

# *Oxford House*<sup>TM</sup>

*Unique • Time-Tested • Evidence-Based*



Commemorative Program

2017 Annual Oxford House World Convention

August 31 - September 3, 2017

Marriott Renaissance Downtown Hotel

# 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Oxford House World Convention

## Oxford House: Unique, Time-tested and Evidence-based

August 31 - September 3, 2017  
Marriott Renaissance Downtown Hotel, Washington, DC

| <b>CONVENTION SCHEDULE</b>   |   |                        |   |   |
|--|---|------------------------|---|---|
| <b>FRIDAY 9/1</b>  |   | <b>SATURDAY 9/2</b>    |   | <b>SUNDAY 9/3</b>   |
| <b>7:00-8:15 AM</b>  | <b>Breakfast Buffet</b><br><i>World Council Nominations Due by 1 PM</i>   | <b>7:00-8:30 AM</b>    | <b>Breakfast Buffet</b><br><i>Voting until Noon for World Council by Houses attending the Convention</i>  | <b>Breakfast Buffet</b>   |
| <b>8:00-9:30 AM</b>  | <b>Opening General Session</b><br><br><b>Invocation</b><br><b>Welcoming Remarks</b><br>Tanya A. Royster, M.D.<br>Director, DC Dept. of Behavioral Health<br><b>Welcome and Convention Overview</b><br>Kathleen Gibson and Paul Molloy<br><b>World Council Election Rules</b><br>James McClain<br><b>Keynote Speaker</b><br>Richard Baum, Acting Director, ONDCP | <b>8:15- 9:30</b>      | <b>Third Breakout Panels</b><br>1. Oxford House – Four Stages of Houses and Five Core Principles<br>2. Dealing with Children in Oxford Houses<br>3. Dealing with Opioid Overdoses<br>4. Keeping Alumni Involved and Forming Alumni Associations<br>5. Giving Medically-assisted Recovery a Chance                           | <b>Closing General Session</b><br><br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Convention Summary</li> <li>▪ Remembrance of Oxford House Residents and Alumni Who Died During the Past Year</li> <li>▪ Tradition Renewal and Closing</li> </ul>   |
| <b>9:30-9:45 AM</b>  | <i>Break</i>  | <b>9:30-9:45</b>       | <i>Break</i>  |   |
| <b>9:45-11:00 AM</b>   | <b>First Breakout Panels</b><br>1. The Opioid Crisis and Recovery – Facts and Experience<br>2. Nuts and Bolts of Opening an Oxford House – The Basics<br>3. Oxford House and State Agencies<br>4. Working With Drug Courts and Parole/Probation Programs<br>5. Educating the Public About Recovery  | <b>9:45-11:00</b>      | <b>Fourth Breakout Panels</b><br>1. Medication in Oxford Houses<br>2. Working Together: Houses, Chapters, Associations and Alumni<br>3. Organizing Your Finances – Budgeting and Saving<br>4. Brainstorming With Researchers: Recovery Topics Residents and Alumni Would Like to See Studied<br>5. Civil Rights and the Law | <p><b>CONVENTION REGISTRATION</b></p> <p><i>Registration for the 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Oxford House Convention starts at 10:00 AM on August 31.</i></p> <p><b>GOLF TOURNAMENT</b></p> <p><i>The Oxford House Golf Tournament will be at 11:00 AM on Thursday, August 31 at Enterprise Golf Course in Mitchellville, MD. Meet in the lobby at 9:00 AM</i></p> <p><b>WOMEN'S CONFERENCE</b></p> <p><i>The Oxford House Women's Conference is on Thursday, Aug. 31 2:30 PM - 7:00 PM Registration opens at 1:00 PM.</i></p> |
| <b>11:00-11:15</b>   | <i>Break</i>  | <b>11:00-11:15</b>     | <i>Break</i>  |   |
| <b>11:15-12:30</b>   | <b>Second Breakout Panels</b><br>1. Oxford House and Re-entry from Prison<br>2. The Importance of Having Fun in Oxford House<br>3. The Role of Oxford House in Reducing Health Care Costs<br>4. Recovery Housing Research – Oxford House and Other Recovery Housing<br>5. Working with Treatment Providers  | <b>11:15-12:30</b>     | <b>Fifth Breakout Panels</b><br>1. Conducting House Meetings<br>2. Health Issues in Oxford Houses (Chronic Illness; HIV, Hepatitis C, etc.)<br>3. Millennials and Recovery<br>4. Current Oxford House Research and Upcoming Studies<br>5. Oxford House World Council Update   |   |
| <b>12:30 - 2:00 PM</b>   | <b>Lunch on Your Own</b><br><br>AA/NA meetings at hotel – 1:00-2:00 PM  | <b>12:30 - 2:00</b>    | <b>Lunch on Your Own</b><br><b>Alumni Lunch; 12:30-2:00 PM</b><br><b>Clyde's at Gallery Place</b><br>Get Tickets at World Council table.<br>AA/NA meetings at hotel – 1:00-2:00   |   |
| <b>2:15-5:00 PM</b>  | <b>Second General Session</b><br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Keynote:</b> H. Westley Clark, M.D.</li> <li>• <b>Keynote:</b> Stuart Gitlow, M.D.</li> <li>• Eligible World Council Nominees give three-minute campaign speeches</li> <li>• Presentation of Directors' 100-Year Awards</li> </ul>   | <b>2:15 - 4:30</b>     | <b>Third General Session</b><br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Keynote:</b> The OHI Year in Review</li> <li>▪ Introduction of New World Council Members</li> <li>▪ Vote on Resolutions</li> <li>▪ Selection of 2018 Convention Site</li> </ul>   |   |
| <b>Evening</b>   | <b>Friday evening free for:</b><br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dinner on your own<br/>AND</li> <li>• Sightseeing – take an open air bus; take a sightseeing cruise on the Potomac; or just wander through Washington sites</li> </ul>  | <b>6:30 - Midnight</b> | <b>Banquet and Dance</b><br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Invocation</li> <li>➢ Dinner and Awards</li> <li>➢ Recovery Speaker</li> <li>➢ Dance: 9:00PM – Midnight</li> </ul>   |   |
| <p><i>Breakout panel rooms: (1) Grand Ballroom, (2) Renaissance West, (3) Renaissance East, (4) Congressional Hall A, (5) Congressional Hall B</i></p> <p><i>All General Sessions and first breakout panels will be in the Grand Ballroom</i></p> <p><i>AA meetings are in Meeting Room 9 and NA meetings are in Meeting Room 10 at 1:00-2:00 PM and 10:00-11:00 PM</i></p> <p><i>On Thursday, August 31, there are AA and NA meetings only in the evening (10:00-11:00 PM).</i></p> |   |                        |   |   |



# *Greetings*

*Oxford House, Inc.*

*42<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary and 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention*

August 31 - September 1, 2017

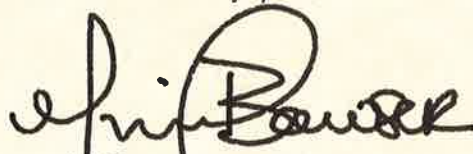


As Mayor of Washington, DC, it is my pleasure to extend congratulations to Oxford House, Inc., on the occasion of your 42<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary and 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention.

Oxford House, founded in Silver Spring, Maryland, has grown from one house to almost 2,200 throughout the US and the world, including 32 in Washington, DC. For more than four decades, Oxford House has helped over 375,000 individuals restore their lives and remain clean and sober without relapse.

I thank this organization for helping to make a difference in the lives of others.

On behalf of the residents of Washington, DC, you have my best wishes for an enjoyable event.

  
Muriel Bowser  
Mayor of Washington, DC



## *Oxford House™: Unique, Time-tested and Evidence-based*

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Welcome to the 2017 Oxford House™ World Convention in Washington, D.C. The convention theme this year sums up the key characteristics of the Oxford House™ program. Throughout the convention, we will be talking about these characteristics as we focus on a broad set of topics ranging from basic stuff about what makes Oxford Houses work to broader issues about addiction and recovery. There is also plenty of time for socializing and networking. Attend all the sessions. You'll learn a lot and have fun in the process.

Oxford House™ was born in 1975 when thirteen men living in a county-run halfway house that was closing needed a safe place to live to continue their recovery. Looking back over the 42 years of Oxford House™ existence, the success of the organization stands out. It has continually focused on providing opportunity for long-term recovery. From its beginning, Oxford House™ has drawn on three legacies inherent in American history: individual liberty, participatory democracy, and entrepreneurial freedom. This focus has paid off. Today, we have a national network of 2,200 Oxford Houses [17,490 beds], continued expansion and recovery outcomes second to none.

Let me give you a few of my thoughts on the three characteristics mentioned in the theme – what they mean, how they draw upon American traditions and how they contribute to the success of Oxford House.

### **Unique**

Built into the Oxford House culture is a belief that recovery without relapse should be the normal outcome of addiction treatment – not the exception. Behind that belief is the realization that behavior change takes time, peer support and a safe place to live. How Oxford House fulfills that expectation is what makes Oxford House unique.

In 1987, when Oxford House was celebrating its 12<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Dr. Bill Spillane released a study he had done involving 1,280 recovering individuals who had lived in the 13 original Oxford Houses. He reported that 80% of those individuals had self-reported that they had stayed clean and sober from the time they had moved into an Oxford House. That finding was the first verification that somehow the Oxford House concept and system of operation was producing results that were substantially better than traditional ways of dealing with alcoholism, drug addiction and co-occurring mental illness.

The American tradition of individual freedom underlies the faith, respect and responsibility that the Oxford House concept puts on the recovering individuals who run and financially support the individual Oxford Houses. That self-run, self-supported principle of Oxford House is what makes it work and also makes widespread development of networks of Oxford House economically feasible.

Last year alone, Oxford House, Inc. [OHI] – the 501[c][3] umbrella organization of all Oxford Houses – operated on a budget of about \$6.3 million dollars but the men and women living in the national network of Oxford Houses paid landlords, utilities and other household expenses about \$106 million. The OHI budget funds outreach support for the start-up of Houses but residents themselves cover all the expenses of their House. The self-support principle of Oxford House™, coupled with the fact that it owns no property and relies solely upon the rental of ordinary single

family houses, is the primary reason that permits it to expand the supply of beds in order to meet the demand for them.

From the beginning, Oxford House has emphasized the importance of self-determination consistent with responsibility. Each Oxford House obtains a charter that spells out three general conditions each Oxford House must follow to achieve the maintenance of an alcohol and drug-free living environment.

Participatory democracy is key to individual freedom, including recovery from the dependence on alcohol or illicit drugs, and it is egalitarian. Within the Oxford House family, it is not uncommon to hear that the only good thing that can be said about addiction is that it is egalitarian. Rich and poor, male and female, Black and White, educated and under-educated, young and old -- all can become addicted to alcohol and drugs. The Oxford House population is also diverse and it features egalitarianism as a core principle – each individual has an equal vote, officers are term-limited and household expenses are divided equally among all residents (EES – ‘equal expense share’ in the jargon of Oxford House). This participatory democracy minimizes a “we versus them” attitude that can detract from a focus on recovery.

### **Time-Tested**

In 1975, when Oxford House™ began, there was considerable doubt that the Oxford House™ concept and system of operation would work. Few believed that the “inmates could run the asylum.” Time has shown the Oxford House™ concept and system of operation has worked well. Over the last 42 years, more than 350,000 individuals have lived in an Oxford House and most have stayed clean and sober. The group recovery home section of the 1988 Anti-Drug Abuse Act with the \$4,000 start-up loan incentive served as a catalyst to expand the number of Oxford Houses throughout the country.

Quality control assures that each Oxford House operates the same way. Each Oxford House™ group is able to enjoy all the proven practices by getting a free charter that requires that the House to employ democratic self-rule, financial self-support and maintenance of a clean and sober living environment by agreeing to immediately expel any House resident who uses alcohol or illicit drugs. By following the charter conditions, the “inmates are able to run the asylum” and the organization, as a whole, is able to assure uniform high quality operations.

It has been demonstrated that Oxford Houses can be started anywhere and work well. Today, 42 states have Oxford Houses and many states support expansion by providing Oxford House, Inc. – the nonprofit umbrella organization for all Oxford Houses – with small grants to pay trained outreach workers to help local recovering individuals learn the Oxford House concept and system of operation. All outreach workers are alumni of Oxford House. These states tend to have the most Oxford Houses.

The Oxford House™ concept has been tested in court many times – successfully. OHI has proven through legal actions that Oxford House residents renting a house to live together in support of recovery are entitled to be treated the same as an ordinary family. The 1995 Supreme Court case, *City of Edmonds, WA v. Oxford House, Inc.* established that Oxford House residents are a protected class under the Federal Fair Housing Act and entitled to accommodation with respect to locating Oxford Houses in areas zoned for single families. OHI has also defended the rights of Oxford Houses when it comes to fire safety and property insurance. Individuals recovering from addiction, who live together in order to help each other master recovery are

protected from discrimination as a direct result of Oxford House, Inc.’s legal actions. Oxford House™ has a long history of time-tested success in the protection of civil rights.

### **Evidence-Based**

Oxford House™ has set the standard for making long-term recovery the norm – not the exception. Very early on, the residents of Oxford House invited researchers to study the program and assess its outcomes. This notion of being open about recovery was uncommon at the time; after all, ‘anonymity’ is the hallmark of the 12-Step programs. Early on, Oxford House residents chose to be open about their program and recovery and the result has been the wealth of research that has been done on the program and its people.

In 2010, Dr. Jeffrey D. Roth, MD, a Chicago psychiatrist who is editor of *Journal of Groups in Addiction and Recovery*, acknowledged this fact when he wrote:

While research on AA has been limited by the role of anonymity in recovery, the willingness of Oxford Houses to open their doors to academic research gives us an opportunity to see recovery from addiction in action.

Over the last twenty-five years, Oxford House has been a key participant in third-party scientific research to learn about the process of recovery from addiction. Both NIDA and NIAAA have sponsored comprehensive research by DePaul University in Chicago. One study followed 890 Oxford House residents living in 219 Oxford Houses around the country for 27 months. At the end of the period, the study found that only 13% had returned to using alcohol or illicit drugs. Another major study tested residents with both the Alcohol Severity Index [ASI] test and the Psychiatric Severity Index [PSI] test and found that residents with co-occurring mental illness also did well within an Oxford House setting.

In 2011, the federal government [SAMHSA] listed Oxford House as a best practice on the National Registry of Evidence-based Practice and Procedures [NREPP]. Oxford House was and continues to be the only recovery house program listed on NREPP. Furthermore, Oxford House was the only recovery housing program singled out in the 2016 Surgeon General’s report. This convention will provide an up-to-date review of the latest knowledge about addiction and solicit your ideas for additional research to better understand the process of recovery.

In addition to formal research, the “stories” that appear in this program and are available on the website give testimony to how individuals have used Oxford House to transform themselves into achieving solid recovery for the long term.

### **Conclusion**

**The theme is correct. Oxford House truly is unique, time-tested and evidence-based.** We are all fortunate to be part of it. Keep in mind that each of us plays an important role in the success of Oxford House. There really are no big bosses. Because each of us pays an equal share of expenses and has an equal vote in House decisions, we learn self-confidence first-hand. That makes us feel good about ourselves and sooner or later we tie the “feeling good about ourselves” to the fact that we are staying clean and sober and contributing to the successful running of our Oxford House. Researchers often call what we acquire, “self-efficacy.” Whatever it is called, we know that what we get from Oxford House is the structure we need to evolve from scared, addicted human beings into confident human beings comfortable in sobriety and long-term recovery.

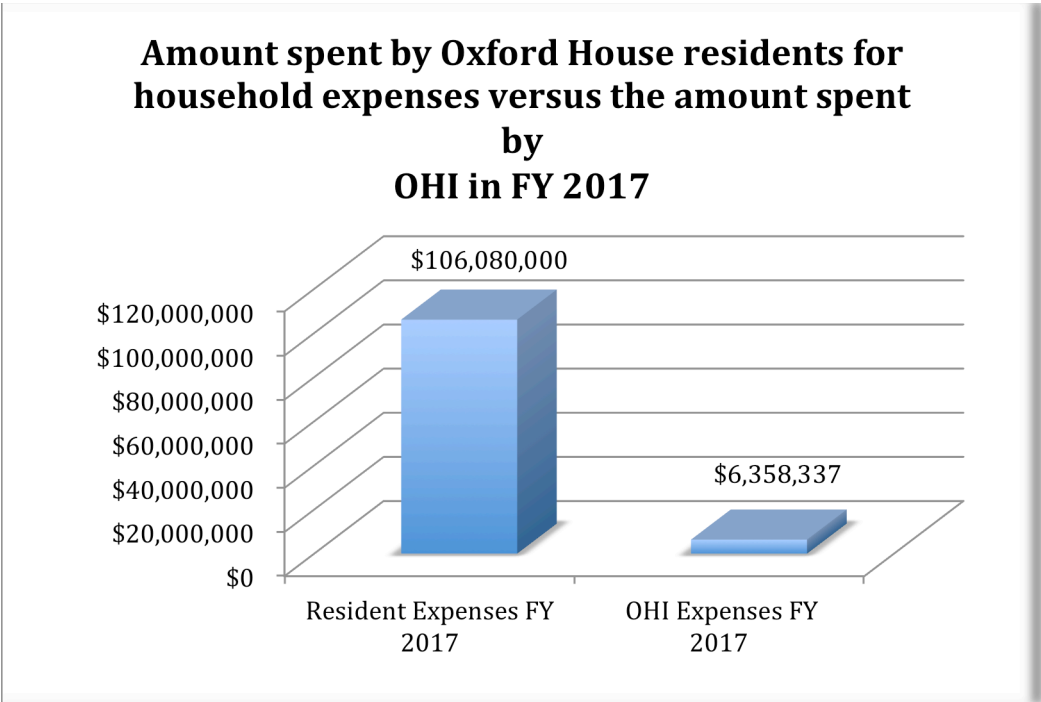
The structure of Oxford House is more than just participatory democracy and self-support. It includes workshops, conventions, training sessions, picnics, bowling leagues, open houses and enjoyment of each other without the use of booze or illicit drugs. That may be no big deal for individuals never addicted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

**PARTICIPATE IN THIS 2017 CONVENTION AND ENJOY IT!**

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

Enjoy this convention! Listen to the speakers and panel experts to learn more about Oxford House. Remember also that all of us can work together to help more individuals achieve long-term recovery without relapse by establishing new Oxford Houses. House residents should split up and plan to cover as many breakout panels as possible so as to be able to go back home and tell others about all the sessions.

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



## **OPIOID ADDICTION AND OXFORD HOUSE**

The nation's opioid epidemic is front page news these days but opioid addiction is not new to Oxford House. For many years, Oxford Houses have been home to residents who have been addicted to opioids and most of them have achieved long-term recovery.

One of the participants in the 1991 CBS 60 Minutes program on Oxford House had been addicted to heroin for over 21 years. On that show, Andrea Griffin spoke of her heroin addiction and how she had overcome it in Oxford House. She appeared in 2016 on the Meredith Vieira Show to talk again about Oxford House and the fact of her continued sobriety. (Links to both programs can be found on the home page of the Oxford House web site – [www.oxfordhouse.org](http://www.oxfordhouse.org).) She is still in recovery today.

Most Oxford House residents don't relapse but some do. Because opioid overdoses can kill quietly and rapidly, Oxford House residents are taught to be aware of and responsive to the possibility of overdoses. At this Oxford House convention one breakout panel will discuss the current opioid crisis and two other breakout panels will address more practical aspects of concern to Houses, including how to recognize opioid overdoses and what actions Oxford House residents should take to respond to a possible overdose by a resident. Narcan (Naloxone) and other antidotes can save the life of an opioid abuser who has overdosed. All Oxford House members are encouraged to learn the signs and what to do in the event of a relapse/overdose. Most Oxford Houses keep overdose antidotes on hand. Most Oxford Houses never get to use them but a few have done so and have saved lives.

Currently, many medical professionals and treatment centers encourage individuals addicted to opioids to participate in what is known as 'medically-assisted treatment' (MAT). This generally consists of providing an opioid substitute such as methadone, suboxone or buprenorphine. The widespread emphasis on MAT is a relatively new development. Oxford Houses accept residents who are on these substitute drugs; however, their behavior and usage is carefully monitored, as it is also for others in the House who are on prescribed medication.

