



Spring 2020  
Volume 2, Issue 2

## 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](http://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 second 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](mailto:cremines@thewhouse.org). Any and all submission are welcome, just email the newsletter committee at [alumninewsletterlc@gmail.com](mailto:alumninewsletterlc@gmail.com).

To review past newsletters, please visit [www.thewhouse.org/lasting-change-alumni](http://www.thewhouse.org/lasting-change-alumni).

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### Special points of interest

- Change the Way You Think
- COVID-19 Tips
- Celebrating Board Achievements
- Client Growth
- Poetry

## Change Your Mindset, Change Your Perception, Change Your Life: -Shanel A: Current Resident

Have you ever woken up in the morning saying, "Ugh, this is going to be a bad day", or "I can't handle this today"? Words have power, whether you believe it or not. Just how you speak about a certain situation can have an impact on the outcome of that situation. Have you noticed that when you wake up with that negative attitude, your day seems to go in a negative way, but just as a negative attitude impacts your day, so can a positive one.

"Even though I'm tired, I got this." "My day is going to be a great day." Did you see what changed? Even while reading these words, a different feeling comes over you. You are manifesting that feeling. Everything is a choice. You choose to be happy or sad. Even if what you are going through typically would be considered a sad situation or a hurtful one, you can choose to feel a different way about that situation. Say it with me, "My feelings are a choice, not a fact." When you realize that you have the power to change your life by changing your mindset, you can transform your

life into what you desire it to be; speak it into existence.

Norman Vincent Peale once said, "Believe you can and you can. Belief is one of the most powerful of problem solvers. When you believe that a difficulty can be overcome you are more than halfway to victory over it already." Mahatma Gandhi once said, "Man often becomes what he believes himself to be. If I say to myself that I cannot do a certain thing, it is possible that I may end by becoming incapable of doing it. On the contrary, if I have the belief that I can do it, I shall surely acquire the capability to do it, even if I may not have it at the beginning."

So, what have we gotten from this forward way of thinking from these two inspirational leaders? This is my perception of these quotes: I believe that if we believe, we can accomplish whatever we put our minds to. When I say minds, that's exactly what I mean. Our minds are so powerful that it can change eve-



rything around us, because we all have a way of thinking and perceiving the world. Imagine if we train our minds to be limitless; to love; to nurture. Everything we perceive will be out of love and limitless possibilities. A simple quote out of the book "Forever Mind" states, "Just as negative programming is powerful, so is positive prophecy. Change a belief and you change reality."

In closing, don't be afraid to be yourself, but first, you must find yourself. When you do, you will be comfortable in your own skin and able to become that person your higher power made you to be: fearless, joyful, and guilt-free. Plant your seed and nourish it everyday with love and care, so it may blossom and multiply. You are uniquely perfect with a powerful story that could change the world. Love yourself and love others. If you do not like the person you are, remember, you have the power to change your mindset—to change your perspective—resulting in a life change.

Go out into the world and be who you choose to be, therefore you are. Believe!

### Alumni Events

#### Past:

- Coffee Date with Alumni
- Panel Discussion

#### Upcoming:

- April 24th 7:00pm—

#### **Alumni Dinner Party**

(214 N. Potomac Street)

#### **POSTPONED**

- May 23rd, 11:00am—

#### **Panel Discussion**

(519 N. Locust Street, open to the public)

- Monthly Alumni meeting, second Tuesday of every month 5:15pm

*"You are uniquely perfect with a story that could change the world."*

### I Choose Me:

#### **-Sha'Quan Collier; Direct Care Staff**

I choose me...

A lil' selfish one might say.

When is enough, enough?

In the midst of despair, I've always sought out those whom needed help. Then stand alone when it's all said and done.

I choose me...

An open ended sentence that speaks volumes to the woman that stands before you today.

I am the master of my abilities.

I am the best affirmation of ones self.

I am yesterday, for I've made many mistakes. I am today because I give you open wounds and scars healing.

I am tomorrow who stands before you ready for whatever it takes to not be a yesterday living for today, striving for tomorrow.

I choose me....

A lil' selfish me might say—that's exactly the point.....ME.

## Blessing in Disguise: -Amber Di.: Former Client

On August 20, 2019, I arrived at Lasting Change after completing an inpatient treatment program. This was my first attempt at sobriety after battling alcoholism for countless years. I had given everything that I loved away to alcoholism: a ten-year relationship, three beautiful children, and a home that I had built for my family. So, here I am at Lasting Change, homeless, fearful, and in absolute despair. The days were long—filled with structure, rules, intensive outpatient treatment, and counseling. I was uncomfortable, irritable, and taking my will back at every opportunity; nothing was changing! Until I was willing to change, I had to accept where I was at, admit I was powerless, and give it to God. By surrendering, I had to take all suggestions that were given to me. I, then, was able to take this opportunity at Lasting Change as a blessing to address my mental health issues, deal with the trauma, and heal.

