



Our Mission

Lasting Change Alumni is a membership organization formed to supply positive influences, a strong support system, and encourage each individual to give back to sustain and strengthen their recovery. We are built on a platform of connection and community and want to continue to stay motivated to be successful with life and recovery goals.

Staying involved gives a sense of purpose. We supply the opportunity for successful clients to demonstrate that treatment works, recovery is possible, and serve as mentors to those starting their road to recovery on their journey through Lasting Change. We highly encourage all our clients to participate in the activities we have to offer for continued growth and development in recovery from addiction. For more information visit our website www.thewhouse.org, and click on Lasting Change Alumni.

The Alumni

Welcome!

Those of us at Lasting Change, who have graduated successfully have come together as Alumni Members. This is our first of four quarterly newsletters to present you with happenings at our organization, informative readings, and entertaining incite provided by the woman. All input is appreciated. If you wish to not receive future newsletters, feel free to contact the Alumni Coordinator at cremines@thewhouse.org. Any and all submission are welcome, just email the newsletter committee at alumninewsletterlc@gmail.com.

To review past newsletters, please visit www.thewhouse.org/lasting-change-alumni.

Inside this issue

Mental Health & Recovery .	2
Addiction Letter.....	2
Lasting Change	3
Client Recognition	3
Gratitude	4
Board /Staff Spotlight.....	5
Client Expression	5

Special points of interest

- Coping With the Pandemic
- What Has Lasting Change Done For Me?
- Letter to My Addiction
- Client Successes
- What Does Gratitude Mean to You?
- Board Additions
- Staff Successes

Coping With the Pandemic; Mental Health and Recovery: -Erin Tack; Clinical Director



We can all agree that 2020 was a difficult year. Our lives, and the lives of everyone around us, changed in an instant. This caused all of us to make immediate and drastic changes in our daily routines. For some, 2020 resulted in an increase of drug or alcohol use or a return to active use after long term sobriety. In my opinion, there is no population that has been more impacted by this change than the recovery community.

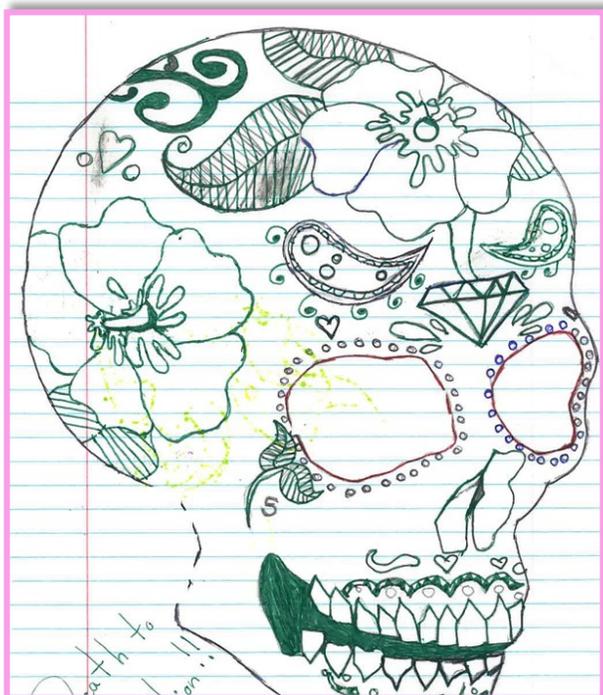
Not only did 2020 bring closures to your favorite restaurants and shopping establishments, but it also meant the closure of many 12-step meetings, as well as many in person physical, substances use and mental health care facilities. There are many facets that play into a person's recovery plan. Apart from substance use treatment and 12-step fellowship, mental health care is among the most important needs of an individual early in recovery. Accessing services became increasingly challenging for many seeking treatment.

Mental health care is vital to an overall sense of health and wellbeing and can assist individuals in processing negative emotions. According to the CDC, in

June 2020 an estimated 40% of all US adults were struggling with some form of mental health or substance use disorder. For many in recovery, isolation, stress, anxiety, and depression are triggers to return to active use. There are many coping skills people can utilize to lessen the symptoms of these triggers, some being meditation, yoga, breathing exercises, questioning your thought pattern and reality testing, and journaling.

Ensuring those in recovery are aware of coping skills, and are able to use them consistently when in a high risk situation, is an important part of the recovery process. These are also important skills for those not in recovery to utilize to stabilize their mental health. Take some time today, reach out to a loved one and check to see how they are doing, and really listen to the answer. Whether you have a mental health disorder, a substance use disorder, or are just struggling with the adjustments you have had to make this year, we are ALL in this together.

Drawing by: Nikiya J.



Alumni Events

Coming Soon!

“Mental health care is vital to an overall sense of health and wellbeing”

Letter to My Addiction: -Nichole K.: Current Resident

Heroin, my sweetest sin,
This battle I will win. I love you oh so much. You could never break us up. Together we would run. But you took my greatest friend and for that we must end. You're so toxic for me and now I finally see, you are no good for me. You took everything from me.

Goodbye, I must say or you'll let me lay in my grave. I will stay,- it'll be my last day. You took my life away.

