

**Oxford House, Inc.**  
**Annual Report FY2020**

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

**Self-run, Self-supported Recovery Housing**



**Supporting Recovery Without Relapse**  
*Even During a Pandemic!*

**Oxford House, Inc.**  
1010 Wayne Avenue, Suite 300  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910  
[www.oxfordhouse.org](http://www.oxfordhouse.org)

## About Oxford House, Inc.

Oxford House, Inc. [OHI] is the Delaware nonprofit, 501(c)(3) corporation that serves as the umbrella organization of the worldwide network of more than 3,000 individual Oxford Houses. Its central office is at 1010 Wayne Avenue, Suite 300, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910. The Oxford House™ program can be developed on a national scale at very low cost and it fosters recovery without relapse.

Oxford House™ is a concept and system of operations based on the experience of recovering alcoholics and drug addicts who learned that behavior change is essential to recovery from alcoholism and drug addiction. They also learned that Oxford House provided the living environment that could help them become comfortable enough with abstinent behavior to stay clean and sober without relapse.

The Oxford House Manual® is the basic blueprint that provides the organization and structure that permit groups of recovering individuals to successfully live together in a supportive environment. All Oxford Houses are rented ordinary single-family houses in good neighborhoods. There are Oxford Houses for men and Oxford Houses for women but there are no co-ed houses. The average number of residents per house nationally is about 8 with a range per house of 6 to 16.

Oxford Houses work because they: (1) have no time limit for how long a resident can live in an Oxford House; (2) follow a democratic system of operation; (3) utilize self-support to pay all the household expenses; and (4) adhere to the absolute requirement that any resident who returns to using alcohol or illicit drugs must be immediately expelled. Oxford House provides the missing elements needed by most alcoholics and drug addicts to develop behavior that assures total abstinence. It provides the time, peer support and structured living environment necessary for long-term behavior change to take hold.

Individuals living in an Oxford House learn or relearn values and responsible behavior and, slowly but surely, they develop long-term behavior to assure comfortable sobriety – forever. Some individuals live in Oxford Houses a few months; others for many years. By using participatory democracy and self-support, alcoholics, drug addicts and those with co-occurring mental illness achieve long-term recovery.

After 46 years of steady growth and successful recovery outcomes, Oxford House™ has been proven to work. It is also a very cost-effective way to support long-term recovery from alcoholism, drug addiction and co-occurring mental illness. At the end of 2020, there were more than 3,000 Oxford Houses with over 20,000 beds throughout the country.

Oxford House has been listed as a best practice on the National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices [NREPP] and was singled out as an effective tool for long-term recovery in the U.S. Surgeon General's report: "Facing Addiction in America: The Surgeon General's Report on Alcohol, Drugs, and Health, 2016."

*Silver Spring, Maryland*  
January 30, 2021

## Board Members

Jerry Conlon, Chairman  
*Former Executive*  
*CNW Railway*  
Evanston, IL 60201

William C. Paley\*  
*William C. Paley Foundation*  
Washington, DC 20036

William Newman  
*Attorney, District of Columbia*  
Washington, DC 20006

Judy O'Hara  
*Attorney, District of Columbia*  
Washington, DC 20036

Col. Kenneth Hoffman, M.D.  
*Retired US Army*  
Rockville, MD 20850

J. Paul Molloy\*  
*Chief Executive Officer*  
*Oxford House, Inc.*  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

James McClain\*  
*Retired USPS*  
Temple Hills, MD 20748

Thomas O'Hara  
*Former Executive*  
*Prudential Securities*  
McLean VA 22102

Janice E. Jordan  
*Retired Virginia BHDS*  
Glen Allen, VA 23060

Robert L. DuPont, M.D.  
*Institute for Behavior and*  
*Health, Inc.*  
Rockville, MD 20852

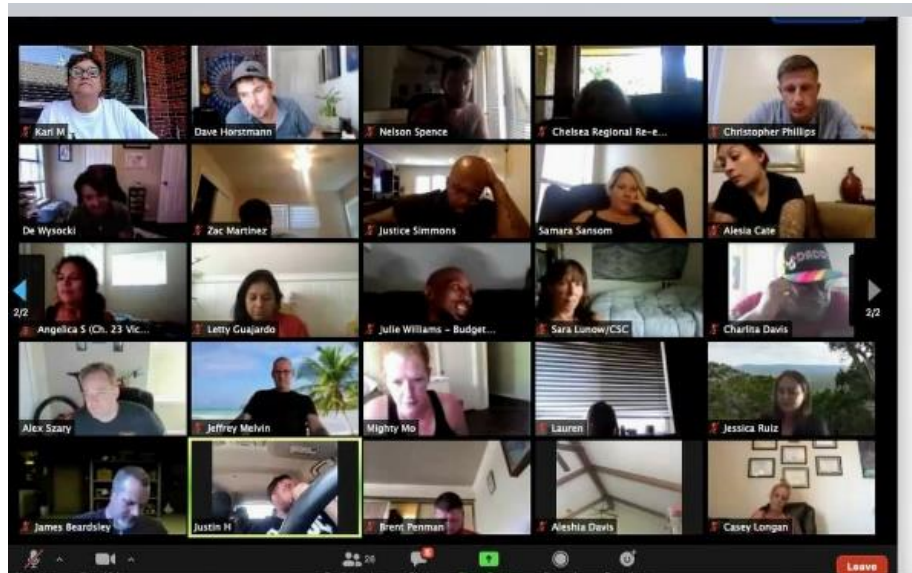
Stuart Gitlow, M.D.  
*Past President, ASAM*  
Woonsocket, RI 02895

Stephanie Curry\*  
*World Council Chairperson*

\* Alumni or Resident

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

National Profile .....	2
Message from the CEO .....	3
Management Report .....	7
Life in Oxford House During the Pandemic .....	10
Opioid Addiction and Oxford House .....	15
Building Community .....	16
Re-entry from Prison or Jail to Oxford House .....	18
Development That Works .....	23
Convention Memories .....	25
FY 2020 Financials .....	28
A Few Houses in the Oxford House Network .....	32



An Oxford House Chapter Meeting During the Pandemic

# NATIONAL PROFILE

## Good Houses in Good Neighborhoods



**Oxford House – Homestead** (pictured at the left) is an Oxford House for 7 men that was established in Chapel Hill, NC on April 1, 1999. It is one of 290 Oxford Houses in North Carolina. The House started on Homestead Road in 1999 and moved to Scarlet Drive in 2005. It has been home to 323 men in recovery. It is an example of how Oxford Houses continue year after year and sometimes the entire group moves to a better house.

There are houses for men; houses for women; houses for women with children; and houses for men with children.

*Creating an Effective National Recovery Network One House at a Time*

### National Oxford House Profile<sup>1</sup>

Number of Houses for Women	950	Recovery Beds for Women	7,494
Number of Houses for Men	2,108	Recovery Beds for Men	17,098
Total Number of Houses	3,050	Total Recovery Beds	24,592
Number of States with Houses	49	Cities with Oxford Houses	493

### Resident Profile<sup>2</sup>

Average Age of Residents [range 17 – 91]	38.0	Percent Veterans	13%
Average Educational Level	12.2 yrs.	Range of Educational Level	3-19 Yrs.
Average Cost/Person Per Week: (Range \$120-550/week)	\$132	Average Rent/Group/Month (Range \$1,000-8,000/mo.)	\$2,045
Residents Working	83.3%	Average Monthly Earnings	\$1,695
Percent Addicted to Drugs and Alcohol [60.7% Opioids]	78%	Percent Addicted to Only Alcohol	22%
Race -- White	77.5%	Marital Status --	
Black	13.6%	Never Married	59.2%
Hispanic	5.1%	Separated	7.6%
Native American	3.8%	Divorced	26.3%
		Married	4.6%
		Widowed	2.2%
Prior Homelessness	71.4%	Time Homeless [median]	6.0 Mos.
Prior Jail	84.8%	Average Jail Time [median 7 Mos.]	8 Mos.
Average AA or NA Meetings Per Week	3.4	Percent Going To Counseling <u>plus</u> AA/NA	38.4%
Average Length of Sobriety of House Residents	12.4 Mos.	Residents Expelled Because of Relapse	21.2%
Average Length of Stay In an Oxford House	9.5 Mos.	Average No. of Applicants For Each Vacant Bed	4.4

<sup>1</sup> Total number of houses, beds and locations as of January 1, 2021.

<sup>2</sup> Resident profile as of September 30, 2020 based on OHI surveys completed by 10,209 residents in 18 States and D.C. plus house reports.

## Oxford House Fast Facts

- **24,592 - Number of Oxford House Recovery Beds**
- **3,050 - Number of Oxford Houses as of January 2021**
- **49 - Number of States with Oxford Houses**
- **493 - Number of towns and cities with Oxford Houses**
- **\$1,695 - Average monthly income of residents**
- **\$132 - Average weekly share of expenses paid by Oxford House residents**
- **71.4% of Oxford House residents had been homeless for an average total period of 6.0 months**
- **78% addicted to drugs and alcohol; 22% only alcohol**
- **84.8% had done jail time related to their addiction**
- **9.5 months - Average length of sobriety**
- **321 - New Oxford Houses started CY 2020 (104 houses for women; 217 for men)**
- **2,681 - Total CY 2020 Added Recovery Beds (844 for women; 1,837 for men)**
- **CY 2020 residents: 44,406 with 21.2% expelled because of relapse**

## MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

The Oxford House™ model is 46 years old and is an important national tool for supporting long-term recovery from addiction. Oxford House enables individuals with substance use disorders (whether addicted to alcohol, opioids or other drugs) to gain the time, peer support and structure needed to change from the chaos of addiction to the comfort of a purposeful life well lived. Since inception, the sole focus of Oxford House has been on providing a recovery housing program that supports long-term recovery without relapse. That’s been its only purpose since it began. It worked then and it works now and we anticipate that it will continue to work many years into the future.

In this message, I’d like to first reiterate how Oxford Houses work. I’ve said it all before but it’s the most critical part of our program and I think it bears repeating here.

### How Oxford Houses Work

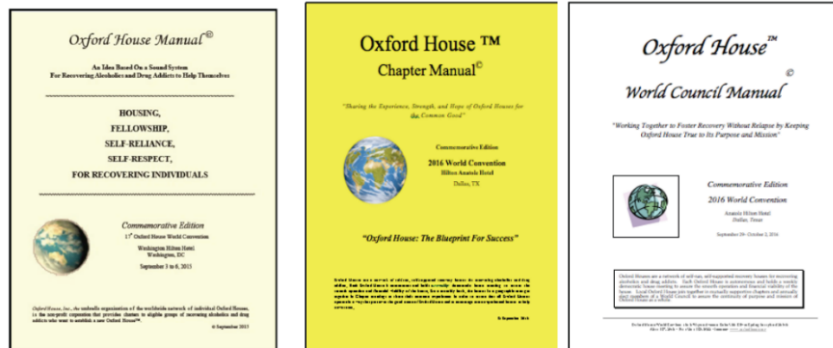
Oxford House, Inc. (OHI) has never been focused on owning property or accumulating wealth. All Oxford Houses are ordinary houses that are rented by the chartered group and the residents share the rent and other household expenses equally. That means that living in an Oxford House is relatively cheap and there are no residency time limits; residents can live in an Oxford House as long as they want – as long as they follow the charter rules.

The charter becomes the entry point for any group to start an Oxford House. In addition to requiring that the group accommodate six or more individuals, the charter sets forth three basic standards: [1] the group must be democratically self-run following the process and procedures of the Oxford House Manual®; [2] the group must be financially self-supporting; and [3] the group must immediately expel any resident who returns to drinking alcohol or using illicit drugs.

Any group of six or more recovering persons can be granted a charter and at no charge. Initially the charter is granted on a probationary basis and, during the first six months, a group must demonstrate that it understands the Oxford House system of operations. Once a new group understands the system, the House is granted a permanent charter.

Every resident pays an equal share of household expenses and has an equal voice in all house operations. Each House elects five house officers with terms limited to no more than six months at a time. Weekly business meetings are held to review House finances and other issues and provide the forum for resolving all issues and disputes that may arise from a group of people living together. Regular or special House meetings may also take up the acceptance of new residents and the expulsion of residents who relapse. If you ask ten residents the question: “Who manages the house?”, nine out of ten will respond: “Oh, the inmates run the asylum and it works just fine, thank you.”