As I began to return to a normal state of health, mind, and strength, I started to change my behaviors, attitude, and thinking process. I used Lasting Change as a platform and AA as a foundation to start over. I explored meetings, built a network

of girls, got a sponsor, homegroup, began service work and my steps. Lasting Change allowed me to learn how to balance my work. I moved to pre-transitional, then to transitional housing. With each transition, I was able to utilize the tools, suggestions, and changed behavior I gained from Lasting Change.

In conclusion of graduating Lasting Change, I left the program scared, hopeful, and with a place to call home again. I gained valuable friendships, healthy coping mechanisms, and how to build my life around recovery. I am beyond blessed that I have a healthier relationship with my children and family. I am fortunate that I am a casework coordinator and that I get the opportunity every day to counsel children who suffer from mental illness. This journey has not been easy and some days are much harder than others, however, I was told that “I only have to do this once”. Therefore, I remember that pain in my heart and feeling so lost, which is why I keep coming back to the rooms of AA. Lasting Change changed my life and for that, I will forever be grateful for the opportunity to be able to rebuild a better, healthier, sober life!

*“Until I was willing to change, I had to accept where I was at, admit I was powerless, and give it to God.”*

Coffee Date  
with Alumni:  
Bridgette  
Coyer, Diane  
Wooten, Mimi  
Duvall, Chloe  
Remines,  
Melanie  
Watts, Shelby  
F., Betty Jo  
Justice, Rachel  
Reines



A Story of *hope*  
Amber Du..  
Current Resident

Lasting Change is a miracle worker and saved my life.

My clean date is May 28, 2019. They have taught me structure, which I needed from my unmanageable life.

They have taught me self-respect; that I am loved and I am important. They have taught me that I matter and how valuable my life really is. I am loved by the counselor's and staff.

I am from Baltimore City. I was addicted to pills and cocaine for 10 years, I never thought I would stop using.

Thankfully, this program helped me get employed, learn to love myself, and teaches me amazing things from outpatient. There are four levels and by God's grace and mercy, I am in phase three in pre-transitional. It is helping me learn how to manage money, pay bills, have a set schedule, and learn how to live a sober life. I just got the chance to share my story and inform people that working with a sponsor, doing step work, and living at Lasting Change, has gotten me 9 months clean on February 28th. God is doing for me what I cannot do for myself.

## Special Thank You to Our Recent Donors!

### Food Items:

The Wells House  
Art Hicks  
Trinity Lutheran Church

### Clothing/Toiletries:

Lori Schmidt  
Alicia Whitehill  
Judy Bohner  
Crystal Frierson  
Karen Hayes  
Jayne Moore  
Church Women United  
Linda Jones  
Zion Baptist Church  
Kim Bain  
Mary Gibson  
Teresa Peek  
Ashley Zimmerman

### Furniture/Appliances:

Barbara Munson  
Martin & Katherine Skane  
Kathy Wallgehleger  
Wendy Bruechert

### Other:

Jone L. Bowman Foundation  
Renee Blanchard

## Wishlist

- ◆ Shampoo/Conditioner
  - ◆ Pillows
- ◆ Body Wash
  - ◆ Vacuum
- ◆ Feminine Hygiene Products
  - ◆ Gloves
  - ◆ Towels

## Getting Through These Hard Times: -Heidi Strossel: Lasting Change Board Member

To the ladies of Lasting Change, our impeccable staff and beautifully supportive community:

Wow, what an interesting and unsettling impasse we have come to on a global scale. One that I never thought I would see so soon, in my lifetime. Our former busy worlds have been shifted or slowed down without much warning. Things that we found comfort in are closed or put on hold. Each time we reach for the thing that once brought us comfort or peace, we are now invited to go within and assess what is want or necessity. Forced to figure out and define what truly matters to us as individuals and as a community.

It's not unlike the process of addiction recovery where one can no longer run to the thing that once numbed us from our real work. For many, going within is normal muscle memory and for many others, this is a brand new and scary page. Not everyone sees the world through the same eyes, but that doesn't mean we can't find common human threads to create connection. Even something as simple as being a fellow human being in crisis, or living under the same roof in the early stages of recovery. What about working as a community team for infection control? We all belong to this Earth and one another. Where can you discuss your similarities as opposed to your differences?

Powerlessness seems to be the common thread to all of us, so let's explore that just a bit. For many, this triggers old wounds from childhood and dysfunctional family/relationship dynamics. The old space where we once sat without a voice, waiting for the other shoe to drop. Sound familiar? Especially in the recovery community, early trauma is a common factor and our triggers can be our best friends as well as our worst enemies. These days, we feel powerless in all the ways that were once familiar and com-

forting. But, we are truly not without power. We're being asked to be powerful in new and different ways. Talk about pushing comfort zones!

Let's ask this question out loud. "What is in my control?" As an overthinker and analyzer, I often think the solution is so complex. In truth, it's *always* in simplicity. I use this daily checklist to stay on track with the basics.

