



The Gateway

Spring 2022

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Fellowship Hall Celebrates 50 years!

By Ogi Overman

Thirty-five years after its founding in 1935, there was still a debate raging among some members of Alcoholics Anonymous who felt that treatment centers were a violation of the Traditions, particularly the 6th, which states: "An AA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the AA name to any related facility or outside enterprise...." Thankfully, once a few recovery centers sprung up around the country, showing proof that the 12-Step model worked, and documenting positive outcomes, those parsing the words too narrowly eventually gave way to reality.

Fellowship Hall was one of those centers on the vanguard, leading the way for hundreds to follow over the next half-century. And, by virtue of not only its longevity but also its flexibility to change with the times while still maintaining its allegiance to the 12 Steps, the Greensboro, N.C. facility stands among the most respected and emulated of its kind internationally.

And it all happened because a couple of sober drunks put together a plan.



The Founders

Local businessmen A.W. "Zander" McAlister and J. Willard Pegg had gotten sober through AA and decided to give back by turning some rental property they owned into a halfway house for newly sober men. But, not unlike Bill and Dr. Bob in the early days, their success rate was minimal. They came up with the notion of taking the halfway-house model a step further and turning it into an actual functioning, private, non-profit facility staffed by counselors in recovery. So,

with little more than a vision, they signed the Articles of Incorporation on September 25, 1969.

Next they sold the idea to two other prominent recovering alcoholics, Henry M. Armfield and Robert A. "Slick" Shephard, and quickly added a fifth, Joseph M. Hunt. McAlister's father founded Pilot Life Insurance; Pegg was a successful and well-known florist; Armfield's family co-founded Macfield Hosiery Mills; Shephard was the editor of the Greensboro Daily News; and Hunt owned Wimbish Insurance and was Speaker of the House of the N.C. General Assembly.

While the five were raising funds, they discovered the prototype that would eventually turn their vision into reality: Harbor House, founded by Burton Davis, in Memphis, Tenn.

One Sunday afternoon, Zander and his wife Hazel stopped for gas at a station on Hicone Rd. He inquired about the lovely property nearby and was directed to a dairy farmer named Mr. Smith. Chatting casually, Zander mentioned that his father had owned a large tract of land not far away known as McAlister Farms. Turned out, Smith

had grown up there, leading not only to a fast friendship but a deal to buy 40.9 acres of Smith's land, provided the cows could stay.

With most of the components in place, the five-member board held its first meeting on December 10, 1969. Still, it would take two full years to recruit staff, develop curriculum, handle the legalities, and raise enough funds to cover operating deficits. Paramount in their mission was to solicit broad support from the AA community. Finally, with the blessings of AA's near and far, Fellowship Hall admitted its first guests on December 21, 1971.

The Formative Years

The initial center consisted of 14 rooms serving 28 guests, a medical department, therapy department, kitchen, dining room, meeting room, and administrative offices. The Hall's first director was Sidney Wheeler who assisted with developing the plans for the treatment program. Sidney consulted with Cumberland Heights in Nashville, TN, and High Watch Farm in Connecticut. He went to Alina Lodge in NJ and observed their operations for two weeks. Today, the Hall has an active, positive relationship with all three of these organizations. In July 1972, Jamie Carraway came on board as the new Director and began seeking accreditation from all the relevant licensing boards, and by 1974 had succeeded. Fellowship Hall has been continuously accredited by the Joint Commission ever since. Jamie also helped plan the early conferences as well as getting the first women admitted.

Yet, it was becoming obvious that a 28-bed facility was not enough to meet the growing demand, and the

first capital campaign was launched. The following year a new wing was built, containing 10 rooms, that came to be known as the women's wing (yes, quaint as it seems, initially the Hall only admitted men), and included a large lounging area at the end of the hall. It remained the women's wing until 2009.

Now a 48-bed facility, the Hall then added a Family Therapy Department, which formulated a four-day family program for parents, siblings, spouses,



Fellowship Hall circa 1971

significant others, and included the guests themselves. It remains an integral part of Fellowship Hall's treatment program.

The Primary Program was set up to last 28 days, but in 1978 an aftercare program was launched, with weekly group sessions for both former guests and family members. Initially, it was open only to Hall alumni but was soon opened to folks who'd been treated at other facilities.

In 1979 Fellowship Hall added an administrative wing, parallel to the original men's wing, to provide offices for primary and family counselors as well as support staff.

Early on, the Hall decided to host three-day biannual conferences whereby alumni would return to reminisce about their stay and listen to "circuit" speakers from around the country. Conferences were initially held on the campus but

quickly as attendance grew, conferences moved to local hotel facilities.

Perhaps the thorniest early issues Fellowship Hall's staff and board had to deal with was whether to admit abusers of substances other than alcohol. Given that it was founded in the middle of the "counterculture revolution" that promoted rampant drug use, it seemed obvious that addicts should qualify for admission. Plus, Narcotics Anonymous was coming of age, providing a path to recovery that paralleled that of alcoholics. The decision was made that addicts were to be treated alongside alcoholics, proving to be the wise decision.

