

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

*Self-run, Self-supported Recovery Housing*

## Oxford House World Convention

AUGUST 29 - SEPTEMBER 1, 2019



WASHINGTON, D.C.

CONVENTION THEME:  
*Oxford House: Self-Reliance • Self-Respect*

Marriott Renaissance Downtown Hotel  
999 9th Street NW • Washington, DC

*2019 Commemorative Program*

# 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Oxford House World Convention

## Oxford House: Self-reliance · Self-respect

August 29 - September 1, 2019 Marriott Renaissance Downtown Hotel, Washington, DC

<b>CONVENTION SCHEDULE</b>				
<b>FRIDAY 8/30</b>		<b>SATURDAY 8/31</b>		<b>SUNDAY 9/1</b>
<b>6:30 - 8:00 AM</b>	<b>Breakfast Buffet</b> <i>World Council Nominations Due by Noon</i>	<b>6:30-8:00 AM</b>	<b>Breakfast Buffet</b> <i>Voting until Noon for World Council by Houses attending the Convention</i>	<b>Breakfast Buffet</b> 6:30 – 8:00 AM
<b>8:00-9:30 AM</b>	<b>Opening General Session</b> <b>Invocation</b> – Msgr. Eddie Tolentino <b>Welcoming Remarks</b> Local Officials <b>Welcome and Convention Overview</b> Kathleen Gibson and Paul Molloy <b>World Council Election Rules</b> James McClain <b>Keynote Speaker</b> John Kelly, Ph.D.	<b>8:15- 9:30</b>	<b>Third Breakout Panels</b> 1. Medication in Oxford Houses 2. Dealing with Children in Oxford Houses 3. Keeping Alumni Involved and Forming Alumni Associations 4. Organizing Personal Finances 5. Nuts and Bolts of Finding and Starting a New Oxford House	<b>Closing General Session</b> <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</b>	<i>Break</i>	<b>9:30-9:45</b>	<i>Break</i>	
<b>9:45-11:00</b>	<b>First Breakout Panels</b> 1. Addiction Research- What's New and Newsworthy 2. Working with State Agencies 3. Engaging the Recovery Community 4. Oxford House and Behavioral Health Organizations 5. Leadership v. Bossism – Practicing Democracy	<b>9:45-11:00</b>	<b>Fourth Breakout Panels</b> 1. Generation X and Millennials in Recovery 2. Educating the Public About Recovery 3. MAT/MAR in Oxford Houses and Dealing with Opioid Overdoses 4. Oxford House Research and Upcoming Studies 5. Oxford House – Four Stages and Five Core Principles	<p><b>CONVENTION REGISTRATION</b></p> <p><i>Registration for the 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Oxford House Convention starts at 10:00 AM on August 29.</i></p> <p><b>GOLF TOURNAMENT</b> <i>Thursday, August 30</i> <i>Enterprise Golf Mitchellville, MD.</i></p> <p><i>Check-in at the course: 10:00 AM</i> <i>Tee time: 11:00 AM</i> <i>Lunch will follow the competition</i></p> <p><i>Meet in lobby at 8:30 AM for transportation</i></p> <p><b>WOMEN'S CONFERENCE</b></p> <p><i>The Oxford House Women's Conference is on Thursday, Aug. 29</i> <i>2:30 PM - 7:00 PM</i> <i>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> 1. Working with Drug Courts, Parole and Prison Re-entry 2. Going Back to School as Residents or Alumni – Tips from Those Who've Done It. 3. Out of the Closet and into an Oxford House – Understanding Recovery and the LBGQT Community 4. World Council Update 5. Conducting House, Chapter and Association Meetings	<b>11:15-12:30</b>	<b>Fifth Breakout Panels</b> 1. The Importance of Having Fun in Oxford House 2. Filling Vacancies – Where to Look and How to Do It 3. Working with Treatment Providers 4. Civil Rights Update 5. Working Together – Houses, Chapters, Associations and Alumni	
<b>12:30 – 2:00</b>	<b>Lunch on Your Own</b> <b>AA/NA meetings at hotel – 1:00-2:00 PM</b>	<b>12:30 – 2:00</b>	<b>Lunch on Your Own</b> <b>Alumni Lunch; 12:30-2:00 PM</b> Clyde's at Gallery Place Get Tickets at World Council table. <b>AA/NA meetings at hotel – 1:00-2:00</b>	
<b>2:15-5:00</b>	<b>Second General Session</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keynote Panel – The Opioid Crisis: The View from the Trenches</li> <li>• Eligible World Council Nominees give three-minute campaign speeches</li> <li>• Presentation of Directors' 100-Year Awards</li> </ul>	<b>2:30 – 4:45</b>	<b>Third General Session</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Keynote:</b> Stuart Gitlow, M.D.</li> <li>• Introduction of New World Council Members</li> <li>• Vote on Resolutions</li> </ul>	
<b>Evening</b>	<b>Friday evening free for:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dinner on your own 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> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Invocation</li> <li>➢ Dinner and Awards</li> <li>➢ Recovery Speaker: Marty Walker</li> <li>➢ Dance: 9:00 PM – Midnight</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Breakout panel rooms: (1) Grand Ballroom, (2) Congressional Hall A, (3) Congressional Hall B (4) Congressional Hall C, (5) Mount Vernon Square</b></p> <p><b>All General Sessions and first breakout panels will be in the Grand Ballroom</b></p> <p><b>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</b></p> <p><b>On Thursday, August 29, there are AA and NA meetings only in the evening (10:00-11:00 PM).</b></p>				



# *Greetings*

*Oxford House, Inc.*

*21<sup>st</sup> Annual Convention*

August 29 - September 1, 2019



As Mayor of Washington, DC, it is my pleasure to extend congratulations to Oxford House, Inc., on the occasion of your 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Convention.

Oxford House, Inc. was established by and for individuals recovering from substance abuse and alcohol addiction. Since its inception, there are now 2,643 Oxford Houses throughout the United States and in Washington, DC. For more than four decades, Oxford House has helped individuals restore their lives and remain clean and sober without relapse.

As you gather to reflect on your accomplishments, I thank this organization for helping to make a difference in quality of life of others.

On behalf of the 702,000 residents of Washington, DC, you have my best wishes for an enjoyable event.

Muriel Bowser  
Mayor of Washington, DC



## *Oxford House™* *Self-Reliance – Self-Respect*

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Welcome to the 2019 Oxford House™ World Convention in Washington, DC. The convention theme this year focuses on two attributes that most residents acquire from living in an Oxford House – self-reliance and self-respect. Throughout the convention, we will be talking about these attributes as well as others as we focus on a broad set of topics ranging from basic Oxford House ‘housekeeping’ issues to broader issues about addiction and recovery. There is also plenty of time allotted for socializing and networking. Attend all the sessions. You’ll learn a lot and have fun in the process. If you’re here with other members of your House or Chapter, consider splitting up in order to hit as many panels as possible. That way you’ll have far more information to bring home to those who weren’t able to attend this year.

### **Introduction**

As you’ve heard me talk about many times, Oxford House™ was born in 1975 when I was one of thirteen men living in a county-run halfway house that was closing. We needed a safe place to live to continue our recovery and we started the first Oxford House. Over the past 44 years, our sole emphasis has been on providing the opportunity for long-term recovery without relapse; we own no real property and don’t accumulate wealth. The focus has paid off. We have a national network of more than 2,600 Oxford House, along with continuing expansion and recovery outcomes second to none. None of that could have happened without the buy-in of Oxford House residents and alumni – then and now. Congratulations to all of you – and keep up the good work!

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. Nonetheless, 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. We’ve also not been afraid to litigate to protect the right to have Oxford Houses in good neighborhoods – and we’ve won, even in the U. S. Supreme Court.

Each year we focus on a different theme that relates to the Oxford House success story. This year’s theme is “Oxford House: Self-reliance • Self-respect.” It is taken from the cover of the original Oxford House Manual®, the entirety of which has changed very little over our 44-year history. In 1975, we first identified Oxford House as “An Idea Based on a Sound System for Recovering Alcoholics and Drug Addicts to Help Themselves”, and then highlighted the four elements of that sound system – Housing, Fellowship, Self-reliance and Self-respect. This convention theme focuses on these last two elements.

Let me give you a few of my thoughts on this theme. First of all, these attributes – self-reliance and self-respect – go hand in hand with last year’s theme which was ‘Recovery, Fellowship and Fun.’ As we discussed last year, while recovery itself is central, it’s not enough. Abstinence alone doesn’t work; long term-recovery requires more than that. In the ‘rooms,’ it’s often said that newcomers need to change their “people, places and things” if they are to achieve recovery. Oxford Houses residents make these changes. They begin to practice recovery and find fellowship among others seeking the same goal. There is also an essential third element – fun. Back in 1975 when we started the first Oxford House we said, “If we can’t have fun in recovery, what’s the point?” All three elements – recovery, fellowship and fun – are necessary for sustained long-term recovery without relapse and are a big part of what makes Oxford House work. All are

important and lead Oxford House residents toward developing (or re-developing) self-reliance and self-respect.

### Self-reliance and Self-respect

Self-reliance and self-respect get established in an Oxford House resident in large part because each Oxford House emphasizes the importance of self-determination consistent with responsibility. Self-determination alone isn't a recipe for success in the long run. However, self-determination coupled with responsibility works. How does this happen?

Each Oxford House obtains a charter that spells out three conditions each Oxford House must follow to achieve the maintenance of an alcohol and drug-free living environment; namely, the House must be democratically self-run, financially self-supported and the residents must agree to immediately expel anyone who uses alcohol or illicit drugs. All Houses have a copy of the Oxford House Manual<sup>®</sup>. It explains how Oxford House works, how to elect officers and how to hold business meetings, manage finances and run the House democratically. The photo on the right emphasizes the importance of the Oxford House Manual<sup>®</sup> not only to the wearer but to all Oxford House residents and alumni.



The participatory democracy aspect of Oxford House is key to the development of self-reliance and self-respect. The notion that residents themselves decide who will live in an Oxford House is



central to the operation of an Oxford House. When a House vacancy occurs, prospective applicants apply to the House and are interviewed by the House residents. It takes an 80% vote of the residents for an applicant to be accepted for residence and invited to move in. Once admitted, residents immediately feel part of the group (though perhaps awkwardly at first) because they know that they have been selected to join the group. It's like a sorority or fraternity or country club – you have to be voted in.

Participatory democracy also extends to the fact that each resident pays an equal share of House rent and other expenses. The person who makes more money doesn't pay more; everyone pays an equal share. If a new resident doesn't have a job, other residents will quickly point out where there are job openings. It's in everyone's interest to have everyone working and paying their equal share.

Some House members may be retired or on disability and don't have formal jobs; they are encouraged to perform volunteer work, usually within the recovery community. Getting a paycheck or performing valuable volunteer service pays off in helping to build both self-reliance and self-respect.

House leadership is also participatory. All House members get to hold office because of the number of House officers and because there are explicit term limits; no resident can hold a particular office more than six months at a time. This policy allows for shared leadership and discourages 'bossism.' Residents get together weekly for their House meeting and hash out problems, go over finances, elect officers and occasionally vote to evict a resident who has relapsed. It doesn't happen often but when it does, residents call a special House meeting to vote

on expulsion. In addition to working together at weekly House meetings, residents get together regularly just to socialize and bond with each other.

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, straight or LGBTQ, young and old – all can become addicted and all are welcome in Oxford House. The very diverse Oxford House population features egalitarianism as a core principle – each individual has an equal vote, officers are term-limited and expenses are divided equally among all residents. This participatory democracy minimizes the “we versus them” attitude that can detract from a focus on recovery and development of self-reliance and self-respect. In an Oxford House, residents respect each other and support each other’s sobriety – for both selfish and unselfish reasons.

Go to any homeless shelter, jail, prison or detox unit and you’ll find out that the residents’ family and friends are long gone. Underneath the shakes and hard-luck stories, you usually find isolation, loneliness and hopelessness. All of us addicts have been there and most of us didn’t find it fun. Oxford Houses provide a way back to a life worth living.

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. More than 550,000 individuals have lived in Oxford House and most have stayed clean and sober. In an Oxford House, residents buy into the concept that relapse doesn’t need to be part of the disease and, as a result of that belief, most residents don’t relapse. This happens because Oxford House provides the structure that leads to self-reliance and self-respect for the long term.

### **Conclusion**

Oxford House fosters self-reliance and self-respect in its residents and alumni. And, as was emphasized at a prior convention, it is also ‘unique, time-tested and evidence-based.’ We are all fortunate to be part of it and each of us plays an important role in its success. There really are no big bosses. All of you are what makes Oxford House work. Because we practice participatory democracy with everyone paying an equal share of expenses and having an equal vote in House decisions, we learn self-reliance and self-respect 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. Oxford House provides the structure we need to evolve from scared, addicted human beings into confident human beings comfortable in sobriety and long-term recovery.

### **PARTICIPATE IN THIS 2019 CONVENTION AND ENJOY IT!**

This convention provides a place for us to celebrate our success and learn more about Oxford House™. There are four general sessions and 25 breakout panels in which specific aspects of addiction and recovery will be discussed. There is a World Council election. Plan to vote!

Take advantage of all that is offered. Listen to the speakers and panel experts to learn more about Oxford House and about addiction. This convention is also a place to make new friends. Oxford House membership is like membership in a big family. We have common ground. Take advantage of all that the convention has to offer. And have fun!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'P'.

# 2019 Annual Oxford House Convention

**Marriott Renaissance Downtown Hotel  
August 29 – September 1, 2019**

**Thursday, August 29, 2019**

## **Annual Oxford House Golf Tournament**

Enterprise Golf Course  
Mitchellville, MD

This is the twenty-first Annual Oxford House Golf Tournament. There is an \$85 fee per player. Transportation to and from the tournament will be available. Meet in lobby at 8:30 AM for transportation to the course. Check-in time at the course is 10:00 AM; tee time will be at 11:00 AM and lunch will be after the game. The play will be ‘Shotgun’ style. There will be four winners.

## **Convention Registration**

Grand Ballroom Foyer

- Thursday, 10:00 AM – 8:00 PM
- Friday, 7:00 AM – 4:00 PM
- Saturday, 7:00 AM – Noon

## **Women’s Conference**

Thursday, 2:00 – 7:00 PM  
Grand Ballroom

Registration opens at noon on Thursday

## **World Council Meeting**

Thursday, 8:00 PM  
Meeting Room 4

## **AA and NA Meetings**

- AA meeting
- NA meeting

10:00 – 11:00 PM  
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. Members of the same House or Chapter should split up and go to different breakout sessions.
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, August 30, 2019

**Breakfast Buffet**

**6:30 – 8:00 AM**  
**Renaissance Ballroom**

**OPENING GENERAL SESSION**

**8:00 – 9:30 AM**  
**Grand Ballroom**

**Invocation: Msgr. Eddie Tolentino    Pastor, St. Michael the Archangel, Silver Spring, MD**

**Welcoming Remarks by Local Officials**

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

Oxford House, Inc. (OHI) is run by a dedicated staff under the leadership of CEO Paul Molloy and COO Kathleen Gibson. Both are Oxford House alumni. 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 autonomous Oxford Houses and helping existing Oxford House networks stay on track. OHI is the sole provider of charters to new Houses that agree to meet charter conditions that require the residents of each Oxford House to run the House democratically, each pay an equal share of household rent and expenses and immediately expel any resident who relapses. OHI also publishes manuals and other publications that support the network of Oxford Houses and organizes the annual World Convention.



**Oxford House World Council Election Rules: James McClain**

**Keynote Speaker: John F. Kelly, Ph.D., ABPP**

**Professor, Harvard Medical School**



Dr. Kelly is the Elizabeth R. Spallin Professor of Psychiatry in Addiction Medicine at Harvard Medical School-the first endowed professor in addiction medicine at Harvard. He is also the Founder and Director of the Recovery Research Institute at the Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH), the Associate Director of the Center for Addiction Medicine (CAM) at MGH, and the Program Director of the Addiction Recovery Management Service (ARMS). Dr. Kelly is a former President of the American Psychological Association's (APA) Society of Addiction Psychology, and is also a Fellow of the APA and a diplomate of the American Board of Professional Psychology. His clinical and research work has focused on addiction treatment and the recovery process, mechanisms of behavior change, and reducing stigma and discrimination among individuals suffering from addiction. He has published more than 140 peer-reviewed articles, reviews, and chapters in the field of addiction science and is currently an Associate Editor for several academic journals in the addiction field.

**FIRST BREAKOUT PANELS**

**FRIDAY 9:45 – 11:00 AM**

- 1. Addiction Research – What's New and Newsworthy**
- 2. Working with State Agencies**
- 3. Engaging the Recovery Community**
- 4. Oxford House and Behavioral Health Organizations**
- 5. Leadership V. Bossism – Practicing Democracy**

**Grand Ballroom**  
**Congressional Hall A**  
**Congressional Hall B**  
**Congressional Hall C**  
**Mount Vernon Square**

## SECOND BREAKOUT PANELS

Friday 11:15 AM - 12:30 PM

- |   |                      |
|---|----------------------|
| 1. Working with Drug Courts, Parole and Prison Re-entry                                       | Grand Ballroom       |
| 2. Going Back to School as Residents/Alumni – Tips from Those Who’ve Done It                  | Congressional Hall A |
| 3. Out of the Closet and into an Oxford House– Understanding Recovery and the LGBTQ Community | Congressional Hall B |
| 4. World Council Update   | Congressional Hall C |
| 5. Conducting House, Chapter and Association Meetings   | Mount Vernon Square  |

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

**REMEMBER TO GET WORLD COUNCIL NOMINATING PETITIONS IN TO THE WORLD COUNCIL TABLE AT THE RENNAISSANCE REGISTRATION TABLE BY 1:00 PM FRIDAY**  
**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 – 5:00 PM**  
**Grand Ballroom**

### **Keynote Panel – The Opioid Crisis – The View from the Trenches**

**Panelists:** Joshua M. Sharfstein, M.D. Director, Bloomberg American Health Initiative and Vice Dean for Public Health Practice and Community Engagement, Johns Hopkins University  
Lori Holtzclaw Oxford House Alumna and Regional Manager  
Paul Stevens Oxford House Alumnus and Regional Manager  
Amber Pope Oxford House Resident and Outreach, VA  
Caroline Allen Oxford House Alumna, KY  
Ronald McClarin Oxford House Resident and Outreach, VA  
Nicola Barteau Oxford House Alumna and OHI Staff, MD  
Anna Rand Oxford House Alumna and Outreach, WA

**Moderator:** Stuart Gitlow, M.D., MPH, MBA, DFAPA Past President of the ASAM Board of Directors; Director, Annenberg Physician Training Program in Addictive Disease

Oxford House has dealt with the opioid crisis since before it became identified as a crisis. Since its beginnings in 1975, Oxford Houses have been home to opioid addicts – most of whom have achieved long-term recovery. While opioids have become more lethal as fentanyl and other substances have been added, the long-term recovery process remains the same. The panel will discuss addiction to opioids – then and now.

The Oxford House panelists have all personally dealt with opioid addiction and are now working with others in Oxford Houses who are just beginning their journeys toward long-term recovery. The panelists will recount their personal stories and talk about what they’re dealing with now in the field as they work with the current generation of folks with an addiction to opioids (and other substances) and how the situation differs now from what it was in earlier days. Dr. Sharfstein has just published a book on the opioid crisis.

### **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.

This year, residents will vote for four Resident Members and one Alternate Resident Member. One of the new Resident Members will fill a vacant seat and serve for two years. Residents and alumni will vote for one Alumni

Member and one Alternate Alumni Member. Both Resident and Alumni Alternate Members serve one-year terms. Ballots must be turned in to the World Council table by noon on Saturday. Votes are counted during lunch and the new World Council members are introduced at the Saturday afternoon General Session.

### **Presentation of Directors' 100-Year Awards**

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. Over the past fiscal year, Oxford House, Inc. received over \$600,000 in contributions from grateful Oxford House residents and alumni.

### **Friday Evening – Enjoy dinner and sightseeing on your own.**

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## **Saturday, August 31, 2019**

**Breakfast Buffet** **6:30 – 8:00 AM**

### **THIRD BREAKOUT PANELS** **Saturday, 8:15 - 9:30 AM**

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|---|-----------------------------|
| <b>1. Medication in Oxford Houses</b>                               | <b>Grand Ballroom</b>       |
| <b>2. Dealing with Children in Oxford Houses</b>                    | <b>Congressional Hall A</b> |
| <b>3. Keeping Alumni Involved and Forming Alumni Associations</b>   | <b>Congressional Hall B</b> |
| <b>4. Organizing Personal Finances</b>                              | <b>Congressional Hall C</b> |
| <b>5. Nuts and Bolts of Finding and Starting a New Oxford House</b> | <b>Mount Vernon Square</b>  |

### **FOURTH BREAKOUT PANELS** **Saturday 9:45 - 11:00 AM**

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|--|-----------------------------|
| <b>1. Generation X and Millennials in Recovery</b>                       | <b>Grand Ballroom</b>       |
| <b>2. Educating the Public About Recovery</b>                            | <b>Congressional Hall A</b> |
| <b>3. MAT and MAR in Oxford Houses and Dealing with Opioid Overdoses</b> | <b>Congressional Hall B</b> |
| <b>4. Oxford House Research and Upcoming Studies</b>                     | <b>Congressional Hall C</b> |
| <b>5. Oxford House – Four Stages of Houses and Five Core Principles</b>  | <b>Mount Vernon Square</b>  |

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

### **FIFTH BREAKOUT PANELS** **Saturday 11:15 AM - 12:30 PM**

- |  |                             |
|--|-----------------------------|
| <b>1. The Importance of Having Fun in Oxford House</b>                 | <b>Grand Ballroom</b>       |
| <b>2. Filling Vacancies – Where to look and How to Do It</b>           | <b>Congressional Hall A</b> |
| <b>3. Working with Treatment Providers</b>                             | <b>Congressional Hall B</b> |
| <b>4. Civil Rights Update</b>  | <b>Congressional Hall C</b> |
| <b>5. Working Together – Houses, Chapters, Associations and Alumni</b> | <b>Mount Vernon Square</b>  |

**LUNCH ON YOUR OWN** **12:30 – 2:00 PM**

Grab something to eat and hit an AA meeting in Empire A or an NA meeting in Empire B or go nearby to the Alumni Lunch.

**ALUMNI LUNCH** **12:30 – 2:00 PM**

Clyde's at Gallery Place [Get tickets at World Council Table inside the Renaissance Ballroom: \$35 per person]

## THIRD GENERAL SESSION

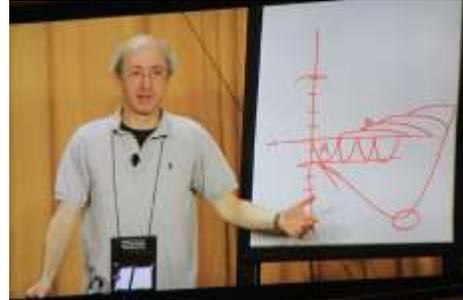
2:15 – 4:30 PM

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

Grand Ballroom

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 programs for the Health Channel and ABC.



Dr. Gitlow is a strong supporter of Oxford House and sits on the Oxford House, Inc Board of Directors. His presentations on addiction 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.

- **Announcement and Introduction of New World Council Members**
- **Discussion and Vote on Convention Resolutions**

## Saturday Evening, August 31, 2019

### BANQUET

6:30 – 9:00 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 never lived in an Oxford House. Tom spent his last eight years 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: Marty Walker**

**Oxford House Alumnus and Senior Outreach Coordinator**



Marty Walker, an Oxford House alumnus and Outreach worker, currently serves as the Senior Outreach Services Coordinator for Oxford House, Inc. in Tennessee and Kentucky. He has been in long-term recovery since 1998 and has worked with Oxford House, Inc. since 2001.

He has helped open over 130 Oxford Houses in many states, including Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, Kentucky, Maine, Oregon and Tennessee. Mr. Walker’s work with the development of new networks of Oxford Houses is used as a model across the country. In addition, he is a lead trainer for Oxford House, Inc. and spends much of his time working with new employees.

A true believer in the Tom Sawyer business model, he has long brought wisdom, humor and grit to his work with Oxford House, Inc. and its residents and alumni.

**Dance**

**9:00 PM – Midnight  
Congressional Hall**

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**Sunday, September 1, 2019**

**Breakfast Buffet**

**6:30 – 8:00 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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# SUMMARY OF ALL BREAKOUT PANELS

## FIRST BREAKOUT PANELS

FRIDAY 9:45 – 11:00 AM

### Addiction Research – What’s New and Newsworthy

Grand Ballroom

Friday 9:45 - 11:00 AM

**Panelists:** Wilson Compton, M.D., M.P.E. Deputy Director, National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)  
Westley Clark, M.D., J.D., M.P.H. CAS and FASAM Faculty, University of Santa Clara, CA  
Joshua Sharfstein, M.D. Director, Bloomberg American Health Initiative and Vice Dean for  
Public Health Practice and Community Engagement, Johns Hopkins U.  
Kevin Sabet, Ph.D. President and CEO, Smart Approaches to Marijuana (SAM)  
Stuart Gitlow, M.D., MPH, MBA, DFAPA Past President of the ASAM Board of Directors;  
Director, Annenberg Physician Training Program in Addictive Disease

**Moderator:** John F. Kelly, Ph.D. Harvard University, MA

The panel will focus on what’s new in research on addiction and long-term recovery. The panel will open with introductions and brief presentations by each of the speakers. That will be followed by a moderated discussion on the recent research and its implications, identify what additional research is needed and discuss the policy implications to be derived from the findings. The panelists will address issues related to the opioid crisis, the implications of the growing use and acceptance of marijuana and vaping, and other issues related to addiction. They will also discuss the definition and measurement of long-term recovery.

The panelists are all highly-regarded researchers in the field. Oxford House is honored by their presence and everyone looks forward to their review and commentary on the research.

### Working with State Agencies

Congressional Hall A

Friday 9:45 – 11:00 AM

**Panelists:** Linda McCorkle Director of Treatment and Recovery Services, TN  
Ivory Wilson, M.A, LAC Program Manager, Office of Behavioral Health,  
Department of Health, LA  
Angela Harper King, M.A. Supportive Housing Specialist, Division of MC/DD/SAS, NC  
Adam Trosper, M.S.W. Program Administrator, DBHDID, KY  
Ute Gazioch Director of Substance Abuse and Mental Health, Department of  
Children and Families, FL

**Moderator:** Christine Scalise NJ Dept. of Alcohol and Substance Abuse, NJ

Expansion of the Oxford House network of houses has occurred fastest where Oxford House has a close working relationship with the state agency or designated Behavioral Health contractor. 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. 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? What’s working well and what isn’t working as well in the relationships?

The panelists each work to foster development of networks of self-run, self-supported Oxford Houses. The moderator is with the New Jersey state agency and has managed the contract with OHI for many years. The panelists 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.

## **Engaging the Recovery Community**

**Congressional Hall B**

**Friday, 9:45 AM – 11:00 AM**

<b>Panelists:</b>	Ed Smith Samara Sansom Elliott Palmer Jenna Neasbitt Anna Mable Jones Jay Ruais	Bridges for Change, OR Oxford House Alumna and Outreach, TX Oxford House Alumnus and Founder, A.N.S.W.E.R., NC Recovery Consultant, TX Oxford House Alumna and Outreach DC/MD Chief of Staff, Addiction Policy Forum
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<b>Moderator:</b>	Johnny Guido	Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, NC
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The recovery community covers a vast cross-section of America, from recovering individuals, family members, employers, 12-step groups, EAP programs, and other groups focused on addiction recovery. Oxford House residents engage with these groups to help mobilize the community to support recovery. In recent years, the recovery community has become very active in establishing, promoting and participating in activities that raise community awareness. Such activities include involvement in marches for recovery and related events particularly during September, which has become known as Recovery Month.

Oxford House residents and alumni also use this involvement to enlist support from the recovery community for the Oxford House community. They also find folks in the recovery community who can be helpful in getting furnishings for new Oxford Houses and in introducing residents of new Oxford Houses to their neighbors. All of this helps to make Oxford Houses and their residents part of the local neighborhood and community.

## **Oxford House and Behavioral Health Organizations**

**Congressional Hall C**

**Friday 9:45 AM – 11:00 AM**

<b>Panelists:</b>	Quinetta Rowley Womack, LPC Kayla Leinenweber June S. Sivilli, M.A. Brian Fike Jeffrey Sanders MSW, MPA, LCSW	Director of Clinical Operations, Department of Health/ Office of Behavioral Health, LA Oxford House Alumna and Treatment Consultant, American Addiction Treatment Center, NC Associate Director, Public Health, Education and Treatment, ONDCP Housing Coordinator, Trillium Healthcare, NC Program Manager, MH/SU Transition to Community Living, Partners Behavioral Health Management, NC
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<b>Moderator:</b>	Emily Catoe	Oxford House Alumna and Regional Manager
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Oxford House, Inc. currently works closely with a few behavioral health organizations and anticipates working with more in the future. The panel includes representatives from organizations with which OHI has been working and some that are just starting a relationship with OHI. An official from the White House Office of Drug Control Policy is also on the panel.

The panel will discuss how OHI and behavioral health organizations can work together successfully. The panel will also focus on financial and other barriers to access to treatment and how they can be overcome; the role of Oxford House in the recovery continuum and related issues. Additionally, the group will consider what has been working and how program staff have overcome specific challenges to such partnerships.

## Leadership v. Bossism – Practicing Democracy

Mount Vernon Square

Friday 9:45 AM – 11:00 AM

<b>Panelists:</b>	Dave Horstmann Shawn Wister Aaron Vick Timothy Marini Michelle Williams	Oxford House Alumnus, TX Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, DE Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, OK Oxford House Resident, NC Oxford House Alumna and Outreach, CO
<b>Moderator:</b>	Jackie Feliciano	Oxford House Alumna and 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 each individual Oxford House. It’s important in all Houses and Chapters to ensure that everyone is 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 it 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.

## SECOND BREAKOUT PANELS

Friday 11:15 AM - 12:30 PM

### Working with Drug Courts, Parole and Prison Re-entry

Grand Ballroom

Friday 11:15 AM - 12:30 PM

<b>Panelists:</b>	Dan Hahn Kurtis Taylor Carson Fox Michael McKeough Jesse Wilson Annie Cleveland	Oxford House Alumnus and State Coordinator, OK Oxford House Alumnus and Executive Director, ADCNC, NC CEO, National Association of Drug Court Professional (NADCP) Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, FL Oxford House Resident and Re-entry Coordinator, NC Oxford House Alumna and Outreach, WA
<b>Moderator:</b>	Joe Chavez	Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, HI

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

The experience of those who enter an Oxford House following incarceration or drug court intervention is usually long-term recovery and crime-free behavior. In some states, Oxford House has developed relationships with re-entry programs that permit those leaving incarceration to go straight to an Oxford House. Other residents come to Oxford

House at the recommendation of drug courts or parole officers, who have found that their clients 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 residents who enter 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] practical ways to facilitate getting individuals leaving incarceration into an Oxford House; (3) how Oxford Houses can help drug court clients achieve long-term recovery and meet the expectations of the drug courts and (4) how Oxford House living facilitates the transition to long-term, crime-free recovery for most residents.

The panelists are all experienced in the field – from the inside and/or the outside.

### **Going Back to School as Residents and Alumni**

**Congressional Hall A**

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

<b>Panelists:</b>	Hunter Phillip	Oxford House Resident, NC
	Scott M. Cumming	Oxford House Alumnus, OR
	Mark Johnson	Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, DC
	Sharonda Banks	Oxford House Alumna, NC
	Emily Catoe	Oxford House Alumna and Regional Manager

<b>Moderator:</b>	Jackson Longan	Oxford House Alumnus and Regional Manager
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Active addiction served to interrupt the educational plans of many Oxford House residents and alumni. Now in recovery, many of them have ventured back to school – some to get GEDs; some take certification courses and others get undergraduate and graduate degrees. The panelists at this session are all Oxford House residents or alumni who have taken this route. They will discuss their own journeys and offer tips for others contemplating such action.

Many colleges now recognize the need for recovery housing and provide support for students in recovery. UNC has been a leader in recognizing and supporting Oxford Houses for students and one of the panelists is a student at UNC and lives in an Oxford House associated with the school. On-campus organizations for those in recovery have also gained prominence in recent years on many campuses.

### **Out of the Closet and Into an Oxford House – Understanding Recovery and the LGBTQ Community**

**Congressional Hall B**

**Friday 11:15 AM – 12:30 PM**

<b>Panelists:</b>	Jeremy Weatherspoon	Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, LA
	Mathew Duncan	Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, AZ
	Al Conley	Oxford House Resident, KY
	Krista Williams	Oxford House Resident, San Antonio, TX

<b>Moderator:</b>	Jason Paul Jarreau	Oxford House Alumnus and Senior Manager, Contracts, OHI
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Members of the LBGQT community have lived in Oxford Houses and found them welcoming but that fact may not be well known. All members of the panel are members of the LBGQT community and are residents or alumni of Oxford House. They will discuss their own experiences in applying to and living in Oxford Houses and discuss fear and misinformation that exists. More generally, they will talk about the LBGQT community and the associated stigma as well as related relevant topics.

Following the moderated discussion, the panelists will take questions from the audience.

## Oxford House World Council Update

**Congressional Hall C**

**Friday 11:15 AM – 12:30 PM**

**Panelists:** World Council Members

Resident and Alumni Members of World Council

**Moderator:** Tim Ring

Oxford House Alumnus and World Council Chair

The Oxford House World Council is made up of Oxford House residents and alumni who are elected annually at the convention to serve staggered three-year terms of office. Elections take place annually at the Oxford House Convention. Resident and Alumni members serve staggered three-year terms of office; Alternate Resident and Alumni Members serve one-year terms. 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. The World Council members meet in person twice a year and hold periodic meetings by telephone conference call.

At this 2019 Oxford House World Convention, residents will elect four Resident Members (one will fill an existing vacancy and serve for two years) and one Resident Alternate Member. Residents and alumni will also elect one Alumni Member and one Alumni Alternate Member.

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.

### Conducting House, Chapter and Association Meetings

**Mount Vernon Square**

**Friday 11:15 AM – 12:30 PM**

**Panelists:** Thomas Floyd  
De Wysocki  
Lance Whitney  
Jackie Alba  
Taylor Wright

Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, OK  
Oxford House Alumna and Outreach, TX  
Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, MO  
Oxford House Alumna and Outreach, TX  
Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, CO

**Moderator:** Lisa Londono

Oxford House Alumna and Senior Outreach Coordinator, SC

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.

The panel will also focus on Chapter and Association meetings. Participation in these meetings is voluntary and the focus should be on making them helpful and informative – and even fun – so as to attract participants. While Chapter meetings sometimes focus on problems in Houses, the focus should always be on being helpful, making useful suggestions and emphasizing and fostering the need for having fun and enjoyment in recovery.

## THIRD BREAKOUT PANELS

Saturday 8:15 - 9:30 AM

### Medication in Oxford Houses

Grand Ballroom

Saturday 8:15 - 9:30 AM

**Panelists:** Ken Hoffman, M.D., M.P.H. Colonel (retired) Medical Corps, US Army  
Paul Stevens Oxford House Alumnus and Regional Outreach Manager  
Darryl Joiner Oxford House Alumnus and Central Office Staff, MD  
James Alston Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, AZ  
Shawn Johnson Oxford House Alumnus and Senior Outreach Coordinator, TX  
Jessica Burden Oxford House Alumna and Senior Outreach Coordinator, IN

**Moderator:** Jason Bliss Oxford House Alumnus and Senior Outreach Coordinator, WA

About half of the residents of Oxford House have a physical or mental health disorder that requires medication to control. This panel will discuss medicines that fit within an Oxford House environment and those that undermine the alcohol and drug-free foundation of Oxford House living. (*Note: MAT/MAR and overdose medication will be covered in a panel in the next set of breakout panels.*) 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 guard against the misuse of legitimate medication and how to use ‘lock boxes’ to avoid provide easy access to the medication.

Following opening remarks by the panelists and a moderated discussion, the panel will respond to audience questions. The panel consists of medical experts and Oxford House alumni experienced in dealing with these issues in Houses.

### Dealing with Children in Oxford Houses

Congressional Hall A

8:15 AM - 9:30 AM

**Panelists:** Sean Bossen Oxford House Alumnus and Senior Outreach Coordinator, OR  
Megan Mason Oxford House Alumna and Outreach, NC  
Kari McFarland Oxford House Alumna and Outreach, AZ  
Judy Maxwell Oxford House Alumna and Regional Manager  
Ryan Didier Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, LA  
Myrna Brown Oxford House Alumna, WA

**Moderator:** Paula Harrington Oxford House Alumna and Outreach, NC

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) how should a House explain an expulsion to children still in the House; and (6) do individual Oxford Houses – those without children in residence – make special rules for when children may visit. Are there any other issues that Houses might 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.

## **Keeping Alumni Involved and Forming Alumni Associations**

### **Congressional Hall B**

**Panelists:** Tim Ring Oxford House Alumnus and World Council Chair  
Lynn Williams Oxford House Alumna, NC  
Eric Cannaday Oxford House Alumnus, OK  
Chuck Liston Oxford House Alumnus, KS  
Alex Szary Oxford House Alumnus and Data Specialist, TX

**Moderator:** Misty Hahn Oxford House Alumna and Outreach, NC

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. The Oxford House World Council also supports alumni associations and its members can be helpful.

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.

## **Organizing Your Personal Finances – Budgeting and Saving**

### **Congressional Hall C**

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

**Panelists:** Lori Holtzclaw Oxford House Alumna and Regional Manager  
Jonathan Gildart Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, KY  
Paul Udell Oxford House Resident and Outreach, OR  
Ricky Mogel Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, WA

**Moderator:** Debbie Robinson Oxford House Alumna and Senior Outreach Coordinator, VA

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 do 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. Their advice may prove very useful.

## Nuts and Bolts of Finding and Starting a Good Oxford House

Mount Vernon Square

Saturday 8:15 - 9:30 AM

<b>Panelists:</b>	Emily Catoe Stacie Hatfield Marty Walker Gene McVae Stacy Levin	Oxford House Alumna and Regional Manager Oxford House Alumna and Outreach, WA Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, TN Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, CA Oxford House Alumna and Outreach, MD
<b>Moderator:</b>	Will Madison	Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, NC

Oxford House needs to continually open new Oxford Houses to meet the demand for beds. 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.

This panel will review the basic elements involved in finding a new House – what’s an appropriate house and neighborhood and what should be done once a possible house is identified. 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.

## FOURTH BREAKOUT PANELS

Saturday 9:45-11:00 AM

### Generation X and Millennials in Recovery

Grand Ballroom

Saturday 9:45 – 11:00 AM

<b>Panelists:</b>	Wesley Ford Jeremy Weatherspoon Brent Erickson Jessica King Pamela Jackson Nathan Truitt	Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, AL Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, LA Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, OK Oxford House Alumna and Outreach, TX Oxford House Resident and Outreach, KY Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, AZ
<b>Moderator:</b>	Shawn Johnson	Oxford House Alumnus and Senior Outreach Coordinator, TX

The panel will focus on young people (*a.k.a.*, Generation X and the Millennial generation) in recovery and discuss opportunities and obstacles that exist for that cohort. 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. While older and younger Oxford House residents have much in common, there are also some significant differences in interests and experiences. Both older and younger residents can learn from each other but sometimes interests diverge.

Many of the younger folks are more into social media and many have started going back to complete their education – whether by getting a GED or advanced degree. They may have fewer or difference job experiences than older residents. They will discuss roadblocks and opportunities they have had that differ from those of older residents.

The panelists – all members of the Gen X or Millennial cohort and either Oxford House residents or alumni – will discuss these trends and talk about the resources they have found (or developed) and the various opportunities available for the Gen X and Millennial generations – and those to follow.

## Educating the Public about Recovery

**Congressional Hall A**

**Saturday 9:45 – 11:00 AM**

**Panelists:** Dan Fuchs Oxford House Alumnus and Senior Outreach Coordinator, CO,  
Westley Clark, M. D., Board Member, Faces and Voices of Recovery  
Kurtis Taylor Oxford House Alumnus and Executive Director, ADCNC, NC  
Ivette Torres Consultant and CSAT (Retired)  
Karen McKinnon Oxford House Alumna and Outreach, NC

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

Throughout the 44-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. Oxford House residents have long been open about their addiction and recovery.

## MAT and MAR in Oxford Houses and Dealing with Opioid Overdoses

**Congressional Hall B**

**Saturday 9:45 – 11:00 AM**

**Panelists:** Ray Cesar Oklahoma Dept. of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services (Ret.)  
Jenna Neasbitt Recovery Consultant, TX  
Alicia Carson Oxford House Alumna and Outreach, NJ  
Casey Longan Oxford House Alumna and Training and Education Coordinator, TX  
Will Madison Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, NC

**Moderator:** Tara Meyer Oxford House Alumna and Outreach, NJ

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 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, some of them harbor some apprehension about this new protocol – particularly when recommended for long-term use rather than as a tapering-off mechanism. Today, however, opioids have become more powerful and MAT has become the norm for recovering opioid users. 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 using 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 panel will also discuss how to deal with opioid overdoses. Most Oxford House residents don't relapse but, occasionally, it will happen. Relapse is most likely to happen during early stages of residency in an Oxford House; this is why Houses are strongly encouraged to have newcomers share a room with another resident for socialization purposes and as a check on behavior that may suggest a relapse has occurred or is imminent. Relapse always requires immediate expulsion. Opioid overdoses can be fatal and residents should be aware of 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.

### **Oxford House Research and Upcoming Studies**

**Congressional Hall C**

**Saturday 9:45 – 11:00 AM**

**Panelists:** Ted J. Bobak  
Patrick Hickey  
Joshua Norris

Researcher, DePaul University  
Researcher, Harry S Truman College  
Researcher, DePaul University

**Moderator:** John Majer, Ph. D. Professor of Psychology, Harry S Truman College, Chicago, IL

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 model 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). The Oxford House program was also singled out as a successful program in the 2016 Surgeon General's report on Addiction.

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. Oxford house residents and alumni work to overcome this limitation. John Majer has led significant studies on Oxford House and the recovery process in general and worked closely with Lenny Jason and his team at DePaul University. The researchers have been assisted in their work by Oxford House residents and alumni and by graduate students

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

**Mount Vernon Square**

**Saturday 9:45 – 11:00 AM**

**Presenters:** Jackson Longan  
Jason Paul Jarreau

Oxford House Alumnus and Regional Outreach Manager  
Oxford House Alumnus and Senior Manager, Contracts, 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.

## FIFTH BREAKOUT PANELS

Saturday 11:15 AM - 12:30 PM

### The Importance of Having Fun in Oxford Houses

Grand Ballroom

Saturday 11:15 AM -12:30 PM

**Panelists:** Elizabeth Lewis Oxford House Alumna and Senior Outreach Coordinator, FL  
Jeremy Weatherspoon Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, LA  
Brandie Bauer Oxford House Alumna, LA  
Jonathan Gildart Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, KY  
Greg 'Goose' Weisz Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, NC

**Moderator:** Marty Walker Oxford House Alumnus and Senior Outreach Coordinator, TN

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. 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 of having fun in Oxford House while also using the democratic, disciplined system of house operation to master self-confidence, sobriety and living a comfortable life without booze and drugs.

### Filling Vacancies – Where to Look and How to Do It

Congressional Hall A

Saturday 11:15 AM- 12:30 PM

**Panelists:** Tim Diehl Oxford House Alumnus and Director of Technology, OHI  
Mateo Littlebird Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, CO  
Mary Taylor Oxford House Alumna and Outreach, TN  
James McClain Oxford House Alumnus and OHI Board Member, DC  
Daniel Fuchs Oxford House Alumnus and Senior Outreach Coordinator, CO

**Moderator:** Sean Bossen Oxford House Alumnus and Senior Outreach Coordinator, OR

Overall, there are many more individuals seeking recovery housing than can be accommodated in Oxford House but when Houses have vacancies, residents sometimes have trouble filling the vacancy and aren't sure how to find applicants. It takes a certain amount of know-how and knowledge of the local recovery community to become good at getting the word out and finding folks new to recovery who need Oxford Houses and would benefit from living in one of them. It's also in the economic self-interest of every resident to keep the beds full.

All of the panelists have proven themselves adept at letting people know about vacancies and finding people in recovery looking for recovery housing. Tim Diehl created the vacancy system. The panelists will talk about methods they have found successful, where to look for possible applicants, how they get the word out and related tips on how to keep beds filled. Keep in mind that filling beds is not only important to keep everyone's EES at an affordable level, it's also giving someone new to recovery the opportunity to discover the many benefits of living in an Oxford House.

## Working with Treatment Providers

**Congressional Hall B**

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

**Panelists:** Lindsay Green Oxford House Alumna and Director Outreach, Recovery Unplugged  
Tania Hubbard COO, Southlight, Raleigh, NC  
Matthew Duncan Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, AZ  
Justin Roshto Oxford House Resident, Houston, TX  
Michael Pickering Oxford House Alumnus and Executive Director, WRAP, DC

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

Most individuals recovering from alcoholism or drug addiction initially go through formal treatment programs of 28 days or longer. 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. While treatment teaches about addiction and provides an education about recovery, long-term recovery generally takes more time and peer support than can be made available in a treatment setting. As is said in the ‘rooms’, folks early in recovery need to change their ‘people, places and things.’ Oxford Houses provide the opportunity to do just that.

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.

## Civil Rights Update

**Congressional Hall C**

**Saturday 11:15 AM – 12:30 PM**

**Panelists:** Steve Polin, J.D. Oxford House Alumnus and General Counsel, OHI  
Greg Heafner J.D. Oxford House Alumnus and Attorney, NC  
Whit Holden, J.D. Oxford House Alumnus and Central Office Staff, OHI

**Moderator:** Paul Molloy, J.D. Oxford House Alumnus and CEO, 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 landmark 1995 U.S. Supreme Court decision in *City of Edmonds, WA v. Oxford House, Inc.* In spite of that favorable decision, some localities continue to try to avoid accommodating Oxford House residents. Oxford House, Inc. continues to challenge these barriers in court whenever they crop up.

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. Oxford House Inc. is not hesitant to litigate these cases when necessary and usually wins.

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. Paul Molloy is also an attorney and an alumnus of the first Oxford House.

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

Mount Vernon Square

Saturday 11:15 AM - 12:30 PM

**Panelists:** Justice Simmons Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, TX  
Jess Wise Oxford House Resident and Outreach, OR  
Tisha Roberson Oxford House Alumna, NC  
Jason Bliss Oxford House Alumnus and Senior Outreach Coordinator, WA  
Dan Hahn Oxford House Alumnus and Senior Outreach Coordinator, OK

**Moderator:** Shawn Wister Oxford House Alumnus and Senior Outreach Coordinator, DE

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.

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***OXFORD HOUSE:***

***SELF-RELIANCE – SELF-RESPECT***

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**PLAN NOW TO ATTEND THE 2020 OXFORD HOUSE CONVENTION  
IN SEATTLE, WASHINGTON**

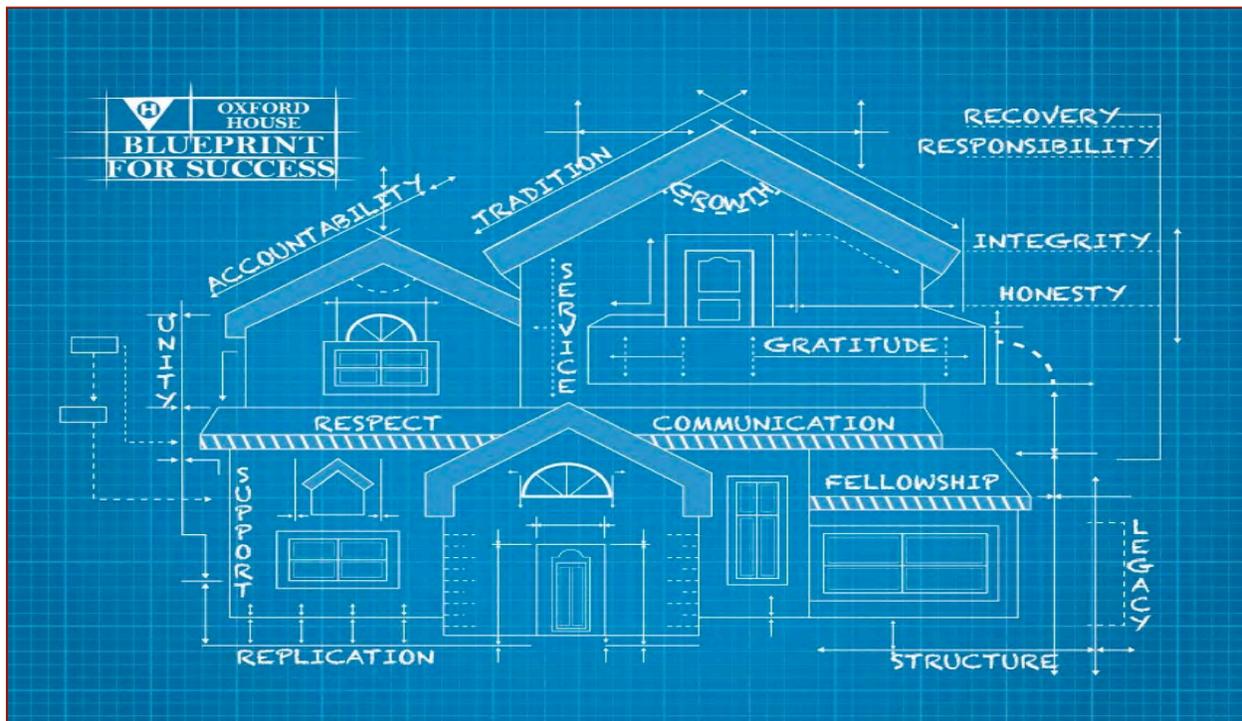
**HAVE A SAFE TRIP HOME**

**Remember to Share What You Have Learned with Residents and Alumni  
Who Weren’t Able to Attend This Year’s Convention.**

# *The Oxford House Blueprint for Success*

The Blueprint for Success, the theme of the 2016 Oxford House convention, continues to apply to Oxford House living in 2019.

