

*Oxford House:
Building Community*



Commemorative Program

16th Oxford House World Convention

Portland Marriott Downtown Waterfront

Portland, Oregon

September 11 - 14, 2014

Oxford House 16th Annual World Convention

Oxford House™ - Building Community

September 11-14, 2014
Portland Marriott Downtown Waterfront Hotel
Portland, Oregon

Convention Schedule				
	FRIDAY		SATURDAY	SUNDAY
7:00-8:15 AM	Continental Breakfast <ul style="list-style-type: none"> World Council Nominations Due by Noon 	7:00-8:15	Continental Breakfast <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Voting until Noon for World Council by Houses attending the Convention 	Continental Breakfast
8:15-9:30 AM	Opening General Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invocation Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Officials David Dickinson, M.A., Reg Mgr, Region 10, SAMHSA Convention Theme Election Process 	8:15- 9:30	Third Breakout Panels <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Medication in Oxford Houses Keeping Connected – How Oxford House Residents Use Social Media Successfully Drug Courts and Oxford House Working With Women in Recovery Why Recovery Research Matters and Why Oxford House Residents and Alumni Should Participate 	Closing General Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remembrance of Members Who Have Died Tradition Renewal – Alumni and Current Members Conference Summary Closing Remarks
9:30-9:45 AM	<i>Break</i>	9:30-9:45	<i>Break</i>	CONVENTION REGISTRATION <i>Registration for the convention begins Thursday, September 11 at 10:00 AM</i> GOLF TOURNAMENT <i>The Annual Oxford House Golf Tournament is on Thursday, September 11.</i> WOMEN'S CONFERENCE <i>The Oxford House Women's Conference begins Thursday, September 11, at 3:00 PM. Registration opens at 2:00 PM</i>
9:45-11:00 AM	First Breakout Panels <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Veterans and Oxford Houses Educating the Public About Recovery Working With Treatment Providers State Agencies – Working With Oxford House Building Skills to Enhance Long-term Recovery 	9:45-11:00	Fourth Breakout Panels <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Opioid Epidemic and Dealing with Overdoses in Oxford Houses – What to Do Before Expulsion Building Successful Partnerships in the Community Posting Vacancies – How it Works and Why It's Important Building Diversity in Oxford Houses Overview of Research and Upcoming Studies 	
11:00-11:15	<i>Break</i>	11:00-11:15	<i>Break</i>	
11:15-12:30	Second Breakout Panels <ol style="list-style-type: none"> State Agencies – Adapting to a New Insurance Environment The Role of Chapters in Building Community Health Issues in Oxford Houses (HIV, Hepatitis C, etc.) Civil Rights and the Law Effects of Social Networks in Oxford Houses – What the Research Tells Us 	11:15-12:30	Fifth Breakout Panels <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Re-entry From Prison and Oxford House Establishing New Oxford Houses World Council Update Dealing with Children in Oxford Houses – Visiting and in Residence. Building Community With Neighbors 	
12:30-2:00 PM	Lunch on Your Own [AA/NA meetings at hotel] Ballots for World Council election should be turned in by 12:45 PM.	12:30 – 1:45	Lunch on Your Own [AA/NA meetings at hotel] Alumni Lunch at hotel; Get Tickets at World Council table.	
2:15-4:30 PM	Second General Session Keynote Speaker: David K. Mineta, Deputy Director, ONDCP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eligible WC Nominees give 3-minute speeches Veterans Meeting 4:35PM 	2:00 – 4:15	Third General Session Keynote Speaker: Stuart Gitlow, M.D., President, ASAM <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Announcement of New World Council Members Vote on Resolutions 	
6:00 PM	Friday Evening Event <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invocation Board Member Remarks Awards Food 	6:30 - Midnight	Banquet and Dance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invocation Dinner Awards Speaker: Mark Spence Dance: 9:00PM – Midnight 	HANDS ACROSS THE BRIDGE <i>Sunday</i>

AA and NA meetings will be held throughout the convention. See postings for room location at Registration Desk.

STATE OF OREGON
PROCLAMATION
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

WHEREAS: Oxford House is celebrating its 39th Anniversary and hosting its 16th annual World Convention, September 12th –September 14th 2014, in Portland, Oregon at the Portland Marriott Waterfront; and

WHEREAS: Oxford House Incorporated is a nonprofit organization with an international network of group homes for individuals recovering from drug and alcohol addiction; and

WHEREAS: there are over 1750 Oxford Houses across the United States, 160 in the State of Oregon, 32 in Canada, 6 in Australia, 1 in England, 2 in Ghana; and

WHEREAS: the Oxford House program has successfully helped persons living with alcohol and drug addiction to remain sober without relapse. Serving over 10,000 residents in Oregon since the first house opening in 1989.

NOW,

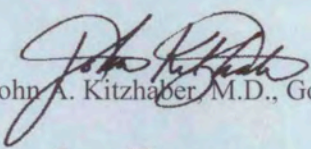
THEREFORE: I, John A. Kitzhaber, M.D., Governor of the State of Oregon, hereby proclaim **September 12, 2014** to be

OXFORD HOUSE RECOGNITION DAY

in Oregon and encourage all Oregonians to join in this observance.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I hereunto set my hand and cause the Great Seal of the State of Oregon to be affixed. Done at the Capitol in the City of Salem in the State of Oregon on this day, August 19, 2014.




John A. Kitzhaber, M.D., Governor


Kate Brown, Secretary of State

Oxford House

Building Community

Welcome to the 16th Annual Oxford House World Convention! The theme this year is “Building Community” and throughout this convention we will be talking about building community in individual Oxford Houses, in chapters, in the recovery community and in the broader neighborhoods and communities in which we live.

“Building Community” is an important aspect of creating sustained recovery without relapse. While there are many definitions of ‘community,’ two cited frequently are: (1) A group of people living in the same place or having a particular characteristic in common; and (2) A feeling of fellowship with others, as a result of sharing common attitudes, interests, and goals. The theme of “Building Community” focuses on going beyond just living together and being in recovery and suggests a far more active role in creating feelings of fellowship with others.

Oxford Houses are not just places to live – they are families and part of the broader community of Oxford House families as well as of their own local neighborhood 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. Because an Oxford House™ is a place of residence, the bond is even stronger than in 12-Step groups.

Common purpose isn’t enough, however. Oxford House residents work together to create a supportive family and community. Each Oxford House has a weekly meeting in which everyone participates and has an equal voice. 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. Some breakout sessions in the convention address the nuts and bolts of running an Oxford House and how residents can build community with their house. Other sessions will focus on the research that has demonstrated how the system has fostered ‘self-efficacy’ or other good stuff in newly-recovering individuals.

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 and assure quality control among Oxford Houses within the chapter. Chapters also promote sobriety and build community by organizing social events – picnics and other get-togethers. Since membership in a chapter is voluntary, it behooves chapters to engage in community-building activities to gain the support of Oxford House residents and alumni as well as neighbors not in recovery. A breakout session on the role of Chapters will feature Chapter members who will discuss their ideas for making chapters successful.

Each Oxford House is a community of individuals living together to support each other’s sobriety but residents also reach out to the broader community to be seen both as a recovery resource and as a good neighbor. Many Oxford Houses invite their neighbors to visit during Recovery Month (and at other times). Neighbors are sometimes leery of having recovery houses in their neighborhoods; Oxford House residents, because of their focus on recovery and being good neighbors, can do much to help the community understand addiction and recovery and learn that Oxford House residents are ordinary folks who are conquering a common addiction. The lack of anonymity among Oxford House residents fosters greater awareness and understanding of recovery in the broader community. 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 tends to stay rented year after year and the tenants usually pay the rent on time.

Building community within the recovery community is also a good practice. Most Oxford House residents attend AA and NA meetings and interact with the broader recovery community. In addition, Oxford House residents reach out to those just beginning recovery, offering fellowship and introducing folks to the Oxford House program. Many residents go back to their treatment facilities to talk to current residents about Oxford House and how it works. Other Oxford House residents work with re-entry groups to encourage inmates in recovery to consider Oxford House residence upon release. Others engage in projects like “Hands Across the Bridge.” Reentry and similar community outreach programs will be discussed in breakout sessions.

When Oxford House began expansion in 1989 as a result of §2036 of the 1988 Anti-Drug Abuse Act, the National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Addiction Directors [NASADAD] was promoting the slogan, “Treatment Works.” Reality undercut the validity of that slogan. At best, treatment kept alcoholics, drug addicts and those with co-occurring mental illness out of the way for a short period of time. When individuals left residential treatment – or began to feel better as a result of temporary abstinence during outpatient treatment – most returned to drinking alcohol and/or using illicit drugs. Family members, the addicted and the community saw right before their eyes that a loved one had returned to addictive use. The practical need was – and even today for most is – to find a way to provide a living environment focused on recovery long enough for a person to develop sobriety comfortable enough to avoid relapse. Oxford House fulfills that need because it can be developed at low cost and maintained at even lower cost. That effectiveness has been recognized both in academic studies and in its 2011 listing on the National Registry of Evidence-based Practices and Procedures [NREPP].

Today, the need for more effective, low cost ways to help alcoholics, drug addicts and those with co-occurring mental illness continues to be great and is likely to become greater with the advent of the Affordable Care Act and the parity legislation. This expanded coverage will put great strain on both the cost and provision of care. And it needs to be recognized that there are severe costs to not providing effective treatment; for example, today only about one in seven alcoholics, drug addicts, and those with co-occurring mental illness is getting formal treatment, and even they are likely to cycle in and out of treatment or prison. Society shouldn’t accept these kinds of costs.

Oxford House was built on the premise that relapse does not have to be part of long-term recovery. By providing time, peer support, and disciplined, self-run, self-supported, sober households, Oxford Houses make staying clean and sober without relapse the norm, not the exception.

As the 16th Annual Oxford House Convention celebrates Oxford House’s 39th year, we know that this gathering of recovering alcoholics, drug addicts and those with co-occurring mental illness has good news to share. Oxford Houses can help thousands achieve long-term recovery. Oxford House can be expanded to meet the need. Let’s all work together to make this happen.

Enjoy the convention and learn from it. Spread the good news and enjoy the sobriety that Oxford House living has helped you achieve. Ask questions and think about what you and your fellow housemates and alumni can do to build community and help give others the same recovery help that you have gotten.

May everyone leave this convention committed to continuing our task of building community within individual Oxford Houses, chapters, the recovery community and our broader neighborhoods and communities.

*J. Paul Molloy
Co-founder and CEO*



Office of Mayor Charlie Hales
City of Portland

August 13, 2014

Welcome!

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the City of Portland for the Oxford House National Convention that will take place September 11 – 14, 2014 at the Portland Marriott Downtown Waterfront.

I am proud that the City of Portland is home to 47 Oxford Houses with 366 recovery beds, and that Oxford House residents and alumni from around the state and nation have chosen to come to Portland for the 2014 convention. The Oxford House program is one of the most successful recovery programs in the nation, and you should all be very proud of what you have achieved. It is only through successful programs such as Oxford House that we will be able to make real inroads on the problems of homelessness and addiction.

I hope that our guests, in addition to exploring new ways to be successful as a community, will also take some time to explore the Portland metropolitan region. As Portlanders, we are extremely proud of what our city has to offer both residents and visitors. It is a place of outstanding natural beauty, fascinating and unique culture, a national destination for northwest-inspired culinary experiences and strong commercial activities accessible by our nationally renowned transportation system.

No matter what activities you choose to pursue during your stay, you'll find the people of Portland ready to help make your visit as enjoyable as possible. Best wishes for a successful convention and a wonderful visit to our fine city!

Sincerely,

Charlie Hales
Mayor of Portland

16th Annual Oxford House Convention

Marriott Downtown Waterfront Hotel
Portland, Oregon

September 11 – September 14, 2014

Thursday, September 11, 2014

Annual Oxford House Golf Tournament

1:30 PM Shotgun Start

This is the Sixteenth Annual Oxford House Golf Tournament and will be held at the Rock Creek Country Club. It is held in conjunction with the annual world convention both for the enjoyment of the participants and to underscore the fact that recovery without relapse enables all recovering individuals to enjoy all aspects of life. The tournament will be a 4-man team scramble. Hot dogs will be for lunch. Transportation will be provided and is leaving hotel between 11:30 AM to 11:45 AM.

Registration
Oregon Ballroom Foyer

10:00 AM – 8:00 PM
Continuing Friday and Saturday

Women's Pre-convention Conference
Salon EF

3:00 PM – 7:00 PM

World Council Meeting
Salem Room

9:30 PM – 10:30 PM

AA Meeting
Portland Room

8:00 PM – 9:00 PM

NA Meeting
Eugene Room

8:00 PM – 9:00 PM

Candidates for World Council should pick up nominating petitions at the Registration Desk or World Council Table. **Nominating petitions must be turned in by noon on Friday.** Resident member candidates need signatures from residents representing five different houses. Alumni candidates need signatures from five alumni members.

Friday Alumni Lunch Tickets available at World Council Table

Daily AA/NA Meetings at Noon • Check Registration Desk for Evening Meeting Times

Friday, September 12, 2014

Continental Breakfast

7:00 A.M. – 8:30 AM

OPENING GENERAL SESSION

8:15 AM – 9:30 AM

Welcome

Salon EF

Invocation by Lieutenant Troy Cook of the Salvation Army opens the 16th Annual Oxford House World Convention followed by a welcome and Convention overview from Oxford House CEO Paul Molloy. Kathleen Gibson, Chief Operating Officer, will highlight the major events of the Convention. Board Member James McClain will welcome the attendees and explain the process for electing new members of the Oxford House World Council.

Opening Keynote Address – David Dickinson, SAMHSA Regional Administrator

David Dickinson, MA, has over 30 years' experience in the field of behavioral health. He had been agency director in both Kansas and Washington State before assuming his SAMHSA leadership position overseeing four states – Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Alaska.



Prior to becoming Regional Administrator in December 2011, he served from April 2009 through November 2011 as Director of Washington DSHS Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery. In that role he continued to support a vigorous Oxford House development program, which was not new to him. Previously, as Director of the Kansas alcohol and drug agency, he had seen first-hand the benefits to recovery provided by Oxford House. In both states he was a leader in developing community relationships to bridge the sometimes disparate interests in the behavioral health field. He has been a leader in both NASADAD and the National Mental Health Program Directors organizations.

The Convention theme: “Oxford House: Building Community” is right down his area of expertise because, as a community builder himself, he knows what works and what does not work. As a Regional Administrator for SAMHSA, Mr. Dickinson has two states under his jurisdiction that lead the nation in utilization of Oxford Houses – perhaps after this convention he will convince the other two states to embrace Oxford House development.

First Breakout Panels

Veterans and Oxford Houses
Educating the Public about Recovery
Working with Treatment Providers
Building Skills to Enhance Long-term Recovery
State Agencies – Working with Oxford House

9:45 AM – 11:00 AM

Salon AB
Salon I
Salon EF
Salon GH
Salon CD

Second Breakout Panels

State Agencies – Adapting to New Insurance Environment
The Role of Chapters in Building Community
Health Issues in Oxford Houses (HIV, Hepatitis C., etc.)
Civil Rights and the Law
Effects of Social Networks in Oxford Houses – What the Research Tells Us

11:15 AM – 12:30 PM

Salon AB
Salon EF
Salon I
Salon GH
Salon CD

Lunch and AA/NA Meetings

12:30 PM – 2:00 PM

Lunch on your own – Immediate area has lots of places to eat in or carry out.

Keynote Address – David K. Mineta, Deputy Director, Office of National Drug Control Policy

David K. Mineta was confirmed unanimously by the United States Senate on June 22, 2010 to be the Deputy Director of Demand Reduction for the Office of National Drug Control Policy. In this position, Mr. Mineta oversees ONDCP Office of Demand Reduction, which focuses on promoting drug prevention and drug treatment programs, as well as the agency's newly-created focus on programs for individuals in recovery from addiction.



Mr. Mineta's focus on drug prevention and treatment services has been longstanding. Since 1996, Mr. Mineta has worked with Asian-American Recovery Services (AARS) throughout the San Francisco Bay Area. He started as a manager of a youth prevention program, but rose quickly to associate director and, since 2007, deputy director. As deputy director, he oversaw all agency grant writing and institutional technology departments, and assisted in strategic planning, community consortiums, and other necessary functions. Before joining AARS, Mr. Mineta was a counselor in the San Jose Unified School District and later in Santa Clara's Alcohol and Drug Department.

Mr. Mineta studied Political Science at the University of California, Berkeley and earned his Masters of Social Work from California State University, San Jose in 1990. This is his fourth year as Deputy Director and he has significantly changed the emphasis at ONDCP to focus on treatment and recovery as the best means of demand reduction. He was a keynote speaker in 2011 at the 13th Annual Oxford House World Convention in Washington, DC. From then until today, Director Mineta has observed the success of Oxford House and has met Oxford House residents and alumni across the United States.

World Council Candidates Present Election Speeches [3 minutes each]

Veterans Meeting

4:30 PM

Friday Evening

Program

6:00 PM

Pioneer Courthouse Square

Presentation of Directors' Hundred-Year Awards by OHI Board Chair Jerry Conlon
Dinner
Entertainment – Mark Lundholm

Hints on Getting the Most out of the Convention

1. Attend as many sessions as you can.
2. Participate in the election of World Council officers.
3. Go to different breakout sessions.
4. Individuals from the same houses or chapters should split up to learn as much as possible to bring home to others.
5. Get to know folks from other states to extend your Oxford House family.
6. Enjoy your sobriety. Learn and have fun.

Submit any proposed resolutions by 5:00 PM to World Council for review.

Saturday, September 13, 2014

Continental Breakfast

7:00 AM to 8:15 AM
Foyer Oregon Ballroom

Third Breakout Panels

Medication in Oxford Houses
Keeping Connected – How Oxford House Residents Use Social Media Successfully
Drug Courts and Oxford House
Working with Women in Recovery
Effects of Social Networks in Oxford Houses – What the Research Tells Us

8:15 AM – 9:30 AM
Salon EF
Salon I
Salon CD
Salon GH
Salon AB

Fourth Breakout Panels

The Opioid Epidemic and Dealing with Overdoses in Oxford Houses
Building Successful Partnerships in the Community
Overview of Research and Upcoming Studies
Posting Vacancies – How it Works and Why It's Important
Building Diversity in Oxford Houses

9:45 AM – 11:00 AM
Salon EF
Salon I
Salon GH
Salon CD
Salon AB

Fifth Breakout Panels

Oxford House and Re-entry from Prison
Establishing New Oxford Houses
World Council Update
Dealing with Children in Oxford Houses – Visiting and in Residence
Building Community with Neighbors

11:15 AM – 12:30 PM
Salon I
Salon EF
Salon CD
Salon GH
Salon AB

LUNCH

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

12:30 PM – 1:45 PM

THIRD GENERAL SESSION

2:00 PM – 4:15 PM
Oregon Ballroom

Keynote Address: Stuart Gitlow, M.D., President, American Society for Addiction Medicine (ASAM)



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 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.

Graduate of MIT and 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. Now dividing 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.

Third General Session [continued]

Call out for States to share new growth and new events
Report of World Council
Introduction of New World Council Members
Vote on Convention Resolutions

Saturday Evening

Banquet

6:30 PM – 8:30 PM
Oregon Ballroom

- Invocation
- Reggie Midget Award
- Founder's Awards

Recovery Speaker: Mark Spence



Mark Spence came to the Northwest United States in 1990 to help start the first few Oxford Houses. His story of recovery and his activities as an early outreach worker for OHI is a model everyone in Oxford House knows – in part because of his stardom in the CBS “60 Minutes” video. That is the story almost every newcomer to Oxford House watches as he or she learns about Oxford House. But as the late radio commentator Paul Harvey used to say ...”Now for the rest of the story.”

Myrna Brown knew Mark when he first arrived in the Northwest. She will introduce him as the Banquet Speaker. The two of them made a team second to none in planting the seed of Oxford House so well that it has grown to more than 400 Oxford Houses in Oregon/Washington combined. With more than 25 years of continuous sobriety Mark retains his enthusiasm for recovery and can relate to the newcomer, old-timer and everybody in between

Dance

9:00 PM to Midnight
Oregon Ballroom

Sunday, September 14, 2014

Continental Breakfast

7:00 AM to 8:15 AM
Ballroom Foyer

CLOSING GENERAL SESSION

8:15 AM to 10:00 AM
Salon EF

Conference Summary
Remembrance of those who have died
Tradition Renewal
Closing Remarks

Oxford House: Building Community

Summary of Breakout Panels

FIRST BREAKOUT PANELS

Friday 9:45-11:00 AM

Veterans and Oxford Houses

Salon AB

Friday 9:45 – 11:00 AM

Panelists: Ken Hoffman, M.D. Clinical Director, Mental Health Services, US Department of State
Meagan Norton Oxford House Outreach, NC
Dawn J. Haskett Treatment Court Coordinator, OR
Laura Johnson Oxford House Outreach OK

Moderator: Joe Chavez Oxford House Outreach Coordinator, HI

About 20% of the nearly 14,000 residents in the national network of Oxford Houses at any one time are veterans. As has been very apparent in the media over the past year, many veterans are not currently getting the health care services they need directly through the VA. Oxford Houses play a significant role in providing recovery housing for many veterans, including many with PTSD. Oxford House could play a much larger role. 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 Oxford House living. The panel will also consider ways by which individuals Oxford Houses can reach out to VA programs and to veterans in VA Hospitals and the Veterans' Domiciliary Program.

Dr. Hoffman, a psychiatrist and former Army Colonel, currently oversees health services at the State Department. While at DOD, he served as Medical Director of the Interagency Military and Veterans Health Coordinating Board. He has served as a member of the Oxford House Board of Directors since 2008. Meagan Norton, an Oxford House Outreach Worker, served in the Air Force in the Security Forces. Dawn Haskett, a Treatment Court Coordinator in Oregon, works with veterans courts. Laura Johnson, an Oxford House outreach worker, formerly served in the Navy. Joe Chavez, a former Marine, is the Oxford House coordinator in the State of Hawaii.

