

# Oxford Grape

January 13, 2011

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## 2010

### Another Successful Year for Oxford House

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2010 was another successful year for Oxford House. Expansion continued and Oxford House, Inc. [OHI] the nonprofit national umbrella organization had income that exceeded expenses. Another 126 Oxford Houses joined the network [89 new men's houses – 695 new recovery beds and 37 new women's houses – 288 new recovery beds] adding a total of 983 new recovery beds. This brings the total number of Oxford Houses to 1,458 having a total of 11,392 Oxford Recovery beds.

The primary reason that OHI's income exceeded expenses was the voluntary contributions sent to OHI by individual houses and chapters. In Fiscal Year 2010 [July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010], \$293,054 was contributed by existing houses and chapters to help start new houses and to pay for support provided by Oxford House World Services to the existing houses, chapters and state associations. Individual houses on their own contributed \$255,240 and \$37,814 through chapters.

About a third of Oxford Houses [31.7%] made direct contributions on a monthly basis – either \$50 or \$70 a month using electronic check transfer. Not only does such dedication underscore the self-help underpinnings of Oxford House but it also puts the 12-Step concept of reaching out to the still suffering alcoholic and drug addict into practice. The selfless contributions help expand the national network of Oxford Houses to make recovery from addiction more likely and provide a path that will insure Oxford House long term existence.

One of the unique characteristics of Oxford House is its commitment to absolute transparency of all the financial transactions, outcomes and experiences of Oxford Houses from the grassroots to the top. The FY 2010 Annual Report is available for download at the website: [www.oxfordhouse.org](http://www.oxfordhouse.org). under "About Us/Finances" Everyone should read the annual report. It not only catalogues the activities of Oxford House during the last year but also builds a persuasive case to everyone concerned about alcoholism, drug addiction and co-occurring mental illness to help expand the national network of Oxford Houses so that every recovering individual can enjoy the same benefits Oxford House provided more than 24,000 individuals during 2010.

Remember full copy of FY 2010 Annual Report is at website under "About Us/Finances." Take a look.

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## 2010 Convention Great Success



Paul Molloy, opening the 2010 World Convention in at the Fairmont Hotel in Chicago last September. More than 700 residents and alumni of Oxford House attended.

"Celebrating 35 Years" was the theme of the Oxford House World Convention in Chicago. The Convention began on Thursday with the annual golf tournament and Women's Pre-Convention Conference. After a full day of two general sessions and ten breakout panels on Friday the convention attendees attended the awards ceremony and dinner at the Navy Pier. [See picture of Chicago Convention Friday Night event below.]



This issue of the Grape [inside] contains highlights from the Chicago convention. Take a look and begin now to figure out how you can attend the 2011 Convention in Washington, DC. Not only are residents and alumni invited to the convention, but also counselors, treatment and drug court personnel can get CEUs [Continuing Education Units]. Eligible participants in the 2010 Convention received 7 CEU credits. A similar opportunity will exist at the 2011 Convention because the content is educational and counselors and staff can benefit.

See inside stories for more highlights of the 2010 Convention and a preview of the 2011 DC Convention.



Laura Griffin, at the Chicago Convention, presented to Oxford House the "2009 Starfish Thrower Award" awarded by the Wyoming Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services Division.

### Oxford House Receives the Wyoming "2009 Starfish Thrower Award"

Each year the Wyoming Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services Division grants the Starfish Thrower Award to an individual or groups providing exceptional service to those in recovery from alcoholism and/or drug addiction. Oxford House received the award in 2009 and Laura Griffin, the manager of an outreach grant to Oxford House World Services made the formal presentation at the Chicago convention. The name of the award arises from an old folk tale about the boy on a beach who finds a starfish and throws it back into the ocean so that it can survive. [See Starfish Thrower Story on page 3]

Three years ago, the Wyoming Division of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Division entered into a contract with Oxford House World Services to help establish Oxford Houses in the state. There are now eleven houses in the state providing 70 recovery beds. Two of the houses are for women and nine are for men.

### World Council Membership

Residents and alumni at the World Convention elect the Oxford House World Council members. The following is a list of current membership of the World Council.