The blueprint graphic details the various attributes associated with living in an Oxford House. It illustrates the goals and values that are part of each Oxford House and that all of the residents emphasize in their day-to-day dealings. These goals and values are the foundation of the family environment created in each Oxford House. Not all of the values identified in the blueprint are easy to come by but the structure of all Oxford Houses makes them an integral part of Oxford House living.



The blueprint draws on the components found in the Oxford House Manual<sup>®</sup>. The Manual explains how Oxford Houses work: how to elect officers, conduct business meetings, run the House democratically and immediately expel anyone who relapses. All of the elements shown in the blueprint are part of this structure and form the foundation for living successfully in an Oxford House. Residents follow the blueprint and, in doing so, most residents achieve long-term recovery without relapse. The blueprint and the Oxford House system of operations work!

## OXFORD HOUSE RECOVERY 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. 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 of the stories are from current residents; others are from alumni. Some of the authors have been in recovery for many years; others are fairly new to recovery. All have a story to tell and they strengthen the sobriety of themselves and others by telling their stories. Some stories have been edited for clarity or length.*

*For forty-four 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."*

### 2019 OXFORD HOUSE STORIES BY RESIDENTS AND ALUMNI

#### Amber Pope - Florida

My name is Amber Pope, I'm a grateful recovering alcoholic and addict. My sobriety date is 6/28/2016. My journey began when I was 5 years old, and I started being molested by my stepdad and it progressed to much worse until I was 13. My mom and stepdad were in full blown addiction ever since I can remember. I had a lot of mental & physical abuse early on. I always felt like an outcast, like I was different than everyone else. I never understood what real love was. Moving back & forth with my mom, stepdad, and grandparents, I never had a real place to call home. I remember having a few friends growing up, but I was always uprooted just when things seemed to settle. Fast forwarding a little bit to the age of 13, I finally got the nerve to tell on my stepdad, and the state took me and my little sister and my mawmaw gained custody. We moved to Baton Rouge where my first real taste of drugs came about. It was a real rough neighborhood, and I fell into the wrong crowd. I got close to the neighborhood dope boys, who gave me my first blunt and bottle. I remember the feeling that came over me; I felt invincible and the void was filled. Fast forwarding again, I moved to Bogalusa where I tried to cram my head in school and be the most normal person I could while still dying on the inside. I smoked weed and drank on the weekends like all the kids did back then. My biological dad passed away my sophomore year, and my mom came home from prison. That was a lot to deal with so I moved out of my mawmaw's house and into an apartment with my boyfriend. I worked, went to school, and tried to be as normal as possible. We partied every weekend; snorting powder, drinking, and smoking weed on daily. My mom and I were more like sisters than mother/daughter, so we developed a close, yet toxic, relationship. I still held a lot of resentments towards her.

I graduated from high school and shortly after that I was in a bad car wreck which got me started on pain pills. I immediately abused them! By 19, I was shooting up on a daily basis and dating guys who would pimp me out. By 21, I had already racked up a record, been in a few abusive relationships, and was in a horrible downward spiral in addiction. My D.O.C was crack cocaine, roxies, and lots and lots of vodka. I had a stroke at 21 because of my severe endocarditis. That still didn't stop me. I had no self-worth, morals, self-respect, or happiness. I couldn't see life past my next hit and how to get it. My mom was clean and working until I got locked up one day and she found an abundance of drugs and guns I was holding for a dope dealer. I realized this while locked up and she stopped answering my jail calls. That killed me. I got out and we started using together; doing everything you could think of to get drugs. I ended up in the streets,

selling my body, stealing cars, robbing anyone I could. I was raped a few times, shot at, stabbed, etc. and I kept going. I was arrested in a round-up with other drug dealers in 2015, and charged with Distribution -- a Schedule II offence. I had to serve time AGAIN, and was given drug court AGAIN. I ran, of course, because I came home from prison to the same people, places, and things. I was high the first night home. My parole officer was someone I grew up with who pleaded with me to try something different. I was so tired and worn down, never knowing there was a way out.

I went to Grace House in New Orleans for 5 months where I gained some trust, self-worth, and vital tools to cope with trauma. I was so scared though to come back home. That's where Oxford House came into my life as the greatest blessing! I moved into Oxford House Slidell on November 16, 2016, and I never left. Oxford House became the foundation for me to build my life on in recovery. The women in that house helped mold me. They loved me until I could love myself. They held me accountable! It wasn't an easy transition by any means but, when I was able to see clearly, I knew this is what I wanted. I knew I had the potential to become a better woman. I worked at McDonald's and moved up to manager within 6 months. I'm still shocked that they gave me the keys to the safe!! LOL!

I got involved on a Chapter level quickly, and Lori approached me about moving to Biloxi as a part-time Oxford House Outreach worker. I received a full pardon from the State of Louisiana 4 ½ years early to be able to move out of state, and it worked out perfectly because the Biloxi and Slidell McDonalds had the same owners. OK GOD, I SEE YOU! Moving to Mississippi was very hard though, and I was extremely overwhelmed. I went back into some old behaviors, and almost completely lost one of the most important people in my life. Then Florida's contract came into effect and I moved to Pensacola! I came here and opened Oxford House Glo and, since my mom became very ill at the same time, I started traveling to Baton Rouge every weekend while still trying to open and stabilize Pensacola's first-ever Oxford House.

On April 7th, my car was stolen and I couldn't get a rental car until the following day. I ended up staying in Louisiana until the next day with my mom. I remember brushing her hair and laughing and joking with her. She was so ill by this time, but I still kept faith. On my way back to Pensacola that night I totaled the rental car. I woke up with three very important people sitting next to me in the trauma unit. (shout-out to Outreach workers Chandra Brown, Summar Comeaux, and my idol, Lori Holtzclaw!). These women came from three different states to be with me while I was all broken. I'll forever be grateful. But the worst thing of all of these traumatic events was learning that my mother passed away while I was in the hospital. It was the hardest thing I've ever been through – harder than my daddy and all my grandparents passing. So, while dealing with the funeral while being very injured, all I wanted was to get back to Florida. That was my safe haven. I needed to get back to the life I'd created and back in the swing of things.

This is the greatest job ever, because without recovery I wouldn't have it and, without it, I honestly believe I wouldn't have recovery. I have been able to heal in all aspects of my life. I have gained so much from the people that I've developed relationships with over these last 3 years. Oxford House has shown me so many things; I travel, meet new people, grow as a woman in recovery daily.

### **Andrew Ward – Louisiana**

My name is Andrew Ward and I am a drug addict. I am telling my story to give someone, somewhere, some hope that they too can recover. Our most powerful asset is our story. The ability to reach someone that no other person can is our gift.

I was born in Alexandria, La. My parents separated when I was two, in very ugly divorce. I can remember going to court houses and sitting in backrooms waiting on the outcome. I remember being forced to choose one parent over the other. I didn't understand why. It seemed like I was to blame if I made the wrong choice. I was to live with my mother. She remarried and my stepfather entered the picture. Filled with

hatred, my father voiced his opinion about them openly. Chaos was a normal thing in my life at a young age. Unknowingly, hatred filled my heart as well and I would hold on to that feeling for years to come. When I got older, I was an outsider. I never just could fit in. I always felt I was different. Harboring hate, I used it to demand the attention I felt I needed. Aggression and violence were the ways I discovered I could matter in the world I felt had wronged me.

When I found opiates, I found the answer to all my problems, or so I thought. I didn't have to feel the feelings of frustration and loneliness any longer. Finally, relief had entered my life and I wasn't going to give that up for anyone. Even though the despair of my life was being numbed, I still felt different. I couldn't seem to change the fact that, though all my friends used, I always used more. When the party was over, I kept going until I collapsed. Night after night, it was a constant effort to launch myself into oblivion and it was working. The destruction of my family and everything around me didn't matter. Feeding my addiction was the only thing I cared about. I was alone. The despair came back. Again I was alone, lost in a hopeless relationship with drugs and a path of destruction through the lives of the ones who loved me. Then came the health problems. My heart had taken a beating in my addiction. The doctor had to put in a pacemaker to keep my heart beating; without it I would have died. Faced with death. I walked out of the hospital, got a hotel room and went right back into my addiction.

Hopeless and at the end of my road, I had two options. I went to a rehabilitation program and, when I got out, I was alone in a place in my recovery when I needed direction. Relapse after relapse happened, every one worse than the last. Finally, after one particularly bad spree, someone suggested that I go to Oxford House. Wanting change in my life so bad, I tried it.

When I was accepted into Oxford House, guys showed me what recovery looked like. They actually had sponsors and worked a 12-step program. They helped me dive into my program like never before. Finally, I fit in. Finally, I had friends, real friends, who actually cared about my well-being. When I went through hard times, they were there. I've cried on my brothers' shoulders in my House and them on mine. Oxford House has given me a safe place away from the noise of my past life to build a solid foundation in my life. The love I've experienced in Oxford House is immeasurable. For the first time in my life I've been sober for 1 year and for that I am grateful. Oxford House saved my life. Without Oxford House, I would never have found the loving friendship of someone taking me through the 12 steps to reach a higher power that keeps me sober. Oxford House is my family and will stay in my heart forever.

### **Annaleah L. – Idaho**

Hi everyone, my name is Annaleah L., and I am the Chapter Chair for Chapter 31 from Lewiston Idaho. I am Native American from the Nez Perce Tribe of Lapwai Idaho. I was born and raised in Lewiston, Idaho most of my life.

I grew up in a home with both parents but both of my parents drank heavily on a daily basis. Every now and then they would take a break and stay sober for a few days at a time. Although there was plenty of laughter throughout the house, it was also a disgusting way to grow up. I remember our home was always dirty and smelled of cigarettes and stale beer. I remember watching a lot of fighting. I remember having to protect my little sister and me in our bedroom from strange men who would wonder into our bedroom after everyone else had passed out. I remember staying up late hanging out with my dad but having to learn to set an alarm for school the next morning to get me and my little sister up for school because I never knew if my mom or dad would be able to wake up the next morning or if they would be there at all. It was about the middle of summer when I was nine years old that my mom stabbed my dad. That is where my childhood took a turn. My mom was in and out of prison after the incident and my dad eventually passed away about two years after the incident, from cirrhosis of the liver. It was about this time that my mom and my little sister and I would all go our separate ways. My mom continued drinking and going in and out of prison,

and my little sister was sent off to an institution for troubled kids. I was placed in foster care where I was in and out of homes and the juvenile detention center until I was seventeen.

At the age of seventeen I was well into the drinking and drugging scene which is why I never stayed in a foster home for long. I started smoking weed at the age of twelve, I started drinking at the age of thirteen, and I started using prescription pain killers at the age of seventeen. At the age of nineteen, I had my first son and, for the first time, I was enjoying the life of having a happy and loving family of my own, being a mother, and being happily engaged to my son's dad. We moved away to Fort Smith, Arkansas and it was not long after that our relationship slowly crumbled and we both started smoking methamphetamine together. We had a fatal attraction to one another and we made so many attempts to stay together until one night when we got into a huge fight that resulted in both of us going to jail and losing custody of our son, who was barely one at the time. We eventually moved back to Lewiston, where we eventually parted ways. I continued using methamphetamine for about four years and towards the end of my use, I was not only using but also dealing.

Life went on this way until my next serious relationship which was with my current boyfriend whom I have been with for the last two, almost three years. When we got together, we were both at the end of our using days and sick of being alone on the streets and without our families and our babies, so we made the decision to quit dealing, get clean and sober, and make way for the happy, healthy family we would one day have. He was on probation and, because we were using, he was on the run with warrants so he had to go back to prison to do time and I had to find my own way. When he went off to prison, I relapsed (a few times) until I decided to try something new,

I made the decision to seek treatment and was referred to Changepoint outpatient treatment. I was then referred to a women's Oxford House. I got clean December 10, 2018 and moved into the women's Oxford House in January of 2019. I hit the ground running once I moved in, found a part-time job that paid enough to let me pay my EES, made a commitment to my recovery and began getting involved more not only in my community but also with my chapter. I eventually became the Chapter Chair and will soon be a certified recovery coach for my community. My life today consists of love for not only myself, but for those around me. I have a supportive network of friends that I never thought I would have and I have peace and clarity, not only physically, but spiritually. I will graduate from Changepoint outpatient treatment towards the end of September and I was just promoted at work. Although I currently do not have custody of my son, he lives with his grandparents who can provide him with a safe and clean and loving home while I continue to work on myself and have regular visitation with him so that I can still be a part of his life. Oxford House has made all the difference and has played a major part in the success I've had in my recovery and for that I am truly blessed and forever grateful.

### **Annie Cleveland – Washington State**

Hi, my name is Annie Cleveland. I am a woman in long-term recovery. What that means to me is, I haven't had the need to put a mood- or mind-altering substance in my body since April 23, 2015 and for that I am grateful. I am not proud of the things I did when I was using but today I do not have to be ashamed of them. I am a FORMER drug dealer and a FORMER drug manufacturer. I am a FORMER delinquent mother, a FORMER wayward child and a FORMER drain on society.

I was formerly a lot of negative things and I am currently none of those today. That is not to say that I am not still recovering. I see recovery as a life-long process. Today, I can tell you we do recover. In recovery, we see on a daily basis those struggling to remove themselves from their former selves to become the people they were meant to be. Seeing what happens to those who do not recover gave me the incentive to reach out for help. The ending is grim for people not lucky enough to get the chance for recovery. The prospects are jails, institutions and death for addicts who don't recover.

Today there are places for people like me to go that are conducive to healing and where others there are understanding because they face the same struggles. I am so blessed to have been given the opportunity to have a safe place to recover from my former life. Oxford House has given me my life back to be the mother, friend, daughter and employee and that I was intended to be.

### **Angela Ferry – Indiana**

On July 31, 2017, I was 10 days clean and at a point of desperation that also gave me a drive to want and do more for myself. I interviewed at Oxford House Chana in Owensboro, KY and was accepted. I moved in on August 1, 2017 with 11 days clean and it was the turning point of my life. I moved in the day that the new Oxford House Outreach worker started in my area (she is also my role model, friend and now my boss). The day that I moved in, I became thirsty for knowledge of how this Oxford House thing worked and wanted to know all I could know. I read...and reread...and reread the Oxford House Manual and asked lots and lots of questions.

Three months later, I opened my first house (Oxford House Metanoia) and began a completely different learning process. I stayed very active, open-minded and willing to grow and change with the way things worked. I attended the World Convention last year as a resident and am so proud to say that I am attending this year as Outreach. I sat still and trusted the process; I put in the work necessary for growth and the dedication to Oxford House and service work and, as of July 15, 2019, I am the Oxford House Outreach Coordinator for Northern Indiana. As a resident, I gained so much knowledge, love, compassion, understanding, willingness and overall growth. I was beaten, broken and lost until I found my Oxford family!! Today, I work a 12-step program, give back what was freely given to me, share experience, strength and hope whenever possible, stay open-minded and willing, trust the process and I am so excited to see what the future holds for myself and also for Oxford House!!!

### **Anna Rand – Washington State**

Hi everyone! My name is Anna and I am the Oxford House outreach worker for Spokane and Stevens County, Washington. This is the first time that I have ever had my own story written out in front of me and honestly, it is making my stomach turn. I still get that feeling and hope that it never goes away so that I never forget where I came from.

I grew up in the typical single-family household; my birth father was an addict/alcoholic and some of the earliest memories I have of him are my mother and I driving around with my aunt trying to pull him out of whatever dive bar he was in. I was only about 4 years old. It wasn't until I was grown that I found out my birth father was addicted to cocaine as well. My birth father eventually ended up driving drunk and getting in a car accident which resulted in him being in a coma for 9 weeks and suffering from severe short-term memory loss. My mother ended up raising my brother (who is now in recovery as well) and me on her own. She did this while suffering from polio and being in a country where English was not her first language. Now that I am older, I realize how scared she must have been.

For the most part, I was a good kid and had a good upbringing. I had a great group of friends and did well in school, but I lacked ambition and dreams and the atmosphere in my home was toxic. I was always scared of hoping for too much because I had gotten used to expecting the worst. Immediately after graduating from high school, I started working in the restaurant/bar business. Anyone who has been in the industry before can tell you that there is a lot partying and a lot of drugs and alcohol. During this time, I made a whole new group of friends with whom I shared one thing in common and that was partying. One of these new friends introduced us to Oxycontin and that is where my life took a drastic turn. I fell in love and for the first time I felt like I could be myself and wasn't constantly anxiety-ridden. On the outside, I portrayed myself to be confident but, really, I was depressed and always felt like there was this void. Oxycontin fixed all of that.

Over the next 4 years I was able to maintain my drug habit but I was a mess. I went from one toxic relationship to another trying to fill that constant void. I lost friendships, I lost money and I lost jobs due to my erratic behavior. Just when I thought things couldn't get any worse, they did. I was introduced to heroin. I spent another 4 years after that not living; it was just existing. I was a shell of a person – empty and full of guilt and shame ; doing whatever I could to get well just for that day. I would get clean and relapse repeatedly because I had this great idea that I could still drink since it wasn't my drug of choice. I ended up moving into my mother and stepfather's house. I robbed them of everything they owned.

My mother and stepfather did not give up on me though and, when I was finally sick and tired of being sick and tired, I got into a detox center and into a treatment center after that. While in treatment, I was able to work on the underlying reasons of why I became an addict and was able to face my demons. An amazing counselor at this treatment center told me about Oxford House. She said it would be a great place for me to go after treatment. I told her, "HECK NO." Well, my parents finally put their foot down and told me I was not allowed back home with them. They offered to pay my first month's rent at an Oxford House and since I had no other options, I went for it. I did a phone interview at Oxford House Upriver in Spokane, Washington and was accepted. It was the best thing that could have ever happened to me!

The women in that Oxford House taught me how to live. They supported me but also held me accountable. I was finally able to surrender to the fact that I was an addict. The women at this house taught me not to be embarrassed by this but, rather, to be proud that I made it out of the trenches. I got involved in service work with Oxford House and was Tom Sawyer'ed by Stacie Hatfield. I was VOLUNTOLD to move into two other new houses as a core member and was able to make some amazing friends with whom I still spend time to this day. I spent the next 4 years involved on a Chapter level as well as sitting on the Washington State Association and I was eventually hired on as full-time Oxford House outreach worker on February 1, 2019. I celebrated 5 years clean and sober on April 14, 2019.

If I could describe my life in one word today, it would be CALM. I spend my days working and with my fiancé and my 2 pit bulls. I binge out on Netflix and Amazon Prime. I cook and clean, make my bed every day, mow my lawn, and pay my bills on time. I also follow through on things that I commit to and have learned how to say 'no' when something is not healthy for me. These are all things that may seem normal to most people but WE are not most people. After living in complete chaos for so long, I couldn't ask for anything better. Oxford House has given me the tools I need to live a better life and has given me the opportunity to meet truly amazing people and make truly amazing friends. It is because of Oxford House and the hard work that I have put in that I now have a life that I love. The one thing that I could pass on to all of you reading this is that life gets better and every day it becomes a little easier to live without drugs and alcohol. Don't give up before the miracle happens!

### **Anne Hadwen – Oregon**

I'm going to start off by saying, "Hi, I'm Anne and I'm an addict." That saying is one of the most crucial things to my recovery. Admittance. So, to take you through a short version of my testimony, I'll start from the beginning. I didn't grow up around drugs or alcohol. I was raised by a single mother and had a pretty good childhood. I got married young and had my first child; unfortunately, my husband was a drug addict. I started using heroin with him a little but it wasn't until I found meth that things went south for me. My addiction, as with so many others, was fun at first – running around having all these new friends and feeling like I was unstoppable. My mother had my son now and then and, during that time, I would go get loaded. It didn't take much of that for her to go from having him now and then to having him all the time. I then went through a divorce and a custody battle and lost everything. Even that wasn't my bottom. I continued to use to not have to think about what I had lost and the little boy who had an absent mother. So, I was in and out of jail continuously, not checking in, and that went on for a few years—then I found out I was

pregnant. Three months into the pregnancy I finally quit using. I white-knuckled through and was blessed with a beautiful healthy baby girl. Unfortunately, God had different plans for her and, 29 days after she was born, she passed away from SIDS. I must have lain in my bed for 2 months straight before my inner addict was full circle and I had to use just to be able to live. Even then, I didn't want to go on with my life. I had been absconding for months and I received a call from my p.o. saying it was my last chance or a warrant would be issued and I would be back in jail. So, I bit the bullet and went to check in so loaded that there was no hiding it. I had figured I would get a u.a. and end up there anyway but, as I'm bawling in the parking lot, there was something that made me walk in there. My name was called and as soon as I got back there, the tears came rolling down as I begged for help. I told her I was not clean and had no reason to live. I was on a 3-year downward path and was convinced that prison was the place for me. I had blamed myself for all the bad in my life. So, I'm sitting in jail on Day 7 before going to court to appear in front of my sentencing judge. The attorney who represented me had spoken with my p.o. who knew everything that had happened and, by the grace of God, the judge looked at me and said, "This is not who you are and I believe that." He gave me a 7-day sanction and I was released that day.

I came back to Roseburg and had heard all this hoot about Oxford. My first thought was 'Nope, not living with that many women' but I also couldn't go back home or I wouldn't remain clean so, weighing the pros and cons, I put in an application and was voted into the South Umpqua Women's Oxford House in Roseburg, Oregon. I now am 18 months clean and sober with a clean date of 12-20-17. I have a beautiful 6-month-old son named Mason who makes my world go round. I am a Chapter Co-chair and have the best family a girl could ask for. I remain diligent in my recovery; I have a sponsor and I work the 12 steps and I pray always for the addict who still suffers. Being part of Oxford has helped me learn to love myself. If there's ever a time I struggle, I've got my Oxford family to have my back. I don't go through it alone. Today I am grateful; my life is amazing – all with the help of Oxford. Thanks.

### **Benjamin Phillips – Oklahoma**

Hello. I've been in recovery since August 6, 2016. I live in an Oxford House in OKC, Oklahoma. Being in Oxford House for the last 35 months has taught me so many key elements to life.

Oxford House has molded the "Three R's of Oxford" into my life personally. I personally have discovered:

- *Recovery*: recovered from a hopeless, savage, insane state of mind (I got my life in line)
- *Responsibility*: helped me become a responsible man (keeping my life in line)
- *Replication*: help the next individual get their life in line (service work: show others this life)

I can never repay what Oxford House has given me: A LIFE!!! Before Oxford House, all I knew was getting high, distributing drugs and partaking in other criminal activities leading me to a lifestyle of insanity and jail and prison stays. My Oxford Experience is as follows:

- I sent myself to prison
- Prison sent me to Oxford
- Oxford sent me to 12-step meetings
- 12-step meetings brought me to know and build a bonding relationship with a higher power that helps me daily better myself.

I can never ever give Oxford House enough gratitude for what it has done for me. I am currently anxiously approaching the day I move on to the next phase of my life. The best thing about Oxford is that it has been around long before I came around and will be here long after me if the residents stick to the traditions and these simple suggestions:

- Pay rent,
- Go to meetings, get a sponsor and work the program,

- Clean up after yourself and do a chore.
- Participate, Participate, Participate in the house chapter state and world levels.
- Don't do drugs and or alcohol.

I'm forever grateful to have let Oxford House have such a major impact on my life, and I look forward to becoming a product of the 87% of people who become successful in never returning to their old way of life!!!! You, Oxford House. Benjamin Phillips 07-07-2019

### **Billy Culbertson – Florida**

My name is Billy and I am a person in long-term recovery. My clean date is 12/20/2015. I grew up in Mobile, Alabama. I have two older sisters and our parents divorced when I was 8. I went with my dad and they went with my mom. We weren't rich or poor exactly. I found alcohol at the age of 13 when my oldest sister married a Navy guy and I went to their house for the summer. I got drunk and for the first time in my life I felt as though I fit in. Being overweight and shy, I struggled feeling like I fit in anywhere. I played sports in High School and hurt my knee playing football. I found opiates. I fell in love with them. Fast forward, I got married and had a kid around at age 23; my wife had a job at a doctor's office with access to a prescription pad. I got free opiates – as much as I wanted. She got caught and the free meds were gone but I was a full-blown addict by then. Our bill money went to buying pills. I lost everything, including my job. They sent me to IOP where I found 12-step meetings but I wasn't done yet. I thought I could control my drug use. WRONG. I ended up in jail and, when I got out, it was off to the races. The disease progressed really fast. I discovered Meth and needles. I ended up unemployed and unemployable and was still in full- blown addiction.

The last time I used, I prayed to God for it to be my last shot. I was ready to die. I overdosed and woke up scared to death and I haven't looked back since. I made some calls, found a halfway house for a couple of months but then I made my way to an Oxford House in Nashville. Oxford House has taught me how to be a positive, productive member of society as well as how to be accountable and hold others accountable. Oxford House has given me more blessings than I ever dreamed of. I am beyond grateful for my recovery and to Oxford House for giving me a chance to be somebody when I didn't believe I was capable of it.

### **Bridgette L. Breeze – Virginia**

Addiction has been embedded in my family for generations although I never knew the correct terminology was "Addiction." I thought that everyone was always having a good time or partying.

By the age of 20, I had been indulging heavily into alcohol and marijuana. The gateway drugs! I promised myself that I would never graduate to the hard stuff. Little did I know that my new best friend and love was patiently waiting around the corner to make my acquaintance. The new love of my life was PCP (Phencyclidine), Angel Dust and Boat (just a few names to call her). I dove headfirst into PCP and immediately understood why it was nicknamed "Love Boat". For almost 20 years, I used PCP on a regular basis. I endured so much loss of my closest family during my years of addiction. My sister passed away at 40 and had battled the disease of addiction for years. My father also battled with addiction.

After realizing that I wasted so many of the prime years of my life getting high, I made a long heartfelt plea to God and asked what I could do better and why wasn't my life a normal one. After years of the same discussion, I realized that I didn't want to die this way. I didn't want to play the victim anymore. My oath was to not taint this new decade of my life with drugs and alcohol so, at 39, I decided it was time to do or die. I chose to DO. I reached out for help. I went to detox for 7 days and, because that wasn't enough, I went to treatment for 30 days and, when that wasn't enough, I got my treatment stay extended about two

weeks. That still wasn't enough and I decided, after listening to God and counselors, that I needed a sober living environment. They then introduced me to Oxford House.

Since September 17, 2017, I haven't looked back. Oxford House has provided me a safe sober environment in which to recover and I am able to give back and help others struggling with this disease. I love the opportunity that Oxford House has provided me with being part of an environment and organization outside of myself. Without Oxford House I don't know where I would be. The stars continue to align me with the right people places and things to help with the daily ongoing battle to recovery. I am proud to continually serve in my recovery daily. There is no turning back, only looking forward. As long as I remain clean and sober, I know the sky is the limit.

### **Caroline Allen – Kentucky**

My story started in the small town of Corydon, Indiana, where I was born and raised. I grew up with both parents who were total opposites. My Dad was the strong silent type and my Mom was a very compassionate caregiver. I grew up with lots of kids, including my younger sister, in my mother's at-home daycare center but never felt like I fit in anywhere and I was always filled with anxiety. I dealt with anxiety and feeling different until I got in a relationship at the age of 15 with a man who was much older. From there, my life went downhill to a very dark place. What started off as just drinking every night turned into pills, then into Heroin. To maintain this new way of life I got heavily involved in the manufacturing and distribution of methamphetamine. This went on for years, until I lost my best friend to an overdose in my house. When she passed away, the whole town was very upset and wanted someone to blame and tried charging me with murder. The charges were dropped and I had to move in with my mother-in-law. My heroin addiction got worse and worse and eventually landed me in a drug house with a pimp selling me.

After a year of being trafficked in and out of drug houses, I had finally hit my rock bottom and reached out to my probation officer from a previous D.U.I. My probation officer and my Mother then helped me get admitted in to a rehab facility in Louisville, Kentucky. Once I completed my rehab program I moved back to Corydon, IN to stay with my Mom after being gone for 8 years. I stayed sober for 6 months, but quickly relapsed when I thought being in a relationship was more important. I continued to think a relationship would keep me sober every time I tried to get sober and I relapsed every time.

My last run ended with me homeless and selling my body to maintain my heroin addiction until I decided to go back to rehab on June 19, 2018. When I completed the program this time, I decided to do something different and I reached out to a girl who was sober and lived in an Oxford House. I interviewed for Oxford House Cherokee Park in Louisville, KY from a hospital bed – beaten and broken – and they accepted me. I moved into Oxford House Cherokee Park on July 15, 2018 and it changed my life. The women in that house loved me back to life and I quickly found my self-worth and felt human. In this house I had an actual bed, not just a mattress on the floor. I had a clean safe place to grow and learn and amazing women to support me. Oxford House wasn't just a place to sleep when I had nowhere else to go; it became my home and the people involved with Oxford House became my family. Oxford House wasn't just a half-way house; it was a symbol of and a chance for a better life.

### **Christina Gardner – Indiana**

My name is Christina Gardner and I am a recovering addict. What that means to me is that I have not felt the need to use any mind- or mood-altering substance since March 27, 2018. That was the day I was given an opportunity to do things differently. IMPD chose to take me to a hospital instead of putting me in jail. At that point, I was beyond reality and was seeing and hearing people who did not exist. I was taken to a local hospital and held in their psychiatric processing area. Once they figured out that my hallucinations were due to a combination of drugs, they kept me for the safety of myself and others. It took 4 days for the

hallucinations to stop and, luckily, they did. That was truly the day I decided that I did not want to live like that anymore. I was blessed to have already known people in the recovery field and I reached out for help. I was accepted to Dove Recovery House 2 weeks later and that's where my recovery began. I lived there for 10 months and utilized all the resources they had to offer. I completed IOP classes, was working with a sponsor and successfully completed the program. It was time for me to give my bed up for someone who needed it more desperately than I did.

At this point Oxford House was very new to Indiana and only had 2 houses opened – one men's house (Kai) and one women's house (Indy). Jessica Burden came to Dove to do an Oxford House presentation but I was at work so I did not get to attend. However, I heard great things about it and I reached out to Jessica myself and, from then on, I knew it was my next step in my recovery.

I moved into Oxford House Indy on February 1, 2019. I have to admit that, at first, this was not what I was expecting at all. I envisioned a home where I paid rent, did my part, followed guidelines and life would be good. It took me awhile to adjust to the Oxford House lifestyle – the accountability, giving back, and being there for your housemates. The late-night emergency house meetings and the emergency interviews were not what I had envisioned by any means. However, I adjusted to the Oxford House lifestyle and began to understand how the big picture came together. I became more involved, and began learning as much as I could.

On March 25, 2019 I moved into and helped open Indiana's very first Mom and Me Oxford House as a core member. Our motto is Oxford House is a safe and sober environment for those who are committed to recovery; if you are open-minded and willing, Oxford House will teach you so many core life skills without your even knowing it. You build a family and a strong accountability foundation that will help you in any way possible – but will still call you out on your bullshit. They say, "You can't keep what you have unless you freely give what was given to you." It is so true and it comes full circle. I have gained so many skills and grown – emotionally, mentally and spiritually – with Oxford House.

### **Christopher Jensen – Oregon**

Coming from a Catholic school background, one would think my life should've been a pretty straight forward thing. Instead, I turned to stealing and dealing as soon as I understood how my morals could be switched on and off at the snap of a brain cell. At around 14, I found that stealing was way more intense than the psalms and I pursued the next level of theft each time I set out to get things. It started as change from the money mugs my parents had; by the time I got clean, it had progressed into cutting open ATMs. In between, I would deal whatever to pass the time – but theft is what I loved.

Multiple stints in prison didn't curb the infatuation, nor did pleading from friends and family, until this last set. I got caught for a bit of criddle and, since I was pretty much at max on the Washington sentencing grid, my only option was to try and get to a prison that had something for me to do besides reread Game of Thrones. So, WSP in Walla Walla it was. My counselor there looked at my history and asked if I had any plans to do literally anything with myself...ever. I didn't know. So, he recommended Diesel Tech school. From Day One in that course of study, my entire outlook changed. The only thing I knew about cars was how to 'klak em'. The instructor was a veteran CAT technician who tolerated the inmates' quirks and shortcomings while feeding us information that started a brand-new way to live.

The DOC up there let me stay in Walla Walla when I got released and I continued my education at the community college while living in a STAR Project home. I had a tiny little spot that I could call my own. I struggled a bit with alcohol for a bit while working on a farm and going to school. My addiction followed me back to Portland as I got a job at a truck shop. Then I hit a motorcyclist. My P.O. at the time was so stoked that I actually had a job and checked in when I was supposed to that he gave me another shot. He

said to get into an Oxford House or end up on his list. I knew some folks on that list. They were just like me. Stealing and dealing like shit was gravy. So, I contacted Heidi Wisner because I knew she had gotten into that way of life and, if anyone could relate to my train of madness, it was her. She gave me Levi's number and he genuinely cared about my current situation; like, he actually gave a shit.

A few days later I was in Hughes Oxford house with less than a week sober. This changed everything. We were group of people voluntarily looking out for one another as we progressed through a life worth living. I continued my work at the truck shop and started my application process for the Local 701 as a heavy equipment mechanic. About a year into my Oxford life, having held a position for a bit as Chapter Secretary, I was asked to be a core member of a new house, Oxford House Hoodview. I realized then that I had value – value as a member of a community that focused on the addict and alcoholic and the positive changes that occurred when they wanted a better way to live. This revelation only emboldened my desire to be better.

Today, I am a mechanic for the union. I don't drink or use. I get involved and help when I can and use that help to inspire others. Even if I don't reach someone immediately, I still know that it's the right thing to do. Oxford House has opened me up to the possibility that helping others helps me and that the cycle can be infectious to others like me. My name is Christopher Jensen and I'm a person in long-term recovery and I'm a better human being because of it. This is possible through an effort to push an Oxford House-related agenda and to spread the miracle of recovery and hope to those who need to hear it.

#### **Colby Robertson – Texas**

I began using and drinking at eleven years old. Around the age of fourteen, I began to self-mutilate and have suicidal ideations. That would be when I would be admitted to my first mental health institution. After my release from that facility, I would be prescribed Adderall and this would be the beginning of my daily abuse; my first thirty-day prescription was gone in less than a week. Throughout high school and shortly thereafter, I would find myself using wide varieties of prescription medications and drinking before and during school. If I was not getting high, or getting drunk, I just was not OK. In hindsight, I see that I was never OK, not even close. In 2012, I would ruin my relationship with my family, stealing everything I could sell from them to feed my addiction. My mother was watching her son destroy himself and I can still remember the pain and anger in my mother eyes as she opened the bathroom door to her son covered in blood from his wrists. One month later, I would take 60,000 milligrams of Tylenol to end my life. The doctors would tell my parents that, in only a couple more hours, my liver would've failed and nothing could've been done. By some miracle from the God I did not believe in, I did not die that day.

A few months would pass, living on random couches, before I began to even think that maybe there was a different way to live, that maybe there was a God. At age nineteen in late 2012, I would for the first time pray for salvation and help. I would attempt to get sober and clean and I moved into a sober living facility in Pennsylvania. I lasted four short months. I then moved to Virginia and there I went back to drugs and alcohol. After five months, I found myself back in another mental health institution for the fourth time in my life. I was twenty years old. From there, I would be admitted to my first substance abuse treatment facility then I would move into another sober living facility in Dallas, Texas. I lasted four short months. I found myself now using cocaine daily and living with a coke dealer while I ran drinks at a bar. That was the best place for someone like me to be, or so I thought. I would enter treatment a second time, and then move to Kerrville, Texas to try at another sober living facility. This was in 2014. In Kerrville, I would make my first real attempt at working the 12-step program of AA that I had been introduced to so much in the previous three years. I would again relapse. At this point, I would drink or take anything I could get my hands on. After living in a few hotels, I would end up sleeping on someone's couch for a few months. In July of 2015, I totaled my car and was arrested in the process for possession of Adderall that was not prescribed to me, and for the pipes and needles throughout the trunk and car. This would be the beginning of the end for my old way of life.

After my arrest, I began to pray and read the Bible every day. The court had me choose between Celebrate Recovery or community service for my paraphernalia charge. I chose Celebrate Recovery because it was “easier” than doing community service. While I may have been praying and reading daily and attending these 12-step meetings, I was still drinking daily and smoking marijuana. However, as the days past, as I really began to see others and hearing their stories of freedom from addiction. The joy and love they carried in them and around them, I couldn’t help but desire what they had. I began to slowly and surely lose the desire to drink and use, this time my heart and mind began to change. I began to have a different view of the program of recovery and a different view of God Himself. I made a decision on October 9, 2015, that I wanted to live a life free of drugs and alcohol, a life free of the pain, the shame and guilt, a life that God wanted for me, not what I wanted for me. That would be the last time I put a substance in my body to get high or drunk. I would board a bus the next day, on October 10, 2015, to move into a sober living facility in Grapevine. While living in this house, I began going to AA constantly, got connected with a sponsor who would take me through my step work. The first months were tough: I had no vehicle; I would walk two miles to and from work every day and walked to the majority of my recovery meetings, rain, storm, ice, cold or scorching hot. I was desperate and grateful to have been given another chance. I was going to do whatever it took to have what I saw in these people with long term recovery, and to grow in my own relationship with God. After some time had passed, I could now pay my own bills; I had a vehicle I bought on my own; I had a sense of joy and freedom; and I wasn’t thinking about suicide anymore.

I would then move into an Oxford House. Truthfully, when I did, it wasn’t necessarily for the right reasons. It was one of my few choices since I was on felony probation for a relatively recent charge. I just wanted the cheaper rent and a little bit less structure than the previous sober living facility I was in (more freedom) and I didn’t want to live in the “hood.” I was a year and a half clean, yet at this time it was still about me. Something was missing. I convinced myself that – because I wasn’t hurting anyone, because I wasn’t lying to anyone, because I would help someone financially or help someone here and there with something and because I would spend an hour serving at a church – that I was being of service.

It was through Oxford House that I would make close relationships with people; relationships I still have today. Through these people, with their passion for service and willingness even in hardship to serve, I began to see what was missing inside myself and what God wanted to awaken in me – the desire to serve and help others in their journeys in both recovery and Oxford House. Oxford provided exactly what I needed to grow to another level in my recovery, and it still does today. Service within Oxford House and life has now become a passion of mine. I can do nothing but credit this to God and to the people within Oxford who have mentored me and to whom I have grown close. I am grateful not only for my sobriety but also to those I have met through Oxford. I had no idea what would come nor what I was missing when I first moved into Oxford House just looking for cheaper rent and not having someone breathing down my neck. Today I have three years and nine months of sobriety and I can say without any doubt that Oxford House has played an important and intricate part in my personal recovery, growth, and life.

### **Deborah Jackson – Virginia**

My name is Deborah and I am a grateful recovering addict. My Oxford House story and my recovery story are beautifully woven together. I came into Oxford House in Virginia Beach on August 15, 2014. I had exactly 7 days of detox when I was interviewed and accepted by Oxford House Pembroke in Virginia Beach. I was trying to leave a life of Heroin addiction that had gone on for 22 miserable years.

I wish that I could say that I was an ideal House member (I was not!). I was physically ill for months. I had no possessions, no job and, most importantly, no self-esteem. The women in the house were all different and each helped me in a different way. One woman took me under her wing. She took me to meetings, donated clothing to me and fed me when I was hungry. Just as important, these women held me

accountable. I had to be out of my house from 9-3 looking for employment after making excuses for too long. It was the best thing they could have done for me. I managed to get a job but, with no vehicle and a 45-minute walk to the bus stop, it was difficult. But, those long walks and many bus rides had an amazing effect on my recovery; they taught me to overcome my circumstances. I felt empowered and self-sufficient. I learned to overcome adversity and stop making excuses. Most importantly, I was proud of myself for a change. This phase lasted for 2½ years until I was finally able to afford a car and drive again. Month by month, I became more confident and self-sufficient. I became very involved in my House, holding all house positions. I became more interested in our Chapter and served as Chapter Vice Chair, HSCC and Treasurer.

I am forever grateful to Oxford House for the huge role it has played in my life. So... from the broken woman who sat at the park, cursing the women in her house for making her look for a job, to the confident, hopeful, new Outreach Worker in Virginia, Thank You, Oxford House! I am forever humbled and grateful to be a part of the Oxford Family. Deborah Jackson, Outreach Services, Eastern Virginia

### **Dwayne Fagan – Oregon**

I was a drug dealer and user of methamphetamines for 29 years. I wasn't a good role model for my children and I even sold drugs to them when they turned 18. I've felt horrible about the example I set for them because I believe they followed in my footsteps and have addiction issues of their own... Well, I decided in 2016 to change my life and to become the father figure I should have been years ago.

After absconding for 5 years on 3 felony warrants, I turned myself in. I was facing 2 years in prison so that was no easy decision. But, I did it. The judge took into consideration my age and the fact that I had done the first right thing I had done in many years and gave me only 90 days. Well, I did my time and got out on March 3, 2017 and, having nowhere to go, I headed to a shelter. I was about to check in when a friend got hold of me and told me I was to come and stay with him until I could get into an Oxford House. I was surprised and overjoyed yet scared. I had tried Oxford once before and I just hadn't been ready. This time I knew I wanted to change and was ready to do whatever it took... Two days later, after not getting into the first Oxford House I applied at, I was voted into the Rick Dougherty Oxford House and I have been there ever since.

I haven't always been the most popular guy in the house. I was sent to Chapter meetings because our House President couldn't go and, being new, I kinda threw the House under the bus. I wanted things to run properly and I got involved with Chapter right away. This caused me to be placed on behavior contracts for holding others accountable and I learned to pick my battles and learned how to communicate more effectively. Eventually, I became a seasoned member of the House and am currently looked up to as a role model as well as a leader in the House and that has overflowed into the rest of my life.

A few months ago, my son was released from prison and was going to be sent to the Mission in Salem. I had my daughter go pick him up and bring him to the House. The guys met him and asked me if we could have an e-meeting the next day. They voted him in!! He and I haven't always had the best relationship – mostly my fault. But today I'm happy to be doing the next right thing and setting a better example for my children. Oxford has given me the stability and helped me build the foundation that I have today.

I am a legal, licensed driver with my own car for the first time in 13 years and for the first time in almost 30 years, I am able to be a role model for my children. I love being of service – I am the Chapter 19 Chair, and helping others get what I have gotten is a passion for me. I love my life and owe it all to God for giving me the strength to face my fears and to Oxford House for being an awesome place to stay clean and get my life together.

### **Erica Cotton –Texas**

I was almost three years clean in 2008 and I had convinced myself that I could handle just one beer. I failed to realize that's where it all starts for me. I failed to realize that, first and foremost, I am an alcoholic and I can't have just one.

Nine years later, I made it to treatment in Wichita Falls, Texas by way of the Tribal Center of Dallas. I recall my therapist asking what my plan was after treatment and my not having a clue. I was just trying to make it through treatment alive. At this point, my addiction had taken it all. My family was done with me; I wasn't even present for my son that last year. Beer for breakfast was my motto and nothing stood in the way of that. Drugs and alcohol had consumed me. I had lost the desire to drink while still drinking but I just couldn't stop. I remember praying I would get pulled over for a DWI because then it would be over for me. Thankfully, I had reached out and God had opened the doors. I made it to detox on March 14, 2017 to be medically detoxed from alcohol. On March 17, 2017, I entered into treatment. My therapist then told me that there was sober living in Wichita Falls and that I should consider it.

Directly from treatment, I moved into Oxford House and it's been my home ever since. I didn't know anyone in Wichita Falls and, other than a desire to stay sober, I didn't have much. I immediately got involved in the recovery committee and service work within Oxford. I was ready and willing to do whatever it took to not return to the person I was when I had entered treatment only months before. Some days I didn't know where my next meal was going to come from but God always provided for me. I got a job and for the first time in my life, I learned to stand on my own two feet. It wasn't much, but it was mine. My family didn't have much to do with me so I formed my chosen family from within Oxford and the recovery community. I learned how to build relationships with others. Service work within Oxford became such a large part of my recovery and it still is today. Helping others stay sober keeps me sober and I am extremely grateful for the program and Oxford for helping me create a life that I never could imagine having.

### **Evan Jackson – Alabama**

My name is Evan Jackson. I am 27 years old, from Birmingham, Alabama. I have one child, and my drugs of choice are heroin, amphetamines and marijuana. This is not my first attempt at getting sober; it's actually my fifth, and this is not my first time living at a sober living establishment; it's my third time. I first began using drugs towards the end of high school, predominantly during my junior and senior year of high school. I feel as if I used drugs in order to feel more accepted among my peers, and to escape a constantly declining and increasingly stressful home life.

Not long after I graduated from high school, roughly two years to be exact, my mother passed away from cancer. During the five years that she was sick, I experimented with just about any drug that I could get my hands on. I discovered quickly that opiates were something that really numbed me in a way that I had been searching for, for so long, and not to mention that, given the fact that my mother was a dying cancer patient, opiates were most definitely not a struggle to come by, nor was it a struggle for me to pay for the drugs financially because they were present and in abundance.

After my mother passed away in 2012, I really took a turn for the worse and ended up becoming homeless for a brief period of time. I resorted to selling heroin and Xanax in order to feed my increasingly growing addiction. This quickly got me a one-way ticket to jail where I spent the next 8 months of my existence. Looking back now, it saved my life and kept me from following down a path of imminent death. I then went to rehab for a year, and got out and moved into a sober living house. Given my young age and surprisingly lack of awareness of consequences, I eventually returned to using drugs. That went on for another 6 years before I willingly admitted myself back into treatment in February of 2019.

Upon completion of my most recent stay in treatment, I knew for certain that returning to my hometown of Birmingham would be a potentially catastrophic and deadly choice. So, I opted to leave my family, my child, and my entire existence behind in Birmingham and move down to Mobile. This brought me to the place that has truly changed my life and completely done a 180 to my outlook on life and my future.

Oxford House has been a literal godsend for me in my life, and it's all due to the model that Oxford House has established, the rules implemented at the House, and the people I have met along the way in Mobile. My outreach, Summer, has been truly an inspiration and has given me a growing motivation to see my life for how truly valuable it actually is. She's stern and not a corner-cutter but she leads with love and has a bigger heart for helping people than anyone else I've ever known. Oxford House has truly been a life saver and I look forward to see where the journey of life will take me in this new chapter of my life. Thank You, Oxford House!! Sincerely, Evan Jackson

### **Freddie Barrett – Texas**

Well there are a lot of events that led me to where I am now. But I'll make it short... I had a business and a family. I had the cars, houses and money. Towards the end, I was under a lot of stress because of my marriage, my business and my daughter having a baby that I had to step in and take care of because the father of the baby left my daughter. I went to a doctor and he put me on Xanax to help me with the stress; however, it was a very high dose. I was prescribed two milligrams four times a day. As time went on, I had started taking eight bars a day. It turned me into a monster and, after twenty-five years of being with my ex, I left her and my family. I chose the drugs over them.

As time went on, it got worse and I lost everything. I ended up being homeless for three years, and one day I got tired of being sick and living on the streets. One day I was so sick that I couldn't take it anymore. I found the highest bridge I could find and I jumped off. I don't remember hitting the ground or being picked up and taken to the hospital. I woke up in ICU with tubes in and out of me. The doctor told me that I wasn't going to make it through the night because I was bleeding too much inside. He had called my family and told them they need to come down and be with me. Well somehow, I made it through the night. I was throwing up blood the whole night through but I didn't die like he told me I would. I spent a month in the hospital and then six months bedridden because I couldn't walk.

