



Clubhouse employers saluted

Statehouse ceremony honors companies who employ residents with psychiatric disabilities

BOSTON - More than 35 companies were honored at the Statehouse for choosing to diversify their workforce by employing residents with psychiatric disabilities.



The commitment to their employment was made possible with the support of Clubhouse employment and recovery centers - including the Corner Clubhouse in Attleboro - that are funded by the state Department of Mental Health (DMH).

The event was organized by the Massachusetts Clubhouse Coalition (MCC), a nonprofit organization that works to improve the lives of those who are working to recover from psychiatric disabilities.

SUBMITTED Statehouse celebration Pictured, from left, are: Geraldine Cuddy, Greenhouse employee; Gary Moses, Greenhouse employee; State Rep. Betty Poirier, R-North Attleboro; Karen Therrien, FHR's program director of the Corner Clubhouse in Attleboro; Karen Trudeau, FHR human resources director; Thomas Couhig, fhr regional director of clubhouse services, Jordan Miller, FHR greenhouse manager, and state Rep. Paul Heroux, D-Attleboro. (Submitted photo)

Employers were selected for recognition for their dedication and commitment to creating a welcoming and diverse workforce. More than 40 legislators and their offices attended the event, along with Interim DMH Commissioner Joan Mikula. Together, they honored the companies for being excellent employers and community leaders.

Representing the Attleboro, state Rep. Paul Heroux, D-Attleboro, attended the award ceremony and presented Fellowship Health Resources, Inc. (FHR) with a citation. State Rep. Betty Poirier, R-North Attleboro, whose district also includes Attleboro, joined Heroux for the opening remarks and a presentation of the Exemplary Employer Award.

In addition, Attleboro's local psycho-social vocational program, the Corner Clubhouse on the corner of Park and Maples streets, nominated FHR of Taunton for this year's prestigious award.

In March of 2013, FHR accepted the responsibility for the finances and operations of the Greenhouse located on 80 Hodges Ave. in Taunton. FHR recognized the value and meaning that this particular work site had in the hearts of individuals with mental health disabilities.

"FHR truly embraces the clubhouse model and is a strong advocate for transitional and supported employment placements in the community," said Karen Therrien, FHR's program director of the Corner Clubhouse.

Several employees currently working at the clubhouse were in jeopardy of losing their positions if the greenhouse closed. Other individuals who had hoped for future positions would have no longer had the possibility to do so.

FHR wanted to be able to continue to offer those employment opportunities, and holistic horticultural experiences, for individuals with mental health disabilities, and has been able to achieve this with this ancillary community program.

To date, FHR provides training and employment opportunities at this site for eight individuals with disabilities in year-round jobs.

To learn more about the programs and community initiatives of FHR, visit our website at fellowshiphr.org.