Oxford House residents addicted to opioids have achieved long-term sobriety mainly because Oxford Houses offer peer support, a time-tested structure and no time limits on residency. Most formal treatment programs are too short to permit an individual to become 'comfortable' in sobriety during that time. Recovery requires long-term behavior change and that doesn't occur very quickly for most individuals.

Oxford House living builds self-confidence in recovery. Residents share in the elected leadership of their House, participate in Oxford House social activities, get a job, mentor new residents voted into the House, and abstain from the use of alcohol and illicit drugs. These Oxford House characteristics work to support long-term recovery for most Oxford House residents, whether or not they also use medication.

Read the stories in this program for examples of how residents have gained recovery in Oxford Houses. Many of the authors were addicted to drugs and are on the road to recovery. There are many more stories that could be told by other Oxford House residents and alumni.

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## **RECOVERY WITHOUT RELAPSE WORKS**

## **OXFORD HOUSE RESIDENTS PROVE THAT DAILY**



# 2017 Annual Oxford House Convention

Marriott Renaissance Downtown Hotel, Washington, DC  
August 31 – September 3, 2017

## Thursday, August 31, 2017

### Annual Oxford House Golf Tournament

Enterprise Golf Course  
Mitchellville, MD

This is the nineteenth Annual Oxford House Golf Tournament. There is an \$85 fee per player. Transportation to and from the tournament will be available. Meet in the Hotel Lobby by 9:00 AM to go to the course. Tee time is at 11:00 AM and play will be 'Shotgun' style. There will be four winners.

### Convention Registration

Grand Ballroom Foyer

- Thursday, 10:00 AM – 8:00 PM
- Friday, 8:00 AM – 2:00 PM
- Saturday, 8:00 AM – Noon

### Women's Conference

Thursday, 2:30 PM – 7:00 PM

- Registration opens at 1:00 PM

### World Council Meeting

Thursday evening

### AA and NA Meetings

10:00 PM – 11:00 PM

- AA meeting
- NA meeting

Meeting Room 9  
Meeting Room 10

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## HINTS FOR GETTING THE MOST OUT OF THE CONVENTION

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

## Friday, September 1, 2017

Breakfast Buffet

7:00 A.M. – 8:15 AM

### OPENING GENERAL SESSION

8:00 AM – 9:30 AM

Grand Ballroom

**Invocation: Deacon Ronald Ealey**

**Welcoming Remarks: Tanya A. Royster, M.D., Director, DC Dept. of Behavioral Health**

Dr. Tanya A. Royster, Director of the DC Department of Behavioral Health, was appointed by Mayor Muriel Bowser. Dr. Royster is a Board certified general, child and adolescent psychiatrist who prior to her appointment served as the Director of Behavioral Health at the Franciscan Physicians Network in Illinois. Previously, Dr. Royster served as the Chief of Clinical Services System with the Illinois Department of Human Services Division of Mental Health. She is a seasoned clinician, teacher, researcher and innovator. Dr. Royster earned tenure at the University of Illinois at Chicago where she taught in the departments of medicine, nursing, social work and Honors College. She also has served as medical consultant to an Illinois care coordination entity that provides care coordination services for the Illinois Medicaid agency.



Dr. Royster is well published and was selected as a Child and Family Fellow at the Annie E. Casey Foundation. She is a graduate of the Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine and completed her general psychiatry and child and adolescent psychiatry residencies at New York University/Bellevue Hospital Medical Center.

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

**Oxford House World Council Election Rules – OHI Board Member James McClain**

**Keynote Address: Richard Baum, B.A., M.A, M.P.A. Acting Director, White House Office of National Drug Control Policy**

Richard Baum currently serves as Acting Director of ONDCP. He has served ONDCP for two decades in a variety of positions through four presidential administrations. Prior to his current appointment, he was Director of the International Division in the Office of Policy, Research and Budget at ONDCP. During this time, he led or co-led the development of numerous strategic documents, including the National Drug Control Strategy, the National Southwest Border Counternarcotics Strategy, the Synthetic Drug Action Plan and the Strategy to Combat Transnational Organized Crime.



Over his years at ONDCP, he has worked on both national security and domestic drug policy issues and was in the Office of Legislative Affairs. Earlier, he was a criminal justice writer and researcher and served for six years as a Republican Congressional Staff member.

Separate from his work at ONDCP, Richard is an Adjunct Professor of Public Policy at Georgetown University's McCourt Graduate School where he teaches a course on the history of American drug policy.

**FIRST BREAKOUT PANELS**

**FRIDAY 9:45 – 11:00 AM**

**The Opioid Crisis – Facts and Experiences  
Nuts and Bolts of Opening an Oxford House – The Basics  
Oxford House and State Agencies  
Working with Drug Courts and Parole/Probation Programs  
Educating the Public About Recovery**

**Grand Ballroom  
Renaissance West  
Renaissance East  
Congressional Hall A  
Congressional Hall B**

**SECOND BREAKOUT PANELS**

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

**Oxford House and Re-entry from Prison  
The Importance of Having Fun in Oxford Houses  
The Role of Oxford House in Reducing Health Care Costs  
Recovery Housing Research – Oxford House and Other Recovery Housing  
Working with Treatment Providers**

**Grand Ballroom  
Renaissance West  
Renaissance East  
Congressional Hall A  
Congressional Hall B**

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**Lunch on your own - Grab something to eat and hit an AA meeting (Meeting Room 9)  
or hit an NA meeting (Meeting Room 10)**

**REMEMBER TO GET WORLD COUNCIL NOMINATING PETITIONS IN BY 1:00 PM  
Campaign speeches by each of the nominated candidates will be made at the Second General Session**

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**SECOND GENERAL SESSION**

**2:15 PM – 5:00 PM  
Grand Ballroom**

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

Dr. Westley Clark will be making his 13<sup>th</sup> presentation at an Oxford House convention, where Oxford House audiences always enthusiastically receive his remarks. He retired two years ago after 16 years at SAMHSA as Director of the Center on Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT) and currently serves as Dean’s Executive Professor in the Public Health Program at Santa Clara University.

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



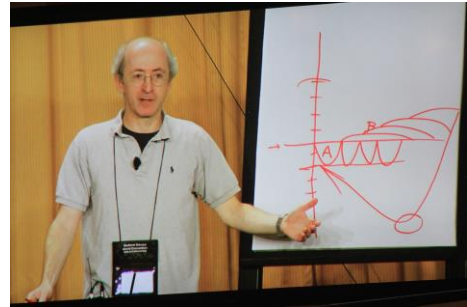
Over his many years in the field, Dr. Clark has observed the change from the focus on acute care to one that emphasizes long-term recovery. His support of Oxford House and its message of the possibility of long-term recovery without relapse is exemplified by his attendance at most of our annual conventions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

## Friday, September 1, 2017 (cont.)

### Keynote Address: Stuart Gitlow, M.D., M.P.H., M.B.A.

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

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



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

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

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

### Presentation of Directors' 100-Year Awards: Jerry Conlon, OHI Board Chair

The Directors' 100-year awards are given to those Oxford Houses, Chapters and State Associations that have voluntarily contributed at least \$600 over the past year to Oxford House, Inc. to support expansion of Oxford Houses in areas where no other support is available. Oxford House, Inc. levies no fees or charges of any type to individual Oxford Houses. Many Houses, Chapters and State Associations choose to make voluntary contribution to show their gratitude for what Oxford has done for them and to enable others to receive the same opportunity for long-term recovery without relapse in an Oxford House.

## Friday Evening – Enjoy Dinner on Your Own

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*“Under the dedicated, tireless leadership of Kathleen Gibson, the entire Oxford House staff has done a wonderful job of carrying out the hard work of organizing this 2017 Annual Oxford House World Convention.*

*May the things we have learned and the new friends we have made at this convention speed us on the way to making the 43<sup>rd</sup> year of Oxford House one of great expansion. May that expansion be great enough to give every alcoholic, drug addict or person with co-occurring mental illness the opportunity to benefit from living in an Oxford House!”*

*Paul Molloy, a grateful Oxford House alumnus*

## Saturday, September 2, 2017

**Breakfast Buffet**

**7:00 AM – 8:30 AM**

### **THIRD BREAKOUT PANELS**

**Saturday, 8:15 - 9:30 AM**

**Oxford Houses – Four Stages of Houses and Five Core Principles  
Dealing with Children in Oxford Houses  
Dealing with Opioid Overdoses  
Keeping Alumni Involved and Forming Alumni Associations  
Giving Medication-Assisted Treatment a Chance**

**Grand Ballroom  
Renaissance West  
Renaissance East  
Congressional Hall  
Congressional Hall B**

### **FOURTH BREAKOUT PANELS**

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

**Medication in Oxford Houses  
Working Together: Houses, Chapters, Associations and Alumni  
Organizing Your Finances – Budgeting and Saving  
Brainstorming with Researchers  
Civil Rights and the Law**

**Grand Ballroom  
Renaissance West  
Renaissance East  
Congressional Hall A  
Congressional Hall B**

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

### **FIFTH BREAKOUT PANELS**

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

**Conducting House Meetings  
Health Issues in Oxford Houses (Chronic Illnesses, HIV, Hepatitis C, etc.)  
Millennials and Recovery  
Current Oxford House Research and Upcoming Studies  
Oxford House World Council Update**

**Grand Ballroom  
Renaissance West  
Renaissance East  
Congressional Hall A  
Congressional Hall B**

### **LUNCH ON YOUR OWN**

**12:30 PM – 2:00 PM**

Lunch on your own – Immediate area has lots of places to eat in or carry out. Grab something to eat and hit an AA meeting in Meeting Room 9 or an NA meeting in Meeting Room 10 or go nearby to the Alumni Lunch.

**Alumni Lunch** [Tickets at World Council Desk: \$30 per person]

**12:30 PM -2:00 PM**

### **THIRD GENERAL SESSION**

**2:15 PM – 4:30 PM**

**Grand Ballroom**

**Keynote: The Oxford House, Inc. (OHI) Year in Review**



Oxford House, Inc. is run by a dedicated staff under the leadership of CEO Paul Molloy and COO Kathleen Gibson. Together, they direct the activities of Oxford House outreach workers – all Oxford House alumni – who work around the country helping groups of recovering individuals start new Oxford Houses and helping existing networks stay on track. OHI provides charters to new Houses that agree to meet charter conditions, manuals and other publications the support the network of Oxford Houses and organizes the annual World Convention. Paul and Kathleen – both Oxford House alumni – will discuss OHI’s activities over the prior year and highlight milestones.

- **Announcement and Introduction of New World Council Members**
- **Discussion and Vote on Convention Resolutions – including the selection of a site for the 2018 Convention**

## Saturday Evening, September 2, 2017

### Banquet

6:30 PM – 8:30 PM  
Grand Ballroom

#### Invocation

#### Dinner

#### Presentation of Awards

- **Reggie Midget Award**

When Reggie Midget was an Oxford House outreach worker in the State of Missouri, he spent free time getting an Oxford House established in his old hometown of Tulsa, Oklahoma. Sadly, Reggie was murdered in Kansas City in 1999. This award is given annually to the person who best reflects Reggie's dedication to spreading the Oxford House movement to new geographic areas.

- **Founder's Award**

Each year the Founder's Award is given to one or more individuals who have made a lasting contribution to the growth and success of Oxford House.

- **Tom Fellows Award**

Tom Fellows was a Friend of Bill's but he was never a resident of an Oxford House. Nevertheless, Tom spent the last eight years of his life as an advocate of Oxford House and helped start a cluster of houses serving graduates of the Salvation Army's Rehabilitation Facility in Maryland. When Tom died, his wife asked his friends to remember him with contributions to Oxford House. The annual Tom Fellows award is an award given to an individual who has given outstanding service to Oxford House even though he or she was never an Oxford House resident.

### Recovery Speaker

#### Dance

9:00 PM – Midnight

## Sunday, September 3, 2017

#### Breakfast Buffet

7:00 AM – 8:30 AM

### CLOSING GENERAL SESSION

8:15 AM to 9:45 AM  
Grand Ballroom

- **Convention Summary** Paul Molloy, CEO
- **Remembrance Of Those Who Have Died** Oxford House Residents and Alumni
- **Tradition Renewal and Closing** Kathleen Gibson, COO

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Have a safe trip home and remember to share what you have learned at the convention with Oxford House residents who weren't able to attend this year's convention.

**Make plans now to attend the 2018 Annual Oxford House World Convention!**

# SUMMARY OF ALL BREAKOUT PANELS

## FIRST BREAKOUT PANELS

FRIDAY 9:45 – 11:00 AM

### The Opioid Crisis – Facts and Experiences

Grand Ballroom

Friday 9:45 - 11:00 AM

**Panelists:** Wilson M. Compton, M.D., M.P.E. Deputy Director, National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)  
H. Westley Clark, M.D., J.D., M.P.H. Faculty, University of Santa Clara, CA  
Marty Walker Oxford House Outreach Coordinator, TN  
Lori Holtzclaw Oxford House Regional Manager, LA/MS  
Flo Stein, M.P.H. Past Chief, Community Policy Management, NC DHHS SAS  
John Majer, Ph. D. Researcher and Clinical Psychology Professor, Truman College, Chicago, IL

**Moderator:** Stuart Gitlow, M.D. M.P.A., M.B.A. Past President, American Society of Addiction Medicine

The opioid crisis is much in the news these days. The recently-released interim report of the Commission on Combatting Drug Addiction and the Opioid Crisis quantified the problem, recommended that the President declare a national emergency, and identified a set of eight legislative and regulatory actions to be taken immediately. Two of these action items of particular interest to this panel are: (1) rapidly increasing treatment capacity; and (2) enhancing access to Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT). The interim report also noted that the final report will examine improvements in treatment programs based on adherence to principles of evidence-based treatment, continuum of care, outcome measures, and patient education on quality treatment.

Opioid addiction is not new to Oxford House. Some of the earliest Oxford House residents successfully battled opioid addiction and many residents continue to do so. The panelists, a combination of medical experts, a former state agency director, a researcher and two Oxford House alumni, will discuss opioid addiction, their thoughts on the current crisis and the Commission's interim report recommendations. They will discuss treatment expansion and the role of MAT, identify improvements in treatment programs that they believe should be highlighted by the Commission in its final report, and talk about how the Oxford House program fits into a solution to the problem.

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

Renaissance West

Friday 9:45 – 11:00 AM

**Panelists:** Debbie Robinson Oxford House Outreach, VA  
Stacey Levin Oxford House Outreach, SC  
Kayla Leinenweber Oxford House Outreach, TN  
Bruce Gates Oxford House Outreach, KY

**Moderator:** Keith Gibson Oxford House Outreach, NC

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

Oxford House expansion happened in the early years because members of existing Oxford Houses found new houses to rent and some members of the older Oxford Houses would move in to help get the new House running. 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 then and can still work. Outreach workers can also be used as resource persons by individual Oxford Houses and Chapters that want to learn how to start new Houses.

## Oxford House and State Agencies

Renaissance East

Friday 9:45 - 11:00 AM

**Panelists:**

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| Linda McKorkle Jenna     | Director of Treatment and Recovery Services, TN                         |
| Neasbitt, M.S.,LCDC      | Texas Health & Human Services Commission, TX                            |
| Chris Scalise, M.A.,LPC  | NJ Dept. of Alcohol and Substance Abuse, NJ                             |
| Angela Harper King, M.A. | Supportive Housing Specialist, CMH/DD/SA Services, NCHHA, NC            |
| Michael Snoddy           | Office of Fiscal Services, DC Department of Behavioral Health (DBH), DC |

**Moderator:** Mark Spence

Oxford House Outreach, DC

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

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

## Working with Drug Courts and Parole/Probation Programs

Congressional Hall A

Friday, 9:45 - 11:00 AM

|                   |                     |  |
|-------------------|---------------------|--|
| <b>Panelists:</b> | Nelson W. Rupp, Jr. | Judge, Circuit Court, Montgomery County, MD      |
|                   | Thomas Floyd        | Oxford House Outreach, OK                        |
|                   | Katy Steer          | Oxford House Resident, OR                        |
|                   | George Kent         | Oxford House Regional Outreach Manager, NJ/WV    |
|                   | Whit Holden, J. D.  | Oxford House Alumnus and Drug Court Outreach, MD |

**Moderator:** Joe Chavez

Oxford House Outreach, HI

In 1990, there were only one or two drug courts in the country. Currently there are over 3,000 drug courts. The practice and theory of drug courts is that it is better to route alcoholics and drug addicts into treatment than send them to jail. Drug court judges have found that drug court participants tend to do well if they live in an Oxford House. Not only does such intervention motivate clients to begin to master the recovery process, it also saves taxpayers the costs of incarceration and recidivism. Oxford House is a natural partner of drug courts. Drug court clients encouraged to apply to an Oxford House sometimes do so reluctantly, but they often later become active and enthusiastic House members. Generally, drug court clients do better in an Oxford House than they would if they returned to their families or old neighborhoods. Many Oxford House residents are, or have been, drug court clients; most of them do well in Oxford House and achieve long-term recovery.

The panelists include a drug court judge along with residents and alumni of Oxford House. All are familiar with the drug court process. They will discuss their experiences and talk about how Oxford Houses can help drug court clients achieve long-term sobriety and meet the expectations of the drug courts. In addition, they will discuss ways in which Oxford Houses can do a better job of informing drug courts about the Oxford House program and its value for drug court clients.



## Educating the Public about Recovery

**Congressional Hall B**

**Friday 9:45 – 11:00 AM**

**Panelists:** Ivette A. Torres, M.Ed., M.S. Director, Office of Consumer Affairs, CSAT/SAMHSA  
Anna Mable Jones Oxford House Outreach, DC  
Theresa O’Laughlin Faces and Voices  
Lavongue Manley OH Alumnus + Alcohol Drug Council of NC  
Tom Hill VP for Addictions and Recovery, National Council for Behavioral Health

**Moderator:** Tom Coderre Senior Advisor, Altarum Institute

Throughout the 42-year history of Oxford House, Oxford House residents have been open about their addiction. Historically, this openness came about because the location of Oxford Houses in residential neighborhoods and the publicity surrounding NIMBY lawsuits made anonymity impossible. Also, the Oxford House program emphasized the positive aspects of recovery and encouraged residents to focus on their recovery and not on the stigma of active addiction. These factors kept Oxford House residents from maintaining anonymity in the broader community. Furthermore, this openness led Oxford House residents to be pioneers in encouraging and participating in academic research on addiction and recovery. As a result, researchers and the public now have a far better understanding of addiction and recovery. This research would not have been possible without piercing the veil of anonymity.

Panelists from government and private sector organizations that focus on public drug and alcohol education will discuss the purpose, value and need to educate the public on the fact that 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.

## SECOND BREAKOUT PANELS

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

### Oxford House and Re-entry from Prison

**Grand Ballroom**

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

**Panelists:** Stacie Hatfield Oxford House Outreach WA  
Ivory Wilson, M.A., LAC, CCGC Program Manager, Office of Behavioral Health, DHH, LA  
Dan Hahn Oxford House State Coordinator, OK  
Hiram Torres Oxford House Resident, TX  
Lori Holtzclaw Oxford House Regional Manager, LA/MS

**Moderator:** Kurtis Taylor Oxford House Outreach NC

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

Those who enter an Oxford House following incarceration tend to master long-term recovery and crime-free behavior. In some states, Oxford House has developed relationships with re-entry programs that permit those leaving incarceration to go straight to an Oxford House. The panel will discuss how to encourage this. Oxford House residents who come into an Oxford House from incarceration are exposed to participatory democracy rather than institutional authority. They are elected to leadership positions and undertake shared responsibility for the operation of the house. Most residents rise to the occasion. This kind of real-life training is rare for most individuals re-entering society.

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

## The Importance of Having Fun in Oxford Houses

**Renaissance West**

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

**Panelists:** Marty Walker Oxford House Outreach Coordinator TN  
Jeremy Weatherspoon Oxford House Alumnus, LA  
Brandie Bauer Oxford House Alumna, LA  
Karen McKinnon Oxford House Resource Coordinator. NC  
Emily Edens Oxford House Outreach, KY

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

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

Among the types of activities some Houses and Chapters undertake are: picnics, fishing trips, retreats, progressive dinners, softball teams and tournaments, cookouts, spaghetti dinners, pancake breakfasts, bowling and participation in bowling leagues. Many Houses and Chapters emphasize these activities during Recovery Month in particular. Chapters frequently use these types of activities to encourage Houses to become members of the Chapter. Chapter membership by individual Oxford Houses is voluntary; many Chapters use social activities of the type mentioned to generate increases in House membership in the Chapter.