Well, after six months I was sent to a yearlong drug program. After I got out, I was in another program and they were the ones to refer me to Oxford. So that's kind of my story. Looking back at it now...me doing what I did was the best thing to happen to me because it sobered me up. I am still without my family but I can deal with it and live sober. I am very grateful to be where I am today and that I lived through what I put myself through. I really can't explain why I am still here to be honest but that's not up to me. I am just here for the ride and to do the best that I can. Thank you

### **Greg T. – Florida**

I have pretty much had a problem with drinking and drugs since high school. I've been in jail, prison, and rehabs over the years and never really learned the basics of being an adult and doing things like paying bills. It was a vicious cycle. However, I knew that I had a problem, especially toward the end, but I couldn't break the cycle. When I had an exceptionally bad night and was confronted by the cops, I asked them to take me to detox. I was done. Sick and tired of being sick and tired. While in detox I found a pamphlet about the Oxford House and was quickly interviewed and accepted. Since being in the Oxford house I have stepped up to the plate – finally. Being responsible, accountable, and in recovery (willingly) has changed my life for the better. So much better. My relationships have improved; my self-respect is good and my recovery has never been better. Oxford House shows you how to live responsibly and clean without being

made to. You have your freedom to live your life without being told what to do. You have to want it. If you want it, the Oxford House is a great opportunity. It works if YOU work it.

### **Jessyka Bain – Florida**

My name is Jessyka and I am an addict. I am currently living in Oxford House Ashton in Pensacola, FL. My clean date is February 3, 2019. My biological father is an addict who has never been in my life. I remember my mom always saying that he was incapable of being a father. So, my mom raised me with my step-dad. That was honestly no different than if it were both my biological parents. My mom is an alcoholic. She always has been. So, my childhood wasn't in the least bit ordinary. My step-dad was an addict in his own way with his own vice. The first thing that I can remember as a child was being yelled at by my dad when I was 6 for finding my mom's drugs. When I was 9, I found my mom after she tried to commit suicide. That was when my using began. At 9 I was getting drunk after I had put my little brother and my older sister to bed. I was the caretaker – what can I say. One day, I saw my mom snort cocaine so I decided I would try it. From there I was hooked. I would steal from my mom's stash and blame it on her. She soon started blaming my sister. When we were growing up, my sister's coping skill was drugs and alcohol. She didn't know how to hide it like I did though – or so I thought.

My mom got sober when I was 14. For a year I didn't talk to her. I was still using and my mom had no idea. I was barely ever home so, when I was, nobody ever knew. I kept busy to make sure I didn't seem suspicious. I was on the swim team, played soccer, and always had my nose in a book. When I was 15, I went to an AA meeting with my mom and admitted that I was using at the 4th meeting I went to. When I didn't have dope, I couldn't feel anything but sadness and emptiness. I stayed clean and on the right track from drugs for 3 years. During that 3 years, my disease manifested itself in many different forms – from boys to my work to school – anything that I could focus on, really.

I got married when I was 18. I thought I loved him and thought he loved me. Boy, was that further from the truth. I moved to El Paso, TX with him in February 2018. He started abusing me and I relapsed. This time, my DOC was marijuana and alcohol. I drank to forget, to not feel, to be numb. Physically I was a wreck. Emotionally, there was nothing but an empty dark hole. Then I was introduced to ecstasy. It made me feel loved even when I was getting beaten. I had gotten so low I would tell myself and my friends that I loved my husband even when I was in the hospital or with a gun to my head. I finally was so dead inside that I called the cops. Somehow, he manipulated better than I did and I got put in jail for a few hours. He had to be away from the house for a few days so he left me with no phone or car and I was stuck there. That night I tried to commit suicide. My friend called my mom to tell her what was happening and I finally had to be honest. She bought me a plane ticket and I went home the very next day.

I detoxed at my mom's house and then I said I wanted treatment. I went to an inpatient center for 63 days. When I got out, I went to a sober living place in Tennessee. Needless to say, that didn't work out for reasons out of my control. I was stuck and had no money and nowhere to go. All I knew was that it wasn't healthy for me to stay there. I started looking into sober living places near my mom. They had pretty much just opened up Oxford House Ashton! I got an interview and I got accepted. It has been one of the most amazing things that I have been part of. The women of my house have helped me so much while we work this program. They help me grow on a daily basis. I don't know where I would be without Oxford House. I am beyond grateful!

### **Justin Roshto, LCDC-I, PRSS, PM/PRC – Texas**

My name is Justin and I am a survivor of the foster care system and a man in long-recovery. What that means to me is that I have not found it necessary to get high, commit any felonies or steal anyone's stuff

since April 20, 2013. For that, I am forever grateful. There are three things that got me where I am today—God, Oxford House Inc., and desperation to change.

I started utilizing mind-altering substances on regular basis around the age of 10 or 11 but I can also remember as a kid sneaking alcoholic beverages from different people during events or out of the refrigerator when everyone was asleep. My substance abuse stems from a long series of traumatic events starting at the age of 1-1½. My mother and father separated before I was born. My mother had no education and three very small children to take care of after I was born (all under the age of three). My father kidnapped me when I was about 18 months old and later abandoned me at a crack house in Louisiana. My mother and grandfather found out where I was and rescued me but my mother died just a few months later and my father completely disappeared from my life.

I was sent to live with a great-aunt and great-uncle who were physically, emotionally, and psychologically abusive of me, and I began running away from their home when I was twelve. I was passed from family member to family member until I started getting passed to strangers because my family had given up hope and lacked the ability to raise a troubled child. Somehow, I always ended up back with the same great-aunt. I went to 22 different schools from elementary school to high school. Due to the inconsistency and the instability of my home life, I struggled significantly with school. By the age of 13, I was using drugs on a regular basis, and my use quickly escalated to a full-blown addiction. I developed several mental health issues from the trauma of the abuse as well, including Reactive Attachment Disorder, Manic Depressive Disorder, Insomnia, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder and Bi-Polar Disorder.

When I was fourteen, I was “out of control” and had no desire to listen to anyone. This is the year I was raped and the physical abuse became noticeable by teachers and neighbors. CPS became involved and, after years of CPS cases being closed, they finally acted. I ended up living with one of my mother’s cousins. I never told anyone about the rape until I was seventeen and in treatment during a process group. But, as a high school teacher, my foster mother recognized some of my problems and tried getting me help for them. She got me special education support and spent countless thousands of dollars on treatment facilities, psych-hospitals, alternative peer groups, psychiatrists, therapists, sober high schools, and medication for me. Even though I tried, I still struggled with drugs and acting out behaviors. I dropped out of school in my senior year when I just couldn’t keep up anymore and felt like I was wasting my time, and everyone else’s.

After dropping out and moving out of my cousin’s home, I spent the next four years in and out of jail and more outpatient facilities. The last time I was incarcerated, I became overwhelmingly tired and was ready to surrender. I couldn’t tell you how many times I detoxed in Jefferson County Jail in Beaumont TX. I remember talking to God, writing a few amends letters which were initially intended to manipulate someone to save me from the life I had created for myself. I made a phone call to my mom telling her I couldn’t do it anymore and I was ready to stop using drugs. I had burned that bridge so many times that she told me that she would send me a bus ticket to come to Houston but I couldn’t live at home.

I remember on the bus ride from Port Arthur to Houston contemplating how my life got so out of control. I was 19, a high school dropout, consistently bouncing from job to job and affiliated with negative people and influences. I had done every drug that was put in front of me. My drug of choice started with pills and ended with cocaine and heroin. I enjoyed the back and forth between the highs and lows because it kept me numb from the wreckage of my past and the conflicting internal feelings. I knew I had to change, but I wasn’t sure where to start. I truly didn’t believe I deserved any grace from another human being or God.

By the time I got to Houston, my mother had a number for me to call for sober living. I knew I didn’t need treatment because I had already been to every residential adolescent treatment center in Houston. I didn’t want to go and thought I could manipulate my way back home but my mother wouldn’t budge. I ended up calling Oxford House Bellaire and had an interview scheduled for that day. I was accepted in the house

and was held to a standard that, at the time, I thought was unobtainable. I was 19 and always the youngest person in the room and they pushed and guided me to hold myself to a standard where I was able to see personal growth. I ended up growing into a strong individual who fell in love with recovery and what it offered. I went through House positions; I started living in Oxford Houses that were struggling in order to assist with replication; I became a Chapter officer and took on the HSC state position in 2014. Oxford House changed everything for me. I stayed about 15 months and took the next step into my recovery by moving out on to my own. It was scary, not having someone there to hold me accountable when I wasn't able to see my own behaviors. But, somehow, I have managed to stay sober over the last 6 years.

Before Oxford, I sometimes lived with friends and sometimes I was homeless and slept in my car or on a park bench. Each time I ran from one bad situation to another, I dug myself in deeper and deeper holes, feeling lonelier than I was before. I never truly felt like I had anything to live or work for. I pushed everyone away who remotely cared about me. I was a high school dropout who couldn't do anything right and, even worse, no matter how much I tried, I couldn't stay sober before Oxford House.

I view the year 2013 as the best year of my life because it was the year that I finally hit rock bottom. I found myself. I turned my life over to my God. I was not perfect, but I tried to be better, and it took everything in me to change. I finally was able to change for myself and not for someone else's benefit. A few months into my recovery, when I had less than 6 months sober, I started working at an adolescent treatment center, Odyssey House, where I had been a client when I was sixteen. I have been in the field ever since, giving everything I have to support and love the teenagers and youth back to life and into a healthy sober lifestyle. I am now 25 and, for the last few years, I have been in some sort of supervisory, case management or clinical role in these facilities.

I got a GED at 20 years old and went back to school to be an LCDC (Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselor) and I hold several state level certifications such as PRSS (Peer Recovery Support Specialist) as well as a basic mentorship and peer recovery coach. I have extensive training in Medicated Assisted Treatment, Medicated Assisted Recovery, Harm Reduction and Overdose Prevention and have gone through courses allowing me to teach and help those on the street.

Earlier this year, I left my job working with the Houston Recovery Center and UTHealth on the HEROES Project (Houston Emergency Response Opioid Engagement System) and took a job I never thought I would have – Texas Outreach Representative for Houston and Beaumont – and, although it was hard to leave working with Emergency Medicine, I have been given a sense of satisfaction working for the organization that saved me from myself and gave me a chance even as I had burned out of all the rest. My only goal right now is to be the voice of reason and to assist advocating for those who can't advocate for themselves. Life has been challenging but I wouldn't trade what Oxford House gave me for anything else.

### **Katie Vestor – North Carolina**

My name is Katie and I am a woman in long-term recovery. What that means for me is that I have not had a drink or a drug since November 12, 2016. I was born and raised in Rocky Mount, NC. ... When I was 6, my father gave me a shot of Wild Turkey and said it would get rid of my cold. That is a young age to learn how to self-diagnose.... All throughout middle school and high school I was very active in sports. I played soccer, softball and cheerleading. I was active in 4-H, animal science and competition choir. Although I kept myself busy in school, I still made time to hang out with my friends and drink at parties. I had my first blackout experience when I was 14. I partied a lot during high school....

When I was 15, I tried marijuana for the first time. I didn't really like it and it made me feel paranoid, but I still smoked it recreationally. My second semester of senior year, I tried Xanax. Again, I didn't like it and the fact that it made me forget everything but I still used it recreationally. A few weeks later, I tried Percocet.

... One day, a friend said, "You are messing with the wrong stuff; you need to try one of these." That was when I tried my first Oxycontin. At that moment, I felt like I had found my best friend, my soul mate, the love of my life. It was something about the sweating and nodding out – I LOVED IT. I started dating a guy (Stephen) who would feed them to me like candy, and for free. He became my using buddy and my best friend for the next 4 years. I used every day, not knowing what I was getting myself into. I thought it was innocent and I was just having fun. Then one day I woke up and felt like I had been hit by a Mack truck. I called Stephen and asked him what was wrong with me. His response was "It's probably because you haven't done a pill today." I was experiencing my first withdrawal and should have known I needed to stop there. But I didn't, I loved it too much. I kept using and my addiction continued to get worse.

After a few years had passed, Oxycontin was hard to find on the streets. Stephen decided it would be a good idea to start doing Heroin. At first, I thought that was crazy but he explained that it was just like Oxycontin except in powder form and without the medication in it. I caved and started doing Heroin. After some time had went by, I found out that Stephen was using needles behind my back. I hated needles, I thought that was a whole new level of getting high that I didn't want to be part of. I always said I would never use needles. ... I thought I would teach him a lesson and try it myself. I thought if he could see what it was doing to him, then maybe he would stop. Well, I was wrong. I just ruined myself. I used a needle for the first time and fell in love with it. It was a high I had never experienced and there was no turning back now. My addiction escalated like you'd never seen before. I started pawning all of my valuable belongings and selling every nice thing I had just to feed my addiction. I was constantly lying to my parents and ruining all of my friendships, just so I could go get high. I ruined all of my jobs. I was either too dope sick to go to work or I was nodding out at the cash register.... I was fired from every job I ever had.

One night, I was set up and was arrested for the first time for possession of Heroin. It was my first offense so they gave me a slap on the wrist. ... I was put on probation for a year. My mom gave me an ultimatum and said I could either go to rehab or she would kick me out of her house. Of course, I chose the rehab. The counselors convinced me to end my 4-year relationship with Stephen and I thought it would help. It did absolutely nothing for me. I wasn't ready to stop using and only went because of an ultimatum I was given. And that arrest did nothing for me either. I ended up violating my probation and was given a choice by my officer. I could either spend 45 days in jail or move into an Oxford House. I chose Oxford House. I moved into one in Fayetteville, NC. I got high the day after moving in and they kicked me out. After 2 weeks had passed, I moved back in and found out someone had stolen half of my belongings. I was upset and didn't trust the women in the house, so I stayed one more day, then moved out. I was there for a total of 2 days. I moved back home and continued using.

In 2015, I was arrested again, but for more serious charges. .... My bond was set at \$50,000 and there was no way my parents were going to bond me out of jail. I spent 2 months in the Wake County jail. I might have thought that would have been enough for me; I might have thought selling my car to hire a lawyer would have been enough. But it wasn't. After all that, I still wanted to use. I hung out with Stephen the night I got out and got high. The DA in Wake County gave me plenty of chances to get my life together but I continued to use. At this point, my mom was done with me, she cut me off completely and blocked my phone number. I didn't care though, all I cared about was still getting high. ....

In 2016, I was arrested for a 3<sup>rd</sup> time for possession of Heroin. My bond was only \$700 but I still had to sit in jail for 2 weeks because my parents were done and no one would come get me. The judge dropped it to a misdemeanor and I was released for time served. I ... finally did what the DA in Wake County asked me to do. I decided to go to TROSA in Durham. TROSA is a very intense 2-year program. They were very strict and had a lot of rules. I hated it there. One day, I got this gut feeling that I needed to leave. The counselors kept telling me that it was my disease wanting to get high, but I knew they were wrong, it was something else. After being in TROSA for 6 days, I left and got on a Greyhound bus back to Rocky Mount. While on the bus, I learned that a close friend was on life support and he y died on May 2, 2016]. After

experiencing something that traumatic, I was back to using in no time. I got high before going to his funeral and I am not proud of it, but that was the only way I knew how to handle it. A couple days later, I had my first overdose experience. All I remember was getting high and then blacking out. ....

The DA in Wake County knew that I had left TROSA and wasn't very pleased with me. This is when I decided that I was going to try an Oxford House again. I was very skeptical due to my experience in Fayetteville. I came to the conclusion that, if I was going to try an Oxford House again, then I was going to go somewhere fun. On May 28, 2016 I moved to the Oxford House in the Outer Banks, NC. I lived in the house for 5 months then moved out with one of my roommates. I thought I was a responsible adult and was ready to be on my own. It was not long after I moved out that I smoked Marijuana again. The high wasn't enough for me and I wanted more. Only 2 weeks later, I relapsed on heroin.

I used for a few weeks and visited the girls at the Oxford House while I was high. The girls knew that I was using and told me I wasn't allowed over anymore. I almost lost my job and the DA found out I was using again. He told me I could either move back into the Oxford House or he would revoke my bond and put me back into custody. It took no time at all for my life to have become unmanageable all over again. On November 11, 2016 I smoked Marijuana one last time and then finally turned my will and my life over to the God of my understanding.

My sobriety date is November 12, 2016 and I moved back into the Oxford House on November 28, 2016. I lived in the house for another 13 months then, decided I was finally ready to move out on my own. After getting a year of sobriety and moving out of the Oxford House, I got a job as a Patient Support Specialist at Two Dreams Treatment Center. At this point, I thought life was great. I had my own apartment, a job at a rehab and had bought myself my very own car. I thought life couldn't get any better than this. I was wrong! Today I have 2 years and 8 months of sobriety; I live in a beautiful condo; I have the most amazing pit bull that I rescued back in January and I work for the most amazing organization – Oxford House Inc.

I can only imagine how great my life will be in another 3 years. I am truly grateful that I didn't give up before the miracles happened. I quickly learned that just because you get clean, it doesn't mean life will be unicorns and rainbows every single day. Life will never be perfect but today I have a network and tools to help me cope and deal with life on life's terms.... Oxford House and Narcotics Anonymous saved my life and I am blessed to give back what was so freely given to me. Life for me today is pretty amazing and there isn't a single drink or drug that will make me throw any of it away.

### **Mark Johnson – District of Columbia**

My name is Mark Johnson. I was born in Washington, D.C. on January 3, 1962; the country was in the middle of the Vietnam War, John F. Kennedy was the president, and Dr. King and Malcolm X were fighting for black rights. As an only child of black middle-class parents, both of whom had several siblings, I was always surrounded by family, yet I mostly felt alone. We moved from DC to Hyattsville, MD in 1967—the year my father finished dental school at Howard University. My mother was an educator, teaching in DC public schools (she would go on to earn her master's and become a principal). My father and mother's hard work and dedication to obtaining education helped us climb the socioeconomic ladder. Their goal was always to make life better for me; to give me opportunities they didn't have.

They made sure I had a well-rounded childhood. I was always involved in activities—I played sports (basketball, football, and baseball), participated in Boy Scouts, took trumpet lessons, learned to swim, became a lifeguard, attended church every Sunday, went horseback riding with cousins, cut the grass and tended to the yard with my father, went to camps in the summer, traveled at least once a year, vacationed regularly, and earned high marks in school. I also found time to make friends. My social circle grew with each thing I participated in.

In the 1970s, I was exposed to drug culture. I smoked and drank, progressed to selling, and by the time I was a senior in high school, I was aware of the double-sidedness life offers. I played the fence, not knowing that I would have to choose a side. I enrolled at Howard University and was on track for dental school, following in my father's footsteps. At the same time, I was in a relationship with a childhood sweetheart, and we were both getting high. We went on dates to the Go-Go, to the movies, out of town; we smoked weed, we drank alcohol, we snorted lines of coke. In the 1980s, I was introduced to crack cocaine. I introduced her to the drug, and we both got hooked. I held on to the academic, upstanding, positive side of life for as long as I could. But I ended up on the other side, actively involved in the destruction of myself and my people. My girlfriend and I had a daughter in 1986. We both tried to get clean, but she and I ended up deeper in the throes of addiction.

I caught my first charge in 1988. While serving time in a Maryland Prison for felony possession with intent to distribute, I privately confessed that I had allowed drugs and alcohol to control me, that I failed my parents and my community and that I would make a change and never return to a prison cell. After serving my time, I returned to dental school and tried to work the twelve-step program. But, my girlfriend (the mother of my child), was still using. I gave in to old familiars and relapsed a few months after I was released.

Fearing legal troubles, I decided to seek help in an inpatient rehab program. My girlfriend entered the same rehab program two months after me but we were not allowed to be at the same facility. We had a plan: we would complete the program, we would reunite sober, and we would continue working on our relationship while raising our daughter. Things did not go according to plan. She met someone else while we were apart. When I completed the year-long rehab, I relapsed shortly after hearing the news.

I was arrested twice in 1992. Each time I was released, I returned to smoking crack. I tried to go back to dental school that same year but failed to make it to classes. I failed. I went to a few more rehabs and the outcome was always the same: I would remain clean for a while and then fall back into old habits. My name made a frequent appearance on court proceedings and, for many years, I cycled between rehab and incarceration. I am a habitual offender, a recidivist.

I have always had the ability to bounce back from setbacks. Even though I spent 30 years in and out of prisons, detention centers, and rehabs, there were stretches of time where I was clean and achieved some remarkable things. In 2002, while clean, I started a business venture—Johnson Trucking Company, Inc. In 2013, I earned my B. S. degree in communications from Bowie State and started graduate school.

In 2015, a few months after the death of my daughter's mother (my childhood sweetheart), I relapsed. It was the last time I faced a judge and did my time. I felt my age. I was too old for all the back and forth. I made a firm decision to stop climbing the fence and freefalling on the dangerous side. In order to make sure that I would abstain from drugs and alcohol, I figured that I needed to do something drastically different this time. Instead of returning to my parent's home, I discovered Oxford House. I applied and hoped that there was a place for me. I entered the Cedar Ridge Oxford House on February 20, 2018.

In 2018, I enrolled in school again. This time, I earned my Associates Degree in Substance Abuse Counseling. I made it my mission to help others who are struggling. I want to give back, right my wrongs, deal with my shortcomings. After 14 months in Oxford House, I was able to put my skills to use. I am now an employee—the Resource Coordinator for the District of Columbia. I have plans to enter a Graduate-Doctorate program in addiction services and counseling. I've taken all the years of chaos and hard-learned lessons, channeled them into a passion, and used them to give me purpose in life. I believe in a higher power, in karma, and in energy. All that I've done, things that have happened to me, experiences I've had, were all parts of my story that led me to this moment in my hero journey.

I have much to be thankful for—my parents are still alive and well, my daughter is always welcoming and loves me no matter what, my two grandsons will carry on the family tradition of black excellence. I am living for the present, always moving forward. I was introduced to Oxford House by way of a treatment center presentation. Mark Spence came in that day and shared his experience, strength, and hope about Oxford House. Immediately, I wanted some of what he had. From that first time until now, I have been on the ride of my life. Without Oxford House, I do not know where I would be.

### **Melissa A. – Colorado**

My name is Melissa; I'm an addict. My story may be very similar to many others out there, or very different... I have an old saying I like to start my story off with; that is, the definition of "insanity" is repeating the same mistakes over and over again and expecting different results. If there were lists of names of people under the definition, mine would be one of them.

Before I came into sober living. I had walked away from having 8½ years of recovery under my belt. ... I began to rely on drugs daily for 4 months. First, came the social drinking, then sleeping around with casual encounters; of course, that wasn't enough. So then found myself bar-hopping to find drugs. With my own place and space with my roommates, I thought I had it all, including having my using under control. I then decided it was okay for me to take a short vacation from going to meetings and working with a sponsor. Not working on myself in my step work was beginning to show. I put no thought into it or accountability. I avoided my problems in life. ...

I was working a good job and making decent money and I was able to function for a while and pay my bills on time. That was until my friends and family started noticing me being gone away every day, not to mention losing a lot of weight in a fast amount of time. But throwing my recovery out the window wasn't all; there was the simple fact that I had hidden my past from my job in order to keep it. ... Fortunately, I was able to resign from my job and that's when I started to seek help voluntarily. I knew what lay ahead... I began to pray again and cried for 3 months straight in my early sobriety.

Waking up to my revelation. I believed that if I wasn't going to stop, I would either get caught up with the people who were using and doing a lot more illegal stuff and end up back in prison or become homeless or even dead on the streets. My spiritual awakenings started to hit me even harder after surrendering from 4 months of using meth. It was like I got hit by a big bus – with its headlights coming at me. Some may call it "The burning bush moment"; I call it the big G.O.D knocking at my door.

I finally got into Oxford House and found my way into a homegroup. I then got down to business and picked a sponsor who had a similar path. We connected in an instant. I had my ups and downs while in Oxford House; however, being there taught me how to live without the use of drugs, build up a greater foundation of support around me, open up communication with my loved ones, balance a job and service work and cope with other women while growing through mistakes and becoming a productive member of society again.

Flash forward to today. I am happy I have chosen the road back into recovery. I am at peace knowing I don't have to ever live that way again. I am not only an alumna, I also work as a manager in a restaurant, and have healthy friendships in recovery. I do service work by being part of a subcommittee for H&I, sharing my experience, strengths and hope by going into the women's prison and detox facilities. I am blessed and honored to have the gifts of carrying the message to those still out there. I hope and pray my story can reach out to at least one person to change the path of making the same mistakes as I did. Thank you! Melissa A. 4/10/19 Chapter 6

### **Melissa F. – North Carolina**

I'm Melissa, Oxford resident - Chapter 6 – Oxford House Dotson. I was born and raised by a rehab romance that didn't work out in Baltimore, Maryland. I was introduced to manipulation when my parents split up; I would play them against each other as much as I could. ... Now, looking back, I can even see my obsession as a child with my hobbies like cheerleading or arts and crafts; it would be all I could think about. I would try to people-please and play the perfect daughter because I was scared that, if I didn't, I wouldn't be good enough to keep my parents in my life. Once my mom remarried and adopted two boys when I was 9, my obsession and people-pleasing turned to them; I just so badly wanted to belong somewhere. My oldest brother would babysit me when my mom would go to work and my stepfather was on maintenance medication that my older brother would take from him. He learned I was smaller and sneakier than him and I found my first DOC and my next tool – stealing. From 9 to 19, I ran with him and other “friends” that did the same things we did. During that time, I detoxed more times than I can remember, I took care of my father who had cancer and somehow graduated high school but I was completely lost to the world and wanted to die every day I woke up.

I found recovery for the first time at 19 and I took a seat for a few years but I couldn't relate to anyone because no one was my age. I was just as miserable there as I was on the street and, with no life skills, I felt just as lost. At 24, I made the choice to leave the rooms and found more pain and misery back on the streets. This time I found myself homeless and prostituting on the streets of Baltimore, barely eating or sleeping. I was praying for life but didn't know how to find it again. I found myself in a treatment center when I was 28 and it was strongly suggested I go to a facility in Wilmington NC where I was in a very structured living environment but all I learned was how to make my bed daily and pay rent. While going to recovery meetings, I kept hearing about Oxford. .... Chapter 6 had just opened a new house called Oxford House Dotson and they were looking for ladies to move in. I filled out an application, then was told I had to interview. It was probably the most nerve-racking few days while I waited for the House meeting so I could be interviewed. I was so happy when I got accepted. It was as if I was accepted into school; it felt like a new chapter was starting.

I knew that moving into Oxford would be different from what I was used to but I had no idea what I was getting myself into. Not only am I learning how to keep a checkbook, pay bills on time, and keep a clean house, I am also given the opportunity to grow with 7 other women not only in recovery but as a family ...sometimes dysfunctional, but still a family. Whether we have 1 day or over a year, we are all finding our voice and our way, thanks in big part to the Oxford House guidelines.

Thanks to the Oxford House, I have found a way to grow in my life and my recovery. I was just recently voted into housing services and I have found it rewarding to be giving back to the Houses that have been a big part of my story. The best thing that Oxford has given me is that, on any given day when I get home from work, I can walk into my safe place, my home, and I am asked how my day was by another lady in the house and I can feel that they care genuinely and honestly, thanks to Oxford. I feel like I belong. I have found a family and can continue my process and path in recovery and for that I am forever grateful!

### **Michael H. – Florida**

My name is Michael and, since I was 21, I have struggled with addiction off and on. But looking back, it might have started before then. When I was 17, I became anorexic and by the time I was 18, I was bulimic. At 6'1", I weighed only 116 pounds. That was my first addiction. Little did I know there would be many more to come. I have lost virtually everything you can lose due to addiction – except my life. I have spent time in mental institutions and I have been incarcerated. I have also destroyed numerous relationships with friends and family. Recently I had to come off a high dose of a benzodiazepine while I was in jail. And I had to do it while in solitary confinement. It was absolutely the worst thing I have ever been through. Six

months later, I'm still going through it but it's getting better. And so are the relationships with my family – especially my mother whom I love dearly. She is the one who found out about the Oxford House.

Since I have been residing in the Oxford House I have been through a plethora of emotions. I have good days and I have bad days. But I have a support system here to get me through it. I have met some amazing people through this institution – friends that I would like to keep for life. I honestly do not know what I would have done if I hadn't found this place. For the first time in my life I am learning how to become a man. Better late than never!

### **Mick Schroeder – Washington State**

I have struggled with addiction my entire adult life in one form or another. I started off in Middle School with alcohol. High School I stepped it up a notch. I started using cocaine with my alcohol. This continued until my mid-twenties when I tried speed. It started off every once in a while but, before I knew it, I was using daily. I no longer had control of my life. My life was centered around the getting and using of drugs.

Since then, I have acquired 6 Felonies. I have been to prison 3 times and gone through treatment 7 times – all to no avail. In 2015, I picked up my 7<sup>th</sup> felony 20 days out of prison. Sitting in county, I pleaded with God to take this addiction that has taken everything from me. I then wrote letters to the judge, prosecutor, and my lawyer telling them I needed help, that I was an addict and that prison was not helping me. I was released 3 days later and given the opportunity to participate in Drug Court, which I completed sanction-free. This, however, was not the end of my drug use. I relapsed 9 months after Graduation for a short period.

This is when I decided to move into an Oxford House. It was the best decision I have ever made. I not only moved into an Oxford House, I got involved. I went to fundraisers. I got a Chapter position. I went to the State Association Meeting. I had the privilege of going to the 2018 World convention in Kansas City. That is when I knew I wanted to do this for a living. On March 1<sup>st</sup> of this year, I became an employee of Oxford House Inc. Oxford House gave me the structure and support I needed to change my life – to rebuild relationships with family and friends and to be the father I have always wanted to be. For this I am forever Grateful. #OXFORDHOUSESTRONG.

### **Misty Hahn – Oklahoma**

My name is Misty Hahn and I am an addict. I started using drugs when I was twelve, not by my choice. Let's just say that my step-father was a very evil man. The older I got, the more experimenting I did with drugs. My favorite was weed and meth mixed with alcohol. I loved the feeling of not feeling anything. The mask. I never felt like I belonged anywhere and was always uncomfortable in my skin. I was a pleaser and just wanted to be accepted. When I was 16, my mother committed suicide and I was the one who found her. My world turned completely upside down and I didn't have a care in the world. I was angry at God and felt that I was meant to be alone in this world. When I was 10 years old, I had been told that I wouldn't be able to have children and now I had lost my mother. My downward spiral began. I got into dancing in clubs to support my habit. I went in and out of abusive relationships. I went to prison in 2006. Any time I left treatment, prison or jail, I always went back to what I was used to – the drugs and the misery. I was an IV meth user from the time I was 16 off and on until I was 30.

I had violated my probation and was on the run from Sedgwick County when they finally caught up with me!! My saving grace was that I had gone to court and they gave me a UA and I melted the cup. I stood in that courtroom trying to justify by any means why I was dirty. That judge called me on it and said, "Miss Miner, I don't live in that world you live in. You're going to jail." I was facing 2 years in the county jail. I remember sitting in the jail cell waving the white flag. I was done. A week later, that same judge pulled me back into his court room. He said, "I am going to give you one last chance. I see something in you." I went

to treatment at WRC. Some Oxford House folks came and did a presentation and I was willing to try something different. Sometimes you have to get uncomfortable to get comfortable.

I walked from treatment to Oxford House Rita in Wichita, Kansas. I remember being nervous, thinking, "What if they don't like me?" I had so many fears. I've never had my own place or known how to be responsible and pay bills. Those women accepted me and told me, "Welcome home!" My whole experience was the best thing that ever happened to me. I found a family within that house. They made sure to hold me accountable for attending meetings, having a sponsor and working the steps. Also, along the way I learned self-accountability and about holding others accountable. Principles before personalities. I lost one of those sisters, Lindsey Barnes. She had taught me so much in Oxford House and in recovery. When we lost her to an overdose, I realized that there was nothing out there anymore for me except death. I wanted to live and be in recovery. I got more involved with Oxford House. I was elected HSC for Chapter 3 without even being there. I went on an opened-up Oxford House Barnes, a house for 9 women. That taught me how to get out of self and help others. Since then I have become an alumna and I helped with the beginning of the OKC Alumni Association in Oklahoma. I married my best friend at the 2014 Oxford House World Convention in Oregon. I have always had some part of involvement with Oxford House.

I am one of the lucky ones. It only took me one time going through Oxford House. I fell in love with it immediately. It was the missing link to my recovery. I was hired in 2017 to become outreach in Oklahoma. It is a passion of mine and my husband's as he also works for Oxford House. I have been clean and sober since 12/10/09. I am forever trying to repay Oxford House for what it has so freely given me.

#### **Monica R. – North Carolina**

August 24th of 2018 was the day I turned my will and life over to the God of my understanding. It was the day my son, Chayne, was born. He came two months early and had cocaine in his system. I was finally sick and tired of being sick and tired. I was what felt like a million miles away from home and all alone (or so I thought). I grew up in South Florida and started using at the age of 13. I have been through jail, institutions, and near-death. But God had a purpose for me other than anything I could have imagined.

On the day my son was born, I knew that I had to change everything – for myself first and then for my child. So, I called Oxford House Beaumont in Greenville, NC. It was the only women and children's house in eastern NC and it gave us a chance. The day I moved into the house was the same day my son was released from the hospital and also the same day the Department of Social Services took him to foster care. But I didn't use. The girls gave me one of only two mother/child rooms and I am grateful for that chance every day. With the help of AA and God, I showed up for life.

I went to a program for felons to help with job readiness skills and I got two jobs. I went to AA and found a sponsor and started working the steps. I also took every class DSS said I needed. It was like I was finally living. Seven months later, I got my son back and he lives me here in the Oxford House. While being here in the Oxford House, I realized how much I would like to help other addicts and alcoholics. I am now in school to be a drug abuse counselor. I wake up every day not only grateful to be sober but also grateful for life. I know that my past is just part of my story, not all of it. My past doesn't dictate my future and I know that God has a purpose for my life. Oxford House gave me the support, structure and guidance I needed to become the person I was always meant to be. I live my life knowing that as long as I put my sobriety first, anything is possible.

#### **Natasha Sprinkle – Washington State**

I'm Natasha Sprinkle, the current Chair for Chapter 22 in the Tri-Cities, WA. I chose to get clean after several years of heavy addiction. I am a Type 1 Diabetic and my use added an extreme amount of stress

on my body. In fact, during the final year of my addiction I was admitted into the ICU 16 times—yes, in one year. Because of my use, like many of us, I placed myself in some horribly dangerous situations. I have been to jail numerous times. I have had several close friends die from their addictions. When my addiction hit its peak, I was no longer placing just myself in harm's way; I was now placing my loved ones in vulnerable situations in which they could be hurt. I had had enough of my chaotic life and I went to treatment in the Spring of 2017. I excelled and loved the outlook for my new life with my new potential. However, I made a huge mistake. After completing treatment, I naively moved back to my hometown on the west side of Washington State, with familiar neighborhoods and all too many familiar faces. Even though I had gained tools and understanding while in treatment, I relapsed almost immediately upon my return. After a month-long binge, an opportunity seemingly fell into my lap. I received the chance to move into an Oxford House, except this time it would be 300 miles away from “home.”

I have been clean since August 24, 2017 and I moved into an Oxford House three days later in Tri-Cities, Washington. Every day, recovery is a struggle and a gift. It's a blessing that we are owed because we're not simply addicted faces with poor choices; we're human beings with a disease. Recovery must be sought because it has become an epidemic in which people are not just losing things important to them, they are dying! I'm grateful to provide service to Oxford House, Inc. It has shown me how to work towards my true potential, be accountable, and live my life outside of a self-centered mindset. I am entirely grateful for my Oxford family. Natasha Sprinkle Chapter 22 Chair

### **Robert Trevino – Texas**

I grew up on the ‘ramen noodles-and-canned raviolis-for-lunch-on-most-days’ kind of life; just me, my mom and my sister. Starting at the age of 16, I made my first (of many) bad choice of my life and involved myself in a drug trafficking operation – initiating a ripple effect of negative choices that led my life on a destructive path. I was consuming alcohol at an alarming rate and selling marijuana full-time by the age of 17 and I had dropped out of High School. By 24, life was the same stagnant dark cloud on repeat and, by 27, I was in and out of Federal Prison and accomplished nothing more than waking up in the morning and not always wanting to do so. Age 28 was a blur of bad relationships, the introduction of crack cocaine into my diet and a downward spiral into what felt like the end. Let me start at the beginning...

I grew up in a small city called Del Rio. It is the border town to Acuna, Mexico, so coming and going was common. Coming and going to party at age 16 was not so common but, at the time, the Border Patrol was not what it is today. As I started to spend more and more time there, I realized that the people I met had a lot of extravagant things that I did not (e.g., new cars, brand-named clothes, wads of money, etc.) Drug trafficking was the answer and before I knew it, I was indicted into the Federal System at the age of 19 for a ‘Conspiracy to possess marijuana with the intent to distribute over 100 kilograms from Mexico into the United States of America.’ After 3 years of back and forth court dates, I was sentenced to 37 months. My time spent during those 3 years pre-sentence was filled with constant depression and anxiety and alcohol. My addiction was clouded by the felony charge and my impending incarceration. I did not think or register that I had a problem with alcohol but, as I grew through my 20s, it was manifesting and festering inside...waiting. When I was released from prison at the age of 25, I spent time satisfying the terms of my release until it was safe to return to alcohol – that came with a 2-year bender and then another 1-year sentence for a DWI. At 29, I failed another drug test for probation and picked up a PI charge; it should have been the end for me. My probation officer came back with the option to go to rehab instead of another prison stint. My addiction was in full effect and I knew it was either die or get help.

Walking into rehab at the Bay Area Recovery Center was the best choice of my life. I didn't see it that way at first; I still didn't think I belonged there but, after my 5<sup>th</sup> day of detox and withdrawal, it started to make more sense and the desire to run was fleeting. Experiencing rehabilitation gave me more hope and desire to change than any amount of prison ever could. It provided a foundation of hope and I was able to finally

feel that I *wanted* to make it out alive. By the end of rehab, I started looking into living alternatives and through the help of a good friend, I was introduced to Oxford House. I knew I wanted to continue to utilize the habits that were starting to develop but I also was afraid of not being able to do it alone and afraid I might revert to old habits if I went back to where I was originally living. Oxford House provided the continuous support and accountability I needed to keep me sober. At 29, I am sitting in my room at Oxford House Lombardy writing this life synopsis, 5 months sober. I have started a new ripple effect – an effect that initiates a whole new perspective on what life has to offer me. As I continue to experience what this new lifestyle has to offer me, through Oxford, I hope and want to help other struggling addicts find the light through their darkness.

### **Roger G. – District of Columbia**

I came to the Oxford Houses in 2012. I'd left everything behind to start a new life. It was the hardest thing I've ever done but also the most worthwhile. I've been clean for six years and the help and support provided to me by the Oxford Houses and the people I have met there have been essential parts of that. When I walked through the door, I knew immediately that each and every person I met was there for the same reasons I was. They wanted that same fresh start. And, as fast as I realized their kinship, so too did they welcome me to their community. I stayed in Oxford Houses until 2016, and that welcoming attitude never changed. That collective resolve to get better, to do better, never changed either. As I got older, and got a job, the Houses and their community stayed behind me, holding me up. When I came out to them as a gay man, they didn't falter in the slightest but continued to be the rock I needed.

It would have been difficult to convince the version of me that existed before living in Oxford House that it would be better – that there was a future version of me that paid bills on time, that had been managing a restaurant for years, that had three beautiful, adorable puppies. And yet, that is where I am now. Oxford House has given me the tools necessary to make the changes to my life that we all want. I've never been more passionate about anything than I am about allowing others to get the same help I did. My current involvement in Oxford House is being a part of the DC and MD Alumni Association. Oxford House continues to be one of the most meaningful parts of my life – a life that, thanks to the Oxford Houses, is now full of meaning.

### **Ronald P. McClarin III – Virginia**

I was born May 18, 1995 in Henrico County Virginia. After moving around several times during my childhood due to family issues, I finally settled in with my parents in Matoaca, Virginia. Upon graduating Matoaca High School, I joined the U.S Army in 2013 as a combat medic. During my time spent in the military, I developed an addiction to opiates, which followed me into the civilian life. In 2016, I started working as a career firefighter for the city of Petersburg, Virginia. During this time, my addiction consumed me as I attempted to cope with the things I saw daily while on my job. In 2018, my addiction caught up with me and ultimately cost me my career as a firefighter. After losing my job, I used even more frequently, and I subsequently lost my home, family and everything I loved most. I spent the next two months living in my truck in the city of Richmond with no job and no money to feed my habit.

When the Army found out about my situation, they attempted to intervene. I entered a two-week detox program at Fort Belvoir. The military then arranged for me to enter a 60-day residential treatment program at River Oaks Treatment Center in Tampa, Florida. Upon completion of my treatment program, I moved into Oxford House in September of 2018. I became the House President in February 2019 and, in the same month, I became the Chairperson of my Chapter. In May, 2019, I accepted a full-time position as an Oxford House Outreach Worker covering the Central Region of Oxford Houses in Virginia. I have been clean and sober since July 14, 2018. Today I am not only an Outreach Worker but also a REVIVE Trainer as well as a Pre-Law student at Liberty University.

### **Scott Clarke – Indiana**

"You should consider an Oxford House." That's what my treatment center counselor said to me as I sat in her office. I had just expressed to Meghan my fear and anxiety about leaving treatment and going back to my dreary one-bedroom apartment. I felt that if I went back there, to the place I stayed drunk, the place I did drugs, the place I was loneliest and the place that was pure isolation, I would not be able to remain sober. The fact is, if I didn't stay sober, I would most likely be dead!

I'm a 58-year old man with 40+ years of an alcoholic and drug-induced blur that has been my life. As in most stories, I have wreckage in my past – failed marriages, countless evictions, repossessions and a list of lost jobs and careers a mile long. I am one of those who had been labeled "hopeless." About 6 weeks before I sat in Meghan's office, I had suffered a heart attack. While I lay in that hospital bed with tubes carrying blood thinners and other meds to my veins, I was still drinking. 'Friends' would bring me vodka or other alcoholic beverages and, when they wouldn't, I found a liquor store that would deliver to my room. After getting out of the hospital, I continued to drink, night and day. I shook violently in the mornings until I put enough alcohol in me. There was no longer a choice for me. I was completely dependent on it, addicted. On February 20, 2019 I admitted myself into treatment.

It was on or about March 10 when Meghan said, "You should consider an Oxford House." I knew a couple of other guys who had left the treatment center and gone to an Oxford House but that was the extent of my knowledge about them. Meghan explained that they were sober living houses; that they were men living together in a regular house, supporting each other's sobriety. She felt it would be a good situation for me because I didn't need the structure of a traditional halfway house. I told her I wanted to think about it; after all, I didn't know anything about them. Here's where the spirit of the universe, God or whatever you call him, stepped in. I called my former sponsor and he said Oxford House would be a great choice! I heard from one of the other guys who had gone to one and he loved it! I couldn't find one person who had anything bad to say about Oxford House. I told Meghan that I would do it and she set up my interview. I didn't know it yet but I had already been evicted from my apartment because of past due rent.

On March 20, 2019, I was discharged from treatment and moved into Oxford House Mariposa in New Albany, Indiana. I was greeted by several of the guys who had interviewed me and they said, "Welcome home!" I immediately felt comfortable and 'part of' – but part of what? I didn't know, but I soon found out. I was part of a new family with guys who were happy to see me; guys who needed me as much as I needed them; guys who genuinely cared about my well-being and who would hold me accountable and not in a mean or hateful way. I felt respected and accepted regardless of my past.

Since moving in I've experienced a life I didn't know existed. Between my 12-Step program and Oxford House, I have a life full of purpose and fulfillment. We, all of us in the House, are a band of brothers, always helping, encouraging and uplifting each other. We all are driven to make our House successful and to help others to find what we've found – a safe, clean, supportive home to promote our sobriety. We have attended numerous unity events and I, personally, have found the friendship and acceptance by others that I never had before! I was drinking and drugging myself to death; my life had no meaning or purpose. I made a decision to get sober and took the steps necessary to do just that. I believe, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that if I had returned to my previous living situation, I'd be drunk or dead by now... I am convinced Oxford House saved my life!

### **Seth Backer – Washington State**

My first attempt at recovery was in my senior year of high school. Like most, I had some trauma in my life that propelled my addiction; my brother's suicide, and the arrest of my lifelong soccer coach were those events for me. I drank and partied through high school and it got out of control; I sought help and the seed

of recovery was planted. I then went off to Portland State University where I thought that I could live in the dorms and remain sober; that didn't happen. I began to drink, and started using party drugs again. Over the next few years my drinking and drug use got out of hand. My addiction went full throttle and by the end of that time I had failed out of school, wrecked four cars and lost many friends as well as the job had had since I was 16. When the friends that you party with say that you have a problem, you might look at it, but I didn't and my addiction continued to progress. By the end of it, I had a raging cocaine habit and was drinking a fifth a day. I needed help. I checked myself into a local rehab facility and entered inpatient. This began my first real attempt at recovery and even that was not all I needed. I thought I could do it my way.

Once I graduated treatment, I found Oxford House in Vancouver WA. I interviewed and was accepted in Oxford House Grammar. I found that this was the missing piece for me – or so I thought. I did very well there: I enrolled in school and got a nice job that allowed me to do a lot. I also found the idea of service work. I got involved, became Chapter Co-chair and moved into a sick house to help it back on its feet. Then I relapsed, due to only going to a few meetings; I had no real recovery though I was sober. I waited 30 days and reapplied to a different Oxford House, I got in and did the same thing; jumped back into service work, upped the number of meetings I went to and that was it, still on my terms. I relapsed again. With my ego severely hurt, I went back out for 6 months and that almost was the end of me, I was at a breaking point.

I reached out to an old housemate at the Grammar Oxford House where I started and did so well. They had an opening. I was accepted to that Oxford House.. I did whatever I needed to make it; I went to meetings, got a sponsor, worked my steps, and it all started to make sense. I got back involved with Chapter but this time I was able to show others the real way to do it, not just sober but with recovery.

I hit about a year and half and I got a job as a Chemical Dependency Professional at a MAT clinic, I then use my experience with that to educate as many people in Vancouver Oxford House and the state of WA about MAT and what it really is – not all the myths. I loved my job but had always wanted to be a “Judy Maxwell” and a few times she had asked me if I would be interested in an outreach position. I said: “Yes,” Well, when one opened up, I said, “Yes” and it has been an amazing journey since that day. I graduated from University of Phoenix with my Bachelors of Science in Human Services and Addiction Studies. I recently applied to two master's programs to work towards my Masters of Social Work degree. I would have none of this without Oxford House.

### **Shawn McReynolds – Alabama**

My name is Shawn and I'm a 44-year-old recovering alcoholic. I moved to Oxford House-Christi in Alabama, in December 2018 from Mississippi. This was a stressful time for me because I was coming from a 3-month treatment program that I willingly completed but I had never lived out of my hometown. I knew I needed to move away from certain people, places, and things that had been triggers for the last few years of my active addiction. The transition to a new environment and community seemed somewhat overwhelming, but exciting at the same time.

After coming to the Oxford House, I was able to get to know the other women in the House, which provided me an immediate support system. I recognized that I needed continued structure in my life and accountability, which I get from living in a sober living environment. I'm able to stay focused on my recovery, attend meetings regularly, and I have a great sponsor. I was able to get back into my career, which has helped my confidence, knowing I'm taking care of myself again.

All in all, Oxford House has helped give me a sense of hope and belonging. I have become more self-aware in my recovery and in how I want to live my life. I'm doing the things I need to do to stay spiritually fit and sober. I'm able to give back, which feels great and builds my self-worth. I am happy to say that I am

9½ months sober and being a member of Oxford House-Christi has played a part in helping me along the way with my continued recovery.

### **Sheronda Banks – North Carolina**

When I decided to surrender to the disease of addiction. I immediately called Karen McKinnon (Oxford House Resource Coordinator) who has been part of my support network off and on for years. My life was full of relapses, failure, and a cycle of active addiction. I moved into the Oxford House full of fear of the unknown, failure and despair. Immediately upon moving in, I felt fortunate to have discovered this new family and way of living, even though it took a few weeks before I was comfortable in my own skin. With the thoughts of repetitive relapses, my belief was that I will never amount to or accomplish anything, let alone stay clean. I didn't want to go back to that shattering cycle I was living and I needed an opportunity to start a new life. Oxford House was the answer to my prayers. I came in there with no self-esteem and my spiritual, physical, and mental aspects were broken. About 2 weeks after I moved in, I got involved. I was welcomed and finally found a place where I belong. I spoke with Ms. Karen McKinnon, who encouraged me, lifted my spirits, and advised me of many options. The one option that drew close to my heart was getting some structure in my life. I became hopeful.