Educating the Public about Recovery

Salon I

Friday 9:45 – 11:00 AM

Panelists: Ivette Torres, M.Ed., M.S. Associate Director for Consumer Affairs, CSAT, SAMHSA
Kristi M. Miller, MPA Innovation and Outreach Mgr. National Coalition Institute, CADCA
Patty Katz Founding Director, Hands Across the Bridge
Jerry Gillen Director of Operations, Faces and Voices, DC

Moderator: Ricky Mogul Oxford House Outreach, WA

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.

Ivette Torres, the SAMHSA coordinator of Recovery Month, has established a national network of individuals and programs dedicated to changing public understanding about recovery. Kristy Miller is Training Manager for CADCA. She has extensive experience working with prevention and with problems of alcohol and drugs on college campuses. Patty Katz is the founding director of "Hands Across the Bridge, a collaborative effort between Oregon and Washington to celebrate National Recovery Month. Jerry Gillen, an alumnus of Oxford House, Director of Operations for Faces & Voices in Washington, DC. Ricky Mogul is an Oxford House Outreach Worker in Washington State.

Working with Treatment Providers

Salon EF

Friday 9:45 – 11:00 AM

Panelists: Stephanie Hendren Oxford House Outreach, TX
Elizabeth Woodford, BA, CADC I Managed Care Specialist, Hazelden
Sally Marks, CSAC Betty Ford Foundation, OR
David Rudduck, CPD Executive Director, Visions of Hope
Treatment Director, Lakeside Milan, OR; OH Alumnus

Moderator: Mark Spence Oxford House Outreach, DC

Most individuals recovering from alcoholism or drug addiction initially go through formal treatment programs. For many individuals, the time allowed for residency in formal programs is an insufficient 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. With the advent of new health insurance requirements, access to cost-effective, successful recovery programs is critical.

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. Panelists will also discuss the need for getting good vacancy information. It is important that patients leaving treatment have a safe place to live.

The panel consists of both treatment providers and Oxford House Outreach Workers.

Building Skills to Enhance Long-term Recovery

Salon GH

Friday 9:45-11:00 AM

Panelists: David Case Oxford House Resident, TX
Tim Ring Oxford House Alumnus, OK
Paula Harrington Oxford House Outreach, NC
Michael Doolen, MSW, LCSW, LCAS Behavior Health Care Specialist, NC

Moderator: Julie Ellis, MSW, LICSW Oxford House Alumna, NC

Residents of Oxford House master long-term recovery in part because Oxford Houses provide the opportunity for them to become responsible by doing household chores, paying an equal share of expenses and accepting leadership positions in the house. They also support their own and their housemates' sobriety. Helping fellow addicts stay sober is 12th Step work that supports the sobriety of both the donor and the recipient. As demand for recovery services become greater, additional opportunities arise for Oxford House residents to strengthen their own sobriety and to be of service to others. Other opportunities include learning how to mentor those re-entering society from incarceration, becoming a recovery coach to newly recovering individuals not in Oxford Houses, learning the best practices for drug abuse prevention, and helping to expand the number of Oxford Houses.

This panel will explore the things that residents can do to improve their own skills and to help others achieve sustained recovery.

State Agencies – Working with Oxford House

Salon CD

Friday 9:45 AM – 11:00 AM

Panelists:	Melinda Trujillo	Behavioral Health Program Manager, DBHR, WA
	Steven Dettwyler, Ph. D.	Director of Community Mental Health and Addiction Services Delaware Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health
	Linda McCorkle	Director, Treatment and Recovery Services, Dept. of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, TN
	Karen Wheeler, M.A.	Administrator, Oregon Health Authority, Addictions and Mental Health Division
	Ray Caesar, LADC-MH, LPC	Director of Addiction Specialty Programs, Dept. of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services
Moderator:	Gino Pugliese	Oxford House Outreach Coordinator, WA

Expansion of the Oxford House network of houses has occurred fastest where Oxford House has the support and a close working relationship with the state agency. Expansion is particularly strong in those states where the state has financially supported both a start-up revolving loan fund and on-site technical assistance.

This panel will discuss the ways that a close working relationship between Oxford House World Services and a state's alcohol and drug agency helps develop a successful network of Oxford Houses within a state. The benefits and barriers of working with a state agency will be examined with particular emphasis on the effect that new health insurance laws and criminal justice policy changes will have on the need for Oxford House development.

Questions to be addressed also will include: Are state agencies fully utilizing Oxford House as a cost-effective best practice for promoting long-term recovery without relapse and, if not, what should Oxford House (or other State agencies) be doing to encourage greater support. The fact that the Oxford House program is listed on the National Registry of Evidence-based Practices and Procedures (NREPP) should give professionals confidence in the value of the Oxford House program.

Oxford House is a leader in developing long-term sobriety. 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? Oxford Houses serve as a shield to permit states and/or political leaders to avoid NIMBY and similar problems?

Each of the panelists work in state agencies that foster development of networks of self-run, self-supported Oxford Houses. They are each in a good position to assess the working relationship and suggest ways in which the relationship is effective and ways it might be improved. Oxford House has been working with these states for different periods of time. In Washington State, the partnership began in 1990; in Tennessee, it began just last year. Over time, these partnerships have resulted in extensive growth in the number of Oxford Houses and recovery beds in each of these states and have done so at very low cost per bed.

Gino Pugliese is the Oxford House Outreach Coordinator in Washington State

Oxford House: Building Community

SECOND BREAKOUT PANELS

Friday 11:15 AM - 12:30 PM

State Agencies – Adapting to a New Insurance Environment

Salon AB

Friday 11:15 AM – 12:30 PM

Panelists:

Steven Dettwyler, Ph. D.	Director of Community Mental Health and Addiction Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health, DE
Chris Imhoff, LICSW	Director, Division. of Behavioral Health and Recovery, DSHS, WA
Karen Wheeler, MA	Administrator, Addictions and Mental Health Division, Oregon Health Authority

Moderator: David Dickinson, MA

Regional Administrator, Region X, SAMHSA

The Affordable Care Act and The Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008 (MHPAEA) are expected to engender significant changes in insurance coverage and costs and in medical treatment. Under the ACA, most Oxford House residents are probably finding insurance more available and perhaps more affordable. The MHPAEA requires group health plans and health insurance issuers to ensure that financial requirements (such as co-pays, deductibles) and treatment limitations (such as visit limits) applicable to mental health or substance use disorder (MH/SUD) benefits are no more restrictive than the predominant requirements or limitations applied to substantially all medical/surgical benefits; however, defining parity between health and physical health treatment is difficult.

The panel will focus on the changes that have been made already and on their expectations of how the new laws are impacting their agencies and how the changes are likely to affect treatment and recovery for alcoholics, drug addicts and those with co-occurring mental illness going forward. Are the new laws likely to result in a greater focus on measurable long-term recovery outcomes; is there likely to be greater emphasis on recovery housing as an essential part of the ‘continuum of care’; and how does the Oxford House program fit within the new system?

The Role of Chapters in Building Community

Salon EF

Friday 11:15 AM – 12:30 PM

Panelists:	Mike Kornell	Oxford House Resident, OR
	Eric Heber	Chair, Oxford House World Council; Alumnus, LA
	Lori Holzclaw	Oxford House Outreach Coordinator, LA/MS
	Sean Bossen	Oxford House Outreach, OR
	Sione Keni	Oxford House Outreach, HI
Moderator:	Marty Walker	Oxford House Outreach, TN

Chapters play an important role in the Oxford House community. Chapters consist of groups of Oxford Houses in a region. Membership in a chapter is voluntary but most Oxford Houses join a chapter to reap the benefits of it. Chapters operate both to assure quality control in individual Oxford Houses and to promote community building among the residents or Oxford Houses and among their neighbors. Chapters operate pursuant to an Oxford House Chapter Manual. The Manual has just been revised with the extensive help of the Oxford House World Council.

The panel will discuss the revised Chapter Manual and talk about what can be done to make a chapter more successful. Questions to be considered will include: what can a chapter do to use attraction rather than enforcement to keep individual Oxford Houses focused and working well; what can a chapter do to serve as a jobs network, particularly for new residents just entering the work force; what should a chapter do when they learn that a member Oxford Houses has gotten behind in paying their rent; and what kind of social activities work best to build community? Each of the panelists has lived in an Oxford House and worked extensively with chapters. Eric Heber served as Chair of the 2012-2013 Oxford House World Council and led the work that led to the revision of the Chapter Manual

Health Issues in Oxford House (HIV, Hepatitis C., etc.)

Salon I

Friday 11:15 AM – 12:30 PM

Panelists:	Darryl Joyner Ken Hoffman, M.D. Sean Hughes Elizabeth Lewis Charles Thibodeaux, B.A.A.S., LCDC	Oxford House World Services Chief Medical Officer, U. S. Department of State Oxford House Outreach, PA Oxford House Outreach, MS Department of State Health Services, TX
Moderator:	John Fox	Oxford House Outreach Coordinator, NC/SC/WV

Many Oxford House residents have a variety of health issues in addition to addiction, including HIV, AIDS, Hepatitis C, 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. It followed 897 Oxford House residents for 27 months after giving ASI and PSI tests. Significantly, the researchers found that half of the individuals tested positive on the PSI, with half of that number showing serious mental illness. Significantly, those individuals testing positive on the PSI test did just as well as the other the individuals in the study. These individuals moved toward long-term recovery because they had the peer support necessary to develop good habits of sobriety and taking the right medicines at the right times. This is particularly important as states and insurers focus on behavioral health in general.

AIDS, HIV and Hepatitis C 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 and understands the system of operation of Oxford Houses. Charles Thibodeaux is with Texas Health Services and works closely with Oxford Houses in Texas. 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.

Civil Rights and the Law

Salon GH

Friday 11:15 AM – 12:30 PM

Panelists:	Steve Polin, J.D. Greg Heafner, J.D. George Kent	General Counsel, Oxford House, Inc. Attorney, Chapel Hill, NC Oxford House Outreach Coordinator, NJ/PA
Moderator:	Blair Tinkle, J.D.	Oxford House World Services Staff

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 kept group homes out of the better residential neighborhoods. When Oxford House began expansion following enactment of the recovery home start-up loan mandate in the 1988 Anti-Drug Abuse Act, it took advantage of the Federal FHA to rent houses in good neighborhoods. The FHA extended the prohibition against discrimination to “handicapped” individuals. Since everyone in an Oxford House is using the group home to overcome alcoholism, drug addiction or co-occurring mental illness, they qualify as handicapped and thereby a protected class under the Federal FHA. As such, local governments must make a “reasonable accommodation” in their zoning laws to avoid discrimination against Oxford Houses. 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 in *City of Edmonds, WA v. Oxford House, Inc.* decided in 1995. In spite of that favorable decision, localities continue to try to avoid accommodating Oxford House residents.

Localities have tried a variety of measures to thwart the establishment of Oxford Houses. Just a few days after 9/11, Steve Polin found himself in a Federal Court with 13 other lawyers arguing whether 7 men could live in Jones Bridge Oxford House in West Haven, CN, without a sprinkler system. (Oxford House won.) In other instances, insurers have attempted to charge commercial rates to landlords renting to Oxford House (again, Oxford House won) and communities continue to develop roadblocks to Oxford House development. Good lawyers, common sense and strong civil rights laws continue to work in Oxford House's favor.

This panel will discuss the current state of the law and explain 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. It will also relate the topic to the convention theme and discuss the role of Oxford House residents in establishing good relations with neighbors and communities, showing them that Oxford Houses make desirable neighbors.

Steve Polin, an alumnus of Oxford House, is the leading lawyer in the nation with respect to application of the Federal Fair Housing Act to protect rights of individuals with disabilities. He has handled housing civil rights cases throughout the country and has coordinated most of the Oxford House discrimination litigation. Greg Heafner, an Oxford House alumnus, is an attorney in Chapel Hill and has represented Oxford House in Fair Housing Act cases. George Kent is an outreach worker in New Jersey who has participated in numerous neighborhood meetings on behalf of Oxford House. Blair Tinkle is an attorney who is on the staff of Oxford House.

Effects of Social Networks in Oxford Houses What the Research Tells Us

Salon CD

Friday 11:15 AM – 12:30 PM

Panelists: Lenny Jason, Ph.D. Center for Community Research, DePaul University, Chicago, IL
John Light, Ph.D. Oregon Research Institute, Eugene, OR
Sarah Callahan Researcher, DePaul University, IL

Moderator: Ed Smith Oxford House Outreach, OR

Oxford House residents know that living in an Oxford House works. Most residents stay clean and sober, get jobs, develop new skills and become responsible citizens. Now, academic research has examined these social networks and documented how they work to get the results that they do.

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 the demise of community and social networks, Oxford House residents create social networks that work. Oxford House residents not only help each other attain long-term sobriety but they also serve as social and employment networks. Oxford House residents are responsible for paying their share of the House rent and expenses so it's in the interest of all House residents to see that everyone in the House has a job and they help residents find jobs.

The panelists are all academics who have published extensively in the field of addiction and recovery housing. They will discuss what the research has to say about social networks in general and the effect of social networks in Oxford Houses in particular. Lenny Jason is a leader in the field of community psychology and has done extensive research on the Oxford House program. He and his DePaul research group, including Sarah Callahan, have published nearly 200 scientific paper on the recovery process with most focused on the Oxford House model. Dr. John Light holds a Ph.D. in Mathematical Sociology and has does extensive work on social influence, social networks, and mathematical approaches to social dynamics. Ed Smith is an Outreach worker in Oregon.

THIRD BREAKOUT PANELS

Saturday 8:15-9:30 AM

Medication in Oxford House

Salon EF

Saturday 8:15-9:30 AM

Panelists: Ken Hoffman, M.D. Medical Director, U. S. Department of State
Stuart Gitlow, M.D. President, American Society of Addiction Medicine
De Wallace Oxford House Outreach, NJ

Moderator: Kurtis Taylor Oxford House Outreach, NC

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. Understanding different medications, their use and abuse is the first step to knowing how an individual Oxford House should monitor and control the presence of drugs within Oxford Houses.

Keeping Connected How Oxford House Residents Use Social Media Successfully

Salon I

Saturday 8:15-9:30 AM

Panelists: Chris McGuire Oxford House Outreach, TX
Jaime Rodriguez Oxford House Resident, Corpus Christi, TX
Misty Miner Oxford House Resident, Edmond, OK
Sean Bossen Oxford House Outreach, OR
Jason Bliss Oxford House Outreach, WA

Moderator: Marty Walker Oxford House Outreach, TN

Oxford Houses keep connected 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 telephone. 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 to help others understand the program and get access to it. Part of the discussion will focus on the need for all Oxford Houses to maintain current vacancy information on the Oxford House web site and respond promptly to email, text or telephone inquiries about vacancies. In addition, panelists will discuss how Oxford Houses have used social media successfully (and unsuccessfully) and identify websites likely to be of interest to Oxford House residents. The panelists are all residents or alumni of Oxford House.

Drug Courts and Oxford House

Salon CD

Saturday 8:15-9:30 AM

Panelists: Hon. Dennis Graves Marion County Drug Court, OR
Dawn J. Haskett Treatment Court Coordinator, Oregon City, OR
Joe Chavez Oxford House Outreach Coordinator, HI
Rachael Lippelgoos Peer Mentor Coordinator/Drug Court, Oxford House Alumna, OR
Laura Johnson Oxford House Outreach, OK

Moderator: George Kent Oxford House Outreach Coordinator, NJ/PA

In 1990, there were only one or two drug courts in the country. Today there are more than 2,300. The practice and theory of drug courts is simple. It is better to route an alcoholic or drug addict into treatment rather than send him or her to jail. In jurisdiction after jurisdiction, drug court judges have found that drug court participants tend to do much better if they live in an Oxford House. The NADCP is the national nonprofit organization that has promoted, developed and educated judges around the country of the value of drug court intervention. Not only does such intervention motivate alcoholics and drug addicts to begin and master the recovery process, but it also saves taxpayers the costs of incarceration or repeated cycling in and out of detoxification and treatment.

Paul Molloy, Co-founder and CEO of Oxford House, Inc. served on the Board of Directors of NADCP during its formative years. Oxford House is a natural partner of drug courts. Many drug court judges have found that their clients do better in an Oxford House than returning to neighborhoods where they are likely to return to old friends and old habits.

Panelists are each very familiar with the workings of drug courts and will offer their observations and experiences with them. They will also discuss how Oxford Houses can best serve drug court clients and the expectations of drug courts working with Oxford Houses.

Working With Women in Recovery

Salon GH

Saturday 8:15-9:30 AM

Panelists: Lisa Ramirez, MA Substance Abuse Counselor, Corpus Christi, TX
Karen McKinnon Oxford House Outreach, NC
Christine Scalise, MA LPC, LCADC Manager, Special Populations, Trauma-Informed, Women and Families Unit. MHAS, NJ DHS
Sarah Callahan Researcher, DePaul University, IL
Sheri Glissen Oxford House Resident, MD

Moderator: Judy Maxwell Oxford House Outreach Coordinator, WA/OR

Oxford Houses for women differ in some fashion from Oxford Houses for men – both in establishment and in subsequent operation – but both work equally well. Women’s Oxford Houses take longer to set up but once they find sound footing they provide the peer support necessary for women to become sober and confident for the long term. There are 490 Oxford Houses for Women, including some for women and children, providing nearly 4,000 recovery beds.

This panel of women will discuss working with women in recovery and the challenges and successes of Oxford Houses for women. They will discuss the ways that new houses for women, or women with children, are established and how the women who move in deal with the challenges and opportunities they face. They will also discuss the role that the pre-convention women’s conference has with respect to Oxford House living.

Why Recovery Research Matters And Why Oxford House Residents Should Participate in It

Salon AB

Saturday 8:15-9:30 AM

Panelists: Lenny Jason, Ph.D. Center for Community Research, DePaul University, Chicago, IL
John Light, Ph.D. Oregon Research Institute, Eugene, OR
Christopher Beasley, Ph.D. Assistant Professor, Washington College
Douglas L. Polcin, Ed.D; M.S. Senior Scientist, Alcohol Research Group
Public Health Institute, CA

Moderator: Paul Stevens Oxford House Outreach Coordinator, VA/DC

Oxford House has been in the forefront of encouraging Oxford House residents to participate in behavioral research and data collection. This encompasses both in-house research conducted by Oxford House and academic research conducted by researchers such as that associated with the DePaul program. Recovery research has been 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 and determining more definitively what works and what doesn't. This panel will discuss why behavioral research – particularly that related to addiction and recovery – is so important and why Oxford House residents should participate in such research. They will identify concrete conclusions that have been reached as a result of addiction/recovery research and the implications that such findings have for treatment.

All the panelists have been extensively involved in conducting and publishing recovery research.

FOURTH BREAKOUT PANELS

Saturday 9:45-11:00 AM

The Opioid Epidemic and Dealing with Overdoses in Oxford Houses – What to do before Expulsion

Salon EF

Saturday 9:45-11:00 AM

Panelists: Ken Hoffman, M.D. Medical Director, U. S. Department of State
Stuart Gitlow, M.D. President, American Society of Addiction Medicine
Melinda Trujillo Behavioral Health Program Manager, DBHR, WA
George Kent Oxford House Outreach Coordinator, NJ/PA
Christine Scalise, MA LPC, LCADC Manager, Special Populations, Trauma-Informed,
Women and Families Unit. MHAS, NJ DHS

Moderator: Chris McGuire 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. Relapse always requires immediate expulsion but the opioid overdoses can be fatal and residents should be aware of their occurrence and action to 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.

The panel is composed of medical experts, a state drug and agency manager and outreach workers who have had to deal with residents who have relapsed and with communities beset by heroin overdoses.

Building Successful Partnerships in the Community

Salon I

Saturday 9:45-11:00 AM

Panelists: Ann Doolan Executive Director, Alcohol/Drug Council of NC
Herman Bryant Oxford House Alumnus, OR
De Wallace Oxford House Outreach, NJ
Jeff Hunt Oxford House Outreach, NM

Moderator: Keith Gibson Oxford House Outreach, NC

An important part of ‘building community’ is forging partnerships with other programs and organizations in the community. This includes not only forging links with treatment providers, drug courts and re-entry programs but also broader community-based programs.

The panelists all have experience with a variety of outreach and partnership programs. They will discuss the value of such partnerships, their experience with partnerships including what works and what doesn’t, and provide tips on how Oxford Houses can develop good partnerships with other organizations in their communities.

Overview of Recovery Research and Upcoming Studies

Salon GH

Saturday 9:45 AM – 11:00 AM

Panelists: Doug Polcin, Ed.D; M.S. Senior Scientist, Alcohol Research Group Public Health Inst., CA
Christopher Beasley Assistant Professor, Washington College
Ph.D. John Light. Ph. D. Oregon Research Institute, Eugene, OR

Moderator: Leonard Jason, Ph. D. Director, Center for Community Research, DePaul University

The panelists will discuss recovery research with a particular emphasis on studies involving Oxford House residents. Each of the panelists has done significant work in the field of recovery research and will share their thoughts. Lenny Jason and his dedicated team at DePaul University Community Research Center have studied Oxford House since 1991. Their work has been shared through the publication of peer-reviewed articles in various professional journals. This panel will discuss the latest publications of each of them and provide a preview of ongoing and upcoming research.

Posting Vacancies How it Works and Why It’s Important

Salon CD

Saturday 9:45-11:00 AM

Panelist: Tim Diehl Vacancy System Developer and Oxford House Resident, NJ
Trace Purlee, M.A. Oxford House Outreach, NM
Michael McCarthy, MBA, M. MUS Oxford House World Services Staff

Moderator: Jackson Longan Oxford House Outreach Coordinator, TX/OK

Treatment providers looking to place people leaving treatment and individuals looking for a place to live following treatment need to be able to access accurate and current Oxford House vacancy information. Tim Diehl developed a state of the art vacancy reporting system for the New Jersey network of Oxford Houses and is now expanding the system nationwide.