Key Manuals To Keep Oxford Houses On Track



The self-run feature of Oxford House has two main advantages: [1] it saves expenses by not having a paid staff running the House and [2] it builds self-esteem since each resident takes pride in the self-management of the House. Self-esteem is particularly important because it is tied to commitment to recovery. The absence of a residency time limit is important because everyone in recovery masters recovery at a different pace.

**HOUSE OFFICERS**  
President  
Secretary  
Treasurer  
Comptroller  
Chore Coordinator

It is pretty easy to find a good house to rent in a nice neighborhood but it was not very easy in the early days of expansion. Fortunately, OHI has provided the oversight and civil rights protection needed to put houses in good neighborhoods.

The first five Oxford Houses in New Jersey all faced NIMBY (not-in-my-back-yard) zoning problems. It was only through the persistence of OHI that we won those cases. In 1995, a Washington State case – *City of Edmonds, WA v. Oxford House, Inc.* reached the U.S. Supreme Court. OHI won that case and has won civil rights cases with respect to landlord insurance coverage and fire safety issues. OHI continues to help individual Oxford Houses combat discrimination. We are a functional family and act together to protect our civil rights.

As soon as several Oxford Houses exist in an area, a Chapter is formed and have monthly meetings and frequent workshops. Chapters also form state associations to organize statewide conventions to teach and learn more about addiction and recovery. Education is always ongoing and has a side benefit of community and socialization. Residents of Oxford Houses also value the opportunity to gather at an annual convention to learn more about addiction and to socialize. As you will read in subsequent portions of this report, some adaptations have had to be made to accommodate joining together for meetings and workshops during this past year.

The network of more than 3,000 individual Oxford Houses continues to provide the time, peer support and living environment needed to enable comfortable, long-term recovery without relapse.

### **The 2020 Pandemic**

In 2020, Oxford House, Inc. took on the challenge of operating amidst a worldwide pandemic. I am pleased to report that the central organization, the outreach workers and the individual Oxford Houses and their residents have all risen to the occasion and managed to develop workarounds and accommodations that safeguard the program and its residents.

Throughout this report, you will read of ways in which individuals, Houses and Chapters have used their unique resources to strengthen their recovery and that of others within their network of Oxford Houses. As you will see, the experiences of many recovering individuals have given rise to unique abilities that enable them to adapt to unforeseen and unexpected circumstances better than many less-challenged folks. Resourcefulness and creativity sometimes spring from unexpected sources.

I am particularly proud of the exceptional work being done by COO Kathleen Gibson, the central office staff and all of the outreach workers in the field who are working with the

Oxford Houses and helping to expand the network of Oxford Houses. All of this work is continuing successfully even during the pandemic.

Early in March 2020, before the pandemic became widespread and social-distancing became the norm, OHI sponsored a workshop for outreach workers – all of whom are Oxford House alumni and now work to teach others how it works. See group photo below.



All of the outreach staff are critical to the success and expansion of the Oxford House network of houses. They are the “Johnny Appleseeds” who spread the word and the “Tom Sawyers” who convince House members they can do it themselves. Their job is not to act as house managers or supervisors; their role is to act as resource folks who are available to help teach others how it works. It’s not an easy job but they do it and they do it exceptionally well!

### **Support and Expansion**

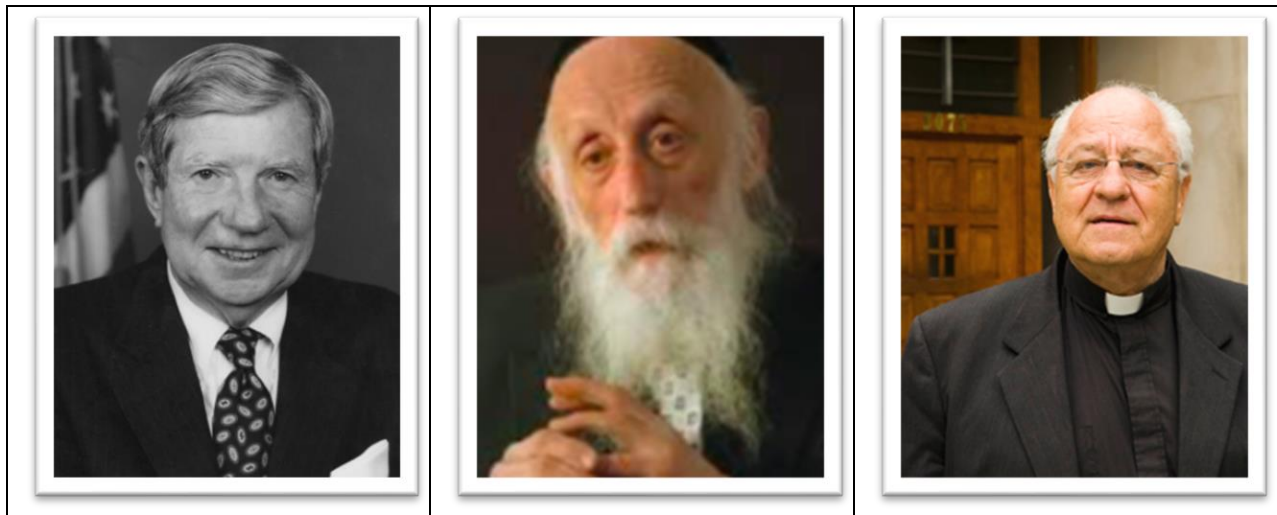
I am also exceedingly grateful for the financial support we have received from states, localities, behavioral health organizations, individuals and individual Oxford Houses and Chapters over the course of the fiscal year. This support has permitted us to continue expanding the network and keeping individual Houses on course. Expansion is greatest where OHI receives financial support and where there is a start-up loan fund that permits new Oxford Houses to get no-interest loans to help cover start-up expenses. Start-up loans were initially authorized by the U. S. Congress in 1988 and have proven to be an important catalyst for expansion.

Much of the support we have received lately is directed toward addressing the opioid crisis and, a year ago, my message focused on where Oxford House fits when the national focus is opioid addiction. The founders and most early residents of Oxford Houses were alcoholics; however, the fact is that the Oxford House model is as relevant today as it ever was – if not more so! Street drugs may be more potent but the conditions needed to achieve long-term recovery remain constant. Medication and treatment may save lives in the near term but recovery models like Oxford House are essential for providing the time and peer support needed to achieve the long-term behavior change that supports recovery without relapse.

Recovery requires more than treatment. There is enhanced recognition that the evidence-based Oxford House model greatly increases the likelihood that an individual will achieve long-term recovery without relapse.

### **In Memoriam**

Over our 46-year history there have been thousands of friends who have provided good advice and support to the concept and expansion of opportunity for recovering individuals to live in an Oxford House. Three such friends died this year. From left to right below: Fred Rooney, former Congressman from Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, who, in 1987 convinced OHI to establish houses in his old district; Rabbi Abraham Twerks, cofounder of Gateway Treatment Centers, who, in 2008, helped OHI to establish a cluster of houses in Butler, Pennsylvania; and Father Peter Young, who in 1999 traveled from Albany, New York to Washington, D.C. to share his expertise on addiction treatment and recovery at the first Oxford House national convention.



Fred Rooney – 1925 - 2019

Rabbi Twerski – 1930-2020

Father Peter Young – 1930-2020

### **The Annual Convention**

For years, residents and alumni from around the country have gathered for an annual Oxford House convention. Because of the pandemic, the 2020 Oxford House convention was cancelled. We all were disappointed but prudence dictated forbearance. We all look forward to the time when it is again safe for the Oxford House family to get together to celebrate recovery and Oxford House. We hope it can be held in 2021.

### **Conclusion**

The past year has been unusual and challenging but everyone in Oxford House has risen to the occasion. I am tremendously proud of all that has been accomplished despite the challenges of social-distancing, mask-wearing, and meeting via Zoom – all in addition to the usual challenges of recovery. Kudos to all!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.



## MANAGEMENT REPORT

FY 2020 was another successful year for Oxford House, Inc. (OHI). Over the course of the year, the total number of Oxford Houses (and recovery beds) continued to rise, quality remained high, and finances remained stable – all despite the pandemic! Our primary focus has been on expanding our program to provide more opportunities for individuals recovering from alcoholism and drug addiction to achieve long-term sobriety without relapse and become fully integrated into the broader society.

### Expansion

Led by Paul Molloy, CEO, and Kathleen Gibson, COO, Oxford House chartered 321 new Oxford Houses with 2,681 recovery beds during CY 2020. Of the new Houses, 104 were for women and 217 were for men. At the end of CY 2020, the Oxford House network consisted of a total of 3,050 individual Oxford Houses with a total of 24,592 recovery beds. Demand for Oxford House residency remained high and, on average, there were more than three applicants for each vacancy that arose during the year. Expansion was particularly strong in those states and localities that supported the creation of new Oxford Houses through the provision of start-up loan funds and grants to enable OHI to send trained outreach workers to help start new houses and teach the system of operation. Once started, Oxford Houses are self-run and self-supported in accordance with their three charter conditions.

*(The COO/CEO picture at right was taken in 2019 – before the pandemic.)*



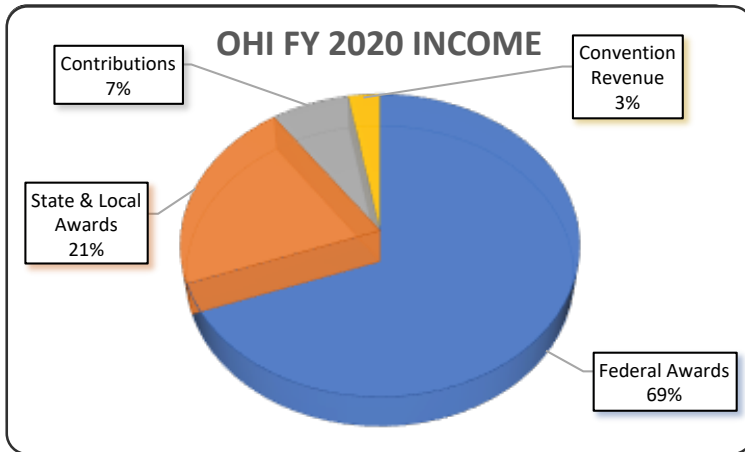
In FY 2020, OHI had development contracts with 25 states as well as with some treatment providers, behavioral health organizations, localities and drug courts. Those contracts cover most – but not all – of the development and maintenance costs. Oxford House residents and alumni continue to provide support for development in areas without government support. In 2020, 876 Oxford Houses voluntarily donated at least \$600 to OHI during the year. Voluntary contributions from Oxford House residents total \$768,141 and provided nearly 4.8% of the organization's total FY 2020 expenditures. Our goal continues to be total self-support by the year 2075! The goal is long-term; but not unrealistic! In a typical year, the Board of Directors recognizes these Houses with the *Directors' 100-Year Award* – but the convention was cancelled in 2020 as a result of the pandemic. The awards will be made during the scheduled 2021 Convention.

Once a cluster of houses is developed in an area, it becomes easier to expand because of help from existing Oxford Houses. Once providers and state officials see the effectiveness of Oxford House™ development, experience has shown them to be interested in supporting the expansion of the network of houses. The new Oxford Houses added in CY 2020 are an indication of the growing realization by states and providers that Oxford House™ is an important resource for fostering long-term recovery. By the end of FY 2020, more states, counties and local governments asked OHI to submit proposals for the development and maintenance of Oxford Houses. It is anticipated that OHI will expand into additional states in 2021 as more states recognize the important role that Oxford Houses play in addressing the opioid crisis and recovery in general.

OHI uses a number of time-tested protocols to establish and maintain the network of individual Oxford Houses. Clusters of houses are encouraged to form mutually-supportive chapters to facilitate networking between houses and to help monitor charter compliance. In a similar way, chapters group together to form mutually-supportive statewide associations. Training materials and standardized operating procedures are provided to all chartered houses, chapters and state associations. The OHI central office in Silver Spring, Maryland, also trains and supervises field workers to do outreach to states and communities throughout the United States and in some foreign countries. In 2020, much of this work was done online.

## Financial Results

Overall, OHI finances remained stable even though financial activity increased by 37%. OHI continued to support the expansion and maintenance of the network of Oxford Houses in an extremely cost-effective manner. Expenditures by OHI in FY 2020 were \$1,297,083 less than income.