Living in Oxford House taught me a lot about me, others, democracy, conflict resolution, budgeting, organization skills, and how to get through struggles (life on life terms). Sharing with others, letting people know what's going on with me, and being open to suggestions made it easier one day at a time. The combination of Oxford House living, my roommates, and the program of NA have given me a life of peace and, most of the all, serenity. I have completed my college degree, something I quit due to drugs and alcohol. I prayed about it and shared it with the ladies in the house and they filled me with so much strength, love, and motivation. I did the necessary steps to get back in school as a fulltime student. Throughout the semesters, I struggled, cried, and had to get a tutor. My housemates and Ms. Karen McKinnon were all there for me. The early feelings of insecurity, fear and shame plagued me but my Oxford roommates who shared their experience, strength, and hope carried me through and encouraged me to not give up. On December 10, 2016, I not only graduated with two degrees but also obtained 6 other certificates and diplomas. Who would have thought an addict like me could achieve all these credentials. Only by the grace of God do dreams do come true.

Today, I am so grateful for Oxford House. I lived there for 2 years and obtained all the necessary tools I needed to become a productive woman in society. Each position in the house gave me the education, knowledge, and experience I need for all areas of my life – Comptroller taught me how to balance and budget; Secretary taught me how to prioritize by New and Old business; Chore Coordinator taught me about keeping my room clean and, overall, the House taught me how to be accountable and mindful. Today, with the life of recovery that I have gained and new way of living, I have 3 years of sobriety. I am a college graduate and homeowner; I have savings, a car and numerous mental, physical and spiritual assets. Helping someone, somewhere, achieve clean and sober living and sharing my experience, strength, and hope about living in an Oxford House would be another success!! I cannot lose if I stay involved in both my life of recovery and my Oxford House family. Oxford House Oldham Court saved my life.

### **Summer McClellan – Florida**

My name is Summer and my story begins, like many others, when I was a child. On the outside, I appeared to be an ideal kid. I made straight A's, participated in multiple sports, and never had to take a trip to the dean's office for any reason. At home, I continued to put on the act of being that perfect daughter, sister, friend, grandchild... However, on the inside, I felt worthless. This people-pleasing, perfectionist act went on through my teenage years and into my adult life. No one in my life at that time could have ever imagined that by the age of 18, I had already used dope to numb the trauma that I experienced from childhood

emotional abuse and being raped at the age of 16. I went on to college where I played volleyball. It was then that I had multiple knee surgeries and script after script of painkillers were given to me. It's crazy to think back on this because I had those pills at my disposal yet I never abused them until later in life.

In my senior year of college, I finished playing volleyball and got a job waiting tables. I started using on a daily basis and, once I started, I was not able to stop. I continued this habit over that year until my best friend intervened and I promised her I would quit. I left my job waiting tables and became a bartender where I just traded one substance for another. This became a habit until I got fired from my job and moved back to Pensacola. Within a few months of moving home, I got my first teaching job. With this, I also coached multiple sports. This is when I started to experiment with my script for painkillers. One day I took 2 and I will never forget how good I felt. From there, it was over. I was doctor-shopping and calling in refills early. During this time, I found out I was pregnant and got married. I didn't have a physical dependence yet but I continued to take pills throughout my pregnancy as my doctor prescribed a certain amount of them to me. I have back issues and have had 3 knee surgeries so I am always in pain. It wasn't hard to get a script from her. I remember that I could go days without taking anything but at this time, it was the compulsive thoughts that drove me to use. I had no idea that I was suffering from a disease.

After my first child was born and I left the hospital with a script of my favorite pills, my physical dependence began. For over 2 years, I maintained my addiction in secret. I had worked my way up to the stronger stuff still not knowing that I was an addict. I soon found out I was pregnant with my 2nd child and, by this time, I was drowning in the disease and the guilt and shame that comes with it. I did not want to hurt my baby but I did not know how to stop and was too scared to tell anyone. Soon after finding out I was pregnant, a girl came into my life who was also pregnant and on a maintenance medication they prescribe opiate addicts that can be taken when pregnant. She helped me over the next 9 months and I had a perfect, healthy baby. Two weeks after having my 2nd son, I found out that my husband had been cheating on me our entire marriage. It KILLED me. I started using heavily and I spiraled into a dark void. My family saw me slowly dying and they could not sit back and watch any longer so my mother made a doctor's appointment for me and an appointment with a therapist. I still did not have the courage to tell them I was struggling with addiction so I let God do what I could not. The day of my doctor's appointment, I was going to get on anti-depressants and birth control; however, I learned I couldn't do either because I was pregnant. After a few days, I realized I could not stay in a marriage that was built on lies (on both sides). So, I told him I wanted out, asked him to leave and the next day, I went to therapy. This is where I learned that I was really sick and suffered from a disease.

I finally told my family that I struggled with substance abuse disorder and I went to rehab for the first time. It felt like the weight of the world was lifted off my shoulders. I rode the pink cloud for over a year. After coming out of rehab, I had to come back to reality and the realization that things didn't stop in life while I was away. I came home to a half-empty house and a nasty divorce. I managed to stay clean for about 2 years as I was pregnant for almost one of them and fighting a custody battle for the next one. My children were my strength and motivation to stay clean. However, in 2016, I learned that even my love for my own children was not enough to keep me clean. During this year, I had my first experience with IV use. At that moment, I knew it was over. Over the past few years, I have been able to have short amounts of clean time. Each of these times happened the exact same way... I was so deep into my addiction that I couldn't hide it anymore; my family confronted me and tried to get me help through medicine, religion and psychiatry. None of these was sufficient and I would go right back out. In February of 2019, I was at a point of desperation. This time it was life or death. So, I tried rehab again. This time I was doing all the things suggested of me. I focused on me and loving myself, trusting others and building a relationship with my higher power.

When I was preparing to leave rehab, it was suggested that I go to sober living and participate in Intensive Outpatient so I did. This is how I ended up in an Oxford House. I did not think it would be possible to do

sober living considering my shared parenting time and the fact that I have to live within 50 miles of their father to exercise my parenting time. But I prayed about it and the day I sat down with my counselor to see if we could make this happen, we found an Oxford House that was a women and children's house exactly 50 miles from Pensacola. If that doesn't scream GOD, I don't know what does!!! I moved in in March and have been living in Oxford ever since. I am now Chapter Chair in the Pensacola Chapter 2 region. I love Oxford House and what it has done for me. I am learning how to live a clean life responsibly. I am building relationships and rapport with women who empower me. I am learning how to be a leader without putting substances in my body. And, I have accountability in all aspects of my life. I am forever grateful for this experience and my Oxford family.

### **Terry Fuller – Nebraska**

My grandmother raised me since I was 3 days old. My mother and father were unable to care for me as they were struggling with alcohol and drug addiction. I have 4 brothers – 2 older, and 2 younger. When I was 4 years old, my youngest brother, Cody, died in the home, due to unsafe crib practices that really sent my mother and father into destructive use and abuse. I grew up in North Omaha, a rough part of town and my mother and father lived next door to my grandmother's house. Eventually, my father moved into my grandmother's and my mom wasn't around anymore. Drug addiction was in my face a lot after that. When adults were in the house we had to go to our rooms. There were times we would be locked there all night and some of the next day. We moved when I was 9 years old to Benson to escape my father's drug dealers that he owed money to.

Growing up, I was the trouble maker, the class clown. I was in trouble with the law often. Luckily, I was never charged with anything. I never took high school seriously; I constantly skipped school and started to get into drugs, marijuana, and psychedelics. In my junior year, I dropped out of high school with the intentions of getting my GED – which never happened. At 21, I hit the bar scene hard and got heavy into cocaine. A few months later, I had my girlfriend pregnant with no way to provide, and my son, Jayden, was born in 2012. A few months later, I received 2 felony charges for flight to avoid, possession of a controlled substance, and DUI. I was out on bond and moved back to Omaha but nothing changed and I received another DUI. In 2013, I was sentenced to 1 year in prison. While I was incarcerated, I continued to use drugs and never took it seriously. I was released in 2014 and went straight back to my old ways. Over the next 2 years, I destroyed my life and anyone's I came into contact with. I ended up homeless and checked into treatment. I still couldn't stay sober.

On February 22, 2017, I totaled my car and received a 4<sup>th</sup> offence DUI and ended up back in jail. When I got there, I hit my knees and I asked God to come into my life and help me. I had a small taste of sobriety from treatment previously and I wanted that feeling again. I let God work in my life from that day forward. After 4 months I got pretrial release and was awarded the opportunity to go to Campus of Hope Treatment Center. After completing treatment, I went to an Oxford House for a year. I was then sentenced to 2-10 years for the 4<sup>th</sup> offence DUI. I was bitter but I swallowed it and told myself God had a plan for me. I was then paroled to an Oxford House that was struggling but, over the next 7 months, my brothers and I built this house up and it was amazing to be a part of that. My time at being a resident was eventually up. Oxford gave me the tools I needed to live a life free from active addiction and I moved into my own place and became the Oxford House Alumni Committee Chair.

My life today is amazing. I'm Housing Services for Chapter 6; I'm Treasurer for the State Association, and the Alumni Committee Chair. I am currently an alumnus but I still have a strong connection to Oxford. I stay involved and am the first to help a House that needs it. I freely give back what was so freely given to me. I chair meetings and I sponsor guys and houses. I help with fundraising and event planning. I do presentations for Oxford at treatment and detox centers. I have built a family in Oxford and I love my life today and the friendships I've built for a lifetime. None of that would have been possible without Oxford.

## **Tisha Roberson – North Carolina**

Growing up in a small town, spending time with family and church friends was my normal. I made good grades and played piano and trumpet. Tee-ball led to softball; cartwheels, back bends, and splits led me to our middle school cheerleading squad. The Yearbook Committee, and photojournalism were my favorite extracurricular activities. Being voted Student Council Secretary was an accomplishment. My daughter was born in November of my senior year, and I graduated in June. I started college in the fall and soon dropped out. I was content with being a waitress, and raising my daughter. Her dad and I moved in together. Three years later our twins were born.

Life was good, at least on the outside. At age 26, I tasted alcohol, snorted cocaine, took pills and smoked cigarettes for the first time, all in one night. My life and way of thinking was forever changed. I was hooked! Within six months, I was smoking crack and had completely abandoned my children. I lived to use, and used to live. I had sex with strangers for money, robbed people and stole from local businesses. Two prison sentences later, I thought, enough was enough.

I was ready to get my life back together. But, I didn't work a 12-step program or associate with any recovering addicts or alcoholics and I never truly surrendered to God. I relapsed and went back to the cold lonely streets in search of money and drugs. Heroin was readily available and cheap. Speed-balling was my best friend; I couldn't smoke crack without shooting dope. I fell in love with the feeling of a needle pricking my skin and running warm numbness through my veins. The devil had me chained down in the pits of hell. Many people prayed over my life. God assigned an earthly angel to love me in the mist of all this pain. She gave me food, hugged me, prayed with me, and never failed to let me know how much Jesus loved me, just as I was.

On July 26, 2014 after 2½ years of heroin and crack cocaine use, I was fleeing the cops on multiple FTA felony charges. Looking back, I know God specifically placed my open warrants file into Officer Woodlief's hands. He was looking for me and asking people to call him if they saw me. Little did I know that my walk into a drug house that Saturday morning would end the way it did, plus the fact that I can't PRAISE GOD ENOUGH THAT IT DID!!! He had received a phone call revealing my whereabouts and he arrived shortly after that. I was angry, exhausted, and defeated. As he approached me, I was raising my voice asking him why he was so concerned about me when drug dealers were so busy making moves all around us. The words he spoke to me have a permanent place in my memory. He said, "Today is not their day; today is your day." He was calm and patient with me. I knew there would be no making bond and I would surely be sentenced to prison. He allowed me to smoke a cigarette, gather my thoughts, and heard my plea to call my children. He gave me his phone to place the call.

On the way downtown, he was compassionate and asked questions about my life and the decisions I had been making. He was invested as an officer into who, what, why, and how, I and so many others, were living a life addicted to drugs and street life. I kept it real and, for the first time in a long time, the addict inside felt like Tisha, simply because this man, who was dedicated to his job, talked to me like I was a human being and not just a junkie and a convict.

I was sentenced to prison for the third time. Several months later, I surrendered my life to the care of God and I asked Jesus to forgive me of my sins, and invited Him into my heart. At that very moment I was saved and set free. Someone sent me a Celebrate Recovery Bible, and I used it to complete a drug treatment program. The Oxford House prison reentry program arranged for me to interview with an Oxford House and I was accepted. Upon release, my parole officer took me to Raleigh and I was welcomed home by the ladies at North Hill Oxford House.

I started each day with prayer and meditation. I got a job waiting table at IHOP, attended 12 step meetings, got a sponsor, and kept showing up. I learned to trust other women, and allowed them to love me. They taught me to love myself. I was given an opportunity to rebuild my relationship with my children, my precious gifts from God. I worked the steps and made amends for the wrongs I had done. I was finding my authentic self, and I was falling in love with the woman I saw in the mirror. I met a good woman; her name is Mary. Today, she's my best friend. Oxford House and support groups taught me a new way to live and encouraged me on my way. After having my license reinstated, Mary allowed me to drive a car she owned. I enrolled in school and moved out of Oxford House. I completed my first semester of collage, and bought my own car. For the first time in my life I was truly proud of myself. I was falling in love with a kind and gentle man, Casey. I was growing and helping others. I completed my NC Peer Support Certification and worked part-time with Cottage Healthcare while continuing full time with IHOP. This soon proved to be too much. Being invested in my college education, I decided to stop work with Cottage and continue on my way. My favorite day of the week was Thursday, because I'd drive home to Henderson to spend time with my kids and attend Celebrate Recovery.

Nearly a year and a half later, I moved in with Casey and his son Caleb. We were growing and becoming a family. I started applying for full-time inpatient peer support positions. I was turned down time and time again. My criminal background was a barrier. I was depressed and overwhelmed; after all I was attending school to become a substance use counselor and I couldn't find employment as inpatient peer support. Had I misunderstood Gods purpose for my life? I was now attending my 12-step meeting and Celebrate Recovery at Temple. These programs taught me to surrender and stop forcing my will and allow God to work. I took off my God shoes and moved out of His way.

And, boy oh boy, did He move. I began to work with Oxford House residents as a peer advocate. Building relationships with new residents, while connecting them to resources, filled a space in my heart that I never realized was empty. Soon after, I interviewed with the Alcohol Drug Council of NC and was offered a position as an Integrated Recovery Resource Specialist. I accepted. A year later, so much has changed. I wake up every day with a grateful heart, knowing our work makes a difference. I'm registered with The North Carolina Substance Abuse Professional Practice Board. I'm working to complete 6,000 hours of supervision so I can be fully licensed in the state of NC. My life is blooming and I'm busy planting seeds. I'm marrying my best friend on Nov 2. My youngest daughter is pregnant with my first grandchild. My oldest daughter graduates from ECU in the spring. My son is working full-time and is busy building his life. Caleb is growing and finding himself. Our newly-formed family is thriving. I have true friends, I attend Temple Represents and Temple Celebrate Recovery, where I'm encouraged to grow in my walk with God. I didn't misunderstand God's calling for my life; I heard Him loud and clear. I'm following my passion and I'm beyond grateful to know that He is still working on me. I'm excited to live out the next chapter of my life. God writes beautiful stories, I'll let Him keep the pen.... Tisha Roberson, NC Oxford House Alumna

### **Travis Jobe – Virginia**

My story throughout addiction is like many others – putting everyone close to me through some of the worst times of their lives. The only thing I knew how to do was to lie, cheat, and steal to get my next fix. This continued for a decade, until my wreckage caused serious legal issues. After being put into jail for the fifth time in 2015, I agreed to go to treatment in Florida just to get released. That's where I found the rooms (although I wouldn't take much seriously). Furthermore, realizing that I needed to research addiction a little more, I went on a run for about 7 months, using and trying to stay away from the Virginia Court system. Finally, after being caught, they extradited me back to Virginia where I was sentenced to the minimal time (thinking I was going away forever as I ran) and released back into my hometown of Winchester, VA. From that point, I made it about six months before I was incarcerated for another eleven months on a probation violation.

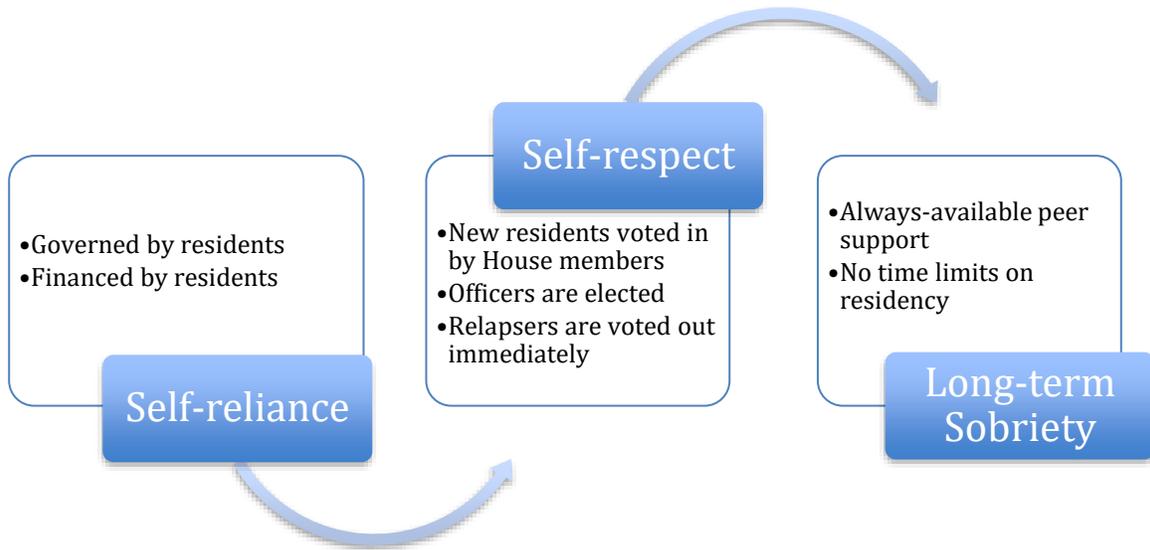
I still to this day cannot tell you exactly what “clicked” while being incarcerated this go-round but I’m truly blessed to have had something work in my favor. My clean date is June 15, 2017. I attended a ninety-day Department of Corrections program and from there I went into Oxford House - Hawthorne in May of 2018. The accountability that I had in Oxford kept me conscious of where I was. I was then nominated to become Chapter 9 Vice Chairperson at a Chapter meeting. I completed the yearlong commitment without me knowing it was giving me so much. It taught me how to handle situations that I would never in a million years ever put myself into otherwise. I was planning to move on to bigger things in my life (getting my own place) at the end of May 2019 after being in Oxford House for a little over a year at this point. Miss Debbie Robinson came to me and put feelers out for what I was doing for work and, though I had talked with her multiple times prior to this, I didn’t really know where she was going with this! To make the long story short, I took the position of the Western VA Outreach Worker in June of 2019.

Through working steps with a sponsor and having a home group for the first time, I’ve been able to focus on myself and truly make progress on myself. Only because of the structure that Oxford has given me, things were lining up in life for the first time. Oxford House is a huge part of my story and also a massive part of my recovery! I’m grateful to have been given the opportunity to have a safe and structured living environment; it has shown me that, despite the differences that everyone living in my house has, we truly have one major thing in common – the desire to prosper in recovery by following an amazing model as well as a twelve-step program! Now I’m blessed to say I work every week on helping those who are in the position that I was in just a short time ago. I am humbled and blessed every single day with the opportunities I’ve been given; I owe a big portion of that to Oxford House, Inc.



## **THE BANQUET AT THE 2018 OXFORD HOUSE CONVENTION**

# OXFORD HOUSE™



Unique • Evidenced-based • Time-tested  
Fostering self-reliance, self-respect and long-term sobriety

## The OHI Directors' 100-Year Awards

Oxford House relies on voluntary contributions to fund expansion in areas where there is no other support. The largest portion of voluntary contributions comes from Oxford House residents and alumni. In the fiscal year just ended, voluntary donations of at least \$600 a year from individual Oxford Houses, Chapters, State Associations and Alumni groups totaled over \$600,000.

These Houses, Chapters and State Associations will be the recipients of the 2019 Directors' 100-Year Awards, which will be presented at the Second General Session. Three program pages are dedicated to listing these contributors.

Oxford House residents and alumni members recognize the need to expand the network and to help OHI do so. Their donations show their gratitude and their support for expansion.

THANK YOU!

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.

## Recipients of the 2019 Board of Directors' 100-Year Award

### Alumni Associations:

OK-Alumni Association

### Chapters:

KS-Chapter 01  
 KS-Chapter 08  
 KS-Chapter 13  
 NE-Chapter VI  
 OR-Chapter 04  
 OR-Chapter 05  
 OR-Chapter 06  
 OR-Chapter 08  
 OR-Chapter 13  
 WA-Chapter 15  
 WA-Chapter 18  
 WA-Chapter 19  
 WA-Chapter 26

### State Associations:

LA-State Association  
 NJ-State Association  
 OR-Oregon State Association  
 OR-Oxford Houses of Oregon  
 WA-State Association

### Individual Houses:

#### Arkansas

Oxford House-Harness

#### Colorado

Oxford House-Acacia  
 Oxford House-Adams Drive  
 Oxford House-Andes  
 Oxford House-Colorado Springs  
 Oxford House-Edgewood Drive  
 Oxford House-Garden of Gods  
 Oxford House-Loveland  
 Oxford House-Miller  
 Oxford House-Murray  
 Oxford House-San Miguel  
 Oxford House-Thornton

#### District of Columbia

Oxford House-Anacostia  
 Oxford House-Avalon  
 Oxford House-Ben Black  
 Oxford House-Dahlia  
 Oxford House-North Rock Creek  
 Oxford House-R Street

#### Delaware

Oxford House-8th Street  
 Oxford House-Athena Place  
 Oxford House-Bedford  
 Oxford House-Chestnut Hill  
 Oxford House-Salem Woods  
 Oxford House-Silver Lake  
 Oxford House-Victory Lane

#### Hawaii

Oxford House-Coconut Grove  
 Oxford House-Kealoha  
 Oxford House-Moekolu  
 Oxford House-Niu Valley  
 Oxford House-Paopua  
 Oxford House-Uhu

#### Idaho

Oxford House-Burrell  
 Oxford House-Nez Perce

#### Kansas

Oxford House-Braeburn

Oxford House-Dunsworth  
 Oxford House-Halsey 2  
 Oxford House-Hope Central  
 Oxford House-Louis  
 Oxford House-Robin  
 Oxford House-Terrace  
 Oxford House-Waco

#### Kentucky

Oxford House-Derby  
 Oxford House-Fayette  
 Oxford House-Greenup  
 Oxford House-Iroquois Park  
 Oxford House-Kenwood Hill  
 Oxford House-Lily  
 Oxford House-Moyo  
 Oxford House-Oaks  
 Oxford House-Potomac  
 Oxford House-Reagan  
 Oxford House-University  
 Oxford House-Vara  
 Oxford House-Waverly Park  
 Oxford House-Yana

#### Louisiana

Oxford House-Acadiana  
 Oxford House-Alpha  
 Oxford House-Avalon II  
 Oxford House-Baton Rouge  
 Oxford House-Bella Donna  
 Oxford House-Belle  
 Oxford House-Belle Maison  
 Oxford House-Bienvenue  
 Oxford House-Bon Famille  
 Oxford House-Bon Temps  
 Oxford House-Boxwood  
 Oxford House-Broadmoor  
 Oxford House-Brooke  
 Oxford House-Bruce 2  
 Oxford House-Buveur de Lait  
 Oxford House-Bye-Water  
 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-Dominican  
 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-Jambalaya  
 Oxford House-Jones Creek  
 Oxford House-Kenner  
 Oxford House-Lafayette  
 Oxford House-Lafitte  
 Oxford House-Lagnippe  
 Oxford House-LaRouge  
 Oxford House-LaSalle  
 Oxford House-Le Grand  
 Oxford House-Lions Den  
 Oxford House-Little Italy  
 Oxford House-Louisiana

Oxford House-Mandeville  
 Oxford House-Maplewood  
 Oxford House-McNeese  
 Oxford House-Metairie  
 Oxford House-Mint House  
 Oxford House-Mirabeau  
 Oxford House-Miro  
 Oxford House-MJC Walker  
 Oxford House-New Leaf  
 Oxford House-Old Hammond  
 Oxford House-Palmer Park  
 Oxford House-Pierremont 2  
 Oxford House-Pinhook  
 Oxford House-Pontchartrain  
 Oxford House-Prien Lake  
 Oxford House-Protege  
 Oxford House-Red River  
 Oxford House-Regalia  
 Oxford House-Rhiannon  
 Oxford House-Roma  
 Oxford House-Saint George  
 Oxford House-Shawn  
 Oxford House-Slidell  
 Oxford House-Soignet  
 Oxford House-South Alexandria  
 Oxford House-Southern Oak  
 Oxford House-Southfield  
 Oxford House-Southshore  
 Oxford House-St Tammany  
 Oxford House-St Thomas  
 Oxford House-Stockton  
 Oxford House-Tams  
 Oxford House-Tangi  
 Oxford House-Tanner  
 Oxford House-Treasure Island  
 Oxford House-Uptown  
 Oxford House-Vieux Carre  
 Oxford House-Village Creek  
 Oxford House-Waterfront  
 Oxford House-Wenham  
 Oxford House-West Hale  
 Oxford House-Whittington  
 Oxford House-Windsor

#### Maryland

Oxford House-Cedar Ridge  
 Oxford House-Cheverly  
 Oxford House-Glenarden  
 Oxford House-Silver Spring

#### Maine

Oxford House-Back Bay  
 Oxford House-Brighton Avenue

#### Missouri

Oxford House-Shenandoah  
 Oxford House-Westport  
 Oxford House-Zona

#### Mississippi

Oxford House-Big Lake  
 Oxford House-Bon Ami  
 Oxford House-East Northside  
 Oxford House-Forest Park  
 Oxford House-Golden Eagle  
 Oxford House-Landon Place  
 Oxford House-Medallion  
 Oxford House-Phoenix  
 Oxford House-Rodenberg  
 Oxford House-Shuckers  
 Oxford House-Sunkist  
 Oxford House-Tropicana

Oxford House-Tupelo  
 Oxford House-Winterview

#### North Carolina

Oxford House-11th Street  
 Oxford House-Amhurst Rd  
 Oxford House-Asheville  
 Oxford House-Askham  
 Oxford House-Bluff Wood Court  
 Oxford House-Brandon Road  
 Oxford House-Brentwood  
 Oxford House-Bretonshire  
 Oxford House-Brinkley  
 Oxford House-Buck Jones  
 Oxford House-Cahaba  
 Oxford House-Camden Circle  
 Oxford House-Cannon Park  
 Oxford House-Carolina Avenue  
 Oxford House-Carrboro  
 Oxford House-Cary  
 Oxford House-Central  
 Oxford House-Chaney  
 Oxford House-Changes  
 Oxford House-Christopher Road  
 Oxford House Church Street  
 Oxford House-College Oak  
 Oxford House-Covil House  
 Oxford House-Covington  
 Oxford House-Daley  
 Oxford House-Dellwood  
 Oxford House-Driver  
 Oxford House-Dunn  
 Oxford House-Durham  
 Oxford House-Durwood Lane  
 Oxford House-East Westwood  
 Oxford House-Estes  
 Oxford House-Fairview  
 Oxford House-Fieldbrook  
 Oxford House-Firelight  
 Oxford House-Fleming  
 Oxford House-Fox Road  
 Oxford House-Franklin Street  
 Oxford House-Gardenvue  
 Oxford House-Gardner Cir  
 Oxford House-Garner  
 Oxford House-Glenwood II  
 Oxford House-Greene Street  
 Oxford House-Greene St - N  
 Oxford House-Greenwich  
 Oxford House-Grinnell  
 Oxford House-Harvard  
 Oxford House-Haven Road  
 Oxford House-Hearth  
 Oxford House-Homestead  
 Oxford House-Hunting Ridge  
 Oxford House-Hyde Park  
 Oxford House-Ilford  
 Oxford House-Indian Trail  
 Oxford House-Irvington  
 Oxford House-Jacksonville  
 Oxford House-Jones Franklin  
 Oxford House Kings Mill Rd  
 Oxford House-Kornegay  
 Oxford House-Longfield  
 Oxford House-Lucerne  
 Oxford House-Mantua Way  
 Oxford House-Mayflower  
 Oxford House-Mayridge  
 Oxford House-Mendenhall  
 Oxford House-Merritt Mill  
 Oxford House-Mordecai  
 Oxford House-Morehead

## Recipients of the 2019 Board of Directors' 100-Year Award

(Continued from prior page)

Oxford House-Morgan Creek  
 Oxford House-Myakka  
 Oxford House-Narbeth  
 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-Old Winston Rd  
 Oxford House-Oldham Court  
 Oxford House-Pamlico  
 Oxford House-Parkwood Drive  
 Oxford House-Peace Street  
 Oxford House-Piedmont  
 Oxford House-Pinecrest  
 Oxford House-Pinewood Lane  
 Oxford House-Pond  
 Oxford House-Quail Hollow  
 Oxford House-Rangeley  
 Oxford House-Redbanks  
 Oxford House-Repon  
 Oxford House-Round Top  
 Oxford House-Shamrock  
 Oxford House-Sharmeck  
 Oxford House-Sharon-Amity  
 Oxford House-Smith Creek  
 Oxford House-South Hills  
 Oxford House-State Street  
 Oxford House-Steeds Run  
 Oxford House-Stockton Drive  
 Oxford House-Sudbury  
 Oxford House-Suite  
 Oxford House-Swann  
 Oxford House-Triangle  
 Oxford House-Tyndall Court  
 Oxford House-University Drive  
 Oxford House-Van Thomas  
 Oxford House-Weatherhill  
 Oxford House-Willow  
 Oxford House-Woodduck  
 Oxford House-Wright Road  
 Oxford House-Wyoming  
 Oxford House-Zmaura Way

### Nebraska

Oxford House-Mid Crossing

### New Hampshire

Oxford House -Manchester

### New Jersey

Oxford House-11th Avenue  
 Oxford House-13th Avenue  
 Oxford House-5th Avenue  
 Oxford House-Astoria  
 Oxford House-Bay Lea  
 Oxford House-Bayshore  
 Oxford House-Bond Street  
 Oxford House-Bradford  
 Oxford House-Bradley Beach  
 Oxford House-Carnegie  
 Oxford House-Cinnaminson  
 Oxford House-Claire Drive  
 Oxford House-Clairmont  
 Oxford House-Cornwall  
 Oxford House-Crows Mill  
 Oxford House-Dickinson Ave  
 Oxford House-Disney  
 Oxford House-Doral

Oxford House-Dorer  
 Oxford House-Dougie  
 Oxford House-Dudley  
 Oxford House-East Brunswick  
 Oxford House-Evesham  
 Oxford House-Fischer Blvd  
 Oxford House -Fletcher Lake  
 Oxford House-Galway Place  
 Oxford House-Garden Street  
 Oxford House-Haddon  
 Oxford House-Hazelwood  
 Oxford House-Jarvis  
 Oxford House-Johnson Ave  
 Oxford House-Julcz  
 Oxford House-Kenbury  
 Oxford House-Kendall Park  
 Oxford House-Kingston  
 Oxford House-Lakewood  
 Oxford House-Langford  
 Oxford House-Long Branch  
 Oxford House-Lookout  
 Oxford House-Matawan  
 Oxford House-Meadowbrook C  
 Oxford House-Melrose Avenue  
 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-Rockefeller Park  
 Oxford House-South Toms River  
 Oxford House-South Ward Ave  
 Oxford House-Stratford  
 Oxford House-Stuart Street  
 Oxford House-Texas Drive  
 Oxford House-Tigger  
 Oxford House-Union Creek  
 Oxford House-Van Court  
 Oxford House-Vineland  
 Oxford House-Waters Edge  
 Oxford House-West Orange  
 Oxford House-Witherspoon  
 Oxford House-Woodbrook

### New Mexico

Oxford House-Juan Tabo  
 Oxford House-Pennsylvania  
 Oxford House-Snowheights

### Oklahoma

Oxford House-Awakening  
 Oxford House-Beacon  
 Oxford House-Beech  
 Oxford House-Bil-Mar  
 Oxford House-Boomer  
 Oxford House-Briar Meadows  
 Oxford House-Bricktown  
 Oxford House-Burning Tree  
 Oxford House-Centum  
 Oxford House-Claremont  
 Oxford House-Cloverleaf  
 Oxford House-Dittmer  
 Oxford House-Durant  
 Oxford House-East Moore  
 Oxford House-E Wedgewood  
 Oxford House-Edgewood 2  
 Oxford House-Edmond 2

Oxford House-Elmhurst  
 Oxford House-Epic Forest  
 Oxford House-Flair  
 Oxford House-Fontana  
 Oxford House-Grace Hill  
 Oxford House-Green Country  
 Oxford House-Grove  
 Oxford House-Hogan  
 Oxford House-Holiday  
 Oxford House-Holtzclaw II  
 Oxford House-Integrity  
 Oxford House-Jamestown So.  
 Oxford House-Lafortune  
 Oxford House-Longan  
 Oxford House-Marlynn II  
 Oxford House-Midland  
 Oxford House-Midwest City  
 Oxford House-Mustang  
 Oxford House-Parish  
 Oxford House-Patterson Estates  
 Oxford House-Pine Oak Place  
 Oxford House-Progress Way  
 Oxford House-Radium  
 Oxford House-Regime  
 Oxford House-Resurgence  
 Oxford House-Rise  
 Oxford House-Rockford  
 Oxford House-Rockwood Hil II  
 Oxford House-Royal  
 Oxford House-Rustic Hills  
 Oxford House-Shadow Mountain  
 Oxford House-Shawnee  
 Oxford House-Sooner  
 Oxford House-South Park Plaza  
 Oxford House-Southern Hills  
 Oxford House-Terrace Manor 2  
 Oxford House-Three Lakes  
 Oxford House-Tulsa Mid-Town  
 Oxford House-West Winds  
 Oxford House-Will Rogers  
 Oxford House-Woodridge

### Oregon

Oxford House-Allen II  
 Oxford House-Ashar  
 Oxford House-Blanton  
 Oxford House-Elkhorn  
 Oxford House-Endor  
 Oxford House-Englewood Park  
 Oxford House-Fir Ridge  
 Oxford House-Forest Grove  
 Oxford House-Glencoe  
 Oxford House-Hazeldale Park  
 Oxford House-Juniper  
 Oxford House-Kinnaman  
 Oxford House-M Jonas  
 Oxford House-Meldrum Park  
 Oxford House-Morgan Lane II  
 Oxford House-Onyx Street  
 Oxford House-Powell Butte  
 Oxford House-Red Oak  
 Oxford House-Rocky Butte  
 Oxford House-Royal Park  
 Oxford House-St. Johns  
 Oxford House-Swanson Park  
 Oxford House-Valinor  
 Oxford House-Ventura  
 Oxford House-Warrenton Pioneer  
 Oxford House-West Howard  
 Oxford House-Wygant

### Pennsylvania

Oxford House-Cecelia  
 Oxford House-Donna J.  
 Oxford House-Eau Claire Street  
 Oxford House-Orchard Avenue  
 Oxford House-Walker-Butler

### South Carolina

Oxford House-Conestee  
 Oxford House-Neshama  
 Oxford House-Nouveaux Famille  
 Oxford House-Watson

### Tennessee

Oxford House-Atlantis Abroad  
 Oxford House-Casanova  
 Oxford House-Cleveland  
 Oxford House-Crestone  
 Oxford House-Famille  
 Oxford House-Faxon  
 Oxford House-Fleur De Soleil  
 Oxford House-Gibson Lodge  
 Oxford House-High Pointe Terr  
 Oxford House-Hilltop East  
 Oxford House-Hixson Terrace  
 Oxford House-Knoxford  
 Oxford House-Metropolis  
 Oxford House-Metta  
 Oxford House-Milton  
 Oxford House-Ridgecut  
 Oxford House-Rocky Top  
 Oxford House-Thief  
 Oxford House-Titan  
 Oxford House-Volunteer

### Texas

Oxford House-4th Dimension  
 Oxford House-Abilene  
 Oxford House-Ahavah  
 Oxford House-Airport  
 Oxford House-Amity  
 Oxford House-Atreides  
 Oxford House-Bell  
 Oxford House-Blanco  
 Oxford House-Bon Park  
 Oxford House-Brettonwood  
 Oxford House-Buffalo Pass  
 Oxford House-Camilla  
 Oxford House-Carson  
 Oxford House-Childress  
 Oxford House-Coronet  
 Oxford House-Cortez North  
 Oxford House-Costigan  
 Oxford House-Culebra  
 Oxford House-Davis  
 Oxford House-Dunaway  
 Oxford House-Dynamis  
 Oxford House-Emet  
 Oxford House-Eqinox  
 Oxford House-Excalibur  
 Oxford House-Excelsior  
 Oxford House-Fawn Ridge  
 Oxford House-Fielder  
 Oxford House-Fort Worth  
 Oxford House-Gaia  
 Oxford House-Genesis  
 Oxford House-Gentry  
 Oxford House-Gramercy  
 Oxford House-Grayson  
 Oxford House-Green Meadow  
 Oxford House-Guilbeau  
 Oxford House-Hulen

## Recipients of the 2019 Board of Directors' 100-Year Award

*(Continued from prior page)*

Oxford House-Hurst  
 Oxford House-Identity  
 Oxford House-Invicta  
 Oxford House-Janus  
 Oxford House-Jennings  
 Oxford House-Kirby Deuce  
 Oxford House-Laguna  
 Oxford House-Leon Valley  
 Oxford House-Lions Park  
 Oxford House-Lombardy  
 Oxford House-Longhorn  
 Oxford House-Magnolia Heights  
 Oxford House-Marist  
 Oxford House-McCart  
 Oxford House-Meadow Park  
 Oxford House-Noble  
 Oxford House-Parmer  
 Oxford House-Pasler  
 Oxford House-Ramble Creek  
 Oxford House-Revenant  
 Oxford House-Rolling Hills  
 Oxford House-Rolling Oaks  
 Oxford House-Rosewood  
 Oxford House-San Paula  
 Oxford House-San Pedro  
 Oxford House-Sherman  
 Oxford House-Skycrest  
 Oxford House-Stonewall  
 Oxford House-Tranquility  
 Oxford House-Tyler  
 Oxford House-Valiant  
 Oxford House-Valor  
 Oxford House-Walton  
 Oxford House-Werner Hill  
 Oxford House-Westcreek  
 Oxford House-Wood Oak  
 Oxford House-Woodland Park

### Virginia

Oxford House-Amherst Street  
 Oxford House-Annandale  
 Oxford House-Apple Blossom  
 Oxford House-Baileys Crossroads  
 Oxford House-Ballston  
 Oxford House-Bayview Gardens  
 Oxford House-Beall Drive  
 Oxford House-Beau Lane  
 Oxford House-Belle Haven  
 Oxford House-Berkley Park  
 Oxford House-Blossom  
 Oxford House-Bon Air  
 Oxford House-Braddock  
 Oxford House-Brandy Jo  
 Oxford House-Briar Patch  
 Oxford House-Briarwood 2  
 Oxford House-Brilyn  
 Oxford House-Brookfield  
 Oxford House-Chain Bridge  
 Oxford House-Chamberlayne  
 Oxford House-Chapel Hill  
 Oxford House-Chesapeake  
 Oxford House-Chester  
 Oxford House-Clay Street  
 Oxford House-Columbia Pike  
 Oxford House-Coral  
 Oxford House-Deer Springs  
 Oxford House-Diva  
 Oxford House-Douglass Park  
 Oxford House-Edgehill  
 Oxford House-Endurance  
 Oxford House-Fair Oaks

Oxford House-Fairview Park  
 Oxford House-Fenix  
 Oxford House-Forest Glen  
 Oxford House-Forest Hills Park  
 Oxford House-Forest Ridge  
 Oxford House-Fry's Spring  
 Oxford House-Glebe Road  
 Oxford House-Glebe Wood  
 Oxford House-Glen Carlyn  
 Oxford House-Golden Maple  
 Oxford House-Gosport  
 Oxford House-Hampton  
 Oxford House-Hermosa  
 Oxford House-Highland Springs  
 Oxford House-Hill Top Heights  
 Oxford House-Hunter Street  
 Oxford House-Jamestown  
 Oxford House-Kenwood  
 Oxford House-Kings Manor  
 Oxford House-Lake Smith  
 Oxford House-Landmark  
 Oxford House-Lemon Road  
 Oxford House-Little Back  
 Oxford House-Little Creek  
 Oxford House-Little River  
 Oxford House-Lynnhaven  
 Oxford House-Manassas  
 Oxford House-Manor  
 Oxford House-Melita  
 Oxford House-Merrifield  
 Oxford House-Mill Mountain  
 Oxford House-Moseby Court  
 Oxford House-Neptune  
 Oxford House-New Horizon  
 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-Piccadilly Place  
 Oxford House-Pike Place  
 Oxford House-Pinewood  
 Oxford House-Plaza  
 Oxford House-Pleasant Valley  
 Oxford House-Poseidon  
 Oxford House-Prosperity  
 Oxford House-Raleigh Court  
 Oxford House-Ramekin  
 Oxford House-Ravensworth  
 Oxford House-Rising Sun  
 Oxford House-River City  
 Oxford House-Roseberry  
 Oxford House-Salem  
 Oxford House-Seaview  
 Oxford House-Serenity Park  
 Oxford House-Serenity Path  
 Oxford House-Shenandoah Valley  
 Oxford House-South Cameron  
 Oxford House-South Lee  
 Oxford House-Springfield  
 Oxford House-Star City  
 Oxford House-Sterling  
 Oxford House-Sudley Manor  
 Oxford House-Sugarland  
 Oxford House-Sunnyside  
 Oxford House-Tarpley Park

Oxford House-Thomas II  
 Oxford House-Thomas Street  
 Oxford House-Tidewater  
 Oxford House-Valley View  
 Oxford House-Victoria  
 Oxford House-Wakefield  
 Oxford House-Wasena  
 Oxford House-Washington Park  
 Oxford House-Waverly Hills  
 Oxford House-Wesleyan  
 Oxford House-Williamsburg  
 Oxford House-Winchester  
 Oxford House-Woodland Heights  
 Oxford House-Wyman  
 Oxford House-York

### Washington State

Oxford House-Adams  
 Oxford House-Addison  
 Oxford House-Ainsworth Ave  
 Oxford House-Akona  
 Oxford House-Alexis  
 Oxford House-Anoka  
 Oxford House-Apple Valley  
 Oxford House-Athena  
 Oxford House-B Street  
 Oxford House-Bachelor Creek  
 Oxford House-Baltimore  
 Oxford House-Bill Wyze  
 Oxford House-Bridgeview  
 Oxford House-Brockman  
 Oxford House-Cascade View  
 Oxford House-Charleston  
 Oxford House-Chase Lake  
 Oxford House-Chelan  
 Oxford House-Chestnut  
 Oxford House-Conifer Park  
 Oxford House-Connelly  
 Oxford House-Cornell  
 Oxford House-Corulli  
 Oxford House-Crosby  
 Oxford House-Cushman  
 Oxford House-Delaware  
 Oxford House-Eastside  
 Oxford House-Echo Lake  
 Oxford House-Englewood  
 Oxford House-Erlands Point  
 Oxford House-Everett Mall  
 Oxford House-Finn Hill  
 Oxford House-Fisher Park  
 Oxford House-Franklin  
 Oxford House-Grant Road  
 Oxford House-Gregory Way  
 Oxford House-Grover Place  
 Oxford House-Hendrick  
 Oxford House-Hewitt  
 Oxford House-Hilltop View  
 Oxford House-Hillyard  
 Oxford House-Inland  
 Oxford House-Jadwin  
 Oxford House-John Harrison  
 Oxford House-Journey  
 Oxford House-Juanita  
 Oxford House-Karen Audrey  
 Oxford House-Laurel  
 Oxford House-Laurelwood  
 Oxford House-Levy 2  
 Oxford House-Lewis and Clark  
 Oxford House-Licton Springs  
 Oxford House-Lien  
 Oxford House-Madrona  
 Oxford House-Maple Leaf 2

Oxford House-Matthews Beach  
 Oxford House-Melrose  
 Oxford House-Minnedell  
 Oxford House-Mirror Lake  
 Oxford House-Naval Avenue  
 Oxford House-Nob Hill  
 Oxford House-North Callow  
 Oxford House-Northgate  
 Oxford House-Northtown  
 Oxford House-Nunziato  
 Oxford House-O'hana  
 Oxford House-Oak Harbor  
 Oxford House-Orchard Heights  
 Oxford House-Wyman  
 Oxford House-Peabody  
 Oxford House-Perkins  
 Oxford House-Pine Street  
 Oxford House-Pinecrest  
 Oxford House-Pioneer Point  
 Oxford House-Portia Park  
 Oxford House-Puget Sound  
 Oxford House-Renton Stadium  
 Oxford House-River Side Hill  
 Oxford House-Roosevelt  
 Oxford House-Rosemere  
 Oxford House-Ruddell Road  
 Oxford House-Ruth Park  
 Oxford House-Sandalwood Ct  
 Oxford House-Scott King  
 Oxford House-Sedro Woolley  
 Oxford House-Serene Lake  
 Oxford House-Serenita  
 Oxford House-Shelton  
 Oxford House-Shiloh Hills  
 Oxford House-Shorewood  
 Oxford House-Sidney  
 Oxford House-Silver Creek  
 Oxford House-Simpson  
 Oxford House-Sirona  
 Oxford House-Skagit Valley  
 Oxford House-St. Edmonds  
 Oxford House-Stan Timberlake  
 Oxford House-Stark  
 Oxford House-Sunrise Heights  
 Oxford House-Tekoa  
 Oxford House-Teresa  
 Oxford House-Tieton  
 Oxford House-Tri Lakes  
 Oxford House-Tyee  
 Oxford House-Tynan  
 Oxford House-Upriver  
 Oxford House-Veneta  
 Oxford House-Victory  
 Oxford House-Washougal  
 Oxford House-Wenatchee  
 Oxford House-Wheaton  
 Oxford House-Whipple  
 Oxford House-White Lake  
 Oxford House-Wide Hollow  
 Oxford House-Woodland Creek  
 Oxford House-Yakima  
 Oxford House-Alling Park

### West Virginia

Oxford House-Bishop Overlook  
 Oxford House-King Street

### Wisconsin

Oxford House-La Cross

**Thank You!**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Theme</b>	<b>Location</b>
2019	“Oxford House: Self-Reliance • Self-Respect”	Washington, DC
2018	“Oxford House: Recovery • Fellowship • Fun”	Kansas City, MO
2017	“Oxford House: Unique, Time-tested and Evidence-based”	Washington, DC
2016	“Oxford House: The Blueprint for Success”	Dallas, TX
2015	“Oxford House: Celebrating 40 Years”	Washington, DC
2014	“Oxford House: Building Community”	Portland, OR
2013	“Oxford House: Meeting the Need”	Washington, DC
2012	“Oxford House: Good Neighbors-Good Citizens”	Oklahoma City, OK
2011	“Oxford House: Saving Money-Saving Lives”	Washington, DC
2010	“Oxford House: Celebrating 35 Years”	Chicago, IL
2009	“Oxford House: Together We Can”	Washington, DC
2008	“Oxford House: Time for Recovery”	New Orleans, LA
2007	“Oxford House: What If?”	Washington, DC
2006	“Oxford House Comes of Age”	Wichita, KS
2005	“Family, Fellowship and Freedom”	Washington, DC
2004	“Back to Basics”	San Antonio, TX
2003	“Recovery, Responsibility, and Replication”	Washington, DC
2002	“Changing the Culture of Recovery”	Seattle, WA
2001	“If not Now, When?”	Washington, DC
2000	“Recovery Without Relapse”	Kansas City, MO
1999	“If Not Us, Who?”	Washington, DC

## **OXFORD HOUSE TRADITIONS**

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

# Oxford House™

1975-2019

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

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

Write or Call

***Oxford House, Inc.***

1010 Wayne Avenue, Suite 300  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Telephone 301-587-2916

Facsimile 301-589-0302

E-Mail [Info@oxfordhouse.org](mailto:Info@oxfordhouse.org)

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

# 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Oxford House World Convention

## Oxford House: Self-reliance · Self-respect

August 29 - September 1, 2019 Marriott Renaissance Downtown Hotel, Washington, DC

### CONVENTION SCHEDULE

FRIDAY 8/30		SATURDAY 8/31		SUNDAY 9/1
6:30 - 8:00 AM	<b>Breakfast Buffet</b> <i>World Council Nominations Due by Noon</i>	6:30-8:00 AM	<b>Breakfast Buffet</b> <i>Voting until Noon for World Council by Houses attending the Convention</i>	<b>Breakfast Buffet</b> 6:30 – 8:00 AM
8:00-9:30 AM	<b>Opening General Session</b> <b>Invocation</b> – Msgr. Eddie Tolentino <b>Welcoming Remarks</b> Barbara J. Bazron, Ph.D., Director of the Department of Behavioral Health, DC <b>Welcome and Convention Overview</b> Kathleen Gibson and Paul Molloy <b>World Council Election Rules</b> James McClain <b>Keynote Speaker</b> John Kelly, Ph.D.	8:15- 9:30	<b>Third Breakout Panels</b> 1. Medication in Oxford Houses 2. Dealing with Children in Oxford Houses 3. Keeping Alumni Involved and Forming Alumni Associations 4. Organizing Personal Finances 5. Nuts and Bolts of Finding and Starting a New Oxford House	<b>Closing General Session</b> ▪ Convention Summary ▪ Remembrance of Oxford House Residents and Alumni Who Died During the Past Year ▪ Tradition Renewal and Closing
9:30-9:45	<i>Break</i>	9:30-9:45	<i>Break</i>	
9:45-11:00	<b>First Breakout Panels</b> 1. Addiction Research- What's New and Newsworthy 2. Working with State Agencies 3. Engaging the Recovery Community 4. Oxford House and Behavioral Health Organizations 5. Leadership v. Bossism – Practicing Democracy	9:45-11:00	<b>Fourth Breakout Panels</b> 1. Generation X and Millennials in Recovery 2. Educating the Public About Recovery 3. MAT/MAR in Oxford Houses and Dealing with Opioid Overdoses 4. Oxford House Research and Upcoming Studies 5. Oxford House – Four Stages and Five Core Principles	<p><b>CONVENTION REGISTRATION</b></p> <p><i>Registration for the 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Oxford House Convention starts at 10:00 AM on August 29.</i></p> <p><b>GOLF TOURNAMENT</b> <i>Thursday, August 30</i> <i>Enterprise Golf Mitchellville, MD.</i></p> <p><i>Check-in at the course: 10:00 AM</i> <i>Tee time: 11:00 AM</i> <i>Lunch will follow the competition</i></p> <p><i>Meet in lobby at 8:30 AM for transportation</i></p> <p><b>WOMEN'S CONFERENCE</b></p> <p><i>The Oxford House Women's Conference is on Thursday, Aug. 29</i> <i>2:30 PM - 7:00 PM</i> <i>Registration opens at 1:00 PM.</i></p>
11:00-11:15	<i>Break</i>	11:00-11:15	<i>Break</i>	
11:15-12:30	<b>Second Breakout Panels</b> 1. Working with Drug Courts, Parole and Prison Re-entry 2. Going Back to School as Residents or Alumni – Tips from Those Who've Done It. 3. Out of the Closet and into an Oxford House – Understanding Recovery and the LGBTQ Community 4. World Council Update 5. Conducting House, Chapter and Association Meetings	11:15-12:30	<b>Fifth Breakout Panels</b> 1. The Importance of Having Fun in Oxford House 2. Filling Vacancies – Where to Look and How to Do It 3. Working with Treatment Providers 4. Civil Rights Update 5. Working Together – Houses, Chapters, Associations and Alumni	
12:30 – 2:00	<b>Lunch on Your Own</b> <b>AA/NA meetings at hotel – 1:00-2:00 PM</b>	12:30 – 2:00	<b>Lunch on Your Own</b> <b>Alumni Lunch; 12:30-2:00 PM</b> Clyde's at Gallery Place Get Tickets at World Council table. <b>AA/NA meetings at hotel – 1:00-2:00</b>	
2:15-5:00	<b>Second General Session</b> • Keynote Panel – The Opioid Crisis: The View from the Trenches • Eligible World Council Nominees give three-minute campaign speeches • Presentation of Directors' 100-Year Awards	2:30 – 4:45	<b>Third General Session</b> • <b>Keynote:</b> Stuart Gitlow, M.D. • Introduction of New World Council Members • Vote on Resolutions	
Evening	<b>Friday evening free for:</b> • Dinner on your own AND • Sightseeing – Take an open-air bus; take a sightseeing cruise on the Potomac; or just wander through Washington sites.	6:30 - Midnight	<b>Banquet and Dance</b> ➢ Invocation ➢ Dinner and Awards ➢ Recovery Speaker: Marty Walker ➢ Dance: 9:00 PM – Midnight	
<p><b>Breakout panel rooms: (1) Grand Ballroom, (2) Congressional Hall A, (3) Congressional Hall B (4) Congressional Hall C, (5) Mount Vernon Square</b> <b>All General Sessions and first breakout panels will be in the Grand Ballroom</b> <b>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</b> <b>On Thursday, August 29, there are AA and NA meetings only in the evening (10:00-11:00 PM).</b></p>				



# *Greetings*

*Oxford House, Inc.*

*21<sup>st</sup> Annual Convention*

August 29 - September 1, 2019

As Mayor of Washington, DC, it is my pleasure to extend congratulations to Oxford House, Inc., on the occasion of your 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Convention.

