Genesis Club, Inc.
Leadership in Mental Health Recovery
Impact Report
2020
Our Vision, Mission and Values

Our vision is to see that all people living with mental health conditions are respected and enjoy meaningful lives as full and equal members of society.

Our mission is to ensure Clubhouse members have access to meaningful employment, healthy lifestyles, safe housing, and education as well as find genuine belonging, friendships, and purpose.

Our values have always been grounded in the International Clubhouse Standards, but this year we took the opportunity to determine what makes us uniquely Genesis Club, what guides our decisions, our interactions with each other, and what will guide our program into the future. They are as follows:

- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- Dignity and Respect
- Partnership
- Integrity and Accountability
- Quality and Innovation
- Leadership
- Hope and Resilience
Dear Friends,

Ask anyone who is part of the Genesis Club community, and they will tell you about the toll the past year has taken on their lives - in particular on their mental health. All of us, regardless of our mental health history, likely experienced increased anxiety, fear of the unknown, and stress resulting from the economic insecurity and disruption in family life. This report tells the story of how we responded, what we learned, and what we will carry with us long after the pandemic is over.

The pandemic pulled back the curtain on the very real racial and digital divides that prevent some people from accessing the mental health services they need. Lisa D.'s story highlights our work to help members learn to use electronic devices and online platforms, access medical appointments, and participate in virtual clubhouse gatherings and video chats with family. Yadi's story speaks to overcoming her fears of joining the clubhouse as a Puerto Rican woman with a long history of mental health issues. Her story shines a light on the power of side-by-side work, which is inclusive and transformative regardless of race, class, or gender.

We will continue to focus on racial and digital inclusion into 2021 and beyond. Helping members re-enter the workforce, enroll in education programs, and improve their overall health and social connections will of course remain at the center of all we do, as will helping young adults (some of whom have been dramatically impacted by prolonged isolation) to reconnect with each other, re-engage with their goals, and reimagine their futures.

We look forward to sharing updates with you over the next year on all of our activities. In the meantime, we are proud to share these accomplishments with you, which we feel highlight the strength, determination and resilience of the Genesis Club community.
Our Impact
At a Glance

**Membership**
- 824 members served
- 68 new members joined Genesis Club

**Employment**
- 186 members were employed
- $1,582,977 wages earned
- 114,000 hours worked

**Housing**
- 23 members were prevented from being homeless
- 378 members received housing support

**Education**
- 158 members received support in a continuing education program
- 100% of members who were enrolled completed their semesters

**Social Connections**
- 64 dinners and weekend social events
- 180 members participated in social events

**Wellness**
- 24 members participated in the community garden
- 22 individuals participated in the pedometer walking program
In 2020, 42 members enrolled in educational programs. As the environment shifted, so did the ways we provided support. Using phone calls, video conferencing, texting and social media, we helped students adapt to their new virtual learning environments. We helped students upgrade their computers and increase their internet connections so that they could fully participate in online classes. For students with learning disabilities, we purchased printers so they could read lessons off-screen, and met weekly using Zoom and Slack. Whether students were at the clubhouse or quarantining at home, we were able to provide access to a strong, caring, and stigma-free community as well as the technical support they needed to be successful.

Sarah and Harris during a campus visit. Harris graduated from Clark University last fall with a Bachelor's in Environmental Science.
At Genesis Club we believe that holding a job and earning a living are important ways people engage with others in society – ways that are vital to recovery from mental illness. In the Employment Services program, we seek out, secure, and provide job opportunities to help members transition back into the world of competitive employment, with our support and at their own pace. The program is designed around the highly successful, evidence-based Clubhouse model, which emphasizes member’s strengths and talents, not their illness. This cultivates and generates the skills and self-confidence needed to re-enter the workforce. When health concerns from COVID-19 left many without work, Genesis Club provided virtual support for members to navigate the unemployment application process, find new employment opportunities, and learn new skills for the post-COVID work environment.
Older Adult Initiative

Our goal is to reduce social isolation and improve the overall quality of life and health outcomes for our older members. Tech support was a key priority this past year. We helped older members connect with Clubhouse activities and take part in the community. Tech-savvy members and staff worked to ensure everyone who wanted to could access their telehealth therapy appointments or enjoy a video call with their grandchildren. Some older members needed an upgrade in their devices and data plans. Others needed help learning to use meeting platforms like Zoom or Webex. Genesis Club provided a wide range of technical support, but we also provided emotional support when things didn’t work right the first time, or the second, or the tenth! More work still needs to be done, but we are well on our way to being virtually accessible to older members long after the pandemic is over.