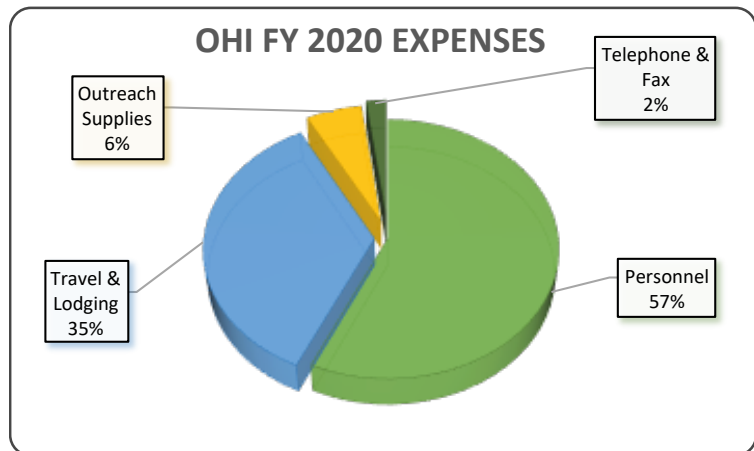


Total income in FY 2020 was \$17,224,658. Income sources are shown in the graph at the left. *Federal Awards* are almost entirely state block grant funds used by various states to pay for development and maintenance of existing networks of Oxford Houses. *State and Local Awards* are agreements that do not include block grant or pass-through federal funding. Contributions of \$1,196,183 includes \$768,141 in voluntary contributions from individual Oxford Houses either directly or through chapters. The rest comes from foundations and individuals.

When the federal Paycheck Protection Program was made available OHI applied for a PPP Loan and was awarded \$1,125,147. At the end of thirty days, it became clear that OHI did not need the proceeds of the PPP Loan to continue its work and keep its employees and repaid the PPP Loan in full.

OHI's expenditures for FY 2020 total \$16,134,063. The OHI expenditures are shown in the graph at the right. Over 99¢ of every dollar spent went directly to program costs – expanding and maintaining the network of Oxford Houses. Travel, telephone and personnel costs account for over 86% of costs. In 2020, OHI outreach workers operated in 21 states and Ghana.

*A copy of the audited financials and notes to the financials is at the end of this report.*



## Transparency and Research

Throughout the year, OHI continued to encourage Oxford House residents to participate in research. While anonymity has long been the norm for recovering alcoholics and drug addicts, OHI, since its inception, has encouraged residents and alumni to participate in research in order to continually evaluate the Oxford House model to better understand recovery from alcoholism and drug addiction.

OHI conducts internal surveys and continues to invite independent third-party research. Since 1991, both NIAAA and NIDA have devoted federal behavioral research dollars to studying the Oxford House program and its effect on developing long-term recovery. DePaul University has been a major recipient of such grants. The DePaul studies have produced more than 300 articles showing how Oxford House living affects recovery. From the DePaul research, Oxford Houses have been able to confirm that they are on the right track. OHI continues to encourage the DePaul researchers and other third-party researchers to evaluate the Oxford House program and assess its effectiveness.

## Proven Effectiveness of the Oxford House Model

Beginning in 2011, the government (SAMHSA) listed the Oxford House program as a best practice on the National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices (NREPP). While the 1988 Anti-Drug Abuse Act [PL 100-690] represented political acceptance of Oxford House, the NREPP listing verified the soundness of the Oxford House model as an evidence-based program that significantly improves addiction treatment outcomes. This finding was reinforced in the 2016 U. S. Surgeon General’s report, “Facing Addiction in America” and in ONDCP’s 2020 National Strategy Report that acknowledged the quality of the Oxford House™ program and held it up as an organization with a mission to improve the quality of recovery support services that should be emulated. It was also reaffirmed by his successor, Dr. Jerome Adams, at the Oxford House convention in September 2019.



## Litigation

Establishment and maintenance of an adequate network of recovery homes sometimes requires legal actions under the Federal Fair Housing Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act to protect the civil rights of residents. It has now been twenty-six years since the U. S. Supreme Court found in favor of Oxford House™ in the landmark case, *City of Edmonds, WA v. Oxford House, Inc. 514 US 1776 [1995]*. Nevertheless, local jurisdictions and insurance companies continue to test the limits of the law. In 2019, OHI was engaged in several legal cases to protect the right of recovering individuals to live together in order to increase their opportunity for long-term recovery. Fortunately, OHI’s attorney’s fees and court costs were minimal. OHI continues to be a leader in defining the extent and scope of rights under the Federal Fair Housing Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. It will continue to do so as it is important not to let the hard-fought rights obtained in the past be eroded by indifference to discrimination.

## FY 2021 Focus and Challenges

In FY 2021, OHI will focus on continuing to expand the network of Oxford Houses to provide more opportunities for individuals seeking long-term recovery without relapse via Oxford House living. The current opioid epidemic has encouraged additional states to enlist OHI’s support for the development of statewide networks of recovery homes. Oxford House anticipates supporting further expansion during FY 2021 and providing more needed recovery housing that’s cost-effective and works.

Well-meant calls for recovery home certification continue to pose a challenge. Fly-by-night operations need to be regulated but that should be done in a way that protects proven programs like Oxford House™ that rely on being treated as ordinary families; not as treatment facilities that require certification and regulation. The Oxford House system of operations has been time-tested and its principle of not owning real property or accumulating wealth has shielded it from the malpractice that often plagues recovery house operations.

The 2020 Annual Oxford House World Convention was cancelled as a result of the pandemic. This annual gathering provides an opportunity for residents and alumni to join together to learn and socialize. All participants leave conventions with renewed energy, stories and skills to bring back home. We hope to be able to hold a convention in 2021.

## Conclusion

We end the year with a profound sense of gratitude to all who have made the year so successful. Our contributors – the states, foundations, individual Oxford Houses and others – have seen the value of the Oxford House concept and have supported it. They have also seen that the staff of OHI and the residents and alumni of the individual houses work tirelessly to achieve the OHI goals and objectives. Most of all, we are grateful for all of the residents and alumni of Oxford House who daily prove that “the inmates can run the asylum” and, in doing so, they foster long-term recovery without relapse for most residents – even during a pandemic!

## LIFE IN OXFORD HOUSE DURING THE PANDEMIC

Living in an Oxford House entails many challenges but no one anticipated anything like the Covid-19 Pandemic in 2020. Remarkably, the men and women of Oxford House adapted amazingly well. They ardently took on the challenge of supporting sustained recovery without relapse while operating in a very different environment. This chapter details some of the challenges they faced and how they dealt with them.

The challenges were many. First of all, Oxford Houses are a form of congregate living; disparate folks live together as a family. This structure provides the support of the group but also imposes challenges insofar as residents are in and out of the house working at jobs and residents frequently share bedrooms – particularly if they are newcomers since that facilitates assimilation rather than isolation. Also, the Oxford House structure relies on attendance at 12-step meetings as well as House, Chapter and State Association meetings and social get-togethers – all of which support recovery and build community. The pandemic required residents to develop creative work-arounds to permit them to stay safe while continuing to support community-building.

The pandemic didn't leave Oxford Houses unscathed; by the end of December 2020, there had been just over 500 confirmed positive COVID-19 cases among Oxford House residents and staff and there have been three deaths. The good news is that there were not many more.

This section discusses the myriad ways in which Oxford Houses adapted. In late 2020, residents were invited to provide their testimony about their pandemic experience. Excerpts are included in this section. All together, they speak to the strength and resourcefulness of Oxford House residents. Most of the respondents also discussed their addiction and entry into Oxford House but the excerpts focus primarily on coping with the pandemic. Unless noted otherwise, the respondents are all current Oxford House residents.

- I currently reside with four other house members. ...We have struggled to find new members. With the intake capacity of treatment facilities being lowered, we have seen a large decrease in applicants. This has been an issue, not only for the Anastasia house, but for the rest of the houses here in the Huntington chapter. We are managing to get more members but it has been a slow process.

We have also had to pull together as a group to support each other from isolating during times of public shutdown. With most in-person Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous meetings being shut down or operating at only half-capacity, we have had to adjust to attending those meetings via Zoom, as well as our Chapter and Housing Services meetings. It has been a challenging learning process for all members, but it seems to be our new way of life, for the unforeseen future. In some ways, it has drawn us closer together, and in other ways, it has created more distance between us all physically and emotionally. We are all still working to adapt to all the changes and run our houses smoothly and efficiently. In these hard times, I am privileged to be a member of Oxford House and not have to face this pandemic alone.

*Mary Rapp – Huntington, West Virginia*

- The House is truly thriving despite the difficulties everyone has faced this year. Our chapter developed a HSR house visit checklist that we started in March and, even though it's different, it has kept us connected during this time of distancing. We also have a sanitizing station at the front door of each house. It includes a thermometer, a log book for guests, hand sanitizer and masks for residents/guests.

*Elischa D. – Nashville, Tennessee*

- Oxford House Jubilee here in Colorado Springs didn't change much during the pandemic, other than people losing their jobs and us having to be home more. No one got sick here.. We average about 8 girls plus 3 kids. We certainly had to adjust to being around each other more, luckily it was at the time when we had a really good group of girls. We planned movie and dinner nights. Over the summer we had a few BBQ's with the pool set up and a bounce house! We were kind of on lock-down but we certainly didn't make it feel like that. We made the best of it. **Cyndi T. – Colorado**

- I've lived in Oxford House for 5 and half years My experience has been great. The structure is something I knew I needed. ... During Covid-19, I was the only one in my House who was laid off. It is actually a blessing to have a safe place to live. Unemployment has allowed me to stay current on my EES. House rent has stayed affordable. Our house is sanitizing daily and taking proper precautions to remain healthy. Eventually I see myself being completely self-supporting. ...I am not comfortable moving out yet, although I could if I chose to. Today I chose to live my life in an Oxford House and give back to what was given to me. **Shandy B. - Oxford House Morris - New Mexico**



- When I moved into Oxford December 9, 2019, I wasn't really sure if I was going to stay. Now I'm thankful I did. When the pandemic hit is when I fully unpacked all my things from bags and boxes. ... Once in-person meetings had basically become non-existent, we had to come together as a House and make adjustments. Our House would gather and do Zoom meetings or listen to AA speakers on our phones for a level of accountability to ensure everyone was still meeting the requirements. Without Oxford House, I would not have had any accountability because I wasn't made to go to probation or anything during this time. .... We got to know each other on different levels sharing our fears and hopes during this time. We all made adjustments to help and support each other in this time of need. I'm extremely thankful for Oxford. **Lisa Reed – Clarksville, Indiana**

- I have lived at Oxford House Beacon of Hope in Mobile Alabama since October 20, 2019. When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, it affected how our Chapter functioned as a whole in that we had to start doing our Chapter meetings and State Association meetings via Zoom. We're also doing 12-step Zoom meetings. Those of us who attended church had to watch our pastor's sermons online. Our outreach worker was restricted from attending House meetings or traveling for Oxford House business. The interview process for new members became somewhat difficult as we had to implement new questions. such as. "Are you experiencing fever, persistent coughing, etc." We had to stop all unity events as well.

We experienced a considerable amount more relapses during the beginning of the pandemic, And I believe it to be due to the newcomers not being able to attend in-person meetings and in-person sponsor meetings. During this time, the unemployment rate also became considerably higher, and many of our members were laid off due to COVID-19. Fortunately, most of the members they were able to receive the pandemic unemployment benefits. For the newcomers coming in that were already unemployed, it was much more difficult and we had to allow more leniency with their payment of EES. Needless to say, COVID-19 has shifted the dynamic of how Oxford House usually functions; however, Chapter 2 has pulled together and showed strength, determination and unity in spite of the pandemic restrictions.

I can honestly say that I am proud to be part of such a loving, strong and unified chapter. Oxford House has been a major stronghold in my sobriety despite the unforeseen issues life has thrown at me.

**Katy Jeter – Alabama**

- I was released from jail on March 19, 2020. Little did I know I would be homeless during the pandemic, nor did I know the severity it reached at the government level until I was unable get my ID replaced as there was no license branch open and services online wasn't an option because of limitation guidelines. ... I lived outside in a community of other homeless people in tents on a small piece of land owned by a local company; they were unaware of our presence at first and then unable to evict us due to Covid-19 government rulings. Although at that time I had already been on the waiting list for Oxford House, I wasn't able to be contacted when my name come up for interview.

Finally, I reached my breaking point and wanted to change my life after being asked to move by local law enforcement several times, getting robbed several times, and relapsing several times. I was done. Then, at a local outreach picnic, I saw a friend who was a member of the Oxford House who had heard about my choice to achieve sobriety. At the time I had 5 days clean. He got me into this house and now I have a home, job, sobriety, and discipline, all as a result of the Oxford House. I have my life back.