Oxford House, Inc. was established by and for individuals recovering from substance abuse and alcohol addiction. Since its inception, there are now 2,643 Oxford Houses throughout the United States and in Washington, DC. For more than four decades, Oxford House has helped individuals restore their lives and remain clean and sober without relapse.

As you gather to reflect on your accomplishments, I thank this organization for helping to make a difference in quality of life of others.

On behalf of the 702,000 residents of Washington, DC, you have my best wishes for an enjoyable event.

Muriel Bowser  
Mayor of Washington, DC



## *Oxford House™* *Self-Reliance – Self-Respect*

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Welcome to the 2019 Oxford House™ World Convention in Washington, DC. The convention theme this year focuses on two attributes that most residents acquire from living in an Oxford House – self-reliance and self-respect. Throughout the convention, we will be talking about these attributes as well as others as we focus on a broad set of topics ranging from basic Oxford House ‘housekeeping’ issues to broader issues about addiction and recovery. There is also plenty of time allotted for socializing and networking. Attend all the sessions. You’ll learn a lot and have fun in the process. If you’re here with other members of your House or Chapter, consider splitting up in order to hit as many panels as possible. That way you’ll have far more information to bring home to those who weren’t able to attend this year.

### **Introduction**

As you’ve heard me talk about many times, Oxford House™ was born in 1975 when I was one of thirteen men living in a county-run halfway house that was closing. We needed a safe place to live to continue our recovery and we started the first Oxford House. Over the past 44 years, our sole emphasis has been on providing the opportunity for long-term recovery without relapse; we own no real property and don’t accumulate wealth. The focus has paid off. We have a national network of more than 2,600 Oxford House, along with continuing expansion and recovery outcomes second to none. None of that could have happened without the buy-in of Oxford House residents and alumni – then and now. Congratulations to all of you – and keep up the good work!

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. Nonetheless, 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. We’ve also not been afraid to litigate to protect the right to have Oxford Houses in good neighborhoods – and we’ve won, even in the U. S. Supreme Court.

Each year we focus on a different theme that relates to the Oxford House success story. This year’s theme is “Oxford House: Self-reliance • Self-respect.” It is taken from the cover of the original Oxford House Manual®, the entirety of which has changed very little over our 44-year history. In 1975, we first identified Oxford House as “An Idea Based on a Sound System for Recovering Alcoholics and Drug Addicts to Help Themselves”, and then highlighted the four elements of that sound system – Housing, Fellowship, Self-reliance and Self-respect. This convention theme focuses on these last two elements.

Let me give you a few of my thoughts on this theme. First of all, these attributes – self-reliance and self-respect – go hand in hand with last year’s theme which was ‘Recovery, Fellowship and Fun.’ As we discussed last year, while recovery itself is central, it’s not enough. Abstinence alone doesn’t work; long term-recovery requires more than that. In the ‘rooms,’ it’s often said that newcomers need to change their “people, places and things” if they are to achieve recovery. Oxford Houses residents make these changes. They begin to practice recovery and find fellowship among others seeking the same goal. There is also an essential third element – fun. Back in 1975 when we started the first Oxford House we said, “If we can’t have fun in recovery, what’s the point?” All three elements – recovery, fellowship and fun – are necessary for sustained long-term recovery without relapse and are a big part of what makes Oxford House work. All are

important and lead Oxford House residents toward developing (or re-developing) self-reliance and self-respect.

### Self-reliance and Self-respect

Self-reliance and self-respect get established in an Oxford House resident in large part because each Oxford House emphasizes the importance of self-determination consistent with responsibility. Self-determination alone isn't a recipe for success in the long run. However, self-determination coupled with responsibility works. How does this happen?

Each Oxford House obtains a charter that spells out three conditions each Oxford House must follow to achieve the maintenance of an alcohol and drug-free living environment; namely, the House must be democratically self-run, financially self-supported and the residents must agree to immediately expel anyone who uses alcohol or illicit drugs. All Houses have a copy of the Oxford House Manual<sup>®</sup>. It explains how Oxford House works, how to elect officers and how to hold business meetings, manage finances and run the House democratically. The photo on the right emphasizes the importance of the Oxford House Manual<sup>®</sup> not only to the wearer but to all Oxford House residents and alumni.



The participatory democracy aspect of Oxford House is key to the development of self-reliance and self-respect. The notion that residents themselves decide who will live in an Oxford House is



central to the operation of an Oxford House. When a House vacancy occurs, prospective applicants apply to the House and are interviewed by the House residents. It takes an 80% vote of the residents for an applicant to be accepted for residence and invited to move in. Once admitted, residents immediately feel part of the group (though perhaps awkwardly at first) because they know that they have been selected to join the group. It's like a sorority or fraternity or country club – you have to be voted in.

Participatory democracy also extends to the fact that each resident pays an equal share of House rent and other expenses. The person who makes more money doesn't pay more; everyone pays an equal share. If a new resident doesn't have a job, other residents will quickly point out where there are job openings. It's in everyone's interest to have everyone working and paying their equal share.

Some House members may be retired or on disability and don't have formal jobs; they are encouraged to perform volunteer work, usually within the recovery community. Getting a paycheck or performing valuable volunteer service pays off in helping to build both self-reliance and self-respect.

House leadership is also participatory. All House members get to hold office because of the number of House officers and because there are explicit term limits; no resident can hold a particular office more than six months at a time. This policy allows for shared leadership and discourages 'bossism.' Residents get together weekly for their House meeting and hash out problems, go over finances, elect officers and occasionally vote to evict a resident who has relapsed. It doesn't happen often but when it does, residents call a special House meeting to vote

on expulsion. In addition to working together at weekly House meetings, residents get together regularly just to socialize and bond with each other.

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, straight or LGBTQ, young and old – all can become addicted and all are welcome in Oxford House. The very diverse Oxford House population features egalitarianism as a core principle – each individual has an equal vote, officers are term-limited and expenses are divided equally among all residents. This participatory democracy minimizes the “we versus them” attitude that can detract from a focus on recovery and development of self-reliance and self-respect. In an Oxford House, residents respect each other and support each other’s sobriety – for both selfish and unselfish reasons.

Go to any homeless shelter, jail, prison or detox unit and you’ll find out that the residents’ family and friends are long gone. Underneath the shakes and hard-luck stories, you usually find isolation, loneliness and hopelessness. All of us addicts have been there and most of us didn’t find it fun. Oxford Houses provide a way back to a life worth living.

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. More than 550,000 individuals have lived in Oxford House and most have stayed clean and sober. In an Oxford House, residents buy into the concept that relapse doesn’t need to be part of the disease and, as a result of that belief, most residents don’t relapse. This happens because Oxford House provides the structure that leads to self-reliance and self-respect for the long term.

### **Conclusion**

Oxford House fosters self-reliance and self-respect in its residents and alumni. And, as was emphasized at a prior convention, it is also ‘unique, time-tested and evidence-based.’ We are all fortunate to be part of it and each of us plays an important role in its success. There really are no big bosses. All of you are what makes Oxford House work. Because we practice participatory democracy with everyone paying an equal share of expenses and having an equal vote in House decisions, we learn self-reliance and self-respect 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. Oxford House provides the structure we need to evolve from scared, addicted human beings into confident human beings comfortable in sobriety and long-term recovery.

### **PARTICIPATE IN THIS 2019 CONVENTION AND ENJOY IT!**

This convention provides a place for us to celebrate our success and learn more about Oxford House™. There are four general sessions and 25 breakout panels in which specific aspects of addiction and recovery will be discussed. There is a World Council election. Plan to vote!

Take advantage of all that is offered. Listen to the speakers and panel experts to learn more about Oxford House and about addiction. This convention is also a place to make new friends. Oxford House membership is like membership in a big family. We have common ground. Take advantage of all that the convention has to offer. And have fun!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'P'.

# 2019 Annual Oxford House Convention

**Marriott Renaissance Downtown Hotel  
August 29 – September 1, 2019**

**Thursday, August 29, 2019**

**Annual Oxford House Golf Tournament**

Enterprise Golf Course  
Mitchellville, MD

This is the twenty-first Annual Oxford House Golf Tournament. There is an \$85 fee per player. Transportation to and from the tournament will be available. Meet in lobby at 8:30 AM for transportation to the course. Check-in time at the course is 10:00 AM; tee time will be at 11:00 AM and lunch will be after the game. The play will be ‘Shotgun’ style. There will be four winners.

**Convention Registration**

Grand Ballroom Foyer

- Thursday, 10:00 AM – 8:00 PM
- Friday, 7:00 AM – 4:00 PM
- Saturday, 7:00 AM – Noon

**Women’s Conference**

Thursday, 2:00 – 7:00 PM  
Grand Ballroom

Registration opens at noon on Thursday

**World Council Meeting**

Thursday, 8:00 PM  
Meeting Room 4

**AA and NA Meetings**

- AA meeting
- NA meeting

10:00 – 11:00 PM  
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. Members of the same House or Chapter should split up and go to different breakout sessions.
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, August 30, 2019

**Breakfast Buffet**

**6:30 – 8:00 AM**  
**Renaissance Ballroom**

**OPENING GENERAL SESSION**

**8:00 – 9:30 AM**  
**Grand Ballroom**

**Invocation: Msgr. Eddie Tolentino      Pastor, St. Michael the Archangel, Silver Spring, MD**

**Welcoming Remarks: Barbara J. Bazron, Ph.D.      Director, Department of Behavioral Health, District of Columbia**

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

Oxford House, Inc. (OHI) is run by a dedicated staff under the leadership of CEO Paul Molloy and COO Kathleen Gibson. Both are Oxford House alumni. 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 autonomous Oxford Houses and helping existing Oxford House networks stay on track. OHI is the sole provider of charters to new Houses that agree to meet charter conditions that require the residents of each Oxford House to run the House democratically, each pay an equal share of household rent and expenses and immediately expel any resident who relapses. OHI also publishes manuals and other publications that support the network of Oxford Houses and organizes the annual World Convention.



**Oxford House World Council Election Rules: James McClain**

**Keynote Speaker: John F. Kelly, Ph.D., ABPP**

**Professor, Harvard Medical School**



Dr. Kelly is the Elizabeth R. Spallin Professor of Psychiatry in Addiction Medicine at Harvard Medical School—the first endowed professor in addiction medicine at Harvard. He is also the Founder and Director of the Recovery Research Institute at the Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH), the Associate Director of the Center for Addiction Medicine (CAM) at MGH, and the Program Director of the Addiction Recovery Management Service (ARMS). Dr. Kelly is a former President of the American Psychological Association's (APA) Society of Addiction Psychology, and is also a Fellow of the APA and a diplomate of the American Board of Professional Psychology. His clinical and research work has focused on addiction treatment and the recovery process, mechanisms of behavior change, and reducing stigma and discrimination among individuals suffering from addiction. He has published more than 140 peer-reviewed articles, reviews, and chapters in the field of addiction science and is currently an Associate Editor for several academic journals in the addiction field.

**FIRST BREAKOUT PANELS**

**FRIDAY 9:45 – 11:00 AM**

- 1. Addiction Research – What's New and Newsworthy**
- 2. Working with State Agencies**
- 3. Engaging the Recovery Community**
- 4. Oxford House and Behavioral Health Organizations**
- 5. Leadership V. Bossism – Practicing Democracy**

**Grand Ballroom**  
**Congressional Hall A**  
**Congressional Hall B**  
**Congressional Hall C**  
**Mount Vernon Square**

## SECOND BREAKOUT PANELS

Friday 11:15 AM - 12:30 PM

- |   |                      |
|---|----------------------|
| 1. Working with Drug Courts, Parole and Prison Re-entry                                       | Grand Ballroom       |
| 2. Going Back to School as Residents/Alumni – Tips from Those Who’ve Done It                  | Congressional Hall A |
| 3. Out of the Closet and into an Oxford House– Understanding Recovery and the LGBTQ Community | Congressional Hall B |
| 4. World Council Update   | Congressional Hall C |
| 5. Conducting House, Chapter and Association Meetings   | Mount Vernon Square  |

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

**REMEMBER TO GET WORLD COUNCIL NOMINATING PETITIONS IN TO THE WORLD COUNCIL  
TABLE AT THE RENNAISSANCE REGISTRATION TABLE BY 1:00 PM FRIDAY**  
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 – 5:00 PM  
Grand Ballroom

### Keynote Panel – The Opioid Crisis – The View from the Trenches

**Panelists:** Joshua M. Sharfstein, M.D. Director, Bloomberg American Health Initiative and Vice Dean for Public Health Practice and Community Engagement, Johns Hopkins University  
Lori Holtzclaw Oxford House Alumna and Regional Manager  
Paul Stevens Oxford House Alumnus and Regional Manager  
Amber Pope Oxford House Resident and Outreach, VA  
Caroline Allen Oxford House Alumna, KY  
Ronald McClarin Oxford House Resident and Outreach, VA  
Nicola Barteau Oxford House Alumna and OHI Staff, MD

**Moderator:** Stuart Gitlow, M.D., MPH, MBA, DFAPA Past President of the ASAM Board of Directors;  
Director, Annenberg Physician Training Program in Addictive Disease

Oxford House has dealt with the opioid crisis since before it became identified as a crisis. Since its beginnings in 1975, Oxford Houses have been home to opioid addicts – most of whom have achieved long-term recovery. While opioids have become more lethal as fentanyl and other substances have been added, the long-term recovery process remains the same. The panel will discuss addiction to opioids – then and now.

The Oxford House panelists have all personally dealt with opioid addiction and are now working with others in Oxford Houses who are just beginning their journeys toward long-term recovery. The panelists will recount their personal stories and talk about what they’re dealing with now in the field as they work with the current generation of folks with an addiction to opioids (and other substances) and how the situation differs now from what it was in earlier days. Dr. Sharfstein has just published a book on the opioid crisis.

### 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.

This year, residents will vote for four Resident Members and one Alternate Resident Member. One of the new Resident Members will fill a vacant seat and serve for only two years. Residents and alumni will vote for one Alumni

Member and one Alternate Alumni Member. Both Resident and Alumni Alternate Members serve one-year terms. Ballots must be turned in to the World Council table by noon on Saturday. Votes are counted during lunch and the new World Council members are introduced at the Saturday afternoon General Session.

### **Presentation of Directors' 100-Year Awards**

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. Over the past fiscal year, Oxford House, Inc. received over \$600,000 in contributions from grateful Oxford House residents and alumni.

### **Friday Evening – Enjoy dinner and sightseeing on your own.**

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## **Saturday, August 31, 2019**

**Breakfast Buffet** **6:30 – 8:00 AM**

### **THIRD BREAKOUT PANELS** **Saturday, 8:15 - 9:30 AM**

- |   |                             |
|---|-----------------------------|
| <b>1. Medication in Oxford Houses</b>                               | <b>Grand Ballroom</b>       |
| <b>2. Dealing with Children in Oxford Houses</b>                    | <b>Congressional Hall A</b> |
| <b>3. Keeping Alumni Involved and Forming Alumni Associations</b>   | <b>Congressional Hall B</b> |
| <b>4. Organizing Personal Finances</b>                              | <b>Congressional Hall C</b> |
| <b>5. Nuts and Bolts of Finding and Starting a New Oxford House</b> | <b>Mount Vernon Square</b>  |

### **FOURTH BREAKOUT PANELS** **Saturday 9:45 - 11:00 AM**

- |  |                             |
|--|-----------------------------|
| <b>1. Generation X and Millennials in Recovery</b>                       | <b>Grand Ballroom</b>       |
| <b>2. Educating the Public About Recovery</b>                            | <b>Congressional Hall A</b> |
| <b>3. MAT and MAR in Oxford Houses and Dealing with Opioid Overdoses</b> | <b>Congressional Hall B</b> |
| <b>4. Oxford House Research and Upcoming Studies</b>                     | <b>Congressional Hall C</b> |
| <b>5. Oxford House – Four Stages of Houses and Five Core Principles</b>  | <b>Mount Vernon Square</b>  |

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

### **FIFTH BREAKOUT PANELS** **Saturday 11:15 AM - 12:30 PM**

- |  |                             |
|--|-----------------------------|
| <b>1. The Importance of Having Fun in Oxford House</b>                 | <b>Grand Ballroom</b>       |
| <b>2. Filling Vacancies – Where to look and How to Do It</b>           | <b>Congressional Hall A</b> |
| <b>3. Working with Treatment Providers</b>                             | <b>Congressional Hall B</b> |
| <b>4. Civil Rights Update</b>  | <b>Congressional Hall C</b> |
| <b>5. Working Together – Houses, Chapters, Associations and Alumni</b> | <b>Mount Vernon Square</b>  |

**LUNCH ON YOUR OWN** **12:30 – 2:00 PM**

Grab something to eat and hit an AA meeting in Empire A or an NA meeting in Empire B or go nearby to the Alumni Lunch.

**ALUMNI LUNCH** **12:30 – 2:00 PM**

Clyde's at Gallery Place [Get tickets at World Council Table inside the Renaissance Ballroom: \$35 per person]

## THIRD GENERAL SESSION

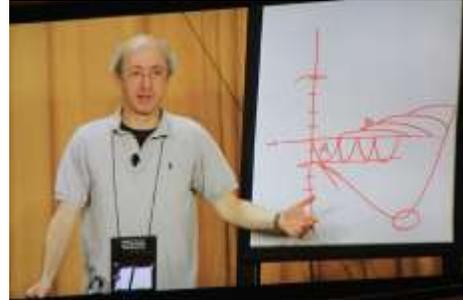
2:15 – 4:30 PM

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

Grand Ballroom

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 programs for the Health Channel and ABC.



Dr. Gitlow is a strong supporter of Oxford House and sits on the Oxford House, Inc Board of Directors. His presentations on addiction 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.

- **Announcement and Introduction of New World Council Members**
- **Discussion and Vote on Convention Resolutions**

## Saturday Evening, August 31, 2019

### BANQUET

6:30 – 9:00 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 never lived in an Oxford House. Tom spent his last eight years 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: Marty Walker**

**Oxford House Alumnus and Senior Outreach Coordinator**



Marty Walker, an Oxford House alumnus and Outreach worker, currently serves as the Senior Outreach Services Coordinator for Oxford House, Inc. in Tennessee and Kentucky. He has been in long-term recovery since 1998 and has worked with Oxford House, Inc. since 2001.

He has helped open over 130 Oxford Houses in many states, including Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, Kentucky, Maine, Oregon and Tennessee. Mr. Walker’s work with the development of new networks of Oxford Houses is used as a model across the country. In addition, he is a lead trainer for Oxford House, Inc. and spends much of his time working with new employees.

A true believer in the Tom Sawyer business model, he has long brought wisdom, humor and grit to his work with Oxford House, Inc. and its residents and alumni.

**Dance**

**9:00 PM – Midnight  
Congressional Hall**

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**Sunday, September 1, 2019**

**Breakfast Buffet**

**6:30 – 8:00 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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**OXFORD HOUSE:**

**Self-Reliance – Self-Respect**

**Make plans now to attend the 2020 Oxford House Convention in Seattle!**

# SUMMARY OF ALL BREAKOUT PANELS

## FIRST BREAKOUT PANELS

FRIDAY 9:45 – 11:00 AM

### Addiction Research – What’s New and Newsworthy

Grand Ballroom

Friday 9:45 - 11:00 AM

**Panelists:** Wilson Compton, M.D., M.P.E. Deputy Director, National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)  
Westley Clark, M.D., J.D., M.P.H. CAS and FASAM Faculty, University of Santa Clara, CA  
Joshua Sharfstein, M.D. Director, Bloomberg American Health Initiative and Vice Dean for  
Public Health Practice and Community Engagement, Johns Hopkins U.  
Kevin Sabet, Ph.D. President and CEO, Smart Approaches to Marijuana (SAM)  
Stuart Gitlow, M.D., MPH, MBA, DFAPA Past President of the ASAM Board of Directors;  
Director, Annenberg Physician Training Program in Addictive Disease

**Moderator:** John F. Kelly, Ph.D. Harvard University, MA

The panel will focus on what’s new in research on addiction and long-term recovery. The panel will open with introductions and brief presentations by each of the speakers. That will be followed by a moderated discussion on the recent research and its implications, identify what additional research is needed and discuss the policy implications to be derived from the findings. The panelists will address issues related to the opioid crisis, the implications of the growing use and acceptance of marijuana and vaping, and other issues related to addiction. They will also discuss the definition and measurement of long-term recovery.

The panelists are all highly-regarded researchers in the field. Oxford House is honored by their presence and everyone looks forward to their review and commentary on the research.

### Working with State Agencies

Congressional Hall A

Friday 9:45 – 11:00 AM

**Panelists:** Linda McCorkle Director of Treatment and Recovery Services, TN  
Ivory Wilson, M.A, LAC Program Manager, Office of Behavioral Health,  
Department of Health, LA  
Angela Harper King, M.A. Supportive Housing Specialist, Division of MC/DD/SAS, NC  
Adam Trosper, M.S.W. Program Administrator, DBHDID, KY  
Ute Gazioch Director of Substance Abuse and Mental Health, Department of  
Children and Families, FL

**Moderator:** Christine Scalise NJ Dept. of Alcohol and Substance Abuse, NJ

Expansion of the Oxford House network of houses has occurred fastest where Oxford House has a close working relationship with the state agency or designated Behavioral Health contractor. 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. 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? What’s working well and what isn’t working as well in the relationships?

The panelists each work to foster development of networks of self-run, self-supported Oxford Houses. The moderator is with the New Jersey state agency and has managed the contract with OHI for many years. The panelists 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.

## **Engaging the Recovery Community**

**Congressional Hall B**

**Friday, 9:45 AM – 11:00 AM**

<b>Panelists:</b>	Ed Smith Samara Sansom Elliott Palmer Jenna Neasbitt Anna Mable Jones Jay Ruais	Bridges for Change, OR Oxford House Alumna and Outreach, TX Oxford House Alumnus and Founder, A.N.S.W.E.R., NC Recovery Consultant, TX Oxford House Alumna and Outreach DC/MD Chief of Staff, Addiction Policy Forum
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<b>Moderator:</b>	Johnny Guido	Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, NC
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The recovery community covers a vast cross-section of America, from recovering individuals, family members, employers, 12-step groups, EAP programs, and other groups focused on addiction recovery. Oxford House residents engage with these groups to help mobilize the community to support recovery. In recent years, the recovery community has become very active in establishing, promoting and participating in activities that raise community awareness. Such activities include involvement in marches for recovery and related events particularly during September, which has become known as Recovery Month.

Oxford House residents and alumni also use this involvement to enlist support from the recovery community for the Oxford House community. They also find folks in the recovery community who can be helpful in getting furnishings for new Oxford Houses and in introducing residents of new Oxford Houses to their neighbors. All of this helps to make Oxford Houses and their residents part of the local neighborhood and community.

## **Oxford House and Behavioral Health Organizations**

**Congressional Hall C**

**Friday 9:45 AM – 11:00 AM**

<b>Panelists:</b>	Quinetta Rowley Womack, LPC Kayla Leinenweber June S. Sivilli, M.A. Brian Fike Jeffrey Sanders MSW, MPA, LCSW Jessie Spiers	Director of Clinical Operations, Department of Health/ Office of Behavioral Health, LA Oxford House Alumna and Treatment Consultant, American Addiction Treatment Center, NC Associate Director, Public Health, Education and Treatment, ONDCP Housing Coordinator, Trillium Healthcare, NC Program Manager, MH/SU Transition to Community Living, Partners Behavioral Health Management, NC AspenPointe, CO
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<b>Moderator:</b>	Emily Catoe	Oxford House Alumna and Regional Manager
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Oxford House, Inc. currently works closely with a few behavioral health organizations and anticipates working with more in the future. The panel includes representatives from organizations with which OHI has been working and some that are just starting a relationship with OHI. An official from the White House Office of Drug Control Policy is also on the panel.

The panel will discuss how OHI and behavioral health organizations can work together successfully. The panel will also focus on financial and other barriers to access to treatment and how they can be overcome; the role of Oxford House in the recovery continuum and related issues. Additionally, the group will consider what has been working and how program staff have overcome specific challenges to such partnerships.

## Leadership v. Bossism – Practicing Democracy

Mount Vernon Square

Friday 9:45 AM – 11:00 AM

<b>Panelists:</b>	Dave Horstmann Shawn Wister Aaron Vick Timothy Marini Michelle Williams	Oxford House Alumnus, TX Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, DE Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, OK Oxford House Resident, NC Oxford House Alumna and Outreach, CO
<b>Moderator:</b>	Jackie Feliciano	Oxford House Alumna and 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 each individual Oxford House. It’s important in all Houses and Chapters to ensure that everyone is 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 it 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.

## SECOND BREAKOUT PANELS

Friday 11:15 AM - 12:30 PM

### Working with Drug Courts, Parole and Prison Re-entry

Grand Ballroom

Friday 11:15 AM - 12:30 PM

<b>Panelists:</b>	Dan Hahn Kurtis Taylor Carson Fox Michael McKeough Jesse Wilson Annie Cleveland	Oxford House Alumnus and State Coordinator, OK Oxford House Alumnus and Executive Director, ADCNC, NC CEO, National Association of Drug Court Professional (NADCP) Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, FL Oxford House Resident and Re-entry Coordinator, NC Oxford House Alumna and Outreach, WA
<b>Moderator:</b>	Joe Chavez	Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, HI

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

The experience of those who enter an Oxford House following incarceration or drug court intervention is usually long-term recovery and crime-free behavior. In some states, Oxford House has developed relationships with re-entry programs that permit those leaving incarceration to go straight to an Oxford House. Other residents come to Oxford

House at the recommendation of drug courts or parole officers, who have found that their clients 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 residents who enter 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] practical ways to facilitate getting individuals leaving incarceration into an Oxford House; (3) how Oxford Houses can help drug court clients achieve long-term recovery and meet the expectations of the drug courts and (4) how Oxford House living facilitates the transition to long-term, crime-free recovery for most residents.

The panelists are all experienced in the field – from the inside and/or the outside.

### **Going Back to School as Residents and Alumni**

#### **Congressional Hall A**

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

<b>Panelists:</b>	Hunter Phillip	Oxford House Resident, NC
	Scott M. Cumming	Oxford House Alumnus, OR
	Mark Johnson	Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, DC
	Sharonda Banks	Oxford House Alumna, NC
	Emily Catoe	Oxford House Alumna and Regional Manager

<b>Moderator:</b>	Jackson Longan	Oxford House Alumnus and Regional Manager
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Active addiction served to interrupt the educational plans of many Oxford House residents and alumni. Now in recovery, many of them have ventured back to school – some to get GEDs; some take certification courses and others get undergraduate and graduate degrees. The panelists at this session are all Oxford House residents or alumni who have taken this route. They will discuss their own journeys and offer tips for others contemplating such action.

Many colleges now recognize the need for recovery housing and provide support for students in recovery. UNC has been a leader in recognizing and supporting Oxford Houses for students and one of the panelists is a student at UNC and lives in an Oxford House associated with the school. On-campus organizations for those in recovery have also gained prominence in recent years on many campuses.

### **Out of the Closet and Into an Oxford House – Understanding Recovery and the LGBTQ Community**

#### **Congressional Hall B**

**Friday 11:15 AM – 12:30 PM**

<b>Panelists:</b>	Jeremy Weatherspoon	Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, LA
	Mathew Duncan	Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, AZ
	Al Conley	Oxford House Resident, KY
	Krista Williams	Oxford House Resident, San Antonio, TX

<b>Moderator:</b>	Jason Paul Jarreau	Oxford House Alumnus and Senior Manager, Contracts, OHI
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Members of the LBGQT community have lived in Oxford Houses and found them welcoming but that fact may not be well known. All members of the panel are members of the LBGQT community and are residents or alumni of Oxford House. They will discuss their own experiences in applying to and living in Oxford Houses and discuss fear and misinformation that exists. More generally, they will talk about the LBGQT community and the associated stigma as well as related relevant topics.

Following the moderated discussion, the panelists will take questions from the audience.

## Oxford House World Council Update

**Congressional Hall C**

**Friday 11:15 AM – 12:30 PM**

**Panelists:** World Council Members

Resident and Alumni Members of World Council

**Moderator:** Tim Ring

Oxford House Alumnus and World Council Chair

The Oxford House World Council is made up of Oxford House residents and alumni who are elected annually at the convention to serve staggered three-year terms of office. Elections take place annually at the Oxford House Convention. Resident and Alumni members serve staggered three-year terms of office; Alternate Resident and Alumni Members serve one-year terms. 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. The World Council members meet in person twice a year and hold periodic meetings by telephone conference call.

At this 2019 Oxford House World Convention, residents will elect four Resident Members (one will fill an existing vacancy and serve for two years) and one Resident Alternate Member. Residents and alumni will also elect one Alumni Member and one Alumni Alternate Member.

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.

### Conducting House, Chapter and Association Meetings

**Mount Vernon Square**

**Friday 11:15 AM – 12:30 PM**

**Panelists:** Thomas Floyd  
De Wysocki  
Lance Whitney  
Jackie Alba  
Taylor Wright

Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, OK  
Oxford House Alumna and Outreach, TX  
Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, MO  
Oxford House Alumna and Outreach, TX  
Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, CO

**Moderator:** Lisa Londono

Oxford House Alumna and Senior Outreach Coordinator, SC

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.

The panel will also focus on Chapter and Association meetings. Participation in these meetings is voluntary and the focus should be on making them helpful and informative – and even fun – so as to attract participants. While Chapter meetings sometimes focus on problems in Houses, the focus should always be on being helpful, making useful suggestions and emphasizing and fostering the need for having fun and enjoyment in recovery.

## THIRD BREAKOUT PANELS

Saturday 8:15 - 9:30 AM

### Medication in Oxford Houses

Grand Ballroom

Saturday 8:15 - 9:30 AM

**Panelists:** Ken Hoffman, M.D., M.P.H. Colonel (retired) Medical Corps, US Army  
Paul Stevens Oxford House Alumnus and Regional Outreach Manager  
Darryl Joiner Oxford House Alumnus and Central Office Staff, MD  
James Alston Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, AZ  
Shawn Johnson Oxford House Alumnus and Senior Outreach Coordinator, TX  
Jessica Burden Oxford House Alumna and Senior Outreach Coordinator, IN

**Moderator:** Jason Bliss Oxford House Alumnus and Senior Outreach Coordinator, WA

About half of the residents of Oxford House have a physical or mental health disorder that requires medication to control. This panel will discuss medicines that fit within an Oxford House environment and those that undermine the alcohol and drug-free foundation of Oxford House living. *(Note: MAT/MAR and overdose medication will be covered in a panel in the next set of breakout panels.)* 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 guard against the misuse of legitimate medication and how to use ‘lock boxes’ to avoid provide easy access to the medication.

Following opening remarks by the panelists and a moderated discussion, the panel will respond to audience questions. The panel consists of medical experts and Oxford House alumni experienced in dealing with these issues in Houses.

### Dealing with Children in Oxford Houses

Congressional Hall A

8:15 AM - 9:30 AM

**Panelists:** Sean Bossen Oxford House Alumnus and Senior Outreach Coordinator, OR  
Megan Mason Oxford House Alumna and Outreach, NC  
Kari McFarland Oxford House Alumna and Outreach, AZ  
Judy Maxwell Oxford House Alumna and Regional Manager  
Ryan Didier Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, LA  
Myrna Brown Oxford House Alumna, WA

**Moderator:** Paula Harrington Oxford House Alumna and Outreach, NC

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) how should a House explain an expulsion to children still in the House; and (6) do individual Oxford Houses – those without children in residence – make special rules for when children may visit. Are there any other issues that Houses might 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.

## **Keeping Alumni Involved and Forming Alumni Associations**

### **Congressional Hall B**

**Panelists:** Tim Ring Oxford House Alumnus and World Council Chair  
Lynn Williams Oxford House Alumna, NC  
Eric Cannaday Oxford House Alumnus, OK  
Chuck Liston Oxford House Alumnus, KS  
Alex Szary Oxford House Alumnus and Data Specialist, TX

**Moderator:** Misty Hahn Oxford House Alumna and Outreach, NC

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. The Oxford House World Council also supports alumni associations and its members can be helpful.

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.

## **Organizing Your Personal Finances – Budgeting and Saving**

### **Congressional Hall C**

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

**Panelists:** Lori Holtzclaw Oxford House Alumna and Regional Manager  
Jonathan Gildart Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, KY  
Paul Udell Oxford House Resident and Outreach, OR  
Ricky Mogel Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, WA

**Moderator:** Debbie Robinson Oxford House Alumna and Senior Outreach Coordinator, VA

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 do 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. Their advice may prove very useful.

## Nuts and Bolts of Finding and Starting a Good Oxford House

Mount Vernon Square

Saturday 8:15 - 9:30 AM

<b>Panelists:</b>	Emily Catoe Stacie Hatfield Marty Walker Gene McVae Stacy Levin	Oxford House Alumna and Regional Manager Oxford House Alumna and Outreach, WA Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, TN Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, CA Oxford House Alumna and Outreach, MD
<b>Moderator:</b>	Will Madison	Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, NC

Oxford House needs to continually open new Oxford Houses to meet the demand for beds. 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.

This panel will review the basic elements involved in finding a new House – what’s an appropriate house and neighborhood and what should be done once a possible house is identified. 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.

## FOURTH BREAKOUT PANELS

Saturday 9:45-11:00 AM

### Generation X and Millennials in Recovery

Grand Ballroom

Saturday 9:45 – 11:00 AM

<b>Panelists:</b>	Wesley Ford Jeremy Weatherspoon Brent Erickson Jessica King Pamela Jackson Nathan Truitt	Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, AL Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, LA Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, OK Oxford House Alumna and Outreach, TX Oxford House Resident and Outreach, KY Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, AZ
<b>Moderator:</b>	Shawn Johnson	Oxford House Alumnus and Senior Outreach Coordinator, TX

The panel will focus on young people (*a.k.a.*, Generation X and the Millennial generation) in recovery and discuss opportunities and obstacles that exist for that cohort. 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. While older and younger Oxford House residents have much in common, there are also some significant differences in interests and experiences. Both older and younger residents can learn from each other but sometimes interests diverge.

Many of the younger folks are more into social media and many have started going back to complete their education – whether by getting a GED or advanced degree. They may have fewer or difference job experiences than older residents. They will discuss roadblocks and opportunities they have had that differ from those of older residents.

The panelists – all members of the Gen X or Millennial cohort and either Oxford House residents or alumni – will discuss these trends and talk about the resources they have found (or developed) and the various opportunities available for the Gen X and Millennial generations – and those to follow.

## Educating the Public about Recovery

**Congressional Hall A**

**Saturday 9:45 – 11:00 AM**

**Panelists:** Dan Fuchs Oxford House Alumnus and Senior Outreach Coordinator, CO,  
Westley Clark, M. D., Board Member, Faces and Voices of Recovery  
Kurtis Taylor Oxford House Alumnus and Executive Director, ADCNC, NC  
Ivette Torres Consultant and CSAT (Retired)  
Karen McKinnon Oxford House Alumna and Outreach, NC

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

Throughout the 44-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. Oxford House residents have long been open about their addiction and recovery.

## MAT and MAR in Oxford Houses and Dealing with Opioid Overdoses

**Congressional Hall B**

**Saturday 9:45 – 11:00 AM**

**Panelists:** Ray Cesar Oklahoma Dept. of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services (Ret.)  
Jenna Neasbitt Recovery Consultant, TX  
Alicia Carson Oxford House Alumna and Outreach, NJ  
Casey Longan Oxford House Alumna and Training and Education Coordinator, TX  
Will Madison Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, NC

**Moderator:** Tara Meyer Oxford House Alumna and Outreach, NJ

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 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, some of them harbor some apprehension about this new protocol – particularly when recommended for long-term use rather than as a tapering-off mechanism. Today, however, opioids have become more powerful and MAT has become the norm for recovering opioid users. 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 using 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 panel will also discuss how to deal with opioid overdoses. Most Oxford House residents don't relapse but, occasionally, it will happen. Relapse is most likely to happen during early stages of residency in an Oxford House; this is why Houses are strongly encouraged to have newcomers share a room with another resident for socialization purposes and as a check on behavior that may suggest a relapse has occurred or is imminent. Relapse always requires immediate expulsion. Opioid overdoses can be fatal and residents should be aware of 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.

### **Oxford House Research and Upcoming Studies**

**Congressional Hall C**

**Saturday 9:45 – 11:00 AM**

**Panelists:** Ted J. Bobak  
Patrick Hickey  
Joshua Norris

Researcher, DePaul University  
Researcher, Harry S Truman College  
Researcher, DePaul University

**Moderator:** John Majer, Ph. D. Professor of Psychology, Harry S Truman College, Chicago, IL

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 model 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). The Oxford House program was also singled out as a successful program in the 2016 Surgeon General's report on Addiction.

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. Oxford house residents and alumni work to overcome this limitation. John Majer has led significant studies on Oxford House and the recovery process in general and worked closely with Lenny Jason and his team at DePaul University. The researchers have been assisted in their work by Oxford House residents and alumni and by graduate students

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

**Mount Vernon Square**

**Saturday 9:45 – 11:00 AM**

**Presenters:** Jackson Longan  
Jason Paul Jarreau

Oxford House Alumnus and Regional Outreach Manager  
Oxford House Alumnus and Senior Manager, Contracts, 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.

## FIFTH BREAKOUT PANELS

Saturday 11:15 AM - 12:30 PM

### The Importance of Having Fun in Oxford Houses

Grand Ballroom

Saturday 11:15 AM -12:30 PM

**Panelists:** Elizabeth Lewis Oxford House Alumna and Senior Outreach Coordinator, FL  
Jeremy Weatherspoon Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, LA  
Brandie Bauer Oxford House Alumna, LA  
Jonathan Gildart Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, KY  
Greg 'Goose' Weisz Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, NC

**Moderator:** Marty Walker Oxford House Alumnus and Senior Outreach Coordinator, TN

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. 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 of having fun in Oxford House while also using the democratic, disciplined system of house operation to master self-confidence, sobriety and living a comfortable life without booze and drugs.

### Filling Vacancies – Where to Look and How to Do It

Congressional Hall A

Saturday 11:15 AM- 12:30 PM

**Panelists:** Tim Diehl Oxford House Alumnus and Director of Technology, OHI  
Mateo Littlebird Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, CO  
Mary Taylor Oxford House Alumna and Outreach, TN  
James McClain Oxford House Alumnus and OHI Board Member, DC  
Daniel Fuchs Oxford House Alumnus and Senior Outreach Coordinator, CO

**Moderator:** Sean Bossen Oxford House Alumnus and Senior Outreach Coordinator, OR

Overall, there are many more individuals seeking recovery housing than can be accommodated in Oxford House but when Houses have vacancies, residents sometimes have trouble filling the vacancy and aren't sure how to find applicants. It takes a certain amount of know-how and knowledge of the local recovery community to become good at getting the word out and finding folks new to recovery who need Oxford Houses and would benefit from living in one of them. It's also in the economic self-interest of every resident to keep the beds full.

All of the panelists have proven themselves adept at letting people know about vacancies and finding people in recovery looking for recovery housing. Tim Diehl created the vacancy system. The panelists will talk about methods they have found successful, where to look for possible applicants, how they get the word out and related tips on how to keep beds filled. Keep in mind that filling beds is not only important to keep everyone's EES at an affordable level, it's also giving someone new to recovery the opportunity to discover the many benefits of living in an Oxford House.

## Working with Treatment Providers

**Congressional Hall B**

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

**Panelists:** Lindsay Green Oxford House Alumna and Director Outreach, Recovery Unplugged  
Tania Hubbard COO, Southlight, Raleigh, NC  
Matthew Duncan Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, AZ  
Justin Roshto Oxford House Resident, Houston, TX  
Michael Pickering Oxford House Alumnus and Executive Director, WRAP, DC

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

Most individuals recovering from alcoholism or drug addiction initially go through formal treatment programs of 28 days or longer. 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. While treatment teaches about addiction and provides an education about recovery, long-term recovery generally takes more time and peer support than can be made available in a treatment setting. As is said in the 'rooms', folks early in recovery need to change their 'people, places and things.' Oxford Houses provide the opportunity to do just that.

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.

## Civil Rights Update

**Congressional Hall C**

**Saturday 11:15 AM – 12:30 PM**

**Panelists:** Steve Polin, J.D. Oxford House Alumnus and General Counsel, OHI  
Greg Heafner J.D. Oxford House Alumnus and Attorney, NC  
Whit Holden, J.D. Oxford House Alumnus and Central Office Staff, OHI

**Moderator:** Paul Molloy, J.D. Oxford House Alumnus and CEO, 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 landmark 1995 U.S. Supreme Court decision in *City of Edmonds, WA v. Oxford House, Inc.* In spite of that favorable decision, some localities continue to try to avoid accommodating Oxford House residents. Oxford House, Inc. continues to challenge these barriers in court whenever they crop up.

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. Oxford House Inc. is not hesitant to litigate these cases when necessary and usually wins.

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. Paul Molloy is also an attorney and an alumnus of the first Oxford House.

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

Mount Vernon Square

Saturday 11:15 AM - 12:30 PM

**Panelists:** Justice Simmons Oxford House Alumnus and Outreach, TX  
Jess Wise Oxford House Resident and Outreach, OR  
Tisha Roberson Oxford House Alumna, NC  
Jason Bliss Oxford House Alumnus and Senior Outreach Coordinator, WA  
Dan Hahn Oxford House Alumnus and Senior Outreach Coordinator, OK

**Moderator:** Shawn Wister Oxford House Alumnus and Senior Outreach Coordinator, DE

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.

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***OXFORD HOUSE:***

***SELF-RELIANCE – SELF-RESPECT***

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**PLAN NOW TO ATTEND THE 2020 OXFORD HOUSE CONVENTION  
IN SEATTLE, WASHINGTON**

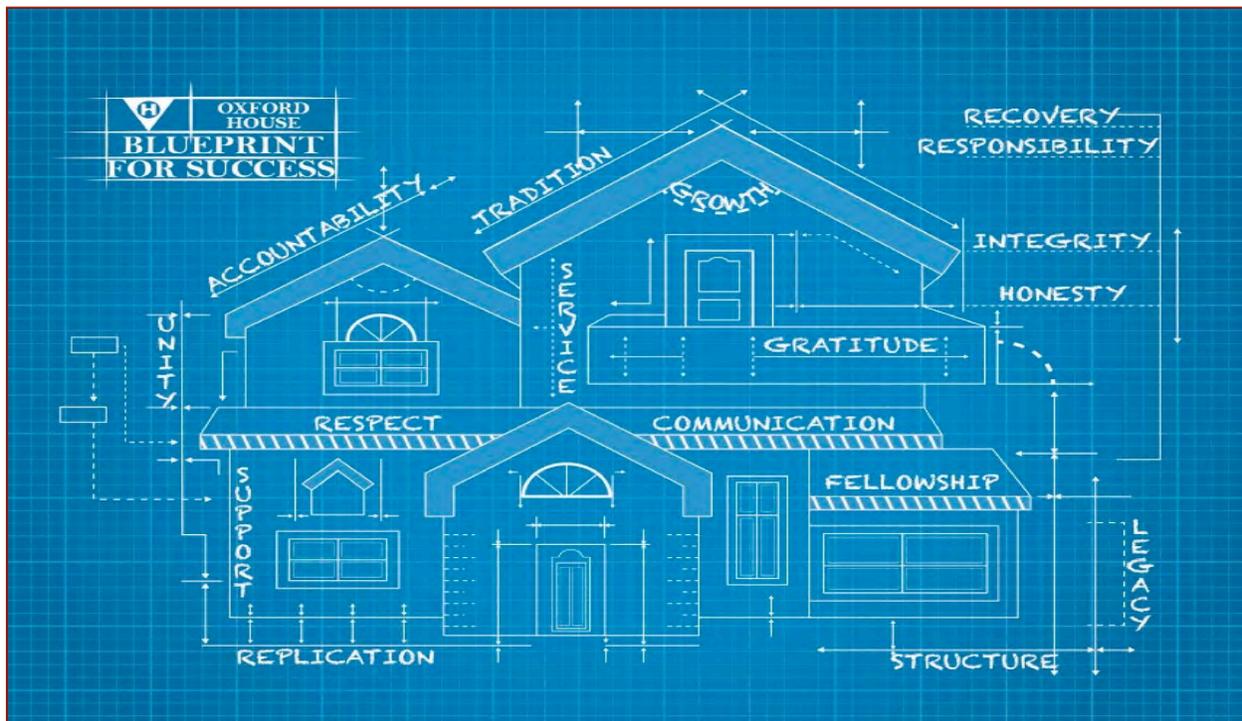
**HAVE A SAFE TRIP HOME**

**Remember to Share What You Have Learned with Residents and Alumni  
Who Weren’t Able to Attend This Year’s Convention.**

# *The Oxford House Blueprint for Success*

The Blueprint for Success, the theme of the 2016 Oxford House convention, continues to apply to Oxford House living in 2019.