Oh heroin please, just let me be. This monster inside me, it controls me. These demons, they scream. My addiction I will feed until again I won't breath. These tears I will weep forever, you will keep these demons with me.

Heroin, you hold this curse on me. When will I break free? I'm so weak.

Oh heroin, the damage that you've done—you are no longer fun. You need to just let me live free. Heroin, you need to leave because I am staying clean. See, you always be a part of me but your addiction I will not feed.

Boy, you messed up my brain. I will not be drained. We'll always be in love but what you did, I cant forgive.

There is no more me and you.

Goodbye Heroin. Forget you.

- Nik K.

What Has Lasting Change Done For Me?:

-Amber D.: Current Resident

If you need hope, if you need help or know of a loved one struggling....Do what Lasting Change did for me, SAVE A LIFE. I can promise you, I am living proof, an example of what this can do for you. A place called Lasting Change.

A year and 19 days ago, I hit bottom. Baltimore Streets, taken lives of my father and mother in addiction. I had nothing; I thought I was going to die.

I did my detox at Mountain Manor then Lasting Change took me in. Amazing counselors, and an amazing director that had faith to give me my life back. Amazing staff, trauma groups, forgiveness, growth, inspiration, boundaries, highs and lows, grieving, the success of recovery. This program fed me so much light, so much hope,

and so much motivation to become a better woman today.

Just a simple bed, feel like home environment, safe, 3 meals a day—were the things I was most grateful for. My mental illness turned into satisfaction, which used to lead me to my downfall.

Structure and a set schedule has helped me during the COVID-19 battle. I am free of even that because Lasting Change made it possible to always keep me safe. With all their support today, working a great full-time job, and keeping up with my appointments, has helped my overall well-being. All because of them, I am no longer a prisoner in my own mind. I am learning how to live again.

“I am no longer a prisoner of my own mind. I am learning how to live again.”

New Year, New Life:

-Katelyn A.: Current Resident

It is her very first time in recovery and she is progressing soundly despite challenges and life obstacles. God-willing, Melinda H. will celebrate 6 months sober on January 1st, 2021.

“After the stressful year of 2020, it feels good and exciting to be starting a new year with 6 months clean,” says Melinda H. She began her clean time at Awakenings, followed by a brief stay at Brooke’s House, then came to Lasting Change. Since coming to Lasting Change Melinda says the networking, counseling, and support are beneficial.

“Talking directly to staff and peers about cravings and issues is most helpful”, she states. “I tell on myself now and it is getting easier to identify my feelings. Learning about self-care, coping skills, learning to love herself, and allowing others to love her aid her recovery.”

When asked about Lasting Change, she replied, “It has saved my life! The networking and support here are really serving me on my journey. I’ve had

many life obstacles emotionally and with family, but I’ve been able to stick and stay.”

Deann McCloud, counselor, claims Melinda is willing to face challenges and overcome them.

Jenn B. is one of Melinda’s closest friends at Lasting Change. Melinda started a few days before Jenn did and they bonded right away. Jenn declares

she has seen a lot of growth in Melinda. “She sits still more and waits to respond. She is better at backtracking and analyzing, and quicker to apologize when needed. She started to regress because of painful circumstances but she is turning back to her loving self and [attaining] the ‘Mom role’.”

Melinda hopes to become a peer-recovery specialist working with traumatized women. She survived abuse and spent 19 years in therapy. It’s clear Melinda has a lot to offer! The women of Lasting Change wish her congratulations for 6 months clean and best wishes in the New Year!



A Story of

Brittany E.
Current Resident

hope

When I first arrived at Lasting Change from Wilmington, Delaware, I was a broken, bitter young lady with low self-esteem; who didn't love or know herself. But, I knew my life had to change this time. I didn't know how I was going to do it or if I was going to, but after being in the rough Wilmington streets, living below animal level, sleeping outside, and other demoralizing things, I made a promise to myself to at least try this time.

Now after 5 different rehabs and 3 recovery homes (which I left after 30 days), I came 3 hours away to Lasting Change to start a new life. It was the best thing that ever happened to me. After being here just 2 1/2 months, something tragic happened. As I was walking into a meeting, I got a phone call that my father died from a sudden overdose. All I could do was scream at the top of my lungs and fall to the ground sobbing. My father was my world, we were so close.

Normally, I would have ran and tried to numb my pain with drugs, as I did in the past. I began to struggle with my spirituality and religion. I stayed and worked on my recovery and chose to live. I've changed my way of thinking. I got involved with my recovery, got a sponsor, and I am now working on my goals. I have a job, 7 months clean, and can show up for my son, Kayleb, my brother, and the rest of my family. Today, I love myself and can show up for me.

Special Thank You to Our Recent Donors!

