

Progress Place News

MENTAL WELLNESS

SPRING 2018
ISSUE 16



HERE'S HOW WE TAKE CARE OF BUSINESS AT PROGRESS PLACE!

We held our second annual “Taking Care of Business Breakfast” on March 1 at Arcadian Court. More than 280 guests attended the event, nibbling on fruit, pastries, and delicious Clubhouse-baked cookies during the hour-long session. The event emphasized Progress Place’s Transitional Employment Program and the benefits of Transitional Employment partnerships to both the business community and to the recovery of individuals living with mental illness.

Business leaders recognized the impact and value of this program with 21 businesses inquiring about Transitional Employment partnership opportunities. Additionally, guests contributed more than \$24,000 in donations, 14 individuals requested tours of Progress Place, and 20 inquiries were made regarding Progress Place’s Mental Health Awareness Training.

City leaders at the event included Toronto Mayor John Tory, Deputy Chief of Police Peter Yuen, City Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam, TC-LHIN CEO Susan

Fitzpatrick, Toronto’s Medical Officer of Health Dr. Eileen de Villa, and Interim TTC CEO Rick Leary.

During the Breakfast, presenters focused on the importance of employment as a part of mental health recovery. Mayor Tory gave a compelling speech about the impact of helping people get back to work, and Progress Place Member Steven Perley awed the crowd with his beautiful, heartfelt story of recovery. Board Directors Alan Booth and Howard Huang presented recognition awards to long-standing employment partners of Progress Place’s Transitional Employment Program.

Other speakers and sponsors including First Gulf; Blake, Cassels & Graydon LLP; KAP Litigation Services; Minden Gross LLP; Rotary Club of Toronto Sunrise; and Webber, Brodlieb & Associates | Raymond James helped to round out this incredible, action-packed hour. We are already looking forward to the third annual!



Gayle Bursley, Director Healthy Public Policy, City of Toronto, with keynote speaker Susan Fitzpatrick, Toronto Central LHIN CEO, and Steven Perley, Progress Place Member.

Special guest Adam Grove with Progress Place Member Mickey Doolittle

Progress Place Executive Director Criss Habal-Brosek and Toronto Mayor John Tory

RAISING AWARENESS ABOUT PROGRESS PLACE AND MENTAL HEALTH RECOVERY



Members and staff visit one of the billboards at Dundas and Bond Streets in downtown Toronto.

A big thank you goes out to **Pattison Outdoor** and **Pattison Onestop** for their on-going support in helping Progress Place spread awareness about mental health recovery.

Over the past year, **Pattison Onestop** displayed Progress Place digital ads on screens in TTC subway platforms. In addition, from mid-February until the end of March 2018, **Pattison Outdoor** also donated the use of four billboards for Progress Place to display a poster designed by members and staff of the Clubhouse in the downtown core, close to Progress Place's Church Street location. Thanks to the **Rotary Club of Toronto Sunrise** for sponsoring the printing of the posters!

Progress Place members, staff, board and colleagues have commented on the incredible impact the billboards have had on the visibility of the organization.

Our Clubhouse community has talked about how proud we are to have our organization visible to thousands of subway riders along with the thousands of people living and working in the downtown core. This has helped educate subway riders and individuals in the area about Progress Place and has helped break down stigma about mental illness. The increased awareness about Progress Place has let people living with mental illness know about a resource that is available for adults aged 18 plus. Many now know that Progress Place is a place where you can go to find a sense of community and receive support, while working towards mental health recovery goals.



Hope.
Opportunity.
576 Church St.



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Ad sponsored by  The Rotary Club of Toronto Sunrise

The billboard poster above was designed by Progress Place members and staff working in partnership. Progress Place member Don is featured on the billboard. To learn more about Don and other inspiring stories of Progress Place members please visit:

PROGRESSPLACE.ORG

RECOVERY THROUGH EMPLOYMENT: STEVEN'S STORY



By: Steven Perley, Progress Place Member

I have struggled with depression and suicidal thoughts ever since I was a kid. I was sensitive and emotional, and so words cut deep. I was bullied often, and other kids would call me any number of cruel names. There were many times I'd wish I would die in my sleep.

