



## A WORLDWIDE COMMUNITY FOR CHANGE.

**FACT:** Clubhouse International supports “Clubhouses” around the world where people living with mental illness **can thrive.**

**FACT:** Every day at Clubhouses around the world people living with mental illness are reclaiming their futures as part of a supportive and recovery-focused community.

### THE PROOF

**100,000 PEOPLE BENEFIT** each year from 330+ Clubhouses in 34 countries

**42% EMPLOYMENT RATE** achieved at Accredited Clubhouses each year vs. an average employment rate of 20% for people in the public mental health system.

**MAXIMIZING DOLLARS** One year of holistic recovery services can be delivered to Clubhouse members for the same cost as a 2-week stay in a psychiatric hospital.

### ABOUT CLUBHOUSE INTERNATIONAL

*Awarded the 2014 Conrad N. Hilton Humanitarian Prize for extraordinary contributions toward alleviating human suffering.*

Clubhouse International has succeeded in creating something that didn't exist before: a worldwide community that is changing the world of mental health. Through local Clubhouses like **Key Clubhouse**, around the world, we offer people living with mental illness opportunities for friendship, employment, housing, education, and access to medical and psychiatric services in a single caring and safe environment—so they can recover and fully participate as valued and respected members of society.



Writers:  
Bob Mandell  
Debra Webb  
Alex Lasa

Layout & Design:  
Bob Mandell

The Groover  
Foundation

Team Footworks Educational  
& Fitness Corporation

THE LITOWITZ FAMILY  
FOUNDATION INC.



THE JOSEPH H. & FLORENCE A. ROBLEE FOUNDATION

The Key Clubhouse  
1400 NW 54th Street Suite 102  
Miami, FL 33142  
www.keyclubhouse.org



April 2016  
Volume 6 / Issue #1

# THE KEY UPDATE

## Thank You for Believing in Us

By Debra Webb,  
Executive Director



It is with great pleasure that I announce that our recent fundraiser titled “Into the Light” was very successful and attracted more than 270 guests. On behalf of the board, Clubhouse members and staff, I would like to thank Christy Romero, who volunteered to chair the first Benefit for Mental Health that raised \$80,000. She truly was a Beacon of Light that pulled our community together to reach our goal! “Into the Light” is a fine example and proof that we have a caring and dedicated community that want to help our members regain their self esteem, become employed, and live independently and healthy.

The Key Clubhouse, an international model, has currently served 360 people living with severe and persistent mental illness since the opening in March 2010. Our mission is to afford people whose lives have been disrupted by mental illness the opportunity to recover meaningful and productive lives through reintegration in the workplace and the community. As you will see in this newsletter, we have recently partnered with

CareerSource South Florida and placed three of our members in Transitional jobs. We still need a few more transitional employment positions to be in compliance for our accreditation, but we are confident that with future business partnerships, like CareerSource South Florida, we will stay on the road to empowering more members to go back to work!

You will also see in this newsletter all the donors, foundations and partners we have in the community that have donated and joined our mission to provide this critical service and program to those living with mental illness. We currently have 58 members who are working in either Transitional, Supported or Independent positions. This is good news for Key Clubhouse as our philosophy is “Recovery through Work.” Clubhouse communities hold the conviction that work, and work-mediated relationships, are restorative and provide a firm foundation for growth and important individual achievement. In the Clubhouse world it is also a strongly held belief that normalized social and recreational opportunities are an important part of a person's path to recovery.

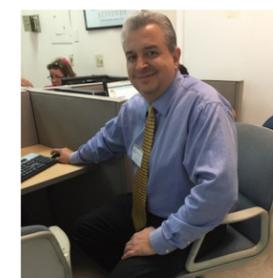
## CareerSource South Florida Partners with Key Clubhouse

The Key Clubhouse is very grateful to CareerSource South Florida, which has offered three Transitional employment positions for members of the Clubhouse. Transitional Employment (TE) is a special type of employment used by Clubhouses around the world. It is a time limited position of six to nine months which helps people living with mental illness transitional back to the workforce. The TE positions, unlike a supported or independent job belongs to the Clubhouse not the member. This is the bloodline of the Clubhouse as the Club helps and maintains a relationship with the employer and provides onsite training and the staff fills in for the member if they are out sick due to their illness. The TE positions are required to become an accredited Clubhouse through Clubhouse International. It is the intent of the Key Clubhouse to add a few more TE positions so we can become accredited and more members can transition back to the workforce.