*Jason Smith – Indiana. Oxford House Mariposa, House President/Chapter Secretary*

- Living within Oxford House during the pandemic has had its trying times but has not been so different. Within our Chapter, we have been lucky enough to only have a few "scares" within the houses. We all keep up on daily needs of the house when it comes to cleaning and making sure that everything is disinfected properly when needed. We have kept social distancing rules in place as recommended by the health department and make sure that simple rules are followed when needed for quarantining. We have been fortunate in this time to have to deal with any major issues and continue our weekly/monthly meetings on Zoom as so instructed.

.... Some of us Oxford House members feel that virtual meetings can become impersonal and, with the lack of the right setting, can allow distractions to take away from the message that we so desperately sometimes need. Others have found comfort in the setting of not knowing anyone and having the ability to share thoughts and experiences to people not only in a different part of Nebraska but, in some cases, a different part of the world. All in all, I feel that our meetings have continued at a wonderful rate here

*Tatiana – Nebraska*

- When the stay-at-home order was expanded statewide, a sense of panic set in with multiple women in the house. Twelve-step meetings were moved online; five of us had lost our jobs; social gatherings were not being held and the overall biggest issue was not being able to have guests or to visit other homes; one of the girls called it a feeling of 'Cloister phobia'. .... After the July fourth holiday, I contracted Covid and our house was placed on lockdown, I was the only one in the house that had tested positive. ... With not working, many of us would stay up late and have Disney movie marathons, we would cook together and started doing group art which now fills our home. I truly don't believe our house would have the strength it does if it had not been for all the time we had spent together.

*Madison - Wilmington North Carolina*

- In addition to the focus on recovery and accountability in Oxford Houses, I had a recent reminder of the power of unity and support in Oxford House. A member of our House tested positive for Covid-19. We had an emergency meeting to discuss the protocol for dealing with such an event. The whole House was supportive in disinfecting the house, moving bedrooms to quarantine the member and arranging for testing of house members. It reminds me of the video by our founder, Paul Molloy, when infection rates of this virus were increasing. Paul said that if we show the same support and unity to address this pandemic as we do in Oxford Houses, then we will weather this storm. Very inspirational!

*Josh White – Florida*

- I have lived in Oxford for 17 months now, so I have gotten to experience before and during this pandemic. The House I reside in luckily didn't have anyone get sick or lose their job. Most of us were lucky enough to work in the health field on the front lines – whether it was in nursing homes, doing laundry for the local hospitals or taking care of the mentally-challenged. Our House had a plan in effect that would consist of me and another roommate giving our upstairs room to a roommate if they had caught COVID-19 during the pandemic, and we would sleep on the couch. We have the complete upstairs set up and ready in the event. Luckily, no one has become sick and we haven't had to pull out this plan. Also, we had our House go on a full lockdown, meaning we couldn't leave the house unless it was work, probation, or emergency-related. We would get together in the living room and have 12-step meetings via Zoom and listen to speaker meetings on YouTube and have what we called House therapy groups to see how each individual was handling the pandemic. It really brought our House residents closer to one another.  
*Chelsea Payne - Johnson City, Tennessee*
- My house got hit with a Covid case. We had to quarantine, and we all were terrified since this is a woman and children's house. Marty and Mustafa dropped off Lysol and supplies for us and offered to get us food delivered if we needed it. They also reassured us that we would be okay. I even relied on Prudence to help me follow protocol in our house from another city! I have experienced a whole new level of togetherness with Oxford House and I couldn't be more grateful. Sure, chapter, housing, and state meetings aren't the same right now but seeing all of my people smiling and catching up even if it's over Zoom made those meetings great. Hopefully, soon we can find a way to get together in person! This just reminds me not to take personal interaction for granted and that will make the day we all can be together again all the more worth it! I believe we can and will get through this! We are Oxford strong!  
*Star - Chattanooga, Tennessee*
- The most important lesson that I have learned in being of service is the ability to adapt to new situations and always stay in the solution of whatever the situation poses. It is always asked, "How has the COVID-19 Pandemic of 2020 affected the way that we conduct business in Oxford House, such as social interactions and conducting Chapter and Regional Association meetings?" I am here to say that it has actually benefited us tremendously. I feel like Zoom meetings have allowed us to reach the masses and have given people the ability to connect in gaining valuable information, education and training while in the convenience of their home, multitasking at work or just life in general. It is incredible that a virtual platform has provided us with the ability to join in on a meeting while being in a completely different physical location and all of us together can be gaining the same information and social interaction with someone hundreds of miles away, clear across this great state of Texas. I feel that having Zoom meetings rather than in-person meetings has not only allowed us to touch more people at once, but also has also allowed us to interact with individuals who normally would have been difficult to reach without extensive traveling. I know that one of the main roadblocks in being of service is the physical travel to get to, let's say, Odessa, and also having to get back to Dallas for work a day later but virtual meetings have filled this bridge in us being of service to our brothers and sisters in recovery in places that are normally hours of travel away from us.

Lastly, I have been asked, "What is the same, different and working or not working, in using a virtual platform?" My response is simple. This virtual platform is serving as a way to touch a life internally, without touching one physically and, at the same time, not putting someone's life in jeopardy. I personally do not feel that there is a negative to using a virtual platform other than not being able to physically touch someone and that is something that we are asked to limit as this virus is transmitted by physical interactions, which this platform eliminates. So, as we continue to see what unfolds in this unprecedented time of uncertainty, we can continue to rely on a constant and solid way to communicate in a safe and effective manner, with this virtual platform.  
*Jose Contreras – Texas*

- In my opinion Zoom meetings were a Godsend! Not only did I observe a much higher turnout than in person meetings, but also increased attention spans of the participants. Once everyone got familiar with the Zoom format and grew accustomed to the virtual meeting protocol, each meeting went much more smoothly than in person. People had to utilize more restraint, there was less interrupting during healthy discussion and more respectful listening. The format allows the chairperson to mute participants when necessary, something one can't do in person. Getting a room full of addicts to stop all the chatter and cross-talk is more challenging than simply clicking a button. There is a chat feature that is extremely helpful to share phone numbers, names, and links to resources.



Living in a rural area, Oxford Houses are spread between several small cities, so virtual meetings eliminate the expense and time of travel. The pandemic and subsequent quarantining gave members precious time to participate in trainings that are normally more difficult to organize without Zoom. In the North Texas Region, we have had multiple training sessions each month for very specific topics that might not normally be covered. For example, we hosted a House Inspection training, HSR & HSC training, Successful Recruiting & Presentations Training, an Accountability Workshop, Relapse Prevention Training; all these in addition to our regular Newcomer training, House Officer training, Chapter Officer training, and MAT/MAR training. The virtual platform can also lend itself nicely to online gaming nights as we discovered a few months into the pandemic. Unity is still possible even though we can't give each other hugs like we are accustomed to. The Oxford model has proven resilient, even in the strange new normal of a Covid-19 world.

**Maureen Dobyns –Texas**

- I moved into Oxford House during the beginning of the outbreak of the Covid pandemic, April of 2020. Most people at this time were being laid off but I was considered an essential worker. Those of my household that were laid off were provided resources that offered counseling through a local agency who in return assisted them with EES. Even prior to these resources being available, none of us was at risk of being expelled as long as we were still being accountable for working our recovery and being proactive for our own well-being. Oxford House provided us with outreach support & resources for Zoom meetings to assist us during this very real struggle. We had people who would call & check on us, even stop by when necessary to make sure we were okay. Being at an Oxford House during this global crisis ensured the safety & security of my well-being and sobriety when I otherwise could have been homeless & relapsed - Lord only knows where. Oxford House is not a home with sobriety & accountability; it's a family & support unlike you can find anywhere else.
  - ... We got to try a new way to go about staying involved thru Zoom meetings. Awkward at first, but anything for us to stay in contact was better than no contact. I got to grow through this and adjusted quickly. Did I like it, no... but, in recovery, I'm willing to do what it takes, so there I was. It was hard with video or audio failing at times and everyone struggling with talking over each other made it aggravating. We eventually got to use this method in all our normal recovery meetings, in Oxford meetings, and we were finally able to speak in the Magnolia Ridge and other facilities again. I am thankful for it, because I know firsthand that I was able to reach others through this method. They later reached out to me when they were released.
- Desiree Jones – Florida**
- Brad Collins – Johnson City, Tennessee**

As each of the stories attests, life in Oxford House during the pandemic has not been easy; however, the Houses and their residents have all adapted to the new reality and have done whatever needed to be done to support recovery while keeping everyone as safe as possible. In the process, they may also have uncovered new ways of communicating that will continue to be useful even after the pandemic ends.



## OPIOID ADDICTION AND OXFORD HOUSE

While the pandemic is at the top of the news these days, the opioid crisis has not gone away. Opioid addiction continues to be a national crisis and there are reports that methamphetamine use is increasing. Since its beginnings in 1975, Oxford Houses have been home to residents recovering from addiction to opioids and most have achieved long-term recovery. Over time, however, opioids have become more lethal and, as a result, medication-assisted treatment (MAT) is now the norm for treating opiate addiction; it stems craving and MAT clients are more likely to achieve long-term sobriety – particularly if they receive recovery support. Many Oxford House residents today are using MAT and achieving sustainable long-term recovery through medication AND Oxford House living.

Opioid addiction was a major topic at 2019 Oxford House convention. The photo below shows the Addiction Research Panel which included Wilson Compton, M.D., Deputy Director of NIDA; Joshua Sharfstein, M.D. of Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health;; John Kelly, Ph.D., of Harvard; Kevin Sabat, Ph.D., CEO of SAM; Stuart Gitlow, M.D.; and Westley Clark, M.D., former CSAT Director. They were joined at the last minute by VADM Jerome M. Adams, M.D. M.P.H., U.S. Surgeon General.



A keynote panel was entitled, “The Opioid Crisis – The View from the Trenches” featured two physicians specializing in addiction and six Oxford House alumni who have dealt with their opioid addiction and now work with Oxford House residents who are new to recovery. Both Dr. Gitlow, who moderated the panel, and the panelists with longer sobriety, spoke of their evolution in recognizing the value of MAT and the role it can play in helping opioid addicts avoid death and achieve recovery.

Panelists also acknowledged that MAT alone is unlikely to result in long-term recovery. Four tools are generally acknowledged to be necessary for achieving recovery without relapse: (1) intervention; (2) detoxification; (3) treatment; and (4) long-term behavior change. These tools are most effective when used together. Traditionally, there has been support for the first three stages but the weakest link is support for environments that foster long-term behavior change. While 12-Step programs have long preached the need to ‘change people, places and things’, that is easier said than done. More often than not, individuals completing treatment go back to where they came from. Returning ‘home’ may thwart even the most highly-motivated individual; e.g., a recovering incarcerated person re-entering society who goes back to an old neighborhood is likely to be welcomed home only by his or her drug dealer. That’s a recipe for relapse.

Oxford House residents and alumni addicted to opioids (and/or other substance) achieve long-term recovery mainly because Oxford Houses offer peer support, a time-tested structure and no time limits on residency. Oxford House living builds self-confidence in recovery. Residents share in the elected leadership of their House, participate in Oxford House social activities, get jobs, mentor new residents, and abstain from the use of alcohol and illicit drugs. These Oxford House characteristics work to support long-term recovery for most Oxford House residents, whether or not they also use medication to support recovery.

## BUILDING COMMUNITY

“Building Community” is an important aspect of creating sustained recovery without relapse. While there are many definitions of ‘community,’ two cited frequently are: (1) A group of people living in the same place or having a particular characteristic in common; and (2) A feeling of fellowship with others, as a result of sharing common attitudes, interests, and goals. For Oxford House residents, the concept of “Building Community” goes beyond just living together and being in recovery and requires a far more active role in creating feelings of fellowship with others.

Oxford Houses are not just places to live – they are families and part of the broader community of Oxford House families as well as of their own local neighborhood community. The common interest that brings Oxford House residents and alumni together is the desire to become comfortable enough in sobriety to avoid relapse. For over eighty years AA has demonstrated the power of self-help based on the common interest of a shared disease. Millions have transformed their lives through AA/NA. The same common bond that unites individuals in AA/NA unites residents and alumni of Oxford House. The shared hardship of their active addiction becomes a common bond. Because an Oxford House™ is a place of residence, the bond is even stronger than in 12-Step groups.

Common purpose isn’t enough, however. Oxford House residents work together to create supportive families and communities. Each Oxford House has a weekly meeting in which everyone participates and has an equal voice. Each House elects five house officers who have specific duties and responsibilities and serve for only six months at a time. The term limits are important to combat ‘bossism.’ Individuals rise to the challenge of being a House officer. The duties of the office help provide the officeholder with leadership skills and new self-esteem while also ensuring smooth management of the Oxford House.

