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Raising the Bar on Personalized Employee Wellness: The Breakers Palm Beach Elevates Successful Team Member Programs with Expanded Focus on Mental Health; Diversity, Equity & Inclusion; and Parenting Resources

Iconic resort introduces three customized initiatives to its ever-evolving, wellness-centered workplace

PALM BEACH, FL – One of America’s most legendary resort destinations, [The Breakers Palm Beach](#) is a purpose-driven, family-owned organization with a dynamic 126-year history, whose employee-centric culture and steadfast commitment to social responsibility have been fundamental to the company’s success and longevity. Its dedicated ownership, descendants of founder Henry Flagler (circa 1896), holds tremendous passion for the well-being of its 2,200 team members, which resides at the forefront of The Breakers’ comprehensive wellness programs. With that in mind, the resort has rolled out extensive programming with significant and meaningful focus on mental health; diversity, equity & inclusion (DEI); and parenting.

By recognizing and prioritizing each individual and their unique needs, the resort has developed highly personalized wellness services and resources, which foster a strong sense of fulfillment and a more enriching workplace. The cultural philosophy that family comes first, remains unwavering throughout each division and at all levels of the organization; in genuinely caring for staff members in every facet of the employee experience, they can better care for themselves, their families, peers and community.

This underscores the delicate and important balance of connection and community at work; while sharply attuned to individuality and the special differences among employees, so each person feels they truly belong. The Breakers strives to do both. In the post-pandemic era, these prominent topics are leading conversations throughout the general population; they are vital to employee personal and professional satisfaction and are part of The Breakers’ wellness toolkit.

Mental Health Is Everyone’s Business

For the past four years, The Breakers has established a robust partnership with [Ferd & Gladys Alpert Jewish Family Service \(Alpert JFS\)](#) - a non-profit, non-sectarian organization - to provide *Mental Health First Aid* (MHFA) training to the resort’s team of managers. MHFA teaches critical communication and support skills that empower participants to identify and extend initial assistance to individuals who show signs of mental health problems, or are experiencing a mental health crisis.

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Based on participant feedback received from Breakers' managers who attended MHFA, and with one in five Americans suffering from some form of mental illness in their lifetime (as cited by Alpert JFS), The Breakers quickly recognized the need to expand MHFA training to its entire employee population. In collaboration with Alpert JFS, a new program, *Mental Health Is Everyone's Business*, was developed and launched - a virtual training initiative that raises awareness of the role mental well-being plays in both work and non-work lives. Led by an Alpert JFS-certified instructor, the course reduces the stigma around mental health challenges, giving insight and encouraging participants to help others by emphasizing self-care.

- To date, 400 managers at The Breakers have completed MHFA training and 335 non-managerial team members have completed *Mental Health Is Everyone's Business*.

“What hit home for me was understanding the appropriate way to communicate with someone who's depressed or experiencing mental health issues; especially having experienced it previously with my own brother who suffered for years,” said a *Mental Health Is Everyone's Business* participant. “The program taught me that I was not communicating with him in a helpful way; I was giving him advice and ultimately not understanding the depth of his despair. If I could go back and have another chance to save him, I would approach him differently. Small differences save lives.”

Established in 1974, Ferd & Gladys Alpert Jewish Family Service is a nationally accredited service provider for children, adults, seniors, and Holocaust survivors. The non-profit, non-sectarian organization is a trusted leader, with a team of nearly 200 highly skilled professionals delivering high-quality care to community members. Alpert JFS works to ensure the well-being of children and families, independence of older adults and quality-of-life for individuals with disabilities.

The Breakers' Wellness Program for Team Members of Color with Dr. Nicola Finley

Based on findings from an internal diversity study conducted in 2019, The Breakers created a wellness program specifically tailored to team members of color, a population that has traditionally shown lower engagement levels within the company's wellness incentive program. *The Breakers' Wellness Program for Team Members of Color with Dr. Nicola Finley*, is a fully-integrated educational experience that supports the health equity for this particular employee demographic and is now one of the organization's key DEI partnerships.