By the 1980s "chemical dependency" was the phrase used to describe all forms of substance abuse. Meanwhile, Fellowship Hall was beginning to be recognized as one of the model facilities for treatment. In 1982 it became the first private facility to be given the Outstanding Program Award by the Addiction Professionals of North Carolina. It won it again in 1989 for developing and incorporating a Relapse Prevention component into the program.

As the treatment program expanded, so did the campus.. In 1987 a family wing was built parallel and behind the women's wing, with classrooms, offices, an exercise room, and an expanded medical department.

Fellowship Hall Comes Of Age

The decade of the '90s was a critical era not only for Fellowship Hall but for many similar facilities. While they had proliferated in the '80s, many had either been downsized or shut down entirely because managed care and HMOs took over the nation's healthcare system. Many providers and insurance companies stopped covering residential treatment programs, including the Hall. Consequently, they had to downsize the Family Program into a weekend educational program.

Part of the problem was the Hall's

rigid 28-day program, which HMO's somehow found offensive. Executive Director Rodney Battles convinced the board that the program needed to be tweaked a bit, that the 28-day regimen needed to be more flexible. Once the Hall did that, the managed care contracts started coming back in, occupancy went back up, and the Hall was soon back on sound financial footing.

After reinstating the four-day Family Program, Fellowship Hall began building the bridge from inpatient to outpatient by establishing the Gateway House, paving the way for the Intensive Outpatient Program that was to follow.

The Hall hired its first full-time medical director leading to an ongoing relationship with the Duke Medical School. A Director of Development position was also created with one of its early missions to raise funds for upgrading the Meditation Trail from a lovely walk in the woods to a self-guided path with 12 meditation areas, corresponding to the 12-steps with each named after a seminal figure in Fellowship Hall history.

One of those figures was district court Judge E. Raymond Alexander, Jr. After his death in 2000, a golf tournament in his name was established to support a Financial Assistance Fund which would provide funds to guests who had begun treatment but didn't have money to complete it.

By the turn of the century, Battles was ready to take on his biggest challenge: a \$3 million capital campaign to build a new 12-bed wing and remodel the nurse's station. It took six years to complete with one third of funding from Fellowship Hall's prudent reserve, one third from philanthropists, and one third from alumni donations.

"It was a true partnership of people who believed in our mission," said Battles in a 2011 interview.

Gateway Spring 2022

A New Century

The recovery community today looks a lot different than that of the last century. Instead of hundreds of facilities, there are thousands; some more closely resemble health spas than treatment centers, while some



The Kiser Women's Lodge opened in 2017

are no-frills; and some adhere to the 12-Step model, while others barely pay lip service to it. Through all the growth and changing times, Fellowship Hall has remained true to its mission of providing "treatment and evidence-based programs based on abstinence and the 12-step model of recovery."

While the 28-day model still forms the basis of the residential program, it is no longer the sole method of treatment. In addition, the Hall now offers extended treatment, intensive outpatient, short-term halfway housing, long-term halfway housing, specialty tracks geared toward professionals and young adults, and, most recently, a 14-day Recovery Reset program.

The 90-day Extended Treatment Program began in 2013 with the construction of Zander's House, for men, and Hazel's House, for women. It's now hosted in the Extended Treatment Lodge, while the Kiser Women's Lodge, named after longtime board member, Mose Kiser, is the primary treatment venue for women. Zander's and

Hazel's are now halfway houses. Most recently completed, the IOP (Intensive Outpatient Program) building, now called the Alumni Outpatient Center, hosts the Family Program, IOP groups, and Early Recovery Groups.

The world-class center also boasts the State Employees Credit Union Lecture Hall, a 150-seat lecture room and training facility. The Alumni Outpatient Center also boasts a gym for guests in treatment. With all this construction, it is not surprising that the Hall footprint has tripled in size, from the initial 40 acres to more than 120.

To further illustrate the Hall's growth, all totaled it has more than 100 beds (residential, extended, short-term and long-term) and 151 employees, which includes 26 counselors and 40 therapy assistants. But perhaps the most eye-popping stat is the total number of guests treated at Fellowship Hall: 30,500.

"That is the most important number," mused Mike Yow, Hall president since 2016. "Research says that every alcoholic or addict touches the lives of five other people — and, truthfully, that's probably low — but say it is, that's over 150,000 directly touched. And 50 years is two generations, so that's 300,000, a huge number."

As for hitting the 50-year mark, Yow, who has been in the recovery field 33 years, 28 of them at FH, noted, "To be honest, having been around that long has kind of moved us into a different status. It's increased our exposure on the state and national stage, but it's happened organically, which is the best way. It's not because of who we are but what we do, and why we do it."

And, one might add, how well they do it.

Pandemic

In December 2019, Hall president

Mike Yow called nursing supervisor Sandra Barclay into his office. Three full months before the COVID pandemic shut down virtually everything, Yow said, “I could see something coming, and it wasn’t good. I knew if we didn’t start planning then...” his voice trailed off.

