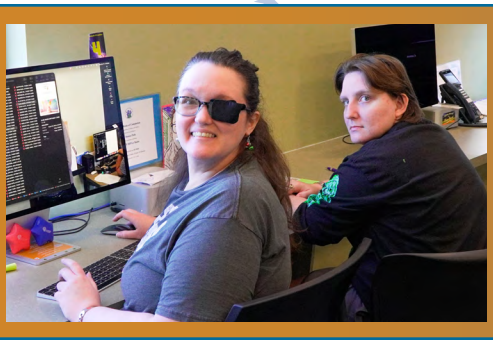
ACADEMY TIMES

ACADEMY AT GLENGARY | ACADEMY AT BRADENTON

NEWS OF THE ACADEMY AT GLENGARY AND ACADEMY AT BRADENTON

October 23, 2026







KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

by Ellen Russell

"Yes, Lynn it is a big crowd," I nervously smiled.

How could this be happening? How could I, with a history of anxiety, panic attacks and myriad other issues, possibly be presenting at the USA Clubhouse Conference in Arlington, Virginia.

I can share exactly how. Even with a technical glitch and our limited time ticking away, I felt oddly calm and weirdly enough, comfortable. It was because I was alongside my co-presenter and my Academy job coach, Lynn Rupe.

We had prepared, written and rehearsed our presentation until I (mostly) knew it by heart. We had successful and inspiring stories about the Transitional Employment Program at the Academy to share. Plus, I had thoughts to share about my own, very personal journey.

Looking out at the crowd of unfamiliar faces, it would have been easy to panic. I then caught the smiles of my own Academy family. It grounded me and I remembered to breathe. And, as it turns out, the entire audience was also family - Clubhouse Family. Members and staff from across the country created the safety net I needed to be able to share my story. Turns out - I knew my audience, because I am one of them.



(L to R) Lynn Rupe and Ellen Russell about to present at the USA Clubhouse Conference in Arlington, VA

IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

We hosted an impromptu Lunch & Learn for Manatee County Children's Services Section Department Manager Melissa Bomar, accompanied by our longtime community partner Lize Francis, Manatee County Health Services Analyst. Melissa said that Lize spoke so highly of the Academy that she was that she was intrigued and wanted to see for herself.

They were given a tour and then joined us for lunch, prepared and served by our members. Over lunch, member Grant Goodin explained our Transitional Employment program to Melissa and engaged them with personal stories about his experience working at the State Attorney's Office, and what the job means to him and his future.

We say this all the time: the best way to truly understand the unique culture and intention of our community is to see it for yourself. Visitors give our members opportunities to hone their social skills and step into leadership roles, as tour guides and hosts. It also helps us broaden our reach. And, not for nothing, we think it just might be the best lunch in town!

Interested in scheduling a Lunch & Learn?
Please contact Jodi-lee Weiss at 941-929-2800 (Bradenton) and Patty Haltinner at 941-921-9932 (Glengary)



(L to R) William McKeever, Lize Francis, and Melissa Bomar at the Academy at Bradenton

FOCUS ON FITNESS

Thanks to generous grants from the Charles & Margery Barancik Foundation, our two campuses have taken holistic fitness (based on the 8-Dimensions of Wellness) to new heights. Our FIT programs have been off and running for several years now, with gym memberships, banking partnerships, brain training workshops and more.

With expert guidance from USF Assistant Research Professor Dr. Roxann Taormina, we have again created a dynamic wellness curriculum and continue to track inspiring outcomes.

Dr. Taormina recently met with Academy at Bradenton members for a focus group that identified the hits and misses of our current FIT offerings, guiding us to adapt to the varying needs of our members. Dr. Taormina, in collaboration with our wellness coordinator Brooke DePuy and our "wellness champion" members, is instrumental in our implementation of a comprehensive wellness curriculum that is FIT for our deserving community.



FIT
Fully In Transformation

Dr. Roxann Taormina (center) with members and staff at the Academy at Bradenton



Members and staff of ACTS Clubhouse Tampa and Academy at Bradenton

SHINY HAPPY PEOPLE

by Ashley Muscat

I visited ACTS (All Come To Shine) Clubhouse last week with Vanessa Alcantara-Mangrum and Diana Marte. I thought the Academy cornered the market on friendliness, but no; it must be a Clubhouse thing because everyone was so welcoming and nice. My first impression was how cool their space is. It's a modern open plan with high ceilings and lots of light. Everything was well maintained and looked like it was brand new. We we given an amazing tour by their director Jennifer Mullins and we were inspired by how they manage to have a bountiful garden in the city. We were taking notes!

I love how each Clubhouse has its own ideas and identity to meet the specific needs of their members. Even though we are all following the same 37 Standards of our accrediting body Clubhouse International, we interpret them in our own unique way to better serve our diverse communities. I really enjoyed the experience of seeing another Clubhouse program, and I hope to visit more programs in the future.

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