The blueprint graphic details the various attributes associated with living in an Oxford House. It illustrates the goals and values that are part of each Oxford House and that all of the residents emphasize in their day-to-day dealings. These goals and values are the foundation of the family environment created in each Oxford House. Not all of the values identified in the blueprint are easy to come by but the structure of all Oxford Houses makes them an integral part of Oxford House living.



The blueprint draws on the components found in the Oxford House Manual<sup>®</sup>. The Manual explains how Oxford Houses work: how to elect officers, conduct business meetings, run the House democratically and immediately expel anyone who relapses. All of the elements shown in the blueprint are part of this structure and form the foundation for living successfully in an Oxford House. Residents follow the blueprint and, in doing so, most residents achieve long-term recovery without relapse. The blueprint and the Oxford House system of operations work!

## OXFORD HOUSE RECOVERY 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. 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 of the stories are from current residents; others are from alumni. Some of the authors have been in recovery for many years; others are fairly new to recovery. All have a story to tell and they strengthen the sobriety of themselves and others by telling their stories. Some stories have been edited for clarity or length.*

*For forty-four 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."*

### 2019 OXFORD HOUSE STORIES BY RESIDENTS AND ALUMNI

#### Amber Pope - Florida

My name is Amber Pope, I'm a grateful recovering alcoholic and addict. My sobriety date is 6/28/2016. My journey began when I was 5 years old, and I started being molested by my stepdad and it progressed to much worse until I was 13. My mom and stepdad were in full blown addiction ever since I can remember. I had a lot of mental & physical abuse early on. I always felt like an outcast, like I was different than everyone else. I never understood what real love was. Moving back & forth with my mom, stepdad, and grandparents, I never had a real place to call home. I remember having a few friends growing up, but I was always uprooted just when things seemed to settle. Fast forwarding a little bit to the age of 13, I finally got the nerve to tell on my stepdad, and the state took me and my little sister and my mawmaw gained custody. We moved to Baton Rouge where my first real taste of drugs came about. It was a real rough neighborhood, and I fell into the wrong crowd. I got close to the neighborhood dope boys, who gave me my first blunt and bottle. I remember the feeling that came over me; I felt invincible and the void was filled. Fast forwarding again, I moved to Bogalusa where I tried to cram my head in school and be the most normal person I could while still dying on the inside. I smoked weed and drank on the weekends like all the kids did back then. My biological dad passed away my sophomore year, and my mom came home from prison. That was a lot to deal with so I moved out of my mawmaw's house and into an apartment with my boyfriend. I worked, went to school, and tried to be as normal as possible. We partied every weekend; snorting powder, drinking, and smoking weed on daily. My mom and I were more like sisters than mother/daughter, so we developed a close, yet toxic, relationship. I still held a lot of resentments towards her.

I graduated from high school and shortly after that I was in a bad car wreck which got me started on pain pills. I immediately abused them! By 19, I was shooting up on a daily basis and dating guys who would pimp me out. By 21, I had already racked up a record, been in a few abusive relationships, and was in a horrible downward spiral in addiction. My D.O.C was crack cocaine, roxies, and lots and lots of vodka. I had a stroke at 21 because of my severe endocarditis. That still didn't stop me. I had no self-worth, morals, self-respect, or happiness. I couldn't see life past my next hit and how to get it. My mom was clean and working until I got locked up one day and she found an abundance of drugs and guns I was holding for a dope dealer. I realized this while locked up and she stopped answering my jail calls. That killed me. I got out and we started using together; doing everything you could think of to get drugs. I ended up in the streets,

selling my body, stealing cars, robbing anyone I could. I was raped a few times, shot at, stabbed, etc. and I kept going. I was arrested in a round-up with other drug dealers in 2015, and charged with Distribution -- a Schedule II offence. I had to serve time AGAIN, and was given drug court AGAIN. I ran, of course, because I came home from prison to the same people, places, and things. I was high the first night home. My parole officer was someone I grew up with who pleaded with me to try something different. I was so tired and worn down, never knowing there was a way out.

I went to Grace House in New Orleans for 5 months where I gained some trust, self-worth, and vital tools to cope with trauma. I was so scared though to come back home. That's where Oxford House came into my life as the greatest blessing! I moved into Oxford House Slidell on November 16, 2016, and I never left. Oxford House became the foundation for me to build my life on in recovery. The women in that house helped mold me. They loved me until I could love myself. They held me accountable! It wasn't an easy transition by any means but, when I was able to see clearly, I knew this is what I wanted. I knew I had the potential to become a better woman. I worked at McDonald's and moved up to manager within 6 months. I'm still shocked that they gave me the keys to the safe!! LOL!

I got involved on a Chapter level quickly, and Lori approached me about moving to Biloxi as a part-time Oxford House Outreach worker. I received a full pardon from the State of Louisiana 4 ½ years early to be able to move out of state, and it worked out perfectly because the Biloxi and Slidell McDonalds had the same owners. OK GOD, I SEE YOU! Moving to Mississippi was very hard though, and I was extremely overwhelmed. I went back into some old behaviors, and almost completely lost one of the most important people in my life. Then Florida's contract came into effect and I moved to Pensacola! I came here and opened Oxford House Glo and, since my mom became very ill at the same time, I started traveling to Baton Rouge every weekend while still trying to open and stabilize Pensacola's first-ever Oxford House.

On April 7th, my car was stolen and I couldn't get a rental car until the following day. I ended up staying in Louisiana until the next day with my mom. I remember brushing her hair and laughing and joking with her. She was so ill by this time, but I still kept faith. On my way back to Pensacola that night I totaled the rental car. I woke up with three very important people sitting next to me in the trauma unit. (shout-out to Outreach workers Chandra Brown, Summar Comeaux, and my idol, Lori Holtzclaw!). These women came from three different states to be with me while I was all broken. I'll forever be grateful. But the worst thing of all of these traumatic events was learning that my mother passed away while I was in the hospital. It was the hardest thing I've ever been through – harder than my daddy and all my grandparents passing. So, while dealing with the funeral while being very injured, all I wanted was to get back to Florida. That was my safe haven. I needed to get back to the life I'd created and back in the swing of things.

This is the greatest job ever, because without recovery I wouldn't have it and, without it, I honestly believe I wouldn't have recovery. I have been able to heal in all aspects of my life. I have gained so much from the people that I've developed relationships with over these last 3 years. Oxford House has shown me so many things; I travel, meet new people, grow as a woman in recovery daily.

### **Andrew Ward – Louisiana**

My name is Andrew Ward and I am a drug addict. I am telling my story to give someone, somewhere, some hope that they too can recover. Our most powerful asset is our story. The ability to reach someone that no other person can is our gift.

I was born in Alexandria, La. My parents separated when I was two, in very ugly divorce. I can remember going to court houses and sitting in backrooms waiting on the outcome. I remember being forced to choose one parent over the other. I didn't understand why. It seemed like I was to blame if I made the wrong choice. I was to live with my mother. She remarried and my stepfather entered the picture. Filled with

hatred, my father voiced his opinion about them openly. Chaos was a normal thing in my life at a young age. Unknowingly, hatred filled my heart as well and I would hold on to that feeling for years to come. When I got older, I was an outsider. I never just could fit in. I always felt I was different. Harboring hate, I used it to demand the attention I felt I needed. Aggression and violence were the ways I discovered I could matter in the world I felt had wronged me.

When I found opiates, I found the answer to all my problems, or so I thought. I didn't have to feel the feelings of frustration and loneliness any longer. Finally, relief had entered my life and I wasn't going to give that up for anyone. Even though the despair of my life was being numbed, I still felt different. I couldn't seem to change the fact that, though all my friends used, I always used more. When the party was over, I kept going until I collapsed. Night after night, it was a constant effort to launch myself into oblivion and it was working. The destruction of my family and everything around me didn't matter. Feeding my addiction was the only thing I cared about. I was alone. The despair came back. Again I was alone, lost in a hopeless relationship with drugs and a path of destruction through the lives of the ones who loved me. Then came the health problems. My heart had taken a beating in my addiction. The doctor had to put in a pacemaker to keep my heart beating; without it I would have died. Faced with death. I walked out of the hospital, got a hotel room and went right back into my addiction.

Hopeless and at the end of my road, I had two options. I went to a rehabilitation program and, when I got out, I was alone in a place in my recovery when I needed direction. Relapse after relapse happened, every one worse than the last. Finally, after one particularly bad spree, someone suggested that I go to Oxford House. Wanting change in my life so bad, I tried it.

When I was accepted into Oxford House, guys showed me what recovery looked like. They actually had sponsors and worked a 12-step program. They helped me dive into my program like never before. Finally, I fit in. Finally, I had friends, real friends, who actually cared about my well-being. When I went through hard times, they were there. I've cried on my brothers' shoulders in my House and them on mine. Oxford House has given me a safe place away from the noise of my past life to build a solid foundation in my life. The love I've experienced in Oxford House is immeasurable. For the first time in my life I've been sober for 1 year and for that I am grateful. Oxford House saved my life. Without Oxford House, I would never have found the loving friendship of someone taking me through the 12 steps to reach a higher power that keeps me sober. Oxford House is my family and will stay in my heart forever.

### **Annaleah L. – Idaho**

Hi everyone, my name is Annaleah L, and I am the Chapter Chair for Chapter 31 from Lewiston Idaho. I am Native American from the Nez Perce Tribe of Lapwai Idaho. I was born and raised in Lewiston, Idaho most of my life.

I grew up in a home with both parents but both of my parents drank heavily on a daily basis. Every now and then they would take a break and stay sober for a few days at a time. Although there was plenty of laughter throughout the house, it was also a disgusting way to grow up. I remember our home was always dirty and smelled of cigarettes and stale beer. I remember watching a lot of fighting. I remember having to protect my little sister and me in our bedroom from strange men who would wonder into our bedroom after everyone else had passed out. I remember staying up late hanging out with my dad but having to learn to set an alarm for school the next morning to get me and my little sister up for school because I never knew if my mom or dad would be able to wake up the next morning or if they would be there at all. It was about the middle of summer when I was nine years old that my mom stabbed my dad. That is where my childhood took a turn. My mom was in and out of prison after the incident and my dad eventually passed away about two years after the incident, from cirrhosis of the liver. It was about this time that my mom and my little sister and I would all go our separate ways. My mom continued drinking and going in and out of prison,

and my little sister was sent off to an institution for troubled kids. I was placed in foster care where I was in and out of homes and the juvenile detention center until I was seventeen.

At the age of seventeen I was well into the drinking and drugging scene which is why I never stayed in a foster home for long. I started smoking weed at the age of twelve, I started drinking at the age of thirteen, and I started using prescription pain killers at the age of seventeen. At the age of nineteen, I had my first son and, for the first time, I was enjoying the life of having a happy and loving family of my own, being a mother, and being happily engaged to my son's dad. We moved away to Fort Smith, Arkansas and it was not long after that our relationship slowly crumbled and we both started smoking methamphetamine together. We had a fatal attraction to one another and we made so many attempts to stay together until one night when we got into a huge fight that resulted in both of us going to jail and losing custody of our son, who was barely one at the time. We eventually moved back to Lewiston, where we eventually parted ways. I continued using methamphetamine for about four years and towards the end of my use, I was not only using but also dealing.

Life went on this way until my next serious relationship which was with my current boyfriend whom I have been with for the last two, almost three years. When we got together, we were both at the end of our using days and sick of being alone on the streets and without our families and our babies, so we made the decision to quit dealing, get clean and sober, and make way for the happy, healthy family we would one day have. He was on probation and, because we were using, he was on the run with warrants so he had to go back to prison to do time and I had to find my own way. When he went off to prison, I relapsed (a few times) until I decided to try something new,

I made the decision to seek treatment and was referred to Changepoint outpatient treatment. I was then referred to a women's Oxford House. I got clean December 10, 2018 and moved into the women's Oxford House in January of 2019. I hit the ground running once I moved in, found a part-time job that paid enough to let me pay my EES, made a commitment to my recovery and began getting involved more not only in my community but also with my chapter. I eventually became the Chapter Chair and will soon be a certified recovery coach for my community. My life today consists of love for not only myself, but for those around me. I have a supportive network of friends that I never thought I would have and I have peace and clarity, not only physically, but spiritually. I will graduate from Changepoint outpatient treatment towards the end of September and I was just promoted at work. Although I currently do not have custody of my son, he lives with his grandparents who can provide him with a safe and clean and loving home while I continue to work on myself and have regular visitation with him so that I can still be a part of his life. Oxford House has made all the difference and has played a major part in the success I've had in my recovery and for that I am truly blessed and forever grateful.

### **Annie Cleveland – Washington State**

Hi, my name is Annie Cleveland. I am a woman in long-term recovery. What that means to me is, I haven't had the need to put a mood- or mind-altering substance in my body since April 23, 2015 and for that I am grateful. I am not proud of the things I did when I was using but today I do not have to be ashamed of them. I am a FORMER drug dealer and a FORMER drug manufacturer. I am a FORMER delinquent mother, a FORMER wayward child and a FORMER drain on society.

I was formerly a lot of negative things and I am currently none of those today. That is not to say that I am not still recovering. I see recovery as a life-long process. Today, I can tell you we do recover. In recovery, we see on a daily basis those struggling to remove themselves from their former selves to become the people they were meant to be. Seeing what happens to those who do not recover gave me the incentive to reach out for help. The ending is grim for people not lucky enough to get the chance for recovery. The prospects are jails, institutions and death for addicts who don't recover.

Today there are places for people like me to go that are conducive to healing and where others there are understanding because they face the same struggles. I am so blessed to have been given the opportunity to have a safe place to recover from my former life. Oxford House has given me my life back to be the mother, friend, daughter and employee and that I was intended to be.

### **Angela Ferry – Indiana**

On July 31, 2017, I was 10 days clean and at a point of desperation that also gave me a drive to want and do more for myself. I interviewed at Oxford House Chana in Owensboro, KY and was accepted. I moved in on August 1, 2017 with 11 days clean and it was the turning point of my life. I moved in the day that the new Oxford House Outreach worker started in my area (she is also my role model, friend and now my boss). The day that I moved in, I became thirsty for knowledge of how this Oxford House thing worked and wanted to know all I could know. I read...and reread...and reread the Oxford House Manual and asked lots and lots of questions.

Three months later, I opened my first house (Oxford House Metanoia) and began a completely different learning process. I stayed very active, open-minded and willing to grow and change with the way things worked. I attended the World Convention last year as a resident and am so proud to say that I am attending this year as Outreach. I sat still and trusted the process; I put in the work necessary for growth and the dedication to Oxford House and service work and, as of July 15, 2019, I am the Oxford House Outreach Coordinator for Northern Indiana. As a resident, I gained so much knowledge, love, compassion, understanding, willingness and overall growth. I was beaten, broken and lost until I found my Oxford family!! Today, I work a 12-step program, give back what was freely given to me, share experience, strength and hope whenever possible, stay open-minded and willing, trust the process and I am so excited to see what the future holds for myself and also for Oxford House!!!

### **Anna Rand – Washington State**

Hi everyone! My name is Anna and I am the Oxford House outreach worker for Spokane and Stevens County, Washington. This is the first time that I have ever had my own story written out in front of me and honestly, it is making my stomach turn. I still get that feeling and hope that it never goes away so that I never forget where I came from.

I grew up in the typical single-family household; my birth father was an addict/alcoholic and some of the earliest memories I have of him are my mother and I driving around with my aunt trying to pull him out of whatever dive bar he was in. I was only about 4 years old. It wasn't until I was grown that I found out my birth father was addicted to cocaine as well. My birth father eventually ended up driving drunk and getting in a car accident which resulted in him being in a coma for 9 weeks and suffering from severe short-term memory loss. My mother ended up raising my brother (who is now in recovery as well) and me on her own. She did this while suffering from polio and being in a country where English was not her first language. Now that I am older, I realize how scared she must have been.

For the most part, I was a good kid and had a good upbringing. I had a great group of friends and did well in school, but I lacked ambition and dreams and the atmosphere in my home was toxic. I was always scared of hoping for too much because I had gotten used to expecting the worst. Immediately after graduating from high school, I started working in the restaurant/bar business. Anyone who has been in the industry before can tell you that there is a lot partying and a lot of drugs and alcohol. During this time, I made a whole new group of friends with whom I shared one thing in common and that was partying. One of these new friends introduced us to Oxycontin and that is where my life took a drastic turn. I fell in love and for the first time I felt like I could be myself and wasn't constantly anxiety-ridden. On the outside, I portrayed myself to be confident but, really, I was depressed and always felt like there was this void. Oxycontin fixed all of that.

Over the next 4 years I was able to maintain my drug habit but I was a mess. I went from one toxic relationship to another trying to fill that constant void. I lost friendships, I lost money and I lost jobs due to my erratic behavior. Just when I thought things couldn't get any worse, they did. I was introduced to heroin. I spent another 4 years after that not living; it was just existing. I was a shell of a person – empty and full of guilt and shame ; doing whatever I could to get well just for that day. I would get clean and relapse repeatedly because I had this great idea that I could still drink since it wasn't my drug of choice. I ended up moving into my mother and stepfather's house. I robbed them of everything they owned.

My mother and stepfather did not give up on me though and, when I was finally sick and tired of being sick and tired, I got into a detox center and into a treatment center after that. While in treatment, I was able to work on the underlying reasons of why I became an addict and was able to face my demons. An amazing counselor at this treatment center told me about Oxford House. She said it would be a great place for me to go after treatment. I told her, "HECK NO." Well, my parents finally put their foot down and told me I was not allowed back home with them. They offered to pay my first month's rent at an Oxford House and since I had no other options, I went for it. I did a phone interview at Oxford House Upriver in Spokane, Washington and was accepted. It was the best thing that could have ever happened to me!

The women in that Oxford House taught me how to live. They supported me but also held me accountable. I was finally able to surrender to the fact that I was an addict. The women at this house taught me not to be embarrassed by this but, rather, to be proud that I made it out of the trenches. I got involved in service work with Oxford House and was Tom Sawyer'ed by Stacie Hatfield. I was VOLUNTOLD to move into two other new houses as a core member and was able to make some amazing friends with whom I still spend time to this day. I spent the next 4 years involved on a Chapter level as well as sitting on the Washington State Association and I was eventually hired on as full-time Oxford House outreach worker on February 1, 2019. I celebrated 5 years clean and sober on April 14, 2019.

If I could describe my life in one word today, it would be CALM. I spend my days working and with my fiancé and my 2 pit bulls. I binge out on Netflix and Amazon Prime. I cook and clean, make my bed every day, mow my lawn, and pay my bills on time. I also follow through on things that I commit to and have learned how to say 'no' when something is not healthy for me. These are all things that may seem normal to most people but WE are not most people. After living in complete chaos for so long, I couldn't ask for anything better. Oxford House has given me the tools I need to live a better life and has given me the opportunity to meet truly amazing people and make truly amazing friends. It is because of Oxford House and the hard work that I have put in that I now have a life that I love. The one thing that I could pass on to all of you reading this is that life gets better and every day it becomes a little easier to live without drugs and alcohol. Don't give up before the miracle happens!

### **Anne Hadwen – Oregon**

I'm going to start off by saying, "Hi, I'm Anne and I'm an addict." That saying is one of the most crucial things to my recovery. Admittance. So, to take you through a short version of my testimony, I'll start from the beginning. I didn't grow up around drugs or alcohol. I was raised by a single mother and had a pretty good childhood. I got married young and had my first child; unfortunately, my husband was a drug addict. I started using heroin with him a little but it wasn't until I found meth that things went south for me. My addiction, as with so many others, was fun at first – running around having all these new friends and feeling like I was unstoppable. My mother had my son now and then and, during that time, I would go get loaded. It didn't take much of that for her to go from having him now and then to having him all the time. I then went through a divorce and a custody battle and lost everything. Even that wasn't my bottom. I continued to use to not have to think about what I had lost and the little boy who had an absent mother. So, I was in and out of jail continuously, not checking in, and that went on for a few years – then I found out that I was

pregnant. Three months into the pregnancy I finally quit using. I white-knuckled through and was blessed with a beautiful healthy baby girl. Unfortunately, God had different plans for her and, 29 days after she was born, she passed away from SIDS. I must have lain in my bed for 2 months straight before my inner addict was full circle and I had to use just to be able to live. Even then, I didn't want to go on with my life. I had been absconding for months and I received a call from my p.o. saying it was my last chance or a warrant would be issued and I would be back in jail. So, I bit the bullet and went to check in so loaded that there was no hiding it. I had figured I would get a u.a. and end up there anyway but, as I'm bawling in the parking lot, there was something that made me walk in there. My name was called and as soon as I got back there, the tears came rolling down as I begged for help. I told her I was not clean and had no reason to live. I was on a 3-year downward path and was convinced that prison was the place for me. I had blamed myself for all the bad in my life. So, I'm sitting in jail on Day 7 before going to court to appear in front of my sentencing judge. The attorney who represented me had spoken with my p.o. who knew everything that had happened and, by the grace of God, the judge looked at me and said, "This is not who you are and I believe that." He gave me a 7-day sanction and I was released that day.

I came back to Roseburg and had heard all this hoot about Oxford. My first thought was 'Nope, not living with that many women' but I also couldn't go back home or I wouldn't remain clean so, weighing the pros and cons, I put in an application and was voted into the South Umpqua Women's Oxford House in Roseburg, Oregon. I now am 18 months clean and sober with a clean date of 12-20-17. I have a beautiful 6-month-old son named Mason who makes my world go round. I am a Chapter Co-chair and have the best family a girl could ask for. I remain diligent in my recovery; I have a sponsor and I work the 12 steps and I pray always for the addict who still suffers. Being part of Oxford has helped me learn to love myself. If there's ever a time I struggle, I've got my Oxford family to have my back. I don't go through it alone. Today I am grateful; my life is amazing – all with the help of Oxford. Thanks.

### **Benjamin Phillips – Oklahoma**

Hello. I've been in recovery since August 6, 2016. I live in an Oxford House in OKC, Oklahoma. Being in Oxford House for the last 35 months has taught me so many key elements to life.

Oxford House has molded the "Three R's of Oxford" into my life personally. I personally have discovered:

- *Recovery*: recovered from a hopeless, savage, insane state of mind (I got my life in line)
- *Responsibility*: helped me become a responsible man (keeping my life in line)
- *Replication*: help the next individual get their life in line (service work: show others this life)

I can never repay what Oxford House has given me: A LIFE!!! Before Oxford House, all I knew was getting high, distributing drugs and partaking in other criminal activities leading me to a lifestyle of insanity and jail and prison stays. My Oxford Experience is as follows:

- I sent myself to prison
- Prison sent me to Oxford
- Oxford sent me to 12-step meetings
- 12-step meetings brought me to know and build a bonding relationship with a higher power that helps me daily better myself.

I can never ever give Oxford House enough gratitude for what it has done for me. I am currently anxiously approaching the day I move on to the next phase of my life. The best thing about Oxford is that it has been around long before I came around and will be here long after me if the residents stick to the traditions and these simple suggestions:

- Pay rent,
- Go to meetings, get a sponsor and work the program,

- Clean up after yourself and do a chore.
- Participate, Participate, Participate in the house chapter state and world levels.
- Don't do drugs and or alcohol.

I'm forever grateful to have let Oxford House have such a major impact on my life, and I look forward to becoming a product of the 87% of people who become successful in never returning to their old way of life!!!! You, Oxford House. Benjamin Phillips 07-07-2019

### **Billy Culbertson – Florida**

My name is Billy and I am a person in long-term recovery. My clean date is 12/20/2015. I grew up in Mobile, Alabama. I have two older sisters and our parents divorced when I was 8. I went with my dad and they went with my mom. We weren't rich or poor exactly. I found alcohol at the age of 13 when my oldest sister married a Navy guy and I went to their house for the summer. I got drunk and for the first time in my life I felt as though I fit in. Being overweight and shy, I struggled feeling like I fit in anywhere. I played sports in High School and hurt my knee playing football. I found opiates. I fell in love with them. Fast forward, I got married and had a kid around at age 23; my wife had a job at a doctor's office with access to a prescription pad. I got free opiates – as much as I wanted. She got caught and the free meds were gone but I was a full-blown addict by then. Our bill money went to buying pills. I lost everything, including my job. They sent me to IOP where I found 12-step meetings but I wasn't done yet. I thought I could control my drug use. WRONG. I ended up in jail and, when I got out, it was off to the races. The disease progressed really fast. I discovered Meth and needles. I ended up unemployed and unemployable and was still in full- blown addiction.

The last time I used, I prayed to God for it to be my last shot. I was ready to die. I overdosed and woke up scared to death and I haven't looked back since. I made some calls, found a halfway house for a couple of months but then I made my way to an Oxford House in Nashville. Oxford House has taught me how to be a positive, productive member of society as well as how to be accountable and hold others accountable. Oxford House has given me more blessings than I ever dreamed of. I am beyond grateful for my recovery and to Oxford House for giving me a chance to be somebody when I didn't believe I was capable of it.

### **Bridgette L. Breeze – Virginia**

Addiction has been embedded in my family for generations although I never knew the correct terminology was "Addiction." I thought that everyone was always having a good time or partying.

By the age of 20, I had been indulging heavily into alcohol and marijuana. The gateway drugs! I promised myself that I would never graduate to the hard stuff. Little did I know that my new best friend and love was patiently waiting around the corner to make my acquaintance. The new love of my life was PCP (Phencyclidine), Angel Dust and Boat (just a few names to call her). I dove headfirst into PCP and immediately understood why it was nicknamed "Love Boat". For almost 20 years, I used PCP on a regular basis. I endured so much loss of my closest family during my years of addiction. My sister passed away at 40 and had battled the disease of addiction for years. My father also battled with addiction.

After realizing that I wasted so many of the prime years of my life getting high, I made a long heartfelt plea to God and asked what I could do better and why wasn't my life a normal one. After years of the same discussion, I realized that I didn't want to die this way. I didn't want to play the victim anymore. My oath was to not taint this new decade of my life with drugs and alcohol so, at 39, I decided it was time to do or die. I chose to DO. I reached out for help. I went to detox for 7 days and, because that wasn't enough, I went to treatment for 30 days and, when that wasn't enough, I got my treatment stay extended about two

weeks. That still wasn't enough and I decided, after listening to God and counselors, that I needed a sober living environment. They then introduced me to Oxford House.

Since September 17, 2017, I haven't looked back. Oxford House has provided me a safe sober environment in which to recover and I am able to give back and help others struggling with this disease. I love the opportunity that Oxford House has provided me with being part of an environment and organization outside of myself. Without Oxford House I don't know where I would be. The stars continue to align me with the right people places and things to help with the daily ongoing battle to recovery. I am proud to continually serve in my recovery daily. There is no turning back, only looking forward. As long as I remain clean and sober, I know the sky is the limit.

### **Caroline Allen – Kentucky**

My story started in the small town of Corydon, Indiana, where I was born and raised. I grew up with both parents who were total opposites. My Dad was the strong silent type and my Mom was a very compassionate caregiver. I grew up with lots of kids, including my younger sister, in my mother's at-home daycare center but never felt like I fit in anywhere and I was always filled with anxiety. I dealt with anxiety and feeling different until I got in a relationship at the age of 15 with a man who was much older. From there, my life went downhill to a very dark place. What started off as just drinking every night turned into pills, then into Heroin. To maintain this new way of life I got heavily involved in the manufacturing and distribution of methamphetamine. This went on for years, until I lost my best friend to an overdose in my house. When she passed away, the whole town was very upset and wanted someone to blame and tried charging me with murder. The charges were dropped and I had to move in with my mother-in-law. My heroin addiction got worse and worse and eventually landed me in a drug house with a pimp selling me.

After a year of being trafficked in and out of drug houses, I had finally hit my rock bottom and reached out to my probation officer from a previous D.U.I. My probation officer and my Mother then helped me get admitted in to a rehab facility in Louisville, Kentucky. Once I completed my rehab program I moved back to Corydon, IN to stay with my Mom after being gone for 8 years. I stayed sober for 6 months, but quickly relapsed when I thought being in a relationship was more important. I continued to think a relationship would keep me sober every time I tried to get sober and I relapsed every time.

My last run ended with me homeless and selling my body to maintain my heroin addiction until I decided to go back to rehab on June 19, 2018. When I completed the program this time, I decided to do something different and I reached out to a girl who was sober and lived in an Oxford House. I interviewed for Oxford House Cherokee Park in Louisville, KY from a hospital bed – beaten and broken – and they accepted me. I moved into Oxford House Cherokee Park on July 15, 2018 and it changed my life. The women in that house loved me back to life and I quickly found my self-worth and felt human. In this house I had an actual bed, not just a mattress on the floor. I had a clean safe place to grow and learn and amazing women to support me. Oxford House wasn't just a place to sleep when I had nowhere else to go; it became my home and the people involved with Oxford House became my family. Oxford House wasn't just a half-way house; it was a symbol of and a chance for a better life.

### **Christina Gardner – Indiana**

My name is Christina Gardner and I am a recovering addict. What that means to me is that I have not felt the need to use any mind- or mood-altering substance since March 27, 2018. That was the day I was given an opportunity to do things differently. IMPD chose to take me to a hospital instead of putting me in jail. At that point, I was beyond reality and was seeing and hearing people who did not exist. I was taken to a local hospital and held in their psychiatric processing area. Once they figured out that my hallucinations were due to a combination of drugs, they kept me for the safety of myself and others. It took 4 days for the

hallucinations to stop and, luckily, they did. That was truly the day I decided that I did not want to live like that anymore. I was blessed to have already known people in the recovery field and I reached out for help. I was accepted to Dove Recovery House 2 weeks later and that's where my recovery began. I lived there for 10 months and utilized all the resources they had to offer. I completed IOP classes, was working with a sponsor and successfully completed the program. It was time for me to give my bed up for someone who needed it more desperately than I did.

At this point Oxford House was very new to Indiana and only had 2 houses opened – one men's house (Kai) and one women's house (Indy). Jessica Burden came to Dove to do an Oxford House presentation but I was at work so I did not get to attend. However, I heard great things about it and I reached out to Jessica myself and, from then on, I knew it was my next step in my recovery.

I moved into Oxford House Indy on February 1, 2019. I have to admit that, at first, this was not what I was expecting at all. I envisioned a home where I paid rent, did my part, followed guidelines and life would be good. It took me awhile to adjust to the Oxford House lifestyle – the accountability, giving back, and being there for your housemates. The late-night emergency house meetings and the emergency interviews were not what I had envisioned by any means. However, I adjusted to the Oxford House lifestyle and began to understand how the big picture came together. I became more involved, and began learning as much as I could.

On March 25, 2019 I moved into and helped open Indiana's very first Mom and Me Oxford House as a core member. Our motto is Oxford House is a safe and sober environment for those who are committed to recovery; if you are open-minded and willing, Oxford House will teach you so many core life skills without your even knowing it. You build a family and a strong accountability foundation that will help you in any way possible – but will still call you out on your bullshit. They say, "You can't keep what you have unless you freely give what was given to you." It is so true and it comes full circle. I have gained so many skills and grown – emotionally, mentally and spiritually – with Oxford House.

### **Christopher Jensen – Oregon**

Coming from a Catholic school background, one would think my life should've been a pretty straight forward thing. Instead, I turned to stealing and dealing as soon as I understood how my morals could be switched on and off at the snap of a brain cell. At around 14, I found that stealing was way more intense than the psalms and I pursued the next level of theft each time I set out to get things. It started as change from the money mugs my parents had; by the time I got clean, it had progressed into cutting open ATMs. In between, I would deal whatever to pass the time – but theft is what I loved.

Multiple stints in prison didn't curb the infatuation, nor did pleading from friends and family, until this last set. I got caught for a bit of criddle and, since I was pretty much at max on the Washington sentencing grid, my only option was to try and get to a prison that had something for me to do besides reread Game of Thrones. So, WSP in Walla Walla it was. My counselor there looked at my history and asked if I had any plans to do literally anything with myself...ever. I didn't know. So, he recommended Diesel Tech school. From Day One in that course of study, my entire outlook changed. The only thing I knew about cars was how to 'klak em'. The instructor was a veteran CAT technician who tolerated the inmates' quirks and shortcomings while feeding us information that started a brand-new way to live.

The DOC up there let me stay in Walla Walla when I got released and I continued my education at the community college while living in a STAR Project home. I had a tiny little spot that I could call my own. I struggled a bit with alcohol for a bit while working on a farm and going to school. My addiction followed me back to Portland as I got a job at a truck shop. Then I hit a motorcyclist. My P.O. at the time was so stoked that I actually had a job and checked in when I was supposed to that he gave me another shot. He

said to get into an Oxford House or end up on his list. I knew some folks on that list. They were just like me. Stealing and dealing like shit was gravy. So, I contacted Heidi Wisner because I knew she had gotten into that way of life and, if anyone could relate to my train of madness, it was her. She gave me Levi's number and he genuinely cared about my current situation; like, he actually gave a shit.

A few days later I was in Hughes Oxford house with less than a week sober. This changed everything. We were group of people voluntarily looking out for one another as we progressed through a life worth living. I continued my work at the truck shop and started my application process for the Local 701 as a heavy equipment mechanic. About a year into my Oxford life, having held a position for a bit as Chapter Secretary, I was asked to be a core member of a new house, Oxford House Hoodview. I realized then that I had value – value as a member of a community that focused on the addict and alcoholic and the positive changes that occurred when they wanted a better way to live. This revelation only emboldened my desire to be better.

Today, I am a mechanic for the union. I don't drink or use. I get involved and help when I can and use that help to inspire others. Even if I don't reach someone immediately, I still know that it's the right thing to do. Oxford House has opened me up to the possibility that helping others helps me and that the cycle can be infectious to others like me. My name is Christopher Jensen and I'm a person in long-term recovery and I'm a better human being because of it. This is possible through an effort to push an Oxford House-related agenda and to spread the miracle of recovery and hope to those who need to hear it.

#### **Colby Robertson – Texas**

I began using and drinking at eleven years old. Around the age of fourteen, I began to self-mutilate and have suicidal ideations. That would be when I would be admitted to my first mental health institution. After my release from that facility, I would be prescribed Adderall and this would be the beginning of my daily abuse; my first thirty-day prescription was gone in less than a week. Throughout high school and shortly thereafter, I would find myself using wide varieties of prescription medications and drinking before and during school. If I was not getting high, or getting drunk, I just was not OK. In hindsight, I see that I was never OK, not even close. In 2012, I would ruin my relationship with my family, stealing everything I could sell from them to feed my addiction. My mother was watching her son destroy himself and I can still remember the pain and anger in my mother eyes as she opened the bathroom door to her son covered in blood from his wrists. One month later, I would take 60,000 milligrams of Tylenol to end my life. The doctors would tell my parents that, in only a couple more hours, my liver would've failed and nothing could've been done. By some miracle from the God I did not believe in, I did not die that day.

A few months would pass, living on random couches, before I began to even think that maybe there was a different way to live, that maybe there was a God. At age nineteen in late 2012, I would for the first time pray for salvation and help. I would attempt to get sober and clean and I moved into a sober living facility in Pennsylvania. I lasted four short months. I then moved to Virginia and there I went back to drugs and alcohol. After five months, I found myself back in another mental health institution for the fourth time in my life. I was twenty years old. From there, I would be admitted to my first substance abuse treatment facility then I would move into another sober living facility in Dallas, Texas. I lasted four short months. I found myself now using cocaine daily and living with a coke dealer while I ran drinks at a bar. That was the best place for someone like me to be, or so I thought. I would enter treatment a second time, and then move to Kerrville, Texas to try at another sober living facility. This was in 2014. In Kerrville, I would make my first real attempt at working the 12-step program of AA that I had been introduced to so much in the previous three years. I would again relapse. At this point, I would drink or take anything I could get my hands on. After living in a few hotels, I would end up sleeping on someone's couch for a few months. In July of 2015, I totaled my car and was arrested in the process for possession of Adderall that was not prescribed to me, and for the pipes and needles throughout the trunk and car. This would be the beginning of the end for my old way of life.

After my arrest, I began to pray and read the Bible every day. The court had me choose between Celebrate Recovery or community service for my paraphernalia charge. I chose Celebrate Recovery because it was “easier” than doing community service. While I may have been praying and reading daily and attending these 12-step meetings, I was still drinking daily and smoking marijuana. However, as the days past, as I really began to see others and hearing their stories of freedom from addiction. The joy and love they carried in them and around them, I couldn’t help but desire what they had. I began to slowly and surely lose the desire to drink and use, this time my heart and mind began to change. I began to have a different view of the program of recovery and a different view of God Himself. I made a decision on October 9, 2015, that I wanted to live a life free of drugs and alcohol, a life free of the pain, the shame and guilt, a life that God wanted for me, not what I wanted for me. That would be the last time I put a substance in my body to get high or drunk. I would board a bus the next day, on October 10, 2015, to move into a sober living facility in Grapevine. While living in this house, I began going to AA constantly, got connected with a sponsor who would take me through my step work. The first months were tough: I had no vehicle; I would walk two miles to and from work every day and walked to the majority of my recovery meetings, rain, storm, ice, cold or scorching hot. I was desperate and grateful to have been given another chance. I was going to do whatever it took to have what I saw in these people with long term recovery, and to grow in my own relationship with God. After some time had passed, I could now pay my own bills; I had a vehicle I bought on my own; I had a sense of joy and freedom; and I wasn’t thinking about suicide anymore.

I would then move into an Oxford House. Truthfully, when I did, it wasn’t necessarily for the right reasons. It was one of my few choices since I was on felony probation for a relatively recent charge. I just wanted the cheaper rent and a little bit less structure than the previous sober living facility I was in (more freedom) and I didn’t want to live in the “hood.” I was a year and a half clean, yet at this time it was still about me. Something was missing. I convinced myself that – because I wasn’t hurting anyone, because I wasn’t lying to anyone, because I would help someone financially or help someone here and there with something and because I would spend an hour serving at a church – that I was being of service.

It was through Oxford House that I would make close relationships with people; relationships I still have today. Through these people, with their passion for service and willingness even in hardship to serve, I began to see what was missing inside myself and what God wanted to awaken in me – the desire to serve and help others in their journeys in both recovery and Oxford House. Oxford provided exactly what I needed to grow to another level in my recovery, and it still does today. Service within Oxford House and life has now become a passion of mine. I can do nothing but credit this to God and to the people within Oxford who have mentored me and to whom I have grown close. I am grateful not only for my sobriety but also to those I have met through Oxford. I had no idea what would come nor what I was missing when I first moved into Oxford House just looking for cheaper rent and not having someone breathing down my neck. Today I have three years and nine months of sobriety and I can say without any doubt that Oxford House has played an important and intricate part in my personal recovery, growth, and life.

### **Deborah Jackson – Virginia**

My name is Deborah and I am a grateful recovering addict. My Oxford House story and my recovery story are beautifully woven together. I came into Oxford House in Virginia Beach on August 15, 2014. I had exactly 7 days of detox when I was interviewed and accepted by Oxford House Pembroke in Virginia Beach. I was trying to leave a life of Heroin addiction that had gone on for 22 miserable years.

I wish that I could say that I was an ideal House member (I was not!). I was physically ill for months. I had no possessions, no job and, most importantly, no self-esteem. The women in the house were all different and each helped me in a different way. One woman took me under her wing. She took me to meetings, donated clothing to me and fed me when I was hungry. Just as important to me, these women also held me

accountable. I had to be out of my house from 9-3 looking for employment after making excuses for too long. It was the best thing they could have done for me. I managed to get a job but, with no vehicle and a 45-minute walk to the bus stop, it was difficult. But, those long walks and many bus rides had an amazing effect on my recovery; they taught me to overcome my circumstances. I felt empowered and self-sufficient. I learned to overcome adversity and stop making excuses. Most importantly, I was proud of myself for a change. This phase lasted for 2½ years until I was finally able to afford a car and drive again. Month by month, I became more confident and self-sufficient. I became very involved in my House, holding all house positions. I became more interested in our Chapter and served as Chapter Vice Chair, HSCC and Treasurer.

I am forever grateful to Oxford House for the huge role it has played in my life. So... from the broken woman who sat at the park, cursing the women in her house for making her look for a job, to the confident, hopeful, new Outreach Worker in Virginia, Thank You, Oxford House! I am forever humbled and grateful to be a part of the Oxford Family. Deborah Jackson, Outreach Services, Eastern Virginia

### **Dwayne Fagan – Oregon**

I was a drug dealer and user of methamphetamines for 29 years. I wasn't a good role model for my children and I even sold drugs to them when they turned 18. I've felt horrible about the example I set for them because I believe they followed in my footsteps and have addiction issues of their own... Well, I decided in 2016 to change my life and to become the father figure I should have been years ago.

After absconding for 5 years on 3 felony warrants, I turned myself in. I was facing 2 years in prison so that was no easy decision. But, I did it. The judge took into consideration my age and the fact that I had done the first right thing I had done in many years and gave me only 90 days. Well, I did my time and got out on March 3, 2017 and, having nowhere to go, I headed to a shelter. I was about to check in when a friend got hold of me and told me I was to come and stay with him until I could get into an Oxford House. I was surprised and overjoyed yet scared. I had tried Oxford once before and I just hadn't been ready. This time I knew I wanted to change and was ready to do whatever it took... Two days later, after not getting into the first Oxford House I applied at, I was voted into the Rick Dougherty Oxford House and I have been there ever since.

I haven't always been the most popular guy in the house. I was sent to Chapter meetings because our House President couldn't go and, being new, I kinda threw the House under the bus. I wanted things to run properly and I got involved with Chapter right away. This caused me to be placed on behavior contracts for holding others accountable and I learned to pick my battles and learned how to communicate more effectively. Eventually, I became a seasoned member of the House and am currently looked up to as a role model as well as a leader in the House and that has overflowed into the rest of my life.

A few months ago, my son was released from prison and was going to be sent to the Mission in Salem. I had my daughter go pick him up and bring him to the House. The guys met him and asked me if we could have an e-meeting the next day. They voted him in!! He and I haven't always had the best relationship – mostly my fault. But today I'm happy to be doing the next right thing and setting a better example for my children. Oxford has given me the stability and helped me build the foundation that I have today.

I am a legal, licensed driver with my own car for the first time in 13 years and for the first time in almost 30 years, I am able to be a role model for my children. I love being of service – I am the Chapter 19 Chair, and helping others get what I have gotten is a passion for me. I love my life and owe it all to God for giving me the strength to face my fears and to Oxford House for being an awesome place to stay clean and get my life together.

### **Erica Cotton –Texas**

I was almost three years clean in 2008 and I had convinced myself that I could handle just one beer. I failed to realize that's where it all starts for me. I failed to realize that, first and foremost, I am an alcoholic and I can't have just one.

Nine years later, I made it to treatment in Wichita Falls, Texas by way of the Tribal Center of Dallas. I recall my therapist asking what my plan was after treatment and my not having a clue. I was just trying to make it through treatment alive. At this point, my addiction had taken it all. My family was done with me; I wasn't even present for my son that last year. Beer for breakfast was my motto and nothing stood in the way of that. Drugs and alcohol had consumed me. I had lost the desire to drink while still drinking but I just couldn't stop. I remember praying I would get pulled over for a DWI because then it would be over for me. Thankfully, I had reached out and God had opened the doors. I made it to detox on March 14, 2017 to be medically detoxed from alcohol. On March 17, 2017, I entered into treatment. My therapist then told me that there was sober living in Wichita Falls and that I should consider it.

Directly from treatment, I moved into Oxford House and it's been my home ever since. I didn't know anyone in Wichita Falls and, other than a desire to stay sober, I didn't have much. I immediately got involved in the recovery committee and service work within Oxford. I was ready and willing to do whatever it took to not return to the person I was when I had entered treatment only months before. Some days I didn't know where my next meal was going to come from but God always provided for me. I got a job and for the first time in my life, I learned to stand on my own two feet. It wasn't much, but it was mine. My family didn't have much to do with me so I formed my chosen family from within Oxford and the recovery community. I learned how to build relationships with others. Service work within Oxford became such a large part of my recovery and it still is today. Helping others stay sober keeps me sober and I am extremely grateful for the program and Oxford for helping me create a life that I never could imagine having.

### **Evan Jackson – Alabama**

My name is Evan Jackson. I am 27 years old, from Birmingham, Alabama. I have one child, and my drugs of choice are heroin, amphetamines and marijuana. This is not my first attempt at getting sober; it's actually my fifth, and this is not my first time living at a sober living establishment; it's my third time. I first began using drugs towards the end of high school, predominantly during my junior and senior year of high school. I feel as if I used drugs in order to feel more accepted among my peers, and to escape a constantly declining and increasingly stressful home life.

Not long after I graduated from high school, roughly two years to be exact, my mother passed away from cancer. During the five years that she was sick, I experimented with just about any drug that I could get my hands on. I discovered quickly that opiates were something that really numbed me in a way that I had been searching for, for so long, and not to mention that, given the fact that my mother was a dying cancer patient, opiates were most definitely not a struggle to come by, nor was it a struggle for me to pay for the drugs financially because they were present and in abundance.

After my mother passed away in 2012, I really took a turn for the worse and ended up becoming homeless for a brief period of time. I resorted to selling heroin and Xanax in order to feed my increasingly growing addiction. This quickly got me a one-way ticket to jail where I spent the next 8 months of my existence. Looking back now, it saved my life and kept me from following down a path of imminent death. I then went to rehab for a year, and got out and moved into a sober living house. Given my young age and surprisingly lack of awareness of consequences, I eventually returned to using drugs. That went on for another 6 years before I willingly admitted myself back into treatment in February of 2019.

Upon completion of my most recent stay in treatment, I knew for certain that returning to my hometown of Birmingham would be a potentially catastrophic and deadly choice. So, I opted to leave my family, my child, and my entire existence behind in Birmingham and move down to Mobile. This brought me to the place that has truly changed my life and completely done a 180 to my outlook on life and my future.

Oxford House has been a literal godsend for me in my life, and it's all due to the model that Oxford House has established, the rules implemented at the House, and the people I have met along the way in Mobile. My outreach, Summer, has been truly an inspiration and has given me a growing motivation to see my life for how truly valuable it actually is. She's stern and not a corner-cutter but she leads with love and has a bigger heart for helping people than anyone else I've ever known. Oxford House has truly been a life saver and I look forward to see where the journey of life will take me in this new chapter of my life. Thank You, Oxford House!! Sincerely, Evan Jackson

### **Freddie Barrett – Texas**

Well there are a lot of events that led me to where I am now. But I'll make it short... I had a business and a family. I had the cars, houses and money. Towards the end, I was under a lot of stress because of my marriage, my business and my daughter having a baby that I had to step in and take care of because the father of the baby left my daughter. I went to a doctor and he put me on Xanax to help me with the stress; however, it was a very high dose. I was prescribed two milligrams four times a day. As time went on, I had started taking eight bars a day. It turned me into a monster and, after twenty-five years of being with my ex, I left her and my family. I chose the drugs over them.

As time went on, it got worse and I lost everything. I ended up being homeless for three years, and one day I got tired of being sick and living on the streets. One day I was so sick that I couldn't take it anymore. I found the highest bridge I could find and I jumped off. I don't remember hitting the ground or being picked up and taken to the hospital. I woke up in ICU with tubes in and out of me. The doctor told me that I wasn't going to make it through the night because I was bleeding too much inside. He had called my family and told them they need to come down and be with me. Well somehow, I made it through the night. I was throwing up blood the whole night through but I didn't die like he told me I would. I spent a month in the hospital and then six months bedridden because I couldn't walk.

