



## 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 fourth of four quarterly newsletters to present you with happenings at our organization, informative readings, and entertaining incidents provided by the women. 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 submissions 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

- New Program
- The Disease of Addiction
- Change in One's Life
- Direct Care Update
- Renovations

## Lead Up, Lead Down, Lead All Around: -Kylie Johnson: Executive Director; Lasting Change

Lasting Change is honored to announce their first two graduates from their new Workforce Development and Professionalism 10-week program. Lasting Change partnered with Leadx3 to offer this program to all of their clients to assist in helping each client become more prepared for the workforce by covering topics such as professionalism, job searches, job applications, resume construction, conflict resolution and stress management in the workplace, and interviewing skills. In addition to these topics each client participates in a one-on-one game plan session talking about what each client would like to accomplish career-wise over the next few years as well as an individual mock interview with instant feedback for each client.

Leadx3's motto is Lead Up, Lead Down, Lead All Around and was founded on the premise that everyone can lead in some way. The two founders of Leadx3, Shannon Cianelli and Kim Gembe thoroughly enjoy this program as it impacts our community in so many ways. Shannon Cianelli states, "This program is a way to empower women to not give up on themselves or their career aspirations. Having each client talk about the future they envision is a way to assist each person to stay on the road to recovery and focus on the type of future she desires. We give them the skillsets to help succeed in the working realm long after they complete their program at Lasting Change." Kim Gembe adds, "For years Shannon and I have helped college graduates go after their career aspirations and this was a way to offer these same services to our local community. I have been overwhelmed by the strength and determination from the clients at

Lasting Change, and to see a client succeed and start to become productive members of the workforce again is so impactful." Leadx3 engages in a variety of trainings across the county with nonprofit and for profit businesses and has thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to partner with such a critical organization as Lasting Change that helps our community in so many facets.

The first two graduates from the program are Loren and Teresa and this program meant two different



things for each one. Loren stated that doing a professional resume was her most valued outcome as she now feels she has one of the tools to switch careers. Loren is hoping to work within the addictions field to help others cope with their addiction and stay on the road

to recovery. Teresa stated that the class was so interactive and engaging she looked forward to attending each week. She appreciated the individualized, personal approach and stated that Kim is still working with her to ensure she progresses within her desired career aspirations. Both individuals stated they are now able to start building a sustainable life and manage their independence, careers, and maintain a healthy life balance to stay in recovery.

Each client at Lasting Change participates in this 10 week program. Lasting Change's Executive Director, Kylie Johnson, states, "We are so excited to have this program at Lasting Change. This program is such a key piece to our client's success during their stay and once they leave our program. We are providing clients with the education, tools, and resources they will need to continue their successful path in recovery. Congratulations to our first two graduates!"

Pictured Left to Right: Loren C. Shannon Cianelli, Teresa W-B

## The Disease: -Anonymous

Alcoholism and drug addiction is a chronic, incurable, progressive disease caused by complex physical and environmental factors. No one intentionally develops addiction. But, when you know you have it, you have to accept full responsibility for your recovery. Once addiction potential is established in your brain neurochemistry, it does not go away. There is no known way to change addiction predisposition. Recovery happens when the addicted person takes responsibility for her own recovery. It is a treatable disease and treatment can result in people getting well.

Many people find themselves not understanding relapse. They believe they the addicted person, once in recovery, is

“cured”. Relapse is common because too many people struggle with an addiction fail to maintain a regular program of recovery day after day, month after month, and year after year. Why? There are many reasons: over confidence after a period of clean time in which their healthy, social and emotional well-being is restored—complacency.

No matter what horrors the disease has put you through, no matter how tragic and terrible an individual’s track record, there is hope. If you start today on a program of recovery, if you maintain faith, you will, slowly but surely arrive at a sense of hope and optimism. In recovery you can find peace, joy, and freedom.