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

## The Role of Oxford House in Reducing Health Care Costs

**Renaissance East**

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

**Panelists:** Amy Modlin, M.P.A. Housing Director, Trillium Health Resources, NC  
DeDe Severino, M.A. Section Chief, Addictions and Mgmt. Operations, Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities & Substance Abuse Services, DHHS, NC  
Janice Peterson, Ph.D. Deputy Assistant Secretary for Adult, Child and Family Operations, SSA, LA

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

Alcoholism and drug addiction impose excessive costs on both individuals and society. Many individuals never get any treatment and those who do get treatment tend to relapse shortly thereafter and begin the cycle again. According to the Federal Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS), sixty percent of those currently in treatment have been in treatment three times and fifteen percent have gone through treatment more than five times. Many individuals who relapse following treatment end up in jail, on the street or back in treatment. This is a costly proposition and, when it comes to treatment, public and private insurers take a heavy hit.

The just-released interim report of the Commission on Combatting Drug Addiction and the Opioid Crisis is calling for rapidly increasing treatment opportunities and Congress has been seeking increases in treatment dollars. ‘Treatment’ is usually thought of as completion of a 30-day inpatient program despite the fact that recovery generally involves longer-term behavior change. Treatment recidivism may also be exacerbated by the oft-recited claim that ‘relapse is part of the disease’ – a mantra that becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. Oxford House maintains a zero tolerance policy for relapse and most residents achieve long-term recovery – without relapse.

The panel will discuss how costs might be reduced while also increasing treatment opportunities. Also, to what extent could broader acceptance of Oxford House and other programs that focus on behavior change reduce health care costs?

## Recovery Housing Research – Oxford House and Other Recovery Housing

Congressional Hall A

Friday 11:15 AM -12:30 PM

**Panelists:** Leonard Jason, Ph. D. Director, Center for Community Research, DePaul University, IL  
Thomasina Borkman, Ph. D. Professor Emerita, Sociology, George Mason University, VA  
Nina Ward, M.P.P. Recent Graduate, UMD School of Public Policy, MD

**Moderator:** John Majer, Ph. D. Researcher and Clinical Psychology Professor, Truman College, Chicago, IL

The experience of Oxford House residents to date tends to validate the notion that the Oxford House program works well in supporting long-term recovery. Does research support this conclusion? This panel will discuss this question as well as the differences between Oxford Houses and other recovery housing programs. They will address the characteristics of the Oxford House program that are most critical to its success and whether the Oxford House philosophy of ‘recovery without relapse’ leads to better recovery outcomes. They will also address the role of self-governance and self-support. Nina Ward just completed an overview of recovery housing as her capstone project for her graduate work in the School of Public Policy at the University of Maryland. The other panelists have each undertaken extensive research into the role of recovery housing and are well versed in the research literature.

### Working with Treatment Providers

Congressional Hall B

Friday 11:15 AM – 12:30 PM

**Panelists:** Jason Bliss Oxford House Outreach, WA  
De Wysocki Oxford House Outreach, TX  
Daniel Fuchs Oxford House Outreach, CO  
Nick Yacoub, CPRS; RPSV Substitute Relief Counselor, A New Beginning, Chantilly, VA  
Robert Devereux Clinical Outreach Lead MD, DC, VA; Ashley Addiction Treatment, MD

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

Most individuals recovering from alcoholism or drug addiction initially go through formal treatment programs. 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.

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 Oxford House residents can do to establish and foster good working relationships with treatment providers. The panelists will discuss the value of presentations at treatment provider sites and having real-time vacancy information for primary treatment providers and the recovery community.

### THIRD BREAKOUT PANELS

Saturday 8:15 - 9:30 AM

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

Grand Ballroom

Saturday 8:15 AM – 9:30 AM

**Presenters:** Jackson Longan Oxford House Regional Outreach Manager, OK/NE/TX/NM  
Jason Paul Jarreau Manager, Contracts and Development, OHI

The Oxford House Manual is the basic guide for operating an Oxford House. All Oxford Houses follow the Oxford House Manual but some Houses are more successful than others. The presenters will discuss a continuum of practices that differentiate between an Oxford House that is following its charter but not doing much else and an Oxford House in which members are actively involved in recovery-enhancing activities. The ideas presented don’t constitute a formal rating system but it’s a useful checklist that residents can use to consider how their Oxford House can do better.

## Dealing with Children in Oxford Houses

**Renaissance West**

**Saturday 8:15 AM - 9:30 AM**

**Panelists:** Sean Bossen Oxford House Outreach, OR  
Debbie Robinson Oxford House Outreach, VA  
Shaunna Mellons Oxford House Resident TN  
Genny Slater Oxford House Outreach, TX

**Moderator:** Judy Maxwell Regional Outreach Manager, OR

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

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

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

## Dealing with Opioid Overdoses

**Renaissance East**

**Saturday 8:15 AM - 9:30 AM**

**Panelists:** Tara Meyer Oxford House Outreach, NJ  
Jackie Feliciano Oxford House Outreach, NC  
Ginny Atwood Co-Founder and Executive Director, Chris Atwood Foundation  
De Wysocki Oxford House Outreach, TX  
Eileen Wildnauer House Outreach, WV

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

The current opioid epidemic is a major concern in Oxford Houses. Most Oxford House residents stay clean and sober but, occasionally, residents will relapse. Relapses involving opioids, such as heroin, are more difficult to pick up than relapses into the use of alcohol, cocaine or many other drugs. Sometimes a person relapsing on opioids simply goes to bed, falls asleep and does not wake up because the drug has slowed the respiratory system too much. Relapse is most likely to happen during the first few weeks of residency in an Oxford House; this is one reason that Houses are strongly encouraged to have newcomers share a room with another resident both for socialization purposes and as a check on any behavior that may suggest a relapse has occurred or is imminent. Relapse always requires immediate expulsion but the opioid overdoses can be fatal and residents should be aware of their occurrence and what action should be taken if a resident is believed to have overdosed. Once the immediate crisis is over, residents can move on to expulsion as required by the Oxford House Charter.

This panel will discuss how to recognize overdoses and what actions Oxford House residents should take to respond to a possible overdose by a resident. Narcan (Naloxone) and other antidotes can save the life of an opioid abuser who has overdosed. Oxford Houses typically keep an overdose antidote on hand. All House members should know the signs of an overdose and what to do in the event of a relapse/overdose. The panelists are all knowledgeable about overdoses and how to deal with them. They will provide valuable guidance to Oxford House residents who may have to deal with an overdose in their Oxford House.

## Keeping Alumni Involved and Forming Alumni Associations

**Congressional Hall A**

**Saturday 8:15 AM - 9:30 AM**

**Panelists:** John Summers Oxford House Alumnus, Wichita, KS  
Hamilton Barton Oxford House Alumnus, San Antonio, TX  
Deloris Mabins Oxford House Alumna, TN  
Eric Cannaday Oxford House Alumnus, OK

**Moderator:** Anna Mable Jones Oxford House Outreach, DC

Every year, many residents leave their Oxford House and begin living independently. Most of them stay clean and sober and remain grateful for their Oxford House experience. Oxford House, Inc. and individual Oxford Houses, Chapters and State Associations need to do a better job of staying in touch with alumni who leave in good standing and help keep them involved in Oxford House. Tradition Nine, the final Oxford House Tradition, tries to set the proper tone but alone it falls short. Residents, individual houses, Chapters and State Associations need to do more to motivate alumni to stay involved and suggest ways in which they can be helpful. When

The panelists have experience in creating alumni groups and maintaining contact with them. They will talk about how they've done it; how alumni have stayed involved in their areas and also provide tips on how others can create similar alumni networks. Alumni can play a strong role in spreading the word about Oxford House and can take on other roles. They can share their strength and experience with current residents but they should avoid overreaching and taking on responsibilities that belong to House residents.

## Giving Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) a Chance

**Congressional Hall B**

**Saturday 8:15 AM - 9:30 AM**

**Panelists:** Ray Caesar, LPC, LADC-MH Oklahoma Dept. of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services  
Katie Sherman Texas Health & Human Services Commission  
Danear McCoy Oxford House Resident, MD  
Lori Holtzclaw Oxford House Regional Manager, LA/MS

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

Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) is currently offered to most individuals seeking recovery from opioid addiction. Oxford Houses will accept an applicant using MAT as long as there is a vacancy and the applicant demonstrates a commitment to recovery and the willingness to use only the prescribed medication.

Opioid addiction is not new to Oxford House residents but the use of MAT has been somewhat controversial in the recovery community and in Oxford Houses. Over the years, many of the residents of Oxford House have been addicted to opioids and have achieved long-term recovery. Since most of them did so without medication, they harbor some apprehension about this new protocol – particularly when recommended for long-term use rather than as a tapering-off mechanism. Today, however, MAT has become the norm for recovering opioid users and Oxford Houses are recognizing that fact.

Many Oxford Houses now have residents who are using MAT or who used MAT initially but have since tapered-off and are no longer use it. The panel will discuss the use of MAT, its role in recovery and how Oxford Houses are dealing with the use of MAT among residents.

The panelists include experts, two Oxford House alumni and a current Oxford House resident, all of whom are knowledgeable about the use of MAT in general and in Oxford Houses.

## FOURTH BREAKOUT PANELS

Saturday 9:45-11:00 AM

### Medication in Oxford Houses

#### Grand Ballroom

Saturday 9:45 - 11:00 AM

**Panelists:** Ken Hoffman, M.D.,M.P.H. Clinical Director, ADAP,U. S. Department of State  
Stacey Levin Oxford House Outreach, SC  
Paula Harrington Oxford House Outreach, NC

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

About half of the residents of Oxford House have a physical or mental health disorder that requires medication to control. This panel will sort through the medicines that fit within an Oxford House environment and those that undermine the alcohol and drug-free foundation of Oxford House living.

The panelists will discuss the use and misuse of medicine within an Oxford House. Some medicines 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 Oxford Houses to assure that the person with the prescription or others in the house do not misuse legitimate medication or provide easy access to the medication to others residents. Understanding different medicines as well as their use and abuse is the first step to knowing how an individual Oxford House should monitor and control the presence of legal drugs within Houses. The panelists will also consider the use of medication 'lock boxes' in Houses.

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

#### Renaissance West

Saturday 9:45 - 11:00 AM

**Panelists:** Chuck Liston Oxford House Alumnus, KS  
Greg "Goose" Weisz Oxford House Outreach, NC  
Gene McVae Oxford House Outreach, OR  
Lynn Williams Oxford House Alumna, NC/VA

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

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

In many states, Houses, chapters and state associations all work together, recognizing the different roles of each. Sometimes, however, there is bureaucratic overreach and this should be avoided. One of the biggest challenges is fostering democracy in Houses and in Chapters. The system is purposely 'rigged' to foster democracy by its emphasis on House meetings, election of officers, the equal sharing of expenses and the autonomy of the each individual Oxford House. It's important in all Houses and Chapters that everyone be treated equally; by establishing term limits on House officers, everyone has the chance to rise to the occasion, accept responsibility, learn leadership and strengthen sobriety. It's also important for Oxford House outreach workers to serve as resource persons for residents, teaching them how the Oxford House system works but, like Tom Sawyer, challenging residents to do the work themselves.

Since membership in a Chapter or State Association is always voluntary, emphasizing fellowship over enforcement and education over authoritarianism is necessary and builds membership. While Housing Service Committees play an important educational role, members need to remember that their role is to act as 'helpers', not as 'enforcers' or 'bullies.' Chapters and State associations have an important role to play in supporting individual Oxford Houses and their residents but, at all times, they need to recognize the autonomy of each individual Oxford House. The panel will discuss what Oxford Houses, chapters and state associations can do to build constructive relationships with each other.

## Organizing Your Finances – Budgeting and Saving

**Renaissance East**

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

**Panelists:** Gino Pugliesi Regional Outreach Manager, WA  
Leann Tyler Finance Director, OHI  
Judy Maxwell Regional Outreach Manager, WA/OR  
Ricky Mogel Oxford House Outreach, WA

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

As a consequence of active addiction, most Oxford House residents have left a trail of bad debts and bad credit. Even clean and sober, some Oxford House residents are better than others at managing their money. Some residents figured out how to save for a rainy day; other residents are mostly figuring out where they can ‘borrow from Peter to pay Paul’ or how to escape a mountain of debt. And some residents would like to figure out how to become credit-worthy.

The panelists are not financial experts; they are all Oxford House alumni and staff who have done a good job of dealing with their own finances, establishing good credit ratings, and setting up their own budgeting and saving processes. They will talk about some of their strategies for managing debt, credit and expenses while also saving a bit for the future. Not everyone is likely to be as obsessive about it as Gino is; however, even those who are more casual may pick up some good ideas.

## Brainstorming with Researchers Recovery Topics Residents and Alumni Would Like to See Studied

**Congressional Hall A**

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

**Panelists:** John Majer, Ph. D. Researcher and Clinical Psychology Professor, Truman College, Chicago, IL  
Leonard Jason, Ph. D. Director, Center for Community Research, DePaul University, IL  
Ted Bobak Community Psychology Graduate Student, DePaul University, IL

**Moderator:** Thomasina Borkman, Ph. D. Professor Emerita, Sociology, George Mason University, VA

The members of the panel are all researchers who are very familiar with recovery housing research and who have conducted much of it themselves – and continue to do so. Convention participants will have the opportunity to submit possible research topics and questions to the researchers in writing. The moderator will sort the questions and comments and have the panelists discuss them. If time permits, the panel will take oral questions from the audience.

It will be an opportunity to discuss why particular topics might be of interest to the recovery community and others, to suggest some aspects of Oxford House living that might be considered to be good topics for research, and to raise other issues related to recovery research. The panelists will have the opportunity to discuss the pros and cons or various topics raised, explain something about the research process, and mention the cost of research – particularly as it applies to longitudinal research (following the same people over time). The panelists are all distinguished researchers and academics in the behavioral sciences.

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**OXFORD HOUSE:**

**UNIQUE • TIME-TESTED • EVIDENCE-BASED**

## Civil Rights and the Law

**Congressional Hall B**

**Saturday 9:45 –11:00 AM**

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

**Moderator:** Blair Tinkle, J.D. Attorney, OHI

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

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

Steve Polin, an alumnus of Oxford House, is a leading litigator in the application of the Federal Fair Housing Act to protect rights of individuals with disabilities. Greg Heafner, an Oxford House alumnus, is an attorney in Chapel Hill and has represented Oxford House in Fair Housing Act cases, particularly those involving insurance discrimination against landlords. Whit Holden was a member of the first Oxford House; recently retired, he now works on legal issues with OHI staff. Blair Tinkle, the moderator, is an Oxford House resident and an attorney on the staff of Oxford House, Inc.

## FIFTH BREAKOUT PANELS

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

### Conducting House Meetings

**Grand Ballroom**

**Saturday 11:15 – 12:30 PM**

**Panelists:** Lori Holtzclaw Regional Outreach Manager, LA  
Shawn Wister Oxford House Outreach, DE  
Tara Meyer Oxford House Outreach, NJ  
Misty Wilkins Oxford House Outreach, NC

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

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

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

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



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

**Renaissance West**

**Saturday 11:15 – 12:30 PM**

**Panelists:** Darryl Joiner  
Tony Sowards  
Tara Shimer  
Chris Brann

Staff, Oxford House Inc.  
Oxford House Outreach, NC  
Staff, Oxford House, Inc.

Senior Community Specialist, Hepatitis C, Gilead Sciences, Inc.

**Moderator:** Ken Hoffman, M.D. Chief Clinical Officer, ADAP, U. S. Department of State

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

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

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

Dr. Hoffman is a psychiatrist with extensive experience dealing with substance abuse disorders. He is also a member of the Oxford House Board of Directors. 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.

## Millennials and Recovery

**Renaissance East**

**Saturday 11:15 – 12:30 PM**

**Panelists:** Paula Harrington  
Robert Ashford, M.S.W.  
Wesley Ford  
Jeremy Weatherspoon  
Shawn Johnson

Oxford House Outreach, NC  
Sr. Technical Assistance Manager, JBS International  
Oxford House Resident, LA  
Oxford House Alumnus, LA  
Oxford House Outreach TX

**Moderator:** Jason Paul Jarreau Manager, Contracts and Development, OHI

The panel will focus on young people (*a.k.a.*, the millennial generation) in recovery and discuss opportunities that exist for that cohort on and off college campuses and in the broader community. In the early days of Oxford House, most incoming residents were older and were addicted primarily to alcohol. Today, when drug addiction is more prevalent and addiction seems to occur soon, incoming residents tend to be younger. Both Oxford Houses and the recovery community in general have adapted to this trend and seek to provide new opportunities for younger recovering individuals.

Paula Harrington, while not a millennial herself, has been instrumental in North Carolina in the establishment of Oxford Houses associated with the University of North Carolina and housing UNC students in recovery. Robert Ashford just completed his graduate work and has been very active in collegiate and other recovery programs for young people. The other panelists are three Oxford House alumni and one Oxford House resident.

## Current Oxford House Research and Upcoming Studies

**Congressional Hall A**

**Saturday 11:15 AM – 12:30 PM**

**Panelists:** John Majer, Ph. D. Researcher and Clinical Psychology Professor, Truman College, Chicago, IL  
Ed Stevens, Ph. D. Director/Research Associate, DePaul University  
Casey Longan Southwest Research Manager, DePaul University  
Alex Snowden Northwest Research Manager, DePaul University  
Van Wilkins East Research Manager, DePaul University  
Ted Bobak Community Psychology Graduate Student, DePaul University

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

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

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

## Oxford House World Council Update

**Congressional Hall B**

**Saturday 11:15 AM – 12:30 PM**

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

**Moderator:** Tim Ring World Council Vice Chair

The Oxford House World Council is made up of Oxford House residents and alumni who are elected to serve staggered three-year terms of office. Elections take place annually at the Oxford House Convention. The Oxford House World Council is an advisory council that identifies problems and issues, develops draft solutions and resolutions and makes suggestions and recommendations to the organization. At this 2017 Oxford House World Convention, new World Council Members will be elected. The World Council members meet in person twice a year and hold periodic telephone conference call meetings.

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

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## PLAN NOW TO ATTEND THE 2018 ANNUAL OXFORD HOUSE WORLD CONVENTION

**The vote on the 2018 convention city will take place on Saturday at the  
Third General Session. Be there to cast YOUR vote!**

## Oxford House Stories

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

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

### 2017 OXFORD HOUSE STORIES BY RESIDENTS AND ALUMNI

#### Aaron C. – North Carolina

My name is Aaron C. from Salisbury, NC. I have been battling addiction since the age of 22. My pattern of drug use, destruction, and then rehab was a constant one. I could always somewhat manage my drug use and, to a certain point, maintain the façade of a productive person. But soon my world would come crashing down and the people around me would always end up getting hurt. I would get very depressed and swear a change was going to be made. I would check myself into a rehab and feel as if this was going to be the time I finally kicked this disease. I would spend my 30-60-90 days at a facility and then return home to make everything right. Either by being overconfident, bored, or having the need for something more, I would always return to active addiction. It was a vicious cycle that seemed to be unbreakable. For a decade this continued, like clockwork, which was very depressing because I had no childhood drama, or any real excuses, it seemed.

In late January of 2017, a friend of mine in rehab talked about how Oxford had helped a lot of people he knows. I was always hesitant to do any type of halfway house but this seemed different to me – more freedom given, the House was responsible for itself, and recovery was first and foremost. After consulting with my family, I decided to give Oxford House in Wilmington, NC a chance. When I first arrived, I was a little apprehensive. After living alone for so long, I wondered how I was going to deal with 7 other guys.

After a few weeks, all my fears went away and I started to view my House as a family. We all came from different walks of life but we all shared the same passion for recovery. I was elected Treasurer of the House and, since that day, I have been involved in Oxford as much as possible. I became active in Chapter meetings and was elected Vice Chair for the Wilmington branch. I attended the state convention, and it really blew me away to see how big the family really is. I will be going to the world convention in D.C. – something I have really been looking forward to for the last few months. My House has been a great source of support for me; days I'm not my best they lift me up and vice versa. The most important thing to me is the fact I can be so involved with Oxford; it gives me a sense of purpose and has been an important part of my recovery. Oxford has made my family closer, and has given my life back to me. I owe everything to Oxford and hope that one day I can repay this special gift.

