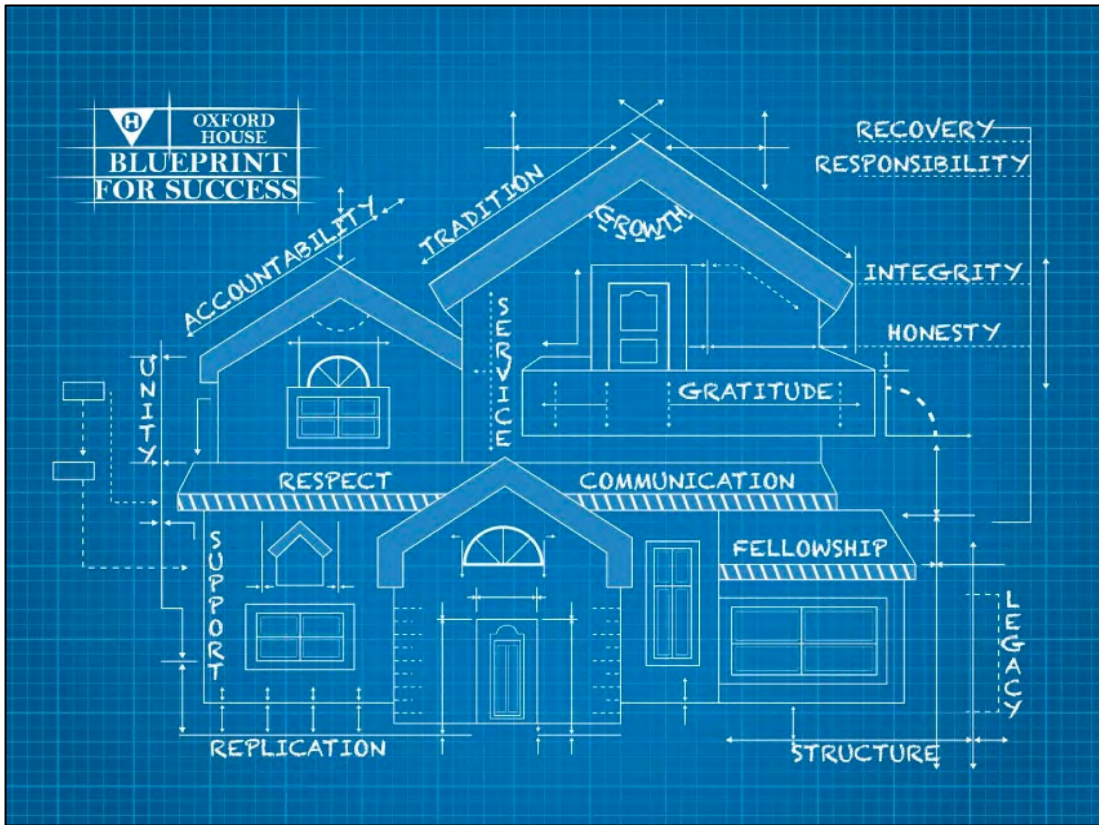


# *Oxford House™*

## *Blueprint for Success*



Commemorative Program

2016 Annual Oxford House Convention

September 29 – October 2, 2016

Hilton Anatole Hotel  
Dallas, Texas

# 2016 Annual Oxford House World Convention Oxford House™ - The Blueprint for Success

September 29 – October 2, 2016  
Hilton Anatole Hotel – Dallas, Texas

<b>Convention Schedule</b>				
	<b>FRIDAY</b>		<b>SATURDAY</b>	<b>SUNDAY</b>
7:00-8:00 AM	<b>Continental Breakfast</b> <i>Get World Council Nominations turned in by 1:00 PM</i>	7:00-8:00 AM	<b>Continental Breakfast</b> <i>Get World Council Ballots turned in by noon.</i>	<b>Continental Breakfast</b>
8:00-9:45 AM	<b>Opening General Session</b> Invocation – <i>Salvation Army</i> Welcome: <b>Tiffinni Young, Dallas City Council Member</b> World Council Election Rules <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>James McClain</b></li> </ul> Convention Overview <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Kathleen Gibson, COO</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Paul Molloy, CEO</b></li> </ul> Keynote Speakers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>J. Westley Clark, M.D., J.D</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Kimberly Johnson, Ph.D. Director, CSAT</b></li> </ul>	8:15- 9:30 AM	<b>Third Breakout Panels</b> 1. Medication in Oxford Houses 2. Building Diversity in Oxford Houses and Reaching the Underserved 3. Civil Rights and the Law 4. Housekeeping Issues: Bedbugs, Butt Cans, and Curb Appeal 5. Conducting House Meetings	<b>Closing General Session</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Remembrance of Members Who Have Died</li> <li>▪ Tradition Renewal – Alumni and Current Members</li> <li>▪ Conference Summary</li> <li>▪ Closing Remarks</li> </ul>
9:45-10:00 AM		9:30-9:45 AM	<i>Break</i>	
10:00-11:00 AM	<b>First Breakout Panels</b> 1. Dealing with Opioid Overdoses 2. Working with Drug Courts & Parole/Probation Programs 3. Oxford House and State Agencies 4. Educating the Public About Recovery 5. Nuts and Bolts of Opening an Oxford House – The Basics	9:45-11:00	<b>Fourth Breakout Panels</b> 1. Strategies for Achieving, Maintaining and Measuring Long-term Recovery 2. Health Issues in Oxford Houses (Chronic illnesses, HIV, Hepatitis C, etc.) 3. Networking for Jobs and Using Community Resources 4. Oxford House World Council Update 5. Working Together: Houses, Chapters, and Alumni	<b>CONVENTION REGISTRATION</b>  <i>Registration for the annual Oxford House Convention begins at 10:00 AM on Thursday, September 29.</i>  <b>GOLF TOURNAMENT</b>  <i>The Oxford House Golf Tournament is on Thurs., September 29. Stevens Park Golf Course, 1005 North Montclair. Tee-off time is 8:00 AM; transportation leaves the hotel at 6:00 AM.</i>  <b>WOMEN'S CONFERENCE</b>  <i>The Oxford House Women's Conference begins on Thursday, September 29, at 3:00 PM. Registration opens at 2:00 PM.</i>
11:00-11:15 AM	<i>Break</i>	11:00-11:15	<i>Break</i>	
11:15-12:30 PM	<b>Second Breakout Panels</b> 1. Oxford House and Re-entry from Prison 2. Working With Treatment Providers and Insurers 3. Technology in Oxford Houses 4. Defining and Measuring Oxford House Networking 5. Oxford Houses – Four Stages of Houses and Five Core Principles	11:15-12:30	<b>Fifth Breakout Panels</b> 1. The Importance of Having Fun in Oxford Houses 2. Dealing with Children in Oxford Houses 3. Current Oxford House Research and Upcoming Studies. 4. Veterans in Oxford Houses 5. Organized Support and Training – Workshops, Retreats, Conventions	
12:30-2:00 PM	<b>Lunch on Your Own</b> [AA/NA meetings at hotel] <i>Ballots for World Council election should be turned in by 12:45 PM.</i>	12:30 – 2:00	<b>Lunch on Your Own</b> [AA/NA meetings at hotel] <b>Alumni Lunch;</b> Get Tickets at World Council table.	
2:15-5:00 PM	<b>Second General Session</b> Keynote Speaker: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Stuart Gitlow, M.D.</b></li> </ul> World Council Nominee Speeches	2:00 – 5:00	<b>Third General Session</b> Keynote Speaker: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Michael Botticelli, Director, ONDCP</b></li> </ul> Announcement of New World Council Members and Vote on Resolutions Directors' 100-Year Awards	
6:00 PM	<b>Friday Evening Event Medieval Times</b>  Short walk from hotel Show and Dinner at 6:00 PM Doors open 5:15 PM	6:45 PM - Midnight	<b>Banquet and Dance</b> Invocation, Dinner and Awards Recovery Speaker: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Brian Cuban</b></li> </ul> Dance: 9:00PM – Midnight	
<i>AA meetings will be in Desoto A at 1:00 and 10:00 PM on Friday and Saturday            NA meetings will be in Desoto B at 1:00 and 10:00 PM on Friday and Saturday</i>				



**STATE OF TEXAS  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**

**Greetings:**

As Governor of Texas, I am pleased to welcome you to Oxford House's 18<sup>th</sup> Annual World Convention.

Oxford House is a nonprofit organization with an extensive group of recovery homes for alcoholics and drug addicts. There are currently 2,100 Oxford Houses across the United States, including 185 in Texas alone. Oxford House continues to demonstrate that individuals suffering from substance abuse can remain sober and strong without falling into a relapse.

As you gather to celebrate your organization's successes and plan for the challenges of the future, I commend you for your dedication to supporting Texans suffering from substance abuse. Together, we can work toward a brighter future for our communities and our state.

To those from out of town, be sure to take the time to see what Dallas has to offer. One of the nation's greatest cities, Dallas has everything from historical sites to great music to fantastic food.

First Lady Cecilia Abbott joins me in wishing you all a successful convention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Greg Abbott".

Greg Abbott  
Governor



CITY OF DALLAS

## *Special Recognition*

**WHEREAS**, Oxford House, founded in Silver Spring, Maryland, is celebrating its 41st Anniversary at its 18th Annual Convention on September 29th through October 2nd, 2016 Dallas, Texas; and

**WHEREAS**, Oxford House, a concept in recovery from drug and alcohol addiction has helped over 350,000 individuals including many residents of Dallas to remain clean and sober without relapse; and

**WHEREAS**, Oxford House has grown from one house to over 2,100 houses throughout the United States including 45 in Dallas; and

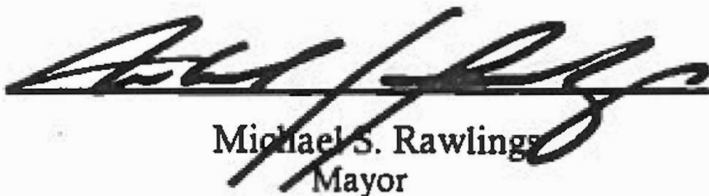
**WHEREAS**, the Oxford House model continues to help persons in recovery become productive contributors in their local communities; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Dallas commends the Oxford House for making a difference in the lives of individuals recovering from alcohol and drug addiction and their families.

**NOW, THEREFORE, I, MICHAEL S. RAWLINGS**, mayor of the City of Dallas, and on behalf of the Dallas City Council, do here by extend special recognition to

### **OXFORD HOUSE**

for their accomplishments and contributions in Dallas, Texas.

  
Michael S. Rawlings  
Mayor



## *Oxford House: The Blueprint For Success*

Welcome to the 2016 Oxford House World Convention in Dallas, Texas! The convention theme this year is Oxford House: The Blueprint for Success. Throughout the convention, we will be talking about the elements of the Blueprint as we focus on a broad set of topics from nuts and bolts stuff such as what makes Oxford Houses work well and the importance of having fun in Oxford House as well as broader issues such as what constitutes recovery and how should it be measured and what current research tells us about Oxford House living and recovery in general. We also have allowed plenty of time for socializing and networking. Attend all the sessions. You'll learn a lot and have fun in the process.

Forty-one years ago, few would have dreamed that the first Oxford House at Fiddler Lane in Silver Spring, Maryland would have grown into a network of more than 2,100 individual Oxford Houses throughout the country. Very few believed that even the first house would succeed and yet it did. Since October 1, 1975, when that first Oxford House started, more than 380,000 Oxford House residents have developed sobriety comfortable enough to assure recovery without relapse.

Oxford House has survived, expanded and prospered. In doing so, it has clung to its original focus, identified in all editions of the Oxford House Manual as “*An Idea Based on a Sound System for Recovering Alcoholics and Drug Addicts to Help Themselves*” and focusing on “Housing, Fellowship, Self-reliance, and Self-respect for Recovering Individuals.” These are also themes found in the Blueprint for Success and they have remained constant over time.

As we consider the “Blueprint for Success,” I am reminded of a visit that James McClain and I made to Dallas back in 1991 to participate in the first statewide workshop for Texas Oxford Houses. There weren't too many Oxford Houses then but we were excited about how Oxford House™ was expanding. At that workshop, we met an AA old-timer – Searcy W. – who was the 12<sup>th</sup> member of AA in Texas and was a personal friend of Bill Wilson. At Bill Wilson's request, he took Ebby T. home to live with him for two years. Searcy spoke at that Oxford House workshop and said:

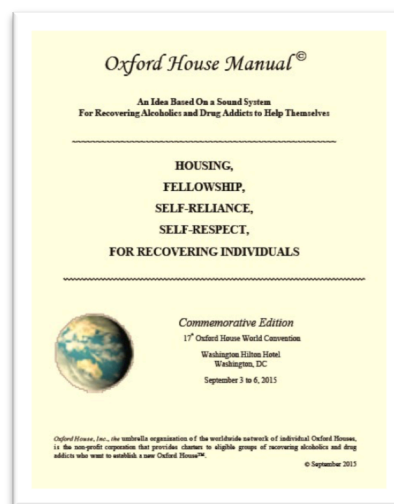
We used to bring the newcomer to AA home to live with us to help keep them on the wagon long enough for sobriety to take hold. When I learned about Oxford House and how it worked, I realized it was re-introducing the dedication known by us old-timers in AA.

*Searcy W. at an Oxford House workshop in Dallas in 1991*

We included an article on Searcy W. in the 2013 Annual Report and copy of that article follows this welcome to the 2016 Convention. What Searcy said was really important; I don't know that we had all made the direct connection with the early practices of AA, but it was a very apt observation.

Oxford House™ has set the standard for making long-term recovery the norm – not the exception. The “stories” – printed in this program and on the website – give a snapshot of how addicts have used Oxford House to transform themselves into recovering individuals. They affirm that we stumbled into a wonderful program that gave us the framework for developing a strong desire for long-term recovery and for translating that desire into a reality.

Of course, there are many pieces to the wonderful program we know as Oxford House™. The primary piece is the system of operation used by every successful Oxford House. The foundation of every Oxford House is participatory democracy, financial self-support and specific policies and procedures to assure fairness,

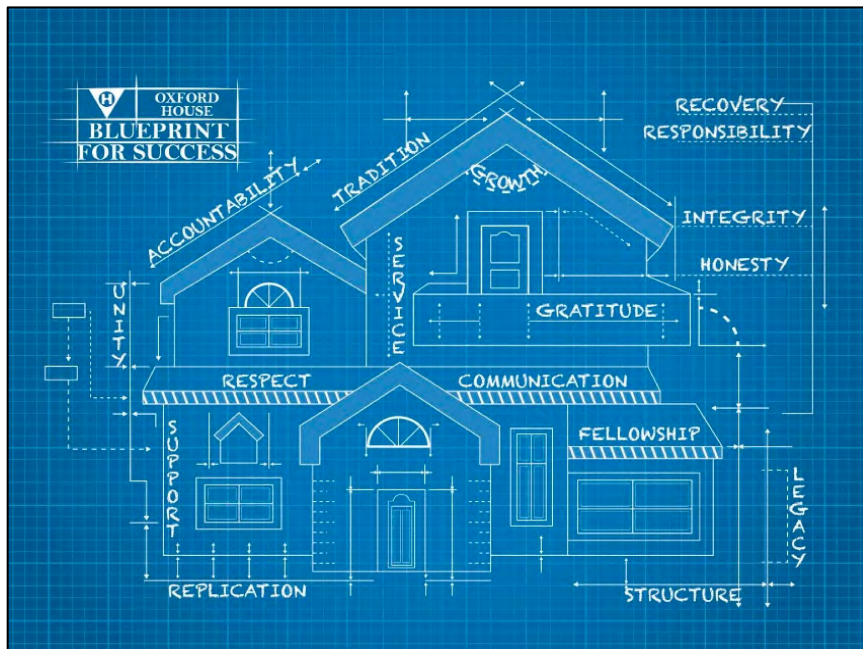


togetherness and a willingness to encourage everyone following at least the minimum expectations to stay as long as necessary. The minimal expectations are: to stay clean and sober, equally share household expenses and be a supportive of the household and the successful recovery of fellow residents. That's the minimum but most Oxford House residents find that doing much more than the minimum is the key to comfortable, long-term sobriety.

Each of us plays an important role in the success of an Oxford House. There really are no big bosses. Because each of us pay an equal share of expenses and have an equal vote in House decisions, we learn self-confidence first-hand. That makes us feel good about ourselves and sooner or later we tie the "feeling good about ourselves" to the fact that we are staying clean and sober and contributing to the successful running of our Oxford House™. Researchers often call what we acquire, "self-efficacy." Whatever it is called, we know what we get from Oxford House™ is the structure we need to evolve from scared, addicted human beings into confident human beings comfortable in sobriety and long-term recovery.

The structure of Oxford House is more than just participatory democracy and self-support. It includes workshops, conventions, training sessions, picnics, bowling leagues, open houses and enjoyment of each other without the use of booze or illicit drugs. That may be no big deal for individuals never addicted to mood-changing drugs, but to us that is an extraordinary transition.

This convention provides a place for us to celebrate our success and learn how to make Oxford House™ even bigger and better. There are 25 breakout sessions in which specific aspects of addiction and recovery can be discussed. There is an election to affirm the democratic foundation of the entire organization.



Enjoy this convention. From time to time take a look at the cover of the program and think about all the goals and values that are a part of the Blueprint for Success. Each of us should ask ourselves how closely our own new behavior tracks the Blueprint for Success. Listen to the speakers and panel experts to learn more about Oxford House™.

Remember that all of us can work together to help the still-suffering alcoholic, drug addict and person with co-occurring mental illness by establishing new Oxford Houses.

While this convention is a place to learn more about addiction and how to master long-term recovery, it is also a place to make new friends. Oxford House membership is like membership in a big family. Building solid friendships with other family members is a reward more available to those in recovery than for many without our disease. We have common ground. We have tolerance of each other. We have support for living a worthwhile life helping others. Take advantage of it. Let the Oxford House Blueprint for Success become personal as well as communal.

*Paul*

## OXFORD HOUSE REVIVES AN EARLY AA PRACTICE

*"We used to bring the newcomer to AA home to live with us to help keep them on the wagon long enough for sobriety to take hold. When I learned about Oxford House and how it worked, I realized it was re-introducing the dedication known by us old-timers in AA."*

Searcy W. at an Oxford House workshop in Dallas in 1991

Searcy R. Whaley was the 12<sup>th</sup> member of Alcoholics Anonymous [AA] in Texas. He became sober in 1946 and remained sober until his death 57 years later in 2003 at the age of 93. Searcy was a close personal friend and colleague of Bill Wilson. He is well known among those familiar with AA history as the person who, at Bill Wilson's request, took Ebby T. home to live with him for over two years – Ebby's longest period of continuous sobriety. It was Ebby T. who introduced Bill Wilson to the Oxford Group in 1934. Out of that AA was born.

In 1991, when Oxford House had begun opening houses in Texas, Searcy came to an Oxford House workshop in Dallas. Everyone at the workshop listened with respect and attention as Searcy told his story and talked about his interest in Oxford House. He explained that he had become a little depressed that AA members were becoming professionals and he worried that AA would lose the missionary zeal it had shown during its early days. In those early days, AA members would bring newcomers home to live with them, letting them become part of their families for as long as was needed for them to achieve sustainable sobriety. He was delighted to learn about Oxford House and to realize that Oxford House was reviving the old tradition of persons in recovery bringing newly-recovering alcoholics home to live with them and their families.



Oxford House –Dallas established February 1, 1991

The founders of Oxford House didn't set out to re-institute this practice when they started in 1975. Their original focus was just on figuring out how they could keep themselves sober in the wake of the closing of the halfway house. They decided that living together to support their sobriety made sense and they created the first Oxford House. Pretty soon, others in recovery saw what the folks in Oxford House were doing and concluded that they seemed to be on the road to recovery and seemed pretty comfortable in doing so. Consequently, some of them asked to join the group. There wasn't room in the first Oxford House for any more residents but, since the group felt an obligation to those who wanted to join them, they decided to rent another house and have some members of the original group move to the new Oxford House. Then each of the two Oxford Houses would interview applicants and vote on accepting new members. It worked and soon those two Oxford Houses were filled and the group set about looking for a third house to rent.

In practice, the Oxford House members were doing what the early AA members had done; they were bringing newly-recovering folks home to live with them and their families – for the residents of each Oxford House truly are a family. They live together, they keep up the house together, they argue together, they celebrate together and they keep each other on the path to long-term sobriety.

As time went on, more Oxford Houses were created but by 1988 there were only 18 Oxford Houses in existence. There was pent-up demand for more but there were obstacles to easy expansion. The biggest problem was accumulating the money needed to rent another house. That obstacle was overcome in 1988 with the passage of the 1988 Anti-Drug Abuse Act (PL 100-690) and support from several states. That minimal state assistance (loan funds for House start-up and grants to OHI for outreach support) has made all the difference in the expansion effort.

The limited nature of the government funding supports the self-help, family nature of Oxford Houses. State support for an individual Oxford House is limited to the disbursement of a start-up loan, repayable over 24 months. Outreach grants to OHI permit OHI to send trained outreach workers (all of whom are in recovery and have lived in an Oxford House) to help establish new Oxford Houses. Participating states recognize the importance of Oxford House and respect the fact that, once established, Oxford Houses are democratically self-run and self-supported.

Oxford Houses are not just a place to live – they are families and part of the broader community of Oxford House families as well as their own local community. The common interest that brings Oxford House residents and alumni together is the desire to become comfortable enough in sobriety to avoid relapse. For nearly eighty years AA has demonstrated the power of self-help based on the common interest of a shared disease. Millions have transformed their lives through AA/NA. Oxford House™ has demonstrated that the same common bond that unites individuals in AA/NA unites residents and alumni of Oxford House. The shared hardship of their active addiction becomes a common bond.



Stacey Levin, a Texas outreach worker, getting an award from Oxford House COO Kathleen Gibson

Because an Oxford House™ is a place of residence, the bond is even stronger than in 12-Step groups. Individuals work together to make their living place into a supportive family and community.

Each Oxford House has a weekly meeting in which everyone participates and has an equal voice. Also, each house elects five house officers who have specific duties and responsibilities and serve for 6-month terms. Individuals rise to the challenge of being a House officer. The duties of the office help provide the officeholder with leadership skills and new self-esteem while also ensuring smooth management of the Oxford House.

The building of community does not stop within the four walls of a particular house as Houses bond together to form chapters. Chapters help Houses work out problems, assure quality control and organize social events – picnics and other get-togethers.

Each Oxford House is a community of individuals living together but to exist well it reaches out to the broader community both as a recovery resource and as a good neighbor. Since each resident of an Oxford House pays an equal share of household expenses the equal share is set low enough to make the house affordable and high enough to pay all the bills. Whenever there is a vacancy in a house it becomes important that the group fill the it right away because others in house will have to pay more as long as the vacancy exists and also because it provides the opportunity for another person to reap the benefits of Oxford House living.

Community building is part of the Oxford House culture. Within a few years of existence, an Oxford House is likely to become viewed by the non-recovering members of a city or town with considerable pride. Throughout the country landlords pass the word to other residential property owners that renting to a group of recovering individuals forming an Oxford House is good business. The property stays rented year after year and the tenants pay the rent on time.