**Victor Fitz, World Council Chair**, Alumni,  
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**Chris McGuire, Vice Chair  
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**Sheri Glisson, Secretary  
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**James McClain, Emeritus Alumni**  
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**Myrna Brown, Emeritus Alumni**  
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**Judy Maxwell, Outreach Liaison [OHI]**  
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Plan *now* to attend  
**2011 Washington Convention**  
<http://washingtongrand.e-hyatt.com/>

## The Starfish Story

Once upon a time, there was a wise man, who used to go to the ocean to do his writing. He had a habit of walking on the beach before he began his work.

One day, as he was walking along the shore, he looked down the beach and saw a human figure moving like a dancer. He smiled to himself at the thought of someone who would dance to the day, and so, he walked faster to catch up.

As he got closer, he noticed that the figure was that of a young man, and that what he was doing was not dancing at all. The young man was reaching down to the shore, picking up small objects, and throwing them into the ocean.

He came closer still and called out "Good morning! May I ask what it is that you are doing?"

The young man paused, looked up, and replied "Throwing starfish into the ocean."

"I must ask, then, why are you throwing starfish into the ocean?" asked the somewhat startled wise man.

To this, the young man replied, "The sun is up and the tide is going out. If I don't throw them in, they'll die."

Upon hearing this, the wise man commented, "But, young man, do you not realize that there are miles and miles of beach and there are starfish all along every mile? You can't possibly make a difference!"

At this, the young man bent down, picked up yet another starfish, and threw it into the ocean. As it met the water, he said, "I made a difference to that one!"

**Adapted by Deanna Joseph  
From The Star Thrower  
by Loren Eiseley, 1907 – 1977**

*Loren Eiseley was both a scientist and a poet, and to this day his writing is the subject of much discussion and inspiration. In this story he is the "wise man" touched by the innocence and determination of another soul.*

*"The Star Thrower" is a classic story of the power within each one of us to make a difference in the lives of others. In such turbulent times as these, when we may feel alone and small and unable to make any lasting changes we may find ourselves asking "What can I do that will make a difference?" or "What can one small person like me do?"*

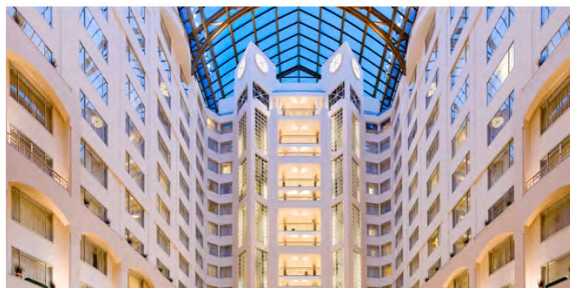
*In reality we don't have to be rich, talented or even particularly intelligent to make a difference in the life of another. We just need to remember that we ARE here for a purpose, and that making small changes in the world eventually add up to something bigger in the life of another.*

*When we become throwers of the stars, we too, have the power to change the world*

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2011 Convention Theme

***Oxford House: Saving Money, Saving Lives***



**Grand Hyatt Atrium in Washington, DC**

## 2011 Oxford House Convention Hyatt Regency – Washington, DC

***Oxford House: Saving Money – Saving Lives***

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Every other year the Oxford House Convention is in Washington, DC. The Convention Hotel for the 2011 Oxford House World Convention is Grand Hyatt located downtown in the Nation's Capital at 10<sup>th</sup> and H Street, NW. It is bigger than the Hyatt Regency on Capitol Hill but still close to all the tourist attractions that made previous conventions in the Nation's Capital such a pleasant trip.



Within a short walking distance are Union Station, museums, Capitol Hill and the White House. Like the previous Oxford House Annual World Conventions the emphasis will be on alcoholism, drug addiction and the Oxford House way of becoming comfortable enough in sobriety to avoid relapse – forever.



The spacious convention hall will hold more than 1,000 and if *everyone plans early* we can fill all the seats. The 32 meeting rooms will provide great space for more than 24 addiction recovery-learning panels that make the convention such a valuable experience.

## Oxford House: Does It Provide A Tool For Helping To Balance the Budget?

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As 2011 begins, residents of Oxford Houses in the United States read and hear a lot about the budget deficits facing the federal and state government. For most of us it is not the most important thing in our life. Getting comfortable enough with our own sobriety to avoid relapse is top priority, but maybe we need to examine whether or not we should let everyone know about Oxford House and why it saves taxpayers money.

