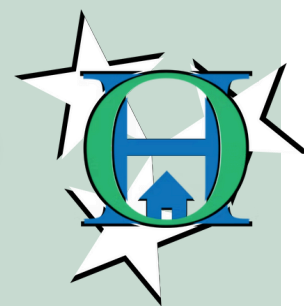




Spring 2025

Oxford Tri-Star

Oxford House of TN Newsletter



Editor - Sarah Harris

Fast Facts

As of March, 2025, there are 175 Oxford Houses in Tennessee.

- **Men: 107 Houses, 837 Beds (3 Houses for men/children)**
- **Women: 68 Houses, 530 Beds (21 Houses for women/children)**
- **1,367 Total Beds**

Spring into Hope: Cultivating Growth, Recovery and Connection in TN

For men and women living in Oxford Houses, Spring's themes of growth, renewal, and connection resonate deeply. Recovery is a process of leaving old ways and means behind, and embracing the beauty of new beginnings. At the heart of this journey is family; not just the ones we're born to, but the ones we choose along the way. For many of us living in Oxford Houses, the people we live with aren't just our "housemates;" they're our brothers and sisters. We need each other to grow and move forward. Having a family that understands our struggles and celebrates our triumphs is priceless. As we reflect on growth, both personal and as a family, we celebrate our outstanding accomplishments in TN. Since last Spring, we've expanded Oxford House's reach by more than 20 homes. We've provided hope, companionship and connection to thousands of people and are grateful to continue on this path of recovery and family.

New & Improved - Ashley DeNardi - Clarksville, TN

Oxford House Zera is the newest addition to Chapter 11. It's our new home for our women and children here in Montgomery County. Moving day was filled with love and laughter. The babies of Chapter 11 jumped in and even packed themselves. (Literally!)

Oxford House Matay has had a complete makeover and will reopen as home for 10 men serious about their recovery. The landlord, Steven, truly went above and beyond with the upgrades to both homes; including new washers, dryers, televisions in every room, new flooring and new paint. He also plans to add a nursery to Oxford House Zera!

These 2 homes have sparked excitement within our community as we see seasoned members become core members, and newcomers wanting to get involved and learn the model to hopefully open up new Houses themselves.



(Top Row) Moving Day shenanigans in TN Chapter 11.
(Bottom Row) Upgrades to amenities at Oxford House MaTay. Thank you, Steven!

Burning Bright

By Travis Booher - Murfreesboro, TN



Oxford House of Murfreesboro has undergone major changes to ensure the longevity of Chapter 25. Moving into new homes was a choice we made in favor of more suitable options for newcomers and seasoned members alike. The Chapter really banded together to assist each other in these uncomfortable changes. Through this spirit of helping hands, Chapter 25 is experiencing more unification than ever before.

Oxford House Beorn opened January 7th 2025 as a replacement for Oxford House Fortress. Beorn is home to 8 men serious about their recovery and is located in a spacious home in a beautiful neighborhood. Since the move, Beorn has made significant progress in achieving financial stability and setting a new standard for recovery housing in the Murfreesboro area.

In wake of a generous loan from the state, Oxford House Chapter 25 has buckled down and turned their focus to fundraising. During January's monthly chapter meeting they had decided to hold a contest for a t-shirt design with the winner receiving a registration to the 2025 State Convention. We sat down and had a multitude of meetings to discuss target audiences, design elements, colors and more. You could see the spirit of service still burning bright in the eyes of newcomers and seasoned members alike. Jamie Fry from Oxford House Satu was declared the winner in the February chapter meeting with her "Join or Die" design, signifying the life and death duality of recovery and addiction with an emphasis on the spiritual principles necessary for our recovery.

In conclusion, here in Oxford House of Murfreesboro we are standing strong in uncomfortability through the experience, strength, and hope of one another. Every day we are getting excited about getting into the solution that comes with this new beginning. Together, there is nothing we can't accomplish. And each of us has been as incredible as the next.



OH Beorn
Est. Jan 2025
for men
3100 sq feet
6 bedrooms
4 bathrooms
Murfreesboro



(Left) Tennessee Outreach Staff visit the US Capitol. (Right) Oxford House, Inc. staff at training.



Empowering Outreach Excellence

Oxford House Inc. hosted its annual staff training in March, 2025. Staff from across the country attended to get the latest facts, skills, and best practices to better serve our peers in recovery. The training was attended by nearly 300 staff members and covered a range of topics including "Ethics for Outreach Workers," "Emergencies and Crisis Management," and "Forming Community Partnerships."