The building of community does not stop within the four walls of a particular Oxford House as Houses bond together to form chapters. Chapters help Houses work out problems and assure quality control among Oxford Houses within the chapter. Chapters also promote sobriety and build community by organizing social events – picnics and other get-togethers. Since membership in a chapter is voluntary, it behooves chapters to engage in community-building activities to gain the support of Oxford House residents and alumni as well as neighbors not in recovery.

Each Oxford House is a community of individuals living together to support each other’s sobriety; however, residents also reach out to the broader community to be seen both as a recovery resource and as a good neighbor. In Florida, where Oxford House has just begun establishing a network of houses, Oxford House residents focus on picking up litter in the street. (See photo at right.)

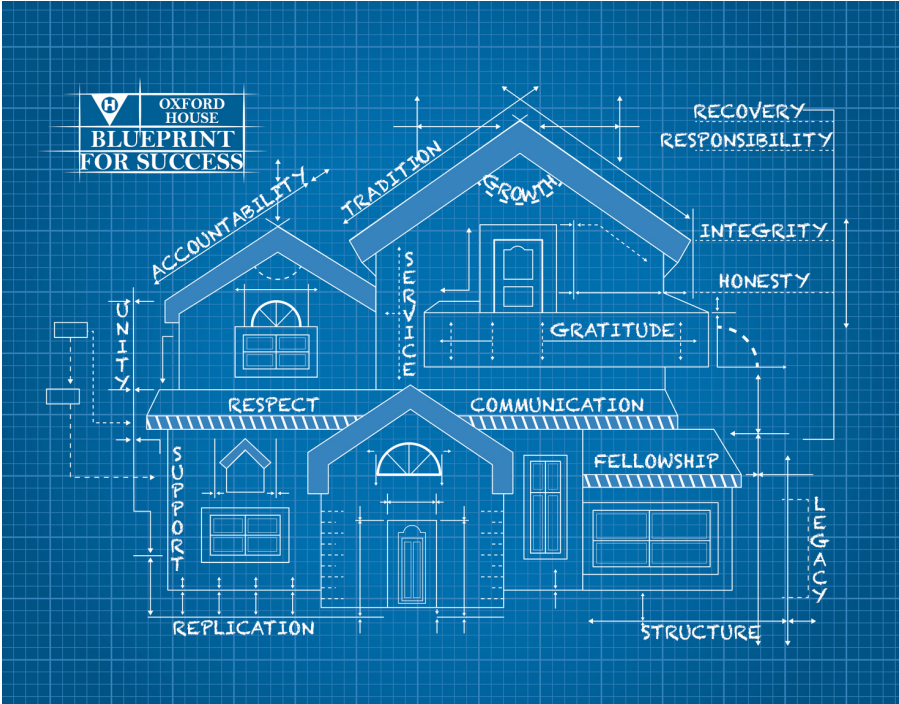
Many Oxford Houses invite their neighbors to visit during Recovery Month (and at other times). Neighbors are sometimes leery of having recovery houses in their neighborhoods; Oxford House residents, because of their focus on recovery and being good neighbors, can do much to help the community understand addiction and recovery and learn that Oxford house residents are ordinary folks who are conquering a common addiction. The lack of anonymity among Oxford House residents fosters greater awareness and understanding of recovery in the broader community. Within a few years of existence, an Oxford House is likely to become viewed by the non-recovering members of a city or town with considerable pride. Throughout the country landlords pass the word to other residential property owners that renting to a group of recovering individuals forming an Oxford House is good business. The property tends to stay rented year after year and the tenants usually pay the rent on time.



Building connections within the recovery community is also a good practice. Most Oxford House residents attend AA and NA meetings and interact with the broader recovery community. In addition, Oxford House residents reach out to those just beginning recovery, offering fellowship and introducing folks to the Oxford House program. Many residents go back to their treatment facilities to talk to current residents about Oxford House and how it works. Other Oxford House residents work with re-entry groups to encourage inmates in recovery to consider Oxford House residence upon release. Others engage in projects like “Hands Across the Bridge” and other Recovery Month programs.

When Oxford House began expansion in 1989 as a result of §2036 of the 1988 Anti-Drug Abuse Act, the National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Addiction Directors [NASADAD] was promoting the slogan, “Treatment Works.” Reality undercut the validity of that slogan. At best, treatment kept alcoholics, drug addicts and those with co-occurring mental illness out of the way for a short period of time. When individuals left residential treatment – or began to feel better as a result of temporary abstinence during outpatient treatment – most returned to drinking alcohol and/or using illicit drugs.

The practical need was – and even today for most – is to find a way to provide a living environment focused on recovery long enough for a person to develop sobriety comfortable enough to avoid relapse. Oxford House fulfills that need because it can be developed at low cost and maintained at even lower cost. The blueprint below shows the personal characteristics embraced by Oxford House residents.



Today, the need for more effective, low-cost ways to help alcoholics, drug addicts and those with co-occurring mental illness continues to be great and is likely to become greater in the wake of the extra stress caused by the pandemic. This will put great strain on both the cost and provision of care. And it needs to be recognized that there are severe costs to not providing effective treatment; for example, today only about one in seven alcoholics, drug addicts, and those with co-occurring mental illness is getting formal treatment, and even they are likely to cycle in and out of treatment or prison. Society shouldn’t accept these kinds of costs.

Oxford House was built on the premise that relapse does not have to be part of long-term recovery. By providing time, peer support, and disciplined, self-run, self-supported, sober households, Oxford Houses make staying clean and sober without relapse the norm, not the exception.

## FROM PRISON TO RECOVERY IN OXFORD HOUSE

Over three-quarters of the Oxford House population has done some jail or prison time. Many Oxford House residents have served only a few days but other residents have served many years in prison. In America today, a majority of individuals in jails or prison are addicted to alcohol and/or drugs. Each year, thousands of those who are incarcerated re-enter society. Within one year of re-entry, many of them will commit another crime and be headed to conviction and re-entry to incarceration. This is very costly for both the individual and for society.

The experience of those who enter an Oxford House following incarceration 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. This process has worked very well. 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.

The question is sometimes asked as to how well can folks just coming out of jail or prison adapt to living in an Oxford House. Generally speaking, they do very well. Oxford House residents who enter an Oxford House from incarceration are exposed to participatory democracy rather than to 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.

Residents entering Oxford House following incarceration sometimes have valuable lessons to teach other members of their Oxford House. For example, consider the experience of Kristina Hills, an Oxford House resident in Tucson, Arizona, who had been in and out of prisons and jails for over 40 years before she finally got into an Oxford House. She did well and was elected to House and Chapter positions. Her testimony presented a unique perspective of skills developed in prison that now served her and her fellow Oxford House residents well:

- “.....When COVID-19 hit, I adjusted easily to a quiet life at home, but I saw others struggling, and I shared the coping techniques I’d developed in prison with my housemates to help them adapt and thrive. It has been a blessing to have so much free time to focus on my recovery, and the more I learn about Oxford House, the more I believe that everything—all the mistakes I made—have led me to where I am now. I have a unique set of skills and experiences that allow me to help addicts when others can’t. At 18 months sober, I began working at a local treatment center. I love my job, and my life, more than I ever thought possible.” *Kristina Hills – Tucson, Arizona*

OHI began working with the prison system in Texas after a parole official did a small informal survey of what happened to a group of folks released from that system either to an Oxford House or back to where they had lived prior to incarceration. He found that most of those who went to an Oxford House were still clean and sober whereas those who had gone home had had new encounters with the criminal justice system.

The Oxford House re-entry program in North Carolina has been highly successful in facilitating the transition of incarcerated individuals from prison to an Oxford House. Funded in part with State funds, since 2005, the program has enabled 1,691 individuals to transition directly from incarceration to an Oxford House. Over the last six months of CY 2020, 126 individuals transitioned from prison to an Oxford House. Programs have been established at numerous correctional facilities in the state and members of Oxford House’s Criminal Justice Outreach Staff regularly make presentations at correctional facilities to educate individuals about Oxford House. Oxford Houses conduct telephone admission interviews with individuals

about to leave incarceration and, if accepted into an Oxford House, they are taken directly to their new residence upon release.

Other states including New Jersey, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas, Washington State, Oregon and Hawaii also have strong Oxford House re-entry programs. Many individuals just being released from prison have no place to go except back to their old neighborhoods and friends. More often than not, that kind of transition leads to a return to drug use, crime and incarceration.

Oxford House works closely with drug courts and many drug court judges encourage clients to seek admission to an Oxford House. They have generally found that sending a client to an Oxford House leads to a better outcome than imprisonment. Below is an excerpt from a 2020 story of a woman who came into Oxford House from a family drug court in Oregon:

- “I have been living in Oxford for over 2 years now and have no rush to leave the strength I find here. I first came into Oxford under the requirement of another program I was in called Family Drug court. I was scared and didn’t know how to trust other women; how to communicate; or how to be a mother. Everything at first was overwhelming... But I would do it 10x over!

The level of growth I have gained in Oxford and in these women with whom I have been gifted to live with has taught me so much not only in myself but how to help others. I can listen and be heard, set healthy boundaries, know how to ask for help or be there when it is asked of me. I can trust other women and be trusted. There is so much strength I have gained not only in my sobriety but as a mother growing and learning in Oxford. I have stepped up and became a bigger part of Oxford by being of service within our Chapter as the Chapter treasurer. It has been such a gift and I am so grateful for this.”



*Ashley Richards - Bend, Oregon*

Oxford House is one of the few sober living environments in the country that truly integrates individuals who come from all strata of society – rich and poor, educated and uneducated, as well as ‘has beens’ and ‘never weres.’

Oxford House residents who come into 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 and round-the-clock peer support is rare for most individuals re-entering society. However, it is what happens in every Oxford House. Most residents have spent at least a little time in jail and they can relate to other residents – whether they have been incarcerated for a few days or many years. (The photo at left shows a re-entry tee-shirt logo on an Oxford House resident. The photo was taken at the 2019 Oxford House convention – prior to the pandemic. )

The following pages present excerpts from personal recovery stories submitted in 2020 by Oxford House residents and alumni who had been incarcerated prior to entering an Oxford House and discuss its effect on them and their recovery.

## Excerpts from 2020 Stories Highlighting Recovery in Oxford House After Incarceration

These excerpts are taken from stories submitted in the Fall of 2020. Unless noted otherwise, the respondents are all current Oxford House residents.

- “...The longest time clean I had was 18 days. I was living on the streets in Lewiston eating pizza from the dumpster and was stealing and dealing to get my fix. ... The Rider program at South Boise Women's Correctional Center really did help. It exposed some of the things that I was too scared to show. It began a process of healing I desperately needed. I found my way to recovery in shackles but today (even though I'm on probation) I am more free than I ever have been.”

“I was released February 13, 2020 to the Oxford House here in Lewiston. I wasn't exactly happy at the thought of living with more women after getting released from prison but, these women became my family. ... I work hard for my recovery every day. I go to regular meetings; I have a sponsor; I work the steps; I go to counselling; I do whatever is necessary to stay clean and to heal from the wreckage of my past. My recovery has become my whole life and it is because of my recovery and these programs that I have been given the chance to really live! “

*Ashlei Ryan – Lewiston, Idaho*

- “...I went to jail after running from the police and overdosing. I began to feel that after living through that then maybe there was a greater purpose for my life. Even after that, I still continued to get high while in jail, which is definitely where I went after running from the police. I began taking LRADAC classes while I was locked up. When I finally went to court, I asked the judge to allow me to go back to inpatient rehab which he granted along with enrolling in a sober living community when I left.

My counselor suggested Oxford House and I figured with so many houses worldwide it had to be helping people. I went into my 1st Oxford House on October 17th of 2019. ... I had tried living sober with no program and no recovery network and failed time and time again. Oxford House has given me a gift in my recovery and a life that I never thought possible. I have gained friendships through Oxford House and know there really are people out there that I can call at any time and they'll be there for me. And they know it goes both ways. I had given up on the whole word "friend." I thought life consisted of people you could use and people that would use you. I could not have been more wrong, and I can honestly say, without Oxford House, I would never have known the difference. It has taught me responsibility as well as the ability to hold others accountable.