Tim will do a presentation on the new vacancy system and how it works after which the panel will discuss the system and address questions about it and its importance to Oxford Houses, the treatment community and those looking for good recovery housing.

Building Diversity in Oxford Houses

Salon AB

Saturday 9:45-11:00 AM

Panelists: Noe Gonzales Oxford House Alumnus, TX
Ray Caesar, LADC-MH, LPC Director of Addiction Specialty Programs, DMHSAS, OK
James McClain OH Alumnus, DC
Ivory Wilson, M.A.,LAC Program Manager, Office of Behavioral Health, LA
Sherri Glisson Oxford House Resident, MD
Lynn Williams Oxford House Outreach, VA

Moderator: Mark Spence Oxford House Outreach, DC

Addiction is a disease that that doesn't discriminate on the basis of race, religion, 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, income level, and education attainment. In its 39 years of existence, the Oxford House population has always reflected that diversity because of the common bond of addiction. The purpose of this panel is two-fold: (1) to celebrate the continuing achievement of diversity within the Oxford House family; and (2) to discuss how Oxford House can better share its success at community building with the country at large.

The panelists will discuss their experiences with diversity in Oxford Houses and how diversity can be fostered, emphasizing both its benefits and challenges.

FIFTH BREAKOUT PANELS

Saturday 11:15 AM-12:30 PM

Oxford House and Re-entry from Prison

Salon I

Saturday 11:15 AM -12:30 PM

Panelists: Kurtis Taylor Oxford House Outreach, NC
Joey Johns Program Manager, Bridges to Change, Multnomah County, OR
Robert Story CCO Officer, WA
Danica Binkley, J.D. Bureau of Justice Assistance, U. S. Department of Justice
Marty Walker Oxford House Outreach, TN

Moderator: Chris McGuire Oxford House Outreach, TX

Over three-quarters of the Oxford House population at any given time has done jail or prison time. This is a natural consequence of the fact that addiction to alcohol and/or drugs impairs judgment and leads to violence or other actions causing arrest, conviction and imprisonment. In America today, 2.2 million individuals are incarcerated. Approximately 80% of those in jails or prison are addicted to alcohol and/or drugs. Often their last crime that led to their conviction and incarceration is directly tied to their being high or intoxicated. Each year, between 600,000 and 700,000 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. This panel will focus on the ways and means of encouraging more recovering individuals leaving incarceration to immediately move into an Oxford House to protect against relapse and criminal recidivism. 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 given leadership positions and shared responsibility. Most residents rise to the occasion. This kind of real-life training is rare for most individuals re-entering society from incarceration while avoiding the return to former neighborhoods and friends.

Five themes will highlight this panel: [1] the need for post-incarceration recovery opportunities in light of the high incidence of addiction among prisoners; [2] the effect of Attorney General Eric Holders' evolving position on incarceration, [3] the value of Oxford House as a transitional residence; [4] practical ways to motivate returning prisoners to get into Oxford House; and [5] practical way-s to integrate post-incarceration and Oxford House admission practices.

The panel consists of a representative of the U. S. Department of Justice, re-entry officials and Oxford House outreach workers who work with re-entry programs to get re-entering individuals into Oxford Houses. The outreach workers also personally know the journey from incarceration to successful recovery in Oxford house.

Establishing New Oxford Houses

Salon EF

Saturday 11:15 AM -12:30 PM

Panelists:	Stacy Levin Gene McVea Jaime Rodriguez De Wallace	Oxford House Outreach, TX Oxford House Outreach, OR Oxford House Resident, TX Oxford House Outreach, NJ
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Moderator:	George Kent	Oxford House Outreach Coordinator, NJ/PA
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Today, there are over 1,700 Oxford Houses but there is a need for many, many more. This need for additional Oxford Houses will become more critical as the country expands coverage for addiction treatment under new health insurance and parity laws. This panel will focus on what Oxford House and its residents can do to meet the expected demand.

Each of the panelists has front-line experience in establishing new Oxford Houses and chapters. They will discuss what it takes to open new Oxford Houses and identify practices that work and that don't work. They also will talk about how expansion can't and shouldn't be done only by Oxford House outreach workers. 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. 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 will still find Houses to rent, recruit new members and teach them how to run the House themselves. They can also be used as resource persons for individual Oxford Houses and Chapters that want to learn the ins and outs of starting new Oxford Houses.

World Council Update

Salon CD

Saturday 11:15 AM -12:30 PM

Panelists: Resident and Alumni Members of World Council

World Council is the made up of elected Oxford House residents and alumni who serve staggered three-year terms of office. World Council is an advisory Council that identifies problems and issues, develops solutions and resolutions and makes suggestions to the organization. At this 2014 Oxford House World Convention, new Council Members will be elected to serve three-year terms of office.

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 Board of Directors. Since the World Council Chairperson is an *ex officio* member of the Oxford House Board, lines of direct communication are always open.

Dealing with Children in an Oxford House (Visiting and in Residence)

Salon GH

Saturday 11:15 AM -12:30 PM

Panelists:	Kelly Crowder Stacie Hatfield Brooke Gower Jennifer Hoff David Taub Melinda Trujillo	Oxford House Outreach, SC Oxford House Outreach, WA Oxford House Outreach, NC Oxford House Outreach, PA Social Services Specialist, Oxford House Alumnus, OR Behavioral Health Program Manager, DBHR, WA
Moderator:	Maria Hampton	Oxford House Outreach, DC

Many Oxford House residents have young children. Some are living with relatives or others and perhaps visiting their parent in an Oxford House. In some Oxford Houses, children live 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) do individual Oxford Houses make special rules for when children may visit; (2) how does a House deal with an unruly or undisciplined child; (3) should a House have age limits for children in residence and (4) is it better if only 1 or 2 residents of a particular Oxford House have children living with them?

Building Community with Neighbors

Salon AB

Saturday 11:15 AM -12:30 PM

Panelist:	Tony Sowards Jason Jarreau Johnny Roache Deborah Robinson Deb Greenhalgh Jennifer Hoff	Oxford House Outreach, NC Oxford House Outreach, MS Oxford House Outreach, DE Oxford House Outreach, VA Oxford House Outreach, OR Oxford House Outreach, PA
Moderator:	Michael McCarthy, MBA, M. MUS,	Oxford House World Services Staff

Oxford House residents need to ‘build community’ not only within their own Oxford Houses and Chapters but also with their neighbors in their local community. Sometimes neighbors are very welcoming of an Oxford House in their midst; other times they are less enthusiastic and may even be hostile. In most instances, when neighbors get to know the Oxford House residents and the residents act as good neighbors, the Oxford House is welcomed.

This panel will address how Oxford Houses go about being good neighbors and ‘building community’ with neighbors. This may be a particularly important issue for new Oxford Houses in neighborhoods without other Oxford Houses. What strategies have Oxford Houses used to accomplish demonstrate that they are good neighbors and encourage the same response from their neighbors? Does it help to host an open house and, if so, how and when should this happen? What is the role of chapters? Should Chapter members volunteer to speak to civic and religious groups in the community to educate them about the Oxford House program? Should House members join neighborhood associations and related civic groups?

Oxford House: Building Community

Oxford House Stories

This next 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.

The thousands of individuals who have found a path to recovery by living in an Oxford House know that Oxford House has come of age. 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 Oxford House stories of the transition from addiction to sobriety – comfortable enough to assure long-term recovery without relapse – are on the Oxford House web site (www.oxfordhouse.org) under “About Us/Stories.”

2014 OXFORD HOUSE STORIES BY RESIDENTS AND ALUMNI

Ashley L.

My name is Ashley Lynch. I was born on December 23rd 1990. I was born in Lake Charles, Louisiana. I'm from Deridder, Louisiana. My childhood was extremely difficult. My parents were divorced by the time I turned four. My dad was in the military so I never really saw him much and really didn't know him. My mom and I lived with my grandparents until I was six when my mom married a man in the military. From the beginning, I didn't like this man and I didn't want my mom to marry him. I remember being the flower girl and walking down the aisle crying so hard. He was extremely intimidating and very mentally and emotionally abusive to me and my mom most of the time they were married. I remained scared whenever he was around. Eventually the abuse got physical toward my mom and they divorced after 1 year of marriage.

My mom and I moved back in with my grandparents – my safe place, and the only place I felt comfortable. My mom was never there for me emotionally. I remember my grandmother was the one that always took care of me the way a mother should. When I was nine, my mother married another man in the military and he had just been stationed in San Antonio, Texas. Once again, I didn't want my mom to marry this man but I had no choice. We moved to San Antonio and I had to leave everything I had ever known. I was devastated. This is when the feelings of not fitting in and not feeling like I belonged anywhere began. Every time I got adjusted in school and made friends, we moved to a different area. I changed schools 4 different times while we lived in San Antonio.

For the most part I never got in trouble as a kid. When I was in the 7th grade, my mom broke the news to me that she would be leaving her third husband. It broke my heart because he was a good stepfather to me and was the closest thing I had to a father figure. I begged her to at least let me finish my school year out since I had already changed schools so much. That didn't happen and that was when a lot of my inner pain started – other than not knowing my dad growing up. I just felt that I would never be able to forgive her for pulling me away from everything I had known for 4 years once again. We moved back to Deridder and got our own house. My mom started working at a bar and was never home or around. My grandmother made sure I was taken care of all the way around. I really hated my school; I had a few friends but still felt that I didn't fit in. All my friends were older than me.

The first time I used drugs was when I was 13. I used quite a bit of Xanax with a friend. I still remember the feeling of being completely numb of everything going on around me or in my life. I had no worries, no pain, no nothing. Little did I know that day would be the very beginning of my long, hard, and painful addiction. Things didn't change with me and my mom; she had boyfriend after boyfriend in and out of the house. I became more and more resentful. When I was 14, my dad offered for me to come live with him in Columbus, Georgia with my stepmom and baby sister. I decided to go as I thought it would be a fresh new start to have happiness and to actually be a part of a real family for once. Things were good for a little while, then reality set in. I felt like the outsider, like I really didn't belong or wasn't good enough to be a part of their family. I suffered a lot of mental and emotional abuse while living there, from mainly

my stepmom but my dad too. He was always making jokes about me being overweight. I started throwing up after I ate, hoping I would lose weight so that I would feel like I was good enough for my dad. It was such a rush but yet so painful on the inside that this is what I was doing to myself to make me feel better inside. I became very weak and ill due to throwing up so much. It was very difficult but I stopped.

Meanwhile my mom was repeatedly begging for me to come back and live with her, promising me that things would be different. I should have never been put in the position to choose where I wanted to live at 14. I gave up and decided to move back in with my mom. A lot of pain came from the night I told my dad. That would change our relationship for the next 10 years. Little did I know prior to moving out of my dad's; my mom had her boyfriend living with her. From that point I knew things were not going to work. I started acting out in a negative way. I got back into school and started hanging with a bad crowd. I started using at school and eventually got caught with drugs at school. I was kicked out and sent to an alternative school. Growing up in a house with 2 alcoholics wasn't easy. All they did was drink and have parties at the house and I was made to clean it up every day after school. The last night I stayed with my mom she was gone the entire day and night and had left me at the house with nothing – no phone to call for help and no food for a day and a half. I felt so abandoned. When she returned I told her I was moving in with my grandparents. Over the next few months there was a nasty custody battle over me.

My grandmother eventually got custody of me and I was able to live with them full time. I felt relieved. I felt safe and like I belonged but emotionally I had been through hell and back and was unable to cope without drugs. I started cutting myself as well trying to fill that void of all the pain inside of me. I went to numerous counselors and psychiatrists and was diagnosed with major depression and insomnia. Over the next few years my addiction kept progressing more and more. My grandmother took such good care of me when I lived with them. She has meant the world to me my entire life. But she also enabled me from a lot of things that would affect me later in life.

When I was 17, I got a car and took full advantage of it in ways that I shouldn't have. I was arrested and charged with intent to distribute marijuana. I was released after 2 days and went right back to the drugs. For that charge I got a slap on the wrist. I was sentenced to 6 months unsupervised probation. At that time I was also in a very unhealthy and abusive relationship. With that stress and my addiction getting worse and worse, I started looking terrible. I weighed 103 and barely ever ate or slept. I barely graduated high school. That was another disappointment and lowered my self esteem even worse.

After high school I started college and eventually dropped out halfway in due to my addiction; it was just too much to maintain. At 18, I was arrested again for possession of hydrocodone, oxycodone and 2nd offense marijuana. I got out immediately and continued using. I was sentenced to 3 years suspended, 5 years of probation, and 6 months of the Impact program which is a boot camp at the state prison. At 19, I did 6 months of prison. That was an experience I never wanted to through again. I completed it and was released in December 2010. I went right back to the same people, places, and things; relapsed within a week, and was back in jail 26 days after my release. I had violated my probation and got another charge of possession of hydrocodone. I was sentenced to 6 months of jail and 6 months of treatment. I did 6 more months and went to treatment for a month. I got out, had surgery and the vicious cycle started all over again. I was alone with the drugs again. I was tired of the pain and the consequences. My life was going nowhere very fast.

Eventually it became too much to hide anymore and I checked myself into treatment on April 3, 2012. After completing treatment, I decided I didn't want to go back home to the same things. So, I tried Oxford House and was accepted. Those two decisions were the best decisions I have ever made and they would change my life completely. I was introduced to the program of Narcotics Anonymous, took the suggestions of the program, and found my higher power. That was 2 years and four months ago and I am still clean today!

Oxford House saved my life and gave me a life better than I had ever imagined in active addiction. Before getting clean I didn't know who I was; I had no self worth, self esteem and no clue on how to even survive without drugs. Today I know who I am and I love myself. I can't even describe in words how much Oxford House has taught me and helped me. I am so extremely grateful I tried something different and gave Oxford House a chance because now I have a life and freedom outside of active addiction.

I am now an alumna of Oxford House. The 2 years I lived in Oxford House was the best experience of my entire life. In recovery I have been through good and bad times but I know now that no matter how hard life on life's terms get, I

don't have to use no matter what! I have people who love me today. I have a relationship with all my family members today. I am a responsible adult today. I am far from perfect but such a better person than I used to be. Today, I enjoy helping others today and I know it's not all about me and I would give the shirt off my back for another person struggling. Oxford House will forever be my family and will always be close to my heart.

Thank you, Oxford House, for saving my life.

Bardwell E.

My name is Bardwell E. and I am an addict. Being addicted to drugs has caused me a great deal of problems. Once I took one hit I could not stop and all I thought about was how I could get more. I asked my family for money to buy more drugs, I hustled, I stole, and I did things that I never imagined doing before. I lost considerable amount of weight and struggled to get more drugs. I lost contact with my family, my girlfriend left me and my daughter wouldn't even talk to me. Eventually, I couldn't even see myself.

One late night I was standing by a drug area where there was a city ordinance that says no one should be here after 10pm – I didn't even know. I truly felt that that was the place to be. I isolated myself from society, paranoid; always thinking somebody was watching me. Undercover police officers pulled up and asked me what I was doing here on the sidewalk at this particular location. I was so high I couldn't think or do anything the police said. They wanted to see my ID. I was afraid and lied and said I didn't have any. They said, "What is in your pocket?" – I was clutching my pipe in my pocket because that was the most important thing to me at that time. They searched me and I wouldn't let go of the pipe, I tried to fight with them and they subdued me and handcuffed me and found the pipe and baggies with drugs in them. They arrested me and took me in and charged me with 2 counts of prom 3rd and 1 count prom paraphernalia. I couldn't post bail and my family was not going to bail me out. I only knew drug people and nobody was going to take a chance on a drug addict like me. Stuck in jail, I proceeded through the court system and, during sentencing, I was shocked when the judge sentenced me to five years in prison! I was sent to Halawa Correctional Facility.

I did not know where to start and what to do about my life and addiction. I was introduced to NA where I learned about the 12 steps and for the first time I surrendered and realized I was powerless over drugs and alcohol. I continued to go to the meetings, each time learning something and I was not alone; I could not do it alone. The constant support and reminding me of the damage I've done to myself and my family, and the things I've done to get the drugs – how much of an addict I am is no laughing matter. I had to do something. And now, because of NA, I had some direction and a new path. I felt better about myself. I continued to go to meetings and each time I felt good and refreshed. I made my way to Waiawa Correctional Facility where I continued my treatment classes as well as continued NA meetings and, because of my new outlook and participation, I was given the opportunity to be paroled and at my parole hearing I presented my parole plan.

It was important that I go to an Oxford House because of the structure and principles incorporating the 12-step program. Individuals like me have a better chance in adjusting in the community and in staying clean. I currently live in an Oxford house. The House President, Daniel Perry, and some other recovering brothers who all are my family now embraced me. We have weekly house meetings to discuss any concerns or problems in the house. We all have chores, we vote to resolve our own situations, and we support each other in our sobriety. I am a happier person and my family is getting better. I've reconnected with my family and I visit my daughter who's in the hospital at this time. My life is getting better. I am so grateful to be here – I am thankful for Oxford house. Oxford house is well recognized by the Hawaii Paroling Authority, families, people in the community, and organizations. Everyone has a family member, relative or a friend who is afflicted by this disease and Oxford House is here to help, and I thank God for creating Oxford houses....

Belton L.

Hello and good day Oxford house family, my name is Belton L. Today I would like for you to read my story and my journey with Oxford house. It is titled, "Desperation for a Good Life Worth Living"

It is November 2009; I just completed rehab at Marworth in Waverly Pennsylvania. My fortunes and God's will did not offer me a return to a sober environment. I was at this point not aware of Oxford house. Unless I went into a shelter or became homeless, I only had the choice to return to Jersey City where I resided at the time.

The environment was hostile and active. One decision that I made was a first step prep with admittance that I was powerless and that my life had become extremely unmanageable. I also told my peers that the first day I get out of rehab that I would go to a meeting and get a sponsor soon thereafter. Well I did just that and with the program, outpatient program and a loving and caring power greater than myself. My sponsor appeared. He told me that I had a lot to live for and that there was wonderful life on life terms in store for me once I surrender to the disease of addiction. He also told me to go home after we made 3 meetings that day and go to a mirror and tell myself that I love myself. I did and it worked; I went to sleep and the miracle appeared. I woke up the next morning sober.

I thanked my higher power and proceeded on this wonderful journey of God's will. I went to my outpatient program and talked with a counselor who herself at the time had 20 years in the program. I told her that I did not want to live in a half-way house or a shelter. She stated: "Sit tight" and left our meeting room to make a phone call. Upon her return, she told me that she spoke with Oxford House in Bloomfield NJ and proceeded to give me the number. I called and made arrangement for an interview. I was doing bad financially at the time due to owing back taxes. You see, through the wreckage I exhausted all manageability to the low power my disease. So I was tax levied. I got in touch with my union president whose blessings went in his pocket and he gave me the balance that was needed. To make a long story short, I was accepted in the Hazelwood house 11/15/09. This journey since has been wonderful. I have held all positions in this house, the one I enjoy the most is HSR because I was told that I can't keep it unless I give it away. It gives me great joy and serenity.

Today I couldn't ever thank Oxford house enough for allowing my life to be beyond my wildest dreams. I lost my city job in 2010 was able, through living at an affordable home, the blessing of returning to college, completing two years of school in counseling, and today I am full time with long term treatment at Integrity house as a counselor Intern. I also am studying for a cert board CADAC. I have commitments in both fellowships – AA and NA. I am truly grateful for having desperation for it reminds me never to forget where I was and to thank him and Oxford house for where I am today! Gratefully yours,

(Belton's story was submitted just before the 2013 convention and arrived too late to go into that convention program. Contacted by OHI a short time ago, he indicated he would be delighted to have it appear in the 2014 program. He will celebrate 5 years of recovery in September. Last March he moved to a new Oxford House and has been part of opening an Oxford House in Wayne, NJ.)

Brian T.

Hello my name is Brian and I am an Alcoholic. I was raised in an environment where alcohol was the norm. I remember my first drink of Moonshine when I was 6 years old, which was given to me for a cough that I had. I was hooked from that day on. I loved the stuff. When I got older I became acquainted with beer and I could not get enough of that either. In my adulthood I would only drink at parties and special occasions, but when I would drink I would get knee-walking drunk.

This drinking did not affect me in my daily life, but I knew I had a problem. I would go to parties and it would never fail – I would black out and do things without remembering it. Drinking at every occasion was the norm for me for 40 years. After an incident with my heart in 2002, I quit drinking, but I never lost the urge to drink. Alcohol still had a hold on my life. I think they call this a dry drunk and I know I was one of them for the next 12 years.

In April of this year I had an incident that happened in my life that truly tested me and my desire to drink. My wife of 10 years, out of the blue, divorced me and I was devastated. The only thing I could think of was to drink and a lot of it. After a time in a mental hospital for the suicide thoughts I had after this news, I was homeless and needing a drink. It is at this time I was introduced to Oxford House. I never heard of a sober living house and did not know what to expect. Going through the interview process I learned I would have to attend AA meetings. I never attended those before and was apprehensive to say the least. I moved in and started to attend the AA meetings and I discovered as I worked the first 4 steps that I lost the urge to drink like never before.

Oxford House is now my refuge and I thank God for its being there when I needed it. Right now I am Treasurer and State HSC chairperson for Southern Oklahoma. I work and do my day to day activities and holidays come and go and I don't get drunk. My life is going so much better now.

Brian Tillery, House Treasurer, State HSC Chair, Oxford House Ada, Ada Oklahoma

Brooke G.

My name is Brooke Gower and I am an alcoholic. I am also a woman in long-term recovery. My journey with Oxford House began in September 2008.