As it turned out, by the time the lockdown happened in March, the FH team had a plan. Everything they’d decided was one or two steps ahead of the CDC recommendations, and as a result, Fellowship Hall has remained open.

“We have no choice. We have to stay open,” stressed Yow. “We put protocols in place and by the grace of God we made it through. We had a few hiccups and dodged a few bullets, but by being proactive, we avoided having to shut down.”

Still, there were challenges — major challenges. The once-in-a-century event impacted virtually every practice and procedure in the facility.

“COVID made us jump through hoop after hoop after hoop,” lamented Yow. “Admission processes, cleaning protocols, staff testing protocols,

purchasing testing equipment, contingencies if someone gets respiratory symptoms, all had to be put in place and sometimes even changed as soon as they were implemented as the standards changed.

“There were no roadmaps. We had an infection control plan, and a pandemic plan because of the swine flu 10 years ago. We had a robust performance and improvement plan. But no COVID plan before December. We had an environmental care committee, but no COVID committee. It was all done on the fly, just so we could keep the doors open.”

Yow acknowledges the adverse effect the deadly virus has had on those in need of substance abuse treatment.

“We may not even know how terrible it is for the sick and suffering for a while,” he said. “Our census has been way down for two years and is just now getting back to pre-pandemic levels. We’ve had a 30-40% increase in callers with no access to help, no insurance,

and we’re not able to provide for them because there are no resources to do so. It’s extremely frustrating.”

Yet, as always, there’s a silver lining.

“Three times lately, I’ve had guests stop by my table at lunch,” he said, a faint smile crossing his face. “One guy had tears in his eyes and said, ‘This place saved my life and I’ll never be able to repay it.’ Another guy said how much good we do and

how well run it is. And another told me how much better he felt and that we were doing a great job.

“Knowing that we are providing a life-saving service — that’s why we keep the doors open.”

As Fellowship Hall embarks on the next 50 years of service, they will no doubt continue to change and adapt to the current state of the world, but one thing will hold true – they will work to keep their doors open, providing evidence-based treatment based on the 12-step model of recovery with the goal of saving lives for another 50+ years.

This place saved my life and I’ll never be able to repay it.’

Two Icons

No history of Fellowship Hall’s first 50 years would be complete without a mention of some of the trusted servants who made it all possible. Obviously, a complete listing is unfeasible, but a glimpse of two of the men who are the personification of carrying the message and reaching out to the sick and suffering must suffice: Jimmy Brown and Wayne Stutts.

Tragically, both passed away within two weeks of each other, Jimmy on June 29, 2021, and Wayne on July 9. Wayne had 43 years of continuous sobriety, Jimmy had 39, and their synchronous passing left a huge hole in the AA community.

Ironically, while both men were revered around Fellowship Hall, neither got sober there. Yet both gave back generously, as a reflection of their love of AA and acknowledgment of the life-saving work done at the center.

It is no exaggeration to say that over the years each of them sponsored well over 100 men, not counting the thousands they influenced, mentored and guided in the right direction.



Jimmy Brown



Wayne Stutts

They truly loved newcomers, and that was likely why they loved Fellowship Hall so fervently.

“Jimmy never gave up on anyone, not even me,” said his wife of 22 years, Rita, whom he married on the campus of Fellowship Hall. “He would jump in there and mix it up with a wet drunk when others would back off. He had that knack of knowing when to be gentle and when to kick butt.”



Greetings from the front office

Message from Fellowship Hall President Mike Yow

So here we are, moving into a third year dealing with the impact of COVID. Never in our worst nightmares did any of us think this would have been the case. Never. As tired as we all are of talking about it, the last 2-3 months have maybe been some of the most stressful, due to the infectious nature of the Omicron variant. I have been in touch with treatment providers across the country, and everyone has been impacted dramatically. The good news is that COVID cases are falling quickly, and hope abounds that we are going to move in a more positive direction sooner than later.

So, the better news is that we have remained open, we have been focused on our mission, and the awesome staff here at Fellowship Hall has shone in a manner that I could not be prouder of! The real excitement is that this is all happening as we celebrate our 50th anniversary! December 21, 2021 was the date that marked 50 years of service. A remarkable feat. As you will read in this issue, you will get some insights into how Fellowship Hall came into existence. Our Founders were laser focused on making this place happen. My number one job is, and has been, to make sure we maintain that focus. I

am pleased to report that our mission is alive and well. The planning is ongoing for our conference this year. It will be a true celebration of recovery and of Fellowship Hall. Please take note of the events we have planned, and I hope you will all make plans to attend!