Before we dismiss such grandiose thoughts entirely, we might want to think twice. As individuals we know that Oxford House living has opened the door for us to achieve comfortable sobriety even though most of us had failed to become comfortable enough in sobriety to avoid relapse in the past. Why is this so and what does it have to do with big national problems like budget deficits?

Together alcoholics and drug addicts cost the nation more than \$180 billion every year to say nothing about the fear and heartache caused our fellow citizens because our behavior is unpredictable to say the least. Oxford House residents and alumni have a secret – alcoholics and drug addicts can become productive sober citizens if they have an opportunity and willingness to live in an Oxford House. Another part of the secret is that it does not cost the taxpayers a lot of money and it can make a big difference in recycling recovering individuals in and out of treatment or incarceration.<sup>1</sup> The DePaul studies show that Oxford House living makes recovery without relapse the norm rather than the exception.

Start-up loans and technical assistance from taxpayers are needed to expand the national network of 1,450 Oxford Houses but that cost is very little compared to recycling recovering individuals in and out of treatment or incarceration. Each resident and alumnus of Oxford House needs to share the Oxford House story with political leaders of all political parties because all of them are looking for good ideas to save taxpayer money. Invite everyone you know to look at the Oxford House website and learn how individual citizens can help themselves to overcome addiction using the time-tested Oxford House concept and system of operation.




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<sup>1</sup> The data collected from the Treatment Episodes Data Set [TEDS] shows that more than half of the individuals in treatment have been through treatment three or more times.

## Oxford House Growth Slightly Slows in 2010

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While 2010 was a good year for Oxford House, the number of new houses declined from the previous year. In 2009 139 houses [99 for men; 40 for women]. During 2010 only 110 new houses were added to the national network of Oxford Houses – 78 for men and 32 for women. Paul Molloy, Oxford House CEO attributed the slower growth to the poor economy and time spent on strengthening the existing network of Oxford Houses. He anticipates a substantial increase in the number of new Oxford Houses during 2011 because of additional outreach contracts and the additional documentation that Oxford Houses greatly increase the likelihood that those in recovery will stay clean and sober without relapse as a result of living in an Oxford House.

Molloy said he believes that tight budgets at both the federal and state government levels will force officials to seek the most cost effective way to deal with recovery for alcoholics and drug addicts. Oxford House continues to be the best way to stop recycling addicted individuals in and out of treatment or prison. The studies by DePaul University – sponsored by NIAAA and NIDA – have shown that the self-run and self-supported Oxford House model provides the time and peer support needed by individuals to become comfortable enough in sobriety to avoid relapse. The TEDS data relating to treatment episodes shows that more than 50% of the individuals in treatment have been in treatment at least three times before. This fact coupled with two other factors mean that states, correctional systems and health providers for veterans will seek Oxford House facilities to improve addiction treatment outcome.

First tight budgets will increase the pressure to get improve treatment outcome at low-cost. Second, the focus on lowering health care costs will shift responsibility for health maintenance in the direction of prevention. Oxford Houses continue to be the most cost-effective way to assure addiction recovery without relapse. Moreover, the evidence is overwhelming that the odds for the recovering alcoholic and drug addict staying clean and sober are substantially increase when a recovering individual gains the time and peer support of an Oxford House.

Expansion of the network of Oxford Houses has a long way to go, but with voluntary contributions from existing houses, and more participation by state agencies, 2011 should bring substantial expansion.

## Message from World Council Chair

Greetings Oxford House family

On behalf of the Oxford House World Council I want to thank all the residents and alumni for a productive year for Oxford House in 2010. It was a good year for the World Council; we saw a lot of progress working with the states and the chapters. The World Council is set to build upon the work done in 2010.

It is our goal to help increase the number of State Associations. We will be working with those states that do not have state associations to help establish state associations. We are also working to complete an **Oxford House State Manual**. This state manual will help guide new state associations and help keep all state associations operating in one accord. We hope to have this manual completed before the World Convention in 2011.

I would like to encourage everyone to look out for the World Council newsletter "The Oxford World". In this newsletter we will address issues that affect Oxford House as a whole. We will also use the newsletter to report on the special projects that the council will be working on. We hope to have the 2011 Oxford World out in mid-February.