Joe, an older adult member, works with Chanelle to improve his computer skills during the pandemic.
I was recovering from a suicide attempt in 2016 when my therapist suggested I go to Genesis Club. So, I scheduled a tour and when I walked in, I immediately felt like I belonged. I joined the kitchen unit where we worked with a small team planning and preparing lunch for the clubhouse. The work took my mind off of how depressed I was. I cried a lot in the beginning, but I kept coming because if I didn’t, I knew I would find myself back in my bed, curled up in the fetal position, paralyzed by my depression.

I moved to the Membership Services Unit in 2018 to do outreach. Pre-COVID we would visit local psychiatric hospital units to talk with people, letting them know that there is a place to recover, where we understand, and where they don’t ever have to feel alone.

When COVID-19 struck and we had to switch over to remote meetings and work, I realized I knew very little about technology. I barely knew how to use my phone! But, we figured out how to do a 3-way conference call and we started doing outreach to other members. Genesis Club held house meetings every morning. I tried to join using the club’s Webex system but my phone kept freezing. I didn’t have a computer either, so I couldn’t connect. I suddenly felt very isolated. Through a grant we received from the Greater Worcester Community Foundation, I was able to get a refurbished laptop. What a lifesaver! Mary, a staff person, helped me download Zoom and Webex and learn how to call into our daily meetings. I was so excited! I join the Older Adult Committee on Wednesdays, too. I take notes from home and send them to the clubhouse. Those get published on the unit’s Facebook page, which I also now know how to use. It’s a whole new way of doing our work!

COVID is terrible, but, if you look hard enough, you can always find something good that comes out of something bad. For me, learning all of these new computer skills, learning new ways to connect with others is one of them.
A Community Comes Together

In collaboration with the Greater Worcester Community Foundation, the United Way of Central Massachusetts, and the City of Worcester, hundreds of individuals and local family foundation leaders came together to meet the needs of those most impacted by the COVID-19 health crisis.

Worcester Together, a city-wide initiative, was formed to provide financial support for nonprofit organizations serving those most impacted by the pandemic.

At the start of the pandemic, our members were severely affected by isolation, food scarcity, and a lack of other essentials. Worcester Together funds enabled us to help hundreds of Genesis Club members during this unprecedented time with additional food, masks, sanitizer and cleaning supplies, updated electronic devices and internet service so members could connect to essential resources.

Thank You!
Wellness and Social Connection

The isolation brought on by ongoing quarantine and social distancing struck at the very core of our clubhouse community. Despite these challenges, Genesis Club organized visits to local attractions, picnics in the park and opportunities to grow healthy produce in our community garden. Our in-house Saturday socials transitioned to virtual book clubs, cooking classes, craft lessons, and sports chats!

- 24 members participated in the community garden
- 27 participated in the pedometer challenge
- 160 members participated in evening and weekend social events
Colleague Training

In a typical year, Genesis Club offers ten Colleague Training sessions of different kinds for clubhouses working towards accreditation, or looking to strengthen their programming. This year, we were forced to cancel six of those sessions due to the pandemic. Like so many other adaptations we have all had to make, we redesigned our curricula and now offer them 100% virtually. So, if a fellow Clubhouse program has training needs that cannot wait for in-person training to resume, they have options at Genesis. Whether it's our one-week Employment or Young Adult trainings, the one-week seminar designed for Clubhouse Directors, or the new Virtual Clubhouse Training developed to respond to our colleagues' needs in the pandemic, we can provide those learning opportunities to clubhouse members and staff.

