



Spring 2008

We just celebrated Mother's Day at Nick's Place. As you can imagine, for me it's a day filled with memories of Nick—both happy and sad. He is still in my thoughts every single day, and I always tell each new group of residents about his personality, charm, sense of humor and kindness. They are so much like Nick. When they aren't under the influence, you could not meet a greater bunch of guys. As on past Mother's Days my guys let me know I was in their thoughts with their calls and cards. This means more to me than words can say.

That's why I am so excited to write you today and update you on the progress of our residents and alumni. Our guys show such courage and strength as they overcome obstacles and learn to rebuild their lives. Each of them has a great story to tell. And I think you'll especially enjoy hearing from Tony Williams, a Nick's Place alumni, who shares a piece of his journey in his own words.

Current Residents

Andrew M has been with us since August of 2007. He is approaching his one year anniversary of being clean and sober. Andrew tried to quit using drugs several times prior to his last treatment, but was never successful. I'll never forget Andrew's first day at Nick's Place. We laugh about it now, but it was a tough day for him. He was scared to death to be out of treatment and afraid that Nick's Place offered too

much freedom. I asked him to give himself a few days and if he didn't feel comfortable, we would try to find another alternative.

Well of course, Andrew did stay. And slowly but surely he found his place at Nick's Place. He has emerged as a leader in the house for our new members. He holds two service positions in the Narcotics Anonymous (NA) program and recently worked the registration desk at the NA convention in Ocean City Maryland. His growth has been astounding and we continue to feel optimistic for Andrew's long-term recovery.

Our other residents Jase, Vic, Martin and Jeff joined us just weeks apart in early spring as other residents transitioned out. As you might imagine, the first few days of Nick's Place can be hectic. They are filled with looking for employment, learning the schedule, making new friends and exploring the area 12-step meetings.

Fortunately, all of the guys are now employed. Vic found a great position with Fed/Ex Kinko's, Jase is a driver for a paint company, Martin works for a car dealership and Jeff is working with Andrew at a garage door installation company. By the way, this employer actually employs five young men associated with Nick's Place. They willingly work with our schedule and they enjoy the confidence of knowing that they have employees who are dependable, committed and alcohol and drug free.



Current residents of Nick's Place

Earlier I mentioned the convention in Ocean City the weekend of April 11-13th. This event draws thousands of people in recovery from the disease of addiction. It is filled with inspirational speakers, meetings and dances. Nick's Place was able to send our residents to this event because of a year-end gift we received from one of our foundation grantors. This gift was a complete surprise, and we were told it was a given just because they truly believe in the work we are doing. What a wonderful surprise and a true blessing.

Barry and I wouldn't be able to do what we do at Nick's Place without the financial support of so many wonderful people like you. As you know, we do not receive any federal, state or county funding to support Nick's Place, so we appreciate every gift we get!

Alumni News

2007 residents Tony W and Sean K each celebrated a year in recovery in March and April. Parents of both young men attended the NA meeting to celebrate this wonderful and excit-

ing accomplishment of their sons. Tony returned to George Mason University this January to pursue his degree in Economics. He's a terrific young man and I'm pleased that he agreed to share bit of his story below.

Sean is a manager at a local Starbucks. Joe A, also a resident in 2007 has moved to another sober house to accommodate his work schedule. Jason S who was with us in 2006 has been working as a weekend manager of Nick's Place since January. He does a wonderful job for us, and the guys feel comfortable knowing that Jason has a good understanding of their challenges and concerns.

Former residents Sean, John S, Phil W (who recently moved back to Maryland), Will E and Oscar P are all living together in an Oxford House (sober living home) in the neighborhood. It's a blessing to have them nearby. They provide support to our new residents and are a fine example to them. A few of them play on a softball team in Laurel. Their current record is 5-3—which is a huge improvement over last year!

Matthew M from 2006 is living with a group of sober friends in Silver Spring, Maryland and has recently returned to school in the evenings.

