



# Oxford Grape

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## Oxford House Listed on National Registry Model Met Rigorous Standards

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### Oxford House Model

Date of Review: February 2011

The Oxford House Model provides housing and rehabilitative support for adults who are recovering from alcohol and/or drug use and who want to remain abstinent from use. The model is a confederation of chartered community-based, self-supported rental homes that are operated under the umbrella of Oxford House World Services. Each house is self-governed and has at least six same-sex residents, who have a shared responsibility for adherence to Oxford House traditions, on-time payment of household expenses, completion of chores, and successful integration into the community neighborhood. Oxford Houses do not employ professional treatment staff, but residents are free to decide whether to seek psychological or substance abuse treatment by professionals or participate in 12-step self-help organizations (e.g., Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous) while receiving social support and guidance from fellow residents.

Adults who want to live in an Oxford House must complete an application for admission, be interviewed by current Oxford House residents, and be voted in by the residents. Each new resident receives a booklet of rules, and current residents spend considerable time helping new residents learn the house's system of operation. The Oxford House Model has no maximum length-of-stay restriction, and on average, a resident stays in an Oxford House for a little more than a year. No resident is ever asked to leave an Oxford House without cause. In cases when eviction is a possibility, all residents meet to discuss the potential cause, which can include renewed substance use or disruptive behavior (e.g., failure to pay rent, failure to complete house chores); a dismissal vote is grounds for immediate eviction of a resident. Residents elect house officers, which include a president, treasurer, secretary, comptroller, and household chore coordinator, for a term of no greater than 6 months, giving all residents the opportunity to assume leadership positions in house governance. Recovering individuals who want to establish a new Oxford House must apply to Oxford House World Services for a charter, which is granted free of charge. Individuals interested in becoming an Oxford House resident can use the program Web site to locate vacancies and access the application.

### Notice on the website of the National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices

Oxford House has just been listed on the National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices [NREPP] – an honor to the men and women who for 36 years have demonstrated that living in a structured Oxford House greatly increases the odds for achieving long-term sobriety. The purpose of the government listing is to provide reliable information about interventions that work. Listing followed a rigorous independent review of the Oxford House model that gave particular emphasis to a major NIDA-sponsored study by DePaul University that favorably compared Oxford House living with a control group. The results of that two-year study were published in *American Journal of Public Health*, Oct 2006; Vol. 96, pp1727–1729. See the study under “Publications/Evaluations/DePaul” <http://www.oxfordhouse.org/userfiles/file/doc/niaaa.pdf> on the Oxford House web site.

The NREPP listing is the latest recognition that Oxford Houses provide the time, peer support and system of operations that make recovery without relapse the norm rather than the exception. See the NREPP listing at <http://nrepp.samhsa.gov/ViewIntervention.aspx?id=223>. Pass on the good news.

<p><b>United Kingdom Comes Aboard</b> <i>First Oxford House in England is established by Tony Brown</i> Story on page 6</p>	<p><b>Georgia Starts Network of Oxford Houses</b> Picture and Story page 5</p>	<p><b>Houses and Chapters Make Record Donations FY 2010</b> Story page 5</p>
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## Oxford Houses Pass 1,500 Mark

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Oxford House expansion continues and in November the number of houses passed 1,500 having a total of 11,999 recovery beds. During the last 12 months, more than 25,000 individuals occupied one of the Oxford Recovery beds. Most of those individuals [83%] stayed clean and sober.

The number of houses continues to grow but the need for many more houses is clear. The Center for Substance Abuse Treatment [CSAT] estimates that more than 25 million Americans are addicted to either alcohol or other mood changing drugs. During the year fewer than 2 million will receive any kind of treatment for their addiction. Many do not want treatment because they deny their addiction, many do and many others would accept treatment if there were effective intervention. Perhaps the saddest situation is when there is intervention and the addict would accept treatment but there is no treatment available. About two-thirds of those in treatment have been through treatment two or three times before. Like most alcoholics and drug addicts they have fallen into a pattern of recycling in and out of treatment. Intervention works but most of the time the intervention simply produces a temporary interruption in addictive use. In most cases the addict stops using but does not stay stopped.