Congratulations to Alex Lasa, Priscilla Mendonca and Violetta Robleto, who recently received their first paychecks. Alex works at the Downtown Hialeah Center and has done so well that they offered him more hours. Priscilla is working in the North Miami Beach Center and Violetta is at the Northside Center. A big thank you goes to CareerSource South Florida!



Priscilla Mendonca



Alex Lasa



Violetta Robleto

## A Member's Story: Alex Lasa

By Alex Lasa



My name is Alexander P. Lasa and I have been dealing with mental illness for many years. I had a psychotic break while attending the University of Miami back in the early 90's. At that time I was hospitalized at Jackson for 3 weeks and began psychiatric treatments. Despite these treatments I was in denial for many years and did not want to believe that anything was wrong with my mind. I attempted to return to school at least 6 times. Each time I would motivate myself to go back I would end up having another episode. I would have extreme bouts of anxiety and paranoia that would not allow me to handle the course work and any social interactions needed to function in that environment.

Fast Forward to 2016: My sister who lives in New York City found the Key Clubhouse of South Florida online

and helped me find my voice. I finally came to the realization that I have a mental illness, but I will not be defined by it.

Thanks to the Clubhouse's "Recovery through Work" philosophy I feel I am getting a second chance. I was hired to work at the CareerSource South Florida Downtown Hialeah Office. Friday April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 marks my 6th week on the job. My supervisors, co-workers, and clients are extremely pleased with my job performance that they are requesting that I work more hours. This represents a victory for me and the entire Clubhouse. In time these TE (Transitional Employment) positions will lead to permanent positions and more of our members will be able to be brought in as TEs. Priscilla Mendonca, Violeta Robleto, and myself are the first to achieve this goal and we've felt the Club's support all through the process. I am honored and grateful to be a part of the Key Clubhouse. We are making a difference.

## Key Clubhouse at the Zoo

By Bob Mandell

On Saturday March 12 the Clubhouse took a trip to Zoo Miami. It was a great day, partly cloudy about 75 degrees with a breeze. Not too hot, not too sunny, but just right. A great day to see the animals.



When we got in the first thing we did is take a group picture, all 25 members and our 3 staff, Pam, Penny, and Deb the director. Then we decided to meet back at the exit at 1:30 pm so everyone would know ahead of time.

We all went off in several groups in to the zoo. The zoo is a large place it takes several hours to see it all. The first thing we saw was the Asian elephants. Then the rhinoceros. I went on to check out a lot of interesting animals such as the Komodo Dragon (the largest lizard in the world), the Harpy Eagle, Jaguar, lions, an anaconda, poison dart frogs, and even camels. I really



enjoyed the Amazon rain forest exhibit.

By then I was out of time and we all met at the exit. We drove off to Wendy's to eat lunch and then it was back to the club.



## First Mental Health Luncheon a Huge Success

Kevin Hines, global speaker, mental health advocate and author, spoke at the first benefit luncheon for The Key Clubhouse of South Florida on February 21, 2016 at the Pullman Miami Airport. This event was presented by the Dosal Family Foundation.

Hines, an award winning speaker and bestselling author, of the book *Cracked, Not Broken: Surviving and Thriving after A Suicide Attempt*, discussed his attempt to take his own life by jumping from the Golden Gate Bridge. He is actively spreading the message around the globe of living with the challenges of bipolar disorder and other mental illnesses.

"We are very happy about the results of the benefit luncheon for the Key Clubhouse," notes Cristina Romero, chairperson of the "Into the Light" event. "We had over 270 people attend the luncheon and surpassed our goal. When so many people are affected by mental illness it is critical to have a support system like the Key Clubhouse that focuses on recovery, employment and education. We hope to bring the work of the Clubhouse 'into the light' as well as reduce the stigma surrounding mental illness." Thank you to our main sponsors:



**DOSAL FAMILY**  
FOUNDATION



**Tate Enterprises**

And Magellan Complete Care & Kenny Nachwalter P.A.



Full House



L to R, Maria Cristina del Campo and Maria Montesino from Coconut Grove Bank; Laura Fabar Equels, Josie Ramirez and Maria Dosal Stone from **Dosal Family Foundation**



Amy McClellan, Cristina Romero, Debra Webb



Debra Webb, Commissioner Daniella Levine Cava, Carla Neufeld, Kevin Hines, Amy McClellan



L to R, Maria, Alzaga, Lizzeett Sobalvarro, Yvonne Gomez, Olga Braceras



L to R, Alicia Rojo, Lupe Zumarraga, Maria Ingelmo, Christy Romero, Millie Baro



L to R, Dr. Rolando & Marivi Montoya, Manual & Ani Alvarez



Amy McClellan, Kevin Hines, Judge Leifman