Prior to finding Oxford House, I had been in and out of treatment programs, beginning in 2001. I would gain little pockets of sobriety here and there, but nothing of any substance. Throughout this revolving door process, everything was stripped from me: my house, my husband, my children, my cars, my self-esteem and my self-worth. Finally in the fall of 2006, my drinking led me to gain some pretty hefty legal issues causing a quick downward spiral.

I was finally ready to get serious and begin living again. I was admitted to a psychiatric/ addiction unit in Arlington, VA. I spent a good amount of time there and was blessed to have been given a bed at a long-term treatment program through Volunteers of America. From there, I went into transitional living for 18 months through Phoenix and built a solid foundation in my sobriety. I was ready for some independence, but was not ready to live on my own. I had heard about Oxford House in the rooms and was really interested in seeing what it was all about.

I called and made an appointment at Oxford House-Diva, in Arlington, VA. I was so nervous, but I was very impressed with the kind of recovery and accountability that I saw in the ladies during the interview. Sadly enough, I was put on a waitlist after the initial interview. It was torture waiting for the ladies to call back, but 3 weeks later, my future "bestie" called me and told me to "come home".

I was very excited! I wanted so much to have what these "senior" members had. For the first month, I sat and observed, kind of watched how things operated. After that it was on! I desperately wanted to be part of everything. The state convention was coming up and I definitely needed to participate! I stepped up as chapter secretary because I heard that the chapter officers got their trip to the convention paid for. That convention changed everything! I knew that I had found my place and my saving grace in my personal journey in recovery.

During the next two years, I held every house position, most of the chapter positions, and the Public Relations Chair position on the VA State Association. But, like a good alcoholic, I felt like I had finally gotten my stuff together and I was ready to go. I made the brilliant decision to move out with two women that also had lived in Oxford Houses in my area for a lot less time with a lot less sobriety. This doomed situation lasted about 2 months and I found myself with my tail between my legs, knocking on Diva's door to get my spot back. Luckily, the girls were all but waiting for my return and welcomed me back with open arms. About 6 months later, the opportunity to reconcile with my ex-husband and children arose and again I went, only to return back 6 months later to the open arms of my Diva sisters.

Upon my return, I grabbed hold and ran with it. I stepped up as chapter chair and regained my PR chair position for the state. I wanted more and more! During this time, I found out I was pregnant with my 8 month old Matthew. In good form, I pulled a geographic and ran to Virginia Beach – luckily, to another Oxford House! My personal life deteriorated catastrophically and the more that it did, the more I dug into my service to Oxford House, again gaining a chapter chair position and maintaining my state position. I was blessed by the powers that be and they let me turn my house into a Women with Children's house!

In June, I gained an Outreach Services position in Charlotte, VA. In October, God willing, I celebrate 2 years sober. I owe everything I have gained to Oxford House. I am proud to be part of this family!

David C.

I started using drugs from an early age, and for a while they were great. Drugs helped me feel like I fit in, that I was one of the popular kids in the "In" crowd, and most importantly they blocked out the voices inside – the shame, guilt, fear and restlessness I felt on a daily basis. Unfortunately, my use came with consequences and before I graduated high school I was experiencing many consequences. Drugs were no longer just for fun, they were the only means of living life with any type of comfort. I found myself using day in and out as I tried to live as a successful drug dealer, and soon I got arrested with my first felony case. My Dad bonded me out, and took me to Florida as I promised to serve my probation living with him. Crawling out of my skin with discomfort, I ran back to Dallas as soon as I could and spent

the next few years trying every way I could to make my using 'work' for me again. I just wanted to feel okay, and I wanted drugs to do that for me.

Spending months trying to find a way to control my using (to simply pass a weekly drug test) and failing at every turn, I became the picture of abject misery. During this time I was put in a treatment center where I was introduced to recovery through the 12 steps of AA. I believed the men saying that they had been miserable, that they couldn't solve their life problem with drugs, and through the steps they had found a new way to live. After treatment I still believed that I could manage better without, and I continued my old ways. As some can probably relate, things got much worse quickly. I found myself spiritually and morally bankrupt; my soul hurt, and stress was a constant factor in my life. I was hopeless. Fortunately for me, the State and God intervened again and I was separated from the life I was living.

Through working all 12 steps after my release from jail, with a sponsor, I have been rocketed into a new life I would have never imagined for myself. I am able to be a son, brother, friend and employee today. A person I am proud to be. Living in Oxford for over two-three years now I have been granted unlimited ways to be of service, whether in my house, chapter, or state. I have been able to live comfortably in an environment conducive to recovery, with other men who wish to do the same. The bonds I have made with the men in my house are strong and lasting; I can lean on them in times of joy or sadness. Oxford House has helped to teach me responsibility in managing my affairs responsibly, shown me how to show respect others in the utmost.

Thank you for being at the World Convention this year and please continue to be of service, allowing others to experience this amazing opportunity, as those before us did for us.

Deb G.

I was born in 1959 and as far back as I can remember I had a feeling of being detached from everything and everyone. At the age of 12 I decided I needed to do something to change how I felt, so I found drugs and alcohol. Life took on a new meaning for me and from the age of 12 until 45 my life revolved around these things. The more drugs and alcohol I had, the more popular I was and the more I felt as if I belonged.

At the age of 45, the law finally caught up with me. Sending me to prison for two years was the best thing that ever happened to me. Not only did I have the chance to clean up and connect with my higher power, but in prison I completed my GED and discovered that I was pretty smart. Realizing I had more going for me than street smarts gave me the willingness to put some thought into college.

When I paroled from prison I was invited to interview at my first Oxford House. The women in this home showed me so much love and helped me become who I am today. After my first year I was asked to move to a new house that was being opened. I felt so honored to be given this opportunity and I want everyone who has this chance to go for it!!!! There is no better feeling. After a year there I was once again given the opportunity to open another house. I lived there for two years and then decided that it was time to become an alumna, opening up my bed for someone new. I wanted someone else to have what I had.

During my four years in Oxford I became a part of every committee, ran for a chapter position and even had the amazing opportunity to be the State Chair. I knew being of service was the best way to give back for what was given to me. My first year I was able to attend the World Convention in New Orleans and I was in for whatever was asked of me.

College and Oxford became my life. After graduating with my associate's degree, I was approached by Oxford to apply for a position that was open for a female Outreach worker. I was blessed with being hired in January of 2012 and have continued to hold this position. Being an Outreach worker for this organization has been the best part of my recovery journey!!!

God Bless Oxford and all the amazing people who are a part of it!!!!

Debbie R.

My name is Debbie Robinson and I am an Addict and Alcoholic. At the age of 8 I decided I wanted to be a swimmer and I was going to be in the Summer Olympics by the time I was 17. And to do this I knew that the pool would become

a practice field, never a playground, if I wanted to reach my goal. I put everything I had into becoming one of the best swimmers in Northern Virginia, in hopes to be a great Olympian. At the age of 12, I was seeing that all my hard work had been paying off. The water was my best friend. I was a winner, my bedroom was full of 1st and 2nd place trophies, my walls were covered in ribbons and my name was known by every swimmer, every swimming organization in Northern Virginia. I was well on my way, and it was wonderful. I was encouraged by my parents who were always there for me; who changed their lives to accommodate my swimming schedules.

At the age of 12, my family moved out into the country. My parents continued to support me and drive me all over Northern Virginia so I could continue to swim. I started a new school, found a friend who introduced me to others and all of a sudden I was off to the races. I started drinking with them, smoking weed and popping whatever I could put in my mouth. To me, I had found a new best friend. I continued to swim but, after the swim tournaments were over and the trophies handed out, I was back to drinking and popping pills within an hour. It was as if I only took a break from drinking and drugging long enough to swim. This went on for many years, undetected by my family and coach.

Finally, I got caught with my hands in the cookie jar. I remember thinking what a relief, now everyone knows that I drink and drug and I don't have to hide it anymore. I had no idea that because of my drinking and drugging, I would be kicked out of the swimming organization. This destroyed me; I could not believe they would do this to me. For the entire next year it was nothing but one big party. There was not a drug out in the 70's that I did not do. I had become what we call in the program a garbage can. But I came back, gave it one more shot just to see if I could do it. I slowed down on the partying, back in the pool I went and the water became my best friend again. I worked harder than I had ever done in the pool; I was determined to make it to the qualifying rounds for the Olympics. I made the qualifying round and decided the night before I had to swim that it would be OK to do a little bit of drugs. I had no idea how stressed out my body was; how much damage I had done in just one year to my body. I gave it all I had the next morning and, just 15 yards from it all being over with and I'd be going to the Olympics, my right arm popped out of my shoulder socket. My goal was gone. My life was never the same after that day.

I gave up, stopped setting goals and took off from Northern Virginia. I moved from city to city, state to state. I became part of a biker organization that no parent would ever want their child to associate with. My life became men, drugs and alcohol for over 15 years. I thought I was living life, but was only running from my own life.

The time had come to return home, hoping I could change. I got married and had a child not soon after returning home. The 9 months I was pregnant was the longest time I had gone without a drink or drug since I was 13 years old. It was the only time, I believe, in the last 15 years that I was doing something for someone else. I decided it was not fair to kill something within me that could not fight back. So the drugs and alcohol were set aside. However, once she was born, I returned to my drugs and alcohol. When my daughter turned 10, I left home again to do what Debbie does best and that was drinking and drugging and running from city to city, state to state. It was party time again, not carrying about anything or anyone but Debbie.

Years later I returned home, found a job that I could embezzle money from so that I could support my addiction. After 2 years of stealing from my employer and my family seeing the grip my addiction had on me, they decided to participate in an intervention with a man that had 37 years of sobriety. I never did figure out how my parents found this guy, but today I'm truly grateful they did. Anyway, he stood in my face, nose to nose, and told me exactly who I was, what I had done and where I was going, and that I would be dead within a year. I was so angry and so upset with my parents because everything this man said to me was 100% correct. He knew exactly who I was and had no problem telling me. Well, I went home that night promising I would come back tomorrow, but I never did. I called my father and asked him to take care of my daughter. I apologized for letting him and my family down by letting drugs take over my life. I told him I was sorry that they changed their lives so I could be a swimmer and I blew that. Then I sat back and I overdosed. But, it was not my time to die.

On February 2, 2007 I went into treatment and landed in a 3 month program. Five months later, I was put in a recovery townhouse program, and then kicked out after a month because of my behaviors. By the grace of God, a woman was living in Oxford House – Pentagon heard that I was being kicked out of the townhouse program and thought that Oxford House could help me. So she moved out early and set me up with an interview. I never thought I would make it with 6 other women. I had never had girls as friends, so I was not sure about this move or if something this crazy would work for me. But they taught me to love myself, love them and help others. I got involved with my Oxford House and started doing as much service work as possible. My life was good; I was focusing on my recovering and helping others, which

kept me out of my head. I learned to forgive myself, and moved on, which was one of the biggest step I took in my recovery.

I lived in Oxford House – Pentagon for 2 years. I was told if I lived in an Oxford House for 18 months, I had an 87% chance of staying clean. I stayed longer only because I wanted to increase my odds. It came time to leave my Oxford House in 2009, and, believe me I did not want to go. I had gotten my daughter back in my life and we needed time together to heal. The ladies of my house taught me how to be a mother again, and I'm truly grateful to have those women still in my life today. My daughter still lives with me, and I'm thankful that every morning I can wake up and get a kiss from my grandson who just turned 2 years old. OK, that's what life is about ☺

Once I moved out of my Oxford House I continued to volunteer and give back. For the next 4 years, I worked my full time job during the day and Oxford House at night. I believe that Oxford House is why I have the life I have today. I'm truly grateful that as an addict and alcoholic I had the opportunity to live in an Oxford House and finally grow up and become the woman I am today and the mother I have always wanted to be. Most important is that my grandson will not have to see what I forced upon my daughter to see as a child. Because of Oxford House I have a healthy relationship with my daughter and my entire family, who never gave up on me, when I gave up on myself.

Today, it is an honor and a privilege to work for the Oxford House, Inc. Thank you Oxford House for changing my life and helping achieve my goal to long term recovery.

Elizabeth S.

My name is Elizabeth S. I am an addict in long-term recovery and a grateful member of Oxford. My story began with me being born into a loving, supportive family in Salem, Oregon. My father was a police officer and my mother took on many odd jobs that she could do out of the house while raising my sisters and me.

My problem began not as one of abuse or neglect at the hands of others but rather as a case of extreme curiosity and mistrust. Whenever I was told that I should not do something by any perceived authority figure, I had to personally investigate this forbidden act. My investigative skills led me to being a heroin addict by the age of sixteen. By the time I had learned why I had been told to 'just say no', it was too late. After I completed my first stint in treatment and had turned eighteen, I made the decision to move to Seattle, Washington. I thought I could live with my boyfriend, go to art school and avoid heroin. This was really unsuccessful.

Once I came back to Oregon and managed to get away from the original problem, I met a new one in the form of a helpful doctor. After several years of him being essentially my legal dealer, many overdoses, and a coma, my family finally set some extreme boundaries. These led to me choosing a six-month inpatient treatment stay. While I was there, two women came in and presented on the benefits of Oxford living. I really did not know if this was for me but I knew I could not return to where I had been.

In October, 2010, I was welcomed into my new home. These women surrounded me with love, understanding and the introduction of an entirely new concept – accountability. I learned how to become a person that not only could I live with but one that I was able to love. Oxford taught me how to live again and has provided me many opportunities to lift up my brothers and sisters in recovery who could benefit from the same chances. Because of the help of my Oxford family I have not felt the need to poison my body with drugs or alcohol since that last time on March 7, 2010.

Erica G.

Having had a number of physical problems since birth, I have had plenty of excuses for using pain medication. You would think that after being on life support for liver damage and pneumonia that I would have learned my lesson. That was really only the beginning of my problems. Three and a half years ago I divorced my husband of twenty-two years. It left me with a good income and I thought I had life made in the shade. I had everything I needed financially, plus three healthy children.

Two and a half years ago my mom died of pancreatic cancer. She went downhill fast. To cope with her death, once again I turned to pain medication. The thought of buying off the street never crossed my mind – until days after her death someone offered to sell me some.

My addiction only escalated. I got to the point where I was buying them every day. It turned into fifty to a sixty pills a day habit. I no longer thought of anything but where and when I would get my next fix. I had put my children on the back burner. Nothing was important to me anymore. I was living only to talk to dealers every day. Life was VERY lonely.

I never dreamed I would go as far as to go through all the money I had but it sure did happen. What could have lasted me a lifetime was completely GONE. All I had left was a small Social Security check each month. When my dad heard about this, he said he was never having anything to do with me anymore. He meant it and took me out of his will. He said his hard earned money would not be thrown away like that. I was on my own with this.

Not knowing what to do, I knew it was time to get some help. I had lost it all, even my children. I put myself into treatment in December of 2013. I had no clue where I was going to go when I got out. I was going to be homeless.

One week before I was scheduled to be discharged, Jason Jarreau came to the treatment center to do a presentation of the Oxford House. There was the answer to my problems. I knew I needed support and I felt like it landed in my lap. God was looking out for me. For all practical purposes I should be dead or in jail. I'm so thankful that never happened. I know now that part of his plan for me is to live in Oxford House clean and sober.

I have no material things left. Now I have the support of Oxford House. Being here I am finally learning to become a responsible adult. It has given me friendships, trust and family. I am also gaining a relationship back with my children. I've found a new way to live life with the help of Oxford House. Addiction is a very lonely disease. I know I have hope again.

Erica G – Oxford House Winterview, Jackson MS

Faye Sanders

Today I found out there was a death in my family. I have felt the weight of pain on me throughout the day. Today I came home to my Oxford family and shared my struggles. I do not have to be alone. The weight of grief does not hold me back from moving forward to enjoy my life. I can cry with others about what has been lost and be present to reach my potential in this world. I know that I am supported and secure so that I never have to escape into the isolation of using.

A year ago, when I began the process of getting clean, I was broken and spiritually bankrupt. I had been in the hospital for a week because, high on drugs, I attempted to fly out of my second story window. I was battling the forces of addiction within myself and felt there was no other way out. When I was discharged from the hospital there was nobody waiting for me on the other side. My parents' insurance covered a cab to the house I had flown away from. When I got there, my roommate was waiting for me to tell me they no longer felt comfortable with me staying in the house. I packed up what I could in my car and called my mom. She also felt uncomfortable with me staying with them. I had kept my addiction a secret from my family and when they got the call that I had raged on my roommates and jumped from a second story window, they were very fearful and trust was broken.

I had nowhere to go. Every number I dialed had no place for me, or didn't answer. I bounced around other clean and sober living houses but none of them could guarantee me a secure bed for longer than two nights. I was broken and desperate in downtown Portland with my car and its contents. I would have to stay in a homeless shelter, which terrified me. I kept trying and found the number of an Oxford house. I spoke to a woman on the phone and shared that I was tired and desperate. She allowed me to come to their house and crash on the couch. I interviewed and got into the Oxford house that Sunday. I was living in the house for a week but my roommates felt that I needed more of a foundation for my recovery. A woman from the house called Homeward Bound. I didn't understand it at the time. I felt rejected and full of resentment. I could not see how God was working in my life. I spent 10 months in Homeward Bound. There I met amazing women who showed me how they had made it through disaster. They introduced and guided me through the rooms of Narcotics Anonymous.

I spent 8 months in hopelessness. I dutifully followed the rules of Homeward Bound but my spirit was low to non-existent. I showed up to the rooms like a fly on the wall. I had always been this way in life. On the outside, looking in. I never felt a part of anything and I used many things to mask my pain. I used anything to separate me from others. I learned early that attachment led to loss and I set up barriers to protect myself. I was a mixed raced child adopted into a

white family. I was quiet and introverted. Sitting in the rooms day to day, the pain of watching and not being a part of became too much. I knew I had to do something, either go back out or make a change. I began to share the truth that I had a hard time speaking up but I was committed to making that different. It was a lot of pressure, but I saw that it helped to lift my separateness and trust in a higher power. I began to work with a sponsor and that brought even more change.

With time I began to have hope – hope that my life was not over. My life was just beginning. I decided to start interviewing for Oxford houses again. I went to a couple of interviews but was not accepted. Again, I felt the rejection and resentment, but this time I had support and a program. I was able to work through these things and let them go. I did not give up and tried again. I ended up getting accepted into the same Oxford house that had let me crash on their couch 10 months earlier. I now stay in the room of the woman who called Homeward Bound the night I was asked to leave. Today, I see God working in my life.

I have worked hard to build a foundation with the love of a higher power. Living in Oxford today, I feel like I am part of a family. We are all rediscovering and practicing what it is to run a home. Some of us had poor models for what a family looks like. Some of us never felt worthy enough to be a part of a loving family. Today we all have one common goal, to make it through without using. We come together for support to reach a higher level of solution. We know that our God is bigger than any struggle. We have faith that we are right where we are supposed to be and we are capable of doing the next right thing to reach our potentials.

Jamie C.

My name is Jamie Castellanos and I am an addict. I ended up in San Antonio, Texas when I was busted by the Federal Marshalls. Getting arrested changed my life forever because the Feds told me I wouldn't be released from jail until I completed a rehab facility. I had lost everything: I was a drug dealer and didn't know how to make a living legally. I was facing a mandatory minimum ten years in Federal prison and probation was not allowed by law. I was a meth addict and I was so consumed with fear that I could barely put one foot in front of the other. My mom, dad and brother had passed away so I had no family or friends to lean on or reach out to. I felt all alone. I was hopeless and had no faith in myself and I had nowhere to go. Treatment was a turning point: it introduced me to Oxford House.

My sponsor, an Oxford alumnus, told me about Oxford House and encouraged me to set up an interview. I decided to interview at the Blanco house and got accepted but within two weeks I got a job opportunity on the other side of San Antonio and transferred to the Leon Valley house to be closer to my job. In my early days I was so lonely that many nights I cried myself to sleep. Those ladies loved me enough until I could learn to love myself. There were times I just wanted to give up and thought "I'll just sober up in prison."

Had it not been for the ladies in the Leon Valley House I don't believe I would be where I am today. I spent a little over a year at the Leon Valley Oxford House. At my sentencing the court room was full of supporters from Oxford and the recovery community and it was at that point I realized I am no longer alone. The Federal Judge decided to go outside of the guidelines and gave me time served and four years supervised release. Oxford was life changing for me and I believe I have my freedom today because of Oxford. Oxford has taught me how to be a woman in recovery, a mother to my son, and a real friend to others. They encouraged me to get a sponsor and work the steps which solved all my problems. I don't think I can put into words the amount of gratitude that I have for Oxford.

After being in Oxford for only three months I attended my first State Retreat and upon my return to San Antonio, I found a way to get involved with the chapter in San Antonio, Texas. I was first elected as Vice Chair and then served as Chair. I also got involved at the State level and became the Female State HSC. Soon after being elected to the state association, my outreach worker asked me to help open Oxford House Invicta as a core member.

When I got sober, I was very lost. Oxford kept me busy and gave me a family. I believe in the democratic process and have learned that I have a voice and that, together, we can overcome our situation and move on to be successful people in this so-called life. I am now an Oxford Alumna and I am a success story. I continue to stay involved with Oxford because I was taught that gratitude is action. I am the Fundraising Chair for Oxford House of San Antonio Interchapter. Today, it is a gift to see the desperate newcomer come into an Oxford House and be given the same opportunity that was given to me. Thank you, God, for allowing Oxford House to be my last and only choice.

BREAKING THE CHAINS

From down in the depths of the darkest of places
We come seeking freedom from that which enslaves us
Acquainted with only the cruel and the callous
Not sure what to make of the welcoming faces.

Inside we're invited without reservation
The peace found within is a foreign sensation
Those who inhabit this home are our fellows
Yet free from the bondage of intoxication.

Finding a refuge from the chaos at last
A solid foundation to build on is cast
In these Oxford Houses we will come to know
A new way to live, breaking chains from the past.