Well, after six months I was sent to a yearlong drug program. After I got out, I was in another program and they were the ones to refer me to Oxford. So that's kind of my story. Looking back at it now...me doing what I did was the best thing to happen to me because it sobered me up. I am still without my family but I can deal with it and live sober. I am very grateful to be where I am today and that I lived through what I put myself through. I really can't explain why I am still here to be honest but that's not up to me. I am just here for the ride and to do the best that I can. Thank you

### **Greg T. – Florida**

I have pretty much had a problem with drinking and drugs since high school. I've been in jail, prison, and rehabs over the years and never really learned the basics of being an adult and doing things like paying bills. It was a vicious cycle. However, I knew that I had a problem, especially toward the end, but I couldn't break the cycle. When I had an exceptionally bad night and was confronted by the cops, I asked them to take me to detox. I was done. Sick and tired of being sick and tired. While in detox I found a pamphlet about the Oxford House and was quickly interviewed and accepted. Since being in the Oxford house I have stepped up to the plate – finally. Being responsible, accountable, and in recovery (willingly) has changed my life for the better. So much better. My relationships have improved; my self-respect is good and my recovery has never been better. Oxford House shows you how to live responsibly and clean without being

made to. You have your freedom to live your life without being told what to do. You have to want it. If you want it, the Oxford House is a great opportunity. It works if YOU work it.

### **Jessyka Bain – Florida**

My name is Jessyka and I am an addict. I am currently living in Oxford House Ashton in Pensacola, FL. My clean date is February 3, 2019. My biological father is an addict who has never been in my life. I remember my mom always saying that he was incapable of being a father. So, my mom raised me with my step-dad. That was honestly no different than if it were both my biological parents. My mom is an alcoholic. She always has been. So, my childhood wasn't in the least bit ordinary. My step-dad was an addict in his own way with his own vice. The first thing that I can remember as a child was being yelled at by my dad when I was 6 for finding my mom's drugs. When I was 9, I found my mom after she tried to commit suicide. That was when my using began. At 9 I was getting drunk after I had put my little brother and my older sister to bed. I was the caretaker – what can I say. One day, I saw my mom snort cocaine so I decided I would try it. From there I was hooked. I would steal from my mom's stash and blame it on her. She soon started blaming my sister. When we were growing up, my sister's coping skill was drugs and alcohol. She didn't know how to hide it like I did though – or so I thought.

My mom got sober when I was 14. For a year I didn't talk to her. I was still using and my mom had no idea. I was barely ever home so, when I was, nobody ever knew. I kept busy to make sure I didn't seem suspicious. I was on the swim team, played soccer, and always had my nose in a book. When I was 15, I went to an AA meeting with my mom and admitted that I was using at the 4th meeting I went to. When I didn't have dope, I couldn't feel anything but sadness and emptiness. I stayed clean and on the right track from drugs for 3 years. During that 3 years, my disease manifested itself in many different forms – from boys to my work to school – anything that I could focus on, really.

I got married when I was 18. I thought I loved him and thought he loved me. Boy, was that further from the truth. I moved to El Paso, TX with him in February 2018. He started abusing me and I relapsed. This time, my DOC was marijuana and alcohol. I drank to forget, to not feel, to be numb. Physically I was a wreck. Emotionally, there was nothing but an empty dark hole. Then I was introduced to ecstasy. It made me feel loved even when I was getting beaten. I had gotten so low I would tell myself and my friends that I loved my husband even when I was in the hospital or with a gun to my head. I finally was so dead inside that I called the cops. Somehow, he manipulated better than I did and I got put in jail for a few hours. He had to be away from the house for a few days so he left me with no phone or car and I was stuck there. That night I tried to commit suicide. My friend called my mom to tell her what was happening and I finally had to be honest. She bought me a plane ticket and I went home the very next day.

I detoxed at my mom's house and then I said I wanted treatment. I went to an inpatient center for 63 days. When I got out, I went to a sober living place in Tennessee. Needless to say, that didn't work out for reasons out of my control. I was stuck and had no money and nowhere to go. All I knew was that it wasn't healthy for me to stay there. I started looking into sober living places near my mom. They had pretty much just opened up Oxford House Ashton! I got an interview and I got accepted. It has been one of the most amazing things that I have been part of. The women of my house have helped me so much while we work this program. They help me grow on a daily basis. I don't know where I would be without Oxford House. I am beyond grateful!

### **Justin Roshto, LCDC-I, PRSS, PM/PRC – Texas**

My name is Justin and I am a survivor of the foster care system and a man in long-recovery. What that means to me is that I have not found it necessary to get high, commit any felonies or steal anyone's stuff

since April 20, 2013. For that, I am forever grateful. There are three things that got me where I am today—God, Oxford House Inc., and desperation to change.

I started utilizing mind-altering substances on regular basis around the age of 10 or 11 but I can also remember as a kid sneaking alcoholic beverages from different people during events or out of the refrigerator when everyone was asleep. My substance abuse stems from a long series of traumatic events starting at the age of 1-1½. My mother and father separated before I was born. My mother had no education and three very small children to take care of after I was born (all under the age of three). My father kidnapped me when I was about 18 months old and later abandoned me at a crack house in Louisiana. My mother and grandfather found out where I was and rescued me but my mother died just a few months later and my father completely disappeared from my life.

I was sent to live with a great-aunt and great-uncle who were physically, emotionally, and psychologically abusive of me, and I began running away from their home when I was twelve. I was passed from family member to family member until I started getting passed to strangers because my family had given up hope and lacked the ability to raise a troubled child. Somehow, I always ended up back with the same great-aunt. I went to 22 different schools from elementary school to high school. Due to the inconsistency and the instability of my home life, I struggled significantly with school. By the age of 13, I was using drugs on a regular basis, and my use quickly escalated to a full-blown addiction. I developed several mental health issues from the trauma of the abuse as well, including Reactive Attachment Disorder, Manic Depressive Disorder, Insomnia, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder and Bi-Polar Disorder.

When I was fourteen, I was “out of control” and had no desire to listen to anyone. This is the year I was raped and the physical abuse became noticeable by teachers and neighbors. CPS became involved and, after years of CPS cases being closed, they finally acted. I ended up living with one of my mother’s cousins. I never told anyone about the rape until I was seventeen and in treatment during a process group. But, as a high school teacher, my foster mother recognized some of my problems and tried getting me help for them. She got me special education support and spent countless thousands of dollars on treatment facilities, psych-hospitals, alternative peer groups, psychiatrists, therapists, sober high schools, and medication for me. Even though I tried, I still struggled with drugs and acting out behaviors. I dropped out of school in my senior year when I just couldn’t keep up anymore and felt like I was wasting my time, and everyone else’s.

After dropping out and moving out of my cousin’s home, I spent the next four years in and out of jail and more outpatient facilities. The last time I was incarcerated, I became overwhelmingly tired and was ready to surrender. I couldn’t tell you how many times I detoxed in Jefferson County Jail in Beaumont TX. I remember talking to God, writing a few amends letters which were initially intended to manipulate someone to save me from the life I had created for myself. I made a phone call to my mom telling her I couldn’t do it anymore and I was ready to stop using drugs. I had burned that bridge so many times that she told me that she would send me a bus ticket to come to Houston but I couldn’t live at home.

I remember on the bus ride from Port Arthur to Houston contemplating how my life got so out of control. I was 19, a high school dropout, consistently bouncing from job to job and affiliated with negative people and influences. I had done every drug that was put in front of me. My drug of choice started with pills and ended with cocaine and heroin. I enjoyed the back and forth between the highs and lows because it kept me numb from the wreckage of my past and the conflicting internal feelings. I knew I had to change, but I wasn’t sure where to start. I truly didn’t believe I deserved any grace from another human being or God.

By the time I got to Houston, my mother had a number for me to call for sober living. I knew I didn’t need treatment because I had already been to every residential adolescent treatment center in Houston. I didn’t want to go and thought I could manipulate my way back home but my mother wouldn’t budge. I ended up calling Oxford House Bellaire and had an interview scheduled for that day. I was accepted in the house

and was held to a standard that, at the time, I thought was unobtainable. I was 19 and always the youngest person in the room and they pushed and guided me to hold myself to a standard where I was able to see personal growth. I ended up growing into a strong individual who fell in love with recovery and what it offered. I went through House positions; I started living in Oxford Houses that were struggling in order to assist with replication; I became a Chapter officer and took on the HSC state position in 2014. Oxford House changed everything for me. I stayed about 15 months and took the next step into my recovery by moving out on to my own. It was scary, not having someone there to hold me accountable when I wasn't able to see my own behaviors. But, somehow, I have managed to stay sober over the last 6 years.

Before Oxford, I sometimes lived with friends and sometimes I was homeless and slept in my car or on a park bench. Each time I ran from one bad situation to another, I dug myself in deeper and deeper holes, feeling lonelier than I was before. I never truly felt like I had anything to live or work for. I pushed everyone away who remotely cared about me. I was a high school dropout who couldn't do anything right and, even worse, no matter how much I tried, I couldn't stay sober before Oxford House.

I view the year 2013 as the best year of my life because it was the year that I finally hit rock bottom. I found myself. I turned my life over to my God. I was not perfect, but I tried to be better, and it took everything in me to change. I finally was able to change for myself and not for someone else's benefit. A few months into my recovery, when I had less than 6 months sober, I started working at an adolescent treatment center, Odyssey House, where I had been a client when I was sixteen. I have been in the field ever since, giving everything I have to support and love the teenagers and youth back to life and into a healthy sober lifestyle. I am now 25 and, for the last few years, I have been in some sort of supervisory, case management or clinical role in these facilities.

I got a GED at 20 years old and went back to school to be an LCDC (Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselor) and I hold several state level certifications such as PRSS (Peer Recovery Support Specialist) as well as a basic mentorship and peer recovery coach. I have extensive training in Medicated Assisted Treatment, Medicated Assisted Recovery, Harm Reduction and Overdose Prevention and have gone through courses allowing me to teach and help those on the street.

Earlier this year, I left my job working with the Houston Recovery Center and UTHealth on the HEROES Project (Houston Emergency Response Opioid Engagement System) and took a job I never thought I would have – Texas Outreach Representative for Houston and Beaumont – and, although it was hard to leave working with Emergency Medicine, I have been given a sense of satisfaction working for the organization that saved me from myself and gave me a chance even as I had burned out of all the rest. My only goal right now is to be the voice of reason and to assist advocating for those who can't advocate for themselves. Life has been challenging but I wouldn't trade what Oxford House gave me for anything else.

### **Katie Vestor – North Carolina**

My name is Katie and I am a woman in long-term recovery. What that means for me is that I have not had a drink or a drug since November 12, 2016. I was born and raised in Rocky Mount, NC. ... When I was 6, my father gave me a shot of Wild Turkey and said it would get rid of my cold. That is a young age to learn how to self-diagnose.... All throughout middle school and high school I was very active in sports. I played soccer, softball and cheerleading. I was active in 4-H, animal science and competition choir. Although I kept myself busy in school, I still made time to hang out with my friends and drink at parties. I had my first blackout experience when I was 14. I partied a lot during high school....

When I was 15, I tried marijuana for the first time. I didn't really like it and it made me feel paranoid, but I still smoked it recreationally. My second semester of senior year, I tried Xanax. Again, I didn't like it and the fact that it made me forget everything but I still used it recreationally. A few weeks later, I tried Percocet.

... One day, a friend said, "You are messing with the wrong stuff; you need to try one of these." That was when I tried my first Oxycontin. At that moment, I felt like I had found my best friend, my soul mate, the love of my life. It was something about the sweating and nodding out – I LOVED IT. I started dating a guy (Stephen) who would feed them to me like candy, and for free. He became my using buddy and my best friend for the next 4 years. I used every day, not knowing what I was getting myself into. I thought it was innocent and I was just having fun. Then one day I woke up and felt like I had been hit by a Mack truck. I called Stephen and asked him what was wrong with me. His response was "It's probably because you haven't done a pill today." I was experiencing my first withdrawal and should have known I needed to stop there. But I didn't, I loved it too much. I kept using and my addiction continued to get worse.

After a few years had passed, Oxycontin was hard to find on the streets. Stephen decided it would be a good idea to start doing Heroin. At first, I thought that was crazy but he explained that it was just like Oxycontin except in powder form and without the medication in it. I caved and started doing Heroin. After some time had went by, I found out that Stephen was using needles behind my back. I hated needles, I thought that was a whole new level of getting high that I didn't want to be part of. I always said I would never use needles. ... I thought I would teach him a lesson and try it myself. I thought if he could see what it was doing to him, then maybe he would stop. Well, I was wrong. I just ruined myself. I used a needle for the first time and fell in love with it. It was a high I had never experienced and there was no turning back now. My addiction escalated like you'd never seen before. I started pawning all of my valuable belongings and selling every nice thing I had just to feed my addiction. I was constantly lying to my parents and ruining all of my friendships, just so I could go get high. I ruined all of my jobs. I was either too dope sick to go to work or I was nodding out at the cash register.... I was fired from every job I ever had.

One night, I was set up and was arrested for the first time for possession of Heroin. It was my first offense so they gave me a slap on the wrist. ... I was put on probation for a year. My mom gave me an ultimatum and said I could either go to rehab or she would kick me out of her house. Of course, I chose the rehab. The counselors convinced me to end my 4-year relationship with Stephen and I thought it would help. It did absolutely nothing for me. I wasn't ready to stop using and only went because of an ultimatum I was given. And that arrest did nothing for me either. I ended up violating my probation and was given a choice by my officer. I could either spend 45 days in jail or move into an Oxford House. I chose Oxford House. I moved into one in Fayetteville, NC. I got high the day after moving in and they kicked me out. After 2 weeks had passed, I moved back in and found out someone had stolen half of my belongings. I was upset and didn't trust the women in the house, so I stayed one more day, then moved out. I was there for a total of 2 days. I moved back home and continued using.

In 2015, I was arrested again, but for more serious charges. .... My bond was set at \$50,000 and there was no way my parents were going to bond me out of jail. I spent 2 months in the Wake County jail. I might have thought that would have been enough for me; I might have thought selling my car to hire a lawyer would have been enough. But it wasn't. After all that, I still wanted to use. I hung out with Stephen the night I got out and got high. The DA in Wake County gave me plenty of chances to get my life together but I continued to use. At this point, my mom was done with me, she cut me off completely and blocked my phone number. I didn't care though, all I cared about was still getting high. ....

In 2016, I was arrested for a 3<sup>rd</sup> time for possession of Heroin. My bond was only \$700 but I still had to sit in jail for 2 weeks because my parents were done and no one would come get me. The judge dropped it to a misdemeanor and I was released for time served. I ... finally did what the DA in Wake County asked me to do. I decided to go to TROSA in Durham. TROSA is a very intense 2-year program. They were very strict and had a lot of rules. I hated it there. One day, I got this gut feeling that I needed to leave. The counselors kept telling me that it was my disease wanting to get high, but I knew they were wrong, it was something else. After being in TROSA for 6 days, I left and got on a Greyhound bus back to Rocky Mount. While on the bus, I learned that a close friend was on life support and he y died on May 2, 2016]. After

experiencing something that traumatic, I was back to using in no time. I got high before going to his funeral and I am not proud of it, but that was the only way I knew how to handle it. A couple days later, I had my first overdose experience. All I remember was getting high and then blacking out. ....

The DA in Wake County knew that I had left TROSA and wasn't very pleased with me. This is when I decided that I was going to try an Oxford House again. I was very skeptical due to my experience in Fayetteville. I came to the conclusion that, if I was going to try an Oxford House again, then I was going to go somewhere fun. On May 28, 2016 I moved to the Oxford House in the Outer Banks, NC. I lived in the house for 5 months then moved out with one of my roommates. I thought I was a responsible adult and was ready to be on my own. It was not long after I moved out that I smoked Marijuana again. The high wasn't enough for me and I wanted more. Only 2 weeks later, I relapsed on heroin.

I used for a few weeks and visited the girls at the Oxford House while I was high. The girls knew that I was using and told me I wasn't allowed over anymore. I almost lost my job and the DA found out I was using again. He told me I could either move back into the Oxford House or he would revoke my bond and put me back into custody. It took no time at all for my life to have become unmanageable all over again. On November 11, 2016 I smoked Marijuana one last time and then finally turned my will and my life over to the God of my understanding.

My sobriety date is November 12, 2016 and I moved back into the Oxford House on November 28, 2016. I lived in the house for another 13 months then, decided I was finally ready to move out on my own. After getting a year of sobriety and moving out of the Oxford House, I got a job as a Patient Support Specialist at Two Dreams Treatment Center. At this point, I thought life was great. I had my own apartment, a job at a rehab and had bought myself my very own car. I thought life couldn't get any better than this. I was wrong! Today I have 2 years and 8 months of sobriety; I live in a beautiful condo; I have the most amazing pit bull that I rescued back in January and I work for the most amazing organization – Oxford House Inc.

I can only imagine how great my life will be in another 3 years. I am truly grateful that I didn't give up before the miracles happened. I quickly learned that just because you get clean, it doesn't mean life will be unicorns and rainbows every single day. Life will never be perfect but today I have a network and tools to help me cope and deal with life on life's terms.... Oxford House and Narcotics Anonymous saved my life and I am blessed to give back what was so freely given to me. Life for me today is pretty amazing and there isn't a single drink or drug that will make me throw any of it away.

### **Mark Johnson – District of Columbia**

My name is Mark Johnson. I was born in Washington, D.C. on January 3, 1962; the country was in the middle of the Vietnam War, John F. Kennedy was the president, and Dr. King and Malcolm X were fighting for black rights. As an only child of black middle-class parents, both of whom had several siblings, I was always surrounded by family, yet I mostly felt alone. We moved from DC to Hyattsville, MD in 1967—the year my father finished dental school at Howard University. My mother was an educator, teaching in DC public schools (she would go on to earn her master's and become a principal). My father and mother's hard work and dedication to obtaining education helped us climb the socioeconomic ladder. Their goal was always to make life better for me; to give me opportunities they didn't have.

They made sure I had a well-rounded childhood. I was always involved in activities—I played sports (basketball, football, and baseball), participated in Boy Scouts, took trumpet lessons, learned to swim, became a lifeguard, attended church every Sunday, went horseback riding with cousins, cut the grass and tended to the yard with my father, went to camps in the summer, traveled at least once a year, vacationed regularly, and earned high marks in school. I also found time to make friends. My social circle grew with each thing I participated in.

In the 1970s, I was exposed to drug culture. I smoked and drank, progressed to selling, and by the time I was a senior in high school, I was aware of the double-sidedness life offers. I played the fence, not knowing that I would have to choose a side. I enrolled at Howard University and was on track for dental school, following in my father's footsteps. At the same time, I was in a relationship with a childhood sweetheart, and we were both getting high. We went on dates to the Go-Go, to the movies, out of town; we smoked weed, we drank alcohol, we snorted lines of coke. In the 1980s, I was introduced to crack cocaine. I introduced her to the drug, and we both got hooked. I held on to the academic, upstanding, positive side of life for as long as I could. But I ended up on the other side, actively involved in the destruction of myself and my people. My girlfriend and I had a daughter in 1986. We both tried to get clean, but she and I ended up deeper in the throes of addiction.

I caught my first charge in 1988. While serving time in a Maryland Prison for felony possession with intent to distribute, I privately confessed that I had allowed drugs and alcohol to control me, that I failed my parents and my community and that I would make a change and never return to a prison cell. After serving my time, I returned to dental school and tried to work the twelve-step program. But, my girlfriend (the mother of my child), was still using. I gave in to old familiars and relapsed a few months after I was released.

Fearing legal troubles, I decided to seek help in an inpatient rehab program. My girlfriend entered the same rehab program two months after me but we were not allowed to be at the same facility. We had a plan: we would complete the program, we would reunite sober, and we would continue working on our relationship while raising our daughter. Things did not go according to plan. She met someone else while we were apart. When I completed the year-long rehab, I relapsed shortly after hearing the news.

I was arrested twice in 1992. Each time I was released, I returned to smoking crack. I tried to go back to dental school that same year but failed to make it to classes. I failed. I went to a few more rehabs and the outcome was always the same: I would remain clean for a while and then fall back into old habits. My name made a frequent appearance on court proceedings and, for many years, I cycled between rehab and incarceration. I am a habitual offender, a recidivist.

I have always had the ability to bounce back from setbacks. Even though I spent 30 years in and out of prisons, detention centers, and rehabs, there were stretches of time where I was clean and achieved some remarkable things. In 2002, while clean, I started a business venture—Johnson Trucking Company, Inc. In 2013, I earned my B. S. degree in communications from Bowie State and started graduate school.

In 2015, a few months after the death of my daughter's mother (my childhood sweetheart), I relapsed. It was the last time I faced a judge and did my time. I felt my age. I was too old for all the back and forth. I made a firm decision to stop climbing the fence and freefalling on the dangerous side. In order to make sure that I would abstain from drugs and alcohol, I figured that I needed to do something drastically different this time. Instead of returning to my parent's home, I discovered Oxford House. I applied and hoped that there was a place for me. I entered the Cedar Ridge Oxford House on February 20, 2018.

In 2018, I enrolled in school again. This time, I earned my Associates Degree in Substance Abuse Counseling. I made it my mission to help others who are struggling. I want to give back, right my wrongs, deal with my shortcomings. After 14 months in Oxford House, I was able to put my skills to use. I am now an employee—the Resource Coordinator for the District of Columbia. I have plans to enter a Graduate-Doctorate program in addiction services and counseling. I've taken all the years of chaos and hard-learned lessons, channeled them into a passion, and used them to give me purpose in life. I believe in a higher power, in karma, and in energy. All that I've done, things that have happened to me, experiences I've had, were all parts of my story that led me to this moment in my hero journey.

I have much to be thankful for—my parents are still alive and well, my daughter is always welcoming and loves me no matter what, my two grandsons will carry on the family tradition of black excellence. I am living for the present, always moving forward. I was introduced to Oxford House by way of a treatment center presentation. Mark Spence came in that day and shared his experience, strength, and hope about Oxford House. Immediately, I wanted some of what he had. From that first time until now, I have been on the ride of my life. Without Oxford House, I do not know where I would be.

### **Melissa A. – Colorado**

My name is Melissa; I'm an addict. My story may be very similar to many others out there, or very different... I have an old saying I like to start my story off with; that is, the definition of "insanity" is repeating the same mistakes over and over again and expecting different results. If there were lists of names of people under the definition, mine would be one of them.

Before I came into sober living, I had walked away from having 8½ years of recovery under my belt. ... I began to rely on drugs daily for 4 months. First, came the social drinking, then sleeping around with casual encounters; of course, that wasn't enough. So then found myself bar-hopping to find drugs. With my own place and space with my roommates, I thought I had it all, including having my using under control. I then decided it was okay for me to take a short vacation from going to meetings and working with a sponsor. Not working on myself in my step work was beginning to show. I put no thought into it or accountability. I avoided my problems in life. ...

I was working a good job and making decent money and I was able to function for a while and pay my bills on time. That was until my friends and family started noticing me being gone away every day, not to mention losing a lot of weight in a fast amount of time. But throwing my recovery out the window wasn't all; there was the simple fact that I had hidden my past from my job in order to keep it. ... Fortunately, I was able to resign from my job and that's when I started to seek help voluntarily. I knew what lay ahead... I began to pray again and cried for 3 months straight in my early sobriety.

Waking up to my revelation. I believed that if I wasn't going to stop, I would either get caught up with the people who were using and doing a lot more illegal stuff and end up back in prison or become homeless or even dead on the streets. My spiritual awakenings started to hit me even harder after surrendering from 4 months of using meth. It was like I got hit by a big bus – with its headlights coming at me. Some may call it "The burning bush moment"; I call it the big G.O.D knocking at my door.

I finally got into Oxford House and found my way into a homegroup. I then got down to business and picked a sponsor who had a similar path. We connected in an instant. I had my ups and downs while in Oxford House; however, being there taught me how to live without the use of drugs, build up a greater foundation of support around me, open up communication with my loved ones, balance a job and service work and cope with other women while growing through mistakes and becoming a productive member of society again.

Flash forward to today. I am happy I have chosen the road back into recovery. I am at peace knowing I don't have to ever live that way again. I am not only an alumna, I also work as a manager in a restaurant, and have healthy friendships in recovery. I do service work by being part of a subcommittee for H&I, sharing my experience, strengths and hope by going into the women's prison and detox facilities. I am blessed and honored to have the gifts of carrying the message to those still out there. I hope and pray my story can reach out to at least one person to change the path of making the same mistakes as I did. Thank you! Melissa A. 4/10/19 Chapter 6

### **Melissa F. – North Carolina**

I'm Melissa, Oxford resident - Chapter 6 – Oxford House Dotson. I was born and raised by a rehab romance that didn't work out in Baltimore, Maryland. I was introduced to manipulation when my parents split up; I would play them against each other as much as I could. ... Now, looking back, I can even see my obsession as a child with my hobbies like cheerleading or arts and crafts; it would be all I could think about. I would try to people-please and play the perfect daughter because I was scared that, if I didn't, I wouldn't be good enough to keep my parents in my life. Once my mom remarried and adopted two boys when I was 9, my obsession and people-pleasing turned to them; I just so badly wanted to belong somewhere. My oldest brother would babysit me when my mom would go to work and my stepfather was on maintenance medication that my older brother would take from him. He learned I was smaller and sneakier than him and I found my first DOC and my next tool – stealing. From 9 to 19, I ran with him and other “friends” that did the same things we did. During that time, I detoxed more times than I can remember, I took care of my father who had cancer and somehow graduated high school but I was completely lost to the world and wanted to die every day I woke up.

I found recovery for the first time at 19 and I took a seat for a few years but I couldn't relate to anyone because no one was my age. I was just as miserable there as I was on the street and, with no life skills, I felt just as lost. At 24, I made the choice to leave the rooms and found more pain and misery back on the streets. This time I found myself homeless and prostituting on the streets of Baltimore, barely eating or sleeping. I was praying for life but didn't know how to find it again. I found myself in a treatment center when I was 28 and it was strongly suggested I go to a facility in Wilmington NC where I was in a very structured living environment but all I learned was how to make my bed daily and pay rent. While going to recovery meetings, I kept hearing about Oxford. .... Chapter 6 had just opened a new house called Oxford House Dotson and they were looking for ladies to move in. I filled out an application, then was told I had to interview. It was probably the most nerve-racking few days while I waited for the House meeting so I could be interviewed. I was so happy when I got accepted. It was as if I was accepted into school; it felt like a new chapter was starting.

I knew that moving into Oxford would be different from what I was used to but I had no idea what I was getting myself into. Not only am I learning how to keep a checkbook, pay bills on time, and keep a clean house, I am also given the opportunity to grow with 7 other women not only in recovery but as a family ...sometimes dysfunctional, but still a family. Whether we have 1 day or over a year, we are all finding our voice and our way, thanks in big part to the Oxford House guidelines.

Thanks to the Oxford House, I have found a way to grow in my life and my recovery. I was just recently voted into housing services and I have found it rewarding to be giving back to the Houses that have been a big part of my story. The best thing that Oxford has given me is that, on any given day when I get home from work, I can walk into my safe place, my home, and I am asked how my day was by another lady in the house and I can feel that they care genuinely and honestly, thanks to Oxford. I feel like I belong. I have found a family and can continue my process and path in recovery and for that I am forever grateful!

### **Michael H. – Florida**

My name is Michael and, since I was 21, I have struggled with addiction off and on. But looking back, it might have started before then. When I was 17, I became anorexic and by the time I was 18, I was bulimic. At 6'1", I weighed only 116 pounds. That was my first addiction. Little did I know there would be many more to come. I have lost virtually everything you can lose due to addiction – except my life. I have spent time in mental institutions and I have been incarcerated. I have also destroyed numerous relationships with friends and family. Recently I had to come off a high dose of a benzodiazepine while I was in jail. And I had to do it while in solitary confinement. It was absolutely the worst thing I have ever been through. Six

months later, I'm still going through it but it's getting better. And so are the relationships with my family – especially my mother whom I love dearly. She is the one who found out about the Oxford House.

Since I have been residing in the Oxford House I have been through a plethora of emotions. I have good days and I have bad days. But I have a support system here to get me through it. I have met some amazing people through this institution – friends that I would like to keep for life. I honestly do not know what I would have done if I hadn't found this place. For the first time in my life I am learning how to become a man. Better late than never!

### **Mick Schroeder – Washington State**

I have struggled with addiction my entire adult life in one form or another. I started off in Middle School with alcohol. High School I stepped it up a notch. I started using cocaine with my alcohol. This continued until my mid-twenties when I tried speed. It started off every once in a while but, before I knew it, I was using daily. I no longer had control of my life. My life was centered around the getting and using of drugs.

Since then, I have acquired 6 Felonies. I have been to prison 3 times and gone through treatment 7 times – all to no avail. In 2015, I picked up my 7<sup>th</sup> felony 20 days out of prison. Sitting in county, I pleaded with God to take this addiction that has taken everything from me. I then wrote letters to the judge, prosecutor, and my lawyer telling them I needed help, that I was an addict and that prison was not helping me. I was released 3 days later and given the opportunity to participate in Drug Court, which I completed sanction-free. This, however, was not the end of my drug use. I relapsed 9 months after Graduation for a short period.

This is when I decided to move into an Oxford House. It was the best decision I have ever made. I not only moved into an Oxford House, I got involved. I went to fundraisers. I got a Chapter position. I went to the State Association Meeting. I had the privilege of going to the 2018 World convention in Kansas City. That is when I knew I wanted to do this for a living. On March 1<sup>st</sup> of this year, I became an employee of Oxford House Inc. Oxford House gave me the structure and support I needed to change my life – to rebuild relationships with family and friends and to be the father I have always wanted to be. For this I am forever Grateful. #OXFORDHOUSESTRONG.

### **Misty Hahn – Oklahoma**

My name is Misty Hahn and I am an addict. I started using drugs when I was twelve, not by my choice. Let's just say that my step-father was a very evil man. The older I got, the more experimenting I did with drugs. My favorite was weed and meth mixed with alcohol. I loved the feeling of not feeling anything. The mask. I never felt like I belonged anywhere and was always uncomfortable in my skin. I was a pleaser and just wanted to be accepted. When I was 16, my mother committed suicide and I was the one who found her. My world turned completely upside down and I didn't have a care in the world. I was angry at God and felt that I was meant to be alone in this world. When I was 10 years old, I had been told that I wouldn't be able to have children and now I had lost my mother. My downward spiral began. I got into dancing in clubs to support my habit. I went in and out of abusive relationships. I went to prison in 2006. Any time I left treatment, prison or jail, I always went back to what I was used to – the drugs and the misery. I was an IV meth user from the time I was 16 off and on until I was 30.

I had violated my probation and was on the run from Sedgwick County when they finally caught up with me!! My saving grace was that I had gone to court and they gave me a UA and I melted the cup. I stood in that courtroom trying to justify by any means why I was dirty. That judge called me on it and said, "Miss Miner, I don't live in that world you live in. You're going to jail." I was facing 2 years in the county jail. I remember sitting in the jail cell waving the white flag. I was done. A week later, that same judge pulled me back into his court room. He said, "I am going to give you one last chance. I see something in you." I went

to treatment at WRC. Some Oxford House folks came and did a presentation and I was willing to try something different. Sometimes you have to get uncomfortable to get comfortable.

I walked from treatment to Oxford House Rita in Wichita, Kansas. I remember being nervous, thinking, "What if they don't like me?" I had so many fears. I've never had my own place or known how to be responsible and pay bills. Those women accepted me and told me, "Welcome home!" My whole experience was the best thing that ever happened to me. I found a family within that house. They made sure to hold me accountable for attending meetings, having a sponsor and working the steps. Also, along the way I learned self-accountability and about holding others accountable. Principles before personalities. I lost one of those sisters, Lindsey Barnes. She had taught me so much in Oxford House and in recovery. When we lost her to an overdose, I realized that there was nothing out there anymore for me except death. I wanted to live and be in recovery. I got more involved with Oxford House. I was elected HSC for Chapter 3 without even being there. I went on an opened-up Oxford House Barnes, a house for 9 women. That taught me how to get out of self and help others. Since then I have become an alumna and I helped with the beginning of the OKC Alumni Association in Oklahoma. I married my best friend at the 2014 Oxford House World Convention in Oregon. I have always had some part of involvement with Oxford House.

I am one of the lucky ones. It only took me one time going through Oxford House. I fell in love with it immediately. It was the missing link to my recovery. I was hired in 2017 to become outreach in Oklahoma. It is a passion of mine and my husband's as he also works for Oxford House. I have been clean and sober since 12/10/09. I am forever trying to repay Oxford House for what it has so freely given me.

#### **Monica R. – North Carolina**

August 24th of 2018 was the day I turned my will and life over to the God of my understanding. It was the day my son, Chayne, was born. He came two months early and had cocaine in his system. I was finally sick and tired of being sick and tired. I was what felt like a million miles away from home and all alone (or so I thought). I grew up in South Florida and started using at the age of 13. I have been through jail, institutions, and near-death. But God had a purpose for me other than anything I could have imagined.

On the day my son was born, I knew that I had to change everything – for myself first and then for my child. So, I called Oxford House Beaumont in Greenville, NC. It was the only women and children's house in eastern NC and it gave us a chance. The day I moved into the house was the same day my son was released from the hospital and also the same day the Department of Social Services took him to foster care. But I didn't use. The girls gave me one of only two mother/child rooms and I am grateful for that chance every day. With the help of AA and God, I showed up for life.

I went to a program for felons to help with job readiness skills and I got two jobs. I went to AA and found a sponsor and started working the steps. I also took every class DSS said I needed. It was like I was finally living. Seven months later, I got my son back and he lives me here in the Oxford House. While being here in the Oxford House, I realized how much I would like to help other addicts and alcoholics. I am now in school to be a drug abuse counselor. I wake up every day not only grateful to be sober but also grateful for life. I know that my past is just part of my story, not all of it. My past doesn't dictate my future and I know that God has a purpose for my life. Oxford House gave me the support, structure and guidance I needed to become the person I was always meant to be. I live my life knowing that as long as I put my sobriety first, anything is possible.

#### **Natasha Sprinkle – Washington State**

I'm Natasha Sprinkle, the current Chair for Chapter 22 in the Tri-Cities, WA. I chose to get clean after several years of heavy addiction. I am a Type 1 Diabetic and my use added an extreme amount of stress

on my body. In fact, during the final year of my addiction I was admitted into the ICU 16 times—yes, in one year. Because of my use, like many of us, I placed myself in some horribly dangerous situations. I have been to jail numerous times. I have had several close friends die from their addictions. When my addiction hit its peak, I was no longer placing just myself in harm’s way; I was now placing my loved ones in vulnerable situations in which they could be hurt. I had had enough of my chaotic life and I went to treatment in the Spring of 2017. I excelled and loved the outlook for my new life with my new potential. However, I made a huge mistake. After completing treatment, I naively moved back to my hometown on the west side of Washington State, with familiar neighborhoods and all too many familiar faces. Even though I had gained tools and understanding while in treatment, I relapsed almost immediately upon my return. After a month-long binge, an opportunity seemingly fell into my lap. I received the chance to move into an Oxford House, except this time it would be 300 miles away from “home.”

I have been clean since August 24, 2017 and I moved into an Oxford House three days later in Tri-Cities, Washington. Every day, recovery is a struggle and a gift. It’s a blessing that we are owed because we’re not simply addicted faces with poor choices; we’re human beings with a disease. Recovery must be sought because it has become an epidemic in which people are not just losing things important to them, they are dying! I’m grateful to provide service to Oxford House, Inc. It has shown me how to work towards my true potential, be accountable, and live my life outside of a self-centered mindset. I am entirely grateful for my Oxford family. Natasha Sprinkle Chapter 22 Chair

### **Robert Trevino – Texas**

I grew up on the ‘ramen noodles-and-canned raviolis-for-lunch-on-most-days’ kind of life; just me, my mom and my sister. Starting at the age of 16, I made my first (of many) bad choice of my life and involved myself in a drug trafficking operation – initiating a ripple effect of negative choices that led my life on a destructive path. I was consuming alcohol at an alarming rate and selling marijuana full-time by the age of 17 and I had dropped out of High School. By 24, life was the same stagnant dark cloud on repeat and, by 27, I was in and out of Federal Prison and accomplished nothing more than waking up in the morning and not always wanting to do so. Age 28 was a blur of bad relationships, the introduction of crack cocaine into my diet and a downward spiral into what felt like the end. Let me start at the beginning...

I grew up in a small city called Del Rio. It is the border town to Acuna, Mexico, so coming and going was common. Coming and going to party at age 16 was not so common but, at the time, the Border Patrol was not what it is today. As I started to spend more and more time there, I realized that the people I met had a lot of extravagant things that I did not (e.g., new cars, brand-named clothes, wads of money, etc.) Drug trafficking was the answer and before I knew it, I was indicted into the Federal System at the age of 19 for a ‘Conspiracy to possess marijuana with the intent to distribute over 100 kilograms from Mexico into the United States of America.’ After 3 years of back and forth court dates, I was sentenced to 37 months. My time spent during those 3 years pre-sentence was filled with constant depression and anxiety and alcohol. My addiction was clouded by the felony charge and my impending incarceration. I did not think or register that I had a problem with alcohol but, as I grew through my 20s, it was manifesting and festering inside...waiting. When I was released from prison at the age of 25, I spent time satisfying the terms of my release until it was safe to return to alcohol – that came with a 2-year bender and then another 1-year sentence for a DWI. At 29, I failed another drug test for probation and picked up a PI charge; it should have been the end for me. My probation officer came back with the option to go to rehab instead of another prison stint. My addiction was in full effect and I knew it was either die or get help.

Walking into rehab at the Bay Area Recovery Center was the best choice of my life. I didn’t see it that way at first; I still didn’t think I belonged there but, after my 5<sup>th</sup> day of detox and withdrawal, it started to make more sense and the desire to run was fleeting. Experiencing rehabilitation gave me more hope and desire to change than any amount of prison ever could. It provided a foundation of hope and I was able to finally

feel that I *wanted* to make it out alive. By the end of rehab, I started looking into living alternatives and through the help of a good friend, I was introduced to Oxford House. I knew I wanted to continue to utilize the habits that were starting to develop but I also was afraid of not being able to do it alone and afraid I might revert to old habits if I went back to where I was originally living. Oxford House provided the continuous support and accountability I needed to keep me sober. At 29, I am sitting in my room at Oxford House Lombardy writing this life synopsis, 5 months sober. I have started a new ripple effect – an effect that initiates a whole new perspective on what life has to offer me. As I continue to experience what this new lifestyle has to offer me, through Oxford, I hope and want to help other struggling addicts find the light through their darkness.

### **Roger G. – District of Columbia**

I came to the Oxford Houses in 2012. I'd left everything behind to start a new life. It was the hardest thing I've ever done but also the most worthwhile. I've been clean for six years and the help and support provided to me by the Oxford Houses and the people I have met there have been essential parts of that. When I walked through the door, I knew immediately that each and every person I met was there for the same reasons I was. They wanted that same fresh start. And, as fast as I realized their kinship, so too did they welcome me to their community. I stayed in Oxford Houses until 2016, and that welcoming attitude never changed. That collective resolve to get better, to do better, never changed either. As I got older, and got a job, the Houses and their community stayed behind me, holding me up. When I came out to them as a gay man, they didn't falter in the slightest but continued to be the rock I needed.

It would have been difficult to convince the version of me that existed before living in Oxford House that it would be better – that there was a future version of me that paid bills on time, that had been managing a restaurant for years, that had three beautiful, adorable puppies. And yet, that is where I am now. Oxford House has given me the tools necessary to make the changes to my life that we all want. I've never been more passionate about anything than I am about allowing others to get the same help I did. My current involvement in Oxford House is being a part of the DC and MD Alumni Association. Oxford House continues to be one of the most meaningful parts of my life – a life that, thanks to the Oxford Houses, is now full of meaning.

### **Ronald P. McClarin III – Virginia**

I was born May 18, 1995 in Henrico County Virginia. After moving around several times during my childhood due to family issues, I finally settled in with my parents in Matoaca, Virginia. Upon graduating Matoaca High School, I joined the U.S Army in 2013 as a combat medic. During my time spent in the military, I developed an addiction to opiates, which followed me into the civilian life. In 2016, I started working as a career firefighter for the city of Petersburg, Virginia. During this time, my addiction consumed me as I attempted to cope with the things I saw daily while on my job. In 2018, my addiction caught up with me and ultimately cost me my career as a firefighter. After losing my job, I used even more frequently, and I subsequently lost my home, family and everything I loved most. I spent the next two months living in my truck in the city of Richmond with no job and no money to feed my habit.

When the Army found out about my situation, they attempted to intervene. I entered a two-week detox program at Fort Belvoir. The military then arranged for me to enter a 60-day residential treatment program at River Oaks Treatment Center in Tampa, Florida. Upon completion of my treatment program, I moved into Oxford House in September of 2018. I became the House President in February 2019 and, in the same month, I became the Chairperson of my Chapter. In May, 2019, I accepted a full-time position as an Oxford House Outreach Worker covering the Central Region of Oxford Houses in Virginia. I have been clean and sober since July 14, 2018. Today I am not only an Outreach Worker but also a REVIVE Trainer as well as a Pre-Law student at Liberty University.

### **Scott Clarke – Indiana**

"You should consider an Oxford House." That's what my treatment center counselor said to me as I sat in her office. I had just expressed to Meghan my fear and anxiety about leaving treatment and going back to my dreary one-bedroom apartment. I felt that if I went back there, to the place I stayed drunk, the place I did drugs, the place I was loneliest and the place that was pure isolation, I would not be able to remain sober. The fact is, if I didn't stay sober, I would most likely be dead!

I'm a 58-year old man with 40+ years of an alcoholic and drug-induced blur that has been my life. As in most stories, I have wreckage in my past – failed marriages, countless evictions, repossessions and a list of lost jobs and careers a mile long. I am one of those who had been labeled "hopeless." About 6 weeks before I sat in Meghan's office, I had suffered a heart attack. While I lay in that hospital bed with tubes carrying blood thinners and other meds to my veins, I was still drinking. 'Friends' would bring me vodka or other alcoholic beverages and, when they wouldn't, I found a liquor store that would deliver to my room. After getting out of the hospital, I continued to drink, night and day. I shook violently in the mornings until I put enough alcohol in me. There was no longer a choice for me. I was completely dependent on it, addicted. On February 20, 2019 I admitted myself into treatment.

It was on or about March 10 when Meghan said, "You should consider an Oxford House." I knew a couple of other guys who had left the treatment center and gone to an Oxford House but that was the extent of my knowledge about them. Meghan explained that they were sober living houses; that they were men living together in a regular house, supporting each other's sobriety. She felt it would be a good situation for me because I didn't need the structure of a traditional halfway house. I told her I wanted to think about it; after all, I didn't know anything about them. Here's where the spirit of the universe, God or whatever you call him, stepped in. I called my former sponsor and he said Oxford House would be a great choice! I heard from one of the other guys who had gone to one and he loved it! I couldn't find one person who had anything bad to say about Oxford House. I told Meghan that I would do it and she set up my interview. I didn't know it yet but I had already been evicted from my apartment because of past due rent.

On March 20, 2019, I was discharged from treatment and moved into Oxford House Mariposa in New Albany, Indiana. I was greeted by several of the guys who had interviewed me and they said, "Welcome home!" I immediately felt comfortable and 'part of' – but part of what? I didn't know, but I soon found out. I was part of a new family with guys who were happy to see me; guys who needed me as much as I needed them; guys who genuinely cared about my well-being and who would hold me accountable and not in a mean or hateful way. I felt respected and accepted regardless of my past.

Since moving in I've experienced a life I didn't know existed. Between my 12-Step program and Oxford House, I have a life full of purpose and fulfillment. We, all of us in the House, are a band of brothers, always helping, encouraging and uplifting each other. We all are driven to make our House successful and to help others to find what we've found – a safe, clean, supportive home to promote our sobriety. We have attended numerous unity events and I, personally, have found the friendship and acceptance by others that I never had before! I was drinking and drugging myself to death; my life had no meaning or purpose. I made a decision to get sober and took the steps necessary to do just that. I believe, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that if I had returned to my previous living situation, I'd be drunk or dead by now... I am convinced Oxford House saved my life!

### **Seth Backer – Washington State**

My first attempt at recovery was in my senior year of high school. Like most, I had some trauma in my life that propelled my addiction; my brother's suicide, and the arrest of my lifelong soccer coach were those events for me. I drank and partied through high school and it got out of control; I sought help and the seed

of recovery was planted. I then went off to Portland State University where I thought that I could live in the dorms and remain sober; that didn't happen. I began to drink, and started using party drugs again. Over the next few years my drinking and drug use got out of hand. My addiction went full throttle and by the end of that time I had failed out of school, wrecked four cars and lost many friends as well as the job had had since I was 16. When the friends that you party with say that you have a problem, you might look at it, but I didn't and my addiction continued to progress. By the end of it, I had a raging cocaine habit and was drinking a fifth a day. I needed help. I checked myself into a local rehab facility and entered inpatient. This began my first real attempt at recovery and even that was not all I needed. I thought I could do it my way.

Once I graduated treatment, I found Oxford House in Vancouver WA. I interviewed and was accepted in Oxford House Grammar. I found that this was the missing piece for me – or so I thought. I did very well there: I enrolled in school and got a nice job that allowed me to do a lot. I also found the idea of service work. I got involved, became Chapter Co-chair and moved into a sick house to help it back on its feet. Then I relapsed, due to only going to a few meetings; I had no real recovery though I was sober. I waited 30 days and reapplied to a different Oxford House, I got in and did the same thing; jumped back into service work, upped the number of meetings I went to and that was it, still on my terms. I relapsed again. With my ego severely hurt, I went back out for 6 months and that almost was the end of me, I was at a breaking point.

I reached out to an old housemate at the Grammar Oxford House where I started and did so well. They had an opening. I was accepted to that Oxford House.. I did whatever I needed to make it; I went to meetings, got a sponsor, worked my steps, and it all started to make sense. I got back involved with Chapter but this time I was able to show others the real way to do it, not just sober but with recovery.

I hit about a year and half and I got a job as a Chemical Dependency Professional at a MAT clinic, I then use my experience with that to educate as many people in Vancouver Oxford House and the state of WA about MAT and what it really is – not all the myths. I loved my job but had always wanted to be a “Judy Maxwell” and a few times she had asked me if I would be interested in an outreach position. I said: “Yes,” Well, when one opened up, I said, “Yes” and it has been an amazing journey since that day. I graduated from University of Phoenix with my Bachelors of Science in Human Services and Addiction Studies. I recently applied to two master's programs to work towards my Masters of Social Work degree. I would have none of this without Oxford House.

### **Shawn McReynolds – Alabama**

My name is Shawn and I'm a 44-year-old recovering alcoholic. I moved to Oxford House-Christi in Alabama, in December 2018 from Mississippi. This was a stressful time for me because I was coming from a 3-month treatment program that I willingly completed but I had never lived out of my hometown. I knew I needed to move away from certain people, places, and things that had been triggers for the last few years of my active addiction. The transition to a new environment and community seemed somewhat overwhelming, but exciting at the same time.

After coming to the Oxford House, I was able to get to know the other women in the House, which provided me an immediate support system. I recognized that I needed continued structure in my life and accountability, which I get from living in a sober living environment. I'm able to stay focused on my recovery, attend meetings regularly, and I have a great sponsor. I was able to get back into my career, which has helped my confidence, knowing I'm taking care of myself again.

All in all, Oxford House has helped give me a sense of hope and belonging. I have become more self-aware in my recovery and in how I want to live my life. I'm doing the things I need to do to stay spiritually fit and sober. I'm able to give back, which feels great and builds my self-worth. I am happy to say that I am

9½ months sober and being a member of Oxford House-Christi has played a part in helping me along the way with my continued recovery.

### **Sheronda Banks – North Carolina**

When I decided to surrender to the disease of addiction. I immediately called Karen McKinnon (Oxford House Resource Coordinator) who has been part of my support network off and on for years. My life was full of relapses, failure, and a cycle of active addiction. I moved into the Oxford House full of fear of the unknown, failure and despair. Immediately upon moving in, I felt fortunate to have discovered this new family and way of living, even though it took a few weeks before I was comfortable in my own skin. With the thoughts of repetitive relapses, my belief was that I will never amount to or accomplish anything, let alone stay clean. I didn't want to go back to that shattering cycle I was living and I needed an opportunity to start a new life. Oxford House was the answer to my prayers. I came in there with no self-esteem and my spiritual, physical, and mental aspects were broken. About 2 weeks after I moved in, I got involved. I was welcomed and finally found a place where I belong. I spoke with Ms. Karen McKinnon, who encouraged me, lifted my spirits, and advised me of many options. The one option that drew close to my heart was getting some structure in my life. I became hopeful.

