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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 third 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.

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Special points of interest

- Forming relationships
- Health issues in recovery
- Getting through the pandemic
- Celebrating Board Achievements
- Client Growth
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Battling the Disease: -Andrea T.: Current Resident

I came to Lasting Change scared and afraid, but desperate to change my life. I could no longer live the way I was living. I had lost everything and the only thing I had left was a tiny bit of hope. Family and friends were sick of things I was doing and no longer accepted my calls. At the end, there was only one last being that I thought would listen, and that was God.

The first couple weeks at Lasting Change were the hardest, being in a strange place not knowing anyone was a challenge. My counselor was warm and welcoming. Her encouragement and concern began to make me want to do better. See, I have always thought I was just a messed up person but I have learned that I have a disease; a sickness I had no control over and that I will have the rest of my life. With counseling, prayer, and being around others struggling like me, my disease can be treated.

Lasting Change helped me understand that I had

things I had not dealt with. I learned that until I start the process of healing, I would not be able to control my addiction. Admitting I was powerless was hard but I now have 8 months clean, which I would not have without the help of Lasting Change. Even during COVID-19, we pulled together and continued our treatment. It was difficult not going to meetings, working with sponsors, or seeing our families.

I kicked my heroin habit when it nearly took my life. There was no where else for me to go. Being a slave to drugs is a horrible thing. When you are stuck in addiction, you feel there is no way out but death. I'm here to tell you that if I can do it, there is hope for you. Hi. My name is Andrea and I am an addict.



From Client to Staff Member:

My adventure with Lasting Change began in January 2018. My plans were to go to a place that I could have my children with me because, let's be honest, being a mother was my identity—or at least I thought it was. They didn't have a bed open so I decided to go to Lasting Change. I knew going home after rehab wasn't a good choice. When I first walked through those doors, I was broken and scared. Lasting Change helped to build my self-worth. With the help of my counselor and a few others, I was able to learn how to live again by myself.

I felt very selfish for not being with my children but they were being cared for by family so I could focus on myself. Which made me the strong woman I am today.

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*"Trying to form relationships
with the wrong people
turned me into someone I
was not, but today...I know
who I am and I love me."*

Relationships in Recovery: -Loren C.: Current Resident

I have not always had the best relationships through all my years of addiction. I could not be trusted and I didn't trust others. Trying to form relationships with the wrong people turned me into someone I was not, but today I can actually say I know who I am and I love me.

It has taken months for me to figure out who I am and to actually put faith into other people. Being at Lasting Change has taught me that it is okay to open up and let out my feelings to other women, as well as being a good listener. Forming bonds with each other was very difficult for me at first. I did not want to speak to anyone or care to engage. With us being quarantined, we were all there for each other and this became my new family. With each day passing, my vulnerability got stronger and slowly realized we are a lot alike in more ways than I thought. As I began to open up, being unafraid of what people may think of me, letting my walls down,

smiling and laughing more, and making my recovery stronger at the same time.

Relationships are a huge part of healing the past. Although some things may never go away, being able to talk about it, makes it that much easier. The girls in the house have taught me a lot, from being patient, learning not to judge, to always doing the next right thing. The next right thing for me was to make amends with the ones closest to me, my family. Healing is a process and everyone heals differently. My relationships are happy, honest, and healthy. I'm extremely grateful for the great people in my life.

Overcoming Hardships: -Hillary: Former Client

My name is Hillary, and I came to Lasting Change the day after Christmas in 2019. I had never lived in a recovery house before, and I was every bit as anxious as I could be. It was the first time I was letting myself be open to the idea of sober living. The first 3 months in the house went smoothly for me. I formed strong bonds with some of the women, I woke up feeling grateful and with a smile on my face (well most days!) and I built an open and honest relationship with my counselor. Then in March, my life changed.

I was diagnosed with rectal cancer and would need major surgery. For the next few weeks as I awaited a surgery date, I was open about my diagnosis and how scared I felt to the people around me. The women (both staff and clients) were there for me when I was having a bad day or just feeling down. They were incredible at lifting my spirits.

Then, COVID-19 hit and it took me a bit to realize that I would have to go through the surgery and recovery without visitors. It was especially hard because my parents could not come down from NY and be there in person to comfort me. I have relied on my parents for everything, Lasting Change taught me how to cope and deal with my situation and to be strong throughout my process.

