

Mission Statement

To provide structured housing and rehabilitative services in an environment of support and accountability that will give addicted men the opportunity to rebuild their lives.

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Milwaukee, WI
PERMIT NO. 922

Serenity Inns Response to COVID-19

My hope is that we as a community will lean into faith, hope and love and emerge from COVID-19 as more compassionate and empathetic.

Taking action, any action, can help alleviate the sense of powerlessness. The Board of Directors agreed to waive April and May rent for residents of both Alumni House and Serenity Inns. Individual board members have also responded in unique and generous ways. Several have increased their annual giving while others have responded with additional meals and gift cards.

I am more convinced than ever that the work we are engaging truly matters. Having worked closely with the men on a weekly basis, I am in awe at both their resilience and their willingness to seek healing and recovery. These men have such beautiful and redemptive stories and they, like us, are experiencing the trauma of this crisis. This trauma, combined with employment uncertainty, creates additional roadblocks to recovery. There is a great need for us to continue to support these men in their healing journey.

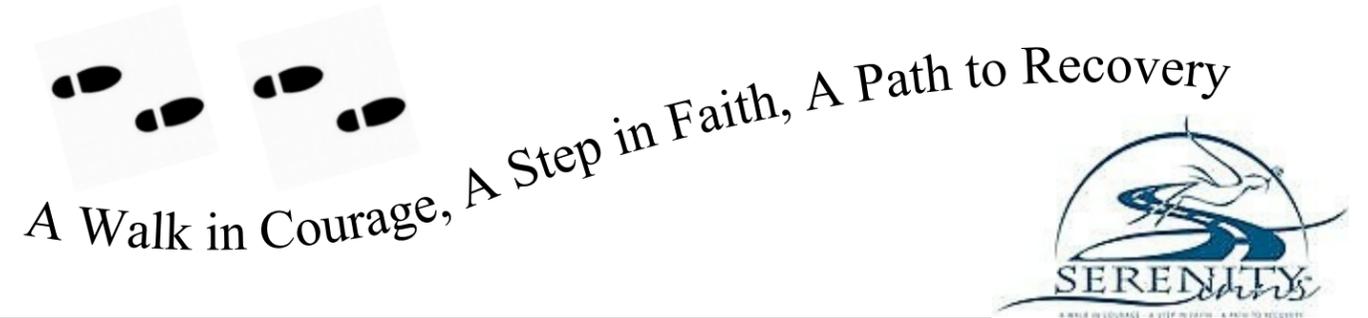
- By Bary Morgan, Serenity Inns Board Member and Chair of the Program Committee

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Alumni House Air Conditioning update

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Thanks to countless hours from our many volunteers, overseen by our volunteer extraordinaire Bill Buehler, the Alumni House renovations are complete! All of the units, main hall and the two stairwells to the basement are at a point of full usability and to a clean, updated, and livable status. With the final apartment rehab's completion in late 2019, all apartments meet the standards we set out in the beginning back in 2016.

The residents are most happy about the HVAC upgrades; all apartments have new furnaces and air conditioning units! The HVAC upgrades were completed earlier this year.



Alumni House tenants Bob O, Cedric S, Jason S, Dylan K, Matt K (top row); Fred W and Dana A (bottom row).

Serenity Inns graduate and Alumni House tenant Fred Walker said of air conditioning, "My experience last summer with no air conditioning at Alumni House was quite the challenge. Some days were unbearable. I am blessed to have gone through that without the aid of drugs or alcohol; I know what I am capable of now. It was well worth it to go through that in my own home."

Thank you to the funders – individual donors and foundations – who donated specifically to this project.



2020: A New Beginning

Four residents graduated from Serenity Inns in the past couple months. Each of the men spent 5-7 months at the Inn, finding employment after the first month and saving money for life after Serenity Inn. Most of the graduates have moved to Alumni House where they pay rent, live with other Serenity Inn graduates, and have the support of the Serenity Inns staff.

Below are excerpts from each graduate's exit interview where he reflects on his recovery journey.

Dylan: I started using prescription drugs when I was 12. And it became a problem right away. When I got out of prison I didn't have money or even know where to go. I wasn't ever given a path for how to go back into society. Things like getting a job, money management, after care, reintegration into society, rent history – Serenity Inns has introduced me to so many things in addition to living in recovery.



Dylan, left and Matt, right

Matt: I started smoking pot in elementary school. I was in foster homes and went to prison until I was 26. When I got out I was doing drugs and living off people – my mom, girlfriends, just existing. I never worked for any amount of time and never learned how to pay bills or budget. Serenity gave me an opportunity to learn how to live a normal life. It was always selling drugs or doing drugs and neither of those come with any sort of responsibility. I never thought about the next day or the next year.



Troy

Troy: I was in my teens when I started using. And I stopped when I was 50. I got tired of that life and it was time for me to get my life together. This has been my first time in treatment. It was a big deal to me. I really liked this program and I found that it really helped me.

Bill: I was 14 when I first started using – marijuana with other kids in the neighborhood. The night my dad died, I tried cocaine and never stopped. What really helped me the most was the healing that takes place here. You learn coping skills, how to deal with your feelings and emotions. Life doesn't stop and I needed to learn how to live sober.



Bill



Meet the Counselor

Jason Dobson, Serenity Inns' Lead Substance Abuse Counselor, shares his top four ways to dealing with stress and anxiety during these challenging times.

TAKE A BREAK FROM THE NEWS

The 24-hour news cycle can make anxiety spike. Limit your news intake to 30-60 minutes a day.

BE SOCIAL

Socialization is key, especially if you feel isolated. You can still get together with friends and family online or on your phone. Remind yourself we are all connected, even if we are apart.

GO OUTDOORS

Fresh air and exercise help with loneliness and stress. Spending time in nature and exercising releases feel good chemicals in your brain to boost your mood.

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

Have a daily routine. Have a regular wake-up and bedtime. Make time for exercise and relaxation. Eat well. Get 6-8 hours of sleep a night. Try deep breathing, stretching, meditation, and yoga. Good self-care offsets anxiety and stress.

Jason Dobson is a 2012 Serenity Inns graduate. During his free time, Jason enjoys working out and going to River Bend Resort with his family on the weekends.

Graduate Profile: Cedric S

Cedric S graduated from Serenity Inns in May 2018 and moved into Alumni House earlier this year. Below is his reflection on living at Alumni House during quarantine.

I wanted to be around guys that are like myself and striving to do better with their lives. It's easier to be in the same environment with guys that are clean and sober and productive members of society. I knew I couldn't jump back out into the real world and pretend I was fine right after having been through treatment.

I am an electrician and we knew we would get laid off and would have to make our paychecks stretch. The rent forgiveness has been such a blessing. I was beginning to worry about where I would get that money from.

Mentally, having been through treatment, I knew that life would happen eventually. The struggle I am going through now is nothing compared to trying to get high every day.