Jason Aldridge. Silverton Oxford House, Salem, Oregon.

Jason J.

For the most part I had thought I had a normal childhood. But ask yourself, what is normal? Yeah, I could never pinpoint it either.

I lost my mother when I was three and a half years off due to a car accident. My grandmother, my mom's mother, stepped in and took the lead. For fourteen years we would stay in a custody battle with my father that made law history for the state of Louisiana. My father passed away when I was seventeen, also in a car accident. Just when I thought that I would start some sort of relationship with my father, the opportunity was taken from me.

I used alcohol in high school to fit in. I never really liked it. I smoked pot a couple times, also to fit in. I always knew something was different about me and never really knew what it was. When I was nineteen years old, I came out to my grandmother. The fear of revealing a secret from deep within, and being casted out was gut wrenching. Her response was something I wasn't ready for. I just knew she was going to kick me out. She simply said "I knew that, what else do you want to say? I have to go to work!" I laughed and said that was it.

The next few years I would spend exploring the LGBT community. There I was introduced to cocaine, ecstasy and other party drugs, using only socially and never during the week. I would excel in employment and eventually worked my way to a Fortune 500 company in Baton Rouge.

It was during my time at this company, traveling on weekends working at several LGBT bars across the Gulf States that I got involved with a group of people known as "the click". The "click" was the dealers in the bars and the gay scene. It was during this time that I was introduced to my DOC, Meth. I had arrived. The cocaine that was present in the clubs was beginning to not work. With my new DOC I could do a little and go longer. I could work for days and nights, and I excelled in my professional life.

At that time I had EVERYTHING a twenty eight year old wanted. I was a global human resources benefits specialists and I had a great 401k, a brand new Mercedes, an awesome condo next to the LSU campus, and an awesome contact with the community. Then it went downhill. It happened during a trip to Houston for Gay Pride where we partied all weekend. I returned back to work on a Tuesday, STILL high, and had enough. I felt they needed to bow down to me and weren't giving me what I was worth, so I said "I quit." I was thinking they would give in and beg me to stay but they said: "So, when is your last day?"

I worked my two weeks and packed up and moved back home. Searching for another job, I continued to party during the week and weekends. Lining up interviews, I would always come up with reasons I needed to reschedule.

I had to eventually move back home with my grandmother, at thirty years old. The bank came for the Benz and I dipped into the 401k, for the obvious reasons. Then the news came. My grandmother needed to go in for another surgery to repair an implant from her breast cancer surgery ten years earlier. I couldn't take it. I said I was moving for a job to Lake Charles, and that's when I really hit further down. There I started using intravenously. At this point, I had no feelings or care. I wanted it and wanted more of it NOW. There I got involved with a connection in the Houston drug ring. I became the driver for the dealer and we moved to New Orleans. To make money for my habit I got a job as a bouncer at a night club I worked at years earlier -- all while running back and fourth twice a week to Houston.

Living in the French quarter, everyone knows EVERYTHING that goes on. It wasn't long before people started getting popped and they turned us in. We were starting to get sketched out and were planning on a Tuesday to leave and drop everything and move to Chicago. One last run and sell for some cash and that was it. Well it was the last run for sure.

I was pulled over on the way back into New Orleans, and searched and busted. It was the DEA, not the local sheriff's. My uncle couldn't get me out of this one. I spent four days in jail and then I was released. I went home where I found a stash and continued to use. I was then informed I was being sent to treatment. I used up until November 29, 2011. I said if I was going to treatment I wanted my date to have more meaning than a day I just stopped using drugs. November 29th, which also is the date my mother died in 1984.

I went to treatment at the Hope Center in Marksville, La. Something clicked while I was there; I don't know what it is and don't care to know. There they offered me the option of sober living. Not: "NO" but "Hell, no." I wanted to go home. This was it for me. After two weeks home, I knew I needed more support and structure. I talked to a buddy of mine from treatment and he said I should call an Oxford House and get an interview. So, I did. On Feb 1st 2012, my belly button birthday, I moved in. They quickly elected me treasurer and three months later chapter chair. I quickly got involved and did as my counselor in treatment said, get a sponsor and work steps. I did that.

I got a job making barely enough money to get by but it paid my EES, put food in my belly, and gas in the car I was driving. I eventually got involved on the state association level, went to the World Convention in OKC, and there I was on FIRE. I started expressing more interest in OH.

One day, Lori and I were talking about an issue at a house and somehow we started talking about my current job and how I hated it. She asked me what I wanted to do and I had been exploring my options of working in the recovery field. I expressed that and said maybe even something like she does. Well, the rest is history. I put my application in for a position in Oklahoma, but unfortunately, they hired someone else. I knew my HP had me. She then called me and said we have a position in Mississippi and I have forwarded your application to Kathleen. I got the call and was told I was hired, and I started on May 1st, that was two weeks away. OH MY GAWD. This was real; I was packing up and moving for a legit job, AWAY from my family and somewhere I knew NOTHING about.

This whole time I was still dealing with my case. If they decided to go federal, I was looking at five to thirty years. By the grace of God, the local DA took the case. I worked with my public defender for a year. With my involvement in OH and starting new meetings in the community, we were able to get my case to probation for one year, and eligible for expungement. Given the amount we had on us, plus the evidence they had that I was crossing state lines, I was shocked at the outcome. I was able to get my probation officer to grant me a work permit and off to Mississippi I went. When I got to MS, we had three houses. Today we now have ten. The best part of my job is watching people move in and watching them grow and change. Watching that fire start with a small flame, and just like gas being thrown on it. I love watching people achieve milestones in their recovery they never thought would happen. It's truly a blessing.

Oxford House changed my life. My recovery program saved me, but Oxford House showed me a new way to live, with support and love and most of all ACCOUNTABILITY. I never in a million years thought I would be where I am today. This was never in my plan, but I know it is exactly the plan my Higher Power has.

Jenn H.

My name is Jenn H. and I am a recovering alcoholic. My sobriety date is September 17, 2011. I had my first drink at age 13, and my last was at the age of 42. I grew up in Mesquite, Texas, and lived there for most of my life.

I didn't have a rough childhood or a bad upbringing. I am the only child of my parents, who divorced when I was 10 years old. I was shy and quiet as a kid, and when I discovered alcohol in my teens I realized that it seemed to make that

awkwardness disappear. I was the life of the party! I drank to blackouts during my teen years and surprisingly never got pulled over for drinking and driving, even though it was a weekly thing.

I got married when I was 19 because I thought it was what I was supposed to do. The man I married was a heroin addict and, since my drinking had not yet taken on epic proportions, his addiction baffled me. He spent a lot of time in jail and prison, and I attended dozens of NA meetings with him in the hopes that he would give up heroin. He could not. We had a daughter and ended up divorced after just 2 years of marriage. I started drinking more heavily then, but I slowed down when I met the man who would be my next husband and father to my younger daughter and son.

In 1995 we moved to Houston, away from family and friends. I still was not a heavy drinker, but I would drink to blackout when we did drink. It was an 'all or nothing' thing for me. I couldn't have just a drink or two; I had to go all out, every time. My husband preferred marijuana to alcohol, so I was content most of the time to just smoke with him. But when I did drink, it was ugly.

In 2002, my boss and co-workers encouraged me to try open mic at a comedy club. I had always been funny – even more so when I was drunk, or so I thought, – so I did it. I was hooked after my very first time on stage. Of course, I needed a little 'liquid courage' in order to get up there, but I didn't see the harm in that. I started doing open mics weekly at a local comedy club, and as I improved I began being asked to do shows at other venues. My drinking went from weekend binges to almost nightly drunks. I spent most of my time away from my family and I realized that a lot of the comedians drank like me, so I didn't feel like it was a problem.

My husband and I split up in 2003. He was done cleaning up after me and trying to pretend that there was nothing wrong. We all moved back to the Dallas area, and he took the two youngest kids away from me because he didn't feel that I was being a good mother. He was right. So it was just me and my oldest child, who was now in her teens. I paid little attention to her as my comedy and drinking life became the center of my world.

This continued for several more years. I kept performing as a comedian and started to gain some local notoriety. I was getting paid to emcee and feature in shows, and my name was out there. But it never really made me happy. My drinking had stopped being fun and became necessary. I was miserable, but everyone thought I was still the life of the party.

I discovered cocaine sometime around 2009. It seemed liked everyone was doing it, so I didn't see anything wrong with it. It was big in the comedy clubs behind closed doors. It didn't take long for me to be hooked. I was on a major self-destructive path and I didn't care, not one little bit.

In 2011, I was all set to move to New York. I had a friend there who wanted me to come work for him. He was going to help me out with an apartment and getting set up there so I could start going to some of the big comedy clubs. This was going to be my big break! I needed a new start. In the previous 6 months, I had lost my job, got evicted from my apartment, and my car had been repossessed. I literally had nothing at this point, so a move and a fresh start seemed like a good idea. Sadly, the move was never to be. What I thought was a done deal was all an illusion and, when the time came that I was supposed to be leaving, my friend in New York stopped returning my calls.

I was couch surfing. I had no place to call home. My last refuge, my mother's house, didn't work out. She asked me to leave when she found a cocaine baggy in the dryer. (I told her not to do my laundry!!) I ended up on the floor of a crappy, dirty apartment that was inhabited by one of my daughter's friends who I hardly knew. I spent my days drunk or high, crying and suicidal.

One day when he was getting ready to walk out the door, I told him that he needed to hide his gun. He thought I was joking at first, but was quick to realize I was dead serious (no pun intended). He grabbed my phone and called one of my closest friends and told her that I needed help. She took me to a place in Dallas called Maggie's House, a non-medical detox home for women. I tried to make excuses as to why I didn't need to be there, but at that point I had pretty much given up. It was time to try something new.

I was there for two weeks. When you arrive, they give you a Big Book and a spiral notebook. Residents attend daily meetings along with morning and evening meditations. Aside from NA meetings with my first husband, this was my first exposure to AA meetings. I had never been to one for myself. I was sick for the first two days I was there while

everything got out of my system, but I was determined to pay attention and try to learn a new way of living. This was my first attempt at sobriety, and I wanted it very badly.

On my eighth day they talked to me about my plans after leaving there. I literally had no home to go to, so they suggested an Oxford House. I had never heard of this before, but I figured it was worth a shot. I called and set up an interview and they allowed my friend to take me there to meet the girls at the house.

I was scared to death. I couldn't imagine why anyone would accept me into their home to live with them. There were four ladies living there and they each asked me questions about my recovery and what my plans were to continue staying sober. I don't remember what I said, but they called me later that night and said that I could come live with them.

Moving into an Oxford House changed my life. I immediately got involved with the chapter, and before I knew it I was elected to be the treasurer. Soon after, I was nominated to be the chairperson, and I couldn't believe this was all happening! I attended house meetings for 9 houses in my chapter and helped people with all sorts of issues. I helped the local outreach rep look for houses, do presentations at treatment centers, and I even opened and moved into a new house as the senior member. Doors were opening and things were going well. The state association elected me to be the housing service rep for the state, so I got to travel to other cities in Texas to provide my experience, strength and hope to other residents.

I loved what this organization was doing for people in recovery, and I knew that I wanted to be a part of it, in any way I could, for as long as I could.

I'm so grateful for my Oxford House experience, and I'm glad that I get to continue to be a part of it all. This September, I will have 3 years clean and sober. That in itself is an absolute miracle. If not for Oxford House, I'm certain I would not have come this far. I'm on an amazing journey!

Jenna H.

It was Christmas time 2013 and I was sitting in a dark room, staring off blankly as a video played in the background. I was in another treatment center and coming to the realization that I was going to be a worthless drunk for the rest of my life. What could possibly make this time any different? My life was torn down to a bleak existence, and still, all I could think about was a bottle of vodka. I knew the rehab script - what I was expected to say, how I was expected to act - from detox to discharge plan. I knew my obsession with alcohol would be as strong as ever 30 days from then. At 28, the past 12 years, nearly half of my life, had been devoted to alcohol. In those 12 years, I had given my promising future and all of my comforts and dreams to drinking. I was an excellent student all of my life, but lost my college scholarship because I couldn't show up to class. I lost numerous jobs and burned bridges in any potential professional arenas. By my mid twenties, I had developed stomach ulcers and a bout with pancreatitis. I had been hospitalized several times for suicide attempts, or "misunderstandings" as I carefully called them. Relationships and friendships were nonexistent because the bottle always came first. My family was estranged and fed up with my lies and manipulations. My parents thought I was going to die any day and refused let me live with them, in fear they might wake up to find me dead. I missed my own sister's wedding, something I had always dreamed about being a part of.

By this time in treatment, I had been living out of my car in New Orleans, spending a fourth of whatever money I could get on gas and the rest on liquor. I was in treatment partly to appease my parents, partly to get out of jail time, and partly because I was exhausted. And still, there I sat, thinking about the next one. I knew I had to figure out somewhere to go after treatment. At this point I was really a shell of a person. I had no expectations of staying sober or going out. I was just going through the motions. I had heard about Oxford House in the past and thought I would try it out. I suggested it to my counselor and we set up a phone interview and I was accepted. A little burst of hope came into view; I knew now I would at least have a place to stay.

When I first came to Oxford House Rodenberg in Biloxi, MS, I was greeted with lots of hugs. The women were extremely nice and accommodating, which I have to admit, made me a little apprehensive. I'm pretty reserved, so I did a lot of listening and watching, and I slowly began to realize that these women did really instantly love me. They had been where I had been, and had been greeted in the same manner, and wanted me to experience that as well. One of my first nights at Oxford, the chapter got together for an impromptu ping-pong party. I remember watching my roommates laughing and singing on the ride there and thinking, "Wow, they look really happy." At the party I got to meet most of

the other residents of the chapter. There were all kinds of different people, laughing and having a great time sober, and they were all so nice. I laughed so hard for the first time in a long time that night, and I realized that I had fallen into something really special. I had suddenly been accepted into a family with people like me, and they were enjoying life sober. This idea was foreign to me. But as I woke up each day with gratitude and an open mind, my new life began to get better and better.

I followed the suggestions of Oxford House and AA and everything soon fell into place. I began to know and love each personality in my house. We went to meetings together, and as I began my journey through finding a sponsor and the 12 steps, I had friends at my home who were going through the same thing. I began to love being a contributing part of my house. I took pride in doing chores and making our house a beautiful home. It may sound silly, but as treasurer, I enjoyed mailing off bills on time and proving myself trustworthy to make deposits. The Promises began to come true in my daily life. I had a great job and a safe home with people who cared about me. I began to repair relationships with my family. I was waking up each day with a purpose, rather than waking up a slave to my disease. I began going to other House meetings with our amazing outreach worker, Elizabeth, and volunteered to be chapter secretary.

When I went to my first regional association meeting and saw the emotion and zeal that the residents in Louisiana had for Oxford, I realized that Oxford House is giving purpose to so many lives. I feel so blessed to be part of what I feel is just the beginning of Oxford House Mississippi. We are small, but I am excited to help us grow. I think about the addict in Mississippi that is terrified right now, but just hasn't heard about us. I think about the alcoholic in Mississippi who is waking up shaking that we just haven't reached yet. I think about the child in Mississippi, and the smile he will have on his face when Oxford House helps him be reunited with his mother. Oxford House has shown me how to live as a sober adult. I have been given a second chance at life thanks to Oxford House, and I want to give back what has been so freely given to me.

Jeremy W.

My story begins similarly to that of other addicts – with fear of rejection, feeling like I was somehow different from my peers, a sense of abandonment, sexual trauma, and signs of having addictive tendencies way before I picked up my first drink or used my first drug.

I had a simple upbringing. My mom gave birth to me when she was 15 years old. As her first born, I was the “starter child”. Admittedly, she did the best she could with the circumstances she was given, however, I found myself looking for love and acceptance in everyone I came into contact with. When I was 8 years old, I met my biological father. That year shaped the young man I would later become. I was able to piece together my identity while simultaneously getting my hopes smashed by the prospect that my father did not want to be an active part of my life in the way I'd hoped. I expected him to be my dad – the one to show me how to be a man. Unfortunately for me, he had a different plan for our relationship or lack thereof.

During that time, I was very vulnerable and my mother was working hard to provide for me; ensuring that I had food to eat and clothes on my back. So I relied heavily on my uncles to be the “father-figures” in my life. Unfortunately for me, one of them used that as an opportunity to exploit my naiveté and molest me. I thought that was love – or at least how a person showed love and affection.

Because I didn't feel anything was wrong with what happened, I didn't act out or tell my mom about the events that transpired over the course of that year. At least someone loved me, right?! Unbeknownst to me, that shaped my sexual ideals and led me toward a life of self-degradation and self-destruction.

As I progressed through school, I found my niche. I was smart and athletic and used that to my advantage. I started cheerleading in the 7th grade which helped me express my creativity, and, because of my intellect, I gained the attention of my teachers. During this time, I started to struggle with my identity. Because I was the only male cheerleader in the parish, my classmates started to insinuate that I liked boys. I tried not to let it faze me but when the adults I encountered also forced the identity on me, it made me suppress the those exact feelings that began to surface during puberty. I was afraid of being ostracized, so I silently suffered.

When I got to high school, I was approached with an opportunity to attend a school in Natchitoches, LA for gifted teenagers: The Louisiana School for Math, Science and the Arts. It was at that point I was able to identify with other young men and women that felt like me. Different! Instantly, I was accepted for who I was (or at least, what I let them

see of me). I came out, I changed my attention from cheerleading to dance and I created an identity outside of the one that was forced upon me. My senior year, I auditioned for the Alvin Ailey School, a modern dance conservatory in Manhattan, and was accepted. So upon graduation, at the age of 17, I moved to NYC.

When I landed at JFK, I knew I was “HOME”! I was able to reinvent myself and leave all the baggage I had in Louisiana behind me. I didn’t have to deal with the molestation, the rejection of my father, the abandonment I felt from my mother when she learned that her only son was gay, or any of the other painful memories of my childhood.

I immediately surrounded myself with those who I considered to be the “popular kids” – the ones that would show me the life. I began to use my body to gain the attention of older men, many of whom I thought “loved me.” Then, in 2003, a year after moving to NYC, I was diagnosed with HIV. My life was over; I’d been given a death sentence. I had no hope, no ambition, no reason to get out of bed and no one to help me through this life-altering change. The suicidal thoughts I’d experience as a child began to come back but I still did not have the courage to take my own life. So I did something even more destructive. I ignored the results and entered a period of denial.

Six years later, I found myself hating life. I had a good job I was not passionate about, a nice car that was more expensive than was necessary, an unhealthy relationship with an ex-boyfriend I lived with; I had lost the desire to dance and had an illness I was refusing to acknowledge. Then, out of the blue, I received a phone call from a casting agent and was presented with an offer to join the cast of the touring Broadway company of Disney’s *The Lion King*. I used that as another opportunity to reinvent myself and become the accomplished dancer I’d dreamed of. I was able to quit my job, sell my car, and finally break up with my ex. I also found that my desire to dance had returned.

Tour Life! I cannot begin to describe the high that came from stepping on a Broadway stage in front of thousands of people who have paid to see you perform. I immediately became addicted to the life of a performer and the pseudo-celebrity that comes with it. My ego soared to heights I hadn’t imagined possible. The money, the traveling, the parties, the men... The Life consumed me.

And then the drugs... That night will forever be etched into my memory. I had just landed in Costa Mesa, CA. I checked in to my hotel and began to relax when a sudden, over-whelming feeling of loneliness came over me. So I did the only thing that had ever brought me solace. I sought the attention of a man. I got online, made a connection and headed over to his place. (A \$60 cab ride, btw) If I knew then what I know now, I would have been able to identify him as a dealer or, at the very least, as an addict. That night my sexual indiscretions lead me to using Meth.

The effects of Tina were immediate and I loved it. I started as a “weekender” and was in control of my consumption, or so I thought. My addiction slowly progressed and I began my journey into the land of “yets.” I vowed never to get high during the week... Did that! I then vowed not to get high before work ... Did that! I vowed never to let my drug use affect my work ethic or cause me to miss work ... Did that! I hid my addiction quite well at first but my quality of work and my body began to suffer. It was at that point that my producers asked me to consider a leave of absence in order to mend the wreckage “the show” was doing to my body. After a bit of reluctance, I agreed. Once I understood the freedoms I would be granted by being placed on a medical leave of absence, like 75% of my paycheck without going to work and the ability to do whatever I desired as long as I was seeking physical therapy, I finally did something I promised myself I would never do. I picked up the needle. It was at that moment I became the addict I am today. That was the point of no return. I had no chance of returning to a life free of my affliction. I openly welcomed the change. I wanted more and that is what I got. More heartache. More pain. More suffering. But that didn’t happen immediately. Although I wish it had.

During my leave from work, I delved deeper into my addiction. Learning all I could about my drug, my lover... where to get it, which part of the country had the best prices, who to party with. And once my leave was over, I was determined to manage my use better. I took the time to study my addiction and master it.

When I returned to work, we headed to Toronto and I realized that even with all the knowledge I possessed, I knew nothing. Meth became a daily fixture in my life. I had to have it to function. Even while performing, my thoughts were on getting high. My life was consumed by it. And because of my consumption, I found myself hooked to an IV in a hospital in Canada. I overdosed. While there, I prayed to my childhood God to save me and not let me die from malnutrition, dehydration and a high viral load. After a week of shaking back, I was released. That very same night, I indulged my sexual deviances and slammed meth. Obviously, I’d missed the opportunity I was given to get my life together.

Shortly thereafter, we ended our run in Toronto and were off to Dayton, OH. I packed my bags into a truck my friend had entrusted to me while she traveled home to South Africa and I headed out in the middle of the night toward our next venue. Luckily, I was able to get across the Canadian border without incident. Unluckily, I drove recklessly, fell asleep at the wheel and sped through Northern Ohio, which caused the state troopers to stop and arrest me. I allowed them to search my vehicle and was subsequently carted off to the local county jail. There I was charged with aggravated possession. Nothing, up to that point in my life, was as devastating, demoralizing, and degrading as the moment I was put in handcuffs and taken to jail. This was the beginning of the end. But far from a lesson learned.

