



A Clubhouse Model Rehabilitation Program

**PRESS RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release**

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**Employers Honored on Capitol Hill for Mental Health Leadership**

The Washington Duke Inn & Golf Club was honored at the Capitol in Washington, DC on Tuesday, March 24<sup>th</sup> for their leadership in promoting the hiring of adults who have psychiatric disabilities with the support of inclusion and resiliency centers like Threshold, located on Gary Street in Durham. Executive Housekeeper Mary Kay Smith accepted the award on behalf of the Washington Duke Inn.

The Employment Celebration was organized by the Massachusetts Clubhouse Coalition, a non-profit education, technical assistance and advocacy organization, whose membership includes over 15,000 MA residents who have a psychiatric disability, plus paid staff, who work together as colleagues in the operations of 32 MA Clubhouse recovery centers. North Carolina has its own clubhouse coalition, with 10 member organizations. Clubhouses help adults who have psychiatric disabilities gain employment, housing, supportive relationships and services aimed at helping participants, referred to as “members”, live full lives in the community.

Congressman David Price presented Mary Kay Smith with the award in DC and praised her and the hotel for their leadership in promoting the hiring of people who have mental illness. “Expanding employment opportunities for people who have mental illness and making sure everyone has a chance to contribute is an important goal at both the national and local levels,” said Price. “The jobs at the Washington Duke and the excellent support Threshold provides play a major role in patients’ recovery. Both are highly deserving of our recognition and gratitude,

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and I congratulate all of the employers who are participating in this work and with us today.”

The companies awarded are employing Clubhouse members through their Transitional Employment programs. These programs allow members of Clubhouses to get a fresh start in the work world with the support of Clubhouse staff. In addition to being exemplary employers, each honoree wrote a reference letter encouraging their colleagues to follow their example.

Congressman Barney Frank, Chairman of the House Committee on Financial Services, commended all of the companies for stepping up to the plate and helping our fellow citizens to achieve their dreams. “I know a fair amount about coming out” Chairman Frank told the crowd. Speaking to the employers in the room he said “what you are doing is important. You are helping those you have employed to no longer be excluded”.

More than 160 corporate and non-profit employers, legislators, Clubhouse members, staff, family members and allies attended the event to celebrate the employment success of those who have mental illness while recognizing the employers that made this success possible. The Celebration also recognized the employment success of people who have mental illness and the achievements of each of the rehabilitation and recovery centers called “Clubhouses” which provide employment, education, housing and peer support, information and services to adults with mental illness who are trying to regain control of their social and economic lives by working.

In addition to the Washington Duke Inn and Golf Club, companies that received awards on the 24<sup>th</sup> included: Appilistic, MA, ARAMARK: Higher Education, SC, Aquarion Water Company, CT , SC, Botanica, the Witchita

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Gardens, KS, Chartwells at Salem State, MA, CVS/Pharmacy, CT, Dow Jones, NY, Fulbright & Jaworski, LLP Attorneys at Law, TX, Iowa Finance Authority, IA, Kauai Marriott, HI, Marshalls, MA, Newton Community Development Foundation, MA, Newton Free Library, MA, Quinsigamond Community College, MA, Reliable Copy Services, PA, ServiceMaster Clean Canton Division, MA, Stamford Marriott, CT, Stop & Shop, MA, The TJX Companies, MA, Town of Braintree Recycling Division, MA, MASS Medial School, MA, Waltham West Suburban Chamber of Commerce, and Zip Mail, MO.

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