Once again on behalf of the Oxford House World Council we like to thank everyone who helped Oxford House grow stronger. Your World Council is here to serve you.

Sincerely

*Victor Fitzg*

OHWC chairperson

## Oxford House A Leader

Again in 2010 Oxford Houses around the country were busy in September – National Recovery Month – in opening their doors to invite members of their communities to see first-hand how alcoholics and drug addicts can build sobriety strong enough to avoid relapse.

Not only did more than 500 Oxford Houses hold open house receptions but many went a step further and organized or led major community events to show that recovery can be a reality. The Oxfest in Oregon and Washington State once again attracted hundreds to enjoy food, song and dance to celebrate being clean and sober.

They also mobilized to support "Hands Across the Bridge" between Vancouver and Portland.

In North Carolina Oxford Houses traveled the state to participate in a number of recovery month celebrations. In New Jersey many residents not only participated in state celebrations, but also went to Philadelphia to be a part of the national showcase put on by CSAT, NCADD and A&E TV.

Once again the Oxford House World Convention kicked off recovery month with its annual 4-day convention. This year's convention was held at the Fairmount Hotel in downtown Chicago. A number of pictures and stories from the convention are included in this newsletter with the hope that everyone will begin now to plan to attend the next convention slated for the Grand Hyatt Regency Hotel in the Nation's Capital. Plan to be there!



### New World Council Members Elected at Chicago Convention

Left to Right – Stan Finney [WA], Reville Atkinson [NC], Chris Hart [AK], Tony Sowards [NC], Dan Hahn [KS], Dominick Ragusa [NJ], Arlene Moore [DC] and Peter Terry [HI]



## Oxford House Alum Dies



**Edward C. Walker**

Ed Walker died January 20, 2011. He is survived by mother, Esperanza P. Walker; one brother, Maurice; three sisters, Janice, Anita and Perez. Ed was one of the individuals who selflessly gave his time and wisdom to help transform Oxford House from a local network of 13 Oxford Houses into the national network of 1,457 Oxford Houses today. He lived in several Oxford Houses in DC during the days that expansion was just beginning. He had held a number of House offices and was elected to the Oxford House Board of Directors when the Board was made up entirely of Oxford House residents and alumni. He brought with him his recovery and the knowledge that behavior change with the grace of God and help from peers was possible. He had been a military veteran and brought that leadership and wisdom to the table.

Ed gave much to the military of his country and to recovering alcoholics and drug addicts throughout the country by his example and hard work on behalf of Oxford House and recovery. We shall all miss him and know that he is now organizing the angels in Heaven to help continue Oxford House expansion to help addicts find recovery here on earth.

## Remembering the 2010 Chicago Convention

The 2010 Convention in Chicago lasted four days and provided more than 700 participants with memories that will last a lifetime. As in prior conventions all the General Sessions and Panel breakouts were recorded. This years recording consists of 25 CDs that include the pre-convention Women's Conference [3 CDs]. The full set is available for purchase from New Life Productions, Bessemer, AL –Tel 205-938-2368. Many chapters have purchased the set for \$150 so that residents who did not get to attend the convention get a chance to share the information and knowledge exchanged during the convention. The recordings have lot of good stuff – at a reasonable cost and often listening to a session becomes a good event to get folks together to enjoy recovery.

### General Session at Chicago



Start planning now to make sure that you can attend the upcoming Oxford House World Convention in Washington, DC September 1 – 4 in Washington, DC. It will be the biggest and best convention yet. The hotel is the Grand Hyatt, which is large enough to handle at least 1,000 convention attendees.