I would be remiss to not acknowledge the passing of our former board member, Jimmy Brown and long-time volunteer, Wayne Stutts. I knew Jimmy and Wayne both for over 30 years. Jimmy was always a big supporter of me, and I loved him. Wayne Stutts built the first house I ever bought. He loved me and my family. They both helped maybe thousands of people in their lifetimes, including members of my family. They both loved this place. I worked with Wayne's beloved wife, Joyce for many years. Their example is one I hope to uphold, and their shoulders are ones that I, and many others, stand on. That's how it works. We follow the examples of our predecessors. We continue that tradition here a day at a time! Stay safe!

In loving service,
Mike Yow

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mike Yow'.

And when Jimmy Brown, a former college football player who dressed out around 6-2, 250, kicked butt, you knew you'd been kicked.

Likewise, Wayne, a former minor-league baseball umpire, cut an imposing figure. He could crack the whip or be the AA whisperer, depending on the situation. He was known around town by law enforcement, bail bondsmen, judges and attorneys as the only guy who would take "hopeless" drunks for involuntary commitment. And he would not merely drop them off but follow up.

"Daddy would bring newcomers and sponsees to our beach house," said his daughter Teresa, "and we never knew who was going to show up at our table for Thanksgiving and Christmas. Plus, he hired a whole lot of them (for his surveying and construction firms). He laughed that he paid them by the day, because if he paid them by the week, they'd spend it on drugs and alcohol."

Both men gave of their funds, time and talent in their own ways, Jimmy more by starting and promoting meetings and Wayne by donating land and constructing buildings for meetings. Jimmy had a hand at starting at least a half dozen meetings nearby and traveled miles to support others. He was

on the board of Fellowship by the Sea and was Fellowship Hall's longest serving board member, with over 32 years. Meanwhile, Wayne donated the land and built the Renewal Center of the South as well as the Camel Club, a retreat on Oak Island. Both had a hand in the expansion of the Summit Club, Jimmy with fundraising and Wayne with the construction.

Wayne's wife, Joyce, was a beloved family counselor at the Hall, and after her passing, a section of the Gratitude Garden was named in her honor.

"Daddy loved going out to the Hall to volunteer every chance he got," said Teresa. "He just loved being around newcomers and being a part of the recovery process."

Echoed Rita, "Jimmy went to that Sunday morning meeting religiously, and loved serving on the Board. His heart was out there and he poured it into making sure it succeeded."

Both men understood the importance of the hard work going on at Fellowship Hall and wanted to be a part of it. And the Hall understood the importance of Jimmy Brown and Wayne Stutts —and wanted them to be a part of their family.

Their legacy will live on.

WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Fellowship Hall is led by a volunteer Board of Directors that is responsible for insuring that the work of the Hall and staff is centered on meeting our mission of helping individuals suffering from substance use disorder by providing compassionate, cost-effective care to every guest we serve. We are excited to announce three new board members who generously give their time and talents to keep our organization on mission and keeping our vision in focus of being a leader in the treatment industry.



Cheryl Hairston

Cheryl Hairston

Attorney Cheryl Hairston is from Greensboro, North Carolina, and is married with four children. She's a graduate of UNC-G and Campbell University School of Law. Attorney Hairston is a former Associate Attorney General with the North Carolina Department of Justice and a former Assistant District Attorney for Guilford County. Presently, she's an Intake Attorney with Elon Law School's Emergency Legal Services Program, housed in the Guilford County Family Justice Center, providing civil legal advice to victims of domestic violence/sexual abuse. Attorney Hairston has been or is involved with: Every Baby Guilford, NC Legislative Black Caucus Foundation, Virtuous Woman Prayer Ministry, Habitat for Humanity, and the Guilford County Jail Ministry. A favorite quote of hers says: "You may be weak and you may be sick, but you have to take responsibility for your own recovery."



William McIvor

William "Bill" McIvor

Bill McIvor brings 30+ years as a senior executive in healthcare/life sciences IT to his role as a board member at Fellowship Hall. Bill also serves as an adviser to Triad Growth Partners here in Greensboro. Bill has advised numerous growth companies and venture capitalist and private equity firms. Bill most recently served as Executive Vice President of SeniorLink Incorporated and President of the Seniorlink Technologies subsidiary. He has served on the Board of Accordant Health Services (CaremarkCVS), Sentillion (Microsoft) and MedVantx and as an operating executive for NovaSom, iHealth Tech (Connelly/Advent & Accordant), Oxford Health and Ernst and Young. Bill started his career at Procter & Gamble.



James Midgett

James Midgett

James Midgett is a former lab supervisor of infectious disease with one of the largest private medical labs worldwide, with over 37 years of experience before retiring in 2016. He presently volunteers in a ministry helping people to cope with daily problems and find hope. He is an active member of Alcoholics Anonymous and assists others to stay on the path of recovery. James is honored to serve on the Fellowship Hall Board as he knows firsthand that recovery is possible if people can understand the nature of addiction and realize that with personal effort and proper guidance they can achieve sustainable contentment and live productive lives indefinitely.



Thanks for Being a Light of Hope!



30,500 lights in the Gratitude Garden, in remembrance of each person served over our last 50 years.