That is why experts call alcoholism and drug addiction chronic diseases – once acquired they stay with the victim for life. The Oxford House experience shows that given the opportunity to master long-term recovery by living in an Oxford House most alcoholics and drug addicts can stay clean and sober forever. Oxford Houses provide the time, peer support and responsibilities that no other program seems to do. Clearly it is a combination of things that lead to long-term sobriety but Oxford House has 36 years of experience that shows something about Oxford House living makes a big difference. As we go through the Holiday Season pass on the good news about Oxford House so that more houses can be started to give more individuals in recovery an opportunity to “make it.”

Not only can Oxford House living stop recycling of individuals in and out of treatment and jail, but also by stopping the recycling many primary care beds are made available. It is time to use common sense to help recovering individuals help themselves by substantially expanding the number of available Oxford Houses throughout the country.

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## Foundation Funding Helps Expansion



Bill Daniels July 1, 1920 – March 7, 2000

Three years before he died, Bill Daniels established the Daniels Fund – a philanthropic foundation to continue his donations to those in need. Daniels had led a full-life from being a World War II Navy fighter pilot to a person who had an interest in business, sports and people. He is known as a pioneer in cable television – setting up the first microwave to import distance TV signals from Denver to Wyoming in 1952. He owned sports teams and was known for being an honest businessman. He was also an alcoholic and successfully went through Betty Ford Clinic in 1986.

The Daniels Fund makes a lot of grants but perhaps Bill Daniels would be most pleased with two grants the foundation made to Oxford House. In FY 2011, the foundation made a \$75,000 grant to OHI for use in Bill’s home state of Colorado and a \$40,000 grant to match funds for development of Oxford Houses in New Mexico. This year the foundation has committed \$56,000 for use in Colorado and perhaps \$17,000 more if OHI matches that amount.

A network of 18 Oxford Houses in Colorado provides 122 recovery beds. [8 new houses and the chapter organizations were directly the result of the Daniels Fund’s grant] and 5 houses started in New Mexico were totally funded by grants from Dr. Bruce Stadel and the Daniels Fund. More will come thanks to these donations. Recovery and gratitude go hand in hand.

**An Oxford House Testimonial**  
**Learning to Live Again**  
By Clint L. Crain

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Until three years ago, my life was plagued with depression and substance abuse. All of this led to a DWI and the loss of everything I owned. With no other option, I moved into a sober living facility called Oxford House. This house was to be my prison, my school, and my way to live through one of the hardest time of my life. However, Oxford House does not just allow people to live; it teaches people how to live again.

My life before Oxford House was typical of most everyone I know. I had lived in Mandeville, Louisiana for about ten years; this is where I rented a small home just five blocks from Lake Pontchartrain with my friend Matthew and me. Spare time was not something that occurred often because of my two full-time jobs and part-time school schedule. However, my close friends frequented my home on the weekends to drink, smoke marijuana, and play videogames. Life was looking up for me.

Then, after receiving a DWI for driving under the influence of Valium, a drug prescribed to me for anxiety, my life was forced to change. The state sentenced me to thirty days of inpatient rehab, one year of group therapy, and eighteen months of house arrest. I lost my house, car, both jobs, and was no longer able to attend scheduled meetings. Needless to say I was extremely angry about the verdict and felt a deep sense of regret about the life I had led. At the time, all I wanted was to not come out of this situation at all. People would tell me to look past all the consequences to a time when all of this would be behind me, but I could not imagine starting over and did not want to.

While in Fontainebleau Treatment Center for the thirty days of inpatient rehab as sentenced by the state, I was told about Oxford House by a group of guys that came to do a presentation.

They explained that Oxford House was founded by a group of recovering addicts who wanted to use what they had learned from a lifetime of drug use to help other men and women to change their life. The way the organization puts it, "Oxford House is a concept in recovery from drug and alcohol addiction. In its simplest form, an Oxford House describes a democratically run, self-supporting and drug free home" ("The Purpose and Structure," 2011). With nothing to lose and nowhere to turn, I applied for residency at Oxford House Regalia.