### **Allie – Louisiana**

My name is Allie and I'm an addict. My sobriety date is 7/31/15 and what that means to me is that I haven't found it necessary to use a drink or drug for almost two years. I am 28 years old but only because Oxford House saved my life. I live in New Orleans at Mirabeau Oxford House.

My introduction to Oxford began when I was discharged from a rehab for a non-drug-related incident. I was maybe 30 minutes out of rehab, standing on the sidewalk with no place to go, one suitcase of clothes and no money to speak of. I was trying to make plans to get to a homeless shelter when I was contacted by the President of Mirabeau Oxford House whom I had met in rehab. She said she had talked to the House, even though they had no openings, to see if they would be OK with couching me until I was allowed back into rehab to finish out my court-ordered year. The women there all voted 'yes' and I was welcomed into their home just like that. When I told my probation officer what happened and that I went to an Oxford House, she said it would be OK for me to stay there and not have to go back to rehab since I had been there for 6 months. This was truly a blessing because now I could get a job and start being a functioning member of society. A few days after that, one woman left the Oxford House and I was voted in as a full member of the House.

Oxford allowed me to have a place to call home until I got on my feet. I soon found a job and began paying back what I owed the House. Fast forward awhile... I go to Oxford events, which allows me to connect with people and get me out of my normal routine of work and recovery. I was voted in as President of my Oxford House, which really allowed me to grow as a person. I didn't realize how timid I was when I first got into Oxford but, since I was voted as President, many people have told me they see such a positive change in me and my confidence. Not too long after I was voted in as President of my Oxford House, I was nominated as Co-chair of my Chapter and I got the position. I was really able to get involved and understand how Oxford operates.

Every day I am grateful for what Oxford has done for me and my family. My mom constantly tells me she is proud of me and that is something that I never thought I would hear 3 years ago. Just a few days ago on 7/25/17, I was voted in as Chapter 12 Chair for Oxford Houses of New Orleans. It is an indescribable feeling knowing every day that I wake up that I can be of service to someone and give them the chance at life that Oxford House has given me. I have built bonds with women that I never thought would be this strong. I owe Oxford house and the people in Oxford House my life. I know for a fact I would be in jail or dead if I wasn't reached out to and been given the tools I needed to get back on my feet. I have held a steady job for almost 3 years now and I've gotten multiple promotions just for the character-building situations I've learned while living within Oxford. I finally feel like my life has purpose and that I belong. Y'ALL ARE MY FAMILY. When everyone had given up on me, Oxford was there to not let me give up; when no one else understands me or what I'm struggling with, Oxford does. I can't wait to continue growing as a person and be granted opportunities that I never would have gotten before. #OxfordStrong

### **Amy A. – Washington State**

By the age of 46, I found myself with 3 children, 2 grandchildren and 2 ex-husbands. Having lost my father to a heart attack when I was 21 and my mother to cancer when I was 30, I was full of regret, grief and feeling extremely sorry for myself since I had experienced so much loss in my life.

I was always able to drink socially since high school without many issues. However, after pushing all my pain deeper and deeper down, I was now pushing people out of my life with my drunken acts of anger and self-pity. By February of 2016, I found myself in jail after DUI #3. I was living with my ex-mother-in-law with my 13 and 11 year old kids. Lying in jail I thought, "If I die here that would be OK." I couldn't believe that I had allowed my life to get this out of hand. I knew this time that I couldn't hide this arrest. However,

I still didn't think it was a possibility that I had a problem with alcohol. I thought I was the victim of some horrible luck. I lay in that cell for 60 hours, crying. I didn't know a single phone number by heart except my brother's. He didn't accept my call from jail but was clearly able to put 2 and 2 together. Monday morning, when I was taken into the courtroom to see the judge, I saw my brother sitting in that room. We made a very brief eye contact with each other and I broke down. I was released and told to return in 45 days. My brother was waiting for me outside and, when I got into his car, he asked me what I wanted to do first. I answered, "I think I should check into a treatment center." Having experienced the same situation 30 years earlier, my brother understood completely.

I had full support in regards to seeking treatment but there was still a ton of pain I had caused and trust that I had broken. My oldest daughter wanted nothing to do with me. She was angry, disappointed and didn't believe I was capable of change. She wrote an 'effects' letter while I was in treatment that stabbed straight through my heart. I knew I had nowhere to live after treatment and that my ex-husband would insist that the kids go with him. But with each day I learned more and more about myself, the disease of addiction, and the overpowering peace I found within from my higher power. My confidence and self-worth was already growing and I was almost waiting for the bubble to burst. It still hasn't, though!

On my last day in the treatment center, I was served with custody papers by my ex-husband's attorney. I was to appear in court in just 2 days. In court, I represented myself. His attorney stated all the flaws about me, why the kids shouldn't be with me and that they were suggesting supervised visitation. The judge then asked me if I had anything to say. "Yes!" I said. "I am so grateful that we have their dad to care for our children as I need to take this time to take care of myself and get well." The judge couldn't speak. When she was finally able to get the words out, she said, "In all my years up here on this bench I have NEVER seen two parents with more concern for their children's wellbeing. I commend you both."

Now I had to find a home. I had a good job and a nice vehicle but I would have to pay my fines and my outpatient treatment and in-patient treatment bills and I also needed to find a home. I had remembered all the fellow patients in treatment talk about Oxford living and all the interviews they had been to. Oxford was the last place I wanted to be because of all the rules, restrictions, and especially living with women since I didn't get along with women. I remembered what my counselor in treatment had told me and that was 'to not be afraid to try new things...otherwise I wouldn't be able to grow.' So I applied at two Oxford Houses and was accepted by both. I chose one and I have been there for a year and a half.

### **Angela V. – North Carolina**

My name is Angela V. I was born in Greensboro, NC on January 4, 1951. My mother was a teacher and my father was a drug dealer and pimp. They were never married. I lived with my father's parents, who owned a soul-food restaurant; I was the only child and grandchild. I learned at an early age how to manipulate my grandparents, and they always let me have my way.

When I was 11, I went to live with my mother and step-father. During my school years, I made good grades, was polite and always on my best behavior -- although this was just an act. When school ended for the summer, I would spend the summer with my father. Because I was a child and naturally loved my dad, I thought his lifestyle was glamorous. He lived in New York City and Washington, D.C., and, to me, it was fun to hang out with his drug partners and his ladies. It seemed like summer was one big party and shopping spree. My father and his partners taught me the drug game; they told me that heroin was for junkies and whores. I suppose they thought that because they sold the drugs and they thought that they were better than the people they exploited. However, the drug game is the drug game, no matter what part you play. Since I was young and appeared to be so innocent, I made many of their deliveries. When I was 16, I was making a delivery in D.C., and I noticed how laid back and seemingly content the "customers" were; so, that night,

after my father and his ladies went out to the club, I decided to experiment. I tried some of the heroin. I had never had such a feeling-that finally, everything in my life was good and right.

The cycle of school years at my mother's and the drug games during the summer continued until I graduated from high school in 1968. I enrolled in Howard University, but my major was selling dope and my minor was Business Administration. This educational plan wasn't working too well but I was able to escape Howard by manipulating my mother and grandmother, convincing them that I needed new schools. I enrolled in colleges in Durham, NC and New York City – with the same results. During this time, the drug game was exciting and fun.

That would change. From 1966 to 1998, I was on the road that all addicts take, from good feelings that were self-delusion into the pain of being chained to a substance and an ever-sinking anchor of pain, degradation and hopelessness. My loving grandmother who raised me was murdered as a result to my father's and my own drug activity. I have been married four times to heroin addicts and it all ended in death – I witnessed two of my husbands being executed (shot in the head) and the other two died of liver cancer. I was shot, raped and beaten by seven men who were attempting to rob me; my mother and father could not identify me when they arrived at the hospital. Several times I have been DOA. I saw that tunnel of light with angels pushing me back – why I do not know because every time I would come back into the world, I had to have one more, just this time not too much. I spent five years in federal prison for-you guessed it – drug charges. I was placed in the witness protection program in 1983 because of several murders in the DC area and I was removed by the US Marshalls with the understanding that I would never return to Washington, DC.

In 1970, I started the recovery process at different facilities and halfway houses. I have been on methadone programs, detox facilities and long-term treatment facilities all over the United States, but nothing was working. I loved heroin and did not care about anyone (especially myself). I do not know how (because I know I did not do it), but I finally got clean in 1998 and stayed clean until 2004. That was when I was diagnosed with lupus of the bones and scleroderma, an autoimmune disease that slowly destroys your internal organs. I was placed into a pain clinic where I was given morphine and oxycodone; I thought I had met Jesus! My high was now legal! **NO MORE HAVING TO GO OUT AND HUSTLE!**

This “acceptable” relapse lasted until 2010. I was tired and I was afraid to die. I had long ago proved to my mother and daughter that I was a hopeless case. I had heard of Oxford House; I decided to see if an Oxford House would accept me. The problem was that I wanted that high feeling just one more time, before I finally stopped. I went to the hospital, received a shot of morphine with the correct paperwork and arrived at Oxford House Stateside where, of course, I tested positive. Paula Harrington decided to give me an option – the one that I believe saved my life. She told me to go to UNC Hospital and admit myself for 14 days and then reapply to another house. I did this and the addict that arrived in Chapel Hill April 14, 2010, is not the one that is here today. I needed to be in a structured living environment and Oxford House was there for me.

I would like to thank Oxford House and Paula Harrington, I have learned to follow rules and guidelines. I have become a responsible person who is reliable and I have learned how to really love myself from the inside out, remembering always to place principles before personality in trying to help other “hopeless cases” like mine because I know that if I could make this change, anyone can if they have the desire to do so. I was able to take care of my father and mother until the day they died. I opened Oxford House Estes in Chapel Hill, NC for Paula Harrington and moved back to Chapel Hill. In 2015, she asked me to move to Oxford House Gardenview in Durham, NC to assist the women in learning the Oxford House model. Since moving to Durham, NC, I have been guided by Tony Sowards in learning how to assist individuals with mental health developmental disabilities and substance abuse. This has been a challenge. Presently, I am the Activity Chair for the State of North Carolina and Housing Services Chair for Durham County.

My daughter, who is 46 and who is, ironically, a pharmacist, has seen me clean for 14 years of those 46 years. She tells me that my change has given her a deep respect for me, because she remembers the active addict and the powerful hold my addiction had on me. She is my daughter, best friend and we have a bond today that will never be broken again.

This is my second return to Washington, DC since 1983. The US Marshalls released me in 2016. I attended a family reunion in the city and this is my first Oxford House World Convention in Washington, DC. My past is behind me. Thank you, Oxford House.

### **Annie O'Dell - Kentucky**

My name is Annie O'Dell. I'm from Bullitt County Kentucky, just south of Louisville. I grew up in an alcoholic home. My family has many alcoholics within it. Most are untreated. I began using and drinking at age 13. It began with marijuana and alcohol. By the age of 17, I remember thinking, "I am an addict." Feeding my disease of alcoholism, over the years I became an intravenous drug user. Turning 35 and in jail again, I knew I had to do something different. I went to inpatient treatment and remained clean and sober for nine and a half months. However, I stopped taking suggestions and I relapsed. I found myself homeless again. I was banned from the treatment facility where I had built my foundation and I had violated my probation. So I had another trip to jail at 36 years old. I fully surrendered during this last trip to jail. I just needed one more place to give me a chance.

My mother set up an interview with a transitional housing facility called Oxford House. When I was released from jail I went to Oxford House and interviewed. They accepted me. They were that one organization that gave me another chance. I started by walking and riding the bus to work and 12-step meetings but now I own my own vehicle and am setting and making goals for my future. I'm grateful to Oxford House for giving me the tools I need to be a successful individual within a household. Oxford House is now a huge part of my life in recovery and has become my family.

### **Austin D. – New Mexico**

I grew up in a drug-addicted/alcoholic household. I remember when I was really young, watching my dad snort lines of cocaine in the kitchen while I was eating my cereal and getting ready for school. I was anxious to grow up and be like him. I had every reason to believe that using and partying was a normal part of adult life. During my teenage years, I felt a strong sense of disconnect from other people. I was socially awkward, had low self-esteem, and also suffered from chronic anxiety and depression. The first time I drank, those feelings seemed to slip away. Within a short period of time, I was introduced to a lot of different substances, including cocaine. I was finally an adult... or so I thought.

What I did not realize at the time was that being an adult means being responsible, which I was not. I dropped out of school and was kicked out of my house. I got a felony charge at the age of 16. In juvenile detention I was introduced to Narcotics Anonymous. After the gentleman shared his story, I knew beyond all doubt that I was an addict. Unfortunately, it took me many years after that experience to finally seek recovery.

Towards the end of my active addiction, I was living in a tent and begging for money on street corners. I was in and out of jail and constantly violating my probation. Every few months, a friend would overdose and die. I secretly was jealous; I no longer wanted to live. In that dark, sad place I had my first spiritual experience. I cried and begged my higher power for the pain to end... and for a moment I felt relief. I also came to the realization that I did not have to continue my path to the bitter end. With that small sliver of hope, I checked myself into rehab.

I spent 4 months in treatment, and that hope grew by leaps and bounds. I started to learn how to be honest. I learned how to sit with uncomfortable emotions and how to express those emotions in ways that were not destructive. For the first time in years, I gained some peace and serenity in my life. As I got closer to my graduation date, I knew that I needed to have a strong aftercare plan. My counselor recommended Oxford House to me.

I applied to Oxford House online and, five minutes later, I received a call from the Zimmerman Oxford House in Albuquerque. They did a phone interview and accepted me the same day! I was equal parts excited and nervous to move into the house. I did not know what to expect but those fears left me once I moved in. The guys at the house were so friendly and supportive. One resident even helped get me a job on my first day out of rehab! After being homeless for so many years, I appreciated having my own bed and dresser. I felt like I had a safe space to keep my belongings and did not have to worry about my things being stolen. That sense of security was very important to me. Loneliness is one of the biggest threats to my recovery. At Oxford House, I have never felt lonely. I always have friends to talk to when I am feeling down, and I get to be there for others when they need support.

I quickly became involved within my House and Chapter. I learned how to be responsible and accountable. I had forgery and fraud charges and yet my House made me the Treasurer. Despite my hesitation at first, it was a great way for me to build trust with myself. I started becoming very passionate about Oxford House because this program truly saved my life. Being of service has always been an important part of my Oxford House experience. When a House was in serious trouble, I moved over there to help guide the house back to compliance. It was such a rewarding experience and, once that House was stable, I moved again to help another House. Eventually, an Outreach position became available in my area and I was eager to apply.

Today I work for Oxford House Inc. and I am so grateful for the opportunity that I have been given. I have the privilege of working for the organization that changed my life. The greatest blessing is getting to see peoples' lives change for the better. I am no longer guided by fear and anger. I have goals and plans for my future. Before I got clean, I couldn't even have imagined how fulfilling my life could become. For those who are struggling – don't ever give up because life is full of surprises!

#### **Chris Curl - Louisiana**

I first moved into Oxford in September, 2015. I was a 17-year IV drug user. I had never known or been inside a treatment center. I moved in having 2 weeks clean. I was shown love and understanding from all my roommates, something even my own family could not do. I moved out after 3 months. Within 4 days, I began to drink. After realizing what lay ahead, I QUICKLY stopped and came back to Oxford. I moved into a different house, started diving into my recovery and took service positions with Oxford. I became Chapter Treasurer, then HSC Treasurer, and now Chapter Chair.

This will be my 2nd World Convention. I have learned a lot along the way and I pass on what was freely given to me. I heard Paul Molloy say last year that you “come to Oxford for yourself but stay for others.” That is where I am today....drugs and alcohol aren't even in my thoughts today. Today, my goal is to pass on what I have learned and love others as I have been loved. I will always be indebted to Oxford and I would not be the same without my Oxford family.

#### **Christina – Tennessee**

My name is Christina and I am an addict. I started using drugs and alcohol at a very young age and it quickly started causing problems in my life. I attended my first rehab at age 17 and, over the years, there were many more unsuccessful attempts to get my life under control. I tried long-term, short-term, halfway houses and every method of controlled using that my sick mind could come up with. I saw AA and NA



working in the lives of other people but I just couldn't seem to make it work in my life, long-term. I started to question if maybe selling drugs and getting high was just my destiny. I could only tolerate halfway houses for a short time before the restrictions and constant monitoring started to wear me down. I could never seem to stay clean at my mother's house and I just wasn't financially stable enough to live on my own. I always ended up in the same situation – living in hotels, selling drugs and getting high.

The summer of 2016 was more of that. After almost about eight months of being clean, I had ended up going back to that lifestyle, but this time it was worse. For the first time, I really wasn't having any fun out there. I missed my family. My daughter was growing up and learning to live without me. Her trust in me was gone. I had caused her so much pain. The only relationships I nurtured were centered on drugs, the getting, using and finding ways and means to get more. I was craving something more out of my life. I found the strength to give recovery one more try. I prayed for something different this time, something that would work.

I went to treatment for 28 days in Nashville, TN, two hours from my hometown. The treatment center offered transitional living and I initially went in with intentions of staying there for as long as they would let me. I was convinced I would never be able to live in my hometown and be successful at staying clean. While in treatment, another lady there started telling me about Oxford House. She had lived there but relapsed. She tried explaining the concept to me but it really seemed too good to be true. I asked another friend of mine from Nashville what he recommended for my transitional housing and he also said Oxford House. I called for an interview and they said they had one bed and that I could interview on the day after I got out of treatment. A friend agreed to let me stay with him for a few days after treatment. I left treatment relying solely on faith that this would work out. I had no other options lined up so I just said a prayer that Oxford House was where I was supposed to end up.

My interview went well. They voted me in. I filled the House's last vacancy. There were nine of us there. I got a full-time job the day after treatment and I was always either working, traveling to and from work by bus, or trying to squeeze a meeting in. The first few weeks it seemed I didn't do much more than sleep at the House. I never had time to connect with the ladies. I questioned if I would find my place in the House. Somehow, over those first couple of months, I did find my place. Relapses, evictions, and other situation in the House brought us closer together and I began to feel like a vital part of the House. I got more involved and after four months of being there, I became House President. I got a car. My life started getting better. Oxford House felt like home. It felt like it was mine; well, ours. I started noticing my strengths and weaknesses and I now had an environment where I could utilize them.

I was traveling home every week to spend time with my daughter, a two-hour drive each way. I was seeing greater results in healing my family relationships than I ever could have hoped for. The drive was a struggle sometimes but it was so important for me keep working on those relationships and being consistent was a huge part of that. Being back in my hometown didn't bother me. I would spend time with my family, hit a meeting or two, and return back to Nashville. I was blown away by the changes in me in such a short time.

I began to contemplate returning home to live but there were no Oxford Houses there. I contributed much of my success to my involvement in Oxford House and I wasn't ready to move on from that yet. I decided to ask someone about opening a House there. To my amazement, they agreed! I found a house and two months later I moved home to open Oxford House Onyx in Jackson on June 15, 2017. Opening a new House in a new area is a struggle at times. I had plenty of frustration and disappointment but the sense of accomplishment I feel when I pull in the driveway each day or when we vote in a new resident makes it all worthwhile. I am so blessed to be a part of Oxford House. It has not only given me a place to work on improving myself, it has given me the opportunity to offer that same safe place to other women in my home town. It has changed my life in ways I never expected and I am forever grateful.

## **Christopher Strickland – North Carolina**

My name is Christopher Strickland and I am 34 years old. I have been clean and sober for over seven months now. My sobriety date is December 29, 2016. For me, drugs and alcohol started back in my early twenties when I was in college. I grew up in a loving Christian home, but when I went off to college I was determined to experience life on my own terms without God because I felt like I didn't need his ways and I wanted to experience life and create my own life apart from him. Drinking alcohol was the beginning for me of a long hard road that only got worse over the years. I started drinking my sophomore year in college almost every day. I felt like it was energizing, fun and opened up a new door of friends and experiences that helped me "fit in and feel normal" in society. By my junior year in college, I started smoking pot, so now I was not only drinking almost every day but was supplementing it with marijuana also. For years I maintained drinking and smoking pot; I thought it was the norm and I felt like I was "functional" at work and in society.