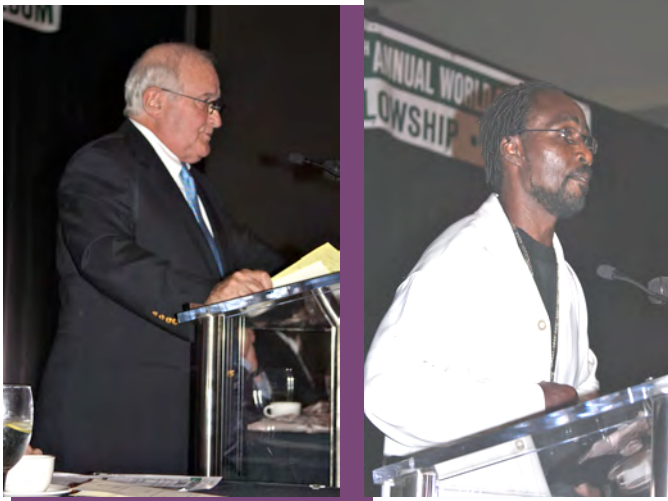
For those who have attended prior conventions in Washington, there is no need to point out the enjoyment that can be had when conventions are in the Nation's Capital. Museums are free and sightseeing can be great. As an eternal optimist it is also the time of year when the Washington Nationals will undoubtedly be in the running to win the National League championship and ultimately the World Series. If you plan ahead, you can attend the full convention and have enough time to see all the sights and attend a ballgame.

### **Oxford House: Saving Money – Saving Lives**

*Theme of the 2011 Convention*

You can again this year register for the convention from the Oxford House website: [www.oxfordhouse.org](http://www.oxfordhouse.org)

# Oxford House 2010 Chicago Convention Highlights



Leon Conlon [left] was the AA speaker and Bernie Lee [right] was the NA speaker at Chicago Oxford House World



First General Session audience – part of the 710 Convention attendees

## 2010 Women's Conference Precedes Convention



187 Women residents and alumni have a five- hour conference a day before convention.



Bob Lindsey CEO of NCADD and Paul Molloy OHI with Bill White [right] Convention Keynote Speaker



Washington State Delegation



Chicago at dusk

## Good Houses in Good Neighborhoods



Oxford House - Vasser, at the left, was established in June 1990 in Audubon, New Jersey. It provides home to ten recovering women. Since established, more than 190 recovering women have lived in the house many of whom had been homeless. Today, there are 75 Oxford Houses in New Jersey – 15 for women; 60 for men – 587 recovery beds.

*Creating an Effective National Recovery Network One House at a Time*

### National Oxford House Resident Profile<sup>1</sup>

Number of Women's Houses:	362	No. of Women Residents:	2,795
Number of Houses For Men:	1,096	No. of Men Residents:	8,603
National Network of Houses:	1,458	Total Number of Residents:	11,398
Number of States with Houses:	44	Cities with Houses:	426
Cost Per Person Per Week:	\$100	Rent Per Group Per Month	\$1,380
Percent Veterans	18%	Average Age	36.6 yrs.
Residents Working 6/15/09:	92%	Average Monthly Earnings:	\$1,580
Percent Addicted To Drugs or Drugs and Alcohol:	74%	Percent Addicted to Only Alcohol:	26%
Race --		Marital Status --	
White;	66%	Never Married	48%
Black;	23%	Separated	16%
Other	10%	Divorced	31%
		Married	4%
		Widowed	1%
Prior Homelessness:	58%	Average Time Homeless:	6 Mos.
Prior Jail:	78%	Average Jail Time:	13 Mos.
Average AA or NA Meetings Per Week:	5.1	Percent Going To Counseling and AA or NA:	45%
Average Length of Sobriety of House Residents:	13.5 Mos.	Residents Expelled Because of Relapse:	19.3%
Average Length of Stay In An Oxford House:	10.1 Mos.	Average No. of Applicants For Each Vacant Bed:	4.2

### Oxford House 2010 World Convention: Chicago, Illinois

*2010 Theme: Celebrating 35 Years*

## Oxford House Highlights

- **11,392–Number of Oxford Recovery Beds**
- **1,458–Number of Oxford Houses as of December 2010**
- **43–Number of States having Oxford House**
- **426–Number of towns or cities having Oxford Houses**
- **\$1,580–average monthly income of residents**
- **\$100–average weekly share of expenses paid by Oxford residents**
- **58% of Oxford House residents had been homeless for an average of 6 months**
- **74% addicted to drugs in addition of alcohol**
- **78% had done jail time connected to their addiction**
- **14.5 months–average length of sobriety**
- **126 New Houses started CY 2010; 37 for Women; 89 for Men**
- **Total Added Recovery Beds during 2010: 983; Men: 695; Women: 288**

<sup>1</sup> As of June 30, 2010 based on standard OHI survey and house reports.