One of the most engaging and exciting activities at training was a massive group activity. OHI staff collaborated to construct a "Bridge to the Future" out of cardboard. The end goal was for the bridge to be stable and secure enough for all 300 attendees to cross it. Building a bridge from cardboard seemed to be an impossible task; but through teamwork, communication, and a detailed set of instructions, a sturdy bridge was built!



OHI TN Staff: Travis speaks on his Oxford goals, Melody, Trish & David cross the bridge, and Jeremy smiling in a cardboard box.



Handshakes and Hugs

By James Raymond - Knoxville, TN



I came into Oxford House fresh out of treatment. James Golden, a member of Oxford House Contentment picked me up and took me to his House for an emergency interview. I was so nervous, not knowing what to expect. These men had my life in their hands. Would I be voted in? Would I be homeless? I had no idea... My anxiety was through the roof. After my interview, they asked me to step out to the front porch where I just prayed that I would have somewhere to stay that night. When I stepped back inside I was greeted with a big "WELCOME HOME" followed by handshakes and hugs. That was 2 and a half years ago. Since that day, Oxford House has given me room to grow and flourish. I've learned about responsibility, accountability, and the importance of connection in recovery. I recently became an Outreach Worker here in the Knoxville area and I'm eternally grateful to Oxford House and the men of Contentment for giving me a chance.

Giving Back

"When the weather gets below 25 degrees in Knoxville, Oxford House members, alumni, and outreach are in full force to volunteer at the local warming center. The warming centers are low-barrier shelters for our unhoused neighbors that provide shelter from the cold, food, and showers. Oxford House of Knoxville has a heart of service and gratitude; we keep what we have by giving it away. Working at the warming center downtown is humbling for me. I spent a lot of time high under that bridge before I was ready to change. Helping others gives me gratitude. Knowing that I could still be there, or dead gives me drive and motivation. Oxford House has given me so much, including a warm bed to come home to which makes me want to get out in the cold and help our unhoused neighbors. Volunteering alongside community partners helps strengthen our presence in the community." -Rachel Ketelle, OHI



"It's important to give back as much as we can, and to stay grateful." -Sarah Fesler, OH Knoxville

(Above) Members, Alumni and friends volunteering in Knoxville.

"Volunteering at the warming center warms my heart. It was only a few years ago in my active addiction, that I was living in my truck. Today I'm blessed and grateful to be able to give back by serving those still in need and loving them where they are. It is what we are called to do." -Shannon Dunlap, OHTN Alumna

"To me service work is a huge part of my recovery journey. I would have never gotten this far without the people who reached back to help me. I went and spent some time with our unhoused friends because to me it's important to look back and see where I started. I know a huge part of the recovery community has been in bad situations in one time or another and that doesn't make us bad people. I find it humbling and inspiring to give back what was so freely given to me!!!!

-Melissa Golden, OHTN Alumni Chair

A Heart that Beats Strong

By Lakeisha Starks - Cookeville, TN

Cookeville is shining! They have really stepped up to the plate in so many ways. The membership is attending presentations and is very willing to be of service.

They have grown to 6 houses in just under 2 years and the addition of the another house is underway. They always say "Strength In Numbers" and this Chapter is a prime example of that. I have watched them grow so much. They are large enough that they rent a conference room once a month from one of our community partners.

The membership here is a heart that beats strong for Oxford House and for that I am full of appreciation and gratitude.



(Top) New OH Mai Solo. (Bottom) Members gather for training, Walter Stafford & Amber Stone helping spread awareness.



Learning the importance of "One Day at a Time" has been monumental to my recovery and something that Oxford House has helped me with by giving me a safe place to call home. I was given the freedom to choose the direction I wanted to go in life and what program I wanted to work. I was able to get on my feet, start my life, and learn to take responsibility for my actions. Learning to work a recovery program and pay my bills (ON TIME) was invaluable to me. Teaching me skills from these things that can help with aspects of life. "One Day at a Time" helps me realize I can't do anything about the past, so stop beating myself up over it. No one is perfect, we all have a past. Stop stressing about the future; there is nothing I can do about it and it hasn't happened yet. Stay where you are, be present in the moment and enjoy life again. I'm finding joy in life's moments and have a life worth living - thanks to Oxford House!

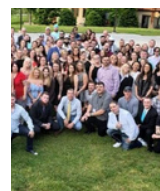
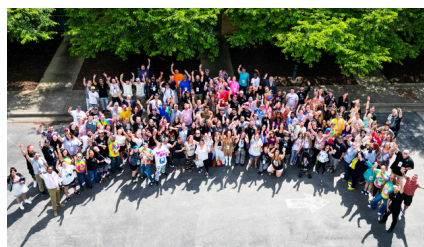


One Day at a Time

By Justin Collins - Bristol, TN



(Right) Sullivan County members with Outreach Justin Collins engaging with the community.