The structure of an Oxford house is one of strict accountability with a cornerstone of sobriety. Each house is separate from the others, but supervised by a local chapter. All in-house decisions, such as: if a person should be allowed to live in the house, if a person can spend the night out of the house, if the bills should be paid, when the bills should be paid, and if a person should be evicted from the house, are determined democratically. Inside the house there is no sole authority. Each resident must keep in contact daily contact with the other members of the house. If a member is found using any sort of mind-altering substances, the other members of the house will confront him or her. Evidence or strong supposition of drug use is penalized by automatic eviction with only fifteen minutes to leave the house. This makes all the people in the house both friends and authority figures.

There are a few other ways a person can be evicted. If someone is too far behind on rent, all other residents place him or her on a rental contract. This form of contract lasts two weeks and in that time the member must have completely paid what they owe or face eviction. Also, a person can be evicted for violent behavior or for disregarding the rules of the house.

On the day I left Fontainebleau Treatment Center, I was taken to the Regalia Oxford House for an interview, not knowing what to expect. The house itself was extremely nice looking and was located in one of the better

subdivisions of Mandeville. Five guys meet me at the door and seemed just as ready to get to know me as I was to move in. The interview process took about thirty minutes and consisted of questions ranging for my work history to the extent of my drug use. After less than ten minutes in private they decided to accept me into the house. As with most new residents, I moved in immediately with nothing to my name but a single bag of clothes and a new mark on my criminal record.

The first week of living in the house was comforting. My room was nothing more than a large closet in the master bedroom, and, despite its size, I found it comfortable and private. The guys and I quickly became good friends. If I needed help in any way, for example, a ride to AA meetings, or just a friend to talk to, they were there to lend a hand. My life had thrown me into a humbling situation with no choice but to deal with it. With all that had happened to me in the year prior, I had become numb. The feelings of anger and regret had diminished, but were not completely absent. On the other hand, this new environment of constant, friendly supervision was beginning to pull me out of my bitter mood. It seemed as though these people planned on showing me that life is something that happens every moment if you like it or not. The guys did this by dragging me to the lakefront to play football. This would not have been my chosen activity, but it was fun nonetheless.

In the house every resident must attend weekly house meeting. Things like bills, delegating chores, and each member's rent balance are usual topics at these meetings. However, for new members these meeting are like trials. Everything the new member has done, said he was going to do, and/or anything he has not done is talked about. For my first three weeks, I had not found a job, so this was the main topic at those meeting. From my personal standpoint, these meetings helped show me just how strongly everything I do affects the house as a whole.



It was one month before I found a job, and at that time I was six hundred dollars in debt to the house. The guys placed me under a rental contract that stated I was to pay eighty percent of my income and turn over my paystubs every week to prove my earnings. I could have taken this as an insult or threat, but it showed the importance of my contribution to the house. I fulfilled all stipulations of my contract and for this there was no other reward except my own sense of belonging.

Two months after moving into the Regalia House, my new-found home, one of the guys who helped me move in was suspected of drug use. In order to keep him anonymous, I will call him Mike. This was the first time I had to take part in an eviction meeting. It started just like all other meetings, but there was one single drug screen on the table. Mike saw the drug screen and started to shake a little. One of the other guys said to him, "It's your turn." Mike just said "I am not going to pass." We looked at him as he started to cry. Mike had been in the house for almost one year, but now he had fifteen minutes to move out. At that moment, the success of the house became more important than the emotions of the residents. Mike had betrayed the trust of the group. Sitting in on this meeting really showed me that my emotions can lead me to poor decision making. Emotions are driven by one's sense of self and they are all too often selfishness in nature.

It was on my birthday that I became the only resident of the Oxford House Regalia. One year after moving in, I had participated in the eviction of six people. All of them left the house without a fight. They all understood that it was they who had failed and to stay would drag the house down with them.

Over time, seven others left voluntarily, which put me in a very strange position once again. Now I had to help find new recovering addicts who wanted to change their life and show them how to

live outside the confines of their own wants and emotions.

After almost two years in the house, I had made two years sober and felt like my whole world had changed. My outlook on life was not dependent on the acceptance of others. The friends that had frequented my home so often in the past became just a memory of a life I was proud to leave behind. Then again, the friends that have stayed by my side have become more important to me than my own breath. For me, sobriety is the only way I want live my life.

