

Go-Getters Moves Into Facility Once Occupied By Fisher Clubhouse

The Fisher Clubhouse, which had served individuals recovering from mental illness for more than 25 years, has closed.

The Go-Getters Homeless Drop-in Center has moved into the former Fisher facility, at 2640 W. Vernor, and began operating there on September 8.

“The current funding environment is a very challenging one and we had to make some difficult decisions,” stated Joseph Tardella, executive director of Southwest Counseling Solutions. “We were the only organization in Michigan to offer both a clubhouse and a consumer-run drop-in center and we are no longer able sponsor both. Our drop-in center, operated in partnership with Go-Getters, an organization founded by and operated by consumers, will remain open. The drop-in center offers a rich environment where consumers, with the support of their peers, can continue their recovery journey and improve their quality of life. Our continued commitment to Go-Getters reflects our belief that consumers play a vital role in our system of care.”

At its former location on Green

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Clubhouse members gather on the last day of Fisher

Street in southwest Detroit, Go-Getters served 50 men and women, six days a week, who were homeless or mentally ill, and who needed a place to go during the day for a nutritious meal, social activities and other services. The staff at Go-Getters help their patrons obtain vital documentation, qualify for assistance and get access to housing. Since it began in 2000, Go-Getters has enabled hundreds of homeless men and women, many of whom have severe mental illness, to receive the services they need to end their homelessness and control their illness.

The supportive environment of the new Go-Getters encourages consumers to work together and contribute their talents and initiatives to further their own

recovery and the recovery of others. Former clubhouse members are welcome at the new Go-Getters and are encouraged to attend for their own wellbeing and to lend their expertise and experience to help make Go-Getters successful.

In its new location, Go-Getters expects to serve even more homeless persons, because of its proximity to Roosevelt Park and its environs, where many homeless are found. “We are excited to move to the Vernor facility,” said Shirley Cockrell, who heads the Go-Getters program. “The space provides opportunities to enhance and expand the services that we offer to meet the needs and interests of our consumers.”



Shirley Cockrell (right), Daniel Yopez, and Victoria Jackson setting up the new Go-Getters facility

The new Go-Getters will feature an emphasis on the creative arts and music. Gerald Butler, a peer support specialist, is directing the Go-Getters' Center for Recovery and the Arts. Gerald is also the leader of the Recovery Band, a musical group comprised of mental

health consumers. “So many homeless and mentally ill individuals have incredible abilities in the arts and music,” said Gerald. “We want to cultivate these talents to help promote recovery and produce some amazing work for the world to see.”



Consumers greet each other on the first day of the new Go-Getters

Most former clubhouse members attended the opening of the new Go-Getters, and many praised the program. “Being here is terrific,” said Dean Stanton, who was a clubhouse member for eleven years.

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“During the transition, I was so bored, just sitting at home. It’s great to see my friends again, and the Go-Getters staff made things easy.”

Indeed, the transition to the new Go-Getters has gone very well – a tribute to the dedication and diligence of the Go-Getters staff. As former clubhouse members become more comfortable with the changes, they continue to step forward and assume leadership roles for support groups and kitchen, cleaning and other responsibilities. “We want everyone here to know that we are all in this together and Go-Getters belongs to us all,” said Shirley.

As Go-Getters embarks on this open and ongoing experiment, it invites all interested individuals to volunteer their time and talents to help Go-Getters serve its consumers and become a leading recovery model. To volunteer or donate, contact Shirley Cockrell at 313.961.0677 or Mary Madigan at 313.297.1371 or mmadigan@swsol.org.