But, over the years, I started isolating myself from my family and true friends because of the shame and guilt that gripped my life so tightly. I felt like drinking and using drugs became a way of escape for me, masking my feelings and helping me cope with everyday life. I became bitter at life, my family, and God and wanted to blame everyone else for the drugs and alcohol that controlled and dictated my life decisions and choices. As I approached my early thirties, I felt like alcohol and pot wasn't enough to help me cope with my feelings, guilt, and shame about life. I started abusing Adderall because it was an upper and helped me "feel happy and focused" and I felt it helped to counteract the depression, and low self-worth I felt when I drank or smoked pot. I also got a prescription for Xanax because it helped me get a handle on my nerves from the uppers – or just a means of escape from having to deal with life and people.

My drug and alcohol use at this point in my life really began to take off. I no longer felt like I was just functioning but I felt like I needed them in order to survive on a day-to-day basis. I became so self-absorbed that I alienated myself from my family and was determined to work out life apart from God or anyone. When I was 33, I started dating someone who not only abused pills, alcohol and pot but also used crystal meth. I had never tried "hard drugs" before, but was so desperate to feel "loved or feel good" that at this point in my life I was willing to try anything. I got involved in this new drug and it really tore down my life to complete destruction. I began lying to my family just to avoid seeing them at family functions or holidays because I knew they would see something was wrong and because it would get in the way of my getting high. I began stealing money from my job – just to support my drug habits and just to survive. I wasn't taking care of myself physically or mentally, and I wasn't even practicing safe sex. As a result of my drugs and promiscuous lifestyle, I found out in February, 2016 that I was HIV positive which, more than likely, was as a result of IV drug use and the sexual promiscuous lifestyle that I was living. I felt miserable and completely hopeless and I remember looking at myself in the mirror, saying to myself that, if I didn't get help, I was going to die.

So, in June of 2016, I decided to go to rehab in Manistee, Michigan. I was there for two months and, for once in my life, I finally realized that I had a problem, a severe addiction to drugs and alcohol. While in rehab, I completely told my family everything that was going on and how drugs and alcohol had taken such a destructive grip on my life. My family gave me such a great network of support and love, far better than I ever expected or deserved. It felt so good to be drug- and alcohol-free and to be so honest with them. It gave me hope and I realized that I could experience complete recovery and have a new life. Before being discharged from rehab, I learned about Oxford House and felt like it would be something significantly vital for me and would help me build a strong foundation for support and strength in recovery.

I began to look at Oxford Houses in North Carolina where I was from. I spoke with Paula Harrington, an outreach worker for Oxford House in Chapel Hill, and had an interview for Greene Street North Oxford House where I was accepted. I moved in on August 20, 2016, directly from rehab. I didn't have a job and

had pretty much lost everything except for my car and my family. Within a month of moving into Oxford House, I found a job and became Secretary for our Oxford House. I was attending meetings regularly and church sometimes but I didn't have a sponsor or dig deep into recovery. I wasn't applying the traditions of AA or Oxford House that I had been taught and I began to grow complacent. I ended up moving out of my Oxford House by mid-November, by choice, and I was still clean and sober at the time. I thought that I could move in with my ex and still remain clean and sober. After about two weeks of moving out, I quickly digressed back into alcohol and drugs and hit my hardest bottom I have ever experienced. I will never forget this moment in life because it completely woke me up and I realized that recovery had to be an action-based program on my part and that I had to dig deep and work a program or become complacent.

I realized after a month in a half that I should have never left Oxford House. I remember it clearly as if it were yesterday. I got on the phone and called Paula and explained to her that I had made a mistake in moving out and I was determined to get help and stay clean for good. I had left my Oxford House on good terms and had never used drugs or alcohol while living there. I took comfort in the guidelines and knew it was important and vital for a strong foundation on which to build my recovery. I had just grown complacent. I just needed to take it all in, slow down and dig in deeper for a complete and lasting recovery. So, on December 29, 2016, I packed my car full of everything I owned and went to detox at Freedom House. I felt peace overcome me that day because I was thankful and grateful to be alive and, for once, I knew this had to be a serious choice in order for true recovery to take place in my life. I didn't even know for sure at the time if there were any beds in the Oxford House that I came from but I didn't care, I just knew I needed to be in an Oxford House and just wanted to get back in and build my recovery stronger than ever.

Thankfully, Reggie Royster, a counselor and President of Oxford House Greene Street North where I had come from, remembered me and worked with me while in detox. He spoke to Paula and set up an interview with me to see about coming back to the Oxford House that I knew and was familiar with. I broke down in tears and knew that this was a second chance given to me from God; talk about amazing grace given to me far better than I deserved. I was excited about the interview because this Oxford House was familiar to me and I knew the people there had long-term sobriety and were a second family to me. I had my interview they accepted me with an 80% majority vote and I moved back in on January 1, 2017. This time, I worked harder on my recovery like never before; I accepted God as my Savior, realizing that without a higher power I could never become powerless over drugs and alcohol. I found a sponsor and began to work the steps, soaking in like a dry sponge everything I could learn and use in my life for true recovery. I became President of my Oxford House on February 20, 2017 and was determined to know the guidelines and traditions inside out and what Oxford House Inc. was all about. I went to the Oxford House state convention in April of 2017 and really began to see and understand the big picture of Oxford House and what it was all about.

I thank God for Oxford House; it truly has saved my life and has developed a thirst within me for recovery and wellness like never before. I thank God for Paula Harrington, who is not only an outreach worker for Oxford House but also a woman with a strong mission, heart and desire to help people in recovery. I thank God for Reggie Royster because he has trained me, given me advice and been a great giant for me in recovery. I am obsessed with Oxford House and look forward to giving my experience, strength, and hope in order to help others in recovery like I have been helped. I want everyone to know about Oxford House and I try to sell it any chance I can. It continues to give me the strength, discipline and a strong foundation for my recovery and wellness. Oxford House works well and has proven itself time and time again. By God's grace, I work an honest program one day at a time, and I look forward to the future of my recovery, serving and living in Oxford House.

### **Corey Yancey Glover – North Carolina**

After 17 years of smoking crack and a suicide attempt, I realized that I have had enough. So, while sitting in a mental hospital, I was offered substance abuse treatment. I had no idea what I was in for but I said,

“Yes.” I have to be honest: that first week of treatment was not sinking in until a group of young ladies came to do a presentation on this thing that was called Oxford House. I didn't know anything about Oxford House but I did know that I liked what I heard and wanted to live in one so I asked one of the ladies, “What do I need to do to get in one?” At the end of that meeting, that same lady give me a list of all the male Oxford Houses in that area and told me to call and ask for an interview. I called every House on that list and there were no empty beds. Then I realized that there was one House that I had missed calling; they had two empty beds. I told the guy on the phone that I wanted to interview for one of those beds but I was in a treatment center. He told me “No worries, we will come to you.”

On February 21, 2012, I moved into that Oxford House. After moving in, I was told I could stay there as long as I wanted: just follow a few simple rules. They were: pay your EES on time; don't use any type of drug; and don't engage in disruptive behavior. Those three little things were all I had to do to live there in that house. I remember after my first few months in Oxford House, I met Carlton B. He told me that it's time for me to get involved and involved I got – from holding House and Chapter positions to being taught how to open a new Oxford House. I loved the ‘getting involved’ part of Oxford House; I felt that I was a part of something that made a difference in my life as well as others. On July 1, 2015, I moved out of Oxford House and, once again, Carton B. told me, “Now it's time for you to stay involved” and, because of him and that group of ladies, I do. I am still working with my local Chapter, which is Chapter 9 of Fayetteville NC. I am a member of Oxford House World Council and serve wherever else I am needed. I am proud to say that the Oxford House I moved into back in 2012 became my home and Oxford House will always be Home. If I had one thing to say to newcomers or an alumni, it would be to tell them to get involved and stay involved; that the true meaning of our SUCCESS!!!! Corey Yancey Glover

#### **David O. - Hawaii**

Hi. My name is David from Oxford House Coconut Grove. This is how Oxford House is helping me. It's helping to keep me from relapsing. It keeps me from being homeless. It keeps me in check and gives me structure. I used to be homeless for many years. I get along with everyone at my house and it feels good to have some place to live. I don't have to worry about getting arrested and going to jail anymore. It's a safe place. I am an alcoholic and drug addict and I go to meetings every day. Everything is falling into place for me. I get off probation pretty soon. I finished treatment, I have nine months clean and sober. I love my life now. I hope everyone can be successful like me but it takes willingness. I've learned a lot of coping skills from treatment but I'm not ready to move out yet. I started looking for work and I am going to make it! Just one day at a time. Mahalo!

#### **Dominic – Mississippi**

My Oxford story, the tale of an egotistical and bold young man.

Everyone loves a happy ending so I can begin by saying that this is not meant for a war story but, in the beginning, it was a constant war going on – most of which was in my mind: “How can I win? I just want to be high when I wake up in the morning; how can I get faded just enough that I will keep my jobs? Oh, shit, I'm late for work. He grabs all his dirty clothes and spends the next 5 minutes heating the nail of the oil rig to get high for when his boss yells at him. That's okay, though. I know the general manager and when my hunger finally sets in midway through my shift, I'm just going to eat some sandwich meat or some soup while I am prepping the foods. I guess breakfast is cookie dough out of the freezer again. Damn it why is my Dad calling me, he must want to tell me how bad of a job I am doing at my third job, or that I need to do something important that I could care less about. Well, whatever it is, I have a 6-pack in my car and about 2 ounces of weed that could fix it. Speaking of pot, you have to go and drop off about half of that before going into your next job.”

None of this really mattered as long as my girlfriend – who I cheated on all the time – didn't know I was high. By the way, she always knew but didn't want to believe I was a bad person. This was my everyday life – just to struggle and not pay my bills on time while I worked three jobs. Meanwhile, my folks were getting constant reminders from people around town, since my parents know everyone, that I was a failure and ruining my life. I was 17 and on the fast track to the penitentiary, where too many of my "friends" have already ended.

As it turns out my loving father was actually calling to offer me a chance to escape the prison of my mental illness and start fresh again with the possibility a future. Mind you, this is after I have already hurt him six ways to Sunday. I took the free ride and, in the end, pushed myself to the limit of my depression. Through my years in active addiction, I never took accountability of any of my actions – my first DUI, failing out of college, getting fired from multiple jobs, ruining relationships, and just burning any bridge that I could if I could gain something from it. It wasn't until I tried to get sober for the first time that I realized I had a serious problem. Mind you, I never recognized myself as an addict or an alcoholic. That's when it happened, the last bender that sent me over the edge. I had this grand idea that I was just going to go to Las Vegas and use for only a couple days and then get clean again. I was depressed and so I thought this vacation was a necessity.

The last time I used was October 15, 2015, the day I got arrested for my second DUI charge and I had pushed my family to its wit's end. My father compromised with me that if I were to come home drunk or high ever again that I would have 24 hours to pack everything and leave. I understood that a change needed to happen, the severity of change could not be known. After speaking with my attorney, I learned very quickly that Florida does not joke about driving under the influence and I might spend the next six months to a year in jail. At that moment, the world came crashing down on me, I knew at that moment that I was BANKRUPT. I had never felt an emptiness so unfathomable that my mind knew I could not even begin to fill it with enough pot, cocaine and Jack Daniels.

That same day I drove on my 10-day driving permit to my first AA meeting this time around. This was the first time I took a 12-step program seriously. I only vaguely remember most of these events but what I do remember was that the topic of the meeting was "fun". I had the gall to speak, and all the words I could muster in broken English through half sobs were: "I do not know how to have fun the right way." Afterwards I walked up to the nearby Roosevelt Bridge and just took in all the beauty of the port St. Lucie inlet. As I looked down upon the rocky 1-foot deep oyster beds, I was flooded with emotions of what would happen to the few people in my life I truly cared about. The only thing that kept me from going over was the thought of what would happen to my family. I had seen the unmeasurable damage of what happens when one of my friend's brother committed suicide from addiction.

Sick and tired of being sick and tired, I didn't know it just yet but I had found my salvation. It was not rock bottom but it was close enough. I had made up my mind. I would do whatever it took to get better; anything to keep me from going overboard. I tried every way that I knew already; that could only lead to one explanation: I didn't know the answers anymore. The hardest thing for me to do was not quitting cold turkey; it was to ask for help. I was the most narcissistic individual I had ever met. So, I spent the next 4 days in such a depression haze that my girlfriend left me, I was going to jail; my family barely wanted me anymore; and my friends constantly were making me out to be a donkey. I did all of that, and I spent my whole life blaming other people for my shitty paradigm of life.

Time for change was now. I confronted all of the guilt and shame that had been accrued over the past decade. All of the lies, cheating, drug and alcohol abuse, and emotional and physical abuse. Forty-five days is a very short time to heal and it was not enough time in a residential treatment facility, if you want my opinion. I had to get back to reality sometime. In this case, it was sooner than later. I interviewed at Oxford House Tupelo on December 1, 2015.

When I first moved into Oxford House, I had extremely high anxiety. For some reason unknown to me, my mind had created the worst possible scenario for the unknown, like: my roommates were going to accept me and then kick me out because I didn't fit their description of a proper addict. I remember that, after meeting my new roommates, I slept for nearly half of a day. Then I began the hunt for a new job. With some help from my roommates, I landed a job working in a great family-based restaurant where I still work to this day – happily. More important than the job, and almost equally as important as the experiences I had gone through in the past to get where I am to that day, the members of the Tupelo house took me under their wing, and began to teach me how to have fun again. This time it was not by using drugs and people to get what I wanted.

To this day, the gifts of sobriety just keep giving: I have a gorgeous furry baby boy, I get to be part of something much larger than myself, I have a great job, the opportunity to continue my college, and the pursuit of a long-time fitness goal of being a bodybuilder. The Oxford Houses taught me a great many things: responsibility, compassion for doing the next right thing, and how to work a program of recovery in all places of my life are just a few. More importantly, I was safe. The single most pertinent gift I have received while living in an Oxford House is accountability and the knowledge that I have to stay sober to live here. Without such a beautiful gift, I could not have made it this far and, maybe one day, I will be able to live a sober lifestyle where holding myself accountable is enough to stay sober. For right now I am grateful and content with having a spiritually fulfilling life.

P.S. This was not a war story, but a love story of how I have come to love my new life. Sincerely, Dominic

### **Frank C. – Virginia**

I was born in November of 1975. My parents lived in Prince Georges County, Maryland. At the age of three my parents divorced, and my mom brought me to her family in Manassas VA. My mom was soon remarried to a police officer of Prince William County. When I was seven, my mom gave birth to my younger sister. When I was ten, they split up and divorced. I was forced to make a decision on whom to stay with – my mother or my step-dad. I chose to stay with my step-dad because I thought I would have a better opportunity with him. He then adopted me. My adopted dad was a regular drinker of beer. I swore I would never become a drinker or drug user. That vow lasted through my middle school years and then I entered high school. I soon found a friend that I went to school with and who also lived near my dad's house. Peer pressure and resentment of authority soon took its hold on me. My uncles and brother were users of marijuana and alcohol. In fact, my first encounter with marijuana was due to them. I soon started to seek the lifestyle of drugs, sex, and rock and roll. The Grateful Dead were all the craze in my high school, and eventually I succumbed to temptation. By the age of sixteen, I was using LSD occasionally and drinking and smoking pot regularly. I managed to make it through high school after being suspended three times during my senior year. I attended school on one of my suspension dates so that I could take tests in order to graduate. My higher power must have been looking after me because I was not charged with trespassing as the law requires.

After high school, I applied to four universities and was accepted into old Dominion and West Virginia University. I chose West Virginia and in August of 1994. I was headed toward the mountains. I roomed with a friend from high school. Certain bars in those days were open to underage folks who wanted to drink. At this time, I was drinking regularly and smoking pot often. I began to drink every day of the week. I would smoke pot and try to study. My first semester, I earned a 1.9 GPA, and the second semester I took easy classes and earned a 3.0. My friends and family persuaded me to transfer to Radford University because it was cheaper. I did so with the idea I would party and mess around with the opposite sex. My brother, a graduate of Radford and a fraternity member, secured me a room in one of the fraternity houses. House parties were the norm. Pot and drinking were everywhere. My dad then informed me I needed a job. I found a job in a local restaurant. Soon, money became my master. This was because I needed to

support my habit. One night I came home and one of my housemates was using cocaine and offered me a line. I tried it and couldn't sleep that night. Shortly after, I was offered crack and tried that. Around the same time, a High School friend died from drowning in her own vomit. She had been at my house earlier that night, and attended other parties afterward.

I soon found a connection at my work place to supply me with cocaine. Soon, he didn't have it in powder form and offered to sell me crack. I went on a three-month crack binge and failed out of school. After that semester, my dad refused to pay my tuition. However, I still wasn't finished. I continued to work and party in Radford. One night, while camping out in my car, the police woke me up and found some marijuana I had purchased the night before. I was charged and given an order to appear in court. I continued to drink and use. A month later, I was picked up for being drunk in public. They took me to the jailhouse and threw me in the slammer.

That morning, one of the guards gave me breakfast in bed with a little tin can of coffee. After I ate and finished my coffee, I raked the tin can across the bars of the jail cell. One of the officers said, "What do you want?" I asked him, "When are you going to let me out of here?" He replied, "You've got another hour." Little did I know how right he was. They let me out of jail and it happened to be the day I was supposed to show up in court for my marijuana charge. I missed the court date, and my roommate drove me to Richmond to my brother's place. My mom and her husband agreed to let me stay with them if I agreed to get help with my problem.

Soon, my mother was driving me to CSB appointments and AA meetings. One of my counselors suggested that I move into an Oxford House. I interviewed and was accepted into Manassas Oxford House. I moved in, only to move out in thirty days. I moved out because I was not being honest about my sobriety. I moved back into my mother house. I then tried Boxwood treatment facility. During my first try, I made it a week and was kicked out for drinking vodka that I had snuck in in my duffle bag. A year later, I tried Boxwood again and this time I was serious. I completed the program in the year 2000. For the first time in my life I completed something I started.

Ten years had passed since my first stay in Oxford House. I moved into town with a Spanish lady with whom I worked. She rented me a room in her townhome. After three months, I was informed that I should pay both her boyfriend and her each five hundred dollars. I then applied to Manassas Oxford House again. The Chapter Chairperson, Greg, offered me a bed at the Moseby Oxford House. I agreed to move in. We soon had a full house and, slowly, either everyone moved out or relapsed. For three months, there were just two members of the Moseby house – an African-American gentleman from Danville, VA and me. In the 18 months we stayed together, we must have kicked 20 to 30 people out for relapse.

After 18 months, Jim moved out, and I was offered a bed in Oxford House Thomas II. I accepted it, and have resided at Thomas II for eight years. In that time, I have held every House position and every Chapter position. I returned to school and earned two associate degrees from the local community college. I then received admission into George Mason University. I am now two years away from earning my Bachelors in physics. Oxford House has saved my life and given me a second chance. I attend four plus meetings a week. I believe Oxford House, like the program of Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous, is a gift from God. Just like when Bill and Dr. Bob met to have the first AA meeting, if Paul and his friends had not decided to rent the county-run half way house, Oxford House might never have been born. I think we all need to tip our hat to the man upstairs.

### **Holly W. – North Carolina**

My life has been dysfunctional for as long as I can remember. I was the 7th child out of 10 children. Both my mother and my father were drug addicts. The seed of addiction was planted inside me before I was even

born. As a child growing up, I knew I was different, I just didn't understand it. I remember feeling discontent, unsatisfied, and always wanting more. My mother left when I was 4 years old, leaving my father to raise me and my other siblings by himself. I resented her from that day on. My father got clean and life was good up until he died from a terminal illness when I was 14.

I then went to live with my mother. Life with her was miserable. Not even 6 months later, I was living in a Baltimore City group home. It was then, at 16, that I started a dangerous love affair with heroin. I became addicted instantaneously. I lived for nothing else; we were inseparable. Nothing else mattered or was more important. Over the course of my 12 years in active addiction I lost any and all morals and principles that I once had. I would lie, scam, steal, do almost anything to get what I needed. It didn't seem to faze me that I had driven intoxicated, crashed, had to be hospitalized for weeks, and nearly died. Overdosing multiple times didn't slow me down. Not even miscarrying my first child due to my abuse of the drug stopped me. My disease was stronger and I hated myself for it. I felt hopeless but I knew no other way to live.

On August 11, 2015, my life forever changed when I was arrested for 36 felony drug charges. It wasn't until then that I realized I had hit rock bottom. The thought of not being able to raise my children and see them until they were adults crippled me. I had a spiritual awakening and had been given new sight. I finally felt I had something to live for. Even though I knew no other way to live, I was determined to find one.

