



Dear Friend of Progress Place,

At Progress Place we believe recovery from mental illness *is* possible when it involves the individual in a community – one that offers hope, respect, and opportunities for personal development. We are proud of our strong community of supporters and champions – people like *you*, who share this belief and make recovery possible.

We are honoured to also include in this community leading-edge organizations who have partnered with Progress Place’s employment program and are leading the way in sharing a vision of inclusion, diversity and mental health recovery. We are equally as privileged to work with men and women living with mental illness who show tremendous courage and perseverance each and every day on their road to recovery.

**Recovery *is* possible because of *you*. It is possible because of the integral partnerships with leaders and innovators in the business community, and it is possible because of the courage and resolve of members.**

It is for this reason that I would like to share Michael’s powerful story of recovery, and what happens when the courage of a Progress Place member finds his path to recovery through the leadership and forward-thinking vision of one of Progress Place’s employment partners, Accenture.



### **MICHAEL’S STORY**

Back in 2000, I was not doing well. I was staying at home isolating and wanting to work but just could not bring myself to look for a job. I was seeing a support worker who told me about Progress Place. I remember coming to Progress Place for a tour with my worker and my father, I thought it looked like a great place to be. There seemed to be lots of people working together, talking, having fun and getting lots done. When I was on the tour, the Café Unit seemed to catch my interest. I liked the idea of seeing people preparing food, and making lunches and dinners for everyone. It was an area where I could

contribute because I was used to working at jobs that did a little bit of everything such as cleaning, receiving the bulk food order, putting it all away, cleaning and being able to meet people at the same time. I joined Progress Place immediately and have been here ever since.

I recently completed a Transitional Employment Program placement at Accenture where I worked for almost nine months. My worker from Progress Place took me to Accenture to show me the job. When my worker went through it with me, I knew that I would love it. It was a great experience!

This job is part of the Transitional Employment Program where Progress Place collaborates with an employer such as Accenture. The job is overseen by Progress Place. They develop the job, onboard new staff or members from Progress Place, and cover the position if a member needs to go to an appointment. I really liked working at Accenture, it has a great work environment. The Accenture staff were all friendly. It helped me feel more comfortable meeting and connecting with people. The team included me in everything and I made friends there.

I have had a number of Transitional Employment Placements at Progress Place and have enjoyed them all. They have all given me a different type of experience and skill set. I have had the opportunity to work at a few different work placements and have added this employment experience to my resume in preparation to move on to independent employment.

## ACCENTURE: LEADING BY EXAMPLE

*The below is an excerpt from a speech given by Anjali Chandra, Workplace Business Operations Manager at Accenture, at Progress Place's Taking Care of Business Breakfast Event on March 2, 2017 at The King Edward Hotel in Toronto.*

I am thrilled to tell you about the wonderful relationship that Accenture has cultivated with Progress Place. It all started when Accenture was introduced to Progress Place through our Corporate Citizenship program's pro bono work during a Call for Proposals, a project was presented and approved.

Accenture Corporate Citizenship consists of many things however; our most prominent focus (in addition to Eco initiatives) is our Skills to Succeed work where Accenture has set a target to impact three million people around the world by 2020 with necessary skills to secure meaningful employment and/or build businesses. We do this through various innovative projects and programs including pro bono work, skills based volunteering, Canadian cash grants as well as global cash grants. We run a successful myGivingCanada program where our staff team gives generously through payroll, credit card and PayPal to a cause of their choice.



**Anjali Chandra speaking at Progress Place's  
'Taking Care of Business Breakfast'**

Progress Place aligns perfectly with both our Corporate Citizenship program and our robust Inclusion and Diversity program, which proudly supports initiatives focusing on Women, Aboriginal People, the LGBT community, People with Disabilities and the Military. We are one of Canada's Top 100 Employers for multiple years. We have received recognition in both our Corporate Citizenship and Inclusion and Diversity programs. Progress Place has done an amazing job integrating the employment program within Accenture. It is through this joint venture that we met Michael Suppa from Progress Place, who joined our team very successfully- went about his business in the tasks delegated to him, and over a period became an integral part of the Workplace Solutions team at King Street. Thank you Michael for all your contributions. As he is over with the tenure with Accenture, we are ready to onboard our next member from Progress Place.

I encourage all businesses and organizations to become an employment partner with Progress Place and make a difference in the community.



Accenture colleagues gather to celebrate the completion of Michael's Transitional Employment Program placement: Michael (centre) and Progress Place Transitional Employment Manager, Dimitra (far left)

Through your support, the lives of hundreds of men and women living with mental illness are transformed every year through Progress Place's Transitional Employment Program. In this program (just one of many in Progress Place's comprehensive network of innovative and recovery-centered programs), men and women living with mental illness are given the chance to work in the competitive job market, receive the support they need to stay on the job, get paid a competitive wage and ultimately improve their self-confidence. Individuals are often re-entering the work force after long absences, or for the first time because mental illness interrupted their lives at a young age, and are given the opportunity to progress along the employment continuum toward independent employment.

At Progress Place we believe recovery from mental illness is possible. We believe that mental illness need not be an obstacle to fulfilling one's dreams, and we are committed to helping people stay out of hospitals, achieve their personal goals and contribute to the communities they live in.

Recovery is possible because of *you*.

**To help support the recovery of people living with mental illness please donate generously.**

**To find out how Progress Place's employment programs can help your organization and support your business needs, email our employment development team at [partners@progressplace.org](mailto:partners@progressplace.org) or call 416-895-8005.**

Sincerely,

*Criss Habal-Brosek*

Criss Habal-Brosek  
Executive Director

*Michael Suppa*

Michael Suppa  
Progress Place Member