



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 7, 2012

Contact: Lisa Hall 850-681-3200
Lisa.Hall@saltermitchell.com
Dr. Susanne Homant, 850-224-4493
Susanne@AbleTrust.org

Able Trust Grant to Key Clubhouse of South Florida Will Improve Employment Opportunities for Persons With Mental Health Disabilities

MIAMI – In today’s difficult economy, finding employment at any skill level and in just about any field is challenging. A grant presented in Miami Tuesday will give a much-needed boost to persons with mental health disabilities who are already working to overcome barriers in their path to independence.

The Key Clubhouse of South Florida is a membership-based community where people living with persistent mental illness come to rebuild their lives. The Miami-based nonprofit will use the \$32,500 grant provided by the Able Trust to support Clubhouse activities including a staff member to assist Clubhouse members in reintegrating into the workforce through a variety of skill-building services.

“Our primary mission at The Able Trust is to help create employment opportunities for people with disabilities in Florida,” said Dr. Susanne Homant, President and CEO of The Able Trust. “The \$32,500 grant we are providing to Key Clubhouse for this model program was a natural fit for The Able Trust. They have been enormously successful in helping to prepare persons with mental health disabilities to live a life without limits and experience the highest degree of independence—which includes reintegrating them into the workforce.”

The Key Clubhouse provides an accepting place to spend the day, participate in valuable work that supports the Clubhouse operations, socialize with friends and co-workers and gain access to transitional and supported employment within the community.

“We are extremely grateful for this grant from the Able Trust,” said Stephanie Solovej, Executive Director of Key Clubhouse of South Florida. “It will enable us to really help persons with mental health disabilities complete the process of learning to live independently. Preparing them with the proper training and skills is one thing; ensuring that they actually get hired is another. And that’s what we plan on doing with this program.”

Employment for persons with disabilities is much lower than for persons without disabilities. A 2010 Harris Interactive survey titled “The ADA, 20 Years Later,” the Kessler Foundation and the National Organization on Disability (NOD) found that only 21% of persons with disabilities aged 18–64 are employed full- or part-time, far below the 59% reported for persons without disabilities. The model program will help open doors and improve job opportunities for people with disabilities who have armed themselves with the education and skills required to succeed as professionals. Ensuring that the underrepresented disability community can find employment appropriate to their background and skills is a top priority of the Able Trust.

About The Able Trust:

The Able Trust, also known as the Florida Endowment Foundation for Vocational Rehabilitation, is a 501(c)(3) public-private partnership foundation established by the Florida Legislature in 1990. Its mission is to be a key leader in providing Floridians with disabilities successful opportunities for employment. Since its establishment, The Able Trust has awarded over \$28 million to individuals with disabilities and nonprofit agencies throughout Florida for employment-related purposes, enabling thousands of Florida's citizens with disabilities to enter the workforce each year. The Able Trust's grant program supports a diversity of projects, including on-the-job coaching, competitive employment, job skills-training, job development, employer outreach, ADA facility compliance, skills evaluation and other programs leading to employment. For more information about The Able Trust, visit www.abletrust.org or call 850-224-4493.

About Key Clubhouse:

The mission of the Key Clubhouse of South Florida is to afford people whose lives have been disrupted by mental illness the opportunity to recover meaningful and productive lives through reintegration into the workplace and the community. The Key Clubhouse of South Florida was founded as a non-profit organization in 2008 by parents of adult children with serious mental illness. These individuals had searched in vain for local programs that could assist their relatives recover from the disabling results of mental illness. After extensive research they decided to initiate an evidence-based International Center for Clubhouse Development (ICCD) program to assist individuals to achieve reintegration in the workplace and the community. The Key Clubhouse opened its doors on July 5, 2010. To date the Clubhouse has enrolled 107 participants. The organization is committed to directing its efforts to eliminate the stigma of mental illness. Visit www.keyclubhouse.org or call 305-374-5115.