



# Genesis Club, Inc.

274 Lincoln St. Worcester, MA 01605  
www.genesisclub.org (508) 831-0100

*A Step Forward for  
Anyone with Mental Illness*



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## *Andrea Gilligan, Genesis Member Spotlight*

I've been a member of Genesis Club for a year now. Before I became a member here, I was hospitalized a number of times. I was having problems with my health and could not get a proper diagnosis, which caused my depression to deepen. I finally couldn't take anymore and I tried to kill myself. I was taken to the hospital and while there I met a fantastic group of people from Genesis Club. Cheryl Nassir and Jane Rudy told me all about the clubhouse. I started to feel a little hope, hope that perhaps Genesis Club could help me toward recovery. I signed up for the peer support program, and after I was released from the hospital, Genesis called me each day. *It was nice to have someone call to see how I was doing, that daily support helped me gain enough strength to come on a tour of the clubhouse.* Jane gave me a tour through the whole clubhouse. She was very nice, and I signed up to start orientation. I was nervous, but all the members and staff were so friendly and welcoming that I soon felt very comfortable here.

Unfortunately, my health issues continued and this kept me from completing my orientation. I suffered with asthma and COPD, struggled with diabetes and I had to get a pacemaker. Between my hospital stays, I continued to try to complete my orientation. David Rocheleau, a staff member in the membership unit encouraged me to keep trying. He continued to tell me that I would finish my orientation, and eventually, after five months, I did. I chose him as my advisor. Since I have completed my orientation, and become a member at Genesis, I have not needed to be hospitalized.

I joined the Genesis Club wellness program. I go three times a week to the gym at Assumption College, and over the last year I have lost 70 lbs. With everyone's encouragement, I have changed the way I was eating and quit smoking; I haven't had a cigarette in over 9 months.

*[Continued on page two]*

## Member Spotlight continued...



*Andrea Gilligan*

*I feel better, have more energy and was even able to dance at our recent holiday party, something I never could have done a year ago. Every Tuesday I go to the 'Healthy Lifestyle' meeting, which helps keep me on track.*

I've been able to return to work part time, working at a pet store. On my free days, I come to Genesis Club and help the outreach team. It feels good to help others, like I was helped, letting people who are in the hospital know there is hope. I have even started thinking about going back to school. I still have a long way to go but being a part of the Genesis Club and having the supports here I know I can accomplish anything I want in life.

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*"It feels good to help others, letting people who are in the hospital know there is hope."*

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## Foundation Highlights

Our sincere gratitude goes to the *Greater Worcester Community Foundation* for a grant of \$17,500 to continue our highly successful Education Program. Over the past several years, Genesis Club has identified a major gap in educational services for adults with mental illness.



*At Genesis Club we feel that a diagnosis of mental illness should not signify a life of difficulty, struggle, and poverty.* Genesis Club, with the support of the Greater Worcester Community Foundation, is committed to reversing the staggering rates of failure in educational outcomes. The major pieces of our Education Program are to assist Genesis members with defining educational goals, selecting schools, obtaining tuition assistance, providing regular and ongoing support for those enrolled in school and offering a Genesis scholarship program.

Worcester, Mass.



*David Gendler*

New and returning college students receive outreach, guidance, a school liaison, and computer training. There is also a peer support system of Genesis members supporting other members. The collaboration of Clubhouse staff and members working together on college campuses is a very powerful model for recovery. In addition, members who need it will be helped with basic education skills including literacy, GED, ESL, and language immersion. A more educated work force will help us move toward the vision that all Genesis members can seek career employment, come off of benefits, and live the quality of life that everyone strives for.

## **Saint Francis Community Health Care, Inc., A Charitable Foundation**

Saint Francis, in keeping with their mission of identifying the health care needs of all of the residents of the City of Worcester and Worcester County, with focus on the elderly and long-term care issues; has joined forces with Genesis Club in working with people who struggle with mental illness. They have granted us \$10,000 to engage advanced age Genesis Members (ages 50 to 70) in exercise, nutrition and smoking cessation. The major focus of this grant will be to enhance and expand the wellness opportunities for the older Genesis members. Our largest age category of members is 51 to 70 years of age, however, only 10% of Genesis members 60 years and older participated in our highly successful Wellness Project. In partnership with the Saint Francis Community Health Care Foundation we are hoping to increase this percentage.



*Kevin Bradley and Karen Kennedy,  
of Genesis Club,  
accepting a grant from  
Ron Racine, Board of Directors, SFCHC*

## My Experience



**John Bridges**

Everyone has bad days. You wake up to a flat tire, maybe you can't find your keys, lose your wallet or purse...everyone has days like this. This past year things got really bad for me, and I had a bunch of those days all bunched together. I had gotten injured; shattered my heel. I wasn't able to work, and lost my job. Without income I had to give up my car. I was extremely worried that I was about to become homeless, and it was just too much for me, and I gave up. A suicide attempt landed me in the hospital.

While I was there I met with members and staff from Genesis Club. They visit the hospital once a week, to let people know about the clubhouse and offer support to people, like myself, who have gotten too tired to keep trying. When I was released from the hospital I came on a tour and went through orientation.