Looking back now, I feel like my life has changed for the better because of Oxford House. Though their strict rules and regulation I have found a level of peace that could have never been reached living in the shadow of chemical dependency. The things I have learned from that house, discipline and selflessness, are a metaphor for the world around me; it is more important to live life for the betterment of the world around you than to live life selfishly.



**Oxford House-Regalia**

Mandeville, LA

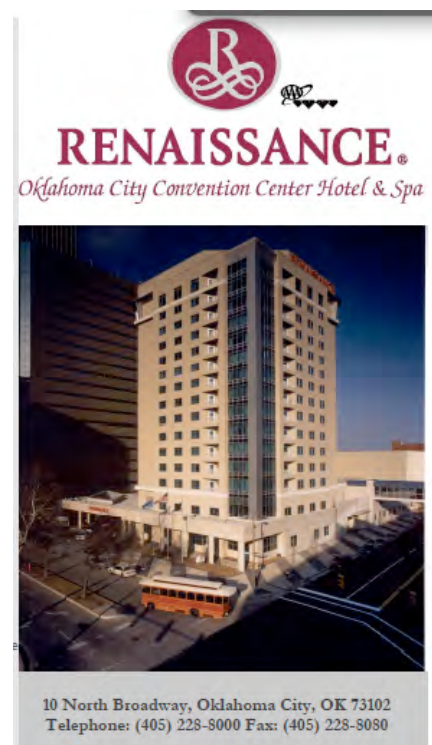
[The house where Clint L. Crain, the author got to "Live Again."]

**Oxford House World Services**  
**1010 Wayne Ave, Suite 300**  
**Silver Spring, Maryland 20910**

**Tel. 301-587-2916**

## **Plan NOW** **2012 Oxford House** **Annual Convention** **Oklahoma City**

The 2011 Convention held in Washington, DC voted to have the convention in Oklahoma City for 2012. The Convention will be held September 13-16. Pictured below is the Renaissance Hotel in Oklahoma City. It is located right next to Convention Center. Plan now to send as many as possible to the convention. It promises to be a great one.



The practice of alternating the annual Oxford House convention site between the Nation's Capital and some other location in the country is part of Oxford House tradition. It underscores that Oxford House is a national program for everyone in recovery.

## Network of Oxford Houses Starts in Georgia

At the beginning of 2011, Georgia was one of seven states not having Oxford Houses. Now that has changed because of a contribution by the management and employees of InComm, the major company providing pre-paid gift cards and credit cards at stores throughout the country, that is headquartered in Georgia.

One of the company's employees, Lawanna Helms, lost her daughter Holly Helms, to an overdose of heroin. Shortly thereafter her daughter's boyfriend died the same way. During her daughter's attempts to stay clean, Lawanna met Dennis Pruitt, who in 1991 helped to get the first Oxford House in Durham, NC (Oxford House-Driver) going.

After Holly died, Dennis and Lawanna spent time discussing how best to honor Holly's life. They decided to see if they could get Oxford House selected as the project for InComm's company-wide annual fundraiser. After about 6 months of sharing information back and forth, Dennis and Kathleen Gibson, Oxford House COO, presented the Oxford House model at the kick off for the weeklong Company Fundraising event at the main corporate office.

The employees of InComm raised around \$15,000. The owner(s) of the company donated the additional \$6,000 plus to make it an even \$21,000.

Two houses are up and running in Georgia.



**Oxford House—Morgan** in Kennesaw, GA is a house for seven women started 10/1/11.



**Oxford House – Chisholm Trail** is a house for 7 men in Marietta, GA started 9/1/11.

Both houses illustrate how ordinary folks can do extra-ordinary things to help a community to solve problems by working together. Thanks to the employees and management of InComm, Oxford House has the beginning of a statewide network of Oxford Houses in the State of Georgia.

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### Facebook and Oxford House

Hundreds of Oxford House residents and alumni have Facebook pages or participate in open and closed groups related to Oxford House. "Friends of Oxford House" is a Facebook group started by the men and women of Oxford House in Oregon. There are also many other state or regional Facebook pages sponsored and maintained by OH residents or alumni.

