



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Contact:**           **Rebekkah Tucker, Marketing and Public Relations**  
**Transitions-Mental Health Association**  
**805.550.6510, [btucker@t-mha.org](mailto:btucker@t-mha.org)**

**GROWING GROUNDS DOWNTOWN RECEIVES GRANT FROM PG&E**

*Grant will fund life changing employment training to adults with mental illness.*

**SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA** – Transitions-Mental Health Association (TMHA) has received a \$2,500 grant from the local PG&E Better Together Giving Program. This grant will be used to provide a 30-hour retail training program to 10 adults with mental illness within TMHA’s Growing Grounds Downtown social enterprise.

The National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors has observed that "for people living with the most severe mental illnesses, unemployment rates can be as high as 90 percent." In Central California, 75% of our local population with a mental illness desire work in order to lead a "normal life," yet there are few employment opportunities in our community for those with mental illness. While the current job market is more competitive than ever, and the number of entry level positions is shrinking, Growing Grounds Enterprises represents a notable first step in California’s Central Coast for adults who experience mental illness to return to work.

Each year Growing Ground Enterprises, and other TMHA employment programs, helps dozens of single parents, heads of families, and adult children with mental health challenges – people who are trying to get back on their feet and need someone to take a chance on them. Growing Grounds provides individuals with mental illness employment and a supportive environment through a combination of horticultural therapy and vocational training. The PG&E grant will help Growing Grounds Downtown provide an opportunity for success to ten program participants, helping change their lives and assist them in finding their path forward.

“Working here gives me purpose,” imparted one of Growing Grounds’ client employees. “When I work here I get a paycheck and that makes me the equal of any human.”

**ABOUT PG&E**

Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E), incorporated in California in 1905, is one of the largest combined natural gas and electric energy companies in the United States. Based in San Francisco, the company is a subsidiary of PG&E Corporation. Through their Better Together Giving Program, PG&E is supporting deserving local organizations and efforts that help power life for our customers.

**ABOUT TMHA**

TMHA is a nonprofit organization dedicated to eliminating stigma and promoting recovery and wellness for people with mental illness through work, housing, community and family support services. TMHA operates 30 programs at over 35 locations that reach over 2,000 people and 1,500 families in San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara counties. The emphasis of TMHA’s many services is to teach vital independent living skills, and build a framework for community re-entry through personal empowerment and hands on experience. For over 35 years, TMHA has been dedicated to providing housing, employment, case management and life-skills support to teens and adults with mental illness; and support, resources and education for their loved ones.

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From left to right: Jill Bolster-White (TMHA Executive Director), Lindsey Miller (PG&E), Linda Neugent (Growing Grounds Downtown), Christine Story (Growing Grounds Downtown), JT Haas (TMHA Board President), Pat Mullen (PG&E Region Director).