

Nick's Place
2005 Spring/Summer Newsletter

Happy Spring from all of us at Nick's Place. We are excited to have the opportunity to share great news with you about our current and former residents. They are enjoying success in their recovery programs and at their jobs. Our young men are holding jobs at a variety of companies, including a gardening nursery, a sign company, a construction company, and a national fast-food franchise.

This past April our residents attended the Narcotics Anonymous conference in Ocean City Maryland. Nick's Place subsidized the weekend. Our guys were part of the official greeting team and wore hug-me T-shirts and offered hugs to registrants. I can assure you that was a huge step for at least one of our residents. It is an event that offers round the clock meetings and activities. It gives newcomers the opportunity to see first-hand that recovery can be fun and they don't have to sacrifice the activities they enjoy just because they are clean and sober.

All of our residents are working with their 12-step program sponsors in understanding the process of recovery. Just like any other progressive and sometimes fatal disease, recovery from addiction requires physical, emotional, spiritual and intellectual healing. Treatment only begins the process. It provides the opportunity to abstain and learn about the disease and how it affects every aspect of their lives. The time they spend at Nick's Place provides the foundation to start applying what they learned in treatment to daily living situations.

At Nick's Place, we also focus on recognizing what we have to be thankful for in our lives. We started grateful Tuesday about 2 years ago. It is an opportunity at the dinner table to share what we feel grateful for in our lives. We also more recently started Worried Wednesday which allows us to share what issues are causing concern and fear. Grateful Tuesday helps remind residents of how far they have come. Worried Wednesday can help identify problem areas that may lead to relapse if not discussed or have a plan developed to resolve the issue.

As you know, our mission is to provide a clean, safe, sober and supervised environment and to that end, we believe our residence should reflect our mission. So in early March, we had the opportunity to begin our Spring cleaning with the painting and re-carpeting of the downstairs living quarters.

As part of our supervised environment, we've added two new staff members to the Nick's Place house manager team. The first is George Smith, a former resident who now has three year's sobriety and is working with us on the weekend shift. As you can imagine, we are extremely proud of George and the accomplishments he achieved while he was at Nick's and after he left. He is currently holding a full-time job as an electrician apprentice and has completed the required classes. George also has an auto detailing business and is an usher in his church! All this is in addition to practicing a strong 12-step program.

The second new member is Nicholas Fernandes. Nick covers our day shift from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM Monday through Friday. Nick will be responsible for making sure our new residents get to job interviews and familiarizing them with the routine of Nick's Place. I just love having someone named Nick working at Nick's Place!!

Finally, I have taken over the Executive Director position for Nick's Place on a full-time basis. It is a move that has brought me enormous satisfaction and has allowed us to focus on continuing to improve our program; networking within the recovery community; and researching new funding sources. (By the way, if you know of an organization or company we should contact, please be sure to let me know.)

I am also pleased to report that I began an informal "mothers group" in January. It is comprised of former and present Nick's Place moms. It is a time where we can share our concerns and learn what behaviors we need to change to live happier, healthier lives and allow our kids the chance to begin making smart decisions for their future. It is a hard thing to let-go when you have a kid at risk, but only through letting go do they get the chance to become self-sufficient, responsible young men.

Also, in March Jason B a former Nick's Place resident and I were invited to speak at Wheaton High School addressing both parents and kids about the dangers of substance abuse and addiction. We both received very positive feedback regarding our messages. The And, finally, Faces and Voices of Recovery, a group dedicated to improving the lives of those in recovery has published an article I wrote about Nick and the development of Nick's Place as a result of Nick's life and death.

We hope by sharing Nick's story with our residents and others that they will be motivated to seek recovery and to support the recovery of their loved ones. The disease of addiction is robbing millions of families of harmony, peace and stability and in cases like ours, the very presence of their loved one. Nick's Place is doing its' small part of helping to restore family relationships and return our residents to the community as productive and responsible members. We continue to be unique by dedicating ourselves to serving this young population.

We appreciate your continued support. It is important to us to know that you believe in what we are doing and why we are doing it. We hope that you will tell your friends, employers and family members about Nick's Place and urge them to think of us when choosing their charitable giving causes.

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Your donations, whether cash or stock are 100% tax deductible. We receive no state or federal funding.