I came to Charlotte in February of 2016 and embraced this beautiful life of recovery. I found a freedom I had never known existed. I went to a treatment facility and then moved straight into an Oxford House. I didn't know what I was doing but, thank God, there were other people who did – people who were willing to show me the way. I was looking for stability and I found it there. I also found a family there. Since living in an Oxford House, I've found a new way to think and a new way to live. I regained my integrity, morals, and principles. I've been educated on recovery through others. It's blessed me with a foundation of other recovering addicts and alcoholics who have held me accountable and loved me through my struggles. I found a family that supports me, believes in me, and motivates me to do better. Oxford House has shown me the importance of working with others and opened the door for me to give back what was so freely given to me. It's taught me to persevere through the struggles of adversity because no matter what arises we all share one common goal, to stay sober, live a better life, and to help others.

### **Jameson Collet – Oregon**

My name is Jameson Collet, and I am a grateful alumnus of Oxford Houses of Oregon. Two and a half years ago, I showed up at the Royal Park Oxford House for an interview. I am extremely grateful for the members of the Royal Park Oxford House for taking a chance on me. When I showed up at that interview, I had given up on life, and I did not want to be clean but I knew that I needed to be clean to provide a good life for my two-year-old son. When I showed up to the interview, I was living in a new city, with no money, no job, and no prospects. All I had was a willingness to show up and interview. The men at this Oxford House took this chance on me, and it has proven to be one of the greatest things that has happened to me. My time in Oxford granted me the safety and stability I needed until my desire to get loaded was replaced with a desire to live a life of recovery and change. The members of that House were there for me when I didn't want to be there for myself. They showed great care and concern, and stuck with me through my darkest hours. They supported me when I wanted to give up and helped me through those tough times.

Living in an Oxford House was an essential part of assisting me in building a strong, sturdy foundation on which to build a life of recovery. During my time in Oxford, I was able to develop a program for a life of recovery. That program consists of four main factors: having a sponsor, working the steps, attending meetings regularly, and partaking in service work. Living a life of recovery has granted me immense benefits. I have been living on my own for nearly a year, and it is the first time I have ever had my own place to live. I am a currently a senior at Western Oregon University, and I just recently got hired as the



Family Housing Apartment Manager through the University. I have only been able to attain the life I have today because of my time in an Oxford House.

### **J-Rob (Jeffro) H. – Delaware**

After many years in and out of AA, I was given the choice of jail or long-term treatment. I spent 200 days at the Gateway Foundation. I went to a halfway house for 2 months. In November of 2008, I was introduced and accepted to Oxford House Browntown in Wilmington, DE. In January of 2009, I was elected to the position of Chair of Northern DE. I opened Oxford House New Castle in September 2009. I then went to North Carolina State Convention, which was my first of many. I helped open and chair OH DE Chapter III. I attended my first World Convention in Washington D.C. in 2013 and was elected to a 3-year term on the World Council. I've been the Chair of Standards for 3 years and, at the last World Convention, I was reelected to a second term and remain the Standards Chair on the World Council. I am a very dedicated member of my local Chapter and State Association in Delaware. Oxford House is a big part of my recovery process. I look forward to the continued growth of this organization and am truly grateful to be a part of the Oxford House family. One day at a time, I have been sober since February 6, 2008.

### **Jenny B. – Oregon**

“Move out on your own.” The voice in my head told me that “I’ve got this, and my recovery was going to stay strong.” When you move out from sober living after 15 months, the joy is amazing. I don’t have to share a kitchen with 8 women, I don’t have to argue about what to watch on TV, and I don’t have to report to anyone. And I get to hold myself accountable. But, this didn’t happen. My recovery tanked. I was miserable and stressed out, and I couldn’t control my finances. Luckily, when these things crashed and burned, I was able to reach out to someone living in Oxford House. My life changed that day and I made the choice to move back into Oxford.

Short story: I grew up in Minnesota. I had a great life and an amazing family. I played sports, was a captain on varsity sports teams. My greatest passion was and is hockey. It wasn’t until after I had surgery that I found the demons in my life. It started with pills, and ended up with heroin. I worked at a bar and drank daily but I thought I “knew” myself and thought alcohol was just a social, fun time, with no consequences for me. I knew my addiction with opiates was a problem but I constantly hid it from family and friends. There were a few people who knew about it, but they were few and far between.

In December, 2014, my life changed. I made the conscious decision to enter Hazelden in Center City, MN. I was apprehensive and only wanted to do a 30-day program, and I knew for damn sure that I wouldn’t go into one of those Sober Houses they talked about. Well, my mind opened and 30 days turned into 94, and a sober house turned into, “I can’t stay clean here in Minnesota”, and so, with closed eyes and stories, I landed in Portland, Oregon. I moved into a recovery-style home that wasn’t Oxford for a couple months. But, the more and more I heard about Oxford House, I wanted to try it out. I can say it wasn’t the easiest thing that I had to go through. After 15 months of sobriety, I moved out on my own with a girl I knew from Intensive Outpatient. As soon as I moved in, I knew I had made a mistake.

The second time in Oxford, I knew I was going to do something different. Within a month, I was blessed to have my best friend nominate me for the HSC Presentations Chair position. I took this head on. When I was younger, I had no problem speaking in front of people but, as I got older, it truly became a fear. But it brought me out of my comfort zone. I started working my steps over again, getting very detailed compared to the amount I had left out. In May of this year, I was nominated and accepted the position of Chapter 7 HSR Chair. This has truly been a “game changer”. I get to go into Houses and mentor the residents. I am faced with situations that I have never thought I would be faced with, and get to help people make decisions. I got the opportunity to lead a House Position Training, even though only two people

showed up. I am able to be of service and it allows me to never forget where I came from. Just this past month, I have started a women's meeting that my friend and I had talked and dreamed about and we were able to make it happen. I've had the ability to work at a treatment center, and not only do insurance and billing, but also to do intake screenings and continuing care, and recommend Oxford House to addicts just getting out of treatment. I've gone to jails, detox centers, treatment centers, and other types of rehab facilities and share about how Oxford House has changed my life. I am so grateful to get the chance to go to Washington D.C. this year and am so grateful for Oxford because they have taught me how to do life, when I wasn't even sure if I was cleaning my room right.

### **Kat Custer – Washington State**

I went to my first 12-step meeting in 2006. I didn't think I really had a problem, I was just going to appease a friend of mine. I went to a few meetings and didn't return until 2009. I had gone to a 28-day inpatient rehab facility for what I thought was the worst misery ever experienced as a result of my addiction to heroin. When I got out, I did everything that was suggested to me. Everything, that is, except for the things that would eventually save my life: "Stay out of a relationship? No thanks. Stay away from old people, places, and things? I can handle it. Move into an Oxford House? You're out of your damn mind. I'm not gonna live with a bunch of women who are gonna try to tell me what to do." And wouldn't you know it, after 7 1/2 months of recovery, I relapsed. I was in an unhealthy relationship with someone who was using and we had our own place. In less than a month I was back to using and selling heroin. And, as happens with addiction, my misery progressed. Between 2010 and 2016, I attempted to quit using heroin well over 30 times. I went to detox facilities, inpatient treatment centers, friends' couches, my couch...but I could never stay quit. I always thought I was open-minded and willing. I wasn't.

In January, 2017, I lost absolutely everything. I didn't want to live but I was too scared to die. I had finally received the gift of desperation. I went to inpatient treatment and knew that if I wanted to stay clean, I had to change EVERYTHING. Among several changes in attitude, I changed my opinion about living in an Oxford House. I knew friends that had lived there in early recovery and had since thrived – not only in their recovery, but in their lives. I moved into my Oxford House on March 10th, 2017 and I can honestly tell you it is the best decision I've ever made and the biggest blessing I've ever received. My House and the ladies I live with have kept me clean so many times. The fear I had of being "told what to do" has vanished, and in its place is a deep appreciation for a group of women who love me enough to hold me accountable for my actions. Where there was once a scared little girl who didn't understand her place in the world, now stands a grown woman who people can look to for guidance and support. I've learned to live life as a responsible adult instead of an immature junkie. Oxford has shown me aspects of myself that I don't think I ever would have been aware of otherwise and I am eternally grateful. Kat

### **Katy – Oregon**

My name is Katy and I live in an Oxford House in Salem, Oregon. I graduated from an inpatient treatment program and moved directly from there into Oxford. Simply put: moving into Oxford was NOT my idea; I moved into Oxford because I was in a Drug Court program and into Oxford is where they have people go when leaving a residential treatment facility. When I went into the residential program, I didn't realize that I was going to have to move into Oxford from there – I thought I was going back to live with my family. I may or may not have bawled hysterically when I found out that I was to interview and move into an Oxford instead of going back to the comfort of familiarity of living with my parents (read: no rent to pay, few stipulations, relatively-stretchy boundaries and free dinner most nights).

When I got accepted into Drug Court, my plan was to complete the program with outpatient treatment as fast as I could then go back to my hometown. When I was ordered to go to residential treatment, my plan was to find a co-ed program. When I got to the all-women inpatient facility, my plan was to keep to myself

and complete it as soon as possible. After taking forever to complete the inpatient program, my plan was to move back in with my parents. After getting voted into an Oxford House (but before actually moving in), my plan was to stay for the mandatory 3 months or so then move back in with my parents. Now, after continuing to live in Oxford over a year later, and without any judges or POs telling me what to do, I find myself wondering, if I were to plan to destroy what's left of endangered species, would I actually get to save them?! Just kidding (kind of)!

Today, I have more than enough gratitude to fill my heart. I am grateful that things haven't gone according to my plans and that my Higher Power gives me all the things I need and some of the things I want. I am grateful that I can grow and hurt and heal and connect and be part of things greater than myself. And I am grateful that my Higher Power brought me to Oxford to give me a miraculous, imperfect, surprising, lovable life (even though I still couldn't tell you how I have any serenity while living in a house with 7 women and only 2 bathrooms).

### **Kevin Copeland – Oklahoma**

My name is Kevin Copeland. My sobriety date is 9/16/2007. When the time came for me to rotate out of my 4<sup>th</sup> treatment facility in October, 2007, I knew that I was going to need a place to live. My first choice was a really nice apartment complex here Tulsa set aside for military veterans who are in recovery. Everything seemed perfect – a nice apartment to share with another veteran, meals provided and nothing to be concerned with other than working a program of recovery!

However, as life often does and still does to this day, things didn't go my way. I didn't have enough active duty time to qualify for the program. So my treatment councilor suggested that I interview at an Oxford House. Let me tell you, the last thing I wanted to do was go live with a bunch of other drunks and drug addicts under one roof. The picture I had in my head was of a dingy house, unkempt rooms and not much else from which to build a new life.

Thankfully, I was able to listen and take the suggestion. I interviewed at OH Terrace Manor (the first OH in Tulsa OK) and was accepted. This was in late October 2007. This, however, was not my only Oxford House. Within 2 years of being a resident of that house, it went to foreclosure due to the owner's not paying the mortgage. So, here we were, wondering what our future would hold. Where were we gonna go? Where were we gonna live? Some members thought, "Oh well, we don't have to pay our EES now that the owner is MIA. Free rent right?" Wrong. Another member of the House and I came to the conclusion that for us to change what we had been doing during our addictions; i.e., not pay bills and live off other people's graces, required that we WOULD continue to pay our EES and be responsible for our actions. We went to the bank and set up a separate savings account and over the next 12 months or so we had accumulated almost \$30,000. Wow, what we could do with all that money when it came time to move. Well, indeed the things we could do. Taking a page from AA, we knew it was not our goal to accumulate wealth. Drunks and addicts with a lot of money would be a recipe for disaster. When the time came we located another house to rent as an Oxford House and I am still a resident there. We donated two-thirds of the money to OHI and our fledgling state association. We used the rest for moving expenses and also established a prudent reserve for the new Oxford House.

Since I have been in this organization, the benefits for me and others was noticed by a family member. She and her husband saw through me the good that Oxford House does for struggling folks like me so she and her husband have since purchased 5 homes and rented them as Oxford Houses.

I have served as an officer at the House, Chapter and State level. It has been a major part of my coming to terms with my addiction to alcohol and drugs. I have learned to live and love others as myself. I have seen and dealt with things that I would have never been able to experience had I not taken the advice from my

counselor, who said, “I think you could benefit from living in an Oxford House.” Indeed, Steve, because of your suggestion, I and others who have crossed my path have benefited.

Never underestimate the small things you do and say for others. It just may save someone’s life. Best regards, Kevin Copeland, Oxford House Rustic Hills, Tulsa, OK.

### **Kristina – North Carolina**

My name is Kristina and I am an addict. When I was 18 years old, I got a DWI. I never considered myself an alcoholic. When I was 33, I tried drugs for the first time and I was off to the races. I stole from my family and lied about how much money I had made waiting tables. I ended up living in a motel for months and getting in trouble with the law. When it was all over with, I had been charged with 10 felonies. In October, 2012, I was sentenced to go to a 90-day treatment program, which was run by the Department of Corrections here in NC. When it was time for me to leave, I knew I couldn’t go back home. So, I moved into an Oxford House in Greenville, NC in March, 2013. I became involved in anything that I could, first Chapter Secretary and Housing Services and then, when the World Convention came to Washington, DC that year, that did it for me. I knew then that Oxford House and working with people in recovery was what I wanted to do.

In December, 2014, I was hired by Oxford House as an Outreach Worker in North Carolina but my Higher Power had a different plan. In October, 2015, I relapsed as an Outreach Worker. I lost everything: my house, my job, money, my respect for myself and my self-worth. I was living in my car for two months, ashamed to show my face. I was the girl who worked for Oxford House and relapsed. Every week, Keith Gibson would call me, sometimes I answered, sometimes I would call him back but he would always ask me, “Was I ready?” On January 7, 2016, I was tired of living in my car and was ready and he was the first person I called. My Oxford Family was there for me when I was ready.

On March 1, 2017, I was offered a job as an Outreach Worker with Oxford House again. I have never been so grateful to be given a second chance. Today I have 18 months – One day at a time with my Higher Power, my Family and my Oxford Family, and AA/NA.

### **Lance D. – New Mexico**

My first drink was in early summer in 1990. I’ll never forget that day. I was at school and, before class started, my best friend had brought a flask filled with Bacardi 151 proof. I took a drink and it felt like someone rammed a rock down my throat. I started gasping for air and my throat was on fire. All through class, I had dry heaves. I did not like the way I felt; however, I did not stop. I would drink during and after work and suddenly I was able to talk with all the girls with confidence. Back then, my drinking didn’t seem like a problem. It didn’t become a problem until the fall of ‘90 when I went to college. I started getting behind in class and I got thrown out of school and stuck with a \$10,000 defaulted student loan.

I decided to move from Maine to New Mexico, thinking that relocating would solve my problems. I didn’t drink for 2 months! But once I got comfortable in New Mexico and started working, I began hanging around with my co-workers who all drank. The minute I started drinking, I was right where I had left off. I lost multiple jobs and had a string of dysfunctional relationships. I started getting into fights. I became extremely jealous. One time, I came out of a blackout handcuffed to the front bumper of a state police car. That was my first time in jail but not the last. I began to get abusive when I drank. One time in a drunken rage, I threw a cinderblock through my girlfriend’s windshield. That was when I received my first felony.

Despite all the consequences, I still drank. Many years are still foggy, but I do remember getting kicked out of quite a lot of apartments. I tried to kill myself by running into traffic. I got sent to the State Hospital,

where I stayed for 3 months. I didn't stop drinking. I was in and out of psych wards and jail. The few times I tried to get sober my attitude sucked. I blamed everyone for everything that was wrong in my life. Finally I had reached my rock bottom and decided to get help.

Now I am working an honest program. I have 5 months sober and I live in an Oxford House. I'm going to meetings, doing a lot of service work, have a sponsor, working the steps and helping my Oxford House community! I still need to check my attitude sometimes, However, I am making a lot of progress! Oxford House offers me a safe place to learn and grow as a person. To continue to stay on the right path, it's going to take a lot of work and faith, but I am confident that I can succeed. Meetings, sponsorship, and service-work help me to stay sober. I also try to share my experience, strength, and hope with the newer residents at my house, to show them that they too can recover! -Lance D., Albuquerque, NM

### **Linda Ellison – North Carolina**

My name is Linda Ellison and I am an alcoholic. I started drinking at the age of 15 but I did manage to graduate from high school. After my father died and my children's father and I split up, I really started drinking heavily. My children had to stay with my mom and brother because of my partying so much. I went from one bad relationship to another and even almost lost my life. But, instead of me dying, someone else lost their life so I decided in January 2017 to get clean and sober.

I went to treatment in Chapel Hill and decided to stay and build a foundation of recovery by moving into an Oxford House. I have learned a lot. I work and have a new relationship with my family. The Oxford House and living with my roommates has saved my life.

### **Michael McKeogh – Mississippi**

My name is Michael McKeogh, and I am an addict. I moved into Oxford House on August 8, 2016. I am originally from just outside Cleveland, OH and I lived there until I was 18 years old. When I graduated from high school, I decided I wanted to follow my passion for golf so I decided to move to Starkville, MS to attend Mississippi State University and get a degree in Professional Golf Management. Normally, I would never in a million years have dreamed of moving to MS but MSU is one of only 10 schools in the country to have this PGM degree and they were rated #1.

So, I made the move. I, like many college kids, began going to parties and drinking. I had lived a rather sheltered life up until this point. I don't know the psychology behind this but the fact that I didn't have the parental supervision that was once there I believe played a role in the next few years of my life. Within the first few months of my college career I began to use drugs socially. Pot and pills were soon a necessity to go out and party. I soon started skipping classes and my grades began to reflect this. In stepped various forms of speed. I know throughout the 12-step programs they say, "Don't mention DOC's", but I think that for my story it shows the progression of this disease that no other way could. So, I started staying up all night partying and then doing school work. My grades got back on track for a while and I thought I had found the answer.

Money started to become an issue though. In order to support my various habits, I started selling pot. For the next six months or so, I would sell just enough to be able to support my bar hopping and drug use. It was working well, or so I thought. Things started getting off track though near the end of my second semester. At this point, I would stay up three days at a time to play catch-up with school because of all the partying I was doing. On this course, I barely made it through one more year before I dropped out. I began to sell a whole lot more drugs at this point. I had a few hundred-dollars-a-day habit between the pot, pills and beer. I successfully sold drugs for the next 3 years or so. I was making a lot of money for very little work so I began to justify using more and more.

One day the police came to my house and, when they took me to jail, I had 4 brand new felony possession charges. Things just got real. When I was walking up to court, I was called out by an officer. He said, "Mr. McKeogh, I need you to place your hands behind your back. I have six indictments to give you." They were all for drug sale charges. So, all said and done, I was convicted on ten felony counts and sentenced to the Mississippi Department of Corrections for 46 years. I obviously did not have to do this amount of time but I did 7 and a half years to the day and now I am on parole. When I got out I needed a place to go in the State of Mississippi so I found myself sitting in the living room of an Oxford House.

Oxford House has given me a huge helping hand. It is the only thing that has gotten me to really start working a program of recovery; it put a roof over my head but that was just the beginning. I thank the people who have worked for Oxford House in order to make it a place of accountability, recovery, comradery and just overall unity for addicts like me. I can't thank them enough! Thank you, all. I could go on about the amazing things that have happened and have started to happen in my life for pages but, to make it simple, I owe all that I have – physically, mentally, spiritually, and with my family – to Oxford House.

### **Mike Hooten – Colorado**

I'm an addict named Mike. I have been clean now for over 8 years. I owe this in a large part to the Oxford House I found early in my recovery. I am eternally grateful and hope that many more people are able to get the opportunity I had.

After spending half my life getting loaded, I had reached a point of no return. Waking up in the ICU after another overdose left me facing the reality that I could not keep using and live. My life was such a mess that I was surprised to find that I actually did want to live. I had no choice but to seek help and try to find a new way of life. I was fortunate that I had the assistance of a treatment program to help get me stabilized and started in recovery. While in that program, I was directed to two programs that became the foundation of my new life. I needed to learn how to not use drugs. Narcotics Anonymous would be the recovery program that showed me I didn't ever have to use again – just for today. I also needed to learn how to live the life of recovery. I am not sure if the little bits of wisdom I could get in an hour meeting each day and reading some literature would have been enough. What I needed was people to show me how to live recovery and hold me accountable. I found that kind of guidance and support in Oxford House.