I used my one phone call to inform my producers of what had happened. After getting bailed out a few days later, I was told that I was being forced on unpaid leave while I awaited my trial and sentencing. I was flown back to NYC and basically told to fend for myself while Disney decided on the terms of my return, if I were to return. So, like the addict I am, I threw myself into the one thing that had been with me through it all. My addiction. It was the only constant in my life.

After I served 19 days in county jail for a misdemeanor aggravated possession charge, paid a lofty fine, spent all of my savings traveling back and forth from NY to Ohio, and manipulated an early release from a 28-day rehab, I was allowed to return to work. As far as consequences were concerned, that was a relative slap on the wrist. But I maintained my sobriety for 30 days while we performed in Buffalo, which was only about 2 hours from Toronto. So, on the last performance day in Buffalo, I skipped work and drove to Canada. And thus the cycle began again.

Baltimore, Denver and Minneapolis were the last three cities of my tour life and I squandered every opportunity afforded me to change my behaviors and prove I was worth keeping in the cast. Finally, management gave up on me and my producers fired me. This trumped the feelings I had when I got arrested and sent me into a self-destructive spiral. I lost my dream job and was humiliated in the process.

In my delusional state, I concocted the notion that I could live in Vegas and again reinvent myself. And I did just that; I became a junkie. There is no better way to describe my year in Nevada. When Disney severed my contract, I was paid for 6 weeks of work upon departing the company. So I used that money to buy a truck, get a nice apartment and buy new friends. I was on unemployment, food stamps, and had a third-party non-profit organization paying my rent intermittently. That allowed me the time and resources to ruin my life, my self-image, my self-esteem and my mind. I was broken. And I didn't care to fix me. I surrounded myself with people that loved everything I hated about myself.

At some point in my using career, I lost my connection with reality. And it was on the day before Thanksgiving, 2012, that I finally made an attempt to end my life. I can remember being in the closet with the needle in my arm, praying that I would have a heart attack, stroke, or brain aneurysm. I took a depth breath and pushed. At that moment, I saw a vision of my mom hugging me, telling me to come home. My attempt failed and in a moment of clarity, I booked a ticket back to Louisiana for Thanksgiving Day.

When I arrived, I was in the worst physical and mental shape my mother had ever seen. She was determined for me to get help. The next week, she took me to the psych unit of a New Orleans hospital and I subsequently entered into my second rehab.

For the first time, I was able to sit and address all of the issues that I had suppressed for many years. From adolescence to young adulthood, I revealed everything about myself and wasn't judged. People even identified with my struggles and shared their own experiences with me. There I was introduced to AA and the design for living outlined in the steps. I thought I had my addiction beat because, like with everything else, I studied and felt I'd learned what it meant not to use drugs. Sadly, I had not yet learned how to live. So, against all the suggestions of my peers and counselors, I got into a relationship and after I graduated I moved to Phoenix.

It did not take long for life to prove unmanageable and I drove to Vegas and relapsed. However, this time was different. I could not get high like I did before. The things I had read in the Big Book and heard in meetings kept rushing into my mind. You could say, Recovery ruined Using for me. So I headed back to Louisiana after a weeklong binge.

I made it to my mother's house and decided immediately that I was not going to be "that guy." I did not want to live with my mother nor rely on her to provide for me. I hadn't done that since I was 15. So I reached out to those I knew from meetings in New Orleans. One of them suggested that move into an Oxford House. Having no knowledge of

what an Oxford House was and no other viable options, I agreed to call for an interview. I got interviewed and accepted to the Southshore house which is where I have been for 16 months.

I owe Oxford House the credit for giving me the foundation to become the recovered man I am today. At Southshore, I was encouraged to gain a god-consciousness, go to meetings, find a sponsor, work the steps, and give back that which was so freely given to me. Through that process, I have been able to regain my health and stay HIV-undetectable, reconnect with my family and have faith in a GOD of my understanding.

I attended my first state convention shortly after becoming a member of Oxford House and there the fire was lit. I gained knowledge of what this organization has done for men and women just like me. I felt like I was HOME! Words cannot express the amount of gratitude I have for Oxford House for saving my life and giving a junkie like me the chance to become a functioning and productive member of society. To show my appreciation, I almost completely give my spare time to being of service to the Oxford Houses of Louisiana. I love every moment and I could think of no other way to live. Happy, Joyous and Free.

- Jeremy J. Weatherspoon

John G.

I'm sure the beginning of my story is similar to many other addicts. I began drinking alcohol, using marijuana and cocaine socially as a teenager. It wasn't until graduating high school that my drug use really began to affect my life. I dropped out of college before completing my first quarter, sabotaged any job opportunities presented to me, and isolated myself from both family and friends. My parents and grandparents tried to support me however they could: finding work for me, trying to speak with me about my apparent depression, and supporting my decision to "take a break" from my academic pursuits. Out of exhaustion, I finally followed the advice of my grandfather to enlist in the Army.

My time in the Army was helpful. I stayed sober for two years but fell back into abusing alcohol towards the end of my enlistment term. The experience and sense of responsibility I had learned led me to realize what my addiction had done to me and family. With the support of my parents, I decided to leave the Army and return home to go to a drug rehabilitation facility.

As I completed the drug-rehabilitation program, I wasn't sure what I was going to do with my life. The councilors suggested applying to Oxford House and I really had no idea what to expect when I went on my first interview at the Brockman Oxford House. The house itself was immaculately clean and conveniently located. The house members were extremely friendly and after an informative interview process, they accepted me into their home.

I've lived at the Brockman Oxford House for over three years now. Looking back at my time spent in Oxford House, it's been the most, most importantly, the friendship and support I needed to get my life back on track. I'm back in school, hoping to attain a medical degree. I was elected Chapter Vice-Chairman and eventually Chapter Treasurer by Washington State Chapter 13. As an officer, I've gotten to become personally acquainted with most of the Oxford House members in our Chapter and have relearned accountability, trust, and compassion. I'm greatly appreciative of everything Oxford House has allowed me to accomplish and I look forward to continuing my service and friendship with my fellow Oxford House members and the greater community.

John Gage, Oxford House Brockman, Seattle, Washington

Kacie C.

My name is Kacie and I'm an alcoholic/addict. My journey to this point in my recovery started out in a small town in Nevada with a good family; mom and dad with three daughters, myself being the oldest daughter. At fourteen my grandmother was diagnosed with cancer; she was the rock and light that held our family together. Being the oldest granddaughter, I stood by her side every day taking care of her until the day she died fighting the disease. I blamed myself for her loss, and I turned to alcohol to relieve my feelings.

I was sneaking out and coming home wasted regularly at all hours in the night and, as you could imagine, the relationship I had with my parents went sour. I went to live with friends and was couch-hopping at sixteen. I was partying almost every night of the week and school interfered with that, so I dropped out. One night I discovered club

drugs like ecstasy and speed and found a relief from all the pain. I was blacking out every night, and had alcohol poisoning countless times by the time I turned seventeen.

The people I was staying with got arrested for selling ecstasy and I had nowhere to turn but to go out on my own. I got my own place and, to support myself, I started selling marijuana to the people I used to go to school with. At this point in my life, I could not wake up without a high or a drink. I lied, cheated, and stole to support my habit. I was quickly burning every bridge that was built. Then the day came that I turned eighteen and I was shortly arrested for six counts of selling controlled substances to minors. All of which were felonies.

I stood in the courtroom at eighteen with six years in prison hanging above my head. The judge sentenced me to complete a drug court program with six years of probation instead. After starting the program and getting a little bit of clean time, I was able to go back to school and get my high school diploma and get a decent job. However, even with good things happening in my life, I still had a criminal mentality. I was still trying to cheat the system to make it more convenient for me.

I heard in one of my first AA meetings that if you want to change you really have to change everything from playmates to playgrounds. So that's what I did. In March of 2011 I got approved for a drug court transfer to Salem, Oregon on a Tuesday, and on Friday I showed up to court in Salem with a car full of everything I owned. I started new, got an apartment and started to attend meetings as well as my drug court counseling sessions.

I had one last relapse on May 22, 2011. I reassured myself at this point that I am an addict and alcoholic and I can not change that. I really did need help. Something was missing in my recovery, a support system. The judge asked me to live in an Oxford House so I could obtain that support. This was not my first choice at the time, and it was a fight to get me to interview. I did not know what to expect and, when I went to my interview, I was asked to step outside while they voted, and they came outside with smiles to tell me I was accepted. On June 11, 2011, I did not know it yet, but I was home.

I was voted into a sick house and at this point still did not know it. After a few months of a lady from another house coming to our meetings and sitting in, our members became fewer and fewer. There were notices served for not paying rent and relapses. Finally I came home one day to a room full of people that announced themselves as 'chapter,' telling me they were going to close our house.

To this day I consider this to be a huge blessing. I was asked to go interview at the Marion House which is where the lady was from that was mentoring my house. I interviewed and got voted into this house. This strong women's house was the life/story changer for me. In this house is where I found my home, my family, and my sisters in recovery. The lady who mentored the house I was living at became one of my best friends. These women pushed for me to get involved, and I did. I got a house position and I was attending Chapter meetings. After some time, I was voted into Chapter and I started mentoring other women's houses.

I have been In Oxford for three years. I celebrated my twenty-first birthday sober, in an Oxford House. I regained a relationship with my family. I know my family is grateful for how this opportunity has changed their daughter. Oxford has been the greatest blessing I have ever had. Oxford was my missing link and, with every chance, I will try to give back to show my appreciation. Thank you.

Keith B.

My name is Keith B. When my bottom came, I had lost everything: a 12 year marriage, a business I had owned for 7 years, my heart, my mind, and my soul. I was put in prison for a year and a half. Along with the courts putting me on paper, I was ordered to do long-term treatment. I went to a 3 month treatment program in Chantilly, VA called New Beginnings, which is where I started to hear about Oxford House. The first day or two was extremely rough. In the middle of the night on the second night, I went to the front door, ready to bolt. At that moment, the director, Dave Nailer, appeared out of nowhere and said to me that the door opens from the inside only.

I stayed for 5 months, because they liked me. Also, I wanted to get recovery and a cure. Anyway, I graduated and went to a program for transitioning out of treatment, called Steps to Recovery, in Merrifield, VA. I ended up not completing the program and got sent to Second Genesis, in Annapolis, MD. While in Second Genesis, my father took me out on an evening pass, and I interviewed at 2 Oxford Houses. I was accepted by both houses, but I chose to move

into Kings Manor Oxford House in McLean, VA. I walked in with my only belongings stuffed into one suitcase. This is where I met my Oxford family.

They taught me how to be accountable for myself and to hold others accountable. They required that I get a job, along with getting a program. I was introduced to AA and NA (where I have seen many come and go). They voted me in as house coordinator within my first 30 days. Since then, I have held every officer's position multiple times. I am now HSC chair for (Virginia) Chapter 5. Oxford House members were willing to teach me, and, now, I am teaching others!

This process has allowed me to have a business again; to have true, meaningful relationships; and to reclaim my heart, mind, and soul.

Thank you, Oxford Houses, for helping me get my life back on track!

Keith Bregman, Sobriety date 2/14/2005

Laci

Hi my name is Laci and I'm an alcoholic/addict. I'm 32 years old and I was born and raised in Bogalusa, La. I grew up in an alcoholic home; my mom was an alcoholic. So I was subjected to alcoholic behaviors from a very young age. I never thought that I would grow up to be an alcoholic/addict.

I had very good grades in school and graduated with honors. I went straight to college after graduation. This is where I was introduced to drugs and alcohol. It didn't take long and I was going out partying and getting loaded every day. Needless to say I dropped out of school after one semester. I began getting loaded on a daily basis. I tried getting sober a few times so that I could go back to school but I would always somehow screw everything up.

When I was twenty-two years old I got pregnant but that wasn't enough to keep me from getting loaded. My mom passed away when I was four months pregnant from drinking and driving. This crushed my whole world. I tried moving away a few times but I still found a way to get high everywhere I went. Little did I know I was taking the problem (myself) everywhere with me. When my daughter was about 16 months old, my sister got temporary custody of her. I didn't think I had anything left to live for. I went to treatment numerous times but would always find myself back at square one with nothing.

In 2009 I got into some trouble with the law and was sentenced to 5 years in prison. While in prison I vowed to never use drugs again. But, when I got out, I wasn't going to meetings so eventually I used again. This time I knew I wanted to die, but God had other plans for my life. I went to a long-term treatment facility in New Orleans, La, and completed it, I actually completed it.

When I was about to graduate from the facility, these ladies came to do an Oxford House presentation and something (GOD) spoke to me and I knew this was the next step for me in my life. So I called a house in Lake Charles, La and did a phone interview and was accepted. I got on a bus and went to Oxford Houses of Lake Charles. I was very scared and nervous, but it was nothing like I thought it would be. I had finally found the family I never had – a group of women, yes, women, who loved me and supported me in every way. Someone told me not long after being there to get involved; that's what keeps them sober. So, for once in my life, I took a suggestion and got involved. That was probably the best decision I have made in a very long time.

Oxford House taught me how to be a productive member of society, pay my own bills, and hold a job for the first time in my life. It's taught me how to be a friend, sister, leader and a mother again. I got a position in the chapter and eventually the state. I moved out of Oxford and into my own place but still remained involved. But that's not the best of it. After living on my own for 6 months, I got the opportunity to move in with my daughter, who is now 9 years old, so I did and none of this would be possible if it hadn't been for those women coming to that treatment center to do GOD'S will. So I am going to have 18 months on the 5th of August and I still hold my position as the secretary of the Oxford House Regional Association of Louisiana/Mississippi while learning how to be a mom again ONE DAY AT A TIME

Laura J.

I grew up very happily in a small town in Oklahoma and I have never seen either of my parents take a drink or drug. In fact, no one in my family tree has ever suffered from the disease of addiction. So, genetically speaking, I really don't know exactly WHY I am an alcoholic – but I know and understand that I was definitely born an alcoholic because I have never drunk like a normal person. From the time I took the first drink of Jack Daniels at the age of 13, I immediately fell in love with everything about it and quickly commenced to drinking as much and as often as I could.

After high school I joined the U.S. Navy as a radar operator/communications/weapons specialist and I was stationed aboard ships. I remember always having the feeling of “I have arrived!!!” when we would pull into ports all over the world. It was often a rush to get off the ship on liberty and find out what there was to drink in whatever particular destination we happened to be visiting. For very many years this continued as an exciting time in my life as well as in my drinking career and I suffered no consequences other than hangovers and surely some poor personal decision making.

After my time in the Navy, I was working in what would be considered a dream job for the government as a civilian. However, my drinking began to accelerate and I started to suffer the normal consequences associated with the untreated progressive disease of alcoholism – late to work, lost days from work, co-worker complaints of the smell of alcohol on me. And then the DUI's started. By this point, I was no longer a social drinker because I knew I was not “normal.” When I get DUI's, it's because I have run out and am on the way to the liquor store. I eventually lost my government security clearance and was fired from my job. But none of the legal issues could compare to how I felt inside or when I looked in the mirror – by this point I was a shell of myself and no matter how much I promised myself I wouldn't, I was unable to go even a single day without drinking to complete and utter oblivion.

I remembered the first time I went to treatment. I had seen an Oxford House presentation and been impressed with what I heard. It was time...my score card truly read 'zero'. AA alone wasn't working for me. It was so easy to slip back into drinking when I was coming home alone to no one and nothing. I made a decision to move into Oxford House and have never regretted a moment of it, although I did have a relapse and eviction early in my time with Oxford. I am so grateful to the women of Oxford House Shadow Mountain who cared enough about me to hold me accountable and protect that house. They helped make sure there would be changes to my recovery when they allowed me to re-interview and return (after another stint in treatment). What a blessing!!! Today I feel this is one of my greatest opportunities to share my experience, strength, and hope when it comes to helping someone understand that what seems like the worst day of their life does not have to be the end of their story.

Oxford House has given me a life worth living again – and for that I am eternally filled with gratitude.

Maria H.

As most addicts do I thought that my story was unique, but in the end I am just another addict that through the grace of God have found comfortable sobriety.

I grew up poor in the deserted farming/ coal mining towns of PA. I am the oldest of 5 and a tomboy. Drugs, alcohol and sex were the only activities for young people in my small town. I experimented with pot and alcohol, and had a solid start to being out of an out of control addict when I became a mom at 16. As it says in AA literature, I got some control of myself for the purpose of being a mom. In my early 20s, I experimented with cocaine and started to sell it to support my habit. But, again as in our literature says, I had a good reason to stop when I had a scare with police watching a house I frequented. I still drank from time to time on special occasions, company functions, and holidays. I always drank to black out, not knowing I was an alcoholic.

Fast forward 15 years: my son grows up and moves out. I was in an abusive marriage and desperate for attention. I had a good job and had acquired some property as a result so we started hosting big parties. All the drugs and booze you wanted you could find at my house, and usually we paid. As the parties got more frequent, the abuse got worse and I moved out. In just a few years, I went from very white-collar drinking and drugs, to going to DC to cop and then hustling money for gas to get back home.

Driving back into DC six or eight times a day, I, of course, got pulled over a few times. In fact, I got a DUI and 2 different possession charges within 2 months. I had not had a court date yet for any of the charges when I went to a

lawyer (public defender). She said you are definitely going to get a felony, but if you go to treatment you might stay out of jail. That sounded good to me so I checked into Detox (the day before my first court date).

What happened to me in detox/treatment was nothing short of a miracle. My head cleared up, I was having real thoughts, and realizing where I had just come from. Every night at 8pm the locals brought in a meeting of AA or NA. I still did not understand what AA/NA was and how it was different than the treatment center. One night in the NA meeting, I got the reading of "how it works." By Step 3 I was crying hysterically and could not finish reading. What I read in those first 3 Steps is what I had been praying for when I was out there. I prayed to be taken out of what I was doing to myself, but I thought the only way out was death.

So now I was in treatment and know that I can do this; I can see that by all the people that share in the meeting. That is when panic hit me. Until now I had a plan... I was going to go to treatment, go to court and get a pat on the back, and then return to flopping from couch to couch at my 'friends' houses. But now I got this recovery thing in my head: I can stay clean, I do not need to go back, but where am I going to go? My family would not pick up the phone. I sold my car for drugs. I did not know anyone that was not using that I could go to.

I prayed again. A simple, I want this, but need to know where I can go, please guide me. The next day, with only a few days left of treatment, Oxford House came to do a presentation. I knew then that my higher power was God, and he was giving me this gift.

I interviewed at 2 houses when I came out of treatment and picked White Rose. A 10-woman house with a pet lease – maybe my dog could join me at some point. She did, and I got to spend the last year of her life with her, treating her better than I did for years. But, most importantly, I am still here – in recovery, never relapsing, never having to pray for death again. It has not all been so easy, but I know that if it were not for the network of people I met in Oxford House, pushing me to look for a job, showing me by example that recovery was possible, that I would not be alive today.

I am now working for Oxford House, another gift from my higher power. I am living just a few blocks from where I would cop, but those streets are faded memories, ghosts of a past not to be forgotten. I am acknowledging 6 years on August 28th, and 1 year working with Oxford House on May 15, 2014. It has been an amazing journey, and yet it feels like it has just begun.

Mike S.

Drug addict? Alcoholic? Me? Spending my 39th birthday in jail, homeless and looking at a felony preceded my introduction to Oxford Houses of Hawaii. All I needed was structure, right? A supportive, safe environment to help defeat the self sabotage which had plagued this "jaywalker"; that's what I needed. Turned out I needed a lot more than that, but it was a good start. I got a chance to escape homelessness and practice rehabilitative actions like accountability and responsibility- without the hourly temptations of life on the streets.

On that four year stretch of sobriety, I was able to grow responsible thru service positions in my 12 step program as well as house operations. I got to move from my first Oxford house to my second, seeking a single room opportunity and closer proximity to work as my recovery mounted.

A move to an independent clean and sober house preceded my first relapse, forcing me back onto the streets. When that run ended in rehab, the renewed need for consistent structure, sober priorities and daily practice of accountability pointed me back to Oxford houses again. My third Oxford house stay briefly helped me try alignment with sober and safe daily principles. Again, weaknesses in my personal "My Way" program led to another relapse and expulsion from this, my third Oxford experience. Oxford House's principle to keep it a safe and committed sober environment is a huge strength, I believe, that has saved countless members' sobriety and lives.

These lessons were an important part of my journey of recovery, the consequences of my actions which were needed for me to reach my bottom. Also something consistent about Oxford houses which make them safe and stand out as clearly something worthwhile and valuable to incorporate into a sustainable recovery. So, when I was sick and tired of being sick and tired, when I felt I had dug deep enough, Oxford house was again highly recommended by my rehab professionals. Oxford's fairness and democratic principles allowed me to secure another chance for this repeated relapser. For that, I am forever grateful.

The hope afforded me make me able to unabashedly proclaim the comparative superiority and consistent high standards of the Oxford system. By no means is everything perfect in facility nor people. Remember, we are still a bunch of sober, yet comparatively sick horse thieves trying to practice responsible living, often in situations and facilities which are both a blessing and a challenge. But when compared to where I have come from, I find it easy to recognize that Oxford has given me the lifeline of stability, safety and hope which is one of the pillars upon which I am trying to build a sustainable, sober life. It is strong, yet flexible; firm, yet friendly. A bunch of personalities bound together to uphold certain principles.

I owe much to Oxford house and, like my recovery program in general, I must remain willing to step up and show that gratitude is an action word: To help keep Oxford houses strong and available to those now and in the future who need it as a supportive option as it was when I needed it, and needed it again and again.