*“No matter what horrors addiction has put you through, no matter how tragic and terrible an individual’s track record, there is hope.”*



## Thoughts About Change: -Terri M.: Past Client 1999

I believe in my heart I’ve known for a long time the person I would like to be, but I’ve never been able to achieve it. The number one change I believe I have made as of today is the choice not to pick up a drink or a drug to escape from things I don’t want to deal with, or for that matter, for any reason at all. I decided to get clean for myself. I didn’t do it for someone else or something else.

I believe my mind today is a lot more open than ever, before I would completely shut my mind off unless it was what I wanted to hear. Today, I listen. Today, I am willing to do anything for my recovery. I know that includes taking suggestions and hearing what I need to hear, not just what I want to hear. Before I got clean and sober, things always had to be my way or I would get angry. Today, I’m learning the world does not revolve around me. I have finally accepted that I am truly an alcoholic and addict. I know I cannot successfully drink or drug. I always wanted to believe that I could.

Today I can be there for others and am not the selfish person I used to be. Today I take steps to be doing something I need to do, not what I want to do. Today, my recovery comes first. Today, I know that if I don’t work on me and change, it can take me right back to where I don’t want to be.

I know I still have a lot of growing to do. I have learned this is a process, not an event. I have God in my life today and pray to do his will, not mine. I want to continue to grow spiritually. Everyday I learn a little something to help me grow and live a normal, clean and sober life. Being honest is very important to me and when I do the wrong things or for selfish reasons, I feel it. Before, I never allowed myself to have a conscience. My goal is to be able to live in my own skin and learn to be happy with me. I know I will only achieve that by doing the next right thing and through prayer, honesty and hard work. Every day is a learning experience for me, and I will grow from each experience.

## A Story of *hope*

Nichole K.  
Current Resident

My name is Nik and I am 19 years old. I’ve been using since age 12.

I ended up dropping out of school and becoming homeless.

My mindset was use to live; that’s all I ever cared about. Heroin was my love. I never thought

I would get clean. I was doing okay for being a heroin addict—I had a house, car, long-term relationship, money, drugs. I thought I was good, things were looking up, but then reality hit.

On June 5, 2020, my boyfriend overdosed and passed away. I thought my addiction could not get worse but it did. I stopped showering and eating, I lost my job and house, wrecked my car, and caught charges. I was tired of being sick and tired. I never thought about getting clean until now. I went to rehab but I knew I wouldn’t stay clean if I went home, so I decided to come to Lasting Change on July 30th. It was the best decision I ever made. I have been here for about 3 months and Lasting Change has saved my life. I’m beyond grateful for this place. It’s my first time in recovery and I believe that being at this place will give me the ability to stay clean and have a new beginning at life. Lasting Change has made things possible that I never thought could be. I am blessed for Lasting Change.

## Special Thank You to Our Recent Donors!

### Food Items:

The Wells House  
Art Hicks  
Maugansville Food Bank/  
Paul Nally  
Trinity Lutheran Church

### Clothing/Toiletries:

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Kim Gembe  
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### Furniture/Appliances:

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## Lasting Change Team Additions! -Mary Winebrenner; HR/Billing; Lasting Change

Lasting Change has welcomed three new members to our Direct Care Team. Our direct care team are responsible for caring, supporting, and assisting our clients on the path to sobriety. Our Direct Care Teammate's are responsible for the day-to-day operations of Lasting Change's residential facility and clients 24- hours a day, seven days a week. This department is an essential part of the services that Lasting Change provides to its clients.

Pictured on Right: Hayley Parks (Hired July 2020)



Hayley Parks chose to be part of the Lasting Change Team because she believes that Lasting Change is a great company and facility. Her past experiences of seeing her mother struggle with her substance use disorder has driven her to want to help others through their own recovery journey. What Hayley likes best about working in her new position is that she is now able to live her dream which is helping others through their journey to long lasting sobriety.