As I transitioned into adulthood, I found joy in other aspects of my life. I had a passion for figure skating, found success in multiple careers, and bought a house with my partner. But in November of 2011, I experienced my first and only manic episode. I lost everything that I felt defined me - my friends, my partner, and my home. Mental illness had smashed my life to pieces. What I didn't know was that Progress Place was about to help me pick up those pieces and assemble my life into something entirely new.

I discovered Progress Place by chance. As soon as I walked in, I was welcomed with immediate acceptance into an amazingly supportive, safe, and vital community that has given me purpose and life-long friends.

Several months after integrating into the Progress Place community, with great reluctance but major encouragement from the staff, I agreed to a six-month Transitional Employment position at a law firm. I was surprised at how much I enjoyed my job and spending time with my co-workers. I discovered with the right supports I still liked to work! This was a major stepping stone in my recovery. No matter how many Transitional Employ-

ment positions I took or how often I was away from Progress Place, they were always there. They are my family. They always make me feel wanted and needed. That's a special feeling.

"Mental illness had smashed my life to pieces. What I didn't know was that Progress Place was about to help me pick up those pieces and assemble my life into something entirely new."

Throughout my years as a Member at Progress Place, I have participated in numerous committees and focus groups, conducted presentations and given countless tours to potential members and supporters. There is never a shortage of opportunities or things to learn at Progress Place. They have been there through every step of my recovery process, and for that I will always be grateful.

I have been stable for years, but **only** because I chose to make Progress Place a permanent part of my life.



DELOITTE: A PARTNER IN MENTAL HEALTH RECOVERY

By: Alan Booth, Associate Partner Deloitte Canada, and Progress Place Board Director

At the 2018 “Taking Care of Business Breakfast”, 10 employers received the *Progress Place Partners in Recovery Award*, which celebrates and acknowledges each organization’s support and commitment to Progress Place’s Transitional Employment Program. My organization, Deloitte, has been an employment partner providing employment opportunities to Progress Place members since 2009.

As well as Deloitte, the following companies were also recognized for their employment partnerships with Progress Place: Accenture, Benchmark Hospitality, Blake, Cassels & Graydon LLP, Body Plus, Compagnie Parento Ltd, Compass Group, Dentons LLP, Minden Gross LLP, Ricoh Canada, StackAdapt, St. Lawrence Market Neighbourhood BIA, Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network, The Waterfront BIA, WeirFoulds LLP, and Winners (College Park).

Our second breakfast event proved more than impactful in raising awareness about mental illness and highlighting significant partners in mental health recovery—the business community. In the days following the breakfast, 21 employers came forward expressing interest in supporting Progress Place’s work through the Transitional Employment Program.



At Deloitte, we know that supporting people recovering from mental illness is everyone’s interest, including the business community’s. Members certainly know the personal impact – add to this the economic impact mental illness can have and the case for partnership writes itself.

On behalf of all our business partners, current and prospective, congratulations to everyone involved in raising awareness and interest in all the work Progress Place does.

For more than 30 years companies like Deloitte have provided thousands of opportunities for individuals living with mental illness to use the power of work in their recovery through Transitional Employment partnerships with Progress Place.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Become an Employment Partner

Progress Place has been working with businesses in the community for more than 30 years to create work opportunities for people living with mental illness. Members work in a variety of industry sectors filling entry-level positions, completing high volume repetitive tasks, and meeting the demands of peak-time work flow. To find out more about Progress Place’s Transitional Employment Program and how it can benefit your workplace, please call our employment line at 416-895-8005 or email partners@progressplace.org.



Make a Donation

You can also support the members of Progress Place by making a monetary donation. Making a donation goes directly to helping Progress Place continue improving the lives of the more than 1,000 people who turn to Progress Place every year. Donations can be made by cheque or credit card and can be sent by mail, phone, or using our secure online donation link at www.progressplace.org. Consider joining our Hope Fund monthly giving program by setting up monthly credit card donations or pre-authorized withdrawals. Call 416-323-0223 to speak with Joelle Ladouceur for more information.



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