There were only three men's Oxford Houses and one women's Oxford House in our state at the time that I left rehab. I was lucky to be able to move into one on the day I left rehab. I had seen people leave rehab with nowhere safe to go and relapse the same day. I saw them wind up dead or in prison or lost back to the bleak existence of a using addict. I learned that the odds are stacked against us in early recovery and the consequences terrible. In that Oxford House, though, I saw guys who were staying clean and sober and working successful programs of recovery. Their example and support made it much easier for me to find and develop my own path in recovery. In the rooms of NA, I see many new people trying to get clean come and go. While it is true that not everyone who moves into an Oxford House stays clean and sober, I am quite clear that the success rate is far, far higher than that of the general population of addicts and alcoholics trying to find help.

Living in an Oxford House was an opportunity for me to learn from people who were successfully making a new life for themselves. I faced the same kinds of challenges they did and they were able to show me what worked. I learned to pay rent and bills on time, how to balance a checkbook, how to keep my home clean and orderly. These may seem like simple things but for me, and many early in recovery, they were skills that had been lost or never existed. I learned first-hand the importance of taking responsibility for my life and my recovery. I saw that my housemates who worked recovery programs had lives worth living

and I wanted that. I followed their example in attending meetings, doing step-work, and being of service to others. Being responsible for running our House ourselves meant that I had to do my fair share and work well with others. These skills continue to help me improve my life and stay clean.

After living in that Oxford House for a little while, some of the guys from my House and the other two men's Oxford Houses were working on a project to open a new House. I had learned that each of the Oxford Houses that we had here were the result of the slow, steady efforts of the members of the existing Houses. Some of them had found the time and motivation to seek out new houses to rent and organize the existing Houses to save money until they could start a new House. This was a slow process with much trial and error. Knowing that there was always a list of dozens of men and women hoping to get a spot in an Oxford House, I began to help with these efforts. Over the next few years I was able, with the help of other Oxford House members, to open a number of Houses and contribute to other new Houses in our area.

I do believe that every new bed we can offer in a new Oxford House helps to save the lives of many, many addicts and alcoholics for many years to come. I am grateful for Oxford House and hope I can continue to be a part of it – even years after living with all those great recovering addicts and alcoholics.

### **Natasha Eggers - Oregon**

Hello family. So, my story of Oxford goes something like this. In 2013, I was on the run and was wanted in multiple counties. My son's father had gotten clean and moved the two of them into an Oxford House. So, when I was coming down or desperate for a place to shower, I would crawl back to him and take refuge in the comfort of his room. That didn't last too long before people started to suspect my use.

One sunny afternoon, three ladies showed up and asked me to give a UA. I instantly got defensive and refused and was asked to leave. I could not believe those girls, messing up my life like that. I swore I would never move into their dumb house. Fast forward about 5 months when I was released from jail and moved back home. I was sick and tired of jail, and feeling crappy and hating myself so I decided to really try this time and give recovery a chance.

In my first month out of jail, I was going crazy at home and decided I needed more structure. I finally gave in to the fact that I needed an Oxford House. I called a friend and they found out when they were having interviews and agreed to take me. I probably changed my mind like ten times before I got to the House but I knew my recovery depended on it. This was the only thing I had never been willing to try. So, with my hands sweating, my tummy in knots and my heart racing, I walked up to the door and knocked. This woman answered and had a smile that just melted all my fears. She grabbed me and hugged me and said, "Welcome Natasha, we have been praying for you to come." You see that woman was the same lady who had asked me for a UA months prior and she wanted me to have a chance at this incredible life Oxford offers. That was on October 19, 2013 and I am still living there. I got thrown into service work and have flourished because of this organization. Thank you for allowing me to share my story. *\*Natasha Eggers\**

### **Rebecca Beach - South Carolina**

My Story isn't over yet... This is going to be difficult, because a lot of this that you are about to read, I have never told anyone and it could be upsetting to some ~Mom, just know that I love you...~ but I want to be completely honest so that someone reading may benefit from it.

My name is Rebecca Mae Beach...and I am a GRATEFUL recovering drug addict. I am 33 years old and I have been battling my drug addiction for the past 15 years. When I was a young girl, I battled with weight issues. I was always a big girl but I was never made fun of. I had tons of friends, a wonderful family, and an amazing childhood. When I was a senior in high school, I got pregnant. At 18 years old, I became a

mother to the most beautiful baby girl in the entire world, who I named Sarah Mae. After having her, my weight continued to increase and I was fortunate enough to have the opportunity to have gastric bypass surgery. On the day of my surgery, I weighed in at 274 pounds – an extremely dangerous weight for someone of my height, only 5'1". My surgery was successful and I began to lose weight rapidly. I also became obsessed with my weight and became extremely bulimic. Within a year from my surgery, I weighed only 105 lbs. My mother was horrified and found out about my bulimia. I sought professional help and was able to get the bulimia to stop.

However, I was still horrified of gaining weight back. THIS IS WHEN I DISCOVERED AMPHETAMINES. I started stealing my daughters Adderall so that I could stay thin.... then that wasn't enough for my addiction...that I wasn't even aware that I had at this point. I then started using cocaine. Cocaine made my head hurt.... so I then graduated to meth. Meth gave me super powers. I was everything I wanted to be...I was pretty, I was thin, I had energy, I was unstoppable! And then....at 24, I found out I was pregnant again. I stopped ALL drugs immediately and had a beautiful baby boy that I named Caleb LaPrince. Shortly after having Caleb, I slowly started introducing myself back into using meth... this made all my pregnancy weight disappear and I became super mom again!

My weekend drug use slowly turned into an everyday habit. I would spend every last dime to get the drugs that I needed. I was in a relationship at this point with the love of my life and the father of my son. We were together for 14 years. For all of those years, I put all of myself into him. So much so that I lost myself. Almost 4 years ago, he walked out of my and our kids' lives. He crushed me and my entire world came crashing down on me. When he left, I couldn't pay the bills, so I lost our home....and my children went to live with my father and step-mom. I, however, had nowhere to go. I was all alone. So..... I turned to the streets. House to house... couch to couch...sometimes I even slept under a tree. But, one thing I ALWAYS had was a big bag of meth. It became my best friend – and my worst enemy – all at the same time.

Shortly after all of this happened, I met a guy who I started to date. He was a heroin addict and a meth addict. But he was on an entirely different level than I had ever gone. He was an IV user. I said, "I would never put a needle in my arm!"... A month later, there I was.... sticking a needle in my own arm... getting high off meth AND heroin. Over the past 4 years, I never had my kids, I was in and out of rehab, I stole, I robbed, and I got arrested 3 times, and I overdosed 3 times.

On Mother's Day of this year, I was strung out, homeless, and all alone in this world...living at a Motel 6 pool. I literally wanted to die. It was Mother's Day and I knew that my mother didn't want to talk to me...and when I called my children, they didn't answer the phone. That's when I made the decision to end my life. I loaded a syringe with a for-SURE lethal dose and combination of meth and heroin. I prayed to God to forgive me and begged him to watch over my babies and my parents. As I went to give myself my final shot, my phone rang. I looked down at it and it was my baby boy, Caleb, calling me... I stopped and answered. He said to me, "Mommy... Happy Mother's Day. I prayed for you today that you would get better." My hand dropped and I shot the entire dose that would have killed me onto the ground. THAT WAS IT FOR ME.

Since that moment, I have been drug free... I no longer have the desire to use, I have an amazing job and I live in an amazing Oxford House. I have a wonderful fellowship with my NA family and I see and talk to my children regularly. I talk to my parents, and I can honestly say that I love my life today. I have a very long road ahead of me.... but I'm willing to work as hard as I have to! Today I know that even my BEST day being HIGH.... DOESNT HAVE SHIT on even my WORST DAY being clean and sober! To everyone who has loved me unconditionally.... thank you from the bottom of my heart. I love you beyond measure....

#116DaysNoHaze #RecoveryMonth #LightUpTheDarkness #IAmNotAnonymous



## Scott C. - Oregon

Potential and a backpack full of ill-fitting clothes. These were the only two things I had managed to hold on to by the time I moved into the McCartney House in Bend, Oregon in 2013 at the age of 24. I had just graduated rehab for the sixth time and had officially managed to burn every bridge behind me. There were only two options ahead: Oxford, or the homeless shelter.

This situation was a far cry from the comfortable middle-class lifestyle I had grown up with. Which isn't to say that I had been comfortable growing up. In fact, I remember being baffled in Kindergarten by the ability of my peers to engage in class and carry on with a positive attitude day after day. I had always felt different, and very uncomfortable.

But they always said I had potential. Always the whiz of the class, and later the class clown. It wasn't until middle school that I finally found comfort; I had injured my toe running the mile in track and had a surgery, after which I was prescribed Vicodin. Finally I felt comfortable in my own skin! I didn't need to terrorize the teachers, or worry about everyone else, or myself, or when I could get a breath of fresh air and some exercise. I was finally content for the first time in my life.

As I mentioned, I was an absolute terror for my teachers by this point in my life. At the end of the week when I hadn't interrupted a single lesson to perform my theatrics, my teacher was concerned. She asked me if I was OK. Confused, I told her that I was just fine. She looked at my foot and said "Oh, they must have given you some pain medicine." That is where I figured it out, the pain medicine did it.

Before this experience I was convinced that drugs were bad, and that I would never try them. Now I had a new idea planted in my mind: drugs were good! I pursued this idea into the depths of insanity like the rest of us; squandering my potential, my relationships, my hopes, and my dreams in the process.

By the time I spent that first night on the couch in the McCartney House, I was a broken man, living by instinct like an animal. My highest hope for the Oxford experience was to hold down a job and stay sober long enough for a good relapse.

Bend, Oregon is a mountain town known for recreation, and it lives up to its reputation in my story. I had your typical Oxford experiences and growths: I saw recovery modeled in my housemates at different stages, meeting attendance was made easy, responsibility and accountability were necessary to fit in, and I lived with people who believed in me.

Before I even knew what was happening, it was nine months later. I had held a job the entire time, I was working steps with a sponsor, and I felt like I was finally free. Like I could do anything I put my mind to. I focused on paying off my debts and got myself back into school. Although I had always wanted to be a lawyer, I figured I could be a social worker at best, given my history. That idea was good enough to get me started.

The year I went back to school was the year the World Convention came to Portland, Oregon and my Oxford House paid for me to go. I didn't expect much but it wound up changing my life. Paul Molloy is an excellent orator with quite a story. The way that he told it throughout that weekend gave me a new appreciation for the experience that I had been given in Oxford.

The way that Mr. Molloy told the story, he happened upon the model, it happened to be an extreme success, and he and his associates were able to make the model available across the country against heavy legal resistance. I realized that he might not have accomplished that last part (which is crucial to my story!), had he not happened to be a lawyer. Everyone had always told me I needed to become a lawyer, I always wanted

to become one and part of my despair in addiction had been that I had ruined my chance at that because of my behavior.

The story of Oxford House, told by Mr. Molloy, convinced me to throw caution to the wind and pursue my dream. Thank you higher power! This is where I think my path in life was truly set back on course, and I believe it is one of the major reasons I am still sober today.

I went on to serve as Chapter Chair and attended the convention in D.C. the next year. I was able to help a lot of people during this time and these are some of the best times in my life. I made friends for life in my housemates; I worked the steps and became a sponsor, I found confidence in responsibility and leadership, my relationship with my family was restored. I found that elusive comfort in a spiritual way of life, and I even met and married my soul mate!

After getting my Associates Degree and getting married, I moved away to attend university and get into my own place. I kept with the program and I use the skills I learned in Oxford to continue living a sober life today. Sometimes it feels like I am living somebody else's life. Honestly, my own mother can't even believe it and I know how lucky I am that I found myself faced with the choice between Oxford House and the homeless shelter, instead of just the homeless shelter.

Because of my sobriety I was able to maintain a 4.0 GPA in school, where I had failed and dropped out before, and attain a Bachelor's Degree *summa cum laude*. I also scored really high on my LSAT (all those people had been right, I really did have the aptitude to be a lawyer). The combination of all of this, along with the fact that I was able to write an exciting application essay due to the life I had lived before, during, and after Oxford, led to me not only getting accepted into law school but offered a scholarship!

Potential, a bag of ill-fitting clothes, and a couch to sleep on in an Oxford House. These were the only things I needed to find my way out of a miserable, animalistic fear-based existence that the love of my family, my privilege, six stints in rehab, jails, lost friendships, friend's deaths, and even my own will power couldn't find me out of. In 2013, Oxford House was the only place I had to go, and because of it I can go anywhere now. Thank you Oxford! - Scott C.

### **Shaunna Mellons – Tennessee**

My name is Shaunna Mellons. I'm honored to be serving as the State Chair of Oxford Houses of Tennessee. I am a mother of three, a college graduate, a social worker and an alcoholic and drug addict in recovery. I built a decent adult life during the early stages of my disease, which consisted mostly of binge drinking. Once the disease progressed and drugs became involved, I lost it all, along with my sanity and will to live.

I left my second round of treatment on May 1, 2015 and moved directly into Oxford House Holston. I had made prior attempts to get sober, but had never even heard of Oxford House. I saw this as my last chance. Fear got me started and I jumped into service work with Oxford, AA meetings and working the steps with a sponsor. I made many mistakes early on, but stayed sober and kept trying. I've been blessed to open houses including the first women and children's Oxford House in Tennessee. My recovery life in Johnson City, Tennessee is incredible and Oxford is something I believe in very deeply. My life has been restored and in many ways is far better than I ever dreamed possible.

### **Todd S. – South Carolina**

I have known that there was something different about me ever since I can remember. Then, at 13 years old, I tried drugs and alcohol. I felt like I had found the answer to life. I didn't drink continuously but I had to have something to change the way I felt. I just wasn't comfortable in my own skin. I was like a garbage

disposal for drugs; it didn't matter what type. I constantly bummed money from my dad and lived with him. This continued on through the years until I was on probation this last time when I fell victim to the delusion that, if I just drink some, I can pass drug tests. After many failures and trips to jail and detox over and over, I started going to Alcoholics Anonymous. The people in my home group saw me constantly struggling and sent me to treatment in Sumter. After working the steps and being there for a year, I left and moved to this Oxford House.

I'm grateful to call this place home and we have a very strong fellowship in this house. We hold each other accountable here but also have fun like a family. Stop by and see us sometime. - Todd Schlick

### Tommy Chambers - Texas

I was at the bitter end. My wife and my family had pushed me out of their lives, knowing that this was the only way I would ever surrender and get help. I left the comfort of my home and made a long trip from my home in Virginia to treatment in Texas. A few days later, I received a call from my wife saying that she wanted a divorce. Hurt, confused, and not knowing whether I would ever see my daughter again or be able to piece my life back together, I was at rock bottom.

I remember feeling lost and unsure of what I would do. I only had one suitcase with nothing but gym shorts and t-shirts that I had brought with me to treatment. I had nowhere to go. I couldn't return home and stay sober. I had no family willing to help me. I was completely alone. The first time I heard the name 'Oxford House,' I remember it was a beacon of hope. It was a place where someone like me could live, become a productive member of society and rebuild a life. I was accepted into an Oxford House without a dollar to my name. They worked with me while I found employment. The guys in the house actually fed me and helped me with rides to job interviews. I couldn't believe it! I was home; a place where I was truly accepted and not judged based on my past.

Two short weeks later, I attended my first Chapter meeting. The male Housing Services Chair position was up for nomination and no one volunteered. Out of nowhere, I was nominated and voted in as the newest Chapter Officer. I was so scared and shocked. I had no idea what had just happened. It was that moment, that leap of faith, that defined my experience in Oxford. I went on to become my Chapter's Chair and was even elected as a State Officer, highlighting the fun memories and experience Oxford can bring to those who truly seek it. Today, I am employed as Outreach Services Representative by Oxford House, Inc. and I am so grateful for my experience with Oxford. Oxford House saved my life so now I can go help save others! Tommy Chambers, Houston, TX



# Oxford Houses Receiving the 2017 Board of Directors' 100-Year Award

## **Colorado**

Oxford House-Acacia  
Oxford House-Andes  
Oxford House-Animus  
Oxford House-Cleveland Ave  
Oxford H.- Colorado Springs  
Oxford H. Garden of the Gods  
Oxford House- Independence  
Oxford House- Longmont  
Oxford House- Miller  
Oxford House-Thornton  
Oxford House-Welby

## **Delaware**

Oxford House- Eighth St  
Oxford House-Bedford  
Oxford House- Chestnut Hill  
Oxford House-Chiming  
Oxford House- Salem Woods

## **Hawaii**

Oxford House- Alaume  
Oxford House- Coconut Grove  
Oxford House-Kealoha  
Oxford House- Kuokoa  
Oxford House Moelima

## **Kansas**

Oxford House Barnes  
Oxford House- Braeburn  
Oxford House- Chautauqua  
Oxford House-College Hill  
Oxford House- Duncan  
Oxford House-Halsey 2  
Oxford House- Midtown  
Oxford House- North Ash  
Oxford House Robin  
Oxford House- Village

## **Kentucky**

Oxford House- Greenup

## **Louisiana**

Oxford House- Acadiana  
Oxford House- Baton Rouge  
Oxford House- Beaureve  
Oxford House- Belle  
Oxford House- Bienvenue  
Oxford House- Bon Famille  
Oxford House- Bon Temps  
Oxford House- Boxwood  
Oxford House- Broadmoor  
Oxford House- Buveur de Lait  
Oxford House- Bye-Water  
Oxford House- C'est Bon  
Oxford House- Canal  
Oxford House-Cayenne  
Oxford House- Clearview  
Oxford House- Cole  
Oxford House- Convocation  
Oxford House-Coursey  
Oxford House- De la Majorite  
Oxford House- Dena Lynn  
Oxford House- Drusilla  
Oxford House- Dulles  
Oxford House- Essen  
Oxford House- Flannigan  
Oxford House- Fleur Di Lis  
Oxford House- Forsythe

Oxford House-Fountainbleau  
Oxford House- Gretna  
Oxford House- Harrell  
Oxford House- Haven  
Oxford House- Imperial  
Oxford House-Jambalaya  
Oxford House- Jones Creek  
Oxford House- Kenner  
Oxford House-Lafayette  
Oxford House- Lagniappe  
Oxford House- LaRouge  
Oxford House- LaSalle  
Oxford House- LeGrand  
Oxford House- Lions Den  
Oxford House- Little Italy  
Oxford House- Louisianne  
Oxford House- Mandeville  
Oxford House- Maplewood  
Oxford House- McNeese  
Oxford House- Metairie  
Oxford House- Mint  
Oxford House- Mirabeau  
Oxford House- Neal  
Oxford House- New Leaf  
Oxford House- Old Hammond  
Oxford House- Palmer Park  
Oxford House- Pinhook  
Oxford House- Ponchartrain  
Oxford House- Prien Lake  
Oxford House -Ragin Cajun  
Oxford House- Red River 2  
Oxford House- Regalia  
Oxford House- Roma 2  
Oxford House- Shawn  
Oxford House- Slidell  
Oxford House- Soignet  
Oxford House- So. Alexandria  
Oxford House- Southern Oak  
Oxford House-Southfield 2  
Oxford House- Southshore  
Oxford House- St George  
Oxford House- St Tammany  
Oxford House- St Thomas  
Oxford House- Stockton  
Oxford House- Tams  
Oxford House- Tangi  
Oxford House- Tanner  
Oxford House- Uptown  
Oxford House- Vieaux Carre  
Oxford House- Village Creek  
Oxford House- West Hale  
Oxford House- Whittington  
Oxford House- Windsor  
Louisiana State Association

## **Maryland**

Oxford House- Bethesda  
Oxford House- Cheverly  
Oxford House- Kelly  
Oxford House- Severna Park  
Oxford House- Silver Spring

## **Mississippi**

Oxford House- Big Lake  
Oxford House- Bon Ami  
Oxford House- Forest Park  
Oxford House- Golden Eagle  
Oxford House- Medallion  
Oxford House- Phoenix  
Oxford House- Rodenberg

Oxford House- Sunkist  
Oxford House- Tropicana  
Oxford House- Tupelo  
Oxford House- Winterview