Developed with Dr. Nicola Finley, an integrative medicine physician of Jamaican heritage, this 3-4 month program begins with a confidential biometric screening, which provides tracked, measurable outcomes to proactively bring awareness to health disparities and prevent chronic disease. Dr. Finley then facilitates a combination of group and individual sessions, which empower team members to recognize and discuss actionable steps towards optimal wellness. Group workshops share evidence-based health education, while private consultations customize personal wellness plans.

The test pilot for the program has seen immediate success because it makes the wellness experience attainable, accessible and focuses on how a person's culture impacts self-care; it presents healthcare concerns and strategies through the lens of people of color, who are able to affirm themselves as instrumental to their well-being. Team members participate during paid work hours and are

encouraged to prioritize their health - making a positive impact in areas such as nutrition, exercise, mental health, sleep and more. Participants have already expressed the positive outcome that this program has made not only in their lives, but also in the lives of their families.

- To date, 26 employees have participated in the test pilot for *The Breakers' Wellness Program for Team Members of Color* with Dr. Nicola Finley (November 2021 - March 2022).

"The Breakers truly cares about my well-being and this program helped me to acknowledge and alter my mindset when it comes to my health," said Hewen Brown, Housekeeping Manager at The Breakers. "Dr. Finley personalized a wellness plan that gave me a better understanding of my spirituality, while sharing information in an easy and fun way. It was a privilege to participate."

Parent's Corner - Employee Resource Groups (ERG)

Recognizing that mothers, fathers and guardians sometimes need support while juggling dual roles of parent and employee, The Breakers developed and implemented *Parent's Corner* to help team members balance work, life and caregiving demands. *Parent's Corner* brings together new and experienced parents to share personal stories, challenges and referrals, as well as exchange parenting ideas, advice, information and resources. Participants in the group are reassured to learn that their concerns are not unique, finding kinship, camaraderie and comfort whether raising infants, small children, teenagers or young adults.

"Our team members enjoy this program because they can speak openly, hear insight that's relatable, and receive positive parenting solutions," said Pat Ciavola, Director of Team Member Development at The Breakers. "The discussions are important, necessary and encouraged. There is nothing more powerful than being able to confide in a group and share experiences in an environment of trust."

- A total of 97 employees currently participate in *Parent's Corner*, which continues to grow.

Employee Resource Groups (ERG) are led by a group of voluntary team members, who bring employees together; they share common characteristics, whether gender, ethnicity, religious affiliation, lifestyle, personal interest or other. Each group's mission is to continue the advancement of a diverse, inclusive workplace by creating a safe space where employees can bring their whole selves to the table.

For more information on other social impact initiatives at The Breakers, please refer to [The Breakers 2021 Social Impact Report](#).

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About The Breakers Palm Beach

Recognized as one of America's most iconic resorts, The Breakers is an Italian Renaissance-style hotel situated on 140 acres of oceanfront property in the heart of Palm Beach, Florida. Founded in 1896 by magnate Henry M. Flagler, and still in the hands of his heirs today, this legendary destination continues to thrive as an independent property. Each year, an investment averaging \$25 million in capital improvements and ongoing revitalization, balances preservation and modernization.

The Breakers features 538 guest rooms and suites, including the ultra-luxury Flagler Club, a boutique hotel nestled atop of the resort. The property offers 10 restaurants ranging from casual beachfront to stylishly sophisticated and a world-class private beach club with four pools, six whirlpool spas, 25 poolside bungalows and a variety of on-site watersports.

Additional amenities include: two 18-hole golf courses, 10 Har-Tru tennis courts, a Forbes Five-Star spa, an indoor-outdoor oceanfront fitness center, 13 signature boutiques, [Via Flagler by The Breakers](#) - an alfresco shopping plaza, and a Family Entertainment Center with an extensive program of activities for children.

Along with being recognized as a AAA Five Diamond property, The Breakers has earned numerous accolades for its social impact on the environment, the community and team member well-being. For reservations or more information, contact the resort at 888-BREAKERS (273-2537) or visit thebreakers.com.

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