I have a job where I have been employed for almost a year and I had never maintained a job for that much time.. I have health insurance, dental and even a 401k. All of these are things I never would have had without Oxford House and the guidance I gained from my brothers and sisters in Oxford. I have amazing relationships with my family and those around me which I thought would never be ... Service work has been one of many great things that has helped keep me sober and focused. Since I began this journey, I have opened a new house as a core member, become a chapter officer and helped others in the same ways I was helped. *Jason B. – South Carolina*

- “My story of addiction is like so many others, it consumed every part of my life for many years. I have now actually been a drug addict for more years than not. .... I went to prison and while there I made the decision that I was going to do whatever it took not to go back to the life I had. I wasn't sure what I had to do but whatever it was, it would be better than what I was doing. .. I was having a terrible time finding a place that would accept me... .. Everywhere I submitted applications for sober living, I was turned down. Finally, after numerous attempts with other organizations, I got a 'yes' from Oxford House the day after I turned in my application.

..At the Oxford House, a member opened the door and I introduced myself and the guy said, “Hey, yea, we have been expecting you. Welcome Home! ... What that House and those members did for me is not able to be repaid ever. It gave me structure when I needed it. They told me to go to 12-step meeting and learn how to cope with my addiction and discover what causes me to do the things I do and finally how to combat it. It taught me how to budget and pay my bills. It taught me how to get along with other types of people and have gratitude that I am not alone. While I lived in Oxford, I held house, chapter, and rural offices. I got involved because my program taught me that getting involved helps me stay sober.

I have since moved out of Oxford, taking with me the principles and routines I learned from those men and that House with me. I still attend meetings daily, I still budget and pay my bills, I still work at my program, and most importantly I still stay involved in Oxford House. I stay involved because not only does it help me stay sober, but I want to be apart of something that gives second chances to people like me. People that don't feel like they deserve another chance. Oxford House does that every day. It gives chances to people where chances and hope is scarce. I am blessed to be allowed to be a part of something that helps change and shape lives, lives that were otherwise discarded and lost. We do recover!"

**Scott R. – Oklahoma – Oxford House Alumnus**

- "...Before moving into an Oxford House my life was in a constant state of chaos. I lived by my own rules and did what I wanted when I wanted. I had zero structure and less accountability. Every day I would wake up trying to figure out how I was going to get my next fix. I did some things that I am not proud of and ended up going to prison for 6 years. While I was locked up, I made a conscious decision that it was time to wake up and get sober. I thought it was going to be easy because I was locked up and that I wouldn't be able to get anything. Boy was I wrong. I stuck to my guns and I'm happy to say that I am coming up on 6 years sober.



Coming straight out of prison to an Oxford House, I was not happy that I was going to have to follow yet another set of rules and be held accountable and hold other members accountable. Turns out it was much easier than I expected .. While living here I have the structure and accountability that I need. If it wasn't for this place I have absolutely no doubt in my mind I would be back in full blown addiction. I have found friends that share the same goals I have; they've help me turn my life around and stay sober. Anytime I go out to meetings I share my experience of living in the house and try to spread the Oxford House name and how it has helped me and how it could help others looking for a safe healthy place for their recovery.

**Ben Radovich – Wisconsin**

- Before coming into Oxford House in May 2019, I was addicted to heroin and methamphetamine, and was living under a bridge in downtown Houston. I'd graduated from Rice University with a master's degree and began taking painkillers during my Ph.D. work. I eventually failed out of graduate school and started experimenting with illegal drugs. In 2015, I moved in with my dealer and began injecting meth and heroin. I lost touch with my family, my principles, and my goals. My only suicide attempt ended with the realization that if I just put enough heroin in my body, I no longer had to feel my feelings, remember my memories, or face my failures.

At the beginning of 2019, I'd been homeless for 4 years, and got arrested for felony possession of a controlled substance. The judge allowed me to participate in a "pre-trial intervention" program. Sober living was one of the requirements, and after 45 days of treatment, I applied and was accepted to Oxford House Yorkwood. After 30 days, I was elected to the Chapter Chair position, and the weekend I spent in Washington, DC at the Annual Convention opened my eyes to the vast recovery community that I was a part of. I was fascinated by the Oxford House Model, and soon rediscovered my love of teaching. Watching others grow and begin to believe in themselves again gave me a sense of purpose that I'd never had before.

In February, I moved to Tucson to work for Oxford House, which has strengthened my recovery immensely. Living with a group of women who share a common goal has allowed me to develop a degree of independence that I have never had, and a sense of purpose so strong that I've forgotten what emptiness feels like.

**Sarah Graham – Tucson, Arizona – Oxford House Outreach**

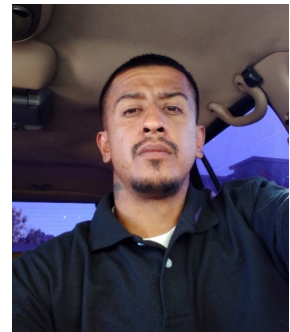
- During my rehabilitation at the MASH Facility in Lubbock, Texas there was a gentleman by the name of Tom H., who brought a presentation about Oxford House. My first thought was, "A frat house without drugs & alcohol!" Well, where do I sign up? It was music to my ears! He spoke of the success that Oxford House had been for so many years; my second thought was I cannot pass up this opportunity. After all, I had nothing to lose. So, I applied, had my interview, and was accepted. I found home at the Richard Lee Oxford House in Lubbock. Finally! A step in the right direction. It gave me a boost of confidence. The guys in that house were like brothers and they took me in as their own. As a matter of fact, some are still my friends today. A year went by and something was missing. I had many sponsors but had not done the work.

I relapsed. I quickly turned to my brothers and it was suggested that, after 30 days, getting a sponsor, and putting in work, I could re-interview at the house. I did it and came back. The one thing my brothers gave me was accountability. I was desperate to have it back! From that point on, I was determined to earn everything outright. Oxford House helped me to become successful at all the little things that mattered, from paying bills to having made some of the best relationships ever. They showed me a way of love and tolerance that would help me grow.

I have since moved out and live on my own but still stay connected. I've been an Oxford Alumnus since April of 2017 and have managed to start a successful Alumni Association of Dallas-Ft. Worth which has come to grow with 29 other Alumni who can each tell you about the success they've become – all because of this place called Oxford House. As part of the Alumni Association, I can continue to grow alongside my peers. Oxford House, along with a 12-step program, gave me a life of recovery beyond my wildest dreams. Oxford House saved my life and, without it, I do not know if I ever would have been found.

**Michael - Texas – Alumnus**

- Life before recovery and Oxford House was many trips to jails and institutions, and many failed attempts to get sober and clean. .... I was homeless and running wild. .... Today, I'm 8 months sober, working 2 jobs, almost completed a 3-year probation term and am an active member in the Oxford House recovery world. I'm currently Fundraising Chair with the Reentry Committee. I'm currently the President at Oxford House Beacon Hill and being of service whenever possible with the Reentry Committee. ... Oxford House has given me the chance to learn about accountability, saving money, prioritizing, working an honest program, being of service, helping others and doing things. **Terrall Guidry, Sr. – San Antonio, Texas**
- While serving my time, a fellow inmate told me about Oxford House... During my interview I was very nervous but it went very well and I was accepted. ...After 3 months, I accepted a Chapter position as Secretary. I have really come to care a lot about OH. I especially like the brotherhood in OH Winterfell. This whole experience has really made an impact on my life. I now have a more positive attitude and outlook on life.



My goal is to work at a Detox/Treatment Center. I would really like to help others by sharing my experience, strength and hope and how much OH has affected me. I would really like to move into the next new men's house and help train the new members in the OH Model and Best Practices as well as the house positions. I have achieved a solid recovery and the continuous will to always stay clean and sober. OH has taught me how to be responsible with my own finances and paying bills. I owe a lot to OH. I will always be grateful for OH and hold it close to my heart.

**Jose "Gabriel" Barragan –Arizona**

- I caught my first drug charge and lost my kids. The judge sent me to prison rehab, then I went to treatment. ... I got in more trouble and ended up in prison. The day I got out of prison, I got high. ... I finally went to a long-term treatment center. Then my sponsor suggested I go to an Oxford House... I got an interview and I was accepted in Oxford House Kinghill. When I walked in the door, the ladies hugged me and said: 'Welcome home' and I couldn't stop crying; this was all so new to me. I hadn't had a home for a very long time.

I started seeing my twins .. and... I thought it would be a great idea to move in with their grandmother and so I left the Oxford House after a few months being there. I wasn't ready... I started feeling overwhelmed - old feelings came up and I was on the edge. I always talked to the ladies at the Oxford House pretty much every day and about the third call and me crying, they said. "Come home Barbara. This is where you need to be." I went back home the Oxford House and this is really where my journey really started. I started getting involved with the House and the Chapter more. ...I started getting involved with housing services then was asked to move into another House to help and I started doing presentations at treatment centers. I got to help open a house. ... I really loved being involved and Oxford House gave me the time I needed to grow and be the responsible adult that I am today.

Moving forward, I moved out got my own home and my oldest son and the twins live with me now. I'm part of all my children's lives today and I also have a grandbaby. I now work as a Reentry Coordinator for Oxford House for North Carolina. Who would have ever thought after what happened I would have my kids with me today and a Job I truly love my life has meaning today. I am grateful for my 12-step program and Oxford House. I hope to continue this journey for many years!

**Barbara Kidder - North Carolina – Oxford House Outreach**



## DEVELOPMENT THAT WORKS

Expansion of the network of Oxford Houses throughout the United States has been facilitated by agreements between individual states and Oxford House, Inc. [OHI]. State support has facilitated opening more Oxford Houses and increasing capacity while also giving the Houses more help from Oxford House outreach workers. This support increases the availability of good recovery housing in the state and does so at a very reasonable cost.

The typical agreement between a state agency and OHI provides for two services to be provided by OHI: [1] the administration of a recovery home start-up revolving loan fund and [2] the provision of technical assistance to develop new Oxford Houses and help maintain the existing network of Oxford Houses. OHI first entered into such agreements in 1989 and today has them with half the states and the District of Columbia.

### Revolving Loan Fund

Revolving loan fund agreements follow the amended specifications of 42 USC 300x-25 [§2036 of PL 100-690], the 1988 Federal Anti-Drug Abuse Act, which permits states to use federal funding to help start self-run, self-support recovery homes. Under such agreements, OHI invites loan applications, evaluates the applications for approval and administers the revolving loan fund. For example, the agreement between OHI and the State of Washington is 30 years old and the initial \$100,000 loan fund has been ‘recycled’ more than 350 times – having made a total of \$1.5 million in loans. The result is that Washington State has 349 Oxford Houses with 3,057 beds and is still growing. The start-up loan funding provides the financing needed for a group of six or more individuals to rent a suitable house and establish it as an Oxford House.

### Technical Assistance Funding

Technical assistance funding permits OHI to hire Outreach Workers to help start new Oxford Houses and to serve as resource persons for the entire network of Oxford Houses in the state. All Outreach Workers are recovering individuals who have lived in an Oxford House and have first-hand experience with how the model works. They are able to understand and relate to the newcomer as they have all had the same experience of being new in recovery and coming into an Oxford House.

### The Role of Outreach Workers

Outreach workers are **not** house managers; they are educators who guide House residents in learning how to operate their Oxford House. They have been called ‘Tom Sawyers’ because of their ability to get others to do the work needed to run a good Oxford House. In recovery stories that are written by Oxford House residents and alumni, reference is often made to having been ‘Tom Sawyered’ or ‘voluntold’ to undertake certain tasks themselves. This is very valuable; residents would not be helped by outreach workers who took on the work themselves.

Outreach workers find suitable houses to rent; contact local treatment providers to alert them to vacancies, find active recovery groups, and generate interest in the development of clusters of Oxford Houses to provide the time, peer support and safe living environment for those recovering from addiction. Once a new Oxford House is opened, outreach workers teach House residents the nuts and bolts of the Oxford House™ time-tested system of operation – from observing the Charter conditions to running House meetings, working with other Oxford



Houses, chapters and the community at large, and by also using OHI's real-time vacancy listing ([www.oxfordvacancies.com](http://www.oxfordvacancies.com)) to post House vacancies and to identify where there are vacancies. Every Oxford House is contacted automatically each week via text to a cell phone to identify if it has vacancies. It is then texted again immediately following its regular house meeting to determine if the vacancy has been filled. This enables anyone looking for a space to find one and it permits OHI to track supply and demand.