On December 14, 2021 Fellowship Hall celebrated the start of our 50th year in operation with Lights of Hope in the Gratitude Garden. More than 250 donors came together to raise \$22,390 for our Partner Scholarship Fund and light up the Garden with 30,500 lights - one for each guest Fellowship Hall has served since 1971.

The Partner Scholarship Fund provides access to treatment at Fellowship Hall for individuals who lack health insurance and financial resources.

Thanks to everyone who came out to the event on December 14 and for each of our donors who are helping us provide hope and healing to the suffering alcoholic and addict.

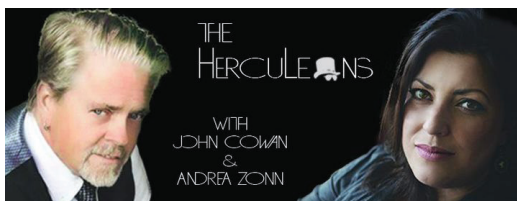
UPCOMING 2022 EVENTS

CAREER LAUNCH 101...MARCH 23

Local experts will share information on starting a new career, where to look for jobs, how to prepare a resume, and getting ready for the interview. Free for FH Alumni from 1-5pm in the SECU Lecture Hall on the FH campus. Registration is open at www.FellowshipHall.com, under Events.

WALK & RUN FOR RECOVERY ... MAY 15

We're partnering with Fleet Feet of Greensboro/High Point to bring you a new and expanded Walk & Run for Recovery! Get ready to join us for a 1.5 mile walk and/or 5K run at Country Park, starting at 2pm. Registration will open on April 1.



21ST ANNUAL GOLF TOURNEY...AUGUST 5

Get your clubs and foursome ready for another great day on the links at Bryan Park! This year's tournament will be hosted on both Bryan Park golf courses with proceeds benefiting our Partner Scholarship Program. Sponsorships are now available; player registration will open June 1. Contact altinal@fellowshiphall.com

ANNUAL CONFERENCE...AUGUST 5 - 8

We can't wait to see you at Conference! We'll be moving to The Carolina Theatre in downtown Greensboro AND a special concert with the Herculeans featuring John Cowan and Andrea Zonn on Saturday night! Mark your calendar and make plans to be there for this exciting 50th Anniversary Conference! Registration will open on www.FellowshipHall.com on June 1. Concert is included in your conference registration - and we'll have our usual Saturday picnic and Gratitude Meeting on the Fellowship Hall campus.

FELLOWSHIP HALL'S ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

AN OVERVIEW

In December, we compiled information for our Annual Impact Report through a four-year lens to help demonstrate the effect of the pandemic on those suffering from substance use disorder and the subsequent impact on Fellowship Hall.

These charts and graphs show that the number of individuals coming into treatment has significantly declined over our last two fiscal years which in turn has impacted our annual revenues while expenses have remained consistent. We have been thankful to receive Paycheck Protection Plan loans with full forgiveness as part of the COVID relief effort, which has helped us manage the decline in guests served and annual revenues.

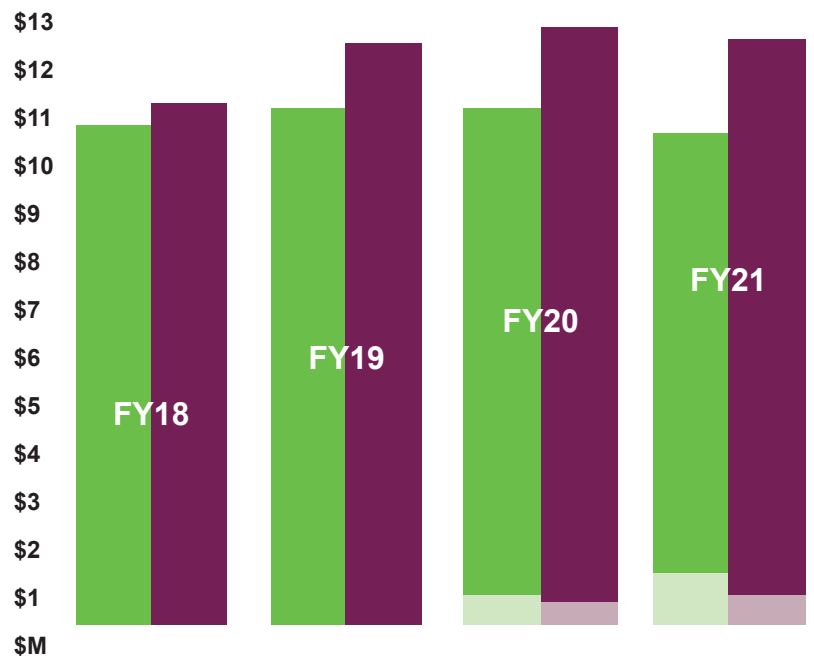
In addition to fewer guests in treatment, we've also seen a decrease in the number of family members participating in our Family Programs, a direct result of moving our offering to an online platform for almost a year, before returning to limited in-person classes in March 2021.