*I really like the clubhouse, it was comfortable and I found people I could relate to, people who have been in similar circumstances. There was no judgment or pressure.* Genesis Club helped me get a bus pass, and I got a bike which I ride just about everywhere. I started taking care of myself again, eating healthier; I was able to lower my blood pressure. I'm hoping to either go to school or get some extra training. In the meantime, Genesis has helped me get a transitional job at the UMass Hospital; I'll be working in the mailroom starting at the end of this month. It feels good to have plans for the future again. It feels good to want to try again.

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*"Throughout my many hospital stays, a woman from Genesis Club, did not give up on me."*

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## Finding Hope

The first time I was hospitalized was in Boston. Basically, they were only interested in "getting rid of me". They told me they were there to get us back on our feet as quick as possible, and then send us back out into the world. Their idea of Genesis Club was that it was for people that had far lower social skills than me, or as they put it, "droolers". They kept telling me that I didn't look sick. I was discharged and sent back to my friend's home in Millbury, with no plan. They eventually told me to leave because I was isolating in my room, playing mind games, and I was "emotionally blackmailing" them. They had had it with me, and they kicked me out. I was now without a place to rest my head.



**James Rodriguez**

This landed me in the psychiatric ward a second time, this time in Marlboro. The Social Workers here had a different view of Genesis Club; they said it would be a perfect place for me, so they sent over a referral. I still wasn't sure. I just felt too embarrassed of being sick and to join any club with a mental disability. My major concern was I was still homeless. This was pressing on my mind. The hospital could not find a place for me to live, so I had to go to a shelter. I called it "The Pit". I spent three months there losing what little self worth I had left. All of my clothes and possessions were stolen. I needed to get out of there.

Throughout my many hospital stays, a woman from Genesis Club, Kathy, did not give up on me. She kept calling, and asking how I was doing. Eventually I came to Genesis for a tour. During my first visit, I was told I could get a bus pass, get training for a job, meet friends, and even get housing. This was everything that I needed, all of it. Never was I asked what my diagnosis was. Never was I asked what medication I was on. I decided to join the club, and help out where ever I was needed. This is where my true rehabilitation began. *Members and Staff from day one have made me feel welcome.* Now I have received all of those things, including a home. I have a wonderful place to sleep, and I feel like a person again. But personally it's given me a purpose, a reason for taking a bath, and dressing nicely. I try to be useful and helpful anywhere in the club. I could say, when I was very unlucky, Genesis brought me luck!

# 1<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL SPRING BENEFIT CONCERT

Featuring Singer/Songwriter

# Meg Hutchinson

WWW.MEGHUTCHINSON.COM



During our 2010 Building Dreams Breakfast we were delighted to have Meg Hutchinson perform three songs for our friends and supporters. She was simply incredible and left us wanting to see more. We are now thrilled to have her with us for a full night of song.

Meg is an award-winning songwriter who artfully documents the human condition. With a poet's ease, she makes the personal universal, allowing people's stories to come alive through her unique vocals and haunting melodies. Influences include poet Mary Oliver, songwriter Shawn Colvin, and mood maker David Gray. Originally from rural western-most Massachusetts, Hutchinson is now based in the Boston area. She has won numerous songwriting awards in the US, Ireland and UK, including recognition from John Lennon Songwriting Competition, Billboard Song Contest and prestigious competitions at Merlefest, NewSong, Kerrville, Falcon Ridge, Telluride and Rocky Mountain Folks Festivals.

*"Such is the breathy intimacy of Meg's vocals throughout, on one level it's simply enough to let the forty-five minutes of music on THE LIVING SIDE wash over you -- now there's a truly heavenly experience. Crack open her lyrics however and shiny gems sparkle before your eyes." Maverick Magazine (UK)*

## Thurs. April 14, 2011

### FIDDLER'S GREEN PUB 7PM \$15

19 Temple Street Worcester, MA 01604

WWW.FIDDLERSGREENWORCESTER.COM

Tickets available at Genesis Club, 274 Lincoln St. Worcester, MA  
Order online at [www.genesisclub.org](http://www.genesisclub.org) or call (508) 831-0100 ext. 30

*We have great sponsorship opportunities available for this concert, if you are interested, give us a call.*



### ***Building Dreams, Careers, and Friendships***

A special thank you to our guests that attended the 2010 Building Dreams Breakfast, it was a great success. We were excited to see a roomful of friends, family, and local community leaders. A full review of the event will be published in our 2011 Annual Report.

#### **Building Dreams Tours**

*We would love to have you over for a visit!*

Our Building Dreams Tours are open to anyone, and consist of an hour filled with member stories, a history of Genesis Club, and a tour of our facility.

#### **Upcoming Dates:**

Feb.16, 2011 10am – 11am

Mar. 23, 2011 10am – 11am      April 27, 2011 10am – 11am

**Please call (508) 831-0100 ext. #30 to reserve a spot.**

### ***Friendly House***

#### ***Secret Santa Partnership***

Genesis Club Members and Staff were happy to participate in Secret Santa for children of Friendly House shelters. Thank you to everyone who gave and a special thanks to our Housing Unit for coordinating with Friendly House.



### ***Thank You!***

Sunshine Sign has donated a season of Sharks Hockey tickets as a way to congratulate Members and Staff of Genesis Club for their success in the past year. We were touched by this gesture, and are having a great time out at the games! Thank you to Dave Glispin for your ongoing support!