Due to complications, the surgeon had no choice but to give me a temporary bag for my output. This devastated me. How would I possibly get through the

Pictured Page 2, Article authors: Olivia G, Lori P, Amber D.

Pictured Below: Hillary



next 3 months? I spent 10 days in the hospital after surgery before returning to Lasting Change. I was worried about leaving the hospital, because I felt embarrassed and self-conscious about my bag. Upon return, everyone went out of their way to help me with whatever I needed; staff and clients bent over backwards every day to help me out and accommodate me, and when I needed to be talked off

"Staff and clients bent over backwards every day to help and accommodate me, and when I needed to be talked off the ledge, the women were always there."

the ledge, the women were always there. I had to rely heavily on the women around me, since outside meetings were still closed due to the pandemic.

It is now 3 months since my surgery, I am cancer free, and I am still sober. I can say for a fact that if it was not for Lasting Change and the amazing women that work here, there is a slim chance I would have been able to maintain sobriety throughout this whole ordeal. I am forever grateful for the help I have received from my temporary home.

A Story of *hope*
Olivia G.
Current Transitional
Resident

When I first arrived at Lasting Change, my attitude was unreasonable. I lacked true ambition and willingness. My counselor, who has been immaculate, held nothing back. She expected a lot from me because she could see that I was capable of doing better. I am lucky enough to have had other women who were patient with me and accepted me for who I was. They waited for me to start making my own personal changes.

Even then, I had some reservations and wasn't ready to take all the steps necessary to recover. After a few months, I met my sponsor. She took the time to study the big book with me and show me the road I needed to tread to recovery. That was July of 2019.

I've had my ups and downs. I've dealt with family death, the deaths of close friends—who weren't able to recover, and some people I'd only met in passing. It put things into perspective for me. Stay sober or forfeit my life. I'm grateful to have found a higher power, a network of loving women, and a wholesome living environment at Lasting Change that enriches my recovery.

Special Thank You to Our Recent Donors!

*We were unable to accept
many donations during this
time, but truly appreciate
those who thought of us*

Food Items:

The Wells House
Art Hicks
Trinity Lutheran Church
United Way—Heather
Guessford
DOT Foods
Potomac Case Mgt.
Renee Burgan

Clothing/Toiletries:

Ashley Zimmerman
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Cathy Ford
Terry Friskey
Gary Hayes

Furniture/Appliances:

Dylan Everetts
Carol Hall
Wendy Bruechert

Other:

David Post



It's Okay to Not Be Okay: -Stephanie Little: Addictions Counselor

One of the biggest parts of being a Counselor is being able to set aside your own thoughts and issues in order to be present with a client and help them navigate through their own stuff. This became almost impossible for me when the world seemed to come to a stop in March because of COVID-19. As a whole, we went from living life in a pretty ordinary way, to being told that we weren't allowed to leave our houses. Before we could adjust, stores were closed, government was closed, jobs were closed and it seemed the world closed. I went from working 40+ hours a week, to only being allowed to come in the office when it was necessary to run groups twice a week.

Being a person that is driven by work and the structure that it brings to my life, COVID stopped me in my tracks. My mental health was suffering due to the lack of structure and the amount of time I was spending alone. Although I could completely relate to my clients in their fears and concerns regarding COVID, I did not know how to help, because I did not know how to help myself. This was happening to me at the same time it was happening to them and I had the same fears that they had. Would I get sick? Would I survive if I did? When will I get to see my family? Am I going to go crazy before they let me go back to work? When was this going to end? When... When was this madness going to end and will I have any toilet paper left when it does?

As the days turned into weeks, and then months, the quarantine became the norm; we had reached a place of acceptance, but still were miserable. Zoom sessions with my clients were getting shorter as we spent more time stuck in our homes and not able to work. They had nothing to say because nothing was changing, which was okay, because I'm not sure if I would have been able to hear them in that moment. As those days turned into weeks and months, I found that we were leaning on each other and that was how we were going to survive. I realized that it was okay for my clients to know that I was struggling with this too and it was okay not to be okay during this time. It was okay for me not to be okay, just as it was for them, because we were all doing the best we could.

