



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

As we all know, you can only make a first impression once, and when it comes to looking for a job, wearing the right suit can project the confidence one needs to be hired. That is why we are thankful for the partnership with Men's Wearhouse for their National Suit Drive.



The National Suit Drive is the nation's largest collection of gently used professional clothing for men. Throughout the month of July, people all over the country were encouraged to "give the suits off their backs" and donate to their local Men's Wearhouse store. Their goal was to positively impact the lives of those in the community who unfortunately can't afford to look his or her best for the workplace by collecting and distributing donations of gently used professional clothing.

The donated items were collected at over 900 Men's Wearhouse stores across the country and will be distributed to approximately 200 nonprofit organizations committed to helping people who are transitioning back into the workforce. For the fourth year, Bridges of America has the honor of being a donation recipient.

We have already received an overwhelming amount of donated clothes so that our program participants can dress for success when they interview for jobs. The numbers are still coming in, but we know that in our Jacksonville Bridge facility alone we have been blessed to receive over 1,700 items, including full suits, shirts, jackets, pants, belts and shoes.

I am so thankful for caring corporations, such as Men's Wearhouse, who give us the support we need in reaching our goal to prepare men and women for their re-entry into society and the workplace after incarceration. This donation is a huge help to our program participants who are eager to join the workforce.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Florida Alcohol and Drug Abuse Association Conference
August 8th - 10th

Turning Point Bridge
Family "Back to School" Day
Saturday, August 11th

Orlando Bridge Non-Secure Graduation
Thursday, August 16th

7PM - 9PM

Florida Council on Crime and Delinquency Institute
August 20th - 22nd

Auburndale Bridge Graduation
Thursday, August 23rd
7PM - 9PM

Bradenton Bridge
Celebration of Life
Friday, August 24th
6AM

[Like us on Facebook](#)

Thanks, Men's Wearhouse!

Sincerely,

Lu Costantino Brown

President and CEO



If you are interested in donating gently-used professional attire to our programs, please contact kkuehn@bridgesofamerica.org

VOCATIONAL SPOTLIGHT

Bradenton Bridge



Chef Daniel Brule and his 14 Culinary Arts Apprentices were recognized in the July/August issue of the *National Culinary*

Follow us on [twitter](#)

Check out News 4 Jacksonville's Interview of a Bridge program participant!



NEW
Jacksonville
Bridge
Construction
Progress



Bridges of America is Smoke and Tobacco-Free!



Review, a magazine read by over 22,000 chefs and culinary arts professionals! Check it out [here](#).

Turning Point Bridge



The Turning Point Bridge is now offering a 12-hour Computer Basics course. Thirteen men are taking the course either on Saturday or Sunday night, after work.

The Turning Point Bridge is also offering a forklift class through McFatter Technical Institute. Six men have received their forklift certifications and another 18 men are currently enrolled.

The Broward County Bridge



Last month we told you about the new program at the Broward County Bridge in which our men can study for the written portion of their Commercial Driver's License exam. These are the six men who comprised the first-ever CDL course. Congratulations to all of them for passing the exam!

The Broward County Bridge is also pleased to announce that 14 of 15 Culinary Arts Apprentices passed their ServSafe Manager Exam. The average score for this class was 86%!

The Orlando Bridge Transition Center



The Orlando Bridge Transition Center hosted the Florida Council on Crime and Delinquency Chapter 7's Annual Awards Banquet on July 19th. Chef Mike Schnitzer, his staff (Donna Parrish, Maxine Brooks, and Nathaniel Taylor), and the Culinary Arts Apprentices outdid themselves preparing and serving an extraordinary meal.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Bradenton Bridge



The Bradenton Bridge looks forward to their Alumni Reunion once a year. This special event, coordinated by Clinical Director Liz Darby, is a time of fellowship and sisterhood for the ladies. This year six alumni came back to support their sisters. The day started with games of Checkers, Scrabble, Chess and UNO. Then the ladies took some time to reminisce with old photos. The BTC Choir sang and afterwards current program participants gave their testimony to the entire community. The ladies then participated in activity to get rid of their burdens. Each program participant dropped a rock at the bottom of a handmade cross as a way to symbolize letting go. The alumni answered questions about their recovery and life after incarceration. It was a lovely day enjoyed by the entire Therapeutic Community.

CHAPLAINCY SPOTLIGHT

Florida Partners in Crisis Conference



We had the pleasure of sponsoring the 2012 Florida Partners in Crisis Conference held in Orlando on July 12th and 13th. Vice President Charles Brown (right) and Director of Chaplaincy Services and Program Development Dr. Thomas Beckner (left) presented a session on "The Role of Faith in Treatment". The session was packed, as people were very interested in the only faith-based workshop offered during the conference.

Florida Partners in Crisis is the only Florida organization that promotes state and community collaboration across the mental health, substance abuse, and criminal justice systems to reduce the contact of people with mental illnesses and addictions with the justice system and to actively promote the cost-effective use of tax dollars to increase public safety and improve lives.

Broward County & Turning Point Bridges



We are very thankful for our partnership with Pastors Dennis Rock and Donnie Hampton of Jesus People Ministries Church International in Miami. Since our dress code policy change in December, JPMCI has made numerous donations of clothing and shoes to the men at the Broward County and Turning Point Bridges. Thank you Chaplain Tillman for facilitating this relationship.

PARTNERSHIP SPOTLIGHT

Florida Department of Corrections



We were honored to host our partners from the Florida Department of Corrections for a tour of all three Orlando Bridge facilities on July 26th.

From L to R: Deputy Assistant Secretary **Michelle Pyle** (DOC), **Mark Flynn** (BOA Director of Government Relations), **Karen Neis** (BOA QM Director of Programs), **Will Kendrick** (DOC Director of Legislative Affairs), **Jessie Lawson** (Orlando Bridge WR Assistant Operations Facility Director), **Sammy Hill** (Orlando Bridge TC Assistant Operations Facility Director), **David Harris** (Orlando Bridge Facility Director), **Randy Tifft** (DOC Regional Director), **Fred Dixon** (BOA QM Director of Operations), Deputy Secretary **Mike Crews** (DOC), **Dr. Thomas Beckner** (BOA Director of Chaplaincy Services), **Paulette Jordan** (Central Florida Reception Center), **Raul Banasco** (BOA QM Director of Operations), **Brett D'Aoust** (BOA Director of Programs), **Dave McCallum** (CFRC Warden).

www.bridgesofamerica.com

Bridges of America is a nonprofit organization founded in 1972 with the mission of changing criminal behavior through a practical, comprehensive approach that includes intensive substance-abuse counseling, parenting classes and work-release programs. Bridges' core value is a belief that people can change.

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