Living in Oxford House taught me a lot about me, others, democracy, conflict resolution, budgeting, organization skills, and how to get through struggles (life on life terms). Sharing with others, letting people know what's going on with me, and being open to suggestions made it easier one day at a time. The combination of Oxford House living, my roommates, and the program of NA have given me a life of peace and, most of the all, serenity. I have completed my college degree, something I quit due to drugs and alcohol. I prayed about it and shared it with the ladies in the house and they filled me with so much strength, love, and motivation. I did the necessary steps to get back in school as a fulltime student. Throughout the semesters, I struggled, cried, and had to get a tutor. My housemates and Ms. Karen McKinnon were all there for me. The early feelings of insecurity, fear and shame plagued me but my Oxford roommates who shared their experience, strength, and hope carried me through and encouraged me to not give up. On December 10, 2016, I not only graduated with two degrees but also obtained 6 other certificates and diplomas. Who would have thought an addict like me could achieve all these credentials. Only by the grace of God do dreams do come true.

Today, I am so grateful for Oxford House. I lived there for 2 years and obtained all the necessary tools I needed to become a productive woman in society. Each position in the house gave me the education, knowledge, and experience I need for all areas of my life – Comptroller taught me how to balance and budget; Secretary taught me how to prioritize by New and Old business; Chore Coordinator taught me about keeping my room clean and, overall, the House taught me how to be accountable and mindful. Today, with the life of recovery that I have gained and new way of living, I have 3 years of sobriety. I am a college graduate and homeowner; I have savings, a car and numerous mental, physical and spiritual assets. Helping someone, somewhere, achieve clean and sober living and sharing my experience, strength, and hope about living in an Oxford House would be another success!! I cannot lose if I stay involved in both my life of recovery and my Oxford House family. Oxford House Oldham Court saved my life.

### **Summer McClellan – Florida**

My name is Summer and my story begins, like many others, when I was a child. On the outside, I appeared to be an ideal kid. I made straight A's, participated in multiple sports, and never had to take a trip to the dean's office for any reason. At home, I continued to put on the act of being that perfect daughter, sister, friend, grandchild... However, on the inside, I felt worthless. This people-pleasing, perfectionist act went on through my teenage years and into my adult life. No one in my life at that time could have ever imagined that by the age of 18, I had already used dope to numb the trauma that I experienced from childhood

emotional abuse and being raped at the age of 16. I went on to college where I played volleyball. It was then that I had multiple knee surgeries and script after script of painkillers were given to me. It's crazy to think back on this because I had those pills at my disposal yet I never abused them until later in life.

In my senior year of college, I finished playing volleyball and got a job waiting tables. I started using on a daily basis and, once I started, I was not able to stop. I continued this habit over that year until my best friend intervened and I promised her I would quit. I left my job waiting tables and became a bartender where I just traded one substance for another. This became a habit until I got fired from my job and moved back to Pensacola. Within a few months of moving home, I got my first teaching job. With this, I also coached multiple sports. This is when I started to experiment with my script for painkillers. One day I took 2 and I will never forget how good I felt. From there, it was over. I was doctor-shopping and calling in refills early. During this time, I found out I was pregnant and got married. I didn't have a physical dependence yet but I continued to take pills throughout my pregnancy as my doctor prescribed a certain amount of them to me. I have back issues and have had 3 knee surgeries so I am always in pain. It wasn't hard to get a script from her. I remember that I could go days without taking anything but at this time, it was the compulsive thoughts that drove me to use. I had no idea that I was suffering from a disease.

After my first child was born and I left the hospital with a script of my favorite pills, my physical dependence began. For over 2 years, I maintained my addiction in secret. I had worked my way up to the stronger stuff still not knowing that I was an addict. I soon found out I was pregnant with my 2nd child and, by this time, I was drowning in the disease and the guilt and shame that comes with it. I did not want to hurt my baby but I did not know how to stop and was too scared to tell anyone. Soon after finding out I was pregnant, a girl came into my life who was also pregnant and on a maintenance medication they prescribe opiate addicts that can be taken when pregnant. She helped me over the next 9 months and I had a perfect, healthy baby. Two weeks after having my 2nd son, I found out that my husband had been cheating on me our entire marriage. It KILLED me. I started using heavily and I spiraled into a dark void. My family saw me slowly dying and they could not sit back and watch any longer so my mother made a doctor's appointment for me and an appointment with a therapist. I still did not have the courage to tell them I was struggling with addiction so I let God do what I could not. The day of my doctor's appointment, I was going to get on anti-depressants and birth control; however, I learned I couldn't do either because I was pregnant. After a few days, I realized I could not stay in a marriage that was built on lies (on both sides). So, I told him I wanted out, asked him to leave and the next day, I went to therapy. This is where I learned that I was really sick and suffered from a disease.

I finally told my family that I struggled with substance abuse disorder and I went to rehab for the first time. It felt like the weight of the world was lifted off my shoulders. I rode the pink cloud for over a year. After coming out of rehab, I had to come back to reality and the realization that things didn't stop in life while I was away. I came home to a half-empty house and a nasty divorce. I managed to stay clean for about 2 years as I was pregnant for almost one of them and fighting a custody battle for the next one. My children were my strength and motivation to stay clean. However, in 2016, I learned that even my love for my own children was not enough to keep me clean. During this year, I had my first experience with IV use. At that moment, I knew it was over. Over the past few years, I have been able to have short amounts of clean time. Each of these times happened the exact same way... I was so deep into my addiction that I couldn't hide it anymore; my family confronted me and tried to get me help through medicine, religion and psychiatry. None of these was sufficient and I would go right back out. In February of 2019, I was at a point of desperation. This time it was life or death. So, I tried rehab again. This time I was doing all the things suggested of me. I focused on me and loving myself, trusting others and building a relationship with my higher power.

When I was preparing to leave rehab, it was suggested that I go to sober living and participate in Intensive Outpatient so I did. This is how I ended up in an Oxford House. I did not think it would be possible to do

sober living considering my shared parenting time and the fact that I have to live within 50 miles of their father to exercise my parenting time. But I prayed about it and the day I sat down with my counselor to see if we could make this happen, we found an Oxford House that was a women and children's house exactly 50 miles from Pensacola. If that doesn't scream GOD, I don't know what does!!! I moved in in March and have been living in Oxford ever since. I am now Chapter Chair in the Pensacola Chapter 2 region. I love Oxford House and what it has done for me. I am learning how to live a clean life responsibly. I am building relationships and rapport with women who empower me. I am learning how to be a leader without putting substances in my body. And, I have accountability in all aspects of my life. I am forever grateful for this experience and my Oxford family.

### **Terry Fuller – Nebraska**

My grandmother raised me since I was 3 days old. My mother and father were unable to care for me as they were struggling with alcohol and drug addiction. I have 4 brothers – 2 older, and 2 younger. When I was 4 years old, my youngest brother, Cody, died in the home, due to unsafe crib practices that really sent my mother and father into destructive use and abuse. I grew up in North Omaha, a rough part of town and my mother and father lived next door to my grandmother's house. Eventually, my father moved into my grandmother's and my mom wasn't around anymore. Drug addiction was in my face a lot after that. When adults were in the house we had to go to our rooms. There were times we would be locked there all night and some of the next day. We moved when I was 9 years old to Benson to escape my father's drug dealers that he owed money to.

Growing up, I was the trouble maker, the class clown. I was in trouble with the law often. Luckily, I was never charged with anything. I never took high school seriously; I constantly skipped school and started to get into drugs, marijuana, and psychedelics. In my junior year, I dropped out of high school with the intentions of getting my GED – which never happened. At 21, I hit the bar scene hard and got heavy into cocaine. A few months later, I had my girlfriend pregnant with no way to provide, and my son, Jayden, was born in 2012. A few months later, I received 2 felony charges for flight to avoid, possession of a controlled substance, and DUI. I was out on bond and moved back to Omaha but nothing changed and I received another DUI. In 2013, I was sentenced to 1 year in prison. While I was incarcerated, I continued to use drugs and never took it seriously. I was released in 2014 and went straight back to my old ways. Over the next 2 years, I destroyed my life and anyone's I came into contact with. I ended up homeless and checked into treatment. I still couldn't stay sober.

On February 22, 2017, I totaled my car and received a 4<sup>th</sup> offence DUI and ended up back in jail. When I got there, I hit my knees and I asked God to come into my life and help me. I had a small taste of sobriety from treatment previously and I wanted that feeling again. I let God work in my life from that day forward. After 4 months I got pretrial release and was awarded the opportunity to go to Campus of Hope Treatment Center. After completing treatment, I went to an Oxford House for a year. I was then sentenced to 2-10 years for the 4<sup>th</sup> offence DUI. I was bitter but I swallowed it and told myself God had a plan for me. I was then paroled to an Oxford House that was struggling but, over the next 7 months, my brothers and I built this house up and it was amazing to be a part of that. My time at being a resident was eventually up. Oxford gave me the tools I needed to live a life free from active addiction and I moved into my own place and became the Oxford House Alumni Committee Chair.

My life today is amazing. I'm Housing Services for Chapter 6; I'm Treasurer for the State Association, and the Alumni Committee Chair. I am currently an alumnus but I still have a strong connection to Oxford. I stay involved and am the first to help a House that needs it. I freely give back what was so freely given to me. I chair meetings and I sponsor guys and houses. I help with fundraising and event planning. I do presentations for Oxford at treatment and detox centers. I have built a family in Oxford and I love my life today and the friendships I've built for a lifetime. None of that would have been possible without Oxford.

## **Tisha Roberson – North Carolina**

Growing up in a small town, spending time with family and church friends was my normal. I made good grades and played piano and trumpet. Tee-ball led to softball; cartwheels, back bends, and splits led me to our middle school cheerleading squad. The Yearbook Committee, and photojournalism were my favorite extracurricular activities. Being voted Student Council Secretary was an accomplishment. My daughter was born in November of my senior year, and I graduated in June. I started college in the fall and soon dropped out. I was content with being a waitress, and raising my daughter. Her dad and I moved in together. Three years later our twins were born.

Life was good, at least on the outside. At age 26, I tasted alcohol, snorted cocaine, took pills and smoked cigarettes for the first time, all in one night. My life and way of thinking was forever changed. I was hooked! Within six months, I was smoking crack and had completely abandoned my children. I lived to use, and used to live. I had sex with strangers for money, robbed people and stole from local businesses. Two prison sentences later, I thought, enough was enough.

I was ready to get my life back together. But, I didn't work a 12-step program or associate with any recovering addicts or alcoholics and I never truly surrendered to God. I relapsed and went back to the cold lonely streets in search of money and drugs. Heroin was readily available and cheap. Speed-balling was my best friend; I couldn't smoke crack without shooting dope. I fell in love with the feeling of a needle pricking my skin and running warm numbness through my veins. The devil had me chained down in the pits of hell. Many people prayed over my life. God assigned an earthly angel to love me in the mist of all this pain. She gave me food, hugged me, prayed with me, and never failed to let me know how much Jesus loved me, just as I was.

On July 26, 2014 after 2½ years of heroin and crack cocaine use, I was fleeing the cops on multiple FTA felony charges. Looking back, I know God specifically placed my open warrants file into Officer Woodlief's hands. He was looking for me and asking people to call him if they saw me. Little did I know that my walk into a drug house that Saturday morning would end the way it did, plus the fact that I can't PRAISE GOD ENOUGH THAT IT DID!!! He had received a phone call revealing my whereabouts and he arrived shortly after that. I was angry, exhausted, and defeated. As he approached me, I was raising my voice asking him why he was so concerned about me when drug dealers were so busy making moves all around us. The words he spoke to me have a permanent place in my memory. He said, "Today is not their day; today is your day." He was calm and patient with me. I knew there would be no making bond and I would surely be sentenced to prison. He allowed me to smoke a cigarette, gather my thoughts, and heard my plea to call my children. He gave me his phone to place the call.

On the way downtown, he was compassionate and asked questions about my life and the decisions I had been making. He was invested as an officer into who, what, why, and how, I and so many others, were living a life addicted to drugs and street life. I kept it real and, for the first time in a long time, the addict inside felt like Tisha, simply because this man, who was dedicated to his job, talked to me like I was a human being and not just a junkie and a convict.

I was sentenced to prison for the third time. Several months later, I surrendered my life to the care of God and I asked Jesus to forgive me of my sins, and invited Him into my heart. At that very moment I was saved and set free. Someone sent me a Celebrate Recovery Bible, and I used it to complete a drug treatment program. The Oxford House prison reentry program arranged for me to interview with an Oxford House and I was accepted. Upon release, my parole officer took me to Raleigh and I was welcomed home by the ladies at North Hill Oxford House.

I started each day with prayer and meditation. I got a job waiting table at IHOP, attended 12 step meetings, got a sponsor, and kept showing up. I learned to trust other women, and allowed them to love me. They taught me to love myself. I was given an opportunity to rebuild my relationship with my children, my precious gifts from God. I worked the steps and made amends for the wrongs I had done. I was finding my authentic self, and I was falling in love with the woman I saw in the mirror. I met a good woman; her name is Mary. Today, she's my best friend. Oxford House and support groups taught me a new way to live and encouraged me on my way. After having my license reinstated, Mary allowed me to drive a car she owned. I enrolled in school and moved out of Oxford House. I completed my first semester of collage, and bought my own car. For the first time in my life I was truly proud of myself. I was falling in love with a kind and gentle man, Casey. I was growing and helping others. I completed my NC Peer Support Certification and worked part-time with Cottage Healthcare while continuing full time with IHOP. This soon proved to be too much. Being invested in my college education, I decided to stop work with Cottage and continue on my way. My favorite day of the week was Thursday, because I'd drive home to Henderson to spend time with my kids and attend Celebrate Recovery.

Nearly a year and a half later, I moved in with Casey and his son Caleb. We were growing and becoming a family. I started applying for full-time inpatient peer support positions. I was turned down time and time again. My criminal background was a barrier. I was depressed and overwhelmed; after all I was attending school to become a substance use counselor and I couldn't find employment as inpatient peer support. Had I misunderstood Gods purpose for my life? I was now attending my 12-step meeting and Celebrate Recovery at Temple. These programs taught me to surrender and stop forcing my will and allow God to work. I took off my God shoes and moved out of His way.

And, boy oh boy, did He move. I began to work with Oxford House residents as a peer advocate. Building relationships with new residents, while connecting them to resources, filled a space in my heart that I never realized was empty. Soon after, I interviewed with the Alcohol Drug Council of NC and was offered a position as an Integrated Recovery Resource Specialist. I accepted. A year later, so much has changed. I wake up every day with a grateful heart, knowing our work makes a difference. I'm registered with The North Carolina Substance Abuse Professional Practice Board. I'm working to complete 6,000 hours of supervision so I can be fully licensed in the state of NC. My life is blooming and I'm busy planting seeds. I'm marrying my best friend on Nov 2. My youngest daughter is pregnant with my first grandchild. My oldest daughter graduates from ECU in the spring. My son is working full-time and is busy building his life. Caleb is growing and finding himself. Our newly-formed family is thriving. I have true friends, I attend Temple Represents and Temple Celebrate Recovery, where I'm encouraged to grow in my walk with God. I didn't misunderstand God's calling for my life; I heard Him loud and clear. I'm following my passion and I'm beyond grateful to know that He is still working on me. I'm excited to live out the next chapter of my life. God writes beautiful stories, I'll let Him keep the pen.... Tisha Roberson, NC Oxford House Alumna

### **Travis Jobe – Virginia**

My story throughout addiction is like many others – putting everyone close to me through some of the worst times of their lives. The only thing I knew how to do was to lie, cheat, and steal to get my next fix. This continued for a decade, until my wreckage caused serious legal issues. After being put into jail for the fifth time in 2015, I agreed to go to treatment in Florida just to get released. That's where I found the rooms (although I wouldn't take much seriously). Furthermore, realizing that I needed to research addiction a little more, I went on a run for about 7 months, using and trying to stay away from the Virginia Court system. Finally, after being caught, they extradited me back to Virginia where I was sentenced to the minimal time (thinking I was going away forever as I ran) and released back into my hometown of Winchester, VA. From that point, I made it about six months before I was incarcerated for another eleven months on a probation violation.

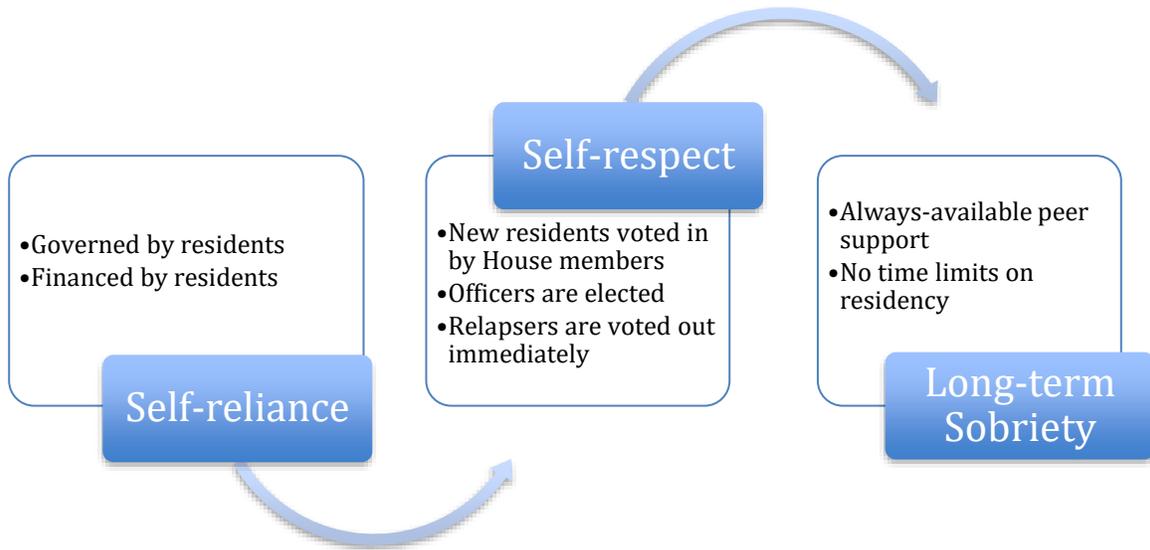
I still to this day cannot tell you exactly what “clicked” while being incarcerated this go-round but I’m truly blessed to have had something work in my favor. My clean date is June 15, 2017. I attended a ninety-day Department of Corrections program and from there I went into Oxford House - Hawthorne in May of 2018. The accountability that I had in Oxford kept me conscious of where I was. I was then nominated to become Chapter 9 Vice Chairperson at a Chapter meeting. I completed the yearlong commitment without me knowing it was giving me so much. It taught me how to handle situations that I would never in a million years ever put myself into otherwise. I was planning to move on to bigger things in my life (getting my own place) at the end of May 2019 after being in Oxford House for a little over a year at this point. Miss Debbie Robinson came to me and put feelers out for what I was doing for work and, though I had talked with her multiple times prior to this, I didn’t really know where she was going with this! To make the long story short, I took the position of the Western VA Outreach Worker in June of 2019.

Through working steps with a sponsor and having a home group for the first time, I’ve been able to focus on myself and truly make progress on myself. Only because of the structure that Oxford has given me, things were lining up in life for the first time. Oxford House is a huge part of my story and also a massive part of my recovery! I’m grateful to have been given the opportunity to have a safe and structured living environment; it has shown me that, despite the differences that everyone living in my house has, we truly have one major thing in common – the desire to prosper in recovery by following an amazing model as well as a twelve-step program! Now I’m blessed to say I work every week on helping those who are in the position that I was in just a short time ago. I am humbled and blessed every single day with the opportunities I’ve been given; I owe a big portion of that to Oxford House, Inc.



## **THE BANQUET AT THE 2018 OXFORD HOUSE CONVENTION**

# OXFORD HOUSE™



Unique • Evidenced-based • Time-tested  
Fostering self-reliance, self-respect and long-term sobriety

## The OHI Directors' 100-Year Awards

Oxford House relies on voluntary contributions to fund expansion in areas where there is no other support. The largest portion of voluntary contributions comes from Oxford House residents and alumni. In the fiscal year just ended, voluntary donations of at least \$600 a year from individual Oxford Houses, Chapters, State Associations and Alumni groups totaled over \$600,000.

These Houses, Chapters and State Associations will be the recipients of the 2019 Directors' 100-Year Awards, which will be presented at the Second General Session. Three program pages are dedicated to listing these contributors.

Oxford House residents and alumni members recognize the need to expand the network and to help OHI do so. Their donations show their gratitude and their support for expansion.

THANK YOU!

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.

## Recipients of the 2019 Board of Directors' 100-Year Award

### Alumni Associations:

OK-Alumni Association

### Chapters:

KS-Chapter 01  
 KS-Chapter 08  
 KS-Chapter 13  
 NE-Chapter VI  
 OR-Chapter 04  
 OR-Chapter 05  
 OR-Chapter 06  
 OR-Chapter 08  
 OR-Chapter 13  
 WA-Chapter 15  
 WA-Chapter 18  
 WA-Chapter 19  
 WA-Chapter 26

### State Associations:

LA-State Association  
 NJ-State Association  
 OR-Oregon State Association  
 OR-Oxford Houses of Oregon  
 WA-State Association

### Individual Houses:

#### Arkansas

Oxford House-Harness

#### Colorado

Oxford House-Acacia  
 Oxford House-Adams Drive  
 Oxford House-Andes  
 Oxford House-Colorado Springs  
 Oxford House-Edgewood Drive  
 Oxford House-Garden of Gods  
 Oxford House-Loveland  
 Oxford House-Miller  
 Oxford House-Murray  
 Oxford House-San Miguel  
 Oxford House-Thornton

#### District of Columbia

Oxford House-Anacostia  
 Oxford House-Avalon  
 Oxford House-Ben Black  
 Oxford House-Dahlia  
 Oxford House-North Rock Creek  
 Oxford House-R Street

#### Delaware

Oxford House-8th Street  
 Oxford House-Athena Place  
 Oxford House-Bedford  
 Oxford House-Chestnut Hill  
 Oxford House-Salem Woods  
 Oxford House-Silver Lake  
 Oxford House-Victory Lane

#### Hawaii

Oxford House-Coconut Grove  
 Oxford House-Kealoha  
 Oxford House-Moekolu  
 Oxford House-Niu Valley  
 Oxford House-Paopua  
 Oxford House-Uhu

#### Idaho

Oxford House-Burrell  
 Oxford House-Nez Perce

#### Kansas

Oxford House-Braeburn

Oxford House-Dunsworth  
 Oxford House-Halsey 2  
 Oxford House-Hope Central  
 Oxford House-Louis  
 Oxford House-Robin  
 Oxford House-Terrace  
 Oxford House-Waco

#### Kentucky

Oxford House-Derby  
 Oxford House-Fayette  
 Oxford House-Greenup  
 Oxford House-Iroquois Park  
 Oxford House-Kenwood Hill  
 Oxford House-Lily  
 Oxford House-Moyo  
 Oxford House-Oaks  
 Oxford House-Potomac  
 Oxford House-Reagan  
 Oxford House-University  
 Oxford House-Vara  
 Oxford House-Waverly Park  
 Oxford House-Yana

#### Louisiana

Oxford House-Acadiana  
 Oxford House-Alpha  
 Oxford House-Avalon II  
 Oxford House-Baton Rouge  
 Oxford House-Bella Donna  
 Oxford House-Belle  
 Oxford House-Belle Maison  
 Oxford House-Bienvenue  
 Oxford House-Bon Famille  
 Oxford House-Bon Temps  
 Oxford House-Boxwood  
 Oxford House-Broadmoor  
 Oxford House-Brooke  
 Oxford House-Bruce 2  
 Oxford House-Buveur de Lait  
 Oxford House-Bye-Water  
 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-Dominican  
 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-Jambalaya  
 Oxford House-Jones Creek  
 Oxford House-Kenner  
 Oxford House-Lafayette  
 Oxford House-Lafitte  
 Oxford House-Lagnippe  
 Oxford House-LaRouge  
 Oxford House-LaSalle  
 Oxford House-Le Grand  
 Oxford House-Lions Den  
 Oxford House-Little Italy  
 Oxford House-Louisiana

Oxford House-Mandeville  
 Oxford House-Maplewood  
 Oxford House-McNeese  
 Oxford House-Metairie  
 Oxford House-Mint House  
 Oxford House-Mirabeau  
 Oxford House-Miro  
 Oxford House-MJC Walker  
 Oxford House-New Leaf  
 Oxford House-Old Hammond  
 Oxford House-Palmer Park  
 Oxford House-Pierremont 2  
 Oxford House-Pinhook  
 Oxford House-Pontchartrain  
 Oxford House-Prien Lake  
 Oxford House-Protege  
 Oxford House-Red River  
 Oxford House-Regalia  
 Oxford House-Rhiannon  
 Oxford House-Roma  
 Oxford House-Saint George  
 Oxford House-Shawn  
 Oxford House-Slidell  
 Oxford House-Soignet  
 Oxford House-South Alexandria  
 Oxford House-Southern Oak  
 Oxford House-Southfield  
 Oxford House-Southshore  
 Oxford House-St Tammany  
 Oxford House-St Thomas  
 Oxford House-Stockton  
 Oxford House-Tams  
 Oxford House-Tangi  
 Oxford House-Tanner  
 Oxford House-Treasure Island  
 Oxford House-Uptown  
 Oxford House-Vieux Carre  
 Oxford House-Village Creek  
 Oxford House-Waterfront  
 Oxford House-Wenham  
 Oxford House-West Hale  
 Oxford House-Whittington  
 Oxford House-Windsor

#### Maryland

Oxford House-Cedar Ridge  
 Oxford House-Cheverly  
 Oxford House-Glenarden  
 Oxford House-Silver Spring

#### Maine

Oxford House-Back Bay  
 Oxford House-Brighton Avenue

#### Missouri

Oxford House-Shenandoah  
 Oxford House-Westport  
 Oxford House-Zona

#### Mississippi

Oxford House-Big Lake  
 Oxford House-Bon Ami  
 Oxford House-East Northside  
 Oxford House-Forest Park  
 Oxford House-Golden Eagle  
 Oxford House-Landon Place  
 Oxford House-Medallion  
 Oxford House-Phoenix  
 Oxford House-Rodenberg  
 Oxford House-Shuckers  
 Oxford House-Sunkist  
 Oxford House-Tropicana

Oxford House-Tupelo  
 Oxford House-Winterview

#### North Carolina

Oxford House-11th Street  
 Oxford House-Amhurst Rd  
 Oxford House-Asheville  
 Oxford House-Askham  
 Oxford House-Bluff Wood Court  
 Oxford House-Brandon Road  
 Oxford House-Brentwood  
 Oxford House-Bretonshire  
 Oxford House-Brinkley  
 Oxford House-Buck Jones  
 Oxford House-Cahaba  
 Oxford House-Camden Circle  
 Oxford House-Cannon Park  
 Oxford House-Carolina Avenue  
 Oxford House-Carrboro  
 Oxford House-Cary  
 Oxford House-Central  
 Oxford House-Chaney  
 Oxford House-Changes  
 Oxford House-Christopher Road  
 Oxford House Church Street  
 Oxford House-College Oak  
 Oxford House-Covil House  
 Oxford House-Covington  
 Oxford House-Daley  
 Oxford House-Dellwood  
 Oxford House-Driver  
 Oxford House-Dunn  
 Oxford House-Durham  
 Oxford House-Durwood Lane  
 Oxford House-East Westwood  
 Oxford House-Estes  
 Oxford House-Fairview  
 Oxford House-Fieldbrook  
 Oxford House-Firelight  
 Oxford House-Fleming  
 Oxford House-Fox Road  
 Oxford House-Franklin Street  
 Oxford House-Gardenview  
 Oxford House-Gardner Cir  
 Oxford House-Garner  
 Oxford House-Glenwood II  
 Oxford House-Greene Street  
 Oxford House-Greene St - N  
 Oxford House-Greenwich  
 Oxford House-Grinnell  
 Oxford House-Harvard  
 Oxford House-Haven Road  
 Oxford House-Hearth  
 Oxford House-Homestead  
 Oxford House-Hunting Ridge  
 Oxford House-Hyde Park  
 Oxford House-Ilford  
 Oxford House-Indian Trail  
 Oxford House-Irvington  
 Oxford House-Jacksonville  
 Oxford House-Jones Franklin  
 Oxford House Kings Mill Rd  
 Oxford House-Kornegay  
 Oxford House-Longfield  
 Oxford House-Lucerne  
 Oxford House-Mantua Way  
 Oxford House-Mayflower  
 Oxford House-Mayridge  
 Oxford House-Mendenhall  
 Oxford House-Merritt Mill  
 Oxford House-Mordecai  
 Oxford House-Morehead

## Recipients of the 2019 Board of Directors' 100-Year Award

(Continued from prior page)

Oxford House-Morgan Creek  
 Oxford House-Myakka  
 Oxford House-Narbeth  
 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-Old Winston Rd  
 Oxford House-Oldham Court  
 Oxford House-Pamlico  
 Oxford House-Parkwood Drive  
 Oxford House-Peace Street  
 Oxford House-Piedmont  
 Oxford House-Pinecrest  
 Oxford House-Pinewood Lane  
 Oxford House-Pond  
 Oxford House-Quail Hollow  
 Oxford House-Rangeley  
 Oxford House-Redbanks  
 Oxford House-Repon  
 Oxford House-Round Top  
 Oxford House-Shamrock  
 Oxford House-Sharmeck  
 Oxford House-Sharon-Amity  
 Oxford House-Smith Creek  
 Oxford House-South Hills  
 Oxford House-State Street  
 Oxford House-Steeds Run  
 Oxford House-Stockton Drive  
 Oxford House-Sudbury  
 Oxford House-Suite  
 Oxford House-Swann  
 Oxford House-Triangle  
 Oxford House-Tyndall Court  
 Oxford House-University Drive  
 Oxford House-Van Thomas  
 Oxford House-Weatherhill  
 Oxford House-Willow  
 Oxford House-Woodduck  
 Oxford House-Wright Road  
 Oxford House-Wyoming  
 Oxford House-Zmaura Way

### Nebraska

Oxford House-Mid Crossing

### New Hampshire

Oxford House -Manchester

### New Jersey

Oxford House-11th Avenue  
 Oxford House-13th Avenue  
 Oxford House-5th Avenue  
 Oxford House-Astoria  
 Oxford House-Bay Lea  
 Oxford House-Bayshore  
 Oxford House-Bond Street  
 Oxford House-Bradford  
 Oxford House-Bradley Beach  
 Oxford House-Carnegie  
 Oxford House-Cinnaminson  
 Oxford House-Claire Drive  
 Oxford House-Clairmont  
 Oxford House-Cornwall  
 Oxford House-Crows Mill  
 Oxford House-Dickinson Ave  
 Oxford House-Disney  
 Oxford House-Doral

Oxford House-Dorer  
 Oxford House-Dougie  
 Oxford House-Dudley  
 Oxford House-East Brunswick  
 Oxford House-Evesham  
 Oxford House-Fischer Blvd  
 Oxford House -Fletcher Lake  
 Oxford House-Galway Place  
 Oxford House-Garden Street  
 Oxford House-Haddon  
 Oxford House-Hazelwood  
 Oxford House-Jarvis  
 Oxford House-Johnson Ave  
 Oxford House-Julcz  
 Oxford House-Kenbury  
 Oxford House-Kendall Park  
 Oxford House-Kingston  
 Oxford House-Lakewood  
 Oxford House-Langford  
 Oxford House-Long Branch  
 Oxford House-Lookout  
 Oxford House-Matawan  
 Oxford House-Meadowbrook C  
 Oxford House-Melrose Avenue  
 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-Rockefeller Park  
 Oxford House-South Toms River  
 Oxford House-South Ward Ave  
 Oxford House-Stratford  
 Oxford House-Stuart Street  
 Oxford House-Texas Drive  
 Oxford House-Tigger  
 Oxford House-Union Creek  
 Oxford House-Van Court  
 Oxford House-Vineland  
 Oxford House-Waters Edge  
 Oxford House-West Orange  
 Oxford House-Witherspoon  
 Oxford House-Woodbrook

### New Mexico

Oxford House-Juan Tabo  
 Oxford House-Pennsylvania  
 Oxford House-Snowheights

### Oklahoma

Oxford House-Awakening  
 Oxford House-Beacon  
 Oxford House-Beech  
 Oxford House-Bil-Mar  
 Oxford House-Boomer  
 Oxford House-Briar Meadows  
 Oxford House-Bricktown  
 Oxford House-Burning Tree  
 Oxford House-Centum  
 Oxford House-Claremont  
 Oxford House-Cloverleaf  
 Oxford House-Dittmer  
 Oxford House-Durant  
 Oxford House-East Moore  
 Oxford House-E Wedgewood  
 Oxford House-Edgewood 2  
 Oxford House-Edmond 2

Oxford House-Elmhurst  
 Oxford House-Epic Forest  
 Oxford House-Flair  
 Oxford House-Fontana  
 Oxford House-Grace Hill  
 Oxford House-Green Country  
 Oxford House-Grove  
 Oxford House-Hogan  
 Oxford House-Holiday  
 Oxford House-Holtzclaw II  
 Oxford House-Integrity  
 Oxford House-Jamestown So.  
 Oxford House-Lafortune  
 Oxford House-Longan  
 Oxford House-Marlynn II  
 Oxford House-Midland  
 Oxford House-Midwest City  
 Oxford House-Mustang  
 Oxford House-Parish  
 Oxford House-Patterson Estates  
 Oxford House-Pine Oak Place  
 Oxford House-Progress Way  
 Oxford House-Radium  
 Oxford House-Regime  
 Oxford House-Resurgence  
 Oxford House-Rise  
 Oxford House-Rockford  
 Oxford House-Rockwood Hil II  
 Oxford House-Royal  
 Oxford House-Rustic Hills  
 Oxford House-Shadow Mountain  
 Oxford House-Shawnee  
 Oxford House-Sooner  
 Oxford House-South Park Plaza  
 Oxford House-Southern Hills  
 Oxford House-Terrace Manor 2  
 Oxford House-Three Lakes  
 Oxford House-Tulsa Mid-Town  
 Oxford House-West Winds  
 Oxford House-Will Rogers  
 Oxford House-Woodridge

### Oregon

Oxford House-Allen II  
 Oxford House-Ashar  
 Oxford House-Blanton  
 Oxford House-Elkhorn  
 Oxford House-Endor  
 Oxford House-Englewood Park  
 Oxford House-Fir Ridge  
 Oxford House-Forest Grove  
 Oxford House-Glencoe  
 Oxford House-Hazeldale Park  
 Oxford House-Juniper  
 Oxford House-Kinnaman  
 Oxford House-M Jonas  
 Oxford House-Meldrum Park  
 Oxford House-Morgan Lane II  
 Oxford House-Onyx Street  
 Oxford House-Powell Butte  
 Oxford House-Red Oak  
 Oxford House-Rocky Butte  
 Oxford House-Royal Park  
 Oxford House-St. Johns  
 Oxford House-Swanson Park  
 Oxford House-Valinor  
 Oxford House-Ventura  
 Oxford House-Warrenton Pioneer  
 Oxford House-West Howard  
 Oxford House-Wygant

### Pennsylvania

Oxford House-Cecelia  
 Oxford House-Donna J.  
 Oxford House-Eau Claire Street  
 Oxford House-Orchard Avenue  
 Oxford House-Walker-Butler

### South Carolina

Oxford House-Conestee  
 Oxford House-Neshama  
 Oxford House-Nouveaux Famille  
 Oxford House-Watson

### Tennessee

Oxford House-Atlantis Abroad  
 Oxford House-Casanova  
 Oxford House-Cleveland  
 Oxford House-Crestone  
 Oxford House-Famille  
 Oxford House-Faxon  
 Oxford House-Fleur De Soleil  
 Oxford House-Gibson Lodge  
 Oxford House-High Pointe Terr  
 Oxford House-Hilltop East  
 Oxford House-Hixson Terrace  
 Oxford House-Knoxford  
 Oxford House-Metropolis  
 Oxford House-Metta  
 Oxford House-Milton  
 Oxford House-Ridgecut  
 Oxford House-Rocky Top  
 Oxford House-Thief  
 Oxford House-Titan  
 Oxford House-Volunteer

### Texas

Oxford House-4th Dimension  
 Oxford House-Abilene  
 Oxford House-Ahavah  
 Oxford House-Airport  
 Oxford House-Amity  
 Oxford House-Atreides  
 Oxford House-Bell  
 Oxford House-Blanco  
 Oxford House-Bon Park  
 Oxford House-Brettonwood  
 Oxford House-Buffalo Pass  
 Oxford House-Camilla  
 Oxford House-Carson  
 Oxford House-Childress  
 Oxford House-Coronet  
 Oxford House-Cortez North  
 Oxford House-Costigan  
 Oxford House-Culebra  
 Oxford House-Davis  
 Oxford House-Dunaway  
 Oxford House-Dynamis  
 Oxford House-Emet  
 Oxford House-Eqinox  
 Oxford House-Excalibur  
 Oxford House-Excelsior  
 Oxford House-Fawn Ridge  
 Oxford House-Fielder  
 Oxford House-Fort Worth  
 Oxford House-Gaia  
 Oxford House-Genesis  
 Oxford House-Gentry  
 Oxford House-Gramercy  
 Oxford House-Grayson  
 Oxford House-Green Meadow  
 Oxford House-Guilbeau  
 Oxford House-Hulen

## Recipients of the 2019 Board of Directors' 100-Year Award

*(Continued from prior page)*

Oxford House-Hurst  
 Oxford House-Identity  
 Oxford House-Invicta  
 Oxford House-Janus  
 Oxford House-Jennings  
 Oxford House-Kirby Deuce  
 Oxford House-Laguna  
 Oxford House-Leon Valley  
 Oxford House-Lions Park  
 Oxford House-Lombardy  
 Oxford House-Longhorn  
 Oxford House-Magnolia Heights  
 Oxford House-Marist  
 Oxford House-McCart  
 Oxford House-Meadow Park  
 Oxford House-Noble  
 Oxford House-Parmer  
 Oxford House-Pasler  
 Oxford House-Ramble Creek  
 Oxford House-Revenant  
 Oxford House-Rolling Hills  
 Oxford House-Rolling Oaks  
 Oxford House-Rosewood  
 Oxford House-San Paula  
 Oxford House-San Pedro  
 Oxford House-Sherman  
 Oxford House-Skycrest  
 Oxford House-Stonewall  
 Oxford House-Tranquility  
 Oxford House-Tyler  
 Oxford House-Valiant  
 Oxford House-Valor  
 Oxford House-Walton  
 Oxford House-Werner Hill  
 Oxford House-Westcreek  
 Oxford House-Wood Oak  
 Oxford House-Woodland Park

### Virginia

Oxford House-Amherst Street  
 Oxford House-Annandale  
 Oxford House-Apple Blossom  
 Oxford House-Baileys Crossroads  
 Oxford House-Ballston  
 Oxford House-Bayview Gardens  
 Oxford House-Beall Drive  
 Oxford House-Beau Lane  
 Oxford House-Belle Haven  
 Oxford House-Berkley Park  
 Oxford House-Blossom  
 Oxford House-Bon Air  
 Oxford House-Braddock  
 Oxford House-Brandy Jo  
 Oxford House-Briar Patch  
 Oxford House-Briarwood 2  
 Oxford House-Brilyn  
 Oxford House-Brookfield  
 Oxford House-Chain Bridge  
 Oxford House-Chamberlayne  
 Oxford House-Chapel Hill  
 Oxford House-Chesapeake  
 Oxford House-Chester  
 Oxford House-Clay Street  
 Oxford House-Columbia Pike  
 Oxford House-Coral  
 Oxford House-Deer Springs  
 Oxford House-Diva  
 Oxford House-Douglass Park  
 Oxford House-Edgehill  
 Oxford House-Endurance  
 Oxford House-Fair Oaks

Oxford House-Fairview Park  
 Oxford House-Fenix  
 Oxford House-Forest Glen  
 Oxford House-Forest Hills Park  
 Oxford House-Forest Ridge  
 Oxford House-Fry's Spring  
 Oxford House-Glebe Road  
 Oxford House-Glen Carlyn  
 Oxford House-Golden Maple  
 Oxford House-Gosport  
 Oxford House-Hampton  
 Oxford House-Hermosa  
 Oxford House-Highland Springs  
 Oxford House-Hill Top Heights  
 Oxford House-Hunter Street  
 Oxford House-Jamestown  
 Oxford House-Kenwood  
 Oxford House-Kings Manor  
 Oxford House-Lake Smith  
 Oxford House-Landmark  
 Oxford House-Lemon Road  
 Oxford House-Little Back  
 Oxford House-Little Creek  
 Oxford House-Little River  
 Oxford House-Lynnhaven  
 Oxford House-Manassas  
 Oxford House-Manor  
 Oxford House-Melita  
 Oxford House-Merrifield  
 Oxford House-Mill Mountain  
 Oxford House-Moseby Court  
 Oxford House-Neptune  
 Oxford House-New Horizon  
 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-Piccadilly Place  
 Oxford House-Pike Place  
 Oxford House-Pinewood  
 Oxford House-Plaza  
 Oxford House-Pleasant Valley  
 Oxford House-Poseidon  
 Oxford House-Prosperity  
 Oxford House-Raleigh Court  
 Oxford House-Ramekin  
 Oxford House-Ravensworth  
 Oxford House-Rising Sun  
 Oxford House-River City  
 Oxford House-Roseberry  
 Oxford House-Salem  
 Oxford House-Seaview  
 Oxford House-Serenity Park  
 Oxford House-Serenity Path  
 Oxford House-Shenandoah Valley  
 Oxford House-South Cameron  
 Oxford House-South Lee  
 Oxford House-Springfield  
 Oxford House-Star City  
 Oxford House-Sterling  
 Oxford House-Sudley Manor  
 Oxford House-Sugarland  
 Oxford House-Sunnyside  
 Oxford House-Tarpley Park

Oxford House-Thomas II  
 Oxford House-Thomas Street  
 Oxford House-Tidewater  
 Oxford House-Valley View  
 Oxford House-Victoria  
 Oxford House-Wakefield  
 Oxford House-Wasena  
 Oxford House-Washington Park  
 Oxford House-Waverly Hills  
 Oxford House-Wesleyan  
 Oxford House-Williamsburg  
 Oxford House-Winchester  
 Oxford House-Woodland Heights  
 Oxford House-Wyman  
 Oxford House-York

### Washington State

Oxford House-Adams  
 Oxford House-Addison  
 Oxford House-Ainsworth Ave  
 Oxford House-Akona  
 Oxford House-Alexis  
 Oxford House-Anoka  
 Oxford House-Apple Valley  
 Oxford House-Athena  
 Oxford House-B Street  
 Oxford House-Bachelor Creek  
 Oxford House-Baltimore  
 Oxford House-Bill Wyze  
 Oxford House-Bridgeview  
 Oxford House-Brockman  
 Oxford House-Cascade View  
 Oxford House-Charleston  
 Oxford House-Chase Lake  
 Oxford House-Chelan  
 Oxford House-Chestnut  
 Oxford House-Conifer Park  
 Oxford House-Connelly  
 Oxford House-Cornell  
 Oxford House-Corulli  
 Oxford House-Crosby  
 Oxford House-Cushman  
 Oxford House-Delaware  
 Oxford House-Eastside  
 Oxford House-Echo Lake  
 Oxford House-Englewood  
 Oxford House-Erlands Point  
 Oxford House-Everett Mall  
 Oxford House-Finn Hill  
 Oxford House-Fisher Park  
 Oxford House-Franklin  
 Oxford House-Grant Road  
 Oxford House-Gregory Way  
 Oxford House-Grover Place  
 Oxford House-Hendrick  
 Oxford House-Hewitt  
 Oxford House-Hilltop View  
 Oxford House-Hillyard  
 Oxford House-Inland  
 Oxford House-Jadwin  
 Oxford House-John Harrison  
 Oxford House-Journey  
 Oxford House-Juanita  
 Oxford House-Karen Audrey  
 Oxford House-Laurel  
 Oxford House-Laurelwood  
 Oxford House-Levy 2  
 Oxford House-Lewis and Clark  
 Oxford House-Licton Springs  
 Oxford House-Lien  
 Oxford House-Madrona  
 Oxford House-Maple Leaf 2

Oxford House-Matthews Beach  
 Oxford House-Melrose  
 Oxford House-Minnedell  
 Oxford House-Mirror Lake  
 Oxford House-Naval Avenue  
 Oxford House-Nob Hill  
 Oxford House-North Callow  
 Oxford House-Northgate  
 Oxford House-Northtown  
 Oxford House-Nunziato  
 Oxford House-O'hana  
 Oxford House-Oak Harbor  
 Oxford House-Orchard Heights  
 Oxford House-Wyman  
 Oxford House-Peabody  
 Oxford House-Perkins  
 Oxford House-Pine Street  
 Oxford House-Pinecrest  
 Oxford House-Pioneer Point  
 Oxford House-Portia Park  
 Oxford House-Puget Sound  
 Oxford House-Renton Stadium  
 Oxford House-River Side Hill  
 Oxford House-Roosevelt  
 Oxford House-Rosemere  
 Oxford House-Ruddell Road  
 Oxford House-Ruth Park  
 Oxford House-Sandalwood Ct  
 Oxford House-Scott King  
 Oxford House-Sedro Woolley  
 Oxford House-Serene Lake  
 Oxford House-Serenita  
 Oxford House-Shelton  
 Oxford House-Shiloh Hills  
 Oxford House-Shorewood  
 Oxford House-Sidney  
 Oxford House-Silver Creek  
 Oxford House-Simpson  
 Oxford House-Sirona  
 Oxford House-Skagit Valley  
 Oxford House-St. Edmonds  
 Oxford House-Stan Timberlake  
 Oxford House-Stark  
 Oxford House-Sunrise Heights  
 Oxford House-Tekoa  
 Oxford House-Teresa  
 Oxford House-Tieton  
 Oxford House-Tri Lakes  
 Oxford House-Tyee  
 Oxford House-Tynan  
 Oxford House-Upriver  
 Oxford House-Veneta  
 Oxford House-Victory  
 Oxford House-Washougal  
 Oxford House-Wenatchee  
 Oxford House-Wheaton  
 Oxford House-Whipple  
 Oxford House-White Lake  
 Oxford House-Wide Hollow  
 Oxford House-Woodland Creek  
 Oxford House-Yakima  
 Oxford House-Alling Park

### West Virginia

Oxford House-Bishop Overlook  
 Oxford House-King Street

### Wisconsin

Oxford House-La Cross

**Thank You!**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Theme</b>	<b>Location</b>
2019	“Oxford House: Self-Reliance • Self-Respect”	Washington, DC
2018	“Oxford House: Recovery • Fellowship • Fun”	Kansas City, MO
2017	“Oxford House: Unique, Time-tested and Evidence-based”	Washington, DC
2016	“Oxford House: The Blueprint for Success”	Dallas, TX
2015	“Oxford House: Celebrating 40 Years”	Washington, DC
2014	“Oxford House: Building Community”	Portland, OR
2013	“Oxford House: Meeting the Need”	Washington, DC
2012	“Oxford House: Good Neighbors-Good Citizens”	Oklahoma City, OK
2011	“Oxford House: Saving Money-Saving Lives”	Washington, DC
2010	“Oxford House: Celebrating 35 Years”	Chicago, IL
2009	“Oxford House: Together We Can”	Washington, DC
2008	“Oxford House: Time for Recovery”	New Orleans, LA
2007	“Oxford House: What If?”	Washington, DC
2006	“Oxford House Comes of Age”	Wichita, KS
2005	“Family, Fellowship and Freedom”	Washington, DC
2004	“Back to Basics”	San Antonio, TX
2003	“Recovery, Responsibility, and Replication”	Washington, DC
2002	“Changing the Culture of Recovery”	Seattle, WA
2001	“If not Now, When?”	Washington, DC
2000	“Recovery Without Relapse”	Kansas City, MO
1999	“If Not Us, Who?”	Washington, DC

## **OXFORD HOUSE TRADITIONS**

1. Oxford House has as its primary goal the provision of housing for alcoholics and drug addicts who want 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™

1975-2019

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

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

Write or Call

***Oxford House, Inc.***

1010 Wayne Avenue, Suite 300  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Telephone 301-587-2916

Facsimile 301-589-0302

E-Mail [Info@oxfordhouse.org](mailto:Info@oxfordhouse.org)

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