On a positive note, we had our most successful Golf Tournament in August 2021, raising more than \$70,000 for our Partner Scholarship Program. Funding from this event and donations to the Partner Scholarship Program all year provided 10 scholarships for treatment to individuals who had a strong desire to find recovery, but lacked health insurance and financial resources to cover the cost of care. But, despite this success, overall donations for FY21 were down over our FY20 and FY19 results.

We've also seen some changes in the primary diagnosis, with higher instances of alcohol and depressant use than in years past, while opiate use has decreased slightly. The good news is, more guests are completing their treatment program and working to build a life in long-term recovery.

A question we are frequently asked is how well do our programs work? We have been measuring guest outcomes through our Continuing Care Program since 2017 and after collecting solid data for three years, we are able to report on how well our guests are able to sustain their recovery at 1 year after they discharge from our program. We have been pleased to see the results, that of those who opt into and participate in our Continuing Care Program, 74% have remained clean and sober after 1 year.

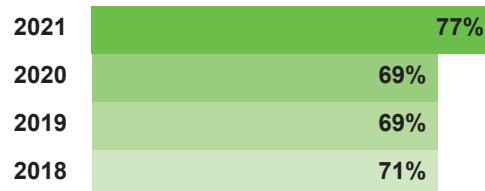
REVENUE & EXPENSES FY18-FY21



REVENUE = ■ | COVID RELIEF = ■ | EXPENSE = ■ | COVID EXPENSE = ■

NOTE: Revenue does not include investment income which is reinvested in our endowment each year.

GUEST TREATMENT COMPLETION RATES FY18-FY21



CLEAN AND SOBER 1 YR AFTER TREATMENT FY19-FY21*

*Approximately 95% of our guests opt to participate in our Continuing Care Program which monitors their progress for one year after discharge. Of those who opt in, approximately 50% complete surveys at each touch point. The outcomes data below is generated from those who complete the Continuing Care Program.

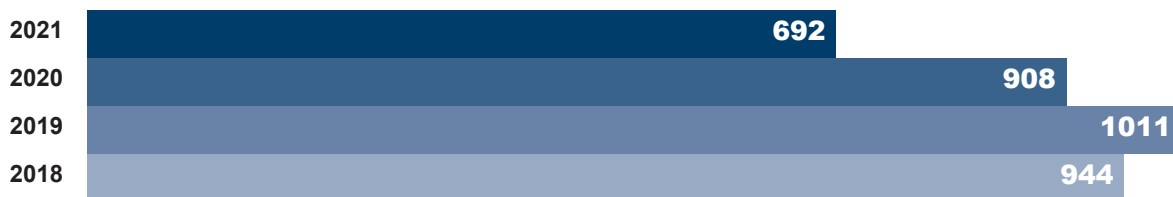


WE ARE MISSION FOCUSED

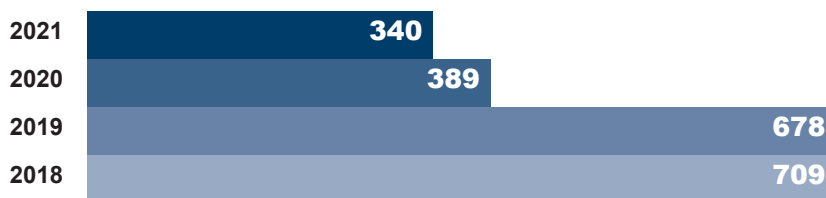
OUR MISSION

It is the mission of Fellowship Hall to help people who suffer from substance use disorder, and to provide compassionate, cost-effective care while maintaining our commitment to a Twelve-Step philosophy.

NUMBER OF GUESTS IN TREATMENT FY18-FY21

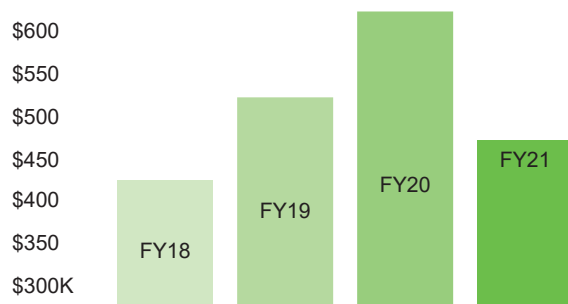


NUMBER OF FAMILY MEMBERS IN OUR FAMILY PROGRAM FY18-FY21

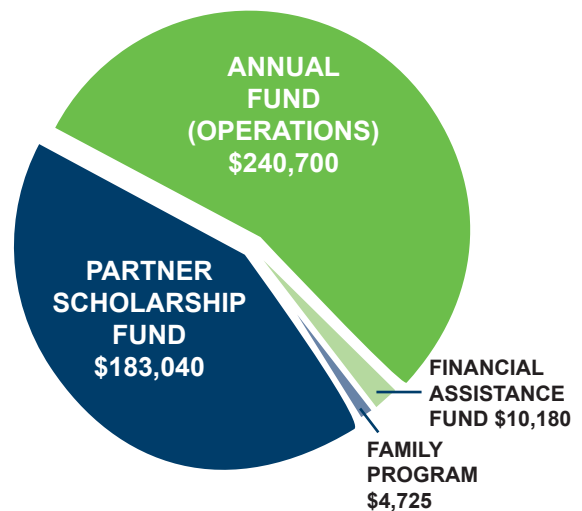


Annual donations play an important part in balancing our annual operating budget. Donors make a significant impact in helping us fund the gap between annual revenues and annual expenses which in turn allow us to keep our treatment programs affordable and accessible to those seeking treatment.