Three months later, and the restrictions are starting to lift. I have been back at work full time for about 2 weeks and the world seems to be opening bit by bit. Life is not normal by any means yet, but it's a vast improvement from what it was 3 months ago. I'm excited to get up everyday again and try to make a difference in the world. The clients are starting to see the light at the end of the tunnel as well. I don't know if I would have made it through the quarantine without the support of family, friends, co-workers and my clients. They let me know what I try to teach them every day; that it's okay not to be okay. Even if you're not okay, you can survive.

Drawing submitted by Shelby F., current resident

Board Member Spotlight:

We congratulate our Board Member, Susan Martz, with heartfelt appreciation for 20 years of loyalty, leadership and dedicated service to Lasting Change | Recovery Solutions for Women. Susan joined the board of Lasting Change, formerly known as the W House, in 2000. Susan has been an integral part here at Lasting Change and has had the opportunity to assist in our growth and continued success. Thank you Susan for all you have done and continue to do for this organization.





Gifted:

-Heather F.: Current Resident

If God gave you a choice to go back, would you go?

To undo everything that's been done, to change life as you know it?

If you had two choices which would you pick?

Well, the truth is....The choice doesn't exist!

To remain in the past, or cherish the present?

To continue killing yourself, or start to live?

The past is a prison, but the present is a gift!

If you could go back, would you go?

Or would you take everything you know from it and continue to grow from it?

If you know what I know, then let the moment guide you....intuition.

Put your ear to the wind, my friend, and listen.

If we were going to be here, then there's a necessity to make a difference

We cannot go back, but our future is unwritten

The past is the past, but the present is a present and we are truly gifted!

Recovery Word Search

Drawing submitted by Amanda C.,
current resident

N J B A S M Q I N T E R V E N T I O N N F M
O S J W G C T I V C X J S A L S Z P M D Z Q
I A E G I M R P X H A M T J U C P Z P N I I
T Y B R X S J B W U T V D H A V D O P P T U
A S U Z E T T H F D W I A K E W L X N G D N
T P G Z Y C T U W W Y N A G U S Z M A S L B
I O M E E T I N G S Y T H F K U T I I E E F
L N A M A K A M T Y N R B G Z E Q R Z E H E
I S T I R E C O V E R Y E O N V L D J X A B
B O H O E I X Q J Q O Z D W Q U N R P J L I
A R W W C I E F B A C U Q X O K S G Z Y Y H
H T A S Q U Q I V H I U Z R I P K E W M N Q
E J D D U A A J D O S Y F T M D R D S C A V
R Y G Y D I T S U C P U Y D M P O E H I N Q
Y D K H I I A N E O N Y S U Z Z W A H A O Y
F B U B Z X C V E I K E S E R I T Z A G Q B
I M K F X Q M T G M R H O M T W E P Q J I L
S B Z R J J H S I E T N I N X N N O V G C H
E Z Q Z H Y N J N O L A A F V W R E V Q G R
S O B E R P K I M N N E E D V I J Y X D C A
Y X Z I X N T P W R L M C R T L O V Z K L D
K D B E Q Y J T Q C T U R Q T T W F R R V Z

NA AA

CLEANTIME

HIGHER POWER

TREATMENT

SOBER

RECOVERY

SPONSOR

NETWORK

SERENITY

REHABILITATION

ADDICTION

SPONSEE

FAITH

INTERVENTION

MEETINGS



{wish list}

◆ Shampoo/Conditioner

◆ Pillows

◆ Body Wash

◆ Vacuum

◆ Feminine Hygiene Products

◆ Disinfecting Wipes

◆ Towels

From Client to Staff Member:

.....Continued from Page 2

They helped guide me when I had no direction. Without that solid foundation, I don't know where I would be today. Thanks to that direction, I now get to work at Lasting Change and play a part in helping ladies just like myself. I know God placed me here for a reason, from the beginning until now. I feel like the ladies, and some co-workers, get to see that it can be done through me. Today I have two years clean and I know that wouldn't have been possible with Lasting Change. Maybe I can help someone see that they are worth it and recovery can happen. I will always be grateful for the difference Lasting Changes has made in my life.

-Misty Smith: Direct Care

Lasting Change

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