



Projections

HOPE, DIGNITY AND SUPPORT FOR PEOPLE EXPERIENCING MENTAL ILLNESSES

Winter/Spring 2005

Happenings

We would like to extend a warm thanks to all of our friends and supporters who made monetary and food donations towards our annual holiday parties this year.

Special thanks goes out to our friends at Hadasah who generously donated the food for our annual Hanukkah party.

Without your support, many of our members would not have a place to go for a holiday dinner, so for that we sincerely thank you.



B. Basham, a former Project Return member, passed away unexpectedly Feb. 25th. Our thoughts & prayers go out to his family & friends in this difficult time.

Mission Statement

Project Return, Inc., is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for people experiencing mental illnesses through educational, vocational and supportive housing services, so that they may lead productive and fulfilling lives in the community.

STUNNING RETURN

ART FOR LIFE AUCTION SURPASSES EXPECTATIONS

The pagentary, creativity and community spirit that dominated Tampa's social calendar in the 1990's returned in October with a dramatic splash to benefit



Full House. House of Blass Creative Director Michael Vollbracht.

Project Return and the American Foundation for AIDS Research. With nearly 500 patrons and 250 artists participating, the grand gala netted nearly \$10,000 for Project Return. To remain true to the roots of Art For



Winning Bids. (Above) Stanton Storer (from left) and poster artist Theo Wujcik watch as (right) MAGIC 94.9's Ann Kelly auctions Wujcik's Return.

Life's beginnings, a portion of the proceeds were donated to AmFAR.

Art For Life Founder Victor Figueredo joined MAGIC 94.9's Ann Kelly and The St. Petersburg Times' Amy Scherzer and Grace Posada as auctioneers along with the highlight of the evening ... the return of AFL founding committee member Michael Vollbracht who is now the creative director of House of Blass.

2004 Poster Artist Theo Wujcik's Return dominated all sales, fetching \$4,500!



An additional highlight was when Project Return Founder Rhoda Zusman was recognized for her many dedicated years to improving the quality of life for people experiencing mental illnesses. Former County Commissioner Pat Frank presented Rhoda with the honor.

Plans are already underway for the 2005 event, slated for Saturday, Oct. 1st, at Higgins Hall.

For information, call (813) 990-8981, ext. 1, or email artforlife@projectreturn.org.

VAN DONATION BRINGS EARLY HOLIDAY GIFT

A cook out at Al Lopez Park. Shopping at thrift stores. Bowling.

These are just a few of the things Project Return members were able to do after receiving an early holiday gift.

Deborah Zusman, daughter of Rhoda Zusman, Project Return's founder, and her fiancé Scott Wolfson, generously donated a seven-pas-



Nice Ride. PR members and supporters with the new van.

senger van to Project Return.

The members were thrilled to learn about their new set of wheels.

"The van is a wonderful donation," said Doris S., Project Return member.

"It gives us the freedom to take field trips and go on outings more frequently," she said.

On behalf of both the staff and members of Project Return, we would like to thank Deborah and Scott for making such a thoughtful donation.



LAUREL JORGENSEN, VOCATIONAL MANAGER

What types of supportive services does Project Return offer members who want to work?

Project Return offers several different supportive services. For those who are not quite ready for work, we offer vocational support. Members can get involved in various classes that teach skills and activities related to going back to work. For those who are ready for work in the community, we offer a fast track program where they will learn how to write a resume and interviewing skills as well as actual job searching. We also offer follow-up services for those who are working in the community, for extra support.

If I am an interested employer, how do I get involved?

Contact me at 933-9020 ext. 8 or at ljorgensen@projectreturn.org. I am here to answer any questions and discuss the needs for staffing, then look for ways Project Return can fulfill those needs.

SUCCESS STORIES

MISSION ACCOMPLISHED

Is your job more than just a paycheck?

For many Project Return members it is.

A job builds confidence, teaches skills, and brings a sense of accomplishment.

With the continuous development of the vocational program, many members are taking the steps to return to work in the community.

LU LU RINGS UP A WIN AT DILLIARD'S

"I feel like I am finally accomplishing something," said LuLu T., who recently accepted a retail position at Dillard's Department Store in University Mall.

Although LuLu had years of cashier experience and great customer service skills, she still felt anxiety about having a job outside of Project Return.

After enrolling in the vocational program, she met with Laurel Jorgensen, Vocational Manager, to discuss her concerns and explore employment options based on her personality and interests.

LuLu explained, "I tend to get upset easily but Laurel has been very encouraging and supportive."

"Still having the connection with Project Return for support puts my mind at ease and gives me confidence."

She has been working for Dillard's for six months and loves it!

PIERRE TAKES IT OUT AT KASH N' KARRY

After receiving PR educational services for about a year, Pierre F. was



Back To Work. Three victories for Project Return's vocational program: LuLu T. (above) at Dillard's, Alvin D. (left) at MOSI and Pierre F. at Kash n' Karry.



unsure about what he wanted to do with his life.