DONATIONS FY18-FY21



FY21 HOW DONATIONS WERE SPENT



In 2018, we completed our Capital Campaign and returned to raising support for our day-to-day operations with our Annual Fund and launched the Partner Scholarship Program, a 100% donor funded program to provide access to treatment for people who lack health insurance and financial resources.

Thanks to our donors, we provided treatment to 10 individuals and their families through our Partner Program this year. We also provided more than \$55,000 in financial assistance to guests in treatment through our Financial Assistance Fund.

WELCOME OUR TWO NEW DEPARTMENT LEADERS

We are excited to announce two new members of our staff leadership team who have recently been promoted from within to fill these important roles at Fellowship Hall. Mysti Billingsley now serves as Director of Nursing, taking the place of Sandra Barclay who retired late last year. Christina Tucker now serves as Director of Admissions, filling the admissions supervisor position previously held by Randy Carter who retired earlier this year. Join us in welcoming these two outstanding leaders!

Mysti Billingsley, Director of Nursing



About me

I have worked in healthcare for most of my life. Before becoming a registered nurse, I spent 10 years in banking/customer service. I was also a CNA for many years and finally had the opportunity to go to nursing school. I always wanted to be a nurse. As a CNA, I felt I wasn't doing enough for the patients and wanted to become a nurse so I could do more. I worked as

an ICU nurse and nursing supervisor before coming here to FH as a staff nurse. The disease of addiction had destroyed my family and I wanted to help others who were facing issues with this growing problem. I am married to the most wonderful man in the whole wide world. I have two rescued dogs and a rescued fish!

Why did you want to be the Director of Nursing?

I wanted to be the Director of Nursing because I could envision that FH could be even greater than it already is. I already knew we had a great team of nurses; I wanted to lead this group into a new beginning. I wanted to bring about the changes that everyone had talked about wanting. I have such a passion for what we do here and I couldn't imagine not stepping up to help further our mission.

What do you enjoy most about your job?

I love being an advocate for the nursing staff. When people present me with situations that are problematic, I like being able to find the answer. I also love involving the team in decision making. I think it helps bring us together. The nurses I work with change my life for the better on a daily basis and I hope that I will be able to do the same for them.

Christina Tucker, Director of Admissions



About me

My Fellowship Hall journey started in 2008 in housekeeping. I suffered a relapse that led to me leaving the Hall until, after months of hard work and managing my recovery, I was offered a position in the kitchen in 2012. Since then, I have been able to work within several departments at Fellowship Hall, from being an Admissions Counselor to being a Primary Counselor.

As a staff member in recovery, I firmly believe that we can live beyond our addiction and overcome the past. I recently experienced the significant loss of my biggest supporter, my mother. Having a place to go where I knew what to do and was surrounded by not only my recovery family, but my work family, grounded me each morning in a time when things were uncertain.

Why did you want to be the Director of Admissions?

It's my dream job. When the opportunity became available, I was excited and hopeful. Admissions is a unique department that touches almost every other department at Fellowship Hall. The process of admitting someone into treatment might take hours, days, or even weeks. To be able to work with the amazing team that is already in place and explore ways to streamline the process is very exciting.

What do you enjoy most about your job?

As a counselor, I love being a part of the process of self-exploration with the guests, watching them gain insight and develop excitement about their future in recovery - seeing them blossom and walking with them. I also love my co-workers and enjoy being able to tap into their wealth of experience whenever I am struggling. I am excited to be returning to Admissions with more experience, and I am looking forward to working with Josh Showfety. Coming back to such an amazing team makes stepping into my new role easier.



5 ways to fit MINDFULNESS into your daily routine

Mindfulness, as described by Jon Kabat-Zinn, means to pay attention in the present moment, on purpose, and without judgment. That's it.

What this means is that mindfulness is a broad category that includes all kinds of practices that can help you be more present. It is more than meditation, although meditation is a kind of mindfulness. You do not have to limit your practice to meditation, you have lots to choose from and it is uniquely your own. The practice that works best for you might not resonate with your coworker, so experiment. There are tons of apps and YouTube videos that you can explore to help you practice mindfulness.

Here are some suggestions to get you started:

Focus on your breath.

When you do this practice, don't try to change your breath pattern—just notice. Be curious about the way you breathe.

Sit quietly and observe your thoughts.

Practice not attaching to them. Just notice what is coming up for you. If you notice that your mind has wandered and that you are entertaining a thought, return to focus on your breath for a minute or two.