The box below details specific tasks for which Outreach Workers are trained. At the close of FY 2020, OHI employed more than 200 outreach workers located in 25 states and the District of Columbia. The box

**The outreach worker is trained by Oxford House, Inc. for the following tasks:**

- ❖ Finding a suitable house to rent
- ❖ Getting a charter from OHI
- ❖ Getting an FEIN number from IRS
- ❖ Recruiting initial residents
- ❖ Teaching residents how to operate a house
- ❖ Building mutually-supportive chapters
- ❖ Balancing supply of houses to meet demand
- ❖ Developing linkages to providers
- ❖ Developing employment linkages
- ❖ Documenting success/failure

at left details specific tasks for which Outreach workers are trained. Like Mark Twain's Tom Sawyer, they motivate their students to do for themselves rather than managing or furnishing or otherwise operating the individual Oxford Houses or chapters. Unlike Tom, they are not driven by laziness but by the understanding that only through self-reliance can the typical Oxford House resident become confident enough to maintain a lifestyle of recovery without relapse. They all know what it's like to come into an Oxford House for the first time – probably scared, not real happy to be there, and wanting to just get it over with and get on with life. They know that succeeding in an Oxford House and in recovery requires stepping up and actively

participating. Most Oxford House residents rise to the occasion and outreach workers facilitate this.

The participatory democracy, self-reliance and safe supportive living environment afforded in every Oxford House has shown that it is possible to make recovery without relapse the norm rather than the exception. By being self-run and self-supported Oxford House™ is unlike any other sober or recovery home. There are no big bosses. There is no institutional living environment. It operates as a functional family connected with others having a shared interest in long-term recovery without relapse.

Oxford House™ is an evidenced-based best practice that not only has 46-years of experience but also opened itself to academic study. The National Institutes of Health [both NIAAA and NIDA] have spent money on research to prove that it works. DePaul University in Chicago has published more than 250 scholarly articles on research financed by NIH over the last 20 years. A 2007 study published in *Addictive Behaviors* [32 (2007) 803-818] [https://www.oxfordhouse.org/userfiles/file/doc/nida\\_after.pdf](https://www.oxfordhouse.org/userfiles/file/doc/nida_after.pdf) reported that 897 Oxford House residents [604 men; 293 women] living in 219 Oxford Houses across the country were interviewed over a 24 - month period every four months. At the final wave of interviews, 13.5% reported using any alcohol or illicit drugs. Beginning in 2011, the government (SAMHSA) listed the Oxford House program as a best practice on the National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices (NREPP). While the 1988 Anti-Drug Abuse Act [PL 100-690] represented political acceptance of Oxford House, the NREPP listing verified the soundness of the Oxford House model as an evidence-based program that significantly improves addiction treatment outcomes. This finding was reinforced in the 2016 U. S. Surgeon General's report, "Facing Addiction in America" and in ONDCP's 2020 National Strategy Report that acknowledged the quality of the Oxford House™ program and held it up as an organization with a mission to improve the quality of recovery support services that should be emulated.

At the end of CY2020, one-half of the states had agreements with OHI to provide technical assistance in developing statewide networks of Oxford Houses. In spite of the pandemic, OHI outreach workers were able to add over 300 new Oxford Houses throughout the nation. Development in three – Florida, Arizona and Indiana – started in 2019. Nevertheless, as CY2020 drew to close, Florida had 55 houses, Arizona had 50 houses and Indiana had 53 houses. The demand for safe housing supportive of long-term recovery exists throughout the nation. OHI – working with individual states – has shown that good recovery housing can be developed in a cost-effective manner. It works.

## THE OXFORD HOUSE ANNUAL CONVENTION

Oxford House residents and alumni look forward to gathering together annually for a convention. This has been the practice since the first one was held in 1999. However, the pandemic required cancellation of the scheduled 2020 annual convention as it would not have been prudent to have everyone gather together at a convention during that period.

In September 2019, 1,600 Oxford House residents, alumni and friends participated in an Oxford House annual convention in Washington, D.C. over Labor Day weekend. The photo below shows the audience during the opening general session. *(A copy of the convention program and videos of major portions of the convention which were covered by CSPAN can be found on the website at [www.oxfordhouse.org](http://www.oxfordhouse.org).)*



The annual convention is important for many reasons. It provides an opportunity for Oxford House residents and alumni from all over the country to gather together to share their experiences, to learn more about addiction and recovery from experts in the field, to participate in panels focusing on ‘household’ issues important to residents, to elect resident and alumni representatives to the Oxford House World Council, and to socialize with one another from all parts of the country.

In 2019, there were several keynote speakers and 25 breakout panels. The panel that focused on addiction and opioids is noted in the opioid section of this report. A Medication panel reviewed medicines that fit within an Oxford House environment and another panel was on “MAT and MAR in Oxford Houses and Dealing with Opioid Overdoses”, at which panelists talked about the role of MAT and how Oxford Houses are dealing with the use of MAT among residents. Experts also participated in panels that included: “Working with Drug Courts, Parole and Re-entry”, Engaging with the Recovery Community”; “Oxford House and Behavioral Health Organizations”; and “Working with State Agencies.” The latter panel featured representatives from agencies in Tennessee, Louisiana, North Carolina, Kentucky, Florida and New Jersey.

Oxford House residents and alumni were featured in many of the panels during the convention. Pictured at right is a photo of the “Going Back to School as Residents or Alumni” panel. Active addiction interrupted the educational plans of many Oxford House residents and alumni. Now in recovery, many of them have ventured back to school – some get GEDs; some take certification courses and others get undergraduate and graduate degrees. The panelists at this session were all Oxford House residents or alumni who have taken this route. Many colleges now recognize the need to support students in recovery; UNC has been a leader in supporting Oxford Houses for students and one of the panelists is a resident of a UNC Oxford House.





The panel at left focused on Educating the Public about Recovery and featured Oxford House alumni as well as Ivette Torres, formerly of CSAT and Westley Clark, M.D. Board member of Faces and Voices of Recovery.

Other panels included: “Leadership v Bossism – Practicing Democracy in Oxford Houses”; and “Conducting House Chapter and Association Meetings. These panels featured Oxford House residents and alumni who discussed their experience and provided good suggestions for House residents.

The convention also featured a very well-attended panel entitled: “Out of the Closet and Into an Oxford House – Understanding Recovery and the LGBTQ Community.” Many members of the LBGQT community have found Oxford Houses very welcoming. All members of the panel were members of the LBGQT community and residents or alumni of Oxford House. They discussed their own experiences in applying to and living in Oxford Houses and responded to audience questions.



Another panel featured a discussion of Oxford Houses for Women with Children and Oxford Houses for Men with Children. Both types of Houses work well. Frequently, a resident will start at one of the other Oxford Houses and subsequently get children back and move into an Oxford House for Women with Children or an Oxford House for Men with Children.

Other panel topics included: Keeping Alumni Involved and Forming Alumni Associations; Nuts and Bolts of Finding and Starting a New Oxford House; Oxford House Research and Upcoming Studies; Four Stages and Five Core Principles of Oxford House; Filling Vacancies; Working with Treatment Providers; Working Together – Houses, Chapters, Associations and Alumni; and a Civil Rights Update. Oxford House, Inc. was a trailblazer in seeking court definition and affirmation of the 1988 Amendments to the Federal Fair Housing Act, including the landmark 1995 U. S. Supreme Court decision in *City of Edmonds, WA v. Oxford House, Inc.* Despite that favorable decision, some jurisdictions continue to try to avoid accommodating Oxford House residents and OHI challenges those barriers in court whenever they arise. Oxford House is fortunate to have access to many lawyers in recovery who are willing to help with these cases.

A highlight over every convention is the election of new resident and alumni members to the Oxford House World Council. The Council serves as an Advisory Committee to the OHI Board. Members serve for staggered three-year terms and elections are held at every convention. Since there was no convention in 2020, It was determined that terms of the current Board would be extended another year. The photo at right shows the current members



The Saturday night banquet is always a highlight of the convention. It features speeches, awards, good food and good fellowship. Below is a picture taken at the Saturday night banquet in 2018 in Kansas City. Whatever the convention theme or venue, everyone relishes the education, camaraderie and excitement of the annual convention.



**OXFORD HOUSE ANNUAL CONVENTION THEMES: 1999-2019**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Convention 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

# FY 2020 Financials

## Oxford House, Inc. Statement of Financial Position June 30, 2020<sup>1</sup>

ASSETS	
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>	
Cash	\$ 1,762,733
Accounts Receivable, Net	3,248,697
Employee Advances	7,320
Prepaid Expenses	2,016
Loans Receivable, Current Portion	<u>122,940</u>
Total Current Assets	<u>5,143,706</u>
<b>PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT</b>	
Furniture and Office Equipment	359,273
Less Accumulated Depreciation	<u>(287,700)</u>
Net Property and Equipment	<u>71,573</u>
<b>OTHER ASSETS</b>	
Loans Receivable	97,428
Restricted Cash	97,732
Deposits	<u>15,285</u>
Total Other Assets	<u>210,445</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b><u>\$ 5,425,724</u></b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>	
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	
Accounts Payable	\$ 868,770
Program Advances	802,637
Accrued Payroll Taxes	17,033
Accrued Salaries	86,185
Deferred Lease Obligation	<u>77,481</u>
Total Current Liabilities	<u>1,852,106</u>
Total Liabilities	<u>1,852,106</u>
<b>NET ASSETS, Unrestricted</b>	<b><u>3,573,618</u></b>
<b>TOTAL NET ASSETS</b>	<b><u>3,573,618</u></b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; NET ASSETS</b>	<b><u>\$ 5,425,724</u></b>

### Statement of Activities

SUPPORT AND REVENUE	
Federal Awards	\$ 11,952,674
State and Local Awards	3,572,973
General Contributions	1,176,898
Convention Revenue	487,744
Combined Federal Campaign	19,285
Conference Revenue	1,130
Interest Income	1,636
Other Income	<u>12,318</u>
Total Support and Revenue	<u>\$ 17,224,658</u>
<b>EXPENSES</b>	
<b>Program Services</b>	
State and Local Program – Federal Funds	\$ 11,952,674
State and Local Program–State/Local	3,572,973
State and Local Program – Other	22,936
World Convention	<u>474,497</u>
Total Program Services	<u>\$ 16,023,080</u>
<b>Supporting Services</b>	
Management and General	110,384
Fundraising	<u>599</u>
Total Supporting Services	<u>110,983</u>
Total Expenses	<u>16,134,063</u>
<b>INCREASE UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS</b>	<b>1,090,595</b>
<b>NET ASSETS Beginning of Year</b>	<b>2,483,023</b>
<b>NET ASSETS End of Year</b>	<b><u>\$ 3,573,618</u></b>

## Oxford House, Inc. FY 2020 Expenses By Category and Function

Expense Item	State/Local Program	G&A	Total Expenses
Salaries	\$6,450,863	\$14,646	\$6,465,509
Fringe Benefits	1,437,218	(14,661)	1,422,557
Payroll Taxes	<u>500,770</u>	<u>(4,126)</u>	<u>496,644</u>
Total Personnel	<u>8,388,851</u>	<u>(4,121)</u>	<u>8,384,710</u>
Travel & Lodging	5,211,029	-0-	5,211,029
Outreach Supplies	849,869	48,864	849,869
Telephone & Fax	298,465	5,800	304,265
Professional Fees	235,781	14,477	250,258
Rent	235,111	1,224	236,335
Other*	141,251	49,164	190,415
Insurance	110,124	17,186	127,310
Convention Expense	123,198		123,198
Mtgs & Conferences	123,033		123,033
Printing/Publications	93,179	1,931	95,110
Payroll Services	47,595	1,990	49,585
Local Training	48,090		48,090
Office Supplies	40,231	4,796	45,027
Postage & Supplies	26,357	12,121	39,156
Depreciation	36,570	196	36,766
Bank Charges	13,668	4,354	18,022
Litigation Settlement		1,885	1,885
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b><u>\$15,548,583</u></b>	<b><u>\$110,983</u></b>	<b><u>\$16,134,063</u></b>

Individual Oxford Houses followed through on a resolution at the 1999 Oxford House World Convention to encourage voluntary contributions to Oxford House World Services for the purpose of defraying expansion and service expenses. During FY 2020, Oxford Houses voluntarily contributed \$768,141 to OHI.

The 2001 World Convention passed a resolution to earmark all house contributions in excess of \$200,000 a year for a national revolving loan fund to help start new Oxford Houses. Since states are no longer required to maintain start-up revolving loan funds, it has become important for future expansion for Oxford House, Inc. to have a self-sustaining loan fund that can take up the slack. About \$220,000 was used for start-up loans in FY 2020 and the remainder for on-site technical assistance.

