drinks at the store!

TD BANK: A STAR PARTNER

This week, the Academy at Bradenton had the pleasure of hosting representatives from TD Bank, Kristen Lynch and Natalie Suarez, for an occupational wellness workshop about "Best Practices in Soft Skill Development." This topic was suggested by members at the most recent wellness committee meeting. They discussed how to present oneself professionally in the workplace or during an interview, including business attire, tone and expression, body language, and emotional intelligence. In addition, we discussed interviewing techniques and what employers are looking for in potential candidates. Our members left with a better understanding of how to answer common interview questions and, most notably, the STAR method (Situation, Task, Action, Result) of formatting their responses.

Member Vicky Vedl said, "they did great job at demonstrating how to dress and what to say to get a job and be successful on the job. It was a fun workshop!" Many thanks to TD Bank and the Bank On Suncoast Coalition for this valuable partnership that enhances both the financial and occupational wellness of our members.



Members learning about the STAR method (Situation, Task, Action, Result).

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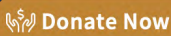


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