### Delaware Continues to Expand

Johnny Roach, OHI Outreach worker in Delaware continues to expand the number of houses in Delaware. There are now 36 Oxford Houses in the state – 28 for men and 8 for women. Last month, Christy Ferguson joined Johnny Roach as an outreach worker and will help start more houses for women.

The Delaware Network of Oxford Houses is strong and provides a vital link in the national network of Oxford Houses. This month they reached out to help start a new Oxford House on the Eastern Shore of Maryland in Salisbury.

## Houses and Chapters Make Record Donations in FY 2011

Voluntary contributions by Houses and Chapters contributed significantly to OHI ending its fiscal year in the black. Houses and Chapters contributed nearly \$300,000 – about 9% of the total OHI budget.

Many of the houses were recognized at the 2011 Convention and received the *Director's Hundred Year Award*. That award is for houses that donate \$50 a month or more to Oxford House, Inc. to help get new Oxford Houses started in states that do not provide technical assistance or start-up loan money to develop statewide networks of Oxford Houses.

In FY 2011., 337 houses each directly contributed at least \$600 to OHI – usually with a \$50 a month electronic transfer of funds directly from the house checking account. That is about 23% of the existing Oxford Houses. Other houses and chapters also contributed amounts less than \$600 during the year. The total house and chapter contributions for FY 2011 is \$27,220 from chapters and \$271,137 from individuals houses for a total contribution of \$298,357 – a little over 9% of total OHI expenses during the fiscal year.

The importance of houses and chapters making voluntary contributions cannot be overstated. It provides the funds that permit Oxford House to expand to underserved areas. While some states, local governments and foundations provide grants to get the technical assistance needed to develop strong networks of local Oxford Houses, many do not – until they can see firsthand the effectiveness of Oxford House.

In the first quarter of the current fiscal year – FY 2012 – houses are doing even better. Contributions are up 25%. Keep up the good work. Thanks to voluntary contributions more recovering folks can gain long-term recovery.

## Oxford House – UK

Oxford House started in the United States but it is beginning to spread to the rest of the world. Tony Brown, an Englishman, attended both the 2010 Convention in Chicago and the 2011 Convention in Washington, DC. He listened and learned and returned home to England to start the first Oxford House in the United Kingdom in July. Pictured below is Tony with a Member of Parliament who had stopped to visit the first Oxford House in England – Oxford House-Middlesbrough located in the Northeast of England.



The six-man house is functioning very well – thanks to Tony and the local AA community. Five of the men are pictured below:



Tony, who took the picture, is the sixth resident of the house. Already the men have designed a T-Shirt [below]



## Oxford House FY 2011 Annual Audit

Oxford House, Inc. – [OHI] the nonprofit national umbrella organization for all Oxford Houses – had a sound FY 2011 primarily because [1] a number of states continued technical assistance contracts with OHI, and [2] 23% of the Oxford Houses voluntarily made monthly contributions to enable their umbrella organization to expand Oxford House throughout the United States and to other countries throughout the world.

Income for the national umbrella organization from July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011 was \$3,431,482. Expenses for the same period were \$3,286,160. The \$145,322 difference made it possible to expand Oxford House into areas that otherwise would have not been possible – including opening of the first house on the African Continent just outside of Accra. Without the voluntary contributions from 22% of the Oxford Houses – totaling \$303,000 – there would have been no funding for expansion. As a matter of fact, Oxford House World Services would have had a loss of \$157,678 for FY 2011. The recovering residents of Oxford House are not only supporting their individual houses but are actively reaching out to solve a national health and safety problem.

The complete financial statements for FY 2011 are available at the Oxford House website: [www.oxfordhouse.org](http://www.oxfordhouse.org) under “About Us/Finances.”

**Plan today to attend the 2012 Annual Oxford House World Convention in Oklahoma City September 13-16. Let’s make the 2012 Convention the largest one to date!**

*Merry Christmas and Happy  
New Year*

*To every resident, landlord and friend and family of the  
worldwide network of individual Oxford Houses*

*From –*

**Oxford House World Services**

**Paul Molloy  
James McClain  
Kathleen Gibson  
Mollie Brown  
Leann Watkins  
Debbie Dungee  
Alma Washington  
Darryl Joiner**