Searcy would continue to be proud of the Oxford House program. He would particularly welcome its expansion in his home State of Texas. During 2013, the network of Oxford Houses in Texas grew by more than 40% for a total of 109 Oxford Houses with 817 recovery beds. It is anticipated that the growth of the network of Texas Oxford Houses and the growth of houses throughout the country will continue during the coming years. *[Reprinted from the FY2013 Oxford House, Inc. Annual Report]*



# 2016 Annual Oxford House Convention

Hilton Anatole Hotel  
Dallas, Texas

## September 29 – October 2, 2016

### Thursday, September 29, 2016

#### Annual Oxford House Golf Tournament

8:00 AM – 3:00 PM  
Stevens Park Golf Course  
1005 Montclair Avenue

This is the Eighteenth Annual Oxford House Golf Tournament. The \$80 fee per player will include breakfast and lunch. **Transportation to and from the tournament will be available and will leave from the Main Tower Valet Area at 6:00 AM.** Breakfast starts at 7:00 AM. Tee time is at 8:00 AM and will be Shotgun style. There will be four winners. Golf club rentals range from \$35-\$60.

#### Convention Registration

Thursday, 10:00 AM – 8:00 PM  
Friday, 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM  
Saturday, 8:00 AM – 11:00 AM  
Chantilly West

#### Women's Conference

3:00 PM – 7:00 PM  
Wedgewood Ballroom

#### World Council Meeting

6:00 PM – 8:00 PM  
Opal Room

#### AA and NA Meetings

- AA meeting
- NA meeting

10:00 PM – 11:00 PM  
Desoto A  
Desoto B

#### HINTS FOR GETTING THE MOST OUT OF THE CONVENTION

1. Attend as many sessions as you can.
2. Participate in the election of World Council members.
3. Go to different breakout sessions. Members of the same House or Chapter should split up.
4. Get to know folks from other states to extend your Oxford House family.
5. Enjoy your sobriety. Learn and have fun at the convention.

## Friday, September 30, 2016

**Continental Breakfast**

**7:00 A.M. – 8:00 AM**

**OPENING GENERAL SESSION**

**8:00 AM – 9:45 AM**  
Chantilly Ballroom

**Invocation – Salvation Army Sergeant Rodney Hinkle.**

**Welcoming remarks – Dallas City Council Member Tiffinni Young**

Tiffinni A. Young was reared in Pleasant Grove and spent much of her childhood in an area of Dallas known as ‘The Bottom’, as a member of Golden Gate Missionary Baptist Church, where she is still an active member. She attended the Law Magnet High School and is a proud graduate of Lincoln Humanities/Communications Magnet High School and Florida A & M University. Tiffinni attended the University of Arkansas School of Law for 2 years and spent her last year of law school as a visiting student at Texas Wesleyan School of Law.

Ms. Young was appointed to serve on the inaugural City of Dallas Youth Commission in 1994 and later appointed to the Park & Recreation Board to represent District 4 and District 7, respectively. The values instilled in her by her family and her faith, her love of community and passion for people led her to enlarge her commitment of service and run for public office. Councilwoman Young was elected to the Dallas City Council in June 2015, as the District 7 representative.



**Oxford House World Council election process – OHI Board Member James McClain**

**Convention Overview: Kathleen Gibson, COO and J. Paul Molloy, CEO**

**First Keynote Address – H. Westley Clark, M.D., J.D., M.P.H., CAS and FASAM**

Dr. Westley Clark will be making his 12<sup>th</sup> presentation at an Oxford House convention, where Oxford House audiences always enthusiastically receive his remarks. He retired last year after 16 years at SAMHSA as Director of the Center on Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT) and is currently serving as Dean’s Executive Professor in the Public Health Program at Santa Clara University.



Dr. Clark’s professional life is one marked by non-stop accomplishments and accolades. His long and distinguished career has had significant impacts on the research, practice, policies and programs in the treatment of substance use disorders. He is a graduate of the chemistry program at Detroit’s Wayne State University, the University of Michigan Schools of Medicine and Public Health, and Harvard Law School. He also completed a two-year Substance Abuse Fellowship at the Department of Veteran Affairs Medical Center in San Francisco, where he served as Associate Clinical Professor, Department of Psychiatry, of the University of California at San Francisco (UCSF).

Over his many years in the field, Dr. Clark has observed the change from the focus on acute care to one that emphasizes long-term recovery. His support of Oxford House and its message of the possibility of long-term recovery without relapse is exemplified by his attendance at most of our annual conventions –in Washington or in places like Wichita. In 2009, Oxford House presented Dr. Clark its coveted Tom Fellows award.

**Second Keynote Address – Kimberley A. Johnson, Ph.D., M.B.A.**

Dr. Kimberly A. Johnson, Director, Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT), leads the center’s activities to improve access, reduce barriers, and promote high quality, effective substance use disorder treatment and recovery services. Dr. Johnson’s extensive experience in and contributions to the behavioral health field ensure the center’s programs are correctly focused and support SAMHSA’s mission. Just prior to her appointment, Dr. Johnson was Deputy Director for Operations of CHES/NIATx, a research center at the University of Wisconsin, Madison that focuses on systems improvement in behavioral health and the development of mobile applications for patient self-management. Dr. Johnson was also co-director of the national coordinating office of the Addiction Technology Transfer Center. Previously, she served for seven years as the Director of the Office of Substance Abuse in Maine and headed a women’s addiction treatment center.



Dr. Johnson has authored a variety of publications related to addiction and recovery, including e-health solutions for people with alcohol problems, using mobile phone technology to provide recovery support for women offenders, and new practices to increase access to and retention in addiction treatment. She is co-author of a book on the NIATx Model. Dr. Johnson has a master’s degree in counselor education, an M.B.A. and a Ph.D. in population health.

**FIRST BREAKOUT PANELS**

**FRIDAY 10:00 – 11:00 AM**

- Dealing with Opioid Overdoses**
- Working with Drug Courts and Parole/Probation Programs**
- Oxford House and State Agencies**
- Educating the Public about Recovery**
- Nuts and Bolts of Opening an Oxford House – The Basic**

- Chantilly East**
- Coronado A**
- Coronado BCD**
- Cortez AB**
- Cortez CD**

**SECOND BREAKOUT PANELS**

**Friday 11:15 AM - 12:30 PM**

- Oxford House and Re-entry from Prison**
- Working with Treatment Providers and Insurers**
- Technology in Oxford Houses**
- Defining and Measuring Oxford House Networking**
- Oxford Houses – Four Stages of Houses and Five Core Principles**

- Chantilly East**
- Coronado A**
- Coronado BCD**
- Cortez AB**
- Cortez BCD**

**Lunch on your own - Grab something to eat and hit an AA meeting (Desoto A) or an NA meeting (Desoto B)**

**GET WORLD COUNCIL NOMINATING PETITIONS IN BY 1:00 PM**

**Campaign speeches by each of the nominated candidates will be made at the  
Second General Session**

**SECOND GENERAL SESSION**

**2:15 PM – 5:00 PM**  
Chantilly East

**Keynote Address: Stuart Gitlow, M.D., MPH, MBA**

Stuart Gitlow, MD, MPH, MBA, is the Executive Director of the Annenberg Physician Training Program in Addictive Disease, which he started in 2005 to ensure medical student access to training that stimulates them to develop and maintain interest in working with patients with addiction. He serves as Chair of the AMA’s Council on Science and Public Health. Dr. Gitlow is the past President of the American Society of Addiction Medicine, and serves as ASAM’s delegate to the AMA. Board certified in general, addiction, and forensic psychiatry, Dr. Gitlow has an active addiction medicine practice.



A graduate of MIT and the Mount Sinai School of Medicine, Dr. Gitlow’s psychiatric and public health training took place in Pittsburgh, following which he went to Harvard for his forensic fellowship. He now divides his time between his clinical practice in New England and his academic work in New York City; he is on faculty at both Dartmouth and Mount Sinai. Dr. Gitlow formerly produced both Health Channel and ABC programming at America Online.

Dr. Gitlow is a strong supporter of Oxford House. His presentations on addiction and recovery to Oxford House audiences have always been met with great enthusiasm and have been very informative, inspirational and entertaining. No one works with an old-fashioned flip chart as well as he does.

**World Council Candidates Present 3-Minute Election Speeches**

The Oxford House World Council is an advisory council made up of Oxford House residents and alumni who serve staggered three-year terms. Each year at the convention, residents and alumni vie for open seats on the World Council. They circulate campaign material and make three-minute campaign speeches on Friday afternoon. Votes are counted on Saturday and the new members are introduced at the Saturday afternoon General Session.

**Friday Evening Dinner**

**6:00 PM**

**Enjoy a feast at: Medieval Times**

The restaurant is a short walk from the hotel at: 2021 N. Stemmons Freeway

There will be great food and entertainment!



*“Under the dedicated, tireless leadership of Kathleen Gibson, the entire Oxford House staff has done a wonderful job of carrying out the hard work of organizing this 2016 Annual Oxford House World Convention.*

*May the things we have learned and the new friends we have made at this convention speed us on the way to making the 42<sup>nd</sup> year of Oxford House one of great expansion. May that expansion be great enough to give every alcoholic, drug addict or person with co-occurring mental illness the opportunity to benefit from living in an Oxford House!”*

*Paul Molloy, a grateful Oxford House alumnus*

## Saturday, October 1, 2015

**Continental Breakfast**

**7:00 AM – 8:00 AM**

### **THIRD BREAKOUT PANELS**

**8:15 AM – 9:30 AM**

**Medication in Oxford House  
Building Diversity in Oxford Houses and Reaching the Underserved  
Civil Rights and the Law  
Housekeeping Issues: Bedbugs, Butt Cans and Curb Appeal  
Conducting House Meetings**

**Chantilly East  
Coronado A  
Coronado BCD  
Cortez AB  
Cortez CD**

### **FOURTH BREAKOUT PANELS**

**9:45 AM – 11:00 AM**

**Strategies for Achieving, Maintaining and Measuring Long-term Recovery  
Health Issues in Oxford Houses (Chronic Illnesses, HIV, Hepatitis C, etc.)  
Networking for Jobs  
Oxford House World Council Update  
Working Together: Houses, Chapters, Associations and Alumni**

**Chantilly East  
Coronado A  
Coronado BCD  
Cortez A  
Cortez CD**

*Remember to Vote for World Council Nominees Before Noon!*

### **FIFTH BREAKOUT PANELS**

**11:15 AM – 12:30 PM**

**The Importance of Having Fun in Oxford Houses  
Dealing with Children in Oxford Houses  
Current Oxford House Research and Upcoming Studies  
Veterans and Oxford Houses  
Organized Mutual Support and Training – Workshops, Retreats and Conventions**

**Chantilly East  
Coronado A  
Coronado BCD  
Cortez AB  
Cortez CD**

### **LUNCH ON YOUR OWN**

**12:30 PM – 1:45 PM**

**Lunch on your own – Immediate area has lots of places to eat in or carry out. Grab something to eat and hit an AA meeting in Georgetown West (GW) or an NA meeting in Georgetown East (GE) or go nearby to the Alumni Lunch.**

**Alumni Lunch** [Tickets at World Council Desk: \$25 per person]

**12:30-1:45 PM**

### **THIRD GENERAL SESSION**

**2:00 PM – 4:15 PM**

**Chantilly East**

### **Keynote Address: Michael Botticelli, Director, Office of National Drug Control Policy**



Michael Botticelli was sworn in as Director of National Drug Control Policy at the White House on February 11, 2015, after being unanimously confirmed by the Senate. He joined the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) as Deputy Director in November 2012 and later served as Acting Director. As Director of National Drug Control Policy, Mr. Botticelli leads the Obama Administration's drug policy efforts, which are based on a balanced public health and public safety approach. The Administration has advanced historic drug policy reforms and innovations in prevention, criminal justice, treatment, and recovery.

In response to the national opioid epidemic, Mr. Botticelli has coordinated actions across the Federal government to reduce prescription drug abuse, heroin use and related overdoses. These include supporting community-based prevention efforts; educating prescribers and the public about preventing prescription drug abuse; expanding use of the lifesaving overdose-reversal drug naloxone by law enforcement and other first responders; and increasing access to medication-assisted treatment and recovery support services to help individuals sustain their recovery from opioid use disorders.

Mr. Botticelli has been in long-term recovery from a substance use disorder for more than 26 years. He has encouraged the millions of Americans in recovery today to make their voices heard and confront the stigma associated with substance use disorders, which often keeps individuals from seeking and receiving treatment.

Mr. Botticelli has more than two decades of experience supporting Americans affected by substance use disorders. Mr. Botticelli has served in a variety of leadership roles for the National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors. He was a member of the Advisory Committee for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Center for Substance Abuse Prevention and the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention. He has also co-authored many peer-reviewed articles that have significantly contributed to the field.

Born in Upstate New York, Mr. Botticelli holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Siena College and a Master of Education degree from St. Lawrence University.

- **Announcement and Introduction of New World Council Members**
- **Discussion and Vote on Convention Resolutions – including the selection of a site for the 2016 Convention**
- **Presentation of Directors' 100-Year Awards**

## **Banquet**

**6:45 PM – 8:30 PM**  
Chantilly Ballroom

**Invocation: Michael McCarthy, Staff, Oxford House, Inc.**  
**Dinner**

### **Presentation of Awards**

- **Reggie Midget Award**
- **Founder's Awards**
- **Tom Fellows Award**

## **Recovery Speaker: Brian Cuban**

Brian Cuban is an attorney, author, and activist from Dallas, Texas. He was born Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania grew up in Pittsburgh and attended Mt. Lebanon High School. Cuban earned his undergraduate degree from Pennsylvania State University and his law degree from The University of Pittsburgh School of Law. He is licensed to practice law in Pennsylvania and Texas, specializing in First Amendment issues. He runs a blog called "The Cuban Revolution." He is a recovering alcoholic and drug user and has maintained sobriety since 2007. He is also an eating-disorder survivor and has authored a book about his lifelong struggle with body dysmorphic disorder.



Brian has a very interesting recovery story and is an engaging speaker.

## **Dance**

**9:00 PM – Midnight**  
Chantilly Ballroom

## **Sunday, October 2, 2016**

### **Continental Breakfast**

**7:00 AM – 8:00 AM**

### **CLOSING GENERAL SESSION**

**8:15 AM to 10:15 AM**  
Chantilly East

- **Convention Summary**
- **Remembrance Of Those Who Have Died**
- **Tradition Renewal and Closing**

**Paul Molloy**  
**Oxford House Residents and Alumni**  
**Kathleen Gibson**

# SUMMARY OF ALL BREAKOUT PANELS

## FIRST BREAKOUT PANELS

FRIDAY 10:00 – 11:00 AM

### Dealing with Opioid Overdoses

Chantilly East

Friday 10:00 - 11:00 AM

**Panelists:** Stuart Gitlow, M. D., M.P.A., M.B.A. Past President, American Society of Addiction Medicine  
Ken Hoffman, M. D. Medical Director, U. S. Department of State  
Charles Thibodeaux Texas Overdose Naloxone Initiative (TONI)  
Mark Kinzly Texas Overdose Naloxone Initiative (TONI)  
De Wallace Oxford House Outreach, NJ  
Eileen Wildnauer Oxford House Outreach, WV

**Moderator:** Shawn Johnson Oxford House Outreach, TX

The current opioid epidemic is a major concern in Oxford Houses. Most Oxford House residents stay clean and sober but occasionally residents will relapse. Relapses involving opioids, such as heroin, are more difficult to pick up than relapses into the use of alcohol, cocaine or many other drugs. Sometimes a person relapsing on opioids simply goes to bed, falls asleep and does not wake up because the drug has slowed the respiratory system too much. Relapse always requires immediate expulsion but the opioid overdoses can be fatal and residents should be aware of their occurrence and what action should be taken if a resident is believed to have overdosed. Once the immediate crisis is over, residents can move on to expulsion.

This panel will discuss the opioid epidemic, where it's most prevalent, how to recognize overdoses and what actions Oxford House residents should take to respond to a possible overdose by a resident. Narcan (Naloxone) and other antidotes can save the life of an opioid abuser who has overdosed. All House members should know the signs and what to do in the event of a relapse/overdose. The panel consists of medical experts, state officials and Oxford House outreach workers knowledgeable about the problem.

### Working with Drug Courts and Parole/Probation Programs

Coronado A

Friday, 10:00 - 11:00 AM

**Panelists:** Judge Lela D. Mays Successful Treatment of Addiction through Collaboration (STAC) Court  
Thomas Floyd Oxford House Outreach, OK  
Tracy Stueckrath Oxford House Outreach, NE  
George Kent Oxford House Regional Outreach Manager, NJ/WV  
Jesse Long Oxford House Outreach, SC

**Moderator:** Joe Chavez Oxford House Outreach, HI

In 1990, there were only one or two drug courts in the country. As of June, 2016, there were 3,057 drug courts. The practice and theory of drug courts is that it is better to route alcoholics and drug addicts into treatment than send them to jail. Drug court judges have found that drug court participants tend to do well if they live in an Oxford House. Not only does such intervention motivate clients to begin to master the recovery process, it also saves taxpayers the costs of incarceration and recidivism. Oxford House is a natural partner of drug courts. Some drug court judges have found that their clients do better in an Oxford House than returning to their families or old neighborhoods. Many Oxford House residents are drug court clients; e.g., in June, 2015, 162 New Jersey Oxford House residents (about 20% of the total NJ Oxford House residents at that time) were drug court clients.

The panelists will discuss how Oxford Houses can help drug court clients achieve long-term sobriety and meet the expectations of the drug courts.

## Oxford House and State Agencies

**Coronado BCD**

**Friday 10:00 - 11:00 AM**

**Panelists:** Kimberly A. Johnson, Ph. D. Director, CSAT  
DeDe Severino, M.A. Program Manager, NC DHHS Div. Of MH/DD/SAS  
Linda McKorkle TN, Director of Treatment and Recovery Services  
Philander Moore Dept. of State Health Services, TX  
Chris Scalise NJ DASA

**Moderator:** Alyssa Brock Oxford House Outreach, NC

Expansion of the Oxford House network of houses has occurred fastest where Oxford House has a close working relationship with the state agency. Expansion is particularly strong where a state has financially supported both a start-up revolving loan fund and on-site technical assistance. This panel will discuss whether state agencies are fully utilizing Oxford House as a cost-effective best practice for promoting long-term recovery without relapse and, if not, what should Oxford House, Inc. (or State agencies) be doing to encourage greater support. Does the fact that Oxford House is listed on the National Registry of Evidence-based Practices and Procedures matter? Should long-term sobriety be the measure of treatment success? From the standpoint of state agencies, what could Oxford House be doing better to increase support? To what extent do NIMBY issues and occasional overdose incidents and deaths discourage state support? Do state agencies understand how Oxford House can serve as a NIMBY buffer for them?

Dr. Johnson is the Director of CSAT. The other panelists work in state agencies that foster development of networks of self-run, self-supported Oxford Houses. The moderator is an Oxford House outreach worker who has worked with state agencies. They are each in a good position to assess the working relationship between state agencies and Oxford House and discuss ways in which the partnership is effective and ways in which it might be improved.

## Educating the Public about Recovery

**Cortez AB**

**Friday 10:00 – 11:00 AM**

**Panelists:** Ivette A. Torres, M.Ed., M.S. Director, Office of Consumer Affairs, CSAT/SAMHSA  
Joe Powell President, APAA Recovery  
Westley Clark, M.D., J.D. Former CSAT Director; Board Member, Faces and Voices  
Jenna Sheldon Texas Dept. of State Health Services (DSHS)  
Ben Bass Board Member, Faces and Voices

**Moderator:** Blair Tinkle, J. D. Staff Counsel, Oxford House, Inc.

Throughout the 41-year history of Oxford House, Oxford House residents have been open about their addiction. Historically, this openness came about because the location of Oxford Houses in residential neighborhoods and the publicity surrounding NIMBY lawsuits made anonymity impossible. At the same time, however, the Oxford House program emphasized the positive aspects of recovery and encouraged residents to focus on their recovery and not focus on the stigmatism of addiction. These factors kept Oxford House residents from maintaining anonymity in the broader community. The end result has been positive. Oxford House residents' openness about their recovery has led to a greater sense of community among residents. Furthermore, early on, this openness led Oxford House residents to be pioneers in encouraging and participating in academic research on addiction and recovery. As a result, researchers and the public now have a far better understanding of addiction and recovery. This research would not have been possible without piercing the veil of anonymity.

Panelists from government and private sector organizations that focus on public drug and alcohol education will discuss the purpose, value and need to educate the public on how alcoholics, drug addicts and those with co-occurring mental illness can and do recover. The panel will discuss the approaches they use – what works and what doesn't – and provide insight into the recovery community's role in these efforts. The recovery community is also recognizing that, while there is a role for anonymity, there is also a need to be more forthright about recovery.



## Nuts and Bolts of Opening an Oxford House – The Basics

**Cortez CD**

**Friday 10:00 – 11:00 AM**

**Panelists:** Ricky Mogel Oxford House Outreach, WA  
Sean Bossen Oxford House Outreach, OR  
Lori Holtzclaw Oxford House Regional Outreach Manager, LA/MS  
Misty Wilkins Oxford House Outreach, NC

**Moderator:** Ed Smith Oxford House Outreach, OR

Oxford House is continually opening new Oxford Houses to meet the demand for successful recovery housing. This panel reviews the basic elements involved in starting a new Oxford House – from how to find an appropriate house and neighborhood, the availability and terms of start-up loans and how to apply for them, getting a charter from OHI, and recruiting new residents for the House. The panelists will discuss what it takes to open new Oxford Houses and identify practices that work and that don't work.

Oxford House expansion happened in the early years because existing Oxford Houses filled up and the residents felt guilty because they were unable to provide a bed for others who wanted what they had. The existing Oxford Houses found new houses to rent and some of the members of the existing Oxford House would move into the new Oxford House to help get it established. That can and should still happen. The early members of Oxford House were particularly adept at convincing new members to do most of the work themselves – the Tom Sawyer effect. It worked and is a formula to be considered by current residents and outreach workers. Outreach workers can also be used as resource persons by individual Oxford Houses and Chapters that want to learn how to start new Oxford Houses.

## SECOND BREAKOUT PANELS

**Friday 11:15 AM - 12:30 PM**

### Oxford House and Re-entry from Prison

**Chantilly East**

**Friday 11:15 AM -12:30 PM**

**Panelists:** Kurtis Taylor Oxford House Outreach NC  
Marty Walker Oxford House Outreach Coordinator LA/MI  
Dan Hahn Oxford House State Coordinator, OK  
Hiram Torres Oxford House Resident, TX  
Marcus Ayers, M.Ed., LPC Manager of Correctional, Criminal Justice, and Reentry Services  
OK Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services

**Moderator:** Chris McGuire Oxford House Outreach TX

Over three-quarters of the Oxford House population has done some jail or prison time. In America today, approximately 60% of those in jails or prison are addicted to alcohol and/or drugs. Each year, thousands of those who are incarcerated re-enter society. Within one year of re-entry, about half of the individuals will commit another crime and be headed to conviction and re-entry to incarceration.

The experience of those who enter an Oxford House following incarceration is usually long-term recovery and crime-free behavior. In some states, Oxford House has developed relationships with re-entry programs that permit those leaving incarceration to go straight to an Oxford House and the panel will discuss how to encourage this.

Oxford House is one of the few sober living environments in the country that truly integrates individuals from all strata of society, rich and poor, educated and uneducated, and 'has beens' and 'never weres.' Oxford House residents who come into an Oxford House from incarceration are exposed to participatory democracy rather than institutional authority. They are elected to leadership positions and undertake shared responsibility for the operation of the house. Most residents rise to the occasion. This kind of real-life training is rare for most individuals re-entering society.