Pictured on Left: Brittany Myers (Hired October 2020)

Brittany Myers chose to work for Lasting Change because she wanted a job that offered a mix of challenges and rewards. Helping women through their recovery is extremely difficult and challenging, but the reward of being there and watching the women transform is monumental. Brittany has worked the last 15 years as a healthcare professional which prepared her for this position. Her previous work history has given her the experience of getting to know people, from all kinds of backgrounds and all different walks of life. This experience has made her impartial and taught her how to understand what another person may be going through. She has learned how to remain unbiased which is what she can now offer to the women going through their recovery at Lasting Change. What Britany really enjoys about her new position is working with women while they navigate through their recovery, so they can go on to live full lives, new lives, and great lives. Watching a client's transformation is like watching a caterpillar turn into a butterfly, it is a truly beautiful process.

Pictured on Right: Shanice Washington (Hired July 2020)

Shanice Washington chose to work for Lasting Change because she is driven to help women overcome their substance abuse, so the women can live a full and healthy life. Shanice has a deep passion for helping others since she lost her sister Janeice in May 2019. What she likes best about her job at Lasting Change is coming to work because she loves being a part of our client's recovery journey.



## Building Improvements at Lasting Change -Kylie Johnson: Executive Director; Lasting Change

Lasting Change has committed to transform the condition and functionality of our facilities by planning broadly to capture the totality of the conditions and needs of physical assets, while maintaining our existing facilities to minimize the backlog of delayed maintenance. We strive through the plan to achieve accessible and healthy facilities that are efficient, safe, and contribute towards our goals of sustainability.

Lasting Change's Facilities Committee has been extremely busy these past few years. The list below breaks down just a few of our recent building improvements.

1. October 2020: Transitional House – 218 – new composite back deck
2. September 2020: Transitional House – 218 – entire house repainted, new floors throughout the house, new furniture (7-bedroom suits, living room, dining room)
3. August 2020: Main House- 519 N Locust – new flooring in all hallways and client bedrooms, all areas of house have been repainted, transition from fluorescent to LED lights through the entire house
4. Feb. 2020: Transitional House- 214 N Potomac – completely remodeled after a devastating fire in 2018. Including all new appliances, new furniture (5-new bedroom suits, living room, dining room), washer/dryer, 2 composite back decks
5. July 2019: Wellness Center – equip with brand new treadmills, recumbent bike, tv, free weights, oversized mirror
6. June 2019: Beautification of Courtyard: Main House- 519 N Locust– newly constructed front entrance, painted paths, new light fixtures, updated mailbox, mulch, flowers
7. September 2018: Main House- 519 N Locust- partial new roof
8. July 2018: Main House – 519 N Locust – completely renovated group room



These tremendous transformations could not happen without our amazing community supporters and partners: Thank you!

**Kellgard General Contracting**  
**United Way of Washington County**  
**Life House Church**  
**Sunrise Rotary**  
**Hagerstown Rotary Club**  
**Community Foundation**  
**Gaming Commission**  
**The Jone L. Bowman Foundation**

## My Worst Enemy: -Heather F. Transitional Resident

I am so tired of the “maybe if’s...”  
 And “maybe this”, or the “maybe not’s...”

The “what is’s and the what not’s.”  
 Looking for the confidence I just don’t got...

Second guessing myself when I know I should not.

I know the probabilities. I see the possibilities...

I know inside of me I have unstoppable capabilities...

But I also have something all too familiar to me.

My worst enemy...Who is she?  
 It’s me!

The key to unlock my mind—She wears proudly, mocking me...

Proving the devil to be right about the failure I’d be.

I’m so sick of looking back at the mess I leave....

But once again there’s my worst enemy.

She lives deep inside of me...  
 You see...

She enables this disease that grows and thrives in me...

But who could it be?...It’s me!

How did I become my own worst enemy?



**Lasting Change**

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- Shampoo
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**Lasting Change**

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