At this writing I have 26 months sober. I have moved again from my fourth Oxford house to another to accommodate work in my recovery. I participate in both my 12-step program and fellowship, as well as help do my part to keep my current house operations strong. Next stop for me is to use my vacation time from work (imagine that- vacation time) to go to this year's Oxford House world convention.

Thank you, Oxford House, for being an important support in my recovery! Mahalo and Aloha!

Paul W.

My name is Paul Wysocki. I'm 31 years old, born and raised in Elizabeth, NJ and I am the youngest of three kids. As a kid, I felt I didn't get enough attention from my parents. That is, until I would misbehave, then I would get all the attention. I learned early on how to be bad. Even before I knew about Drugs, I was stealing and lying.

At the age of 13 my parents said to me "If you don't like the rules here then get out." So that's what I did. I left. Not really thinking it through; I had nowhere to go but to the streets. I knew I wouldn't make it on the streets alone so I joined a gang. (Bad Idea.) I started stealing cars and breaking into houses just to survive and then I was introduced to heroin and that was the love of my life, so I thought. From the age of 13 to 28, I was hooked. I didn't care about nobody or anything but getting that next one.

Throughout my life I went to prison 3 different times and every time I got out I went back to the streets – even trying to relocate to South Florida. Guess what? That didn't work either.

The last time I got locked up, I finally said, "Enough is enough, I'm done!!!" So I told the judge that I was an addict and I needed help and help is what they gave me. While in treatment I met a guy who always talked about Oxford House. I had never heard of it before and decided to give it a try. The treatment facility felt it would be better for me to go to a halfway house. My gut was telling me to try out Oxford house and so I did.

I completed my treatment and moved into Oxford House Suffolk in Ventnor, NJ. I made the commitment that I would stay for a year. In that year I met a lot of great people who are still clean today. Not only did Oxford House give me a sober place to live but it also gave me a built-in network of positive people who understand the struggles of life and being clean.

Two years have passed and I now have my own place, a great relationship with my family and am now proud to work for Oxford House, the place that gave me a second chance in life. Twice!!

Thanks, Oxford House

Ray-Ray

Hello, World. First of all, I would like to thank God from the beginning to now.

My name Is Raymonda Lanae-Payne, a.k.a. "Ray-Ray." I was born and raised In Lynchburg, Va. I am the mother of one daughter. I have one younger sister. My mother is still living; however, my father Is deceased. Growing up I had everything – a child's dream. I had a beautiful room full of toys, stuffed animals and I was so shy. I never liked to talk nor did I have any friends; when I talked, I always held my head down low. I could never look at anyone eye to eye.

This is the first time I ever got honest with my story. For some odd reason I have always left this part out. But In order to be honest, I have to be honest with myself. So, at the ages 9-11, I was molested by my stepfather every day before school. I had no understanding why this was happening. All I knew was that I felt so dirty and so ashamed. I held on to that secret growing into an adult. I went through carrying that heavy burden what seem to be forever. That burden left when I watched as my stepfather passed away in a fetal position suffering from cancer. So I felt free!

At the age of 13 we moved to some apartment complex. I started hanging with the wrong crowd. I started smoking weed and drinking alcohol and I was also skipping school. I needed something to relieve all this pain, to numb my body and mind. I was fortunate enough to graduate on time. At the age of 18 I was smoking weed, alcohol, and snorting powder cocaine. So my life consisted of getting high and higher. At the age of 21 I was smoking weed, alcohol, snorting powder cocaine and crack cocaine now I was well on my way of becoming a stone cold addict! I became pregnant on top of all these drugs. That still didn't stop Ray-Ray. The day I went into labor I was in the crack house fighting the labor pains and blowing crack smoke which seemed to be coming out my ears!!! But, as I look back, it was only by the grace of God that my only child who is now 25 came out healthy with no problems at all! She was so beautiful! Having a child did not slow Ray-Ray down.

By the age of 26 I was introduced to heroin now that put the icing to the rest of my addiction. So a reminder: weed, alcohol, powder cocaine, crack, and now heroin! You couldn't have told me I wasn't a superstar! The very first time I tried heroin I was on cloud nine and I fell so in love with it. Not knowing the aches and pains that came along with it. Not knowing that some days I wouldn't be able to walk, get out of bed, talk or just be able to function without this drug. There were so many sick days ahead of my life. So, to support my habit, I became I shoplifter. I would steal anything that wasn't nailed down. I started catching charges after charges. That led me in and out of jail, in and out of rehabs and detox. The last time I went In front of the judge he said. "Ms. Payne, I have some advice for you today. You've been in and out of jail, rehab, and detox. Today is your day – 4 years prison term." He said I was like a revolving door so "today is sit down day."

After 4 years of imprisonment, I still came out and picked up where I left off! I'd stop by the store, get me a beer and every time I got out of jail or even rehab, my family would be ready to throw me a coming home party. They didn't know anything about my addiction. I could never figure out what would it take for me to get it right. Maybe death!!!! My relation with God – I had none, but with the devil I had the best relationship ever. I had burnt all of my bridges with my family. I also added one more drug to my addiction so weed, alcohol, powder cocaine, crack, heroin and now narcotic pills. I was diagnosed with kidney failure due high blood pressure. My kidneys had failed to the point where it was told to me that it was time for dialysis; that I was in renal failure. But the doctors may say one thing but God has the final word. So, as my addiction got worse, so did my health and I was in and out of the hospitals.

I was tired and I felt like I was at the end of my rope. So I had a friend that lived In Raleigh NC. I called her to ask was there anywhere down there that I could get help. But my plan was to be ready in a month because by now I was high roller. I was selling heroin and I had to make the drug boys' money back before I left. But, plan gone wrong (well, of course), I left owing them \$1,500. But I still had my mind made up. So I came to Raleigh ready to start my recovery. I had to detox myself. No detox facility would take me because I wasn't a Wake County resident!

I wanted my recovery bad enough that I didn't want to return to VA. I started at NCRSS. That's where I met Ms. Lynn Williams, you could have told me that I had met my worst enemy, but at the end of that journey, I look back to every suggestion she gave me and I should have listened. She is a very awesome lady. I was introduced to Oxford House through Ms. Lynn. My first Oxford House was at Lucerne Oxford House. That's where I relapsed after being clean for 9 months. I wasn't taking suggestions like: get a sponsor, get network, and go to meetings; I was just dry clean.

I had an option to go to detox and try to get in another Oxford House. Thanks to Ms. Lynn once again I think she saw something in me that I didn't see. So I was accepted in South Hills Oxford House. Now I'm out in Cary NC. I knew no one but I knew which direction to go in. All I knew was that I was ready to take suggestions. I was in South Hills close to a year! But soon, when I thought I had it, I lied about this young lady drug test and stated she was clean when she was dirty. To make a long story short, I got dismissed. I had 3 days to figure out what was my next move. So in order for me to get accepted in another Oxford House, I had to call around to every Oxford in Wake County to get accepted in another Oxford so majority ruled in my favor!! Hurray for Ray-Ray!

So, here I go – another chance to get it right in another Oxford House! I ended up at Sue Lane Oxford House so now I'm ready to really do what's expected from me and do what I need to do for my recovery. I had learned from my mistakes; I was ready to give back what was given to me. After being at Sue Lane for close to a year I was ready to be a leader! So I texted Mr. Kurtis Taylor and asked him what were my chances to help open Haven Road Oxford House and, he said, "Consider it done."

So, as of today, I'm at Haven Road Oxford House. I have been clean for 1 year, 5 months! It was a struggle to get to where I'm at but my life was worth it all. So today I love this new life and I have to thank Oxford for putting structure in my life and teaching me how to abide by rules and regulations. I found my peace and joy and I love this life I live. The God I serve is an awesome God. I'm very thankful and grateful that I was healed and delivered from my addiction.

Lastly, special thanks goes out to Mr. K. Taylor, Lynn Williams, Taylor Paxton, Clara Downings, Corey Yancey, Brandy, Mr. Bongo Manley, Carlton Briscoe, Karen McKinnon, everyone in my network, the addicts that's still suffering and to Oxford House itself for saving my soul! Be blessed and I am so blessed as well!!!! Love each and every one of you all!!

Rob C. - Heaven, Hell, and Billiards

Back in the late 1990's I was living in the streets of Seattle, Washington. At that time I had clocked a lot of hours and mileage shooting speed and passing through the convolutions of what seemed like a million impossible situations. I had burned countless bridges, did crime as casually as people do texting now, and had reached new heights of drug fueled insanity. I had been technically homeless for 5 years, a fact about which I had run so fast from myself I had hardly stopped to notice. Except when I would come down and have nowhere to go to rest or restore my tortured body and soul and I would be terribly distressed and lament my pathetic existence.

I slept in laundry rooms of apartment buildings, or at the top flight of an interior stairwell, or would break and enter a house or apartment unit that was vacant. I would go to a 12 step meeting somewhere and ask for help during a meeting and nobody would believe in my desire to stop using and reject me as a loser. I remember one occasion when I went to a speaker meeting during a winter night and, after the meeting was over, I hid inside the speaker podium and they shut me inside the fellowship hall. I cried myself to sleep in there while it snowed outside. I remember eating sugar packets from the coffee area that night to palliate my starvation and I think I used the AA big book as a makeshift pillow when I slept under one of the tables. That was the only use I had for that book back then. Those AA people back then dreaded my approach and I resented them for ignoring my cries. The hand of God did not reach out to me from AA.

Instead, back in 2001, I was living in a stolen one-man tent at Tent City (which is a transient's camp enabled by the bleeding hearts of the city). I was making a living out of shoplifting camping gear and selling it and being a go-between for drug scores and that is how I would hustle my kept stash of marijuana, which at that particular time was my resort from shooting dope, at least to such a status-altering degree as was the bigger habit. That Tent City was where I was on September 11, 2001. I watched the office towers in NY crumble on a rabbit-eared television inside the community tent that morning and on that day this Vietnam vet that I had befriended there sought me out and asked me to score speed from him. That initiated my last big binge as a speed freak.

I never made it back to that tent to pack it up when Tent City relocated. Some lucky camper there inherited a brand new wilderness tent chock full of brand new camping and survival gear, top of the line backpacks, sleeping bags, binoculars, compasses, knives, multi-purpose tools, rain gear, etc.: the whole package. It was the proud booty of a highly evolved alley cat and sleuth of crafty theft – all shoplifted from a local network of stores in the inner city.

While I was on the other side of town lost in space all over again, I somehow remembered that the score that started me out this go round was a sheet of blotter acid and P2P Methylamine speed, I abandoned the Vietnam vet right after he did his hit and lost his mind. While he was chasing Charlie in his re-amped hallucination about the past, I was off to new horizons of tweekage, doing what I did back then, which was mostly working really hard at recreation. I left behind a blur of blunted memories of having done something awesome but which, for the outside observer or innocent bystander, probably looked more like some despicable creature crucified on the horns of some mundane dilemma. In other words, I went way out on the edge of civilization and got completely lost, dumpster diving like a prospector during the gold rush and shadow dodging cops in the wee hours. I used speed as a utility. I didn't have any appetite so groceries weren't a need, and I didn't sleep so I didn't need a place to crash, and I had supernatural resilience as a meth-animated cat burglar and so I didn't need a job.

One night I was stuck in a rut of having nowhere to go at night but I had a rig in my sock and a small stash of crystalline speed. Despite holding a fix and having that concern abated for the moment, I was actually quite miserable at the depths of my incomprehensible demoralization. I decided to break into a Catholic church for a place to hang out and to see what treasures I could pilfer there. I found it quite still and quiet in there; there was this atmosphere of austerity or serious sanctity or whatever, and it was also rather dark from the night with street light outside making the stained glass scenes appear as photograph negatives. I did not want to turn on any lights and be discovered trespassing by anyone but I needed lighting to do my hit. Behind the pulpit there was a baptismal font that was a wide and glowing pale blue concave dish radiating a luminescent source of light. I hunkered down in the middle of that font to avail myself of the glow to see to do my hit. That was a strange high. It seemed to have uploaded some kind of communion feeling and I began talking to God. I was actually angrily stating my complaints about my life and was expressing the tremendous anguish that was the cumulative effect of all of my drug addict suffering. I remember pouring out my heart and soul and yelling my demands into the reverberating hallowed hollow of that church, and in my broken jag of drug-altered drama, I petitioned God with the following drug-addled request: "All I want is an apartment and a pool table. That's all I want!" And I think I spent a couple of hours in there mumbling and organizing my backpack like all tweakers tend to do, and then releasing myself from the sanctuary of the church into the cold dawn of what was just another day of my stupid life.

Two months later I fell 23 feet onto cement when I was out slinking around in alley cat mode and accidentally stepped off of a building. I completely obliterated my left heel and ankle and was admitted to the hospital. They said I was a poor candidate for a surgery on my foot because of my status in life. They put my foot in a cast and the social worker set me up for a motel stay. They just dropped me off and wished me luck and gave me a bottle of painkillers that one of my fair weather friends promptly stole from me. I was in dire straits. I had lost my ability to outrun myself since I was now on crutches. My motel voucher expired, and one of those old AA contacts came and coldly delivered me to a mission downtown. I slept on the mats on the floor of the mission. My resentment for AA's failure to rescue me was renewed, for this was certainly not the fourth dimension of existence that I had been rocketed into.

One morning the mission staff pitied me and moved me to the respite floor so I could rest my injured foot. I called this guy named Tom Dugan, an Oxford Outreach Worker at that time, whom I had met when I stayed at an Oxford House for a brief time. I explained my circumstances to Tom and said I wanted to interview for a room. He came and picked me up the next day. He drove me out to this cul-de-sac in Lynnwood, WA and parked in front of this ugly blue split-level house. He handed me the keys and fifty dollars and told me he wanted me to start this rental house as an Oxford House for him. He left me there and said he would return in a day or two. I quietly complied. I certainly had no other options to consider. Such was my life back then.

When I went inside this rather large suburban house there was nothing inside it except an old abandoned sofa and, to my surprise, in this large added-on room stood a full size vintage, tournament grade, slate Brunswick pool table! I think that was my moment of clarity. From that point forward, my life was completely transformed. I opened that house and went on to throw myself into service in the Oxford House organization. With the help of others in the same Oxford milieu, we were able to open several new houses in that chapter. In two years time, I had gone from being homeless to being a housing provider.

Because I was so secure and comfortable with living at Oxford House I began to look forward in my life and make plans for a career. I went to the community college that was within walking distance of the house. My foot had completely mended and was toughened up by carrying furniture into houses and up and down stairs. I put together a transfer degree, opened up a new Oxford House in Seattle, and went to university and got a bachelor's degree. My Oxford Housing gave me the structure I needed to stay sober, accountable, and on the beam in the larger plan schemes of my life. I went to a private school and got a Master's degree in clinical psychology and chose a career as a therapist.

I find that my life experience, my grasp of the principles of recovery, and over a decade of receiving newcomers to clean and sober living transition through the doors of the Oxford House, where I have lived for 12 years now gives me a depth of wisdom and empathetic understanding that is invaluable for work in my therapy career. Every time applicants comes through the door and starts their lives up after addiction has humbled them, it's clearer and clearer to me exactly what I need to know about living in the world.

I have been enjoying the low cost of high living instead of the high cost of low living. What many don't realize is that this is luxurious living in the truest sense of the word. But I am probably going to move on soon. I now have designs

on moving to Santa Barbara and getting a PhD degree in psychology. For a denizen of the most deep like me, that seems appropriate.

I owe Oxford House my life. I will never forget the kindness of Tom Dugan who came and plucked me from hell and provided me with refuge from myself in the Oxford House way of life. I found a comfortable sobriety at Oxford House. When I had finally fallen so far down the scale that I had nowhere to go and no way out Oxford House provided my most essential need: a lease on life until I could find knowledge of my higher power's will for me.

Peace, Love, and Luxury to you all, Rob Curtis, Thornton Creek Oxford House

Samu T.

Aloha, my name is Samu T. and this is my Oxford House story.....

I sat in jail for 30 months 2 weeks and 2 days till I was finally released to Drug Court. This last stretch in jail made me realize that I have been wasting a lot of my time and my talents. I believe that I am a very capable individual and smarter than most people. Though I may not have been the smartest in some of my classes (high school, college and in the Army), I knew I was smart enough to get whatever it is that I wanted.

I have more of an Engineering/I.T. background. I built my first website using HTML while I was a sophomore in high school, learned C and data structures in college and messed around with Cisco routers while I was in the Army. I put a lot of my skills to use when I was on the streets in the disease and also on my first round of recovery in Habilitat.

When I graduated from Habilitat, I really thought I was all that and a bag of chips. Pain and guilt were the tools that I used to help me get through the day. They were my weapons, and with them, I was able to fulfill my obligations. Give till it hurts!" Because of what I'd done to my family, it seemed it was only fair that I do what was in their best interest. I gave.....and then I gave some more. Everyone was proud and happy with my progress....everyone but me.

I gave till I got hurt (woe is me!). It was easier to be bad than it was to be good. There was no healing with the tools I had. My weapons worked better for me on the streets.....so there I was again on the run and in full blown relapse. When I finally got arrested, I picked up two more felonies and a misdemeanor. I now had three separate cases against me, a total of 11 felonies and 21 misdemeanors. This brings me back to the beginning of the story, when I was finally released to Drug Court.....

My first Oxford House was Noho Uka. During my stay there, I found a job as a Food Server at a grocery store. I earned enough money to get a laptop (rent-to-own). With that laptop, I was able to develop an app called the "HIGH RISK EVENT" app. Recovery and the re-wiring of my brain was something that I worked on a daily then and I still do today. The app is based on Drug Court's substance abuse treatment program. I have it implemented on my phone with features such as the AA Meetings schedule and a "Call for help" button. One day I hope to publish my app.

Oxford House Noho Uka is a nice and clean house. It's next to the river, quiet and cool. But the bus system that went into the valley didn't work well for me. When the opportunity came, I asked Joe Chavez if I could move into the open bed space at Oxford House Harding Avenue. He gave me the go-ahead and so I went. Living at the Harding House was really great. The bus stopped right in front of my workplace, it was a minute walk away from a shopping center. Living there gave me more time to do other things.

It's September of 2013 and I've been out of jail for only 9 months now. I just finished up teaching a couple of kids Scratch. It's a programming language developed by M.I.T. to help children learn how to build codes. I taught these kids how to write a game. It was a shark eating fish game. It had a scoring system, a timer and also an octopus that the shark had to avoid or it loses a point. I was very proud of what I was able to deliver to these kids. October came around and one of the parents of the kids asked if I could build a website for Manoa Japanese Language School. She was a board member and she thought it would be really helpful for the school to have a web presence. This project helped me with the idea of having my own web development and hosting company. And so HIGH RISK ENTERPRISES LLC was born.

I set up my own web server in my room at Harding Avenue. I was using NGINX on Ubuntu. It turned a super old desktop that was donated to me into a dream come true. I was now a GEEK, I had my own server in my room and I was

hosting three sites. An old friend of mine decided to invest in what I had developed and we were able to get a dedicated server from Go Daddy.

The time finally came when I graduated from Drug Court. Living in the Oxford Houses helped me and my family with boundaries. My family understood the need for me to keep that distance so I can develop myself and my recovery. Now that I am off paper, I knew I must move back home. I didn't know how bad it was until I moved back. My parents was behind on the mortgage with over \$80,000.00 being unpaid. The house is on a leasehold property in which they also owed \$12,000.00 in maintenance fees. Communication is key, especially when you are talking to banks and the lawyers representing the banks. Anyway, to make a long story short, I was able to move a couple of residents from another Oxford Houses that was closing down into my parents' home. I also had one of my housemates from Harding Avenue move in as well. Along with my girlfriend, I moved to a room out in the back of my parents' house. I was able to get a loan modification and help my brother with the maintenance fees. The house is now out of foreclosure. My parents, the tenants, my girlfriend and I are now safe and still living life sober. I have been promoted to Fish Cutter at the grocery store I worked at and my business, HIGH RISK ENTERPRISES LLC, is still growing.

Today is August 3, 2014. Two years ago I was in jail, waiting for my chance to make a difference.

My name is Samu T., I'm an alcoholic and addict.

(Samuela Tuikolongahau, Jr.)

Sandra G.

I started using drugs at the age of 11 years old. I started with pot, mescaline, acid, and LSD, which is why I was in my first 3 treatment centers before the age of 15. I came from a home of alcoholics and ended up becoming a ward of the state before age 12. I got pregnant, married and had my only child a week after my 17th birthday.

At the age of 21, I was introduced to crack cocaine and meth. I then started to lose everything, including custody of my child, my family and friends, and my self-respect. I had periods of time off of the hard stuff but nothing substantial. I always smoked weed.

I moved into my first Oxford House in 1996, the Dawn house in Spokane WA. I lived there 2 months and moved out into an apartment with my boyfriend and, within a few weeks, I was using drugs (meth) harder than ever. I didn't have a chance to understand Oxford at that time. After several more years of addiction, jail time, homelessness, and insanity, knowing I needed help, I found my way back to Oxford. In 2007, I moved into the Mollie B. Oxford house in Olympia, WA.

I started to learn to live life again – to be genuinely happy and to be accountable to myself and others. I gained employment and got the things back I had lost in addiction. I found a freedom I really hadn't ever known. I lived at the Mollie B., for a year and then moved out. Within 3 weeks of leaving, I relapsed, got 3 new felony drug charges and a DWI. After doing 45 days in jail, I moved right back into the Mollie B. Oxford House. Once again I stayed a year. I loved the Mollie B Oxford House; it had been my rock upon which to rebuild my life upon, my relationships with my family, my daughter and my Higher Power. I was really learning how to live clean and sober and to follow the suggestions of the program. Then I moved out again and relapsed within a few weeks.

After another 18 months of meth use and spending more time in the hospital than out, I went to treatment and got serious. My health problems were pretty serious and I knew I didn't want to die. I had lost my brother and some friends to overdoses and I didn't want that for me. My daughter, who at this time was in her early 20's, also was clean from her addiction and I promised myself I never would have her see me in active addiction again.