He began taking job training classes, and with some encouragement and support from Laurel, he applied and interviewed at Kash n' Karry.

To prepare for the interview, Laurel went through the interview process with him step-by-step. He did great in the interview and has now been working there for a few months. He really enjoys it.

In addition to working, Pierre is also attending classes towards getting his GED.

ALVIN DISCOVERS NEW ROADS AT MOSI

Alvin D. has done an abundance of volunteer work for Project Return, the Museum of Science and Industry (MOSI) and the American Red Cross.

He loved volunteering at MOSI and when he found out that they were hiring,

he became very persistent about applying for the job.

"Laurel helped me through the process of writing my resume, and we discussed interview do's and don'ts," said Alvin.

Alvin got the job and does educational illustrations for school groups, such as demonstrations on static electricity, among many other things.

There are currently close to 70 Project Return members enrolled in the vocational program, 31 of which are acquiring skills while working part time jobs at Project Return and 13 are employed in the community.

Project Return members or employers interested in getting involved with the program can contact Laurel Jorgensen at 813-933-9020, ext. 8.

GOLF TOURNAMENT SWINGS

November 22nd was a beautiful day for golf! This year's Allen Reeves Memorial Golf Tournament raised in excess of \$68,000 which will be used to fund much needed housing, vocational and educational services to help people experiencing mental illnesses.

A new on-course challenge was added to the excitement this year. Reeves Import Motorcars sponsored a hole-in-one challenge offering a \$10,000 prize. Golfer David Hersh was thrilled when he won the feat using a #7 wood.

Pro golfer, Jim Dent, and 2004 Golf Teacher of the Year, Rick Bradshaw, offered the players many important tips to improve their games. Sports celebrity Jim Karvellas, served as the MC and led the successful live auction.

The tournament enjoyed sold out status thanks to



Big Money. Golf Tournament Chairman Francesco Marchesini (right) congratulates David Hersh for winning \$10,000 for a hole-in-one.

Tournament Chairman Francesco Marchesini. The golf committee was expanded to include board members Deborah Adams and Michael Byars, as well as returning members Don Lau and Ron Sherman. New members this year included Sara Byars, Fred

Meyer, Stuart Sierra, and Ken Spongale.

Executive Director Natalie Mitchels and the entire staff and board of directors are very grateful and wish to thank all of the loyal supporters who made our tournament a success.

You Count!

Project Return joined approximately 15 other local organizations from the Tampa Bay area January 27th in the annual homeless census conducted by the Homeless Coalition of Hillsborough County.

The homeless census helps to ensure adequate funding for helping homeless individuals and families to get the critical services and housing they need.

Project Return staff volunteered their time to assist in the count, interviewing and surveying homeless people at work sites, meal sites, facilities, and various camp sites in the Port of Tampa area.

At the camp sites, staff handed out bags containing various items such as a warm blanket, food, and miscellaneous toiletry



To The 'T.' Project Return member artist Ron C. displays this year's t-shirt.

items.

"Our staff coupled with the Crisis Center and the Salvation Army and worked tirelessly and enthusiastically from 5 a.m - 11:30 p.m. to make the homeless count a success," said Pam Healy, Director of Programs for Project Return.

A special thanks to Project Return member Ron C. for his artistic talents in designing the logo for the project's t-shirt.

HONOR YOUR LOVED ONES

IN HONOR OF... RHODA ZUSMAN

Happy Birthday From Boris & Margery Stern

JOHN SETZER

Happy Birthday From Rhoda Zusman

Memorial donations as of Feb. 28, 2005. To honor or memorialize someone special, visit www.projectreturn.org or call (813) 990-8981, ext. 4.

SCOTT & DEBORAH WOLFSON

Congratulations On Your Marriage
From Rhoda Zusman

IN MEMORY OF... WILLIAM HENDERSON ENTERS

From Carol Enters

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Rep. Davis Visits Project Return

Congressman Jim Davis, along with District Director John Kynes, visited the Project Return Center for Lifelong Education, Training & Development and Friendship Palms Apartments in December.

Project Return founder Rhoda Zusman and Board Member David Burke gave them a tour of the agency and explained how our cost effective housing, education and vocational services are helping people who experience mental illnesses.

Rep. Davis was particularly interested in learning about the many classes we offer, such as computers, drama and art. He spoke with many



Rep. Davis Tours. (From left) Program Manager Michael Ross, Rep. Jim Davis, Founder Rhoda Zusman & Board Member David Burke.

members on an individual basis to learn about how Project Return's services are making a difference in their lives. We were pleased that they witnessed the impact that our organization is making on our community.



PROJECT RETURN

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On The Internet

www.projectreturn.org

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