ACADEMY TIMES

ACADEMY AT GLENGARY

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NEWS OF THE ACADEMY AT GLENGARY AND ACADEMY AT BRADENTON

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SPECIAL NEW MEMBER EDITION

WARM WELCOME TO CASSIE MCKEE

by Cassie McKee



Before joining the Academy, I spent most of my time at home taking care of my little brother with special needs. I like coming to the Academy at Bradenton because it gets me out of the house and reduces my stress.

At the Academy, I work in the culinary team and help cook lunch. I'm learning how to prep ingredients, like chopping vegetables. I've also learned how to follow a recipe. We made cookies that we served at our Halloween lunch. I'm naturally very shy and quiet but the Academy is getting me out of my shell and making it easier for me to talk to people. I think it's because it's a place where everyone knows what you're going through and they're understanding and patient.

I'm excited to learn even more! Since the Academy focuses on health, I'm excited to continue learning how to make food that is not only delicious, but also healthy. I also hope to make friends here and get better at communicating. Everyone here is so nice and supportive!

I think, with help, my goals are within reach.



(L to R) Cassie McKee and Alicia Velez in culinary

WARM WELCOME TO ROBERT MARTIN

by Robert Martin



Before I found the Academy, I was sleeping all day and was not motivated to change my life. I live at an assisted living facility, so things are just done for me. I think I was over-medicated, and I just went with the flow for a long time.

I had heard about the Academy at Glengary for years but never took the initiative to check it out. That is, until January 2026 when I finally joined. That's when everything changed. I was still pretty out of it when I took the tour, but I was at least aware enough to know that this was something I wanted to do.

I like working in the Business & Technology team. I make PowerPoint presentations, input data entry for attendance and other statistics that help support our grants and funders. I often run our team meetings, and I like to staff the front desk. I also do a lot of cleaning because I'm very detail oriented and I sometimes see the small details that others might miss. It brings me great satisfaction to restore something to its clean state.

My future goals are to take advantage of the Academy's Supportive Education to finish my degree, and to get a career. I have no idea why I waited so long to join because I honestly don't know what I'd do without the support I get here. Now my days are spent being productive and in service to others and that has made all the difference.



(L to R) Robert Martin and Bailee Steury in business & technology

WARM WELCOME TO MICAELL LEWIS

by Micaell Lewis



For most of my life, I avoided asking for help. Since joining the Academy, I realize how much more I can achieve with a community behind me. The truth is that I was not living my best life. Despite feeling positive about the program when I came in for a tour, it was a year before I found the courage to start. When I finally took the leap, I was met by warm and welcoming people who I could tell truly wanted me to succeed. So, I let my excitement override how nervous I was, and I'm very glad that I did.

Since joining, I work in the business & technology team. I've learned how to use Canva for flyers and presentations. My career had been in Human Resources so administrative work feels comfortable and "safe." I'm intrigued by our culinary team and graphic design, but it might take a bit more confidence-building before I step into learning something so new to me.

My long-term goal is to rejoin the professional world, but it still feels daunting. I'm hoping to use my time at the Academy to learn new skills and explore where my skill set might fit in the world. Interviewing gives me a lot of anxiety because I'm uncomfortable singing my own praises, but hopefully I'll work on that as well. I realize now how important it is for my mental health to stay productive and, even more than that, to be of service and contribute to something that needs me. After just a few short weeks here, I feel pretty certain that I have found that place.



Micaell (second from left) joins in a Wellness Walk after lunch.

WARM WELCOME TO DOLORES MURRAY

by Dolores Murray



I have Bi-Polar II which at times is very hard to control. In the past ten years I cared for my husband who passed away from cancer and then became engaged to another man who passed away a year ago from agent orange from serving in the Vietnam War. Between the two, the grief was overwhelming and I needed professional help as well as something to keep myself busy. I was blessed to find out about the Academy at Glengary where I choose to sharpen my skills in the culinary team.

My late mom (rest her soul), and God taught me so much growing up with nine siblings. With mom, I was always in the kitchen! I love the culinary team headed by Ben and Diego and all the help I get from Yvonne, all who make this so much fun to learn all the tricks of the trade. I may be 70 years old, but it is not too late to teach an old dog new tricks.

I hope to get back in the work field, at either a restaurant, a hospital cafeteria or at Publix either in the deli or the meat department. What is meant to be will be, but the culinary team here at the Academy has set me up for success and I am grateful.



(L to R) Jerry Clancy, Diego Peguero, Yvonne Miller, and Dolores Murray in culinary

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