We all miss the richness of in-person trainings and how they foster communication. Our colleagues have filled our guest house with engaging conversation, new ideas, and the aroma of international meals shared in the kitchen. With the use of creativity, determination, and technology, we have learned that this camaraderie and innovation is still possible in the virtual world. Until the time when we can all meet together, we're proud to be able to offer high-quality virtual trainings that result in better outcomes for clubhouse members around the world.
The Kevin L. Bradley Memorial Fund

The Kevin L. Bradley Memorial Fund, established in 2017, helps to ensure that Genesis Club House services are available to anyone who needs them, with no waiting and at no cost. Thank you for helping us to continue Kevin's legacy.

Brittany Sudar & Curran Bradley
Susan Collins & Thomas Bradley
Elaine Hill
Gregory Kelleher
Ann Lisi
Aidan Murphy
Kelley Rice
Chris Richards
Nancy Stangle
Elaine Terlizzi

Kevin Bradley
Executive Director
1988-2017

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Thank You to Our 'Building Dreams' Donors

Falmouth Road Race

The Falmouth Road Race was a 100% virtual event this year due to COVID-19. The up-side of this "At Home" edition of this important Genesis Club fundraiser is that it allowed non-runners to participate. People could run, walk, bike, or hike 7.0 miles locally and over a two-week period.

With a challenge lead by an anonymous member of the Board of Directors, combined with the generosity of long-time Team Genesis runners and our clubhouse community, we raised $12,725.

Legacy Level

Genesis Club gratefully acknowledges the generous bequest made to Genesis Club by Sherman and Elaine Olson

Foundation Level ($2,000-$5,000)

Jeff & Jennifer Hall
Metzger Family Fund
Patrice Muchowski
Osterman Family Foundation

Friendship Level ($500 - $1,999)

Benevity Community Impact Fund
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Thank You to Our 'Building Dreams' Donors

Community Level (Up to $499)

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**In Memory**
This past year we lost a long-time friend of Genesis Club, Bill Tsaknopolous. Bill was a vocal advocate for our transitional employment positions within the UMass system. Those jobs helped us to solidify and expand our Transitional Employment program which has benefited countless members over the years. Bill served on the Board of Directors from 2005 until he retired in May, 2020.
I was in an outpatient program in Worcester when some people came to talk about Genesis Club. During the presentation that day, someone said, "At Genesis Club, people are members, not clients or patients." That really spoke to me because I was desperate to find a path that could lead me back to a sense of normalcy. I just knew I didn't want my illness to define me for the rest of my life.

"I still see my therapist and take medication, but being part of Genesis Club helped break the cycle of depression that had a hold on me for so long."

I assumed, because of my background and frankly the severity of my mental health conditions, I just wouldn't fit in. I'm Puerto Rican, and growing up, I was taught that women, especially Puerto Rican women, didn't speak about mental health issues, so I thought that would be true at Genesis Club too. But I was wrong. Neither my background nor my ethnicity mattered. I felt genuinely welcome. Because of COVID, I didn't go to the clubhouse. Members and staff stayed in contact through regular phone calls. I began to open up to a few people, and they opened up to me, and we started to become friends.

When I saw that there was work that needed to be done to help the clubhouse run more smoothly, I felt comfortable enough to ask for help learning the job, and now I am actively involved in the Training and Development Unit. I also enjoy making outreach calls to other members because I realize that as much as it helps them, it helps me to feel better too.

The pandemic has made working remotely tricky, but I can see ways to make the work more manageable because of my previous work experience. For example, I suggested ways to improve the tracking system for our outreach calls, which we've now incorporated. I feel as though I'm contributing to something bigger than myself, and it feels good.

Yadira Pedraza
Member since 2020

The Power of Connection: Meet Yadi
Genesis Club House is an Accredited Clubhouse, a charter member of Clubhouse International, and an International Training Center for Clubhouses worldwide.

The Conrad N Hilton Foundation, awarding one of the worlds most prestigious humanitarian prizes, has chosen the Clubhouse model as the solution to alleviating human suffering for individuals with mental illness.