I moved into the Ruston View Oxford House in 2010. I flourished, got my medical conditions under control, and renewed my relationships with my family. I got closer to my daughter and started to work a program of recovery. I got involved in Oxford at the Chapter level and for 3 years my life was about helping others in Oxford. I was a part of my house and stayed involved. I felt a sense of belonging and commitment. I was finally ready to do this long-term. Oxford was the foundation on which I rebuilt my life. The support from the women, not being lonely, and the encouragement I needed at times were given to me so freely. I was able to share that right back. I lived at Ruston View

for a little over 3 years and moved out of Oxford House in February 2014, and, guess what, by the grace of God, I'm still clean. I'm accountable to myself.

I am so happy to be clean and sober and I give God, Oxford and the women in my life all the credit. Oxford is a huge part of who I am. I continue to never forget my insanity and the great life I've built back with the help of Oxford House. Thank you.

Sandra Gibson, Tacoma, Washington

Stacie H.

My name is Stacie Hatfield and I am a woman in long term recovery. My clean date is September 21, 2006. I was in active addiction for 18 years, twelve of those being every day meth use. During that time, I had lost everything; many jobs, many houses full of items, countless vehicles; I lived in shelters and on the streets . . . but, most importantly, I lost custody of my children, and the relationship with my family. My Mom passed away 8 years ago, a year before I got clean, and that last year was my bottom. After losing my mom, and having already lost custody of my children, what did I have to live for? I tried and tried to overdose, and simply became over amped and passed out. I was not even getting "high" anymore, I simply existed. I remember the day I woke up, and literally was sick and tired of being sick and tired. I had been to a few treatment centers, with no luck. I was going to do something though. I had a different feeling this time, and I was willing to do whatever it took. I went to detox, and they placed me in ABHS. I started changing my thoughts, and that changed my world.

While in ABHS, I went to a presentation by a group of people from Oxford House. I had never heard of Oxford House before. Maybe this was the place for me? After all, I had no place to go when I got out of treatment. The clean and sober living environment would be something different from the other times I had tried this, and I really wanted to stay clean this time. I interviewed, and got accepted into Hillyard Oxford House. It's crazy when you look back on your life, and you see where certain decisions change your life as you know it, forever. My life has been changed forever from the day I moved into Oxford House. I started working the steps, and participating in the program of AA. I was elected to service positions in the house, and at a chapter level. I listened to these women who were not always nice, and even sometimes outright mean; but ALWAYS honest and loving. They definitely loved me before I could love myself.

After a few months, I started getting relationships back. My children NEVER stopped loving me; they just wanted me to be a regular mom instead of "meth-head" mom. My family started to get to know me again. My sister had disowned me 15 years prior, for her own wellbeing; and we had a lot of catching up to do. My Mom was always the buffer, and now that she was not there I got to start a brand new relationship with my Dad. After a year, I regained custody of my youngest son; he was 14 at the time.

It was time for me to move out of OH and be on my own. I still remained Chapter Chair and put in another year of "service work" to OH, attending House Meetings, helping open new OH's, etc. All of the service positions I held were about to end with OH. I was now the GM of a hotel downtown, and had quite a busy life. I was looking forward to my terms being up with OH. Then I was approached for a position as an Oxford House Outreach Service Rep in SE Washington. I had no ties to the Tri-Cities area, definitely no family or friends there and my recovery was strong in Spokane. I declined. After being approached again, my son and I had a conversation. He said, "If you could help another "meth-head" mom become a regular mom, that's what it's all about." With two years of recovery and service with OH under my belt, we moved to SE Washington to work for Oxford House, Inc.

In the last five years, I have become the woman I am today. We doubled the number of Oxford House recovery beds available in Tri-Cities, Walla Walla, and Yakima by opening OH's to fill the need. I met and married the man I had dreamt about since I was five years old. I was waiting my whole life for him. My sister is my Best Friend, as is my Dad. My son has been to two OH World Conventions. My oldest son has made me a grandma 3 times now. Becoming a grandparent, means this new generation in my family will NEVER see me loaded. Last spring, we had a staff change, and I am now the Outreach Service Rep for NE Washington and live back in Spokane. I am so very blessed to be working for this great organization, and have the love and support from my family, friends, and co-workers.

Steve F.

My name is Steve, and I'm an alcoholic. I've always felt different from everyone else and was never comfortable in my own skin. I grew up in an abusive family where smoking marijuana was a daily occurrence. I sought refuge in fantasy and daydreaming and I never wanted to be who I was or where I was. I took my first drink at the age of eight; by the time I was thirteen I was drinking and drugging on a daily basis. I had found the answer to all of my problems, or so I thought. All of my cousins and friends were into getting high and so it was like a secret society that only we knew about. By the time I was fifteen I had no parental guidance and had tried every drug under the sun. I was a regular black-out drinker; I thought that was why people drank in the first place! My teen years were completely lost to drinking and drugging. I quit school and decided that I didn't want to live past twenty-one. I didn't want to do anything but stay wasted.

Soon I had new problems but alcohol and drugs couldn't be the source of those problems, could they? Getting trashed was a way of life; I just had bad luck. People were out to get me; I just couldn't catch a break. Any excuse but to look at the real problem: my alcoholism and addiction. Everyone who loved me told me that if I kept on living this way I really would die before I was even old enough to buy alcohol legally. I neatly evaded some serious felonies, and had a few accidents that could have potentially been fatal. When I was twenty I stumbled into my first twelve-step meeting.

I would love to tell you that I got sober and life was wonderful, but that's not how it went down. My introduction to recovery was short-lived; those people just couldn't handle their booze and dope – I'd show them that I could use successfully! The next nineteen years of my life I lived a hopeless and repetitive cycle: I would build up my life, then burn it all down. I lost everything three times over. Every time I thought I hit rock bottom and that the pain and loss couldn't get worse, this disease proved me wrong. I went into treatment several times, only to return to addiction. The progression was astounding. I found myself unemployed and unemployable and I thought that was the bottom. I had lost everything again and I thought that was the bottom. My family had left and I thought that was the bottom. Wrong.

At the end of what I hope was my last run, I found myself hospitalized again. I felt absolutely soulless; empty and worthless. I ended up in treatment again, but what was the use? In twenty-seven years of active alcoholism and addiction, I had only been able to put together seventy-eight days of sobriety. I was beaten. I knew that once my little rehab stint was up I would relapse and I couldn't imagine life getting any worse. There was no way out.

During my last week in treatment, I had a counselor with whom I had been honest with about my disease. He asked me if I was willing to try something different this time. Accepting the futility of my situation I agreed – I'd tried everything, you see, and I knew whatever he proposed wouldn't work, but I really didn't have very many options. He told me about Oxford House. I interviewed at Oxford House – Forest Hills Park in Charlottesville, VA. I was accepted and I moved in on February 25th, 2012.

The guys in the house were crazy, but there was something going on. There was some kind of wacky structure going on here. These guys were staying sober, but I didn't think I could. It was only a matter of time. At my first house meeting they voted me into my first position, Chore Coordinator, then they told me I was going to the Virginia State Convention. Only one other member in the house was attending; the others didn't want to go so they sent the new guy: me. If no one else wanted to go, neither did I, but I wasn't given a choice in the matter.

At that State Convention, my understanding of Oxford House was changed. There was only one other attendee there with less sober time than me. But I met people that weekend who told me about how Oxford House had changed their lives – saved their lives! – and helped make their recovery a reality. I found out that my house wasn't really operating the way an Oxford House should. I left with a whole new attitude about recovery and Oxford House. For the first time in a long time I felt hope.

I returned home and decided to give this thing a shot. I got involved. I was working and paying my share of the expenses. I was active in 12-step meetings and I got a sponsor. I read the House Manual and the Chapter Manual; I was active in my House and Chapter. I started doing something about my recovery. That's when the miracle happened. Before I knew it, six months had gone by and I was still sober. I was learning how to live sober *by living sober*, and, more importantly, I was starting to enjoy sobriety. There were a few moments in those first months where the fear or eviction was enough to make me reconsider throwing it all away. Oxford House was working where nothing else had. So I got even more involved. I was eventually asked to be an Outreach Worker.

Today I haven't had a drink or a drug in over two and a half years, and I know that couldn't be possible without Oxford House. It truly was the missing link in recovery that had eluded me for so long. I am honored to work for Oxford House Inc. and I love telling people that "not only do I work for Oxford House, but Oxford House worked for me!" The job is demanding but I remember every day what my life was like before Oxford House, and the rewards of recovery have been astounding. Oxford House didn't give me my life back, it gave me a new life where I can help others and live happily without alcohol and drugs. For that I am truly grateful!

Terry O.

I'm Terry Ogle and I'm an alcoholic. I frequently hear other addicts & alcoholics say that they've used/drank the majority of their lives. But that just isn't my story. I suppose I was a late bloomer. My drinking "career" began in my 30s and ended in my 40s. But in just a little over a decade, I was able to successfully lose my family, career, possessions, everything. But that misfortune just may have saved my life! Because then, and only then was I finally ready to try something different.

When I was "ready," my 12 step program (AA) and Oxford House were there for me. At my meetings, they told me, get a sponsor, work the steps, and keep coming back. And at home, the guys told me to read the handbook and follow a few simple guidelines and suggestions.

Needless to say I was somewhat skeptical. But, in spite of that, I did everything that was suggested. Because if this thing didn't work, I didn't want anyone to be able to say you didn't do this, or you didn't do that. So I simply did everything. They told me it was progress, not perfection. And I was glad! Because I was far from perfect. I made mistakes. But I kept doing the things that were suggested. Life improved for me. Not overnight, but it improved.

I'll never forget the first time someone looked at me and said, "Terry, it looks like the promises are coming true for you". By this time, I had an inkling of an idea of what he meant when he said that. But I never looked back. I knew I had plenty of work still to do because, by this time, I had learned that helping others was how this thing works! I got involved at the house level. I got involved at the chapter level. I went to State Association meetings. I went to world!

I've come to understand that this thing is bigger than me. It's bigger than my disease. And I'll tell anyone who will listen that my 12 step program along with Oxford House saved my life! I am no longer skeptical. This thing works, and I'll shout it from the mountain tops! I consider myself an Oxford House success story. And I look forward to being a part, if only a small part, of many more success stories.

Plan Today To Attend the 2015 Convention

Washington, DC

Oxford Houses Receiving the 2014 Directors' Hundred-Year Award

Arkansas

Oxford House-Brookside

Colorado

Oxford House-Andes
 Oxford House-Colorado Springs
 Oxford House-Fort Carson
 Oxford House-Independence
 Oxford House-Kenton
 Oxford House-Longmont
 Oxford House-Murray
 Oxford House-Sable

Delaware

Oxford House-8th Street
 Oxford House-His' New Castle
 Oxford House-Ida B. Wells
 Oxford House-Monroe
 Oxford House-New Castle
 Oxford House-Valorian

District of Columbia

Oxford House-R Street

Georgia

Oxford House-Chisholm Trail

Hawaii

Oxford House-Alaume
 Oxford House-Puu Aina
 Oxford House-Ulupaina EW

Kansas

Oxford House-Braeburn
 Oxford House-Chautauqua
 Oxford House-Dunsworth
 Oxford House-Lane
 Oxford House-Meadowlane
 Oxford House-Metcalf
 Oxford House-Midtown
 Oxford House-North Ash
 Oxford House-Village

Kentucky

Oxford House-Greenup

Louisiana

LA-State Association
 Oxford House-Acadiana
 Oxford House-Beaureve
 Oxford House-Belle
 Oxford House-Boxwood
 Oxford House-Bruce 2
 Oxford House-Bye-Water
 Oxford House-Comal
 Oxford House-Creole
 Oxford House-Crescent City
 Oxford House-Dena Lynn
 Oxford House-Dulles
 Oxford House-Essen
 Oxford House-Flannigan
 Oxford House-Gilbert II
 Oxford House-Journey 2
 Oxford House-Kenner
 Oxford House-LaFayette
 Oxford House-Lafitte
 Oxford House-LeGrand
 Oxford House-Louisianne
 Oxford House-Mandeville
 Oxford House-Hearthstone
 Oxford House-Hiddenway
 Oxford House-Hillridge
 Oxford House-Howell
 Oxford House-Jarvis
 Oxford House-Jersey City
 Oxford House-Kendall Park
 Oxford House-Kingston
 Oxford House-Langford
 Oxford House-Lexington Ct

Oxford House-Linwood
 Oxford House-Long Branch
 Oxford House-Lookout
 Oxford House-Madison Court
 Oxford House-Matawan
 Oxford House-Medford Blvd
 Oxford House-Melbourne
 Oxford House-Melody Lane
 Oxford House-Milltown Road
 Oxford House-Monument
 Oxford House-Moorestown
 Oxford House-Myrtle
 Oxford House-Nylund
 Oxford House-Patcong Creek
 Oxford House-Point of Woods
 Oxford House-River Road
 Oxford House-Rockefeller Park
 Oxford House-Somers Point
 Oxford House-South Toms Riv
 Oxford House-Southport
 Oxford House-Stratford
 Oxford House-Suffolk
 Oxford House-Tennent Ave
 Oxford House-Thompson Ave
 Oxford House-Troy
 Oxford House-Vassar
 Oxford House-Vineland
 Oxford House-Waters Edge
 Oxford House-Wesley
 Oxford House-West Orange
 Oxford House-West Ridge
 Oxford House-Winchester
 Oxford House-Woodbrook
 Oxford House-Woodbury

New Mexico

Oxford House-Candelaria
 Oxford House-Eubank
 Oxford House-Juan Tabo
 Oxford House-Morris
 Oxford House-Pennsylvania
 Oxford House-Snowheights
 Oxford House-Turquoise

North Carolina

Oxford House-Asheville
 Oxford House-Askham
 Oxford House-Bluff Wood
 Cove
 Oxford House-Brentwood
 Oxford House-Camden Circle
 Oxford House-Carolina Avenue
 Oxford House-Carrboro
 Oxford House-Cary
 Oxford House-Cayshindren
 Oxford House-Cedar Hills
 Oxford House-Christopher Rd
 Oxford House-Church Street
 Oxford House-Covil House
 Oxford House-Covington
 Oxford House-Daley
 Oxford House-Burning Tree
 Oxford House-East Moore
 Oxford House-E. Wedgewood
 Oxford House-Edgewood
 Oxford House-Elmhurst
 Oxford House-Fontana
 Oxford House-Grove
 Oxford House-Integrity
 Oxford House-Lakeview
 Oxford House-Leisure Lanes
 Oxford House-Leslie Leigh
 Oxford House-Meadows
 Oxford House-Millwood Est
 Oxford House-Oakhurst
 Oxford House-Pennville
 Oxford House-Rockwood Hills
 Oxford House-Rustic Hills
 Oxford House-Shadow
 Mountain

Oxford House-Shirley Ann
 Oxford House-Southern Hills
 Oxford House-Terrace Manor 2
 Oxford House-Tulsa Mid-Town
 Oxford House-Woodridge

Oregon

Oxford House-Burkhart
 Oxford House-Glencoe
 Oxford House-Powell Butte
 Oxford House-Steve Harris
 Oxford House-Water Park
 Oxford House-West Howard

Pennsylvania

Oxford House-Cecelia
 Oxford House-Donna J
 Oxford House-Eau Claire St
 Oxford House-Grehard Avenue
 Oxford House-Third Avenue
 Oxford House-Beaver Run

Texas

Oxford House-Bellaire
 Oxford House-Brettonwood
 Oxford House-Carson
 Oxford House-Carvel Lane
 Oxford House-Catalpa
 Oxford House-Drenner Park
 Oxford House-Florenca
 Oxford House-Fort Bend
 Oxford House-Grayson
 Oxford House-Leon Valley
 Oxford House-Lugary
 Oxford House-McCart
 Oxford House-Meadow Park
 Oxford House-Mistletoe
 Oxford House-Rolling Oaks
 Oxford House-Stepping Stone
 Oxford House-Woodside
 Oxford House-Yorkwood

Virginia

Oxford House-Amherst Street
 Oxford House-Annamdale
 Oxford House-Apple Blossom
 Oxford H-Bayview Gardens
 Oxford House-Beall Drive
 Oxford House-Beau Lane
 Oxford House-Belle Haven
 Oxford House-Berkley Park
 Oxford House-Brandy Jo
 Oxford House-Briarwood 2
 Oxford House-Brilyn
 Oxford House-Brookfield
 Oxford House-Buckroe
 Oxford House-Chamberlayne
 Oxford House-Chapel Hill
 Oxford House-Chesapeake
 Oxford House-Chester
 Oxford House-Church Hill
 Oxford House-Clay Street
 Oxford House-Coral
 Oxford House-Diva
 Oxford House-Dudley Court
 Oxford House-Edgehill
 Oxford House-Elm Street
 Oxford House-Fair Oaks
 Oxford House-Fairview Park
 Oxford House-Forest Glen
 Oxford House-Forest Hills Park
 Oxford House-Fredericksburg
 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-Hill Top Heights
 Oxford House-Horizon

Oxford House-Hunter Street
 Oxford House-James River
 Oxford House-Jamestown
 Oxford House-Kenwood
 Oxford House-King's Manor
 Oxford House-Lake Smith
 Oxford House-Lemon Road
 Oxford House-Little Creek
 Oxford House-Little River
 Oxford House-Lynnhaven
 Oxford House-Manor Road
 Oxford House-Mill Mountain
 Oxford House-Moseby Court
 Oxford House-Mt Vernon Sq.
 Oxford House-Neptune
 Oxford House-North Ave
 Oxford House-North Loudoun
 Oxford House-North Upton
 Oxford House-Norview
 Oxford House-Old Town
 Oxford House-Orchid
 Oxford House-Pembroke
 Oxford House-Piccadilly Place
 Oxford House-Pike Place
 Oxford House-Plaza
 Oxford House-Pleasant Valley
 Oxford House-Pollard Park
 Oxford House-Prosperity
 Oxford House-Ramekin
 Oxford H-Randolph-Macon
 Oxford House-River City
 Oxford House-Salem
 Oxford H -Shenandoah Valley
 Oxford House-Shiloh
 Oxford House-Shiloh
 Oxford House-South Cameron
 Oxford House-Springfield
 Oxford House-Star City
 Oxford House-Sterling
 Oxford House-Thomas Street
 Oxford House-Tidewater
 Oxford House-Valley View
 Oxford House-Victoria
 Oxford House-Wakefield
 Oxford House-Wasena
 Oxford House-Washington Park
 Oxford House-Waverly Hills
 Oxford House-West End
 Oxford House-Williamsburg
 Oxford House-Woodland Hghs

Washington

Oxford House-Adams
 Oxford House-Addison
 Oxford House-Akona
 Oxford House-Anderson
 Oxford House-Apple Valley
 Oxford House-Bachelor Creek
 Oxford House-Ballard
 Oxford House-Betty Miller
 Oxford House-Bill Wyze
 Oxford House-Bridgeview
 Oxford House-Brockman
 Oxford House-Burien
 Oxford House-Cannon
 Oxford House-Cascade View
 Oxford House-Catlin
 Oxford House-Central Park
 Oxford House-Chestnut
 Oxford House-Columbia River
 Oxford House-Connelly
 Oxford House-Crown Hill
 Oxford House-Delaware
 Oxford House-East Side
 Oxford House-Echo Lake
 Oxford House-Erlands Point
 Oxford House-Felida Ridge
 Oxford House-Fern Hill
 Oxford House-Fisher Park
 Oxford House-Franklin

Oxford House-Freedom
 Oxford House-Gracy's Lake
 Oxford House-Grammer
 Oxford House-Greenwood
 Oxford House-Gregory Way
 Oxford House-Heaven's Park
 Oxford House-Heights
 Oxford House-Hendrick
 Oxford House-Hilltop View
 Oxford House-Historic Flynn
 Oxford House-Inglewood
 Oxford House-Interlake
 Oxford House-John Harrison
 Oxford House-Journey
 Oxford House-Juanita
 Oxford House-Kennewick
 Oxford House-Laurelwood
 Oxford House-Levy
 Oxford House-Longview
 Oxford House-Madrona
 Oxford House-Mahan
 Oxford House-Matthews Beach
 Oxford House-Mirror Lake
 Oxford House-Neel
 Oxford House-North City
 Oxford House-Northgate
 Oxford House-Oaktree
 Oxford House-Olympic View
 Oxford House-Orchard Heights
 Oxford House-Pacific Terrace
 Oxford House-Park Hills
 Oxford House-Parkside
 Oxford House-Peabody
 Oxford House-Pinecrest II
 Oxford House-Portia Park
 Oxford House-Prasch
 Oxford House-Richland
 Oxford House-Ridgecrest
 Oxford House-Rosemere
 Oxford House-Rowland
 Oxford House-Ruston View
 Oxford House-Sandalwood Ct
 Oxford House-Shattuck Creek
 Oxford House-Shorewood
 Oxford House-Silver Star
 Oxford House-South Bay Trails
 Oxford House-South Tacoma
 Oxford House-St. Edmonds
 Oxford House-Stan Timberlake
 Oxford House-Stark
 Oxford House-Summitview
 Oxford House-Sunrise Heights
 Oxford House-Tekoa
 Oxford House-Tenny Creek
 Oxford House-Thompson
 Oxford House-Tieton
 Oxford House-Tobias
 Oxford House-Truman Place
 Oxford House-Upland
 Oxford House-Vista
 Oxford House-Wellesly
 Oxford House-West Seattle
 Oxford House-White Pine
 Oxford House-Wide Hollow
 Oxford House-Yakima

Wisconsin

Oxford House-La Crosse

In addition to the individual houses, a number of Chapters and State Associations donated to OHI in FY 2014 to grow the Oxford network of houses.

Notes

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

Oxford House™

1975-2014

39 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 Houses 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.

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