Food Items:

Art Hicks
Trinity Lutheran Church
Maugansville Food Bank

Clothing/Toiletries:

Jean Bricken
Fran Wishard
Jessica Raines
Mike Hartzell
Allison Nicodemus
Linda Brooks/Zion Baptist Church
Courtney and Jessie Cox
JLG
Mary Bowman

Other:

Jodi Blair
Tasha Swailes
Becky Fetchu
Susan Collier
Mike Hartzell
Kandace Carpenter
Gary Hayes
Rose and Gary Hinks
Joe Anderton
Sun Management
Dixie Birmingham
Otterbein United Methodist
Jone L. Bowman Foundation
Tory Van Reenen

Wishlist

- ◆ Pillows
- ◆ Body Wash
- ◆ Disinfectant Wipes
- ◆ Feminine Hygiene Products
- ◆ Gloves
- ◆ Towels

What Does Gratitude Mean to You?:

Being grateful for what you already have—not being sorrow.

I am grateful for:

- Another chance at life
 - My children
 - Rehabs and Programs/Counselors
 - My Higher Power
 - Positive physical and mental health
 - Family that loves and cares about me
 - My sponsor
 - Healthy relationships
 - Food
- Keira L.



Pictured: Loren C.

Gratitude to me is associated with happiness and a warm feeling of being thankful and grateful for what they have in life.

I am grateful for coming to Lasting Change and being able to find me again, living life of freedom from active addiction and having an amazing support system.

- Loren C.

To me, gratitude means appreciating even the smallest blessings in life, staying in the present, and not looking to acquire more than you have today. Gratitude leads to being content.

I am grateful for:

- My sobriety and health
 - My children, restored relationships, sponsor and network.
 - My job
 - Lasting Change and the program of AA/NA
- Lindsey A.

Gratitude, to me, means being thankful and open minded to the simple blessings each and every day brings. It means remaining humble and putting yourself in a spiritual place to interpret and appreciate the blessings throughout the day. Gratitude is a spiritual principle that you obtain in and out of the rooms. It is character defining and will strengthen your being after Lasting Change.

I am grateful for each and every day I have sober and all the rewards living an honest lifestyle has to bring. This program has exceeded my wildest dreams. I am grateful for the endless opportunities this program has allowed for me.

- Aja H.

Pictured:
Aja H..



Board Member Spotlight:

Lasting Change is pleased to announce our newest board members, Tasha Swailes and Joe Anderton. Their addition to the board will help to better position the organization as a critical leader in service to women who are in the early stages of recovery. Our new board members will provide diverse views and expertise that will further our collective work at Lasting Change.



Tasha Swailes, who is a Segment Manager at JLG Industries. Tasha has a desire to increase her community engagement and is particularly passionate in supporting women overcome challenges and grow.



Joe Anderton, who is the Business Banking Relationship Manager at M&T Bank. With over 16 years in the retail banking industry, Joe has placed an increase effect on providing financial literacy in the communities he serves.

Leadership Graduate: Mary Winebrenner

Mary Winebrenner, HR/Billing Specialist at Lasting Change recently graduated from Leadership Washington County, Class 33. Leadership Washington County (LWC) takes a select group of individuals from diverse backgrounds through an intense ten-month program. Leadership Washington County exists to develop and inspire excellent leaders dedicated to serving the community and shaping its future. The professional and personal connections that are made during this experience are invaluable.



Lucid Dream: -Heather F.: Transitional

I once had this dream, you and me
Looking out at the horizon
That stretched as far as we could see.
The sun was shining bright and the
wind blew free
The sky was as blue as your eyes and
your smile matched the warm breeze.
We stood there holding hands
So close I could hear your heartbeat.
Knowing it pumped the same blood,
the same blood that flowed through
me.
I found comfort in that sound, that
familiar rhythm in between
I was lost in that moment, no place I'd
rather be.
Clouds were slipping through the sky,
just as your hand slipped out of mine.
I never wanted to leave, I never did
get to say goodbye.
As I stood there....
I listened to my own heartbeat.
You were in my blood, so you live for-
ever inside me.
The sun was setting in the distance
and your absence brought a lonely
breeze.
When that wind blew it whispered,
just as the words escaped your lips -
"sister"
There you were standing at the end of
the horizon, you without me.
Me standing alone.....
Wishing if only it wasn't a dream.

Dedicated to Jennifer Lynn Finstad
1989-2015

Mary's graduation ceremony was held at The Maryland Theatre in early October. BRAVO to Mary and all the other graduates on this professional achievement!

Board of Directors

Dawn Sweitzer (President)
Michael Hartzell (Vice President)
Jodi Blair (Treasurer)
Kylie Johnson, Executive Director
Erin Tack, Clinical Director
Kandace Carpenter
Kevin Conn
Lt. Rebecca Fetchu
Bill Gaertner
Tiffany Gardner
Gary Hayes
Chief Paul (Joey) Kifer
Susan Martz
Wayne Rummel
Heidi Stossel
Joe Anderton
Tasha Swailes

Honorary Members:

The Honorable Kennedy Boone
Donovan Bachtell
Paul Crampton

Alumni Members

Chloe Remines
(Alumni Coordinator)

Deborah Alvey

Bridgette Coyer

Mimi Duvall

Cheryl Gabinet

Tasha Griffin

Bettyjo Justice

Lori Martinez

Laurel Nelson

Rachel Reines

Melanie Watts

Diane Wooten



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