



Clubhouse International

Creating Community: Changing the World of Mental Health

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Advocates From Across the Nation Meet With Federal Lawmakers to Champion Mental Health Clubhouses

Clubhouse International and Fountain House United host first joint advocacy day on Capitol Hill.

WASHINGTON, D.C. (October 1, 2026) — On September 30, [Fountain House United](#) and [Clubhouse International](#) co-hosted the first *Recovery Is Possible* Clubhouse Congressional Advocacy Day, bringing 100 mental health Clubhouse community members from across the country to Washington, D.C., to meet with federal lawmakers. Clubhouse members and staff from 17 states met with members of Congress to advocate for their individual Clubhouses and for federal support of the national Clubhouse movement. Clubhouses are community-based organizations where people living with serious mental illness participate as members, working alongside staff to build community and pursue goals in areas including employment, education, housing, and health, actively mitigating social and economic isolation.

“Fountain House is proud to join Clubhouses from across the country to bring the power, potential and evidence that clubhouses work to the Halls of Congress,” said Ken Zimmerman, CEO of Fountain House. “By centering the agency and dignity of people with serious mental health conditions in the evidence-based Clubhouse Model, we have demonstrated that Clubhouses transform lives while reducing hospitalization and Medicaid costs. We are eager to work with all those who know, or are learning, about clubhouses to provide mental health supports that center the whole person and address social, economic and health needs that are fundamental for people with serious mental health conditions.”

During the advocacy day, Fountain House United and Clubhouse International called on lawmakers to strengthen their commitment to the Clubhouse movement by joining the Clubhouse Caucus, with the goal of engaging every member of Congress whose district is home to a Clubhouse. Through this effort, the two organizations seek to build greater congressional awareness of the proven role Clubhouses play within the broader mental health system and to advance community-based recovery for people living with serious mental illness.

“People living with mental illness deserve access to a life with community, connection and opportunities that make recovery possible,” said Clubhouse International CEO Joel D. Corcoran. “We are bringing many Clubhouse members and staff from across the U.S. to speak directly with federal lawmakers about what works and how evidence-based Clubhouse programs succeed at ending social and economic isolation for people with mental illness. Accredited Clubhouses are a necessary part of the solution to this nation’s urgent mental health crisis.”

While the first Clubhouse, Fountain House, was established in the 1940s, awareness of and support for the Clubhouse Model is still growing. Recently, states like New York, Virginia, California and North Carolina have made unprecedented investments to expand access to Clubhouses statewide. Building on the growing momentum across the country, Fountain House United and Clubhouse International came together for the first joint advocacy day to bring the experience and evidence of the Clubhouse movement directly to federal lawmakers.

“I’ve met so many amazing people at the Clubhouse and it allows us leave our mental health diagnoses at the door and be regular people,” said Mercedes Dennis Graves, member of B’More Clubhouse in Baltimore, MD. “I feel like the Advocacy Day is really important because we need more places like Clubhouses, more safe spaces, more places with opportunities, more inclusion and more of the holistic approach that Clubhouses bring to mental health.”

The joint advocacy day also kicks off two major Clubhouse gatherings, hosted in the Washington, D.C., area: Fountain House United hosts its first FHU Summit on October 1, and Clubhouse International’s biennial [USA Clubhouse Conference takes place October 1-3](#).

About Clubhouse International

Clubhouse International is the only global mental health nonprofit that expands and enhances recovery opportunities for people living with mental illness by integrating the proven recovery model — the Clubhouse Model of psychosocial rehabilitation — into community-based approaches worldwide. Clubhouse International’s network has grown to over 380 Clubhouses in 30 countries. We envision a world where there is a Clubhouse in every community. There is no health without mental health. |

About Fountain House United

Fountain House United is a national network of Clubhouse organizations dedicated to strengthening community-based mental health recovery and driving systemic change. Through collaboration, advocacy and innovation, the national network expands access to the Clubhouse Model and ensures that people living with serious mental illness have the support, opportunities and community they need to thrive.

Media Contacts

Anna Sackett Rountree

asackett@clubhouse-intl.org

914-584-9369

Witney James

Witney.James@FountainHouse.org

646-455-7363

###