The panel will discuss: [1] the need for post-incarceration recovery opportunities; [2] the value of Oxford House as a transitional residence; [3] practical ways to facilitate getting individuals leaving incarceration into an Oxford House.

## Working with Treatment Providers and Insurers

**Coronado A**

**Friday 11:00 AM – 12:30 PM**

**Panelists:** Kimberly A. Johnson, Ph. D. Director, CSAT  
Amelia Matz Reed, LCDC Recovery Links Manager, Lifetime Recovery  
Marie Krebs, M.S. Marie Krebs Consulting, PLLC  
Keith Gibson Oxford Outreach, NC  
Dan Fuchs Oxford Outreach, CO

**Moderator:** Julie Marshall, M.A. Oxford House Special Projects, NC

Most individuals recovering from alcoholism or drug addiction initially go through formal treatment programs. For many individuals, the residency time limits in formal programs preclude forming a sufficient base for sustained long-term recovery. Individuals who get into an Oxford House following formal treatment are generally more likely to achieve successful long-term recovery than if they go directly back to the community after treatment. Some treatment programs encourage clients to go to Oxford House following treatment and they have found that clients who do so tend to avoid relapse.

The panelists will discuss how treatment programs and Oxford Houses can work together to support long-term recovery without relapse. They will also discuss what treatment programs can do to foster the expansion of Oxford Houses through their own sponsorship of Oxford Houses or other means, and also what Oxford House residents can do to establish and foster good working relationships with treatment providers. The panelists will discuss the importance of frequent presentations at treatment provider sites and having good real-time vacancy information to share with primary treatment providers and the recovery community in general.

## Technology in Oxford Houses

**Coronado BCD**

**Friday, 11:15 AM – 12:30 PM**

**Panelists:** Tim Diehl Oxford House Vacancy Guru, NJ  
Jason Bliss Oxford House Outreach, WA  
Lindsay Green Oxford House Outreach, TX  
Alex Szary Oxford House Data Specialist, TX

**Moderator:** Jake Arther Oxford House Outreach, OK

Oxford Houses use technology in a variety of ways – the Oxford House web site, various State and individual Facebook Pages, Linked-In, You-Tube, individual e-mail accounts and the cell phone. Members also use the web to access information useful to them in recovery. The panelists will talk about how Oxford House residents can use the various media to good purpose – to foster their own recovery and get jobs, and to help others understand the program and get access to it. Furthermore, residents use social media to socialize, publicize House and Chapter achievements and events, and to share information about jobs and House vacancies.

The discussion will also focus on the need for all Oxford Houses to maintain current vacancy information on the web site and respond promptly to email, text or telephone inquiries about vacancies. Treatment providers looking to place people leaving treatment and individuals looking for a place to live need to be able to access accurate and current Oxford House vacancy information. Tim Diehl has created a great vacancy system for Oxford House but, like AA, it works only if you work it. Panelists will also discuss how Oxford House residents have used social media successfully (and unsuccessfully) and identify websites likely to be of interest to Oxford House residents.

The panelists are all savvy and experienced technology users with differing skills and interests. Together they should be able to provide lots of tips to Oxford House residents for how they and their Chapters and State Associations can use technology to great advantage.

## Defining and Measuring Oxford House Networking

**Cortez AB**

**Friday 11:15 AM - 12:30 PM**

**Panelists:** Leonard Jason, Ph. D. Director, Center for Community Research, DePaul University, IL  
John Majer, Ph. D. Professor of Psychology, Harry S. Truman College, IL  
Casey Longan Consultant, Center for Community Research, DePaul University  
Van Wilkins DePaul Researcher  
Alex Snowden DePaul Researcher

**Moderator:** Sarah Callahan Center for Community Research, DePaul University, IL

The panelists will discuss their NIH-funded study that focuses on how recovery house residents' recovery-related attitudes, behaviors, and social relationships co-evolve, and how these individual characteristics and house-level social structures affect house residents' recovery. The study is examining relationships within Oxford Houses in three locations around the country and is focusing on the trust, friendship, and advice/mentoring that exist within each house.

The study will identify mechanisms through which social environments affect health outcomes, and thereby contribute to reducing unnecessary health care costs by improving the effectiveness of the residential recovery home system in the US and also restructuring and improving other community-based recovery settings. These types of improvements could lead to better client care and treatment outcomes. The research will also seek to provide insight on within-house structure and dynamics that influence a resident's likelihood of maintaining recovery. The panelists are all personally involved in the study.

## Oxford Houses – Four Stages of Houses and Five Core Principles

**Cortez BCD**

**Friday 11:15 AM – 12:30 PM**

**Presenter:** Jackson Longan Oxford House Regional Outreach Manager, OK/NE/TX

**Moderator:** David Espiritu Oxford House Outreach, TX

The basic guide for operating an Oxford House is the Oxford House Manual<sup>®</sup>. All Houses follow the Manual but some Houses are more successful than others. Jackson Longan will give a PowerPoint presentation that shows a continuum of practices he has developed that differentiate between an Oxford House that is following its charter but not doing much else and an Oxford House in which members are actively involved in recovery-enhancing activities. It is not a formal rating system but it is a useful checklist that residents can use to consider how their Oxford House can do better.

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## THIRD BREAKOUT PANELS

Saturday, 8:15 - 9:30 AM

### Medication in Oxford Houses

Chantilly East

Saturday 8:15 - 9:30 AM

**Panelists:** Ken Hoffman, M.D. Medical Director, U. S. Department of State  
Stuart Gitlow, M. D., M.P.H., M.B.A. Past President, American Society of Addiction  
Medicine Stacey Levin Oxford House Outreach, SC  
Kurtis Taylor Oxford House Outreach, NC

**Moderator:** Paul Stevens, M.S. Oxford House Regional Outreach Manager, VA/DC/MD

Recovering alcoholics and drug addicts enter Oxford House with a clear understanding that a condition of residence is to stay clean and sober. About half of the residents of Oxford House may also have a mental health disorder that requires medication to control. Medication for some maladies is not only consistent with the clean and sober bedrock of Oxford House but is also essential to maintain the health of the resident. However, some medications have many of the characteristics of alcohol or mood-altering drugs that can trigger relapse either for the user or others in the house. This panel will sort through the medications that fit within an Oxford House environment and those that undermine the alcohol and drug free foundation for Oxford House living.

The panelists will discuss the use and misuse of medicines within an Oxford House. Some medications are not permitted because they may be illicit or cause mood-changing behavior and be addictive. On the other hand, some medicines are correctly prescribed and may be necessary for controlling serious mental illness or making a transition from addictive use to comfortable sobriety. The panel will consider how such situations are handled and steps taken by various houses to assure that the person with the prescription or others in the house do not misuse legitimate medication or provide easy access to the medication to others residents. Understanding different medications as well as their use and abuse is the first step to knowing how an individual Oxford House should monitor and control the presence of legal drugs within Oxford Houses.

### Building Diversity in Oxford Houses and Reaching the Underserved

Coronado A

Saturday 8:15 - 9:30 AM

**Panelists:** Jeremy Weatherspoon Oxford House Alumnus, LA  
Elias Andrade Oxford House Alumnus, San Antonio, TX  
Stacie Hatfield Oxford House Outreach, WA  
Paula Harrington Oxford House Outreach, NC

**Moderator:** Mark Spence Oxford House Outreach, DC

Addiction is a disease that that doesn't discriminate on the basis of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, ethnic background, educational level or a host of other characteristics. There is little good that can be said about addiction and co-occurring mental illness except they are egalitarian diseases, cutting across race, creed, gender, income level, and education attainment. In its 41 years of existence, the Oxford House population has always reflected that diversity because of the common bond of addiction.

The panelists will discuss different types of diversity challenges faced by Houses and what Houses can do to foster and benefit from diversity within Oxford Houses.

## Civil Rights and the Law

### Coronado BCD

Saturday 8:15 – 9:30 AM

**Panelists:** Steve Polin, J.D. General Counsel, Oxford House, Inc.  
Greg Heafner, J.D. Attorney, Chapel Hill, NC

**Moderator:** Blair Tinkle, J.D. Attorney, Oxford House, Inc.

From its establishment in 1975, Oxford House has sought good houses to rent in good neighborhoods. Until the 1988 Amendments to the Federal Fair Housing Act, zoning laws often kept group homes out of the better residential neighborhoods. Oxford House served as the trailblazer in seeking court definition and affirmation of the 1988 Amendments to the Federal FHA, including the US Supreme Court decision in *City of Edmonds, WA v. Oxford House, Inc.* decided in 1995. In spite of that favorable decision, some localities continue to try to avoid accommodating Oxford House residents and Oxford House, Inc. continues to challenge these barriers in court.

This panel will discuss the current state of the law and how Oxford House has successfully applied the law to thwart insurance companies that try to discriminate against landlords renting to Oxford House as well as jurisdictions that dream up new tactics to continue NIMBY discrimination, including discriminatory application of fire/safety codes.

Steve Polin, an alumnus of Oxford House, is a leading litigator in the application of the Federal Fair Housing Act to protect rights of individuals with disabilities. Greg Heafner, an Oxford House alumnus, is an attorney in Chapel Hill and has represented Oxford House in Fair Housing Act cases, particularly those involving insurance discrimination against landlords. Blair Tinkle, the moderator, is an Oxford House resident and an attorney on the staff of Oxford House, Inc.

## Housekeeping Issues: Bedbugs, Butt Cans and Curb Appeal

### Cortez AB

Saturday, 8:15 - 9:30 AM

**Panelists:** Dan Hahn Oxford House State Coordinator, OK  
Sean Bossen Oxford House Outreach, OR  
Jason Jarreau Oxford House Outreach, DC/MD  
Kayla Leinenweber Oxford House Outreach, TN

**Moderator:** Will Madison Oxford House Outreach, NC

While Oxford House residents focus on recovery, they also have to deal with more mundane housekeeping issues. These issues need to be resolved by House members in constructive and effective ways. The panelists, all of whom are Oxford House outreach workers and alumni, will discuss some of the housekeeping issues they've dealt with as residents and as outreach workers.

One of the more difficult – and costly – housekeeping issues faced by Oxford Houses today involves bedbugs. It's an issue that has been dealt with successfully by some Oxford Houses and the panel will discuss typical sources of infestation and what Oxford Houses should do to prevent infestation – and to clean it up if it happens. Prevention is by far the best solution as eradication can be very costly. Panel members who have dealt with bedbug problems will identify what they have learned about prevention and eradication.

Butt cans are a particular problem since they can lead to house fires and destruction of the house. This has happened and it's something that House residents need to be vigilant about and guard against if butt cans are used. Panelists will discuss how they can be used safely.

Yard maintenance probably isn't a safety issue but it's always a good idea to be a good neighbor – and good neighbors try to keep up their yards. It takes a bit of effort but it's worth doing to preserve the good name of Oxford House and to be good neighbors.

## Conducting House Meetings

**Cortez CD**

**Saturday 8:15 – 9:30 AM**

**Panelists:** Mike Martindale  
Shawn Wister  
Tara Meyer

Oxford House Outreach, TN  
Oxford House Outreach, SC  
Oxford House Outreach, NJ

**Moderator:** Chris McGuire

Oxford House Outreach, TX

The panel will focus on the nuts and bolts of how to conduct business meetings in Oxford House. Topics will include conducting applicant interviews, conducting weekly and special business meetings, parliamentary procedure and setting the right meeting tone – and length.

Regularly-scheduled weekly House meetings are critical components of successfully operating an Oxford House. It is in these meetings that residents engage in formally running their House democratically, as is required by their Oxford House Charter. House meetings are not always fun – sometimes they're boring; sometimes tempers flare; sometimes they are too long; other times, they do what they need to do and everyone is proud to be a member of a democratically-run Oxford House. The panelists will emphasize how to run your House meetings to make them productive and even enjoyable.

Each of the panelists has experienced good and bad House meetings. They'll provide tips for holding good meetings.

## FOURTH BREAKOUT PANELS

**Saturday 9:45-11:00 AM**

### Strategies for Achieving, Maintaining and Measuring Long-term Recovery

**Chantilly East**

**Saturday 9:45 – 11:00 AM**

**Panelists:** Kimberly A. Johnson, Ph. D.  
Marty Walker  
John Majer, Ph. D.  
  
Westley Clark, M.D., J.D., M.P.H.  
Lori Holtzclaw  
Jackson Longan

Director, CSAT  
Oxford Outreach TN  
Researcher and Clinical Psychology Professor  
Truman College, Chicago, IL  
Faculty, University of Santa Clara, CA  
Oxford House Outreach LA/MS  
Oxford House Regional Manager, TX/NE/OK

**Moderator:** Stuart Gitlow, M.D., M.P.H., M.B.A

Past President, American Society for Addiction Medicine

This panel will discuss what long-term recovery means (and how should be measured), strategies for maintaining long-term recovery, and how Oxford House residents and alumni achieve it. How does the medical community define and measure recovery and how do Oxford House residents define and measure it? What does the academic literature say about defining and maintaining long-term recovery and what does the experience of Oxford House residents suggest?

The experience of Oxford House residents to date tends to validate the notion that the longer an individual lives in an Oxford House, the more likely that individual will maintain sobriety. Most relapsing Oxford House residents who relapse do so within the first three months of residency. Does the Oxford House philosophy of 'recovery without relapse' lead to the better outcomes found among Oxford House residents? Are there other characteristics of Oxford House living that are particularly important to fostering long-term recovery? What factors do the Oxford House panelists believe explains the long-term sobriety or themselves and other alumni?

The panel consists of the Director of CSAT, experts in addiction medicine, academic researchers, and Oxford House alumni in long-term recovery who are currently working as Oxford House outreach workers.

## Health Issues in Oxford Houses (Chronic Illnesses, HIV, Hepatitis C, etc.)

### Coronado A

Saturday 9:45 - 11:00 AM

<b>Panelists:</b>	Darryl Joiner Tony Sowards Tara Shimer Ken Hoffman, M.D. Michael Duffy	Staff, Oxford House Inc. Oxford House Outreach, NC Staff, Oxford House, Inc. Chief Medical Officer, U. S. Department of State Regional Director, SAMHSA
<b>Moderator:</b>	Kirstin Hallberg	Oxford House Outreach, Nebraska

Many Oxford House residents have a variety of health issues in addition to addiction, including Hepatitis C, HIV, AIDS, and PTSD and other mental illnesses. Others are undergoing chemotherapy for cancers. This panel discusses how residents of Oxford Houses deal with these issues while living in an Oxford House.

One of the major DePaul studies looked specifically at the incidence of co-occurring mental illness among Oxford House residents. Significantly, the researchers found that half of the individuals tested positive on the PSI, with half of that number showing serious mental illness. Importantly, those individuals did just as well as the others in the study and moved toward long-term recovery because they had the peer support needed.

AIDS, HIV, Bi-polar disorder and Hepatitis C all respond to proper medication. In an Oxford House, these individuals get the support they need to develop good medication habits. Housemates notice and comment when it appears that residents are not observing their appropriate medical protocols and encourage them to keep to their scheduled program or perhaps touch base with their physician or therapist.

Dr. Hoffman is a psychiatrist with extensive experience dealing with substance abuse disorders. He is also a member of the Oxford House Board of Directors. Michael Duffy now works for SAMHSA and formerly headed the state drug and alcohol program in Louisiana. The other panelists are all Oxford House staff or outreach personnel who have lived in Oxford Houses and are familiar with how Oxford Houses deal with health problems among residents.

## Networking for Jobs

### Coronado BCD

Saturday 9:45-11:00 AM

<b>Panelists:</b>	Brandi Bauer Karen McKinnon Tom Hill, MSW Johnny Roache Kevin McCormick	Oxford House Alumna, LA Oxford House Outreach, NC Senior Advisor for Addiction and Recovery, SAMHSA Oxford House Outreach, DE Oxford House Outreach, VA
<b>Moderator:</b>	Ed Smith	Oxford House State Coordinator, OR

From Elliott Liebow's "Tally's Corner" to Robert D. Putnam's "Bowling Alone," sociologists have been focused on community networks. While today's sociologists may lament these networks, Oxford House residents create networks that work. Oxford House residents help each other attain long-term sobriety and also create social and employment networks. It's in the interest of all House residents to see that everyone in the House has a job so as to pay an equal share of expenses so they help residents find jobs. Furthermore, residents who have educational achievements, or are pursuing them, provide guidance to residents who may be interested in doing the same. Residents set examples and use House and chapter meetings – as well as social media – to publicize job and educational opportunities.

The panelists will discuss various ways networking works in their areas and the many ways they and other residents and alumni have helped other residents – whether by helping them find job openings, identifying educational opportunities, bringing information about recovery and Oxford House to veterans and those incarcerated or translating Oxford House material into Spanish to make the program more accessible to Hispanics.

## Oxford House World Council Update

**Cortez AB**

**Saturday 9:45 - 11:00 AM**

**Panelists:** World Council Members Resident and Alumni Members of World Council

**Moderator:** Illyana Whiteley World Council Chair

The Oxford House World Council is made up of Oxford House residents and alumni who are elected to serve staggered three-year terms of office. Elections take place annually at the Oxford House Convention. The Oxford House World Council is an advisory council that identifies problems and issues, develops draft solutions and resolutions and makes suggestions and recommendations to the organization. At this 2016 Oxford House World Convention, new Council Members will be elected. World Council members meet in person twice a year and hold periodic telephone conference meetings.

World Council members will report to the convention on their activities over the past year. In many ways, the World Council serves as a ‘canary in a coal mine.’ Its members all over the country keep their eyes and ears open to learn new ways to improve Oxford House operations. When they detect a problem or improvement, they share their views with the Oxford House, Inc. Since the World Council Chair is an *ex officio* member of the Oxford House Board, lines of direct communication are always open.

### Working Together: Houses, Chapters, Associations and Alumni

**Cortez CD**

**Saturday 9:45 - 11:00 AM**

**Panelists:** Jonathan Bob Livingston Oxford House Member, LA  
Chuck Liston Oxford House Alumnus, KS  
Erica O’Donnell Oxford House Resident, TX  
Greg “Goose” Weisz Oxford House Outreach, NC  
Lynn Williams Oxford House Alumnus, NC/VA

**Moderator:** Gino Pugliese Oxford House Regional Outreach Manager, WA

The traditional halfway house that led to the formation of Oxford House was beset by an adversarial “we versus them” culture that often pitted the residents against the authority figures in the house. The “we versus them” culture detracts from the culture of recovery. Early on, Oxford House recognized that an egalitarian, democratic culture could alleviate the “we versus them” culture and keep the focus on the achievement of comfortable recovery.

In many states, Houses, chapters and state associations all work together, recognizing the different roles of each. Sometimes, however, there is bureaucratic overreach and this should be avoided. One of the biggest challenges faced by Oxford House residents – now and in its earliest days – is fostering democracy in Houses and in Chapters. The system is purposely ‘rigged’ to foster democracy by its emphasis on House meetings, election of officers, the equal sharing of expenses and the autonomy of the each individual Oxford House. In the very first Oxford House, the residents were concerned that Paul might become the ‘big boss’ if they didn’t circumvent it and the Oxford House Manual was written to establish a system where democracy would prevail. It’s important in all Oxford Houses and Chapters that everyone be treated equally; by establishing term limits on House officers, everyone has the chance to rise to the occasion, accept responsibility, learn leadership and strengthen sobriety. It’s also important that Oxford House outreach workers serve as resource persons, teaching residents how the Oxford House system works but, like Tom Sawyer, encouraging the residents do the work themselves.

Many Chapters and State Associations sponsor social events as a way of bringing residents of individual Oxford Houses together to create new friendships and networks. Since membership in a Chapter or State Association is always voluntary, emphasizing fellowship over enforcement, and education over authoritarianism, builds membership. Chapters and State associations have an important role to play in supporting individual Oxford Houses and their residents but at all times they need to recognize the autonomy of each individual Oxford House. The panel will discuss what Oxford Houses, chapters and state associations do to build constructive relationships with each other.



## **FIFTH BREAKOUT PANELS**

**Saturday 11:15 AM - 12:30 PM**

### **The Importance of Having Fun in Oxford Houses**

**Chantilly East**

**Saturday, 11:15 AM – 12:30 PM**

**Panelists:** Marty Walker Oxford House Outreach, TN  
Ian Digby Oxford House Outreach, OK  
Stacey Levin Oxford House Outreach, SC  
Emily Edens Oxford House Outreach, KY

**Moderator:** Elizabeth Lewis Oxford House Outreach, TX

Oxford House CEO Paul Molloy has long said that, “If recovery isn’t as much fun as drinking, or using drugs, why stay clean and sober?” Many Oxford Houses and Oxford House Chapters take that admonition to heart and make sure that they find ways to encourage fun in recovery. Houses and Chapters should emphasize attraction rather than enforcement; sometimes that’s hard but it’s worth it.

Among the types of activities some Houses and Chapters undertake are: picnics, fishing trips, retreats, progressive dinners, softball teams and tournaments, cookouts, spaghetti dinners, pancake breakfasts, and bowling and participation in bowling leagues. Many Houses and Chapters emphasize these activities during Recovery Month in particular. Chapters frequently use these types of activities to encourage Houses to be members of the Chapter and demonstrate their value. Chapter membership, of course, is voluntary but social activities of the type mentioned tend to bring increases in membership.

The panelists will discuss various ways Houses and Chapters have gotten together to host social gatherings and promote fellowship among residents and alumni in addition to using the democratic, disciplined system of house operation to master self-confidence, sobriety and living a comfortable life without booze and

### **Dealing with Children in Oxford Houses**

**Coronado A**

**Saturday 11:15 AM - 12:30 PM**

**Panelists:** Kaitlyn Hoffman Oxford House Outreach, NJ  
Sean Bossen Oxford House Outreach, OR  
Debbie Robinson Oxford House Outreach, VA

**Moderator:** Judy Maxwell Oxford House Outreach, OR

Many Oxford House residents have young children. Some are living with relatives or other people but may sometimes visit their parent in an Oxford House. In some Oxford Houses, children live there with a parent. The panel will discuss how Oxford Houses with Children work and what challenges they pose – for the parent, the children, and the other Oxford House residents.

Issues to be addressed will include: (1) what makes an Oxford House with Children work well; (2) how does a House deal with an unruly or undisciplined child; (3) should a House have age limits for children in residence; (4) is it better if only 1 or 2 residents of a particular Oxford House have children living with them; and (5) do individual Oxford Houses – those without children in residence – make special rules for when children may visit.

The panelists all are familiar with Oxford Houses for Women with Children (and a few Oxford Houses for Men with Children). They know the ins and outs of what problems can arise and how others have dealt with such problems in the past.

## Current Oxford House Research and Upcoming Studies

### Coronado BCD

**Saturday 11:15 AM – 12:30 PM**

**Panelists:** Leonard Jason, Ph. D. Director, Center for Community Research, DePaul University  
Chris Beasley, Ph. D. Assistant Professor of Psychology, Washington College, MD  
John Majer, Ph. D. Researcher and Clinical Psychology Professor  
Truman College, Chicago, IL  
Sarah Callahan Center for Community Research, DePaul University

**Moderator:** Blair Tinkle, J.D. Staff Attorney, Oxford House, Inc.

The panelists will discuss recovery research with particular emphasis on studies involving Oxford House residents. Over the years there has been an enormous amount of research done on the Oxford House program and on Oxford House residents. The large body of data about Oxford House and its successful outcomes led the federal government to list Oxford House as a best practice on SAMHSA's National Registry of Evidence-based programs and Practices (NREPP). Oxford House, Inc. and Oxford House residents have been in the forefront of fostering recovery research. Recovery research was long hampered by the historic focus on anonymity by 12-Step groups. While anonymity has its purposes, it has also had the effect of limiting research on recovery.