Eat in a mindful way.

Pick something you particularly love to eat. Pay attention to all of your senses as you eat. What does it smell, feel, look,

sound, and taste like when you eat? Do this slowly and really savor each bite.

Take a walk-mindfully.

Notice all the sights around you. What do you hear and smell? How does the air feel on your skin? Notice your foot touching down and the rate of your gait.

Listen to your favorite song.

Pick a word or phrase that is repeated several times in the song. As you listen, count the number of times you hear that word or phrase sung.

The latest meditation research shows that while new practitioners can experience changes in their brains that are positive, the real change comes from consistent and longer practice. That's when you will start to see permanent, and positive changes in the brain, like improved concentration and better emotion regulation.

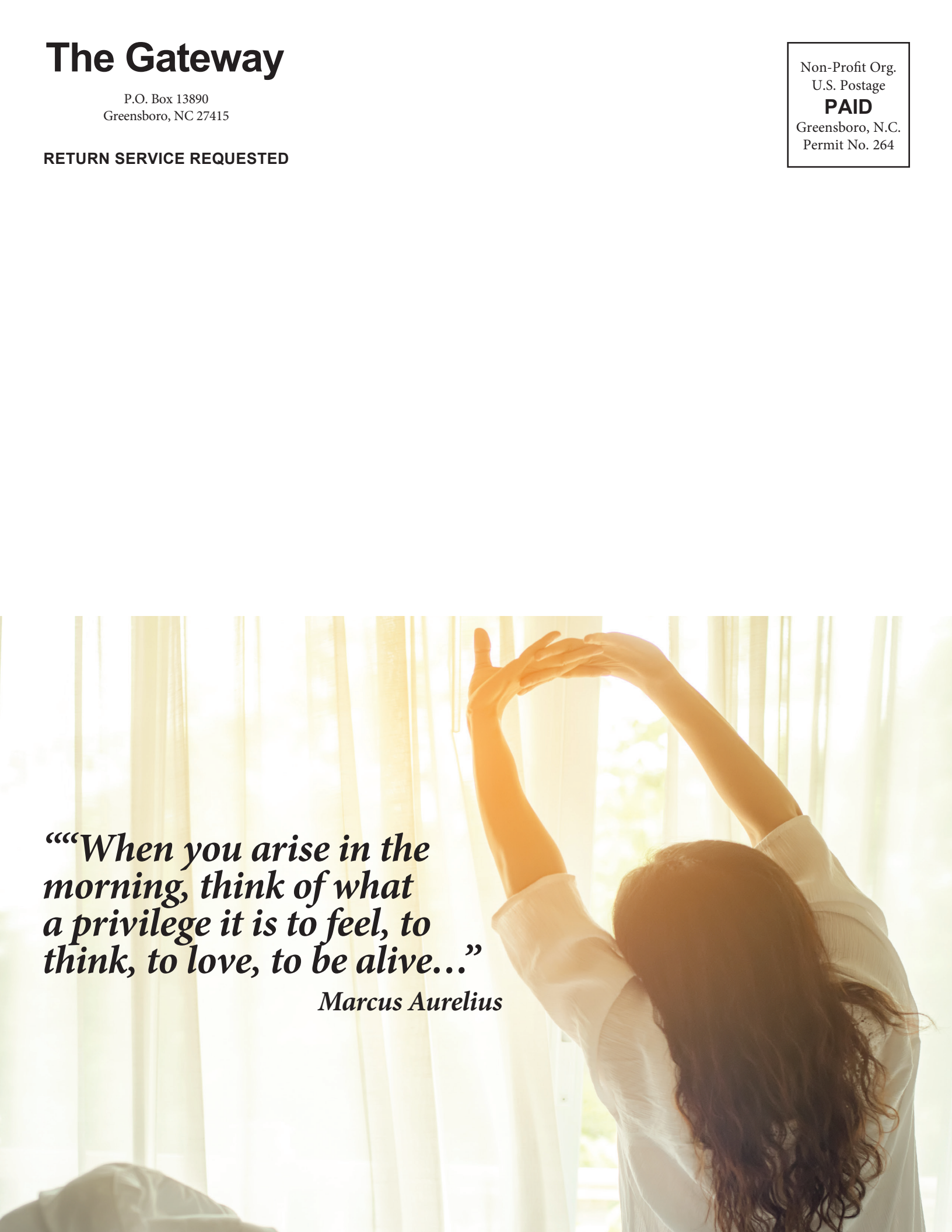
Your practice can be as long or as short as you want it to be. If you only have five minutes, great, use it!! Most mindfulness experts say that 20 minutes a day is a good amount to shoot for, but make that your long-term goal, and start with realistic amounts of time. In fact, starting with a short practice is a good idea because you will have some early success and will be more likely to continue. Either way, find something you can do regularly and you will start to see the benefits.

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““When you arise in the morning, think of what a privilege it is to feel, to think, to love, to be alive...”

Marcus Aurelius