## **New Hampshire**

Oxford House- Manchester

## **North Carolina**

Oxford House- Amhurst Rd  
Oxford House- Asheville  
Oxford House- Askham  
Oxford House- Aurora 2  
Oxford House -Brentwood  
Oxford House- Brinkley  
Oxford House- Buck Jones  
Oxford House -Camden Circle  
Oxford House- Carolina Ave  
Oxford House- Carrboro  
Oxford House- Cary  
Oxford House- Cedar Hills  
Oxford House- Cedarwild  
Oxford House- Christopher Rd  
Oxford House- Church Street  
Oxford House- College Road  
Oxford House- Covington1  
Oxford House- Daley  
Oxford House- Dellwood  
Oxford House- Driver  
Oxford House- Dunn  
Oxford House- Durham  
Oxford House- Durwood Lane  
Oxford House- Eastwood  
Oxford House - Eleventh  
Oxford House- Estes  
Oxford House- Fairview Way  
Oxford House- Faith  
Oxford House- Ferris  
Oxford House- Fieldbrook  
Oxford House- Firelight  
Oxford House- Fleming  
Oxford House- Fox Road  
Oxford House- Franklin Street  
Oxford House- Gardenview  
Oxford House- Gardner Circle  
Oxford House- Glenwood 2  
Oxford House- Goldsboro  
Oxford House- Grace  
Oxford House- Greene Street  
Oxford House- Grinnell  
Oxford House- Guess Road  
Oxford House- Harvard  
Oxford House- Haven Road  
Oxford House- Hearth  
Oxford House- Homestead  
Oxford House- Jacksonville  
Oxford H- Jones Franklin  
Oxford House- Kings Mill Road  
Oxford House- Lucerne  
Oxford House- Mantua Way  
Oxford House- Mayflower  
Oxford House- Maynard  
Oxford House- Mendenhall  
Oxford House-Merritt Mill  
Oxford House- Mordecai  
Oxford House- Morehead  
Oxford House- Morgan Creek  
Oxford House- New Bern  
Oxford House- New Hope  
Oxford House- North Hills

Oxford House- North Trail  
Oxford House- Oakmont  
Oxford House- Oakridge  
Oxford House- Oatgrass  
Oxford House- Ocean Acres  
Oxford H- Old Winston Rd  
Oxford House- Oldham Ct  
Oxford House- Pamlico  
Oxford House- Peace St  
Oxford House- Piedmont  
Oxford House- Pinecrest  
Oxford House- Pond  
Oxford House- Quail Hollow  
Oxford House- Rangeley  
Oxford House- Redbanks  
Oxford House- Repon  
Oxford House- Roundtop  
Oxford House- Shamrock  
Oxford House- Smith Crk  
Oxford House- Soundside  
Oxford House- South Hills  
Oxford House- Spray  
Oxford House- State Street  
Oxford House- Steeds Run  
Oxford House- Stockton Dr  
Oxford House- Sudbury  
Oxford House- Sue Lane  
Oxford House- Suite  
Oxford House- Swann  
Oxford House- Triangle  
Oxford House- Tyndall Court  
Oxford House- Vermel Ct  
Oxford House- Weatherhill  
Oxford House- Westhaven  
Oxford House- Willow  
Oxford House- Wyoming  
Oxford House- Zmaura Way

## **New Jersey**

Oxford House- Eleventh Ave  
Oxford House- Thirteenth Ave  
Oxford House- Fourth Ave  
Oxford House- Fifth Ave  
Oxford House- Astoria  
Oxford House- Bay Lea  
Oxford House- Bayshore  
Oxford House- Bayside  
Oxford House- Billings Ave  
Oxford House- Bradford  
Oxford House- Bradley Beach  
Oxford House- Brick  
Oxford House- Carnegie  
Oxford H.- Cedar Broadway  
Oxford House- Claire Drive  
Oxford House- Cornwall  
Oxford House- Dickinson Ave  
Oxford House- Disney  
Oxford House- Doral  
Oxford House- Dorer  
Oxford House- Dougie  
Oxford House- Dudley  
Oxford House- East Broad St  
Oxford House- East Brunswick  
Oxford House- Evesham  
Oxford House- Fischer Blvd  
Oxford House- Fletcher Lake  
Oxford House- Forked River  
Oxford House- Frankfort  
Oxford House- Freehold  
Oxford House- Galway Place

Oxford House- Garden Street  
Oxford House- Grand Central  
Oxford House- Haddon  
Oxford House- Hazelwood  
Oxford House- Highlands  
Oxford House- Howell  
Oxford House- Isaac Collins  
Oxford House- Johnson Ave  
Oxford House- Kendall Park  
Oxford House- Kingston  
Oxford House- Lake Street  
Oxford House- Lakewood  
Oxford House- Langford  
Oxford House- Lexington Ct  
Oxford House- Linwood  
Oxford House- Long Branch  
Oxford House- Lookout  
Oxford House- Love Ln  
Oxford House- Madison Court  
Oxford House- Matawan  
Oxford H- Meadowbrook Cir.  
Oxford House- Melbourne  
Oxford House- Melody Lane  
Oxford House- Merion  
Oxford House- Millbrook  
Oxford House- Monument  
Oxford House-Moorestown  
Oxford House- Ocean  
Oxford House- Parish Lane  
Oxford House- Parsons  
Oxford House- Patcong Creek  
Oxford House- Pine Fork  
Oxford House- Point of Woods  
Oxford House- River Road  
Oxford H- Rockefeller Park  
Oxford House- Sears  
Oxford H.- South Toms River  
Oxford House S Ward Ave  
Oxford House- Stratford  
Oxford House- Stuart St  
Oxford House- Suffolk  
Oxford House- Thompson Ave  
Oxford House- Tigger  
Oxford House- Troy  
Oxford House- Union Creek  
Oxford House- Van Ct  
Oxford House- Victorian  
Oxford House- Vineland  
Oxford House- Wesley  
Oxford House- West Orange  
Oxford House- Winchester  
Oxford House- Woodbrook  
NJ State Association

## **New Mexico**

Oxford House- Eubank  
Oxford House- Juan Tabo  
Oxford House- Morris  
Oxford House- Pennsylvania  
Oxford House- Tahiti

## **Oklahoma**

Oxford House- Ada  
Oxford House- Beech  
Oxford House- Bil-Mar  
Oxford House- Blessing  
Oxford House- Boomer  
Oxford House- Briar Meadows  
Oxford House- Bricktown  
Oxford House- Burning Tree

## Oxford Houses Receiving the 2017 Board of Directors' 100-Year Award

Oxford House- Claremont  
 Oxford House- Cloverleaf  
 Oxford House- Dittmer  
 Oxford House- East Moore  
 Oxford House- E Wedgewood  
 Oxford House- Edgewood  
 Oxford House- Edmond 2  
 Oxford House- Elmhurst  
 Oxford House- Epic Forest  
 Oxford House- Fontana  
 Oxford House – Grace Hill  
 Oxford House- Grove  
 Oxford House- Holiday  
 Oxford House- Integrity  
 Oxford H- Jamestown South  
 Oxford House- Leisure Lane  
 Oxford House- Longan  
 Oxford House- Marlyn 2  
 Oxford House- Midwest City  
 Oxford House- Opportunity  
 Oxford House- Parish  
 Oxford H.- Patterson Estates  
 Oxford House- Pennville  
 Oxford House- Pine Oak  
 Oxford House-Progress Way  
 Oxford House- Rockwood Hill  
 Oxford House- Royal  
 Oxford House-Rustic Hills  
 Oxford House- Scissortail  
 Oxford H-Shadow Mountain  
 Oxford House- Shirley Ann  
 Oxford House- Sooner  
 Oxford H- South Park Plaza  
 Oxford House- Southern Hills  
 Oxford House- Stillwater  
 Oxford H- Terrace Manor 2  
 Oxford House-Three Lakes  
 Oxford House- Tulsa Midtown  
 Oxford House- Urbana-  
 Oxford House- Westwinds  
 Oxford House- Woodridge  
 OK State Association

### **Oregon**

Oxford House- Aloha  
 Oxford House- Ashar  
 Oxford House-Athena Cove  
 Oxford House Avery Park  
 Oxford House- Blanton  
 Oxford House- Glencoe  
 Oxford House-Hazeldale Park  
 Oxford House- Juniper  
 Oxford House-Kingwood  
 Oxford House- Meldrum Park  
 Oxford House- Onawa  
 Oxford House- Reedway  
 Oxford House- Rocky Butte  
 Oxford House- Royal Park  
 Oxford House- Santana Park  
 Oxford House- Serenita  
 Oxford House- Siskiyou  
 Oxford House- Swanson Park  
 Oxford House- Tanglewood  
 Oxford House- Trinity  
 Oxford House- Waterpark  
 Chapters 4, 8, 9, 13, 14, & 22  
 Oregon State Association

### **Pennsylvania**

Oxford House- Bluff  
 Oxford House- Cecelia  
 Oxford House- Donna J  
 Oxford House- Eau Claire St

Oxford House- Orchard Ave  
 Oxford House- Third Avenue  
 Oxford House-Walker Butler

### **Tennessee**

Oxford House- Cleveland  
 Oxford House- Crestone  
 Oxford House- East Ridge  
 Oxford House- High Pt Terrace  
 Oxford House- Hilltop East  
 Oxford House- Metropolis  
 Oxford House- Ridgecut  
 Oxford House- Rocky Top  
 Oxford House- Titan  
 Oxford House- Volunteer

### **Texas**

Oxford House-Abilene  
 Oxford House- Alamo City  
 Oxford House- Awesome  
 Oxford House- Bashlow  
 Oxford House- Beaver Run  
 Oxford House- Bellaire  
 Oxford House- Blanco  
 Oxford House-Brettonwood  
 Oxford House- Carson  
 Oxford House- Carvel Lane  
 Oxford House- Catalpa  
 Oxford House- Cortez N  
 Oxford House-Costigan  
 Oxford House-Culebra  
 Oxford House- Equinox  
 Oxford House- Excelsior  
 Oxford House-Fielder  
 Oxford House- Fort Worth  
 Oxford House- Gentry  
 Oxford House- Gramercy  
 Oxford House- Grayson  
 Oxford House- Greenridge  
 Oxford House- Guilbeau  
 Oxford House- Harvest Glen  
 Oxford House- Invicta  
 Oxford House- Laguna  
 Oxford House- Leon Valley  
 Oxford House- Longhorn  
 Oxford House- Lubbock  
 Oxford House- Lugary  
 Oxford House- Matador  
 Oxford House- McCart  
 Oxford House- Meadow Park  
 Oxford House- Milam  
 Oxford House- Odette  
 Oxford House- Red Raider  
 Oxford House- Richard Lee  
 Oxford H- Richland Manor  
 Oxford House- Roanwood  
 Oxford House- Rolling Oaks  
 Oxford House- San Pedro  
 Oxford House- South Mesa  
 Oxford House- South Willis  
 Oxford House- Stepping Stone  
 Oxford House- Tech Terrace  
 Oxford House- Walton  
 Oxford House- Westcreek  
 Oxford House- Wharton  
 Oxford House- Wood Oak  
 Oxford House- Woodland Park  
 Oxford House- Yorkwood

### **Virginia**

Oxford House- Amherst Street  
 Oxford House- Annandale  
 Oxford House- Apple Blossom

Oxford H-Baileys Crossroads  
 Oxford H- Bayview Gardens  
 Oxford House- Beau Lane

Oxford House- Berkley Park  
 Oxford House- Blossom  
 Oxford House- Braddock  
 Oxford House- Brandy Jo  
 Oxford House- Briarwood 2  
 Oxford House- Brilyn  
 Oxford House- Brookfield  
 Oxford House- Chain Bridge  
 Oxford House- Chapel Hill  
 Oxford House- Chesapeake  
 Oxford House- Church Hill  
 Oxford House- Clay Street  
 Oxford House- Columbia Pike  
 Oxford House- Coral  
 Oxford House- Douglass Park  
 Oxford House- Fair Oaks  
 Oxford House- Fairview Park  
 Oxford House- Featherstone  
 Oxford House- Forest Glen  
 Oxford H- Forest Hills Park  
 Oxford House- Fry's Spring  
 Oxford House- Glebe Road  
 Oxford House- Glebewood  
 Oxford House- Glen Carlyn

Oxford House- Golden Maple  
 Oxford House- Gosport  
 Oxford House- Hampton  
 Oxford House- Hermitage  
 Oxford House- Hilltop Heights  
 Oxford House- Horizon  
 Oxford House- Hunter Street  
 Oxford House- Jamestown  
 Oxford House- Lake Smith  
 Oxford House- Lemon Road  
 Oxford House- Little Back  
 Oxford House- Little Creek  
 Oxford House- Lynnhaven  
 Oxford House- Manor  
 Oxford House- Melita  
 Oxford House- Merrifield  
 Oxford House- Mill Mtn  
 Oxford H- Mt Vernon Square  
 Oxford House- Neptune  
 Oxford House- North Ave  
 Oxford House- North Upton  
 Oxford House- Oceana  
 Oxford House- Old Dominion  
 Oxford House- Old Town  
 Oxford House- Orchid  
 Oxford House- Pembroke  
 Oxford House- Pen Park  
 Oxford House- Pence Court  
 Oxford House- Peninsula  
 Oxford House- Pentagon  
 Oxford House- Picadilly Pl  
 Oxford House- Plaza  
 Oxford House- Pinewood  
 Oxford House- Poseidon  
 Oxford House- Prosperity  
 Oxford House- Raleigh Court  
 Oxford House- Ramekin  
 Oxford H- Randolph Macon  
 Oxford House- Ravensworth  
 Oxford House- River City  
 Oxford House- Roseberry  
 Oxford House- Salem  
 Oxford House- Seaview  
 Oxford House- Seaview Park

Oxford H- Shenandoah Valley  
 Oxford House- Sheraton Hills  
 Oxford House- S Cameron  
 Oxford House- Springfield  
 Oxford House- Star City  
 Oxford House- Sterling Oxford  
 House- Thomas 2 Oxford  
 House- Thomas St Oxford  
 House- Tidewater Oxford  
 House- Victoria Oxford House-  
 Wakefield Oxford House-  
 Washington Pk Oxford House-  
 Waverly Hills Oxford House-  
 Wesleyan Oxford House-  
 West End Oxford House-  
 Williamsburg Oxford House-  
 Woodland Hgts

### **Washington**

Oxford House- Allenmore  
 Oxford House- Amory  
 Oxford House- Bill Wyze  
 Oxford House Bridgeview  
 Oxford House- Columbia  
 Oxford House- Conifer Pk  
 Oxford House- Connelly  
 Oxford House- Crosby  
 Oxford House- Delaware  
 Oxford House- Eastside  
 Oxford House- Echo Lake  
 Oxford House- Erlands Point  
 Oxford House- Fisher Park  
 Oxford House- Grammer  
 Oxford House- Greenwood  
 Oxford House-Gregory Way  
 Oxford House- Hilltop View  
 Oxford House- J Morgan  
 Oxford House- John Harrison  
 Oxford House- Journey  
 Oxford House- Kennewick  
 Oxford H- Lake Washington  
 Oxford House – Laurelwood  
 Oxford House- Lien  
 Oxford House- Lotus 2  
 Oxford House- Northgate  
 Oxford House- Ohana  
 Oxford H- Orchard Heights  
 Oxford House-Palm Sprgs  
 Oxford House- Pinecrest 2  
 Oxford House- Pioneer Pt  
 Oxford House- Prash  
 Oxford House- Puget Sound  
 Oxford House- Renton Valley  
 Oxford House- Riverside Hill  
 Oxford House- Rowland  
 Oxford House- Sandalwood Ct  
 Oxford House- Sedro Woolley  
 Oxford House- Shorewood  
 Oxford House- Skagit Valley  
 Oxford House- Stark  
 Oxford House- Sunrise Heights  
 Oxford House- Tekoa  
 Oxford House- Truman Pl  
 Oxford House- Tyee  
 Oxford House-Tynan  
 Oxford House- Vancouver  
 Oxford House- Yakima  
 Chapter 5  
 Washington State Association

### **Wisconsin**

Oxford House- La Crosse 1

Thank you for helping Oxford House™ grow.

In FY 2017, the Oxford Houses on this list contributed at least \$600 a year to OHI. That money permitted expansion in new states and gave thousands of recovering individuals the same chance to gain the time and peer support needed to become comfortable enough with long-term recovery to avoid relapse.

While 27% of all Oxford Houses made donations to OHI as a house, others donated through their chapter or state association.

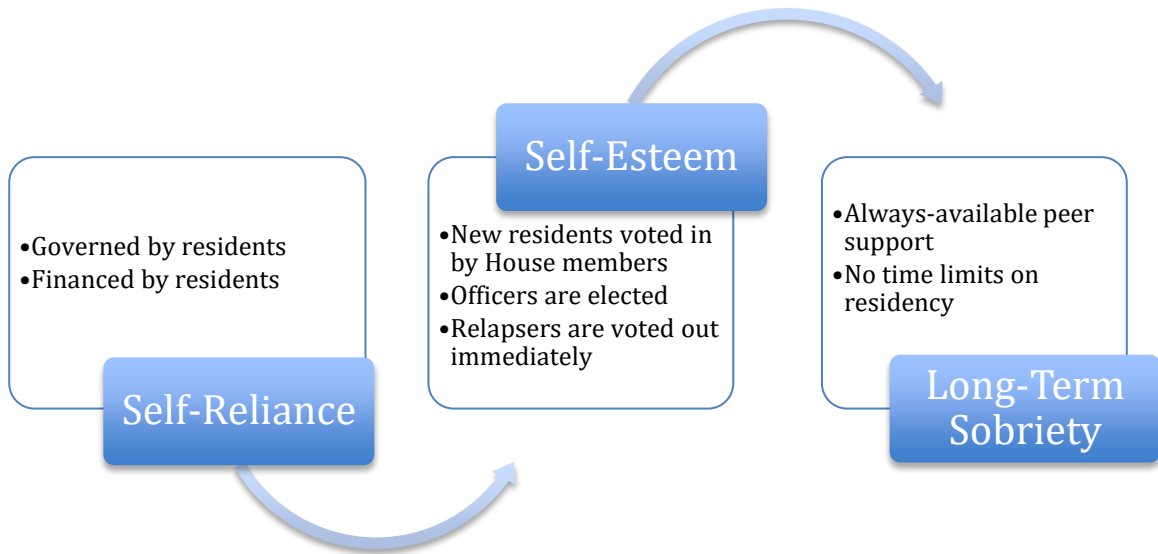
Thanks. Keep up the good work.

Oxford House™ can be around for many more years because of existing Oxford Houses reaching out to help new houses to be established.

Thanks from all who are waiting for an Oxford House in their town or city. Keep donating until everyone who needs an Oxford House bed is able to get one.

Thank You !

# OXFORD HOUSE™



Unique • Evidence-based • Time-tested  
 Fostering self-reliance, self-esteem and long-term sobriety

**ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG ADDICTION**

- About 17 million Americans are primarily active alcoholics with another 8 million addicted to illicit drugs. (SAMHSA)
- 20.3 million persons aged 18 or older needed treatment for an illicit drug or alcohol abuse problem in 2015 (8.5 percent of persons aged 18 or older). (SAMHSA)
- Of these, only 1.25 million – 6.2 percent of those who needed treatment – received it.
- Government reports show that alcohol and drug abuse is responsible for the admission of almost 1.5 million people to emergency rooms nationwide and drug addiction results in nearly half a trillion dollars' economic loss annually or \$1,426 per American.
- For those receiving treatment, 60% had been in prior treatment an average of more than three times. [TEDS]

**Oxford Houses Provide a Low-Cost, Highly Effective Method of Reducing Recidivism**

Not everyone who drinks alcohol becomes an alcoholic. Not everyone who uses mood-altering drugs becomes a drug addict. But some do. Society has struggled with effective ways to help those who become addicted to change behavior because their addiction can cause harm to them, their families and society at large. There is no magic wand but there is a process that works. The four stages are:

1. Intervention
2. Detoxification [Ending physical dependence]
3. Motivation and Education [Treatment]
4. Long-term Behavior Change

The weak link in the process is society's failure to support environments that foster long-term behavior change. Many individuals repeatedly relapse after completing the first three stages. Significant evidence suggests that the Oxford House program addresses this problem, fosters recovery without relapse, and does so at a cost society can afford. With peer support and no residency time limits, Oxford Houses provide the time and environment needed for the development of long-term recovery without relapse.

## **OXFORD HOUSE TRADITIONS**

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

1975 – 2017

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

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

Write or Call

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