\*\$599 is total expenses in conjunction with fund raising and is included in "other" G&A.

A full copy of the Oxford House, Inc. audit and IRS form 990 is available from Oxford House, Inc. E-mail to [Info@oxfordhouse.org](mailto:Info@oxfordhouse.org) to receive a copy of the audit. The IRS form 990 is available to download at [www.oxfordhouse.org](http://www.oxfordhouse.org) under "About Us/Finances".

<sup>1</sup> See notes accompanying financial statement at end of the Annual Report. See box above-right for instructions on how to get full copy of audit.

**OXFORD HOUSE, INC.**  
**NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**JUNE 30, 2020**

**Note 1 –Organization and Summary of Significant Accounting Policies**

***Organization***

Oxford House, Inc. is a nonprofit organization incorporated under the laws of the State of Delaware on October 25, 1987 for the purpose of aiding in the rehabilitation and to improve social condition and environment for recovering alcoholics and drug addicts. This is accomplished by developing plans and programs for their recovery and by establishing homes for recovering substance abusers. Independently chartered "Oxford House" operates throughout the country as self-run, self-supported recovery houses. Oxford House, Inc. acts as the national umbrella organization and provides overall direction and technical, assistance to the independent "Oxford Houses."

***Basis of Accounting***

Oxford House, Inc. presents its financial statements on the accrual basis of accounting, whereby revenue is recognized when earned and expenses are recognized when incurred.

***Basis of Presentation***

Financial statement presentation follows the recommendations of the Financial Accounting Standards Board in FASB ASC Topic 958, Not-for-Profit Organizations. Under FASB ASC 958, Oxford House, Inc. is required to report information regarding its financial position and activities according to two classes of net assets: net assets without donor restrictions and net assets with donor restrictions.

***Use of Estimates***

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

***Allowance For Doubtful Accounts***

Accounts receivable are considered to be fully collectible.

***Property and Equipment***

Property and equipment is stated at cost or donated value and is depreciated using the straight-line method over the estimated useful lives of the assets.

All acquisitions of property and equipment of \$1,000 or more are capitalized. Expenditures for major renewals and betterments that extend the useful lives of property and equipment are capitalized. Expenditures for maintenance and repairs are charged to expense as incurred.

***Grant Contract Revenue***

Grant contract revenue is recorded when earned under the provisions of the applicable contracts.

***Contributions***

Oxford House, Inc. accounts for contributions in accordance with the recommendations of the Financial Accounting Standards Board in FASB ASC Topic 958, Not-For-Profit Entities. In accordance with FASB ASC 958, contributions received are recorded as contributions without donor restrictions or contributions with donor restrictions, depending on the existence and/or nature of any donor restrictions.

Support that is restricted by the donor is reported as an increase in unrestricted net assets if the restriction expires in the reporting period in which the support is recognized. All other donor-restricted support is reported as an increase in net assets with donor restrictions, depending on the nature of the restriction. When a restriction expires (that is, when a stipulated time restriction ends or purpose restriction is accomplished), net assets are reclassified to net assets without donor restrictions and reported in the statement of activities as net assets released from restrictions.

***Income Taxes***

Oxford House, Inc. is exempt from Federal income taxes under section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and has been classified as a publicly supported organization. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization the organization is also exempt from State income taxes. Accordingly, no provision for income taxes is required in the accompanying financial statements.

### ***Functional Allocation of Expenses***

The costs of providing the various programs and other activities have been summarized on a functional basis in the statement of activities. Accordingly, certain costs have been allocated among the programs and supporting services benefited based in the level of effort spent.

### ***Cash Equivalents***

For purposes of the statement of cash flows, Oxford House, Inc. considers all highly liquid debt instruments with maturity of three months or less to be cash equivalents. There were no cash equivalents as of June 30, 2020.

### ***Restricted Cash***

Oxford House, Inc. maintains restricted bank accounts and certificates deposit under various contractual obligations.

### ***Escrow Funds***

Grants from individual states for funding of the loan program (Note 6) are segregated into escrow accounts for the benefit of the individual states. Those funds are not included in the financial statements of Oxford House, Inc. as they are considered to be state funds.

### ***Major Customers***

Oxford House, Inc. derives a substantial portion of its income from State awards funded in whole or in part by Federal funds.

### ***Subsequent Events Evaluation***

Management has evaluated subsequent events through January 4, 2021, the date the financial statements were available to be issued.

### **Recent Accounting Pronouncements**

#### ***Leases***

In February 2016, the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) issued Accounting Standards Update (ASU) No. 2016-02, Leases (Topic 842). This ASU modifies lease accounting to increase transparency and comparability by recognizing lease assets and lease liabilities on the statement of financial position and disclosing key information about leasing information.

The most significant change for lessees will be the recognition of both a liability to make lease payments (the lease liability) and asset for the lease terms for those leases classified as operating permitted for leases with terms of 12 months or less. FASB Accounting Standards Codification (ASC) Topic 842, *Leases* (“ASC 842”), supersedes current lease requirements in FASB ASC Topic 840, *Leases*. When adopted, the amendments in ASU must be applied using a modified retrospective approach, with certain practical expedients available. The new standard is effective for nonpublic companies for annual periods beginning after December 15, 2020. Oxford House, Inc. is currently evaluating the impact of the provisions of ASC 842.

#### **Note 2 – Loans Receivable**

Oxford House, Inc. makes start-up loans to certain recovery houses and temporary loans [bridge loans] to other recovery houses. At June 30, 2020 loans receivable were \$220,368, net of allowance of \$-0-.

#### **Note 3 – Accrued Salaries**

Included in accrued salaries are salaries and royalties owed to an officer of Oxford House, Inc. as follows:

J. Paul Molloy, President	<u>\$ 86,185</u>
	<u>\$ 86,185</u>

#### **Note 4 – Line of Credit**

Oxford House, Inc. has a line of credit note of \$75,000 of which \$0 is outstanding at June 30, 2020. The note is secured by a \$31,536 certificate of deposit, which is included in restricted cash appearing on the statement of financial position. The interest rate is currently 5%. Oxford House, Inc. is to make minimum monthly payments of interest only. The note is considered payable on demand.

Oxford House, Inc. was granted a PPP (Paycheck Protection Program) Loan of \$1,125,147 at a 1% interest rate in May of 2020 and repaid the loan in June of 2020.

Interest expense for the year ending June 30, 2020 was \$1,885.



**Note 5 – Retirement Plan**

Oxford House, Inc. has a 403(b) retirement plan. All full time employees over the age of twenty-one [21] that have completed three months of service are eligible to participate. The plan is funded through pre-tax salary reductions by the employees.

**Note 6 – State Escrow Accounts**

Oxford House, Inc. has received restricted funds from various entities to be used solely for the purpose of extending revolving loans to establish new houses, which are then repaid by these houses.

Oxford House, Inc. managed funds or held and managed funds in escrow accounts under contracts with various states to meet the requirement of Public Law 100-690, “The Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988.” Such escrow accounts are not reflected in the accompanying financial statements of Oxford House, Inc. Held funds, including outstanding loan balances approximate \$1,874,000 on June 30, 2020.

**Note 7 – Lease Commitments**

Oxford House, Inc. leases office space and office equipment under operating leases. The office space lease is subject to operating cost increases. This lease commenced July 2018 and is scheduled to terminate November 30, 2023. Lease expense for the year ended June 30, 2016 approximated \$236,335, which included parking spaces and common area fees.

The following is a schedule of approximate future minimum lease payments under non-cancelable operating leases for office space with initial or remaining terms of one year or more as of June 30, 2020:

2021	\$225,935
2022	232,148
2023	238,499
2024	<u>102,107</u>
	\$798,689

**Note 8 – Concentration of Credit Risk**

Bank balances in excess of Federally insured limits at June 30, 2020 were \$ 1,610,465.

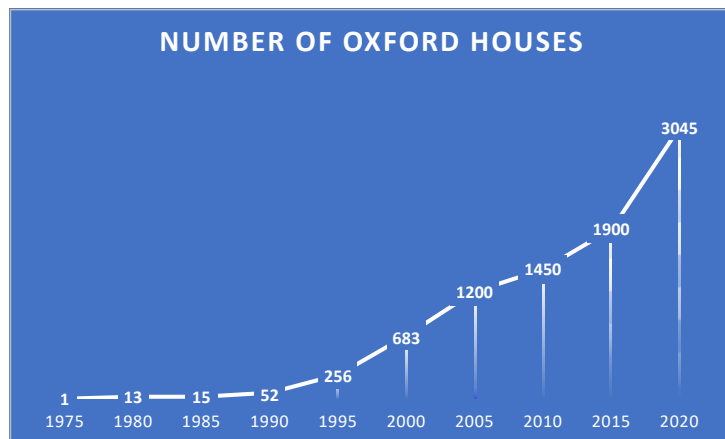
**Note 9 – Claims and Litigation**

Oxford House, Inc. is subject to other various claims and litigation. In the opinion of management, the outcome of such matters will not have a material effect on the financial position of Oxford House, Inc.

**Note 10 – Liquidity and Availability of Resources**

Oxford House, Inc. has a policy to structure its financial assets to be available as its general expenditures, liabilities and other obligations come due.

Oxford House, Inc. has \$ 5,134,370 of financial assets available within one year of the statement of financial position date to meet cash needs for general expenditures consisting of cash of \$1,762,733, accounts receivable of \$3,248,967 and current portion of loans receivable of \$122,940. None of the financial assets are unavailable for general expenditures within one year of the statement of financial position.



*Note: The auditor’s full report, including supplemental single state audits, can be obtained by sending an e-mail to [info@oxfordhouse.org](mailto:info@oxfordhouse.org) or writing to Oxford House, Inc., 1010 Wayne Avenue, Suite 300, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910.*

**Oxford House**  
**Creating a National Network of Recovery Houses One House at a Time**



*A few of the more than 3,000 Oxford Houses*

Oxford House™ is a cost-effective way to help alleviate the alcoholism and drug addiction crisis in the United States. Spread the good news!

### ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG ADDICTION

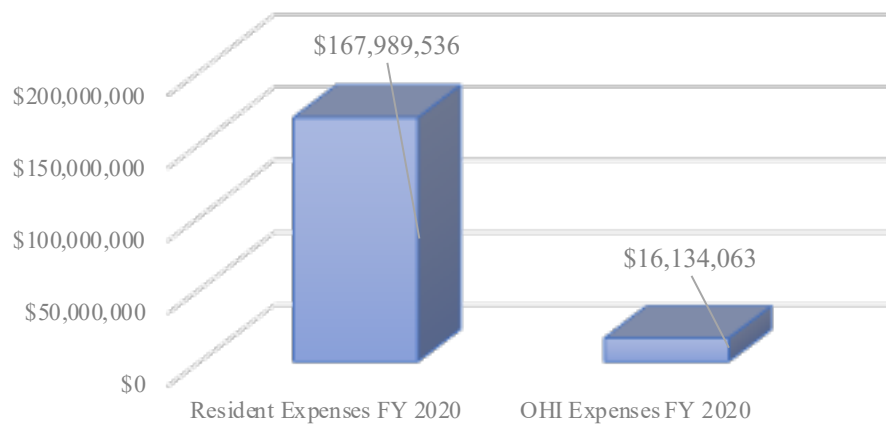
- About 25 million Americans are actively addicted to drugs with about 15 million alcoholics, 2 million opioid addicts and about another 6 million addicted to other drugs. (SAMHSA – 2018)
- 22.7 million persons aged 18 or older needed treatment for an illicit drug or alcohol abuse problem in 2018 (8.6 percent of persons aged 18 or older). (SAMHSA)
- Of these, only 1.75 million – 7.1 percent of those who needed treatment – received it.
- Government reports show that alcohol and drug abuse is responsible for the admission of almost 1.5 million people to emergency rooms nationwide. Drug addiction results in nearly half a trillion dollars in economic loss annually; the equivalent of \$1,426 per American. [2010]
- For those receiving treatment, 60% had been in prior treatment an average of more than three times and 14% five times or more. [TEDS]

**Oxford Houses Provide a Low-Cost, Highly Effective Method of Reducing Recidivism**

### OXFORD HOUSE TRADITIONS

1. Oxford House has as its primary goal the provision of housing for the alcoholic and drug addict who wants 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.

**Amount spent by Oxford House residents for household expenses versus the total development expenses of OHI**



For every development dollar expended by OHI, residents in Oxford Houses spend \$10.42 to maintain the houses.

# Oxford House™

1975-2021

*46 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)