- *Are there dishes in the sink or dishwasher? Do them or put them away.*
- *Does anything need tidying? Do that now.*
- *What about laundry? Fold it and put it away.*
- *Did you meditate? Be sure to pause (at least 5-20 minutes) whether it's meditation, prayer, silence or gratitude.*
- *Did you move your body? Walk, yoga, stretch, bike, run – do something! (at least 20-30 minutes)*
- *What did you create? Art, poem (think Haiku), journal entry, doodle, coloring book, etc.*

This list allows me the 'ropes' to get out of my mind and back into my body. Shifting gears between mind and body is the perfect key to surviving this unsure time. Especially, when everything seems to change daily! This list gives you some pieces of the puzzle that *are* within your control. I invite/challenge you to complete this list each day, fully, and with presence.

Validating the hard parts of this shift is necessary too. On so many levels, it just doesn't seem fair! But, the health and well-being of our homes and communities are at stake. My decisions, your decisions.....our decisions. WE are having an impact on our future as well as the safety and lives of others. I'm choosing to be part of a community of belonging to one another. How about you?



## Board Member Spotlight:

Several of Lasting Change's board members celebrated our long time board member, Heather Guessford. Thank you for your service to Lasting Change. You have truly made a positive impact on our organization. Best of luck to you on your new journey as President/CEO of the Washington County United Way.

**Pictured:**  
Bill Gaertner, Board Member  
Dawn Sweitzer, Board President  
Kylie Johnson, Executive Director  
Susan Martz, Board Member  
Heather Guessford, Former Board Member  
Heidi Stossel, Board Member



## Dreams Are Possible—The Journey Continues:

**-Victoria K.: Current Resident**

It's been almost three months since I wrote about my story in the Winter newsletter. On the 24th of this month, I will celebrate 6 months clean; the longest amount of sobriety I have ever attained. Every time I say it out loud, a huge smile bursts from within, because most days it is still surreal. Since September 24th, 2019, my entire life has changed. In a miraculous way, the God of my understanding and higher power has created my new life.

Recovery is a way of life for me. The program of Narcotics Anonymous is astounding. It has given me freedom from the obsession to use drugs and alcohol. It has spiritually awoken my heart to a power greater than myself. It has provided a network of women who support me. It has allowed me to show up for life—the good days and the bad. Most of all, NA and Lasting Change, have given my children their mother back. The gratitude within me increases within each passing day. From a dark, lonely world, recovery has given me a second chance at life.

On June 24th, my children will be flying in from Montana. It has been four years since I have seen them last. I have never wanted anything in my life more than to be able to hold my babies in my

arms once again. Recovery made this dream possible for me. I watch women around me grow and mature through the program. We are sisters in recovery. We know each other's stories because we are all daughters, sisters, mothers and wives. This is currently my fifth time trying to get clean. This time around was different for me. My higher power guided me to Lasting Change, and it has been the only program that I have been succeeding in. I willingly look forward to the future, knowing that I can accomplish anything in this life that I want, if I put my recovery first. If you are new to the program or new to recovery, I urge you to give it a chance; a real chance with your whole heart. There is hope for every woman who will take the time to believe in herself once more.

## Our Faces: Anonymous: Current Resident

These walls trap us with  
the faces that match  
personalities from places  
we have been before.  
But still the faces anger—  
So we rage against the  
stranger  
From somewhere in our  
core.  
There is only black or white

When we think we're  
always right  
And the grey slips out the  
door.  
So as we grow and clear  
our minds the stranger  
rage slowly unwinds  
And fate shows us  
something more.  
The faces that we

see each day  
Show us that there's a  
different way for us to face  
the world.  
So when released from all  
these simple walls  
We smile when the  
stranger calls  
Together we all soar.

## Think for a Change: -Heather F.: Current Resident

**Think** of the possibilities...

Our potential will reach far beyond any  
question  
We will defy odds,  
And become greater than anybody ever  
expected  
We are preordained, we are meant for  
the top...  
Therefore we are destined

**For** those who doubt us...

They are just too blind to see.  
They only see the surface,  
But what lies underneath?  
Let's show them who we are.  
Where we came from, and what we are  
meant to be.

**A** world awaits...

Filled with bullet holes and broken  
souls,  
But we'll survive it.  
We got bullet proof plans, we're strong  
willed...  
And Teflon minded

**Change** the way we think...

Or nothing will change at all!  
If we don't stand for something,  
Then anything will make us fall  
So we remain strong and we stand tall.  
Mentally prepared.  
For the world...  
That lies beyond these brick  
walls.

## Lasting Change

### Board of Directors

Dawn Sweitzer (President)  
Michael Hartzell (Vice President)  
Jodi Blair (Treasurer)  
Wayne Rummel (Secretary)  
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  
Heidi Stossel

### **Honorary Members:**

The Honorable Kennedy Boone  
Donovan Bachtell  
Paul Crampton

Be Informed.  
Be Smart.  
**Be Safe.**

## Alumni Members

Chloe Remines  
(Alumni Coordinator)

Bridgette Coyer

Mimi Duvall

Tasha Griffin

Bettyjo Justice

Lori Martinez

Laurel Nelson

Rachel Reines

Melanie Watts

Diane Wooten

New Date:  
**Friday**  
**October 9, 2020**

**POSTPONED**



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