Each of the panelists has done significant work in recovery research. Lenny Jason and his team at DePaul have studied Oxford House since 1991. John Majer has also done studies on Oxford House and the recovery process in general.

## Veterans and Oxford Houses

### Cortez AB

**Saturday 11:15 AM – 12:30 PM**

**Panelists:** Ken Hoffman, M.D. Chief Medical Officer, US Department of State  
Matt Schincke Oxford House Outreach, NE  
Eric Hypes Oxford House Alumnus, OK  
Walter Ular Oxford House Resident, OR

**Moderator:** Joe Chavez Oxford House Outreach, HI

About 18% of the nearly 16,000 residents in the national network of Oxford Houses are veterans. Oxford Houses can play a significant role in providing recovery housing for many veterans, including those in recovery who also have PTSD. This panel will discuss how to build better bridges between returning and older veterans in recovery from substance abuse. It will focus on particular problems faced by veterans in recovery and discuss the benefits of living in an Oxford House. The panel will also consider ways by which individual Oxford Houses can reach out to VA programs and to veterans in VA Hospitals and the Veterans' Domiciliary Program. Dr. Hoffman, a psychiatrist, is a retired U. S. Army Colonel who is a medical officer at the State Department. Joe Chavez, a former Marine, is the Oxford House Coordinator in Hawaii. The other panelists are also veterans.

## Organized Mutual Support and Training – Workshops, Retreats and Conventions

### Cortez CD

**Saturday 11:15 AM – 12:30 PM**

**Panelists:** Lori Holtzclaw Oxford House Regional Outreach Manager, LA/MS  
Jeremy Weatherspoon Oxford House Alumnus, LA  
Kasey Ziegler Oxford House Outreach, OR  
Paul Stevens Oxford House Regional Outreach Manager, VA/DC/MD

**Moderator:** Bruce Gates Oxford House Outreach, KY

This panel will discuss the purpose and structure of state and local workshops, retreats and conventions. These gatherings serve both training and social functions for Oxford House residents. The panelists will discuss their experience with these formats and provide guidance on the structure and planning needed to make them successful.

## Oxford House Stories

*This segment of the program contains a selection of autobiographical sketches by current and former residents of Oxford Houses. These recovering individuals are sharing their stories in order to help others afflicted by alcoholism and drug addiction to understand the hope afforded by Oxford House. Many readers will be struck by the devastating damage associated with alcoholism and drug addiction. There is no pill or magic bullet that can produce a cure for addiction. The only path to recovery is total abstinence from alcohol and illicit drugs. Few are able to master such behavior change alone. Together with the 12-Step programs, Oxford House offers its residents the opportunity and time to use peer support, a safe living environment and a disciplined system of operation to achieve the behavior changes necessary to avoid a return to the use of alcohol and addictive drugs. Some stories have been edited for clarity or length.*

*For forty-one years, thousands of individuals have found a path to recovery by living in an Oxford House. All members of the Oxford House family hope that by sharing these personal stories of hard-won recovery, they will contribute to the growth of the Oxford House network, guide those not yet in recovery toward an effective program, and foster the understanding and support of the broader community. Many more Oxford House stories of the transition from addiction to 'comfortable sobriety without relapse' are on the Oxford House web site ([www.oxfordhouse.org](http://www.oxfordhouse.org)) under "About Us/Stories."*

### 2016 OXFORD HOUSE STORIES BY RESIDENTS AND ALUMNI

#### AMANDA G. – North Carolina

I was in active addiction for 20 years. Growing up I suffered with mental illness and addiction. I always felt like the outcast of the family, even at a very young age. In high school I still managed to be a very active member in the marching band, volleyball and track. I kept a high GPA and went on to college to become a registered nurse, which I never completed because I dropped out right after the first semester of being accepted. I had great jobs at Duke Energy and Concord Telephone Company and I had my first child when I was 21. I had terrible relationships that never were successful due to my drugging and drinking. I pushed everyone in my life away. My life was unmanageable and, to say the least, my soul was dead. I battled back and forth with all kinds of drugs and alcohol and thought I was functioning until the age of 35. At that time I was homeless and had no vehicle and was living in a city I knew nothing about. Never in my life did I ever think I would end up homeless. I lost my job, my car, my fiancé and 3 children to the disease of addiction. I wanted to die.

I had been in an out of treatment centers, jail, and organized religion in the past. I wanted something different this time: Real help! I went to a dual diagnosis facility and, while I was there, my parents who had bailed me out time and time again actually told me, "NO!" It was the best thing they ever did for me. They said, "We love you but you can't come home!" My niece was in an Oxford House at the time and my sister told me about it. Before I left treatment, I called for an interview and was accepted. I felt like this was my new beginning. My clean date is 3/7/2014, and I moved in 3/15/2014. I was scared to death, but I remember a sweet, kind tender-hearted girl there who was so welcoming and it didn't feel so scary.

It wasn't long after I moved in that I became very active in Oxford House roles. I was on the Housing Service committee and learned how to do every position in the house. In May of 2015, two other women and I turned a sick and suffering men's house into a second women's house in Salisbury and paid their \$5,000 debt off in full in two months. Mind you, the previous house I came from was \$10,000 in debt when I got there, and we were debt-free right before we opened this second women's house. It takes strong women who are serious about their recovery to really help a house flourish. We did it!

The Oxford House literally saved my life. I've been to state and world conventions, helped with fundraising, and helped houses in need. However, the most rewarding part is just being able to help the one yet to come! I've restored relationships, my children come to stay here on a regular basis, and I have two great jobs! I am going to be able to move out by the end of this year because Oxford House has allowed me to actually save money and have a savings account!!! I owe it all to Oxford House. The relationships I have made during my journey here are priceless! I can't express enough gratitude to Oxford House for assisting me in my recovery journey.

**ANDREW JERMANN – Washington State**

Before I came to Oxford living. I was a hopeless, homeless young man who was in heavy addiction. I didn't have anything except for a duffle bag full of clothes and no one really by my side. I went into a treatment facility and there was some people that came in to a panel to speak about Oxford. At first I wasn't interested but I made the decision to do it. And I am forever grateful that I did! It's giving me a lot in life. It's given me a safe place to come home to, good friendship, brotherhood and unity. It's taught me responsibility.

I've even gotten involved with Oxford and now hold down a service position in Oxford. I love the life style it has to offer and I've met some amazing people since I've been in Oxford. It has just given me hope and a new way of living to be a productive member of society. I love Oxford and it's helped me to stay sober since October 31, 2014.

**ANTOINE DRAUGHN – District of Columbia**

Good afternoon, family. I am Antoine Draughn. My clean date is June 5, 1992. My story is no different than many of yours. Drugs and alcohol had become a major problem for me. I can tell you all that I came back from the brink of death. On June 4, 1992, I was living in a shelter in Washington DC. I was brutally assaulted outside this shelter; beaten with a piece of steel rebar. I was loaded into a body bag and left for dead. On my way to the DC morgue, I woke up kicking and screaming. The attendant opened the bag and said, "If you don't have a God of your understanding, you need to find one now."

In my 3<sup>rd</sup> year of recovery I moved into an Oxford House. I have lived in and volunteered for Oxford House for years. Oxford House has helped me to live a clean and sober life. I practice the principles in my everyday life. I will always be there for Oxford House for they helped me in my recovery process to be a better man, father, grandfather, and human being.

I would like to add in closing that I now sponsor two of the young men who were responsible for the assault in 1992. Because of the program and Oxford House, I've learned to give back so freely that which was given to me.

**BOB G. – Mississippi**

Hey everyone, my name's Bob and I am an addict. My life of addiction started with a dare at nine years old. With my friend's teenage brother egging the two of us on, I took my very first drink of alcohol. I will never forget how it made me feel. At 13 years old, I started getting drunk occasionally. Like most people I have heard share at meetings, I did it to loosen my inhibitions and feel a part of everyone else. By the time I was 17 years old, I was experimenting with drugs as well and liked what they did for me more so than alcohol. I did not realize it at the time but I could never have just one of anything. My intent was always to get wasted. I thought that was what everyone did when they partied. I graduated from high school and a week later joined the military. I was the oldest of four kids so I did not have a big brother to look up to. At my first duty station in the military, I became friends with a guy who was 10 years older than me who seemed pretty cool and loved to party. Little did I know my addiction was off to the races.

I knew I had a problem and would try abstinence over a period of time as a test, then go out and party to celebrate. I have spent a lifetime mired in a progressive drug addiction and being admitted to countless detox facilities, a few rehab centers and jail. I no longer saw a way out of my pain and misery of this insidious disease. Instead of running on self-will any longer, I decided to finally surrender to a new way of life...the 12 Step program of Narcotics Anonymous. I started taking suggestions of medical professionals and those with long-term recovery. I have a sponsor today and use him, go to meetings on a daily basis, have come to believe in a God of my own understanding and, most importantly, I work the steps.

Upon completing long-term treatment, I knew I was not ready to be on my own completely. I needed to change my people, places and things and continue working on my recovery, plus have a fresh start transitioning back into society. Oxford House has filled that need. I am indebted to Oxford House people for what they have done for me. Not only have my house members held me accountable in my recovery, but Oxford House has given me the opportunity to grow in recovery and as a person. Today, I am involved with Oxford House service work and was elected Chair of my Chapter. I have been in Oxford House over five months and have over eight months in recovery. Thank you, Oxford House, for the opportunity to serve and help me live my life again!!!

#### **BRANDON C.—North Carolina**

My name is Brandon and I'm an alcoholic and addict. I grew up in a little town just east of Raleigh (Knightdale). My parents were typical hard-working Americans who have been married for forty years. I have one older brother. I am the only one in my family who was lucky enough to have been blessed with the disease of addiction. As for what it was like, my story does not differ much from anyone else's. There was never enough of anything. I could never steal, rob, buy, sell, smoke, drink or shoot enough! My addiction took everything from me - family, friends, and everything material. It left me broken, homeless and unable to muster the courage to kill myself.

It was only because of two men who God put in my life through the program of AA that I was shown a better way to live. After talking to one of them, I asked for some help. He called an Oxford House here in Raleigh and got me an interview that day! No money, no job, and no hope, but seven men took me in and treated me like family. I took simple suggestions and did as they did. I jumped into Oxford House and AA with both feet. I took a service position within the house and the chapter. Through Oxford House, I have been able to give back what was so freely given to me. Today, I have a firm foundation with the God of my understanding who I call Jesus Christ. All of the family, friends, and stuff I gave up so quickly I had to fight to get back! It's only through God, Oxford House, and AA that this has happened. In closing, I truly believe that I am blessed to have this disease of addiction because, without it, I would not be who I am! Nor would I have developed the friendships that will last a lifetime. Put God first, take the suggestions, work the steps, and help other people!! Thanks for allowing me to share.

#### **BRYANT R. – Washington State**

My name is Bryant R. I'm a recovering alcoholic and I live in an Oxford House in Spokane Valley, Washington. I was born on April 30, 1979 and my father was drinking a lot in my early childhood. My mother took care of my brother and me. When I was in 4th grade, my dad wanted to stop drinking and smoking. It was hard for him and my family but he did it and years went by. He stopped drinking on his own; no AA meetings, just support from my family. I made it through school and, after I graduated, I got my own place. That's when I started drinking just once in a while then, as I started drinking more and my addiction was getting bad, I kept telling myself that as long as I didn't drink Budweiser like my dad did, I wouldn't be an alcoholic. We all know how that would turn out.

So I kept telling myself that as long as I have a job, place to live, etc., I don't have a problem. Well, years went by and things got worse. I lost jobs because of drinking and I lost the trust from my family. And then

I lost places to live and became homeless. I ended up in the hospital getting my stomach pumped. I started having blackouts and going in and out of jail. The friends I thought I had were not true friends. At the end of my drinking, I was stealing to get my next drink. After going in and out of treatment centers, I finally got sick and tired of my life. So I went to treatment and moved into an Oxford House and they helped me to grow. I got my life back and learned how to live life on life terms. I got involved in the house and at chapter level. That's what helps me stay sober today.

I have been sober since May 16, 2013 and live in Whipple Oxford House, Spokane Valley, Washington. And love it love it. I get to go to treatment centers and tell others how great Oxford House is. I also get to go to state meetings, campouts, and the Oxford House world convention. It's been a great experience and it still is every day. I'm looking forward to growing more and getting more experience with Oxford House. Thanks, Oxford House.

### **CANDICE H. – North Carolina**

My only experience with the Oxford House was with my ex-boyfriend. When we met he lived in an Oxford House. I learned a little about Oxford House through him but, at that time, I was not interested in living a clean and sober life. Looking back, I often thought I knew what my rock bottom was. However my actual rock bottom looked completely different.

When the day I actually hit my bottom came, I looked in the mirror and asked myself, "Is this really my life?" I knew I had to do something different. I checked myself into detox. I was there for five days. During that time I knew I couldn't return to my old way of life, therefore, I reached out to the Oxford House. I left detox and immediately moved into the West Thomas Oxford House in Salisbury, NC. My life forever changed from that day forward. I instantly got involved in AA/NA meetings and Housing Services within my Oxford House Chapter. I was nominated and voted in as the Chairperson for NC Chapter 13 and I'm also serving as the Chapter Fundraising Chair. I was honored and very humbled to also be voted in as the NC State Association Housing Service Representative for Western NC.

I learned, through working an honest program and following the ways set before me with Oxford House, that my life no longer had to be full of misery and sadness. I became great friends with the great women in my house, women who I now consider some of my best friends. Loneliness has always been a huge trigger for me. I am not currently in a romantic relationship, but I know that through the Oxford House and recovery I am never alone. I have learned to trust and have developed healthy relationships with the women I live with. I know they will be there whenever I need someone to chat with. From the moment that I came into the house, I was curious about opening a women and children's house and, through the grace of God, we will be doing just that on August 9th of this year. Oxford House 7th Avenue will be the first women and children's house in Chapter 13 and the second in Western North Carolina. The Oxford House is my savior and I completely feel that I owe my life to it. I am at a point in my life that I want to give back while also retaining my sobriety. I hate this disease and what it does to people. I am looking forward to a lifetime of involvement with the Oxford House in some capacity.

### **CHRIS D. – New Jersey**

I'm Chris and I'm an alcoholic. I started drinking at 12 years old at family events since all my cousins were drinking. I wanted to be just like them and, the thing was, I loved it. Since I was adopted, they just thought I wanted to be closer to my family and, since my whole family drank, they saw nothing wrong with it. So then I started having little get-togethers at my parent's house in the basement and, since they never said anything about it to me, my baseball friends took full advantage of it. When we were 14, we were not even buying beer anymore; we went straight for hard liquor. Then the scariest thing that could've happened to a 14-year-old kid happened; my grandmother died in my arms on my parent's front porch, having a seizure

and a stroke at once which she died from. That put me into a panic so immediately my first thought was to drink as much as I could possibly could just to numb my emotions. Well, a friend of mine then introduced me to marijuana for the first time and I loved it. So, at 14, I'm drinking hard liquor until drunk and smoking until I forgot everything and I never thought that I might have a problem because I said my friends do it, my parents are on with it and I'm playing baseball great and I never feel upset or anything, so it's normal.

..... (In high school) I found the wrong crowd and we were smoking and drinking on a daily basis and I started selling coke ... Well, I still was playing baseball, I had good grades and I was getting looked at by scouts. All my friends were doing it and I still felt like I didn't have a problem. Well, by my junior year, not only am I smoking and drinking and selling coke every day, I started using some along with it. I got a full baseball scholarship to a D1 school Saint Peters in the Mac Conference and when I moved up to Jersey City to live in a baseball house, I brought all the things I was doing with me and added steroids. After second semester, we added Ecstasy on a daily basis. I started missing my 7am class but I made the rest of my classes and played baseball with no problem, so I didn't feel like anything could be wrong. Then I got a notice that my \$45,000 scholarship got dropped due to my not showing up to that one class and claimed all I had needed to do was attend all my classes. They didn't ask for any letter average, just for me to attend, and I couldn't do that because was getting messed up all of the time and I couldn't see I had a problem.

So I left blaming everything but myself, and I moved into Lindenwold, New Jersey. ... (W)hile I was there, all I did was drink and use on a daily basis, and use steroids as well. I lived there for almost 2 years and during that time I missed classes because I was drinking and using, which was everything except opiates, crack and meth. .... Then I met my soon-to-be mother of my child. I met her at a night club in Philly and then she lived with me from that day on and she was now doing everything I was doing. .... I transferred to Wilmington University. .... We threw parties every day and drank from morning to bed, and still didn't see anything wrong with it! Then she gets pregnant and I swear I'm not going to sell or grow anything else and stop all my using, which I did but, since alcohol was legal I could still drink. I don't know how but I got a bachelor's degree with a business major and a minor in liberal arts. So I justified all my use and all the craziness I was in; since I got a degree, it was all normal. Then Kaylee was born and all I did was drink and even though it was every day, I still did not think I had a problem. ....

A month or two later, I started getting sharp pains in my spine so I went to a spine specialist and he tells me I have scoliosis, and only reason I didn't know sooner was because I was numb from all the drugs I'd been doing since before high school. He gave me two options: surgery ... or pain meds and, of course, I pick meds, and he puts me on OxyContin which is the first time I've had an opiate. .... Now I was drinking and taking these new meds on a daily basis; I was paranoid all the time for some reason and then I started taking more than I was told to take. I ran out of my meds and I found out what withdrawal was really quick. .. (W)hen I asked my friend what was wrong with me and he laughed and said, "You're withdrawing. Then he proposed something for \$10 that would last a lot longer so I tried heroin for the first time and it was like a magic switch flipped in my head, I loved it. After that, all I used was heroin; I didn't even drink anymore.

Then, while in Camden, I went to grab a lot of dope and my friend had me carry his illegal firearm. I went to the ATM in Crown Fried Chicken and as I walked out and started walking down Broadway, counting my money, I felt someone grab my shoulder from behind me. Thinking that someone was trying to rob me, I immediately spun around and started hitting and, by the time I saw who it was, my heart dropped because it was a police officer. ... They charged me with assault on a police officer and possession of an illegal firearm. I was locked up in Camden County jail for ten months .... The cop finally showed up to court and they downgraded my charges and I got two years of probation. But the first thing I did when I got out was go use so, at my first probation meeting, I failed the test so he sent me to a detox. I went to Princeton House for seven days with no plan to stay clean since in my head I did nothing wrong and I didn't have a problem. I then used for two months and avoided my PO until he surprised me at my parent's house. I failed the test again so he sent me to a 10-day rehab called Malvern in PA. Once I left there, I did the same exact thing

...I lasted over a year until one day I overdosed and woke up in Camden and it took 7 Narcan shots to bring me back alive since I flat-lined for 2 minutes. The first thing I saw when I woke up was my daughter and my parents at the end of my bed, crying their eyes out. My chest and my heart felt like a ton of brick was pressing down on them. And without my PO even knowing, I threw up my hands and said I'm done killing myself and my family, especially my daughter, so I checked into a 30-day rehab called Ambrosia where I finally started listening and realizing I was an alcoholic and that I needed help.

I actually found my first sponsor here when he came to do a Big Book study and he started me on the steps while I was still in treatment and he would come in twice a week to do step work with me. One of the questions he asked me was, "How long do you want to be sick? And what are you willing to do to get this?" Finding out that he is an ex-Marine made me listen very closely and do what he said. When I got out, I took a suggestion and moved into a recovery house in Pennsylvania in Levittown and I was there for 4-5 months and, throughout that time, I was working all the steps every day. When I left, I went to move back into my parent's house.....I was thinking that I'd been sober long enough and have worked the steps so I could handle it. Well, the arguing every day ....., I thought I could just brush it off and deal with it. And instead of talking to my sponsor or anyone, I kept in all inside.

When I was about to be seven months sober, our arguing got really bad until, a couple days after that, I snapped and I went to the bar and got one beer. Ten minutes later I was in Camden buying dope. .... Well, after my 4th day, I was sitting on my bed staring at my arms and not believing where my alcoholism had led me again and how I allowed it to happen, so I picked up the phone and called Seabrook House, a rehab in New Jersey and told them I need to get in as soon as possible because, if not, I knew where it was going to take me. They told I would have to wait two days before I could come in for my intake so, because of the disgust and being completely done with it all, I went through withdrawal with no medication for those two days. At the time, I wanted to remember the pain and make myself realize what damage I've done.

I ended up going to Seabrook for 30 days and, while I was in there, I looked for a recovery house and then I found Oxford. I set up an interview with an Oxford House in Mt. Laurel, which I was nervous going to but, when I moved in, I realized I was in a place where I needed to be. Living in this Oxford House for over seven months, the things I acquired have been life-changing. I started learning responsibility and how to be a productive member of society. The structured environment and being held accountable for my actions pushed such an amazing growth for myself. I live with a group of guys just like me that I can talk to about things or ask them for help with something that other people won't understand and also we have a weekly house meeting where random drug tests are given as well as breathalyzing, and we also can be tested randomly any time so that's another help to know that if you use, it will come out. I work full time, I see my daughter on a daily basis and I got to witness and be a part of her starting her first day of elementary school. I speak at H&I commitments, I hold a position of HSR in my house as well as chapter, and I also sponsor someone. I go to other house meetings each week at other houses as a representative of chapter to help them or make sure things are going the way that they should. I am thinking about running for a position on the state association as the Vice Chair as just another way of giving back and to maybe offer another house some help or ideas that can benefit that house.

When I go to outside places, I always try to encourage people to give it a chance and tell them how living in Oxford House has changed my life and has shown me how to open new doors in my life that I never knew were there. So, today I can say I'm sober and grateful for many things, one being Oxford.

### **CORY M. – Oregon**

My name is Cori Mathers and I am an addict. My clean date is 12/30/13. I am an Outreach Worker for Oxford House, Inc. and I love my job!!!



My Oxford House journey started in January of 2006. I graduated from DePaul Treatment Center in December, 2005. Shortly thereafter, I moved into the Ramona house in Portland, Oregon

I was a terrified, broken, shy, lost girl in a woman's body...

When I moved into the house, all I wanted to do was stay in my bedroom and not talk to anyone. But the ladies living in that house had some different ideas. They encouraged me to go with them to NA meetings, to meet new people and to get out of my comfort zone.

During my second month there, one of the house members asked me to come to a Chapter meeting with her. I had no idea what a chapter meeting was, but I thought she was pretty cool, so I went. It was there that my Oxford House service began.

Little did I know but she had plans for me. She nominated me to be the Chapter Secretary and I accepted that position. Again, I had no idea what that meant for me. She was the Chapter Chair at the time, but was planning on moving out of Oxford House in a few months.

When she made the announcement at our house meeting that she had found a place, she asked me if I would be willing to step up and take over as the Chapter Chairperson. Again, I had no idea what that meant. But I was about to find out.

For the next two years, I worked full-time, worked on getting my license back, purchased a car, worked on my credit report, paid off old debts, and obtained a sponsor and an amazing support group. All the while, I dedicated all of my free time to Oxford House as Chapter Secretary, Chapter Chair, and State Co-Chair.

Giving back to Oxford helped me feel better about myself. I felt like I was making a difference. I felt important. At that time, it was just what I needed. I made so many new friends (that I still have to this day) and was no longer that broken, shy, anti-social girl that I was when I first moved in.

Eventually I saved enough money and cleaned up enough wreckage that I was able to move out on my own again and have my daughter live with me.