Jason B and his wife Jan are expecting their first child, a girl in August. Both Jason and Jan have four years in recovery.

Tony Williams In His Own Words

Hello, my name is Tony Williams and I am a former client and alumni of Nick's Place. First, I would like to thank Rhea McVicker for establishing the sober house that helped launch me into my new life as a clean and sober adult. Before entering treatment at Caron and then Nick's Place four months later, my life was completely unmanageable. I could not stop using drugs and alcohol.

After becoming aware of the severity of this life-threatening disease I had attained the willingness to turn my life around. I did not enter Nick's Place brimming with hope. In fact, I thought my life was over. Always the dramatic one, I did not realize that this was going to be the best thing that could have happened to me. I had the knowledge of the disease and had taken an honest look at what my life using was like, however, I had no idea how to live sober. Nick's Place provided me with a loving environment of young adults just like me, who were trying to progress in their lives. The program allowed me to see what a true friend actually looks like. Other than the relationships I made there, the program requires you to find a full-time job. While using, I could not even hold down a temporary job. Now after completing the Nick's Place program I was fully-employed for a substantial period of time and now have a reliable reference from someone other than friends or family, truly a miracle.

The most important thing I learned from the Nick's Place experience was how to build a support network in the Narcotics Anonymous pro-

gram. To find a certain level of comfort in a new environment takes time and the people who have been there before me helped me immensely in finding new friends and showing me how to actually work the N.A. program. You have to give it away to keep it.

Since leaving Nick's Place in January 2008, I am back in college at George Mason University. A goal that was achieved with the love and support of the staff of Nick's Place and by my being willing to do the footwork to get back into school. I am doing better than I ever have in school and have been clean now for a little over 14 months. I truly believe that as a result of what I had learned at Nick's Place I am now able to stay clean, build a network in my hometown of Fairfax, VA, stay on top of my job, and do well in school. The program provides the perfect environment for a young person struggling to stay clean to begin a new way of life. With the help of my higher power and Nick's Place I will never have to start over again, this new life is just too precious.

*Thank You,
Tony Williams*



Tony at the beach

Other News

A volunteer team from Bank of America presented a money management series for our residents. It included basic banking services, budgeting, understanding and managing credit and retirement vehicles. The feedback from our residents and the Bank of America team has been overwhelmingly positive. It's really exciting to have the guys so engaged in learning about a topic that will impact them for the rest of their lives.

Next up is a series called Life Skills for Men presented by Mr. Gregory Wright who has worked with young men in a number of different settings. Greg will cover topics germane to our young adults such as employment tips and practices. We expect this series to begin in June.

To round out the summer, Dr. Wendy Buskey will return to present her series entitled, "Dynamics of the Addicted Family".

At some point this summer, our guys and alumni will have their annual excursion to Six Flags or Kings Dominion for a day of roller coasters and water park fun.

I hope you have enjoyed this update. Nick's Place is very grateful to all of our friends that continue to support our mission of providing a clean, safe and sober environment to young men in recovery. If you do choose to make a contribution to Nick's Place, keep in mind that you can double your gift if your employer has a matching gift program.

Please continue to pray for the recovery of our residents and their families. Also, please be sure to tell your friends and families about Nick's Place and the importance of the work we are doing.

Nick's Place is a 501 (c) 3 organization.

Your gift is tax deductible.

We do not receive any federal, state or county funding and rely solely on grants and private donations to meet our operating costs.

P.S. If you know someone who needs help with mental health or addiction issues, please refer them to www.samhsa.gov for a complete listing of facilities throughout the United States.

You can make a donation electronically through our website www.nicksplace.org

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Your gift to Nick's Place is tax deductible.

Nick's Place does not receive any federal or state funding.

Please e-mail if you are replacing furniture and wish to explore donating it to Nick's Place.

Also, if you plan to make a donation to Nick's Place and your organization has a matching gift program, please consider submitting our information for a match. It's a great way to double and even triple your gift. Thank you again, so very much.

New layout and printing lovingly provided by our friends at Christ Lutheran Church.