In July of 2008, I got a job as an Oxford House Outreach Worker for RAP. I was so excited! I was able to do what I loved doing AND make money doing it!!!

I stayed clean for 5.5 years because of Oxford House and everything I learned along the way.

Unfortunately, my journey includes a relapse. On January 10, 2011, I gave birth to my son, Ashton. It is also the day I relapsed. Some very hard stuff had happened between Ashton's father and I that I just did not want to face. The pain medication helped me forget about it all...for a while.

I stayed loaded (and miserable) for 3 years.

On December 29, 2013 my addiction and crime had finally caught up with me.

I was arrested at my parent's home in front of my 3-year-old son and taken to jail.

Getting arrested is NEVER a fun thing, but it saved my life.

I entered Washington County Drug Court in February of 2014 and worked harder to stay clean than I had ever worked before. This time I was fighting to stay out of prison. I was absolutely terrified.

In August of 2014 I moved into the Aloha Oxford House. Once again, Oxford House was there for me and allowed me to regain stability and form friendships that I will have forever. 95% of the friends I have today either live in an Oxford House or are Oxford House alumni.

On November 1, 2015 I was blessed with the opportunity to become employed with Oxford House Inc as an Outreach Worker. Once again, I get to help people and work for an organization that I am very passionate about. I get to work with some of the most courageous, smart, funny and amazing people I have ever known (residents and co-workers). I am grateful every day for the opportunity to have a job where I can give back and honestly feel good inside about what I do.

After almost two years of very intense treatment and supervision, I graduated from the Drug Court Program. In June, 2016 I moved into my own apartment with my son and shortly thereafter obtained full custody of him. I now have a little over 2.5 years clean again and know that it would not have happened without the help of Oxford House, Drug Court and the NA program. I owe every bit of happiness to these organizations.

My life is utterly amazing. I thank God every single day for every blessing I have been given. Life is good.

### **David L. – Louisiana**

My name is David L. and I'm a male in long term recovery from drug and alcohol addiction. My sobriety date is December 23, 2013. I guess I could say I grew up in a normal family. I was raised with both of my parents in a small town in north Arkansas. I had a pretty normal childhood. It wasn't until my mid-teens that I found the horrible world of drug addiction. I smoked my first joint when I was 14 years old and I thought it was the greatest feeling in the world. After that, I was pretty much off to the races. I continued to smoke weed and eventually began to drink on a regular basis. You know, I really thought life was going good at that point. I had a job, a car, a pretty little woman on my arm, parties and friends all the time. Life was good. Then I got hooked up with some people who were doing some harder drugs (cocaine, pills, meth, heroin, crack) you know, pretty much everything. And I always said, I'm never going to do any of that. Well, it wasn't very long before I started doing cocaine. The temptation was just too great. And looking back at it now, that's when things started to get bad. I always thought that if my bills were paid and I had a job and food and all this material stuff that I was doing good. Boy, was I wrong. I slowly made the transition from smoking weed and drinking every day to doing cocaine every day. Friends began to come and go as did the drugs.

Looking back at it now, I didn't have friends, I only had people I used with. I met a girl and ended up getting her pregnant and, during the pregnancy, we both decided to quit using but, man oh man, when that cute little girl came out, we were both back at it again. But that didn't last too long. She wanted to get clean. She couldn't live that way anymore, not with a newborn baby. But, she was still okay with me using as long as I didn't do it in front of them. Let me just tell you: that worked out horribly. She ended up kicking me out of the house, where my addiction continued for almost another year. It had gotten so bad that I was refusing to spend time with my daughter to get high and when I was with her it was at the dope man's house. So finally, everybody had enough and told me I had to make a change. I was on the verge of losing everything, including my daughter. And, for as high as I was, when my loved ones told me this, it was not a hard choice. I got sober. I checked myself into a 28-day program and, believe it or not, I finished. I continued my recovery in a halfway house for another eight weeks before I came home. I moved in with Mom and Dad and continued what I thought was a program. I lasted almost 9 months before I relapsed. I went back out and hit dope once and almost died from it. I almost hit somebody, head on, and crashed my car into a tree. Thank God nobody was hurt. See, I learned the hard way that I have to do this for myself, not for anybody else. That's what I was doing for the nine months before. I was making everybody happy but me and it wasn't what I wanted at the time. I think that's called a reservation. LOL.

As I was sitting in the hospital, before they released me, I was thinking to myself about how I almost died and that I can't do this anymore. So, as soon as they released me, I hit a meeting and picked up my second white key tag. And I can't even explain the compassion I felt from everybody in that room that day; it brought me to tears. So, I started over with my recovery. I made meetings and worked with my sponsor like clockwork. And while I was actually doing it for me this time, and not anybody else, I still felt like something was missing. At around 10 months clean, I started to notice I was having the same behaviors and going through the same feelings as before, and realized I was back on the road for a relapse and that something had to change and change fast. In that 10 months, I had learned a great deal about myself and, while my program helped me on a spiritual level, it just wasn't enough. I needed something more.

I needed to learn how to live and that's when I found Oxford House. I had a friend who lived in the Harrell Oxford house in Lafayette LA, and he got an interview set up for me. I went to the interview and I was so nervous. I didn't know what was going to happen. As the interview went on, I noticed that these guys were actually talking to me like a human being with respect and not just some junkie of the street. I got accepted and felt a part of something great right away. I have now been in Oxford House for just over 2 years and it has done wonders for my recovery. The people that I have met showed me how to live. They are just the greatest in the world. I can't even begin to explain what my God, my program and Oxford House has done for me. It is a debt that I will never be able to repay.

### **ERIC HYPES – Oklahoma**

On August 10, 2015, I moved into Oxford House Sooner after almost 90 days in a treatment center. I have a story like most that led me to those doors for an interview – alcoholic, drug-addicted, homeless, in financial ruin, warrants for my arrest, spiritually bankrupt, and alone with no support as a result of my disease. I was desperate. During my interview, the men asked me several questions and the one that stuck with me the most was, "Are you willing to do whatever it takes to be sober?" Of course, my answer was "YES!" I am a re-tread; that is, I was a resident before and relapsed and I knew that this time I was really going to have to commit to my answer.

I quickly got a sponsor who was an Alumni member. He guided me daily through the process of working my steps and observing the Oxford model. As a member of my house, I jumped right in deep with service work. As House Treasurer, my talent with math was exploited and I began to feel like I belonged. This opened up the chance for me to really be a part of something great. I was chosen to serve as the Chapter Treasurer when our area split and a new Chapter was formed. This gave me an opportunity to work with houses and help out as needed. It wasn't long after that I was chosen to be our HSC chairman. Under the guidance of my sponsor and outreach, I was able to really serve the residents to the best of my ability. I had a simple message...

The Oxford House concept works. It has been proven. We provide housing and rehabilitative support to the addict and alcoholic who wants to stop and stay stopped. If we follow the model, we can succeed. Outside our doors, life still happens; however, inside these walls we are safe. I have a safe place to come home to. I have a group of men all working to achieve the same goal. I have a family, a brotherhood, a foundation on which I can make the changes needed. Now let's pass it on to the newcomer. I believe they should have the same opportunity I had, and we can provide that for them. This message is about hope, change, trust, but most importantly freedom.

While living in Oxford House Sooner, it was required that I attend 12-step meetings, that I get a sponsor, and that I work a program of recovery. These simple requirements led me on the road to where I am today. I paid my warrants off, I became a dad to my children, I became employable, I am honest, dependable, moral, ethical, but, most importantly I have a foundation and support so strong for my recovery!

I am now an Alumni member, I have my own apartment and yes, the bills are in my name. I still attend 3 to 5 weekly 12-step meetings. I still serve by assisting houses, chapter, HSC, and State. I am still part of the organization that saved my life. It is what I choose to do to give back to the people who worked so hard to open a house to give a guy like me a chance to do whatever it takes to stay sober. Thank you very much, Mr. Paul Molloy, for chasing your vision; Jackson Longan for your decision to help carry the message; Dan Hahn for your constant love for this organization; Thomas Floyd for inspiring me; Ian Digby for holding me to a standard I did not know I could achieve; Mr. Eric Cannady for sponsoring a guy who once had no hope and for inspiring by example; but the biggest thanks I give is to the men of Oxford House Sooner. Your love, dedication, constant support and determination to succeed has truly been pivotal in saving my life. **TEAM WORK MAKES THE DREAM WORK**

### **ERIC MICHAELSON – Washington State**

I have been in Oxford for over 5 years. I have held every position in my house at some point, and nearly every position in my chapter. Oxford was able to give me my life back and then some. The people I've met in Oxford are some of the best I've ever met and, without Oxford and the people in it, I would not be where I am today. I am proud to say that I live in Oxford. To me, Oxford is about growing. I feel that the largest period of growth in my life has been here at Oxford, and I am forever thankful for that.

When I first came to Oxford I had been released from a 2-year-long stint in prison. I had heard about Oxford at that point and knew what it was like, but my first couple of months in Oxford took some adjusting for me. I found myself isolating in my room often and I rarely spoke at house meetings (those who know me now would be lucky to see me take a break from talking). After about two months of feeling like I wasn't really getting the Oxford way, I spoke to my housemate at the time, Eli. Eli was the Washington State Association Co-Chair at that point in time and he asked me point blank why I was isolating so much at home. I told him about my social anxiety and how I was already so far out of my comfort zone in Oxford that it seemed daunting to go out any further. That's when Eli explained that sometimes you have to make yourself really uncomfortable and do things you're afraid of doing because that's how you grow. Then Eli told me I should come with him to an Oxford State Association Workshop on Whidbey Island. I really did not want to go, but Eli insisted. He said "I'm going to introduce you to everyone I know, and you'll probably not like it and you'll be really uncomfortable but you'll live and, every time you go to another one, it'll just keep getting easier."

So I went to the training session and I talked to as many people as I could. I felt a little foolish at first, I had never really put myself out of my comfort zone so I felt a little awkward doing it. But Eli was right, it started to get a lot easier. I kept pushing and pushing at it, making myself grow just a little more every time, and getting a little more confident each time. As I started to get confident talking to people, I began to make connections as well. I started taking a larger part in my own Oxford family. I volunteered for every position I could and encouraged my fellow chapter-mates to go to the larger meetings of Oxford and build upon their understanding of how Oxford works.

After several years in Oxford I was getting more and more involved in state-level meetings. I went to 21 out of 22 of the State Association meetings before being nominated to the position of State Co-chair and then Chair. If someone had told me when I first entered Oxford that I would be Chair of the State Association of Washington State, I probably would have hightailed it out of there and not looked back. But that's the power of growth: it'll get you to some amazing places if you just let it happen.

Oxford has been my whole life for the last several years. I have put a lot of effort into it and I have reaped the rewards. Not only has Oxford made me a more confident and outgoing person, it gave me the confidence to go back to school and study to become a substance abuse counselor. The best decision of my life was getting into Oxford and I owe all of my success to the people I've met and the lessons I've learned in Oxford.

### **FAITH W. – North Carolina**

Being in Oxford House Beaumont is preparing me to live life on life's terms. I came from a dysfunctional family with a destructive life style. I started drinking by the age of 13, smoking pot by the age of 15 and smoking crack at the age of 17. My clean date is December 29, 2015. At the age of 45 this year has been better than I thought. Especially being part of the Oxford House family. I am being taught things I didn't have to deal with or took for granted like paying bills, having a safe living environment, being a positive role model for my children, becoming a responsible law-abiding citizen with accountability. The structure and rules set for me to live by while here has been the missing void that I had me stuck in and out of recovery over the past 20 + years. Every time I got out of a jail or prison, or any type of substance abuse treatment facility, I went right back to using. It wasn't until June 3, 2016, when I completed another attempt at treatment that I put in for Oxford House for Women with Children and so far my success has made a tremendous impact on myself and my child. My recovery is right where it needs to be. I haven't had a job in nine years, now I do. My son told me he was so glad we are here. His smile is worth everything I put in so far. And I owe that to the program. My confidence, self-worth, and self-esteem has improved dramatically. A place to call home and more. It has given me a chance to reconcile with my other children in an environment conducive with my recovery. The friendship from other women in the houses has been far more than what I expected. Some go out of their way by offering rides when needed, a phone call to check on us and sometimes a hug. No 'big I's' and no 'little you's'; we are all equally important here. When a new housemate comes I want her to feel the same as I did.

It was scary at first coming to share a house with different personalities but slowly the fear turned to hope, hope to joy, and joy with peace, knowing that I'm not alone in this process and I'm not the only one. A better perspective has been placed on my life and on those around me whether here or at home on my job or out in public. Thank you, Oxford House!

### **FREDERICK S. – Louisiana**

I am a grateful follower of Jesus and an addict in long-term recovery. My sobriety date is June 11, 2012. I was raised by my grandparents in a middle-class family. I was taught well and did well in school. I never saw my mom and father live in the same house together. My siblings lived with Mom. My friends were always older than me, and I never felt like fit in. About the time I turned thirteen, I was involved in a hunting accident that took the life of my grandfather. The men in the family blamed me for what happened and had no help for me. The women were the only ones who comforted me. My father had already moved to Louisville, KY and, after my grandfather's death, I was moved there to live with him. While I was there, a lot more bad stuff began. Eventually, I ran away and lived on the streets. I began using drugs, but nothing heavy. Mostly, I began drinking a lot. We're gonna fast-forward through a lot of that.

I finally made it back to Louisiana. I was rebellious, I didn't want to adhere to any authority, and I began partying. That landed me in prison when I was sixteen years old. While I was there I was able to get my GED. I learned my trades in prison, all construction-oriented: welding, carpentry, electrical work, painting, small engine repair... The structured environment kept me going. I got out and tried to start a family, but the partying life was more interesting than raising children.

I wasn't able to be controlled; the partying life was the one doing the controlling. When I got out, I had moved in with my grandmother, who enabled me to keep living like that. She passed away and I was left on my own again. I got the house and some land as an inheritance from her but still the partying lifestyle seemed to fit me better. I didn't want to work, but I finally landed a job offshore. That's where it happened. I started on cocaine and that escalated to methamphetamines. I was in and out of jail all the time... I spent every other weekend in jail. I ended up getting some serious charges and went back to prison for the second time. I lost everything when I went.

With all good intent, I came home wanting to do what was right. I got married, began a family, and made amends with my father before he passed away. My wife was in the army and, when she went off to war, I went back to using again and blew everything on cocaine. The addiction was for real. I felt like I had no other escape. I got into some heavy duty crime and ended up going back to prison for the third time. While I was there, my oldest son told me that if I wanted to be part of his life I needed to get right. So – during my third and final time in prison – I made a decision to get right. I started attending Celebrate Recovery Inside, graduated, and became a leader. I was a very active member in the church and eventually became an ordained minister. I attended NA and AA meetings regularly. All that was while I was in prison.

I was about to get out and was looking for somewhere to go. My sister had advocated for me to Lori about Oxford House Gretna in Gretna, Louisiana, and they accepted me through their re-entry program. I was given an opportunity to continue changing from my old ways to a new way of life. Oxford House was a place to catch my breath and be protected from however Satan would try to bring me back down. It gave me the time and a safe place to keep practicing the good habits and structure I had learned.

The house members held me accountable and gave me a perspective on how life is. I learned better ways to deal with people and problems. They helped me find solutions to problems instead of magnifying them or reverting back to my own ways. I learned not to seek out some escape, and not to fight and put someone down. They taught me how to be a productive member of society. I learned how to live with other people without lashing out just because they made me mad.

I've learned about dealing with both personalities and the principles. We all have different personalities, but our main thing is to follow the principles. Sometimes we have to put aside the personalities and be able to share and make things happen when you disagree and still move on to different things... that's a better way to be. My Oxford House family is an extension of my immediate family; I can always count on them. Anywhere you go in life you pay bills but you can't pay someone enough to give you a new way of life. Oxford House freely gave me that opportunity for a new life. Oxford House has given me things – morally, physically, spiritually... things I would have never imagined I would have. It has given me my family back. I have better relationships with my mother, my children, and with society.

Mamaw – who was my spiritual advisor – told me once that, “In order to be a good leader you first have to be a good servant.” Oxford House has taught me how to be that servant for others. To this day I continue to work the steps of my recovery and I do a wide variety of service work for Oxford House. If I knew then what I know now... I still wouldn't change a bit of it. I wouldn't be who I am today without the hard stuff I went through. The advice, inspiration, encouragement, and skills I have learned through all the dark times have now been brought into the light. It's like the story of Joseph in the Bible: there were things in my life that were intended for evil, but God has used them for good.

To the people that came before me, I'm grateful! They followed the Oxford House model. The model didn't change; it was still intact for me when I came along, and that's a torch that I want to carry on. When it comes to the principles of the Oxford House model, I am Mr. Black & White; there's no gray area!

To the people who are early on in your recovery, I want you to know you're not alone. There's someone somewhere going through something similar. Obstacles are put there for us to overcome, and they help us grow. Never give up on your faith. It's important for me to have a strong recovery network. It's important to be able to reach out no matter what the circumstances are – whether good or bad – and know there's always someone there to help me. I no longer feel like I do not fit in.

## **GENE McVAE – Oregon**

My name is Gene and I am an alcoholic. I was born in Walnut Creek California in 1967. My parents divorced when I was 7. I don't think I ever really recovered from that. I didn't see my dad again till I was 16. I always just kind of figured that my dad had seen the goods and wasn't interested. I always felt 'less than' and thought I had to be the best at what I was doing in order for you to like me and, depending on what crowd of people I was running with at the time, that could be a very bad trait. My mom was and is always there for me and she taught me right from wrong. I come from a family of drinkers and it was always socially acceptable in my family to drink. My drinking was out of control in high school and I dropped out of school in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade because it was interfering with my drinking. After I dropped out of school, I started hanging out with a rough crowd. At the age of 16, I got introduced to meth. My meth use was pretty casual at first but that didn't last long. I started injecting meth at age 17 and, from that point on, I quit caring about anything and everything. I started dealing meth to support my habit and I became very violent. I started collecting money for other dealers because I had become my best customer and needed to pay for my stuff still. I had many stays in juvenile hall and went from juvenile hall to jail on my 18<sup>th</sup> birthday and, instead of being ashamed, I wore that around like a badge of honor.

At age 23 I got off the meth for 8 years and thought I was clean but I was drinking every day. I got a job in a welding shop because drinking was acceptable in the trades and things seemed to get better. I got really drunk one night and though, if I use some meth I will avoid drunk driving, and I went down that ugly road again and started using meth again. Within 2 weeks, I didn't have a job. I had ripped off my employer and started collecting money again. I caught an assault to do great bodily injury case along with a few other charges. I was tired and, for the first time in my life, wanted to give recovery a try. I entered the Oakland Salvation Army in November of 2002 and did very well but I fought the Higher Power aspect of the program so I kind of faked the steps that included God. I graduated and went back to work for my former employer and, because I was showing up for work every day and ready to work, I got promoted at a rapid rate. I went through a divorce and decided to go work on the road because I made better money. I systematically cut all ties with my AA community and hit the road.

It didn't take long and I came up with the idea that I could drink non-alcoholic beer. So I'm drinking 30 non-alcoholic beers a night because they weren't doing what I needed them to do. I had an installation project to do in Portland Oregon and I met up with a buddy of mine who was dealing copious amounts of meth and I was going to save him. I ended up relapsing and went on a year and a half run. I hit an emotional bottom that I had never experienced before. I couldn't imagine going 5 seconds more in the direction that I was heading in. I was ready do get a gun and put it in my mouth and pull the trigger. God intervened. My buddy, who I had relapsed with, had just graduated treatment and he arranged a bed for me at the Oakland Salvation Army. I fought going back but I eventually checked in to the Salvation Army on February 12, 2007.

I graduated and went back to Oregon and a friend of mine who I had been running and gunning with was living in an Oxford House. I had never heard of Oxford House before. I started hanging out at the Umpqua Valley Oxford House and it didn't take long before I realized that I desperately needed to be in that house. I told the guys that when they had a vacancy I wanted to interview. They called me 2 weeks later and said, "Hey, we just voted you in. When can you be here?" I said, "You didn't even interview me" and they said, "We have been interviewing you for months." I moved into that Oxford House in January of 2008 and became part of the Oxford Family. I just remember how welcome those guys made me feel. Guys who didn't know me were willing to go out of their way to make sure I was comfortable. This Oxford family has walked through the good and the bad with me and I am eternally grateful for the lifelong friendships I have made in the Oxford House community.

## **JASON B. – Mississippi**

Hi. My name is Jason and I am an addict. I was born November 19, 1980 in Jackson, Mississippi. I went to good schools and came from a family that loved me very much. Looking back now at my life from an early age, I could be in a group of people (well-loved and liked) and never feel “a part of.” I know that was some of the early characteristics connected to my disease of addiction. I did well all through school and had some unique hobbies. I was very fortunate to become a junior FF while in high school. This led to a career I pursued while in college, the first time, after high school.

I became addicted to opiates and benzo’s around 2003. At that time in my life I was a firefighter and EMT who had a grueling job that took a toll on my body. I needed to have reconstructive back and spine surgery to correct a number of things that had gone wrong. I had to struggle through a grueling surgery and recovery period, which took months. I was depressed while being cared for by my parents, all the while missing my friends, college, and my job. I remember I had prescriptions for narcotics that had dealt with my physical pain from surgery and wondered if they would help with the emotional pain. It is no secret that things I had seen in the line of duty had left me damaged and forever scarred in an emotional capacity. That night I went to the medicine cabinet and took some of my medication for other than how it was prescribed. Did it work: yes, for that time. It dulled that deep emotional pain and gave the ability for me to “check out” from all that I felt was wrong in my life. This is where my true story of addiction starts. I ended up going to rehab the first time in 2006. I had deep-seated emotional, physical, and traumatic experiences from my past to work on.

While treatment afforded me a safe place to learn about my disease, to work on the wreckage of my past, and to earn new behaviors to combat the old ones, I didn’t fully understand “addiction is a progressive incurable disease whose ends are always the same: jails, institutions, and death.” Over the past years I have had some truly meaningful periods of solid recovery that were followed by relapses. Much like the recovery literature says, each relapse got worse and the consequences greater for this addict. I have never suffered from a dying problem in the sense I didn’t care if using killed me...I suffer a living problem. I never fully wanted to do the hard work which is required to live one day at a time and have a meaningful life. I never was willing to give up and surrender fully to the fellowships of recovery.

My clean date is November 3, 2015. The last time I went to treatment I didn’t go to learn about my disease or to be detoxed the “pleasant way.” I had plenty of disease education and been through very nice detox programs. I went with an understanding I had to go to any length to do whatever was suggested to recover. When my time at treatment came to a close it was suggested I go to an Oxford House and the staff felt adamantly that I was a perfect fit for Oxford House. This time, operating on faith, humility, and surrender, I left treatment in the Delta of Mississippi and came to Oxford House Golden Eagle in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. I had no true vision of what it would be like other than what the brochure said.

This is the part where total honesty comes in to play. When I moved into my Oxford House, it was a mess. However, I was determined that I wasn’t leaving and I had a unique opportunity to make it a better house; I was personally invested in making it a great home for recovering alcoholics and addicts. I have so much gratitude to tell you that Oxford House has been a lifesaving and changing process for me. I came to my house without: a job, license, having paid off fines, vehicle, health issues, and the list goes on and on. Today, while I write this: I have a license, vehicle, an amazing job; I’ve taken care of my health issues, and I graduate from college this month as well. I should say that recovery and Oxford House didn’t promise or guarantee me any of these things. It has provided me a safe, accepting, loving, and tolerant place to foster and support me while working on all these goals. I didn’t waste any time in getting involved in Oxford House. I have positions within my house, I have been entrusted to serve as the Chapter Chair, and help with many things associated with Oxford House. I get to travel all over and help carry the message of Oxford House with and while meeting new OH family members daily. Oh, if you are wondering about my



house: it is an amazing house of solid recovery and our chapter is doing the best it has in a very long time. It is truly a blessing in my life for which I remain eternally grateful.

### **JASON N. – Kentucky**

My name is Jason N. from Louisville, Kentucky. I was reluctant at first to write my story because of concerns about traditions. I usually do this in the fellowship of A.A. and only A.A. After being asked from our Outreach Worker and after speaking to my service sponsor, I got a good feeling on sharing a brief story of alcoholism.

I was raised and lived in Louisville 90% of my life. My mother, bless her heart, pretty much raised me and my sister on her own after my parents divorced when I was 3. My mother remarried when I was 7 but my stepfather was a provider, not a dad or a loving man. So, most of my life and still till this day, I find myself looking for the father figure I never had.

We grew up going to church and school at I went to school at the church's Christian school. I am grateful to have had a relationship with God since an early age; unfortunately, because of attention-seeking and behavioral issues, I soon became more interested in what the older kids were doing in the neighborhood than following the Christian values I was taught.

I don't remember my first drunk or drink, but I do remember the first time I went out with those older guys to drink at the age of 14. I got my ass whipped when I came home. I ended up attending public schools for my high school years. I convinced my parents it was best for my sports career. Once an A and B student for 8 years and almost skipped a grade in school, I turned into a D's and F's student on my first report card and didn't worry about fitting in. My drinking career was mainly on the weekends and occasional weekly at this time, but after high school my behaviors and drinking graduated to more and more.

For the next 24 years of my life there were countless vein attempts to get sober. Three months here, six months there, and then I would drink again. I lived in abandoned houses, homeless shelters or outside. I would run back to the church but only to get away from my situation never to actually change. I got plenty of misdemeanors charges, never a felony "Thank God". It was only by the grace of God. I tried Faith-based half-way houses several times never trying A.A. I never believed it was a disease and I was just suffering from a sin. Finally, in 2007, I gave it a try at a treatment center that had a 9-month free program. Like before, after 4 months, I became restless and left. I did buy into A.A. though. For the next 3 years, I bounced in and out but always coming back. I never felt more apart than when I was in the rooms of A.A. Finally, in 2010, I fully conceded that I was an alcoholic. For the next 3 years I was sold out to all 3 legacies of A.A. but my ego began to get too big after becoming a business owner; my behaviors became unspiritual and I relapsed.

For 10 months I was dry and trying to stay sober on my past experiences and I failed. I remember the last 2 weeks were the worst in my life, not because I didn't have anything to drink, not because of any crime I committed, not because I had nowhere to go. It was the black hold of being unspiritual. The separation from God I had allowed to enter my soul. Thank God I made it to detox after a night of doing one of those "Yets". I went to detox and asked God to strip me of everything and do whatever was necessary for me to have that fellowship with Him again. He said "yes, that's all I have been waiting for, Jason." I do a lot of things different and I am not the social butterfly I thought I needed to be. I ended up becoming a manager of a half-way house for 10 months. It slowly became a sick environment and I knew I had to leave.

I had known a Oxford House Outreach Worker was coming to Louisville from a friend in another state, I have AA family nationwide from attending YPAA events all over and, after speaking with him and becoming close, I decided I was interested in becoming Outreach myself. An opening at a house I liked in

Louisville, KY became available and I was accepted and moved in. I knew at that time, the house I was managing was bringing me down.

I truly feel I am where God wants me at this moment. Even though I have a lot of experience in recovery and 29 months sober, I am not afraid to live in transitional housing to help others and do God's will. I truly like what I see from the structure that Oxford House has established. I have always believed you must allow the individual room to be free and grow in an environment that makes you feel like a responsible citizen. Thank you Oxford House for this opportunity to learn and grow with you. In service and Love, Jason N. – Psalms 46:10

### **JAY J. – Mississippi**

It sounds much the same as many of our stories do. I was a despicable drug addict and my disease was called "Selfishness", I was self-serving, grotesquely grandiose, and was pretty sure that I was right about everything, though my life suggested quite the opposite. In contrast, I believed I was dealt a losing hand from the start. I could go into detail about my life before but, to shorten it, I've been in prison three times, twice in the state and the last time with the Federal Bureau of Prisons. I've seen the gun and knife play I've been jailed more times than I can remember and I was pretty certain that life would follow me or be a part of me until my end, unless I was killed in the streets. Someone saw something in me that I couldn't see in myself and, instead of a fourth "bid" or trip to the penitentiary, I was urged to visit a rehab program – for the fourth, fifth or sixth time, I really can't remember. There, I told myself I'd give this another shot, not for family, not for the truest love I knew at the time, not because of legal circumstance but truly for me this time.

Toward the end of my stay, I knew I didn't want to go back immediately to the same environment I was used to, not that it was all bad, I just needed more time. That's when and where I found out about Oxford House in Biloxi. When I arrived it was unlike any other place I'd experienced but my old behavior was still present; my motto was, I didn't care what anyone else was doing, I just needed to keep my nose on my own face and basically do me. It wasn't long before problems came apparent but then, through sponsorship and senior Oxford House members, I learned I could be a part of the problem or part of the solution. I chose to try and be a part of the solution because all I've ever known in the past was being part of a problem. Oxford House urged me to jump in, get involved, offer an opinion even if it's not consistent with the correct way and see my flaws and work on them. I've achieved – with grace, a lot of work (hard work, that isn't comfortable most of the time) and the allowance of my imperfections with constructive critiquing of the structure that Oxford House has allowed me – almost sixteen months of sobriety and that's not a small feat for a guy who had entirely surrendered to addiction, had prayed for help and felt ignored, prayed for death and felt damned to a lowly existence. Oxford House and its people – "you people" – have become my answered prayer, my purpose, my place, my people. And today I am forever indebted and grateful!

### **JEREMIAH – North Carolina**

My name is Jeremiah, I have a little over 9 months of sobriety, and I've been in an Oxford House here in Cary, North Carolina, since I got out of treatment in January 2016. I've been struggling with addiction for 17 years. It started with pot and beer around age 12 but became progressively worse until I found myself strung out on cocaine, heroin, and benzos and facing my first trip to prison. The next 10 years were riddled with more trips to prison, worsening dependence on drugs and alcohol, and countless ruined relationships. Finally in 2013 I had my first experience with A.A. I wasn't yet ready but, by God's grace, the seed had been planted. I went back out and ended up in prison yet again. I moved into an Oxford House upon my release. Sadly I wasn't yet ready and went back out after only 4 months.

Drugs and alcohol finally beat me into a state of reasonableness and on November 15, 2015 I went to detox and treatment. Oxford House has saved my life and is the reason that I have such a strong network and program. My roommates are always there with support, a lending ear, and encouraging words. I eagerly give back what was so freely given. I serve as housing services chairperson, and remain a vocal advocate for Oxford House. God has truly blessed me and so many others with a safe home to learn to live a sober and enriching life.

### **JOHNY – Washington State**

I am fast approaching 7 years sobriety, thanks to the guys who accepted me into the Orchard Heights Oxford House in Vancouver, Washington six and a half years ago. I had nothing but a promise of some short-term funding; I was staying at a shelter, and had recently relapsed out of treatment. I wanted to stay sober, and stayed in contact with my friend from treatment who was in an Oxford House. I cannot say it's been an easy road.; there have been struggles but with the support of my buddy from treatment (who now lives here at Orchard Heights as well!) and meetings, and a GREAT group of guys here (we are like a family and have very little relapse), I can honestly say, I am a miracle! I think I just might make 7 years! ☺

### **JONATHAN (BOB) L. – Louisiana**

My name is Jonathan Livingston, but you can call me Bob. I began my current journey of sobriety on October 30, 2012 after many false starts over the previous decade and a half. There have been a few rough patches over the past 4 years but I've had more help and support than I could have asked for.

My childhood was nothing out of the ordinary, I was just an 80's kid with three sisters. Our parents provided everything we needed and tried to help us all become successful and productive adults but somehow all four of us ended up struggling with drug and alcohol use. I completed DARE in elementary school and swore I would never do drugs. I even told my best friend's parents that he had been smoking pot when we were 13 because I hated drugs and what I had seen them do to my older sister. My trip down that road began shortly thereafter.

The first experience I had with intoxicants was around the age of 14 when I found out you could inhale certain things bought at the store and make things more interesting. I had ADHD, my mind ran too fast all the time, and the world was boring. I needed something to slow everything down and make the world seem more "magical", if you will.

Over the next few years I was introduced to other "mind expanding" substances. My aversion to drugs and alcohol began to wane quite quickly as I experimented and found out how much I felt "at home" with the friends and acquaintances as we partook in cocktails, edibles and 'smokeables.' As time progressed, I continued to use more heavily and more often by myself. I continued down that road for around 15 years, failing out of college, having a few destructive relationships, and all while watching the world pass me by. That's what stung the most, seeing my friends graduate from college, start families and create lives for themselves all while I sat in my apartment racking up student loans, getting high, feeling sorry for myself and being hopeless.

The utilities ended up getting turned off at that apartment, I was evicted and had to move back in with my family. I was eventually asked to leave (kicked out) as I seemed content to sit in my addiction and not attempt to make any progress in my life. I lived in my car in a Wal-Mart parking lot while working full-time but spent my money on opiates instead of trying to get a place of my own. A few months later I totaled my car in a police chase and the real struggle began. My family let me move back but nothing really changed about me so eventually I was asked to leave again.

I had begun the journey in my sobriety but did not tell anyone and I had gotten kicked out anyway. I wondered what the point was but I wasn't willing to go back. I was homeless, carless and struggling financially; I could either afford a room at a motel or get loaded and, luckily, I chose a place to stay over a quick high. I ended up living in a motel for 3 months until my job stopped letting me get overtime, I had been living beyond my means for the entirety of the stay but I had friends who were helping since I was trying to help myself.

When I had to leave the hotel, a friend, Jill, who had lived in Oxford a few years before took me to her house and let me stay for a few days. While there, she told me about how Oxford House works and made calls to the houses around Baton Rouge to see if any houses had openings. I did not want to move into Oxford House when the option was presented to me but I didn't have anywhere else to go.

The first house I interviewed with did not accept me and I was crushed. However, Jill called more houses and got me in contact with one that did have an opening. I was accepted at the Baton Rouge House and there began my journey with Oxford. I still did not really want to have any responsibilities though so I sat in the background quietly observing. As time passed, I quickly got more involved, first in my house, then in the chapter and, after my first state convention. I joined the state association. I never pushed towards or chased any of it; I felt pulled into service, drawn to it if you will. I have now been a part of the Louisiana/Mississippi State Association for 3 years and am currently the Regional Chairperson for LA/MS.

I came into Oxford thinking it was a place to live for a short while, but I was mistaken. It is a place to grow, to meet others who have similar stories but come from diverse backgrounds. It is a place where you meet a new family and connect with others who are struggling as you are and have in order to mutually support one another. In order to have the true "Oxford experience." one cannot simply reside in an Oxford House. To get the most out of Oxford, you have to participate, but the return on your investment of time and service far outweighs what you put in.

Oxford house helped me regain my sense of self-worth and my confidence; it has helped me cultivate the relationship with my daughter; it has helped me learn to not shy away from responsibility and it has reignited the passion to be of service to others. Oxford has also helped me meet some of the most amazing people I have ever known, people that make me want to be a better man, people that make me want to continue to push myself further than I thought possible.

If I can make it to October 30<sup>th</sup>, I will have 4 years clean and sober, something I am not sure I could have done without the help of Oxford and the people I have met while being a resident. I will close with a quote I gave to [www.OxfordHouseLa.org](http://www.OxfordHouseLa.org) :

"Oxford Houses give a person an incredible opportunity to relearn how to live responsibly. I have structure while still having personal freedom, I get a live-in support group of peers, and a family that extends far beyond my individual house. It is a place to learn how to live again."

Thank you for letting me be a part of the community of Oxford Houses. I love you all even if we have never met, because while we all may not be the same, we are trudging the same road, we are "one house"... Oxford House.

#### **JULIE P. – South Carolina**

Over the past 15 years, I used and abused almost every drug, every way possible. Early addiction to prescription pain medications led me to the loss of my first marriage, my three beautiful daughters, my home in an upper-middleclass suburb of Boston, and my lucrative career in global institutional investing. But I kept using...

Eventually, addiction to heroin and cocaine led me to the loss of my ability to keep any job, any apartment, any family, any friends. I committed crimes, did prison time, and became a convicted felon three times

over. I remarried an addict, and was widowed 3 years later when he overdosed in our dirty apartment. And I had to keep using...

I robbed family members, stole from friends, and did more jail time. I overdosed three times. Once while driving, I wrecked my car and lost my license. When I was at last homeless and destitute, I began tricking out of a hotel room. All so I could keep using...

But I didn't want to use any more, I didn't even get high anymore. I was just trying to not be sick. In a desperate moment of clarity, I put my few ragged belongings in storage....and for the first time ever I checked myself into treatment. I wanted help. While in rehab, I surrendered completely – one night I literally threw up my arms and resolved to stop fighting. I gave in entirely to the idea that my way of running the show clearly wasn't working. The next morning, my obsession to use was gone (I had no idea that was even possible!). I gained some weight, got color back in my face, some life back in my eyes, and I was tentatively hopeful of beginning a new life, free from active addiction.

When I first arrived at the Oxford House almost a month after checking in to detox, I was nervous but willing and determined to do exactly what I was told. I would follow the rules set by my counselors and/or my Oxford House– go to a meeting every day, get a sponsor, and get a home group. Take time for daily prayer and meditation. I desperately didn't want to lose the opportunities that were coming my way. With kind and patient guidance from my new housemates, I quickly settled in to my new home. And I loved my new home! It was clean, bright, cheerful, and filled with other women in recovery – there was never a dull (or lonely) moment! I found a fellowship that immediately accepted me for who I was, despite my past. I got an amazing sponsor and we began working the steps. I began to do things I hadn't done in many years - laugh, cry, read, paint, love, and be loved. I also began to find deeply satisfying comfort in waking up/going to bed early, the neatness of my bed, getting myself ready for each day, preparing small meals, and even doing my chores.

The structure and expectations of the Oxford House allowed me to safely re-learn life skills that I'd long forgotten. I thrived in the simple, clear, and supportive environment. The expectations were few and practical – contribute/participate, be fiscally responsible, work my recovery. And so I did. In relatively short time, I became active in the recovery community, my fellowship, and with Oxford House. I was elected president of my house, then fundraising chair for our chapter, and then vice chair for the state. I felt responsible and capable again for the first time in many years. At first, that was only because other people believed in me and were willing to take a chance on me. But soon I believed in me too! I had new purpose and decided to dedicate myself to doing service work with other addicts.

I checked into detox as a lonely, broken, and suffering junky, a thief, a felon, a prostitute, a failure. Today, I have many friends, I strive to live a healthy, loving, purposeful, and spiritual life, I am honest, I am grateful, I am happy...and I am free.

### **KASEY ZIEGLER – Oregon**

My name is Kasey Ziegler and I'm an addict and alcoholic in recovery. I am 25 years old. I have been clean and sober since May 25, 2011. I moved back into the Centennial Oxford House in Bend, Oregon, when I had about 60 days clean. I had lived in that house twice before and had to leave both times due to relapse. The guys in that house gave me another shot, and I ended up living at the house for 4 years. Shortly after moving in, I got a full time job at a call center just down the road. I began the process of digging myself out of yet another hole I found myself in after running and gunning in my addiction. I also joined an AA home group a couple blocks away from the house and picked up a service position there.

Starting from the bottom can be a slow process but, over time, I made more and more progress on building

a new life for myself. The guys in the house became family to me, and for the first time in several years, I had a place to call home. Taking care of my responsibilities in the house and being an important part of the core group in that house did a lot for restoring my self-confidence and giving my life some purpose. I also continued to be very active in Alcoholics Anonymous and worked through the 12 steps with a sponsor in that fellowship. I began to have more of a relationship with God and relationships with my family vastly improved as well.

After living in the Centennial Oxford House for 4 years, and working a couple different jobs, I was presented with an opportunity to go to work for Oxford House, Inc. as an Outreach Worker. I had been involved with service in Oxford House heavily ever since I moved in, and after praying and talking to my sponsor about the opportunity, I decided to take the job.

To this day, I have worked for Oxford House for a little over a year, and it has been my pleasure to be of service to the people involved in this organization. I currently live in Pendleton, Oregon, in the Pendleton Oxford House, which we opened just two months ago. I am extremely grateful to be clean today. Today I am a good son, brother, and friend to the beautiful people I have in my life. I have to say I've had my ups in downs in sobriety, and life is not always peachy, but I trust in God that I am here for a reason. The life I have today is better than any life I've ever had, even before I started using drugs. To men and women who are just starting a journey in recovery, I encourage you to get involved and keep yourself busy with positive recovery oriented activities. You never have to use or drink again. If you stay clean and do the right thing, there is a life available to you beyond what you might think is possible. I wish you the best on your journey, and perhaps our paths might cross. Peace and love, Kasey Ziegler

#### **LAVINA H. – Virginia**

My clean date is 10/14/14. On that day I went to detox and decided that drugs and alcohol were not the solutions to my problems. However, I was very afraid because the house I was living in was very unsafe and all of my roommates drank and did drugs. I was given the option to go to treatment or live in an Oxford House. So I began to call around Northern Virginia to find one. I was referred to Debbie Robinson. I remembered Debbie and was happy to see that she was still an outreach worker. Debbie told me that there was a new house opening in Springfield named Melita but that the house wasn't going to open up until November. So from 10/21/14 to 11/1/14, I fought hard to stay clean. I have been at Melita since then and my whole life has changed. With the help of my housemates. I have developed bonds with the women in the house and they have really helped me on this journey. I thank God that I could make it to this place in recovery. God Bless. Lavina H.

#### **MARY P. OZANIC – Colorado**

Allow me to begin with an anecdotal story. There was a marching band moving down the street and one musician was one out of step with the others. She looked around and thought to herself, "Hmmm, everyone is out of step . . . except me." This self-centered perspective describes how I once viewed the world in which I lived prior to beginning my path to recovery from chemical dependency. I was the center of my own universe and I sensed that all of life revolved around me and everyone in it was here to serve and fulfill my personal wants and needs . . . while, at the same time, I genuinely perceived myself to be a thoughtful, kind and generous individual. In recovery, I am learning the art of patience and faith. I have lost many battles along the way in my struggle to achieve long-term sobriety, but through the continuing work of the Twelve Steps of both Alcoholics and Narcotics Anonymous, coupled with residency at Oxford House, it feels as if I am finally winning the war. I have not had a drink or a drug since March 21, 2015.

My story begins to unfold quite inauspiciously in 1972 with my first marijuana joint and a deep swig of Boone's Farm Strawberry Wine from a leather bota bag at an outdoor music festival while romancing the lyricism that is Bob Dylan. I was naked in the proverbial meadow with flowers in my hair and life in its

essence was a beautiful thing. Psychedelic experimentation with LSD soon followed and the music evolved to include that of Pink Floyd's formidable *Dark Side of the Moon* among a host of others. The decade supported winds of social change that resulted in one of the most tumultuous and significant time periods in modern human history. I am grateful to have been a part of it and did not adjust well to the end of the era, of love beads, bell-bottoms and peace signs.

Before I could utter the word “groovy” for the last time, the Eighties were on me. It marked the beginning of what was to become a decade of wanton use of freebase cocaine that we cooked ourselves in test tubes along with all the accompanying accouterments and behaviors. Working at the time as a ranch cook in Montana, the Universe saw fit to shine its light of good fortune on me and I was hired to work in event production and marketing of entertainment events and professional sports in arenas and stadiums. Based in a 20,000-seat arena in St. Louis named The Checkerdome after its corporate owners, Ralston Purina, I attribute my inability to accurately assess the enormous extent of my drug and alcohol use because of the environment in which I was both employed and where I chose to spend all my waking leisure hours.

I had found my herd: I was a pea in the same pod with others who used as much and as often as I was using and we did not question our motives or intentions. I genuinely believed that the amount of chemicals I was ingesting was “average recreational use” and that other members of the human race were just “squares” and “lightweights” in their consumptive patterns. I had become my own benchmark for the purpose of self-inspection and introspective insight into what was driving me.

I was summoned to a beloved old friend's house late one evening and found him seated on the couch with a loaded shotgun . . . out of freebase, money and his mind. With a guttural moan of true despair, he begged God for it all to stop and then begged me to help him. And with that, the Eighties ended and abruptly, so did my love affair with freebase cocaine and other amphetamines in any form.

I had decided enough was enough and the Nineties were ushered in with my solemn vow that I would set aside cocaine and in its place, I would learn to drink alcohol with class and civility like other citizens, but of course, with a little weed on the side. After all, had we not just elected as president of the United States, a pot-smoking, beer-swilling, draft-dodging saxophone-playing adulterer to lead our country? It was a time . . . and what a time it was. I was enthralled. Throughout it all up to this point, I had built a lucrative and successful career with a solid reputation as a respected executive in the sports and entertainment industry. I had accepted a new position and was now employed as the executive director of marketing at a prominent Thoroughbred horse racing track where I spent the next dozen years in a debauchorous, licentious and lethal alcoholic haze.

I had become a morning maintenance drinker and rarely drew a sober breath. I had managed to secure a place for myself with my herd, employed in an industry with professional sports that only served to further fuel my appetite for drugs and alcohol. In fact, in its generosity, the track concessionaire, as an executive perk, kept our private office bars stocked with the finest liquor and mixers for our visiting clients, dignitaries and guests which we entertained almost nightly during the racing season. I sat in my plush office behind closed doors and drank most days away. My work performance was beginning to suffer and my lack of productivity had become noticeable. More and more frequently, I began to miss work, often not going into my office for days at a time. My appearance had become haggard and disheveled more often than not. The eccentricity of my erotic menagerie now included both Johnny Walker and Jack Daniels . . . Black Label variety, of course. But, hey, at least I was no longer entrenched with an all-consuming need for freebase cocaine. I genuinely believed that I was now on the right path to healing and moving toward better things and a more wholesome way of living. But I was mistaken.

Unbeknownst to me, I had crossed the line into full-blown alcoholism and addiction and from this point forward, there was no turning back. The admission of complete and utter defeat did not come easily or

readily for me, frankly, because my drug and alcohol use had not been all bad. In the beginning of my use back in 1972 and intermittently for many years to come, my fondest memories of some of the best times I will ever have with some of the best friends I will ever know involved music . . . and drugs and alcohol. But as the saying in recovery goes, “Once a cucumber becomes a pickle, it can never, ever go back to being a cucumber ever again.” . . . and believe me when I tell you that I tried.

‘9/11’ had come and gone and the world as we knew it was forever altered. My life would soon be altered as well when one night, an old friend came to visit and introduced me to none other than OxyContin, one of the most powerful narcotic painkillers known to mankind. I readily swallowed a 40 mg pill and soon knew what true ecstasy feels like. I felt the effects of the drug in every cell of my body. A sense of warmth and wellness enveloped me down to the marrow in my bones. It was the strongest, most soul-changing experience with drugs that I had ever had. I believed it to be Mankind's greatest invention. For the first time in my life, I felt whole, at peace and at last in harmony with the world in which I lived. I felt as if I had finally “come home.”

Welcome to the beginning of my New Millennium and the odyssey of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century that was now at hand. It did not take long for me to finally lose my premiere job in horse racing altogether. I also destroyed my personal and professional reputation, alienated my family and friends, trashed all the trust and confidence that anyone ever had in me, emptied my entire 401(k) retirement plan on drugs and eventually lost my horse farm to foreclosure, along with all of my Thoroughbred breeding stock to whose care I had devoted myself. The horses and my dogs were among the only things left in my life that I cared about and in the end, I lost them as well.

After much thought and introspection, my solution? I tried geographic escape and relocated to Denver, Colorado, where I kicked painkillers and an old friend employed me as director of marketing in her architectural firm. She gave me a safe place to stay in her comfortable suburban home while I began the process of rebuilding my life. How could anything go wrong, you may ask? Her office was located in the heart of downtown Denver near a popular, large pedestrian mall, ripe with drinking establishments and dealers hawking their wares. It did not take long for “the itch” to develop. I wanted to get my hand in the cookie jar just one last time . . . one last big hooray . . . the final charge . . . my swan song, if you will. So . . . when I was unable to locate OxyContin, I succumbed to my “Final Temptation”, which up until now, during the course of decades in the entertainment business, I had managed to avoid like the plague . . . I scored heroin instead. And it was truly the beginning of the end.

I crossed moral and ethical lines, working against my own values that I would never have believed I would ever cross. I became subhuman and reached the point that the Big Book of AA so accurately describes: I could no longer imagine life either with or without alcohol (and drugs). I had come to the jumping off point. I came to know loneliness such as few people do and I hoped for the end. I knew whose garage I was going to park my car in to end my life. I have had a dryer hose, towels and tape in the trunk to euthanize myself. I could no longer go on not even one more day. What stopped me is a deeply held belief that suicide is the only sin that the Universe will not forgive because it is the ultimate act of playing God. I feared my soul would float forever in the Netherworld, never to rest or find peace.

What happened? What changed? I believe it to be basic mammalian instinct for survival. Somewhere in between the exhale and the inhale of my breath, I heard the still, small voice of God. In the end, with barely a breath of life left in me and all hope gone, I chose Life over Death. I went to the home of an old AA friend and laid out the truth of my addiction in all its ugliness. Through the power and miracle that is God working in our lives, within 48 hours, I found myself admitted into the Harmony Foundation center, an auspicious treatment program in Estes Park, Colorado, with full payment for a six-week stay covered under a federal grant program called Access To Recovery. The first words out of my mouth to my counselor were, “God refuses to kill me and I don't know what to do about that. What does he want from me?”



I still have not uncovered the answer to that question, but I strive to learn a little more about it each day. On May 14, 2016, the day of my 58<sup>th</sup> birthday, I graduated Magna Cum Laude with Latin honors and distinction from the University of Colorado with my bachelor's degree in communications. I have been accepted into the social sciences graduate school program and am now pursuing my Master's degree in community health administration and I am slated to begin study to earn my certification in addictions counseling. I attend Twelve Step meetings in both AA and NA several times each week and confer regularly with my sponsor and assorted spiritual mentors.

I strive to spend each day well by being of service to God and others in the best ways possible by sharing my experience, strength and hope with others. Through the work of the Twelve Steps, I am recognizing that the Promises are being fulfilled in my life. Even though I have been in institutions, behind the locked doors in mental wards and incarcerated in jail for almost a year, "I do not regret the past, nor wish to close the door on it and I see how my experience can benefit others. I am coming to intuitively know how to handle situations that used to baffle me.

I have come to know a new freedom and my life as an Oxford House resident is being filled with meaning, purpose and direction. I envision what it may be like one day to have a little house of my own again, but for now, even though I am almost sixty years old, I thrive in the structure that is Oxford House. It comforts me to know that there are other women in the house, all working towards achieving quality sobriety. I like knowing that, even when I have the house to myself for an afternoon, my roommates will soon be drifting in one by one from work and meetings.

### **MICHELLE GREEN – North Carolina**

I'm Michelle, a grateful recovering addict. My story starts in a small town in eastern North Carolina. Drugs and alcohol are prevalent. I grew up with a Mom, Dad and a younger sister. My parents both worked hard to support us but had habits of their own to support as well. Even when they were physically present, they weren't really capable of being there for us emotionally. I wasn't taught how to cope with stress or have healthy relationships. I went through some difficult situations as a child and teenager with no clue as to how to deal with it. I tried so hard to just be happy and pretend I was okay. I excelled in school and sports, hoping to be good enough at any activity for someone to notice me.

As a teen, I threw my shoulder out playing softball. That was the beginning of my addiction. The doctor prescribed Percocet and muscle relaxers. Oxycodone was my first true love. I became a zombie, taking more pills than were prescribed. I wanted to feel anything! I was emotionally numb. I started hanging out with a new crowd since I couldn't play sports with my injury. This older, 'cool' crowd introduced me to all kinds of other drugs that promised to make you feel better. I started running out of my prescriptions way too early. My 'friends' told me heroin was basically the same thing, just cheaper. After very little consideration, I tried it. I was hooked instantly. It was like Percocet, but supercharged. Within six months of trying it, I was shooting up every day.

Heroin took me to the pits of Hell. I woke up every morning unable to leave the bed without a shot. I was violently, physically ill without it. I lost my job, my car, my home, my dignity, my sanity and so much more. I gave it all up for another fix. I was arrested 6 times, breaking into people's homes, stealing anything I could. I asked God to please just let me die.

God did not let me die. On August 23, 2015 I woke up on a kitchen floor, a needle still in my arm, with empty dope bags around me. I had burned all my bridges at that point and was homeless, sleeping on someone's couch. Passing out that day with nobody even attempting to help was my epiphany. I called

Port Human Services and scheduled an appointment. I told the therapist everything and we agreed I wouldn't be able to get or stay clean in that environment.

I started researching treatment facilities online and came across Oxford House. I had no idea what it even was. Looking back, I know this was my higher power taking care of me. I dialed the number and did an application by phone with a comforting voice on the other end of the line. I interviewed that week and the girls accepted me. I'd never felt such a sense of compassion and understanding as what those women showed me. It was an unspoken bond. For the first time, I felt overwhelming gratitude and peace within myself. I was so thankful to just have a bed and running water!

I started learning the model and was so impressed with it I started telling every addict I knew about Oxford! Today, I'm house president and secretary for our chapter. I have a job, I work the NA program with a sponsor, have a strong spiritual connection, a home where I'm loved, healthy relationships, and so much more. I'm almost one whole year clean and sober. I never could have done this without Oxford House providing me a safe haven full of wonderful people to help me along my journey.

### **PATRICK - Kentucky**

I found recovery in prison. I attended meetings, worked the steps and didn't use. When I was released, it had been more than 10 years since I had used and I assumed I was good to go. I quickly realized that, although I had not used, and was not using, I was overwhelmed by life. I had not acquired the basic living skills I needed to survive. Everything had been provided for in prison. My time management, my meals, showers, sleep, work, had all been dictated by the prison.

I prayed for help, for guidance, for some direction. I then remembered a time, some 15 years earlier, when I had tried recovery and found the Oxford House. That time had been the one time in my life that, while I knew I was not in control, I had made good decisions and had peace of mind. I did not follow all their suggestions and left early, relapsed, committed crimes, and went to prison.

I again reached out to Oxford House and by the grace of God, they welcomed me in. Oxford House, for me, has meant the ability to learn life skills, to develop healthy friendships, to finally realize I am not alone, and that people really do care about one another. It has been my lifeline in recovery and freedom and they House helps me to maintain both. The gratitude I feel cannot be adequately be expressed in words. I just know I thank God every night.

### **RYAN LANG – West Virginia**

My name is Ryan Lang and I'm in long-term recovery. This is how Oxford House employees identify themselves. My last drink or drug was April 30, 2015 and today I consider myself a grateful recovering addict and alcoholic. I say this because, had I not been an alcoholic I would have never found the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous, and what I found there was not how "not to drink", but a program for living in recovery that works, provided I don't put a drink or drug in my body.

My career with Oxford House officially began on March 15, 2016 but on March 9<sup>th</sup> I traveled to Silver Spring, Maryland for the Oxford House Inc. annual outreach worker training. What I experienced in those three days not only began my journey with OHI but also forever changed my perception of our way of life. At that point in my experience, I only knew life as a resident of Oxford House in Beckley, West Virginia for a 2-week stretch before moving to our house on Grove Avenue in Charleston, WV. I also had some interaction with other Oxford Houses in Charleston through our Oxford House chapter-Central WV. What happened in the D.C. metro area during those three days expanded my view of OHI, my recovery, and the world of long-term recovery living in general.

On the eve of March 10<sup>th</sup>, I found out that we would be traveling to Capitol Hill to lobby our U.S. Senators and Congressmen on legislation that would help Oxford House move forward in its mission to provide a bed to every still-sick and suffering addict and alcoholic. This brought me great joy as I graduated college just down the road at American University and was a proud graduate of their prestigious School of Public Affairs. During my years there, I was an intern in the United States Senate, becoming a staffer for Senator Rick Santorum (R - Pennsylvania). I was not only in my element, I felt like my years and education inside the Beltway had finally had a purpose. My recovery program has taught me that nothing, absolutely nothing happens in God's world by accident, and this certainly didn't feel serendipitous. We lobbied both West Virginia Senators and all three of the representatives from the House. Our efforts indeed paid off and, as of this writing, Representative Evan Jenkins has personally visited our houses in Huntington, WV and Representative Alex Mooney sent staffers from both his local office and his D.C. office to houses in Martinsburg, WV. We are currently reaching out to state level legislators in continuation of this effort to garner support from our policymakers.

The most profound and lasting effect of my time spent at OHI training was meeting all of my wonderful co-workers. I got to hear from an outreach worker from the state of Washington who has recovered from a hopeless state of mind and body. I heard stories of experience, strength, and hope of how Oxford House has changed, not only their lives, but of the many lives they have come into contact with.

I heard the story of one of our regional managers who has gone from a crack-cocaine addict living under a bridge to a home-owner with a credit score better than 98.6% of all Americans. Yeah, I saw it- a 980 credit score. You may have been like me thinking they only went up to the 600's. During his session on personal finances, he guaranteed he could make me a "thousandaire" in mere months by putting away as little as \$50 from every bi-monthly paycheck. He gave me hope that someday I could be a homeowner; he shared his experience that anything is possible if we put our recovery first.

This was a theme with everyone I met. They didn't talk of war stories about administering urinalysis tests but talked of picking up one another, loving those in their houses until they could love themselves, and believing in them when they didn't believe in themselves. Many in our group started their introduction with "Hello, family", and that's exactly what it felt like – family. When heading in to find a seat to eat meals, it didn't matter that I had never met any of those people; they made me feel like long-lost family. Before I arrived at an Oxford House I had long since been lost but my experience at corporate training made me feel like I finally had a place at the table that I had longed for.

Since returning from training and embarking on my career as an outreach worker I have faced my share of challenges, both professionally and personally. Anytime I feel those thoughts of impending doom that come so naturally for us addicts, I have been taught to use the tools I've learned in recovery. I now have a new set of tools in my bag that I have learned from my Oxford House "family" that has buoyed me when my natural inclination was to sink. No matter where I go in my recovery or professionally, my experience with Oxford House will go with me forever and for that I am eternally grateful to be in long-term recovery. Thanks, family!

### **SHANNON – West Virginia**

My name is Shannon Marie Deitche. I am 35 years old and I started using drugs when I was 13. I kept it hidden from my parents for a very long time. They always knew that something was going on but never knew what or why. I would do pretty much any drug anyone handed me except heroin. I always knew that if I picked it up there was no turning back.

Well, at age 22, I hit my first bottom or what I thought was my rock bottom. I decided to go to rehab for the first time. I was in there for 45 days and understood for the first time what was happening to me, like

why I kept on hurting myself and everyone that I loved. I stayed clean for four and a half years but I wasn't taking any suggestions. The next seven years were spent relapsing, getting clean and going to out-patient programs. At 32, I had my daughter -- a beautiful baby named Ryleigh Sadie. I had a bad pregnancy so I was on a lot of pain pills which finally turned into heroin. Yep, that one drug I'd never try was now in me. I did out-patient again and a few days after I finished, my boyfriend (my daughter's father), died from a drug overdose – six days before Christmas.

Six months later I had a terrible relapse. I almost died. I couldn't take it anymore. I wanted to live. I gave up and I put myself into rehab again. This time I knew something different had to happen, and it did. One day we went to this presentation. I didn't really know what it was at the time. A woman started telling us about these houses that you could live at with other addicts. Little did I know that this woman, Stacy, would be the person to change my life and become one of my best friends, or that these houses would change my life and give me everything that I ever lost in myself back. I moved into Oxford House, Wayne Manor, on September 9, 2015.

I started seeing that I had a purpose and I started giving back. By November, I was House President, Chapter Secretary, and State Chair. I lived there until this past April when I moved out and my fiancé, Rob, and I got our own apartment. Through Oxford House, I have made some amazing new family. Since moving out, I have stayed very involved by continuing to go to house meetings, and also opening new houses and filling them. I can never walk away from Oxford House. I love this organization. It gave me life and meaning. I just want to give back everything it has given to me.

*Update August 2016:* Due to belief in me and the Oxford House model, a friend from college has made a personal donation of \$20,000, which was used to establish the Oxford House West Virginia State Association Fund.

### **STEPHANIE S. – Virginia**

My name is Stephanie Smith and I was born October 31, 1962 in Fredericksburg Virginia. I'm the oldest of five. I attended school in Pennsylvania until the ninth grade then I attended high school in Chicago Ill.

My journey had begun; I was introduced to PCP, then Cocaine. I used these drugs until I got pregnant. During that time I had some time out from using. In 1983, I became a mother to a beautiful son. I went back out eight days after his birth. I worked as a receptionist with a technical institute in Downey, Ca. I resided with my mother and my youngest sister. I smoked cocaine all day and night. Finally I called my family; I had sold all the material possession; nothing was left. My second child was born in 1988. I continued to use – just not as much and the boys grew up both graduated from West Potomac High School in Alexandria.

I was introduced to Oxford House in August, 2013. I moved into a beautiful house for women – Brilyn Oxford House in Vienna, Virginia. I stayed for only a short time. I had a bad attitude and I was not able to get along with my roommates. I was expelled from the house disruptive behavior. I didn't use and I moved to another house in Arlington Virginia, Glen Carlyn, but I was expelled again for disruptive behavior. When was I going to get this?

I contacted my Outreach Worker, Debbie Robinson. She talked it over with me and guided me to another house, Pentagon Oxford House, which is still my home. Debbie advised me that she was running out of houses to send me to and this was the last stop before Hell.

I got it. My journey in Oxford has been amazing. I serve my Chapter as the chapter Chair. I've served in this position for one year. I'm also the Virginia State Convention Committee Chairperson. I have been

accepted as a member of the Oxford House Family, which I'm truly grateful to be part of. I completed a training class in Phlebotomy this year and I've been hired by Fresenius Medical Care of North America. Thank you, Mr. Paul Molloy, for your leadership and vision to start Oxford House. And, last but not least, I would like to say, Thank you, Debbie Robinson, for not giving up on me.

#### **SUMMAR C. – Louisiana**

My name is Summar and I'm an addict. I start using at the age of 13 and continued to use throughout my teen years without any consequences. I caught my first charge at the age of 25 for taking my mom's car on a dope run three states over. She pressed charges to scare me so I went to jail and was put on probation. I continued to use, thinking I could control it and, for short periods, I did. I used to numb the pain from my childhood hurts and abuse but soon the drugs caused me more pain. I lost relationships and friends and family members started to disown me but the pain wasn't enough to make me stop. I caught my first felony drug charge in 2007 in Texas. I was in jail for a short time but it was enough to make me try something different for a little while and I decided to switch drugs again because that was my answer for many years. When I couldn't control one drug anymore, I would go to another. Well, I did well for a little bit but finally I decided to try the needle for the first time and that was all it took to unlock the demon inside of me. I lost all drive and ambition. Drugs consumed my inner soul. I lost everything, including myself. I ended up catching new charges and did 2 ½ years in prison. It changed me for the better and I came out a different person because I knew I didn't want to go back.

Well that was short lived, also. I finished parole and two months later caught my fifth felony charge and was looking at 25 years. I asked the judge for help and was given drug court. I completed it successfully with no sanctions but I didn't work a true program. I just didn't pick up. On graduation day in April of 2015, I went to get my diploma high cause I believed I deserved to celebrate and using was the only way I knew how to do that. I used for the next 3 months hard core until I couldn't take it anymore. I was sick and tired. It wasn't what it used to be for me so I decided to put myself in rehab before I ended up dead or back in prison but this time it would be for life. That was the best decision I ever made.

When my release from rehab was getting close, I was scared. I didn't know where I was going but I knew I couldn't go back to Morgan City. That's when Oxford House came to do a presentation. I knew from that moment I was going to go there. I didn't care which one but I had to go. I was accepted into Oxford in August 2015; it was amazing. I stayed in Oxford for a year; worked a program and learned how to be responsible – something I never imagined I could do. I became very involved on a house, chapter and state level. I gained so much knowledge. I just became an alumni. I'm embarking upon a new journey in my life that would have never been possible if it wasn't for my time in Oxford to learn how to live clean, work a program and incorporate it into everyday life and, for that, I will forever be grateful.

#### **VIANCA M. – Louisiana**

I'm what you would call a "late bloomer". I didn't consume alcohol for the first time until I was 17 and didn't take my first puff of weed until a year after that. Of course, the fall to my ultimate bottom came quickly after that. By the age of 19, I found myself a pregnant, second-year freshman in college. At the time, my child's father did not make the choice of sticking around. My daughter was born June 19, 2010. Soon after that I was working, I had my own place, my own car and I started online college courses. I was binge drinking a lot at this time, on the weekend mostly, and smoking weed to calm my nerves. My daughter's father came back into our lives shortly before her 1st birthday.

Let me make one thing clear; we were NEVER good together but I always stayed in a delusional state long enough to think we were. Everything spiraled pretty quickly from there; more drinking, lots more drugs, evictions, fights, police visits you know the general sort of chaos that tends to swarm around those of us in

active addiction. A year or so later, we were living paycheck-to-paycheck in a disgusting hotel room. We got into an argument; looking back now, I don't even know what it was about. I was sitting on the bed with my beautiful little girl in my arms when he pulled a knife and held it to my throat. I packed my things and left within the hour. I bounced from family member to family member after that. A year later, shortly after the death of my younger brother, my daughter's father and I were back at it again screwing up each other's lives.

I quickly found out he had been shooting crystal meth. It only took a month before I was begging him to shoot me up too. I just wanted to see how it felt. I fell in love. It made everything better. In a matter of two weeks, I was shooting up every day and my constant paranoia had managed to get us kicked out of our living situation. So, we did what strung-out homeless parents would do: we skipped town. Destination: New Orleans, LA. Everything happened so quickly. In two weeks, we were picked up for shoplifting in a Wal-Mart. The State of Louisiana took custody of my child when I was arrested. Upon our release, we were issued a court date. The State determined that we could not support her and determined that she would remain in custody until we could support her. I stayed out there for a while after that, racking my brain every day for the easy way out of the mess I was in.

A month or two later I gave up and started seeking treatment. Family House was the best thing that ever happened to me. I was there for six months total. After being there for two months, I was granted full custody of my daughter. I attempted to mend family relationships upon my graduation from Family House. I did so by moving to Atlanta to live with my father. It did not work out and, in the process I relapsed.

I moved back to New Orleans and was accepted into Oxford House Mirabeau. I've got a job, a safe home for my daughter and the most amazing family, thanks to Oxford House. I'm actively involved in my house and my chapter and I do so with so much pride. I know I'm setting an example for my daughter, showing her and my peers that no matter what, you can do anything you set your mind to.

### **WILL K. – North Carolina**

My name is Will Kennedy. I was born February 11, 1971. I was raised on a tobacco farm in Davidson County as an only child. At four years old, my parents divorced and my mom and I moved into the city. At age fourteen, I started experimenting with marijuana, and over the next twenty-eight years, my drug use escalated to just about any drug I could get my hands on, including alcohol. I got married when I was eighteen and had two children shortly after. The marriage lasted three years, and my divorce was a result of my drug use. Shortly following my divorce, I found myself steadily in and out of jails and prisons until my last bid, April 17, 2013. While incarcerated, I realized that this time, unlike all the others, something had to give. Life had finally caught up with me. I learned through prayer, meditation, and my Higher Power that I had to die to self to truly live.

After being released, I had no problem staying clean and sober until November 14, 2015. For three weeks leading up to this date, I was drinking a beer or two after work to help me relax. On this particular day, I decided to get crappy drunk. The end result was that I did not and could not get drunk, no matter how much I drank. I woke up the next morning without a hangover. It was then that I realized that this was not going to work anymore. God made it very clear that I had come too far to turn back.

On May 16, 2016, I was accepted and moved into an Oxford House in Charlotte, North Carolina. After moving in, the house elected me as their President, and I was recently voted in as our chapter's Chairman. I enjoy encouraging others, going to visit all the Oxford Houses that I can, talking to fellow Oxford members, and sharing my experience, strength, and hope. Because of my Higher Power and the Oxford House way, God has taken a hopeless dope fiend and changed him into a dope-less hope fiend.

## Oxford Houses Receiving the 2016 Directors' Hundred-Year Award

<b>Colorado</b>	Oxford House-Fountainbleau	Oxford House-Golden Eagle	Oxford House-New Hope	Oxford House-E. Brunswick
Oxford House-Colorado Sprg	Oxford House-Fremaux	Oxford House-Medallion	Oxford House-North Hills	Oxford House-Evesham
Oxford House-Garden Gods	Oxford House-Gilbert 2	Oxford House-Phoenix	Oxford House-North Trail	Oxford House-Fischer Blvd
Oxford House-Independence	Oxford House-Gretna	Oxford House-Rodenberg	Oxford House-Oakmont	Oxford House-Fletcher Lake
Oxford House-Kenton	Oxford House-Harrell	Oxford House-S. Magnolia	Oxford House-Oakridge	Oxford House-Forked River
Oxford House-Longmont	Oxford House-Haven	Oxford House-Sunkist	Oxford House-Ocean Acres	Oxford House-Frankfort
Oxford House-Miller	Oxford House-Imperial	Oxford House-Winterview	Oxford House-O. Winston Rd	Oxford House-Freehold
Oxford House-Murray	Oxford House-Jones Creek		Oxford House-Pamlico	Oxford House-Galway Place
Oxford House-Shenandoah	Oxford House-Lafitte	<b>North Carolina</b>	Oxford House-Peace Street	Oxford House-Garden Street
Oxford House-Thornton	Oxford House-Lagniappe	Oxford House-Amhurst Rd	Oxford House-Piedmont	Oxford House-Grand Central
	Oxford House-LaRouge	Oxford House-Asheville	Oxford House-Pinecrest	Oxford House-Haddon
<b>Delaware</b>	Oxford House-LaSalle	Oxford House-Askham	Oxford House-Pinewood Ln	Oxford House-Hazelwood
Oxford House-Eighth St	Oxford House-LeGrand	Oxford House-Aurora 2	Oxford House-Pond	Oxford House-Hearthstone
Oxford House-Chestnut Hill	Oxford House-Lions Den	Oxford House-Bluffwood Cv	Oxford House-Quail Hollow	Oxford House-Highlands
Oxford House-Salem Woods	Oxford House-Louisianne	Oxford House-Bosselli	Oxford House-Rangeley	Oxford House-Howell
	Oxford House-Mandeville	Oxford House-Brinkley	Oxford House-Redbanks	Oxford House-Jarvis
<b>District of Columbia</b>	Oxford House-Maplewood	Oxford House-Buck Jones	Oxford House-Repon	Oxford House-Johnson Ave
Oxford House-R Street	Oxford House-McNeese	Oxford House-Carolina Ave	Oxford House-Reynolda	Oxford House-Kendall Park
	Oxford House-Metairie	Oxford House-Carrboro	Oxford House-Roundtop	Oxford House-Kingston
<b>Hawaii</b>	Oxford House-Mint	Oxford House-Cary	Oxford House-Shamrock	Oxford House-Lake Street
Oxford House-Alaume	Oxford House-Mirabeau	Oxford House-Cedar Hills	Oxford House-Sharneck	Oxford House-Lakewood
Oxford House-Coconut Grv.	Oxford House-Neal	Oxford House-ChristopherRd	Oxford House-Smith Creek	Oxford House-Langford
Oxford House-Kuokoa	Oxford House-New Leaf	Oxford House-Church Street	Oxford House-Soundside	Oxford House-Lexington Ct
	Oxford House-Hammond	Oxford House-College Road	Oxford House-South Hills	Oxford House-Linwood
<b>Kansas</b>	Oxford House-Palmer Park	Oxford House-Covil	Oxford House-State Street	Oxford House-Long Beach
Oxford House-Braeburn	Oxford House-Pinhook	Oxford House-Covington	Oxford House-Steeds Run	Oxford House-Lookout
Oxford House-Chautauqua	Oxford House-Ponchartrain	Oxford House-Daley	Oxford House-Stockton Dr.	Oxford House-Madison Court
Oxford House-Duncan	Oxford House-Protégé	Oxford House-Delwood	Oxford House-Sudbury	Oxford House- Matawan
Oxford House-Midtown	Oxford House-Red River 2	Oxford House-Driver	Oxford House-Sue Lane	Oxford House-Meadowbrook
Oxford House-North Ash	Oxford House-Regalia	Oxford House-Dunn	Oxford House-Suite	Oxford House-Medford Blvd
Oxford House-Village	Oxford House-Rhiannon	Oxford House-Durham	Oxford House-Swann	Oxford House-Melbourne
	Oxford House-Roma 2	Oxford House-Durwood Lane	Oxford House-Triangle	Oxford House-Melody Lane
<b>Kentucky</b>	Oxford House-Shawn	Oxford House-Eastwood	Oxford House-Tyndall Court	Oxford House-Merion
Oxford House-Greenup	Oxford House-Soignet	Oxford House-Estes	Oxford House-Weatherhill	Oxford House-Millbrook
	Oxford House-S. Alexandria	Oxford House-Euclid	Oxford House-Westhaven	Oxford House-Monument
<b>Louisiana</b>	Oxford House-Southfield 2	Oxford House-Evans	Oxford House-Willow	Moorestown
Oxford House-Acadiana	Oxford House-Southshore	Oxford House-Ferris	Oxford House-Wyoming	Oxford House-Myrtle
Oxford House-Avalon	Oxford House-St George	Oxford House-Fieldbrook		Oxford House-Ocean
Oxford House-Baton Rouge	Oxford House-St Tammany	Oxford House-Firelight	<b>New Hampshire</b>	Oxford House-Palisade
Oxford House-Beaureve	Oxford House-St Thomas	Oxford House-Fleming	Oxford House-Manchester	Oxford House-Patcong Creek
Oxford House-Belle	Oxford House-Stockton	Oxford House-Fox Road		Oxford House-Pine Fork
Oxford House-Bienvenue	Oxford House-Tams	Oxford House-Fox Run	<b>New Jersey</b>	Oxford House-P't of Woods
Oxford House-Bon Temps	Oxford House-Tangi	Oxford House-Franklin St.	Oxford House-11th Ave	Oxford House-Prospect
Oxford House-Boxwood	Oxford House-Tanner	Oxford House-Gardenview	Oxford House-13th Ave	Oxford House-River Road
Oxford House-Broadmoor	Oxford House-Uptown	Oxford House-Glenwood 2	Oxford House-Fourth Ave	Oxford House-Rockefeller Pk
Oxford House-Bruce 2	Oxford House-Vieux Carre	Oxford House-Goldsboro	Oxford House-Fifth Avenue	Oxford House-Rutgers Place
Oxford House-Buveur de Lait	Oxford House-Village Creek	Oxford House-Grace	Oxford House-Anchor	Oxford House- Sears
Oxford House-Bye-Water	Oxford House-Waterfront	Oxford House-Greene Street	Oxford House-Astoria	Oxford House-S. Ward Ave
Oxford House-Cajun	Oxford House-Wenham	Oxford House-Guess Road	Oxford House-Bay Lea	Oxford House-Stratford
Oxford House-C'est Bon	Oxford House-West Hale	Oxford House-Harvard	Oxford House-Bayside	Oxford House-Suffolk
Oxford House-Canal	Oxford House-Whittington	Oxford House-Haven Road	Oxford House-Billings Ave	Oxford House-Thompson Av.
Oxford House-Clearview	Oxford House-Windsor	Oxford House-Haymount	Oxford House-Boardwalk	Oxford House-Tigger
Oxford House-Cole	Louisiana State Association	Oxford House-Hearth	Oxford House-Bradford	Oxford House-Troy
Oxford House-Comal		Oxford House-Homestead	Oxford House-Bradley Beach	Oxford House-Union Creek
Oxford House-Crescent City	<b>Maryland</b>	Oxford House-Jones Franklin	Oxford House- Brick	Oxford House-Victorian
Oxford House-Creole	Oxford House-Bethesda	Oxford House-Kings Mill Rd	Oxford House-Cardinal Court	Oxford House-Vineland
Oxford House-De la Majorite	Oxford House-Cheverly	Oxford House-Lucerne	Oxford House-Carnegie	Oxford House-Waters Edge
Oxford House-Dena Lynn	Oxford House-Kelly	Oxford House-Mantua Way	Oxford House-Cedar Brdway	Oxford House-Wesley
Oxford House-Drusilla	Oxford House-Severna Park	Oxford House-Mayflower	Oxford House-Claire Drive	Oxford House-West-Orange
Oxford House-Dulles	Oxford House-Silver Spring	Oxford House-Maynard	Oxford House- Clairmont	Oxford House-Winchester
Oxford House-Erlanger		Oxford House-Mayridge	Oxford House- Cornwall	Oxford House-Woodbrook
Oxford House-Essen	<b>Mississippi</b>	Oxford House-Mendenhall	Oxford House- Disney	New Jersey Chapter 2
Oxford House-Filhiol	Oxford House-Bienville	Oxford House-Mordecai	Oxford House- Doral	New Jersey Chapter 9
Oxford House-Flannigan	Oxford House-Big Lake	Oxford House-Morehead	Oxford House- Dorer	
Oxford House-Fleur Di Lis	Oxford House-Bon Ami	Oxford House-Morgan Creek	Oxford House- Dudley	
Oxford House-Forsythe	Oxford House-Forest Park	Oxford House-New Bern	Oxford House- East Broad St	

## Oxford Houses Receiving the 2016 Directors' Hundred-Year Award

### New Mexico

Oxford House-C. Carlos Rey  
 Oxford House-Candelaria  
 Oxford House-Constitution  
 Oxford House-Elizabeth  
 Oxford House-Eubank  
 Oxford House-Juan Tabo  
 Oxford House-Morris  
 Oxford House-Pennsylvania  
 Oxford House-Snowheights  
 Oxford House-Tahiti

### Oklahoma

Oxford House-Ada  
 Oxford House-Beacon  
 Oxford House-Beech  
 Oxford House-Blessing  
 Oxford House-Boomer  
 Oxford House-Bricktown  
 Oxford House-Burning Tree  
 Oxford House-Cloverleaf  
 Oxford House-Dittmer  
 Oxford House-East Moore  
 Oxford House-E Wedgewood  
 Oxford House-Edgewood  
 Oxford House-Edmond 2  
 Oxford House-Elmhurst  
 Oxford House-Epic Forest  
 Oxford House-Fontana  
 Oxford House-Grove  
 Oxford House-Holiday  
 Oxford House-Integrity  
 Oxford House-Leisure Lane  
 Oxford House-Logan  
 Oxford House-Marlyn 2  
 Oxford House-Opportunity  
 Oxford House-Parish  
 Oxford House-Patterson Est.  
 Oxford House-Pine Oak  
 Oxford House-Rockwood Hil  
 Oxford House-Rustic Hills  
 Oxford House-Shirley Ann  
 Oxford House-Sooner  
 Oxford House-S. Park Plaza  
 Oxford House-Southern Hills  
 Oxford House-Stillwater  
 Oxford House-Terrace Manor  
 Oxford House-Tulsa  
 Oxford House-Westwinds  
 Oxford House-Woodridge

### Oregon

Oxford House-Ashar  
 Oxford House-Glencoe  
 Oxford House-Meldrum Park  
 Oxford House-Onawa  
 Oxford House-Powell Butte  
 Oxford House-Royal Park  
 Oxford House-Swanson Park  
 Oxford House-Waterpark  
 Oregon Chapter 8  
 Oregon State Association

### Pennsylvania

Oxford House-Cecelia  
 Oxford House-Donna J

Oxford House-Eau Claire St.  
 Oxford House-Orchard Ave.  
 Oxford House-Third Avenue

### Tennessee

Oxford House-Cleveland  
 Oxford House-East Ridge  
 Oxford House-Faxon  
 Oxford House-High Pt Ter.  
 Oxford House-Hilson  
 Oxford House-Meridian  
 Oxford House-Royale

### Texas

Oxford House-Alamo City  
 Oxford House-Awesome  
 Oxford House-Bashlow  
 Oxford House-Beaver Run  
 Oxford House-Bellaire  
 Oxford House-Blanco  
 Oxford House-Carson  
 Oxford House-Carvel Lane  
 Oxford House-Catalpa  
 Oxford House-Cortez  
 Oxford House-Emet  
 Oxford House-Equinox  
 Oxford House-Excelsior  
 Oxford House-Fort Worth  
 Oxford House-Grayson  
 Oxford House-Greenridge  
 Oxford House-Leon Valley  
 Oxford House-Lubbock  
 Oxford House-Lugary  
 Oxford House-Milam  
 Oxford House-North Star  
 Oxford House-Red Raider  
 Oxford House-Richard Lee  
 Oxford House-Richland Man.  
 Oxford House-Rolling Oaks  
 Oxford House-Stepping Stone  
 Oxford House-Westcreek  
 Oxford House-Wharton  
 Oxford House-Wood Oak  
 Oxford House-Woodland Pk.  
 Oxford House-Woodlawn  
 Oxford House-Yorkwood

### Virginia

Oxford House-Amherst Street  
 Oxford House-Annandale  
 Oxford House-Apple Bloss.  
 Oxford House-Baileys Cr Rd  
 Oxford House-Bayview Gard  
 Oxford House-Beall Drive  
 Oxford House-Beau Lane  
 Oxford House-Belle Haven  
 Oxford House-Berkley Park  
 Oxford House-Blossom  
 Oxford House-Braddock  
 Oxford House-Brandy Jo  
 Oxford House-Briarwood 2  
 Oxford House-Brilyn  
 Oxford House-Brookfield  
 Oxford House-Buckrose  
 Oxford House-Chain Bridge  
 Oxford House-Chamberlayne

Oxford House-Chapel Hill  
 Oxford House-Chesapeake  
 Oxford House-Chester  
 Oxford House-Church Hill  
 Oxford House-Clay Street  
 Oxford House-Columbia Pike  
 Oxford House-Coral  
 Oxford House-Diamond Hill  
 Oxford House-Douglass Park  
 Oxford House-Edgehill  
 Oxford House-Fair Oaks  
 Oxford House-Fairview Park  
 Oxford House-Featherstone  
 Oxford House-Forest Glen  
 Oxford House-Forest Hills Pk  
 Oxford House-Fredericksb'g  
 Oxford House-Fry's Spring  
 Oxford House-Glebe Road  
 Oxford House-Glebe Wood  
 Oxford House-Glen Carlyn  
 Oxford House-Golden Maple  
 Oxford House-Hampton  
 Oxford House-Hermitage  
 Oxford House-Highland Sprg  
 Oxford House-Hilltop Hghts.  
 Oxford House-Hunter Street  
 Oxford House-Jamestown  
 Oxford House-Kenwood  
 Oxford House-Lake Smith  
 Oxford House-Lemon Road  
 Oxford House-Little Back  
 Oxford House-Little Creek  
 Oxford House-Little River  
 Oxford House-Lynnhaven  
 Oxford House-Melita  
 Oxford House-Merrifield  
 Oxford House-Mill Mountain  
 Oxford House-Moseby Court  
 Oxford House-Mt Vernon Sq.  
 Oxford House-Neptune  
 Oxford House-North Avenue  
 Oxford House-N. Loudoun  
 Oxford House-North Upton  
 Oxford House-Oceana  
 Oxford House-Old Dominion  
 Oxford House-Old Town  
 Oxford House-Orchid  
 Oxford House-Pembroke  
 Oxford House-Pen Park  
 Oxford House-Pence Court  
 Oxford House-Peninsula  
 Oxford House-Picadilly Place  
 Oxford House-Pike Place  
 Oxford House-Plaza  
 Oxford House-Pleasant Val'y  
 Oxford House-Pollard Park  
 Oxford House-Poseidon  
 Oxford House-Prosperity  
 Oxford House-Raleigh Court  
 Oxford House-Ramekin  
 Oxford House-Randolph M.  
 Oxford House-Ravensworth  
 Oxford House-River City  
 Oxford House-Roseberry  
 Oxford House-Salem  
 Oxford House-Shenandoah V.

Oxford House-S. Cameron  
 Oxford House-Springfield  
 Oxford House-Star City  
 Oxford House-Sterling  
 Oxford House-Thomas Street  
 Oxford House-Tidewater  
 Oxford House-Victoria  
 Oxford House-Wakefield  
 Oxford House-Wasena  
 Oxford House-Washington Pk  
 Oxford House-Waverly Hills  
 Oxford House-Wesleyan  
 Oxford House-West End  
 Oxford House-Williamsburg  
 Oxford House-Winchester Hg  
 Oxford House-Woodland Hg

### Washington

Oxford House-Beach  
 Oxford House-Bill Wyze  
 Oxford House-Bridgeview  
 Oxford House-Brockman  
 Oxford House-Cascade View  
 Oxford House-Central Park  
 Oxford House-Connelly  
 Oxford House-Crosby  
 Oxford House-Delaware  
 Oxford House-Eastside  
 Oxford House-Echo Lake  
 Oxford House-Erlands Point  
 Oxford House-Fern Hill  
 Oxford House-Franklin  
 Oxford House-Garden  
 Oxford House-Gracy's Lake  
 Oxford House-Grammer  
 Oxford House-Heights  
 Oxford House-Hendrick  
 Oxford House-Hilltop View  
 Oxford House-Historic Flynn  
 Oxford House-Hood  
 Oxford House-J Morgan  
 Oxford House-Journey  
 Oxford House-Juanita  
 Oxford House-Kennewick  
 Oxford House-Lacey Acres  
 Oxford House-Laurelwood  
 Oxford House-Licton Springs  
 Oxford House-Lein  
 Oxford House-Longview  
 Oxford House-Lotus  
 Oxford House-Lynndale Park  
 Oxford House-Mahan  
 Oxford House-Matthews B.  
 Oxford House-Mirror Lake  
 Oxford House-Morain  
 Oxford House-Mountlake Ter  
 Oxford House-Myrna B  
 Oxford House-Northgate  
 Oxford House-Oak Harbor  
 Oxford House-Oakbrook  
 Oxford House-Ohana  
 Oxford House-Orchard Hghts  
 Oxford House-Peabody  
 Oxford House-Pinecrest 2  
 Oxford House-Pioneer Park  
 Oxford House-Prasch

Oxford House-Puget Sound  
 Oxford House-Ranier View  
 Oxford House-Renton Valley  
 Oxford House-Reserve Ridge  
 Oxford House-Richland  
 Oxford House-Rosemere  
 Oxford House-Rowland  
 Oxford House-Ruston View  
 Oxford House-Salmon Creek  
 Oxford House-Sandalwood Ct  
 Oxford House-Sedro Woolley  
 Oxford House-Shattuck Ck.  
 Oxford House-Shorewood  
 Oxford House-Skagit Valley  
 Oxford House-Stark  
 Oxford House-Sunrise Hghts  
 Oxford House-Tekoa  
 Oxford House-Tenny Creek  
 Oxford House-Truman Place  
 Oxford House-Tyee  
 Oxford House-Vancouver  
 Oxford House-Vista  
 Oxford House-Wellesley  
 Oxford House-White Pine  
 Oxford House-Yakima  
 Washington Chapter 5  
 Washington Chapter 25  
 Washington Chapter 26  
 Washington State Association

### Wisconsin

Oxford House-La Crosse

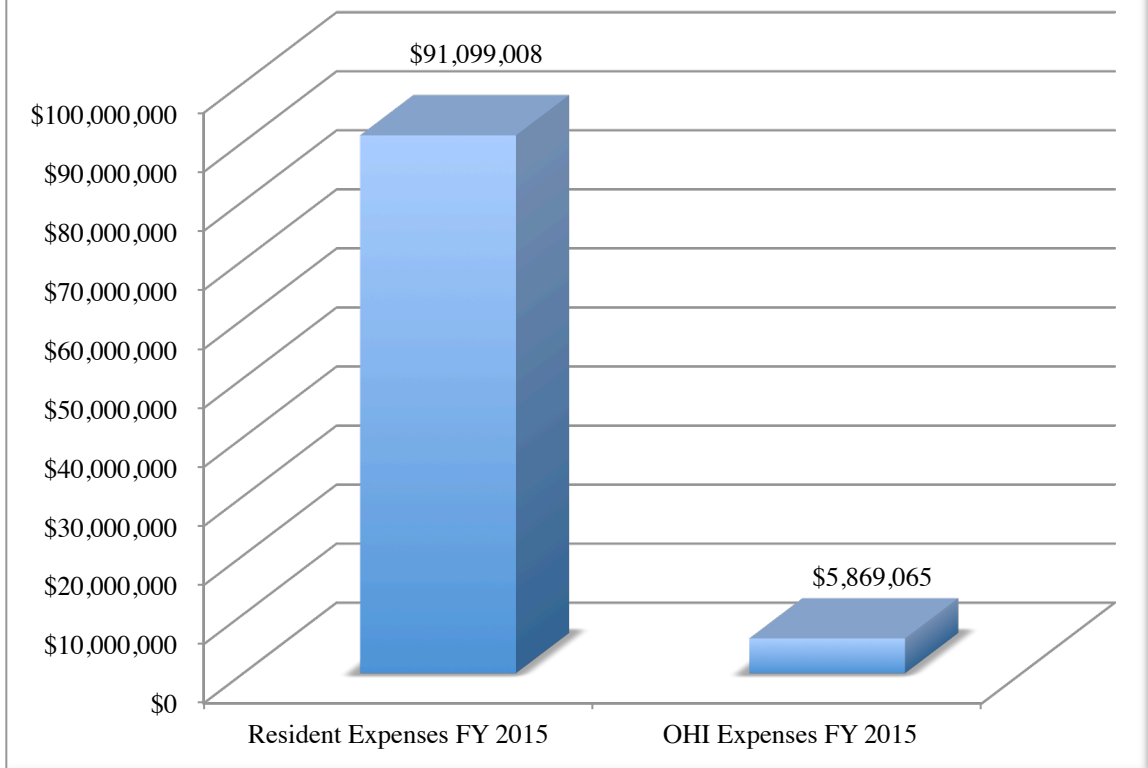
**Thank you for helping  
 Oxford House™ to grow.**

**In FY 2016, the Oxford  
 Houses on this list  
 contributed at least \$50 a  
 month. That money  
 permitted expansion in  
 new states and gave  
 thousands of recovering  
 individuals the same  
 chance we have to gain  
 the time and peer  
 support we need to  
 become comfortable  
 enough with long-term  
 recovery not to relapse.**

**Thanks. Keep up the  
 good work. Oxford  
 House™ can be around  
 for 100 Years because of  
 our efforts.**



**Amount spent by Oxford House residents themselves for household expenses versus the amount spent by OHI in FY 2015 to start new houses and keep existing houses on track**



During fiscal year 2015 for every dollar spent by Oxford House, Inc. to develop new houses and help keep existing houses on track, the residents expended \$15.53 themselves to pay for household expenses including rent to a landlord, utilities and other household expenses.

Oxford House, Inc.[OHI] – the national umbrella nonprofit organization – has the sole authority for granting groups charters to establish Oxford Houses. The charter has three specific conditions: (1) the group must be democratically self-run, (2) the group must be financially self-supported, and (3) the group must immediately expel any resident who returns to using drugs or drinking alcohol.

The outreach worker is trained by Oxford House World Services for the following tasks:

- ◆ Finding a suitable house to rent
- ◆ Getting a charter from OHI
- ◆ Getting an FEIN number from IRS
- ◆ Recruiting initial residents
- ◆ Teaching residents the system of operations
- ◆ Building mutually supportive chapters
- ◆ Balancing supply of houses to demand
- ◆ Developing linkages to providers
- ◆ Developing employment linkages
- ◆ Documenting success/failure

OHI employs, trains and supervises outreach workers to help establish new Oxford Houses and organize chapters and state associations to provide mutual support and quality control. Each Oxford House is self-run and self-supported using the time-tested, disciplined, democratic system of operations used by Oxford Houses for more than 40 years.

In 2015 only 16.7% of the more than 33,000 residents in the national network of Oxford Houses were expelled because of relapse. Recovery without relapse is the norm – not the exception – for Oxford House residents.

## *Notes*

## **OXFORD HOUSE TRADITIONS**

1. Oxford House has as its primary goal the provision of housing for the alcoholic and drug addict who wants to stay clean and sober.
2. All Oxford Houses are run on a democratic basis. Our officers serve continuous periods of no longer than six months.
3. No Member of an Oxford House is ever asked to leave without cause -- drinking, drug use, or disruptive behavior.
4. Oxford House members realize that active participation in AA and/or NA offers assurance of continued sobriety.
5. Each Oxford House should be autonomous except in matters affecting other houses or Oxford House, Inc. as a whole.
6. Each Oxford House should be financially self-supporting.
7. Oxford House should remain forever non-professional.
8. Propagation of the Oxford House, Inc. concept should always be conceived as public education.
9. Members who leave an Oxford House in good standing should become associate members.

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# Oxford House™

1975-2016

*41 Years of Organized Self-Help To Enable Alcoholics and Drug Addicts to Recover Without Relapse*

- Providing Sole Authority for Oxford House Charters
- Providing Technical Assistance to Establish New Oxford Houses
- Providing Technical Assistance to Keep Existing Oxford Houses on Track
- Providing Organization of Chapters to Help Oxford Houses to Help Themselves
- Providing the Time, Living Environment and Support to Enable Alcoholics and Drug Addicts to Achieve Recovery Without Relapse
- Providing the Legal, Philosophical, and Scientific Framework for a Cost-effective, Worldwide Network of Supportive Recovery Housing.

Write or Call

***Oxford House, Inc.***

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Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

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Facsimile 301-589-0302

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Web Site: [www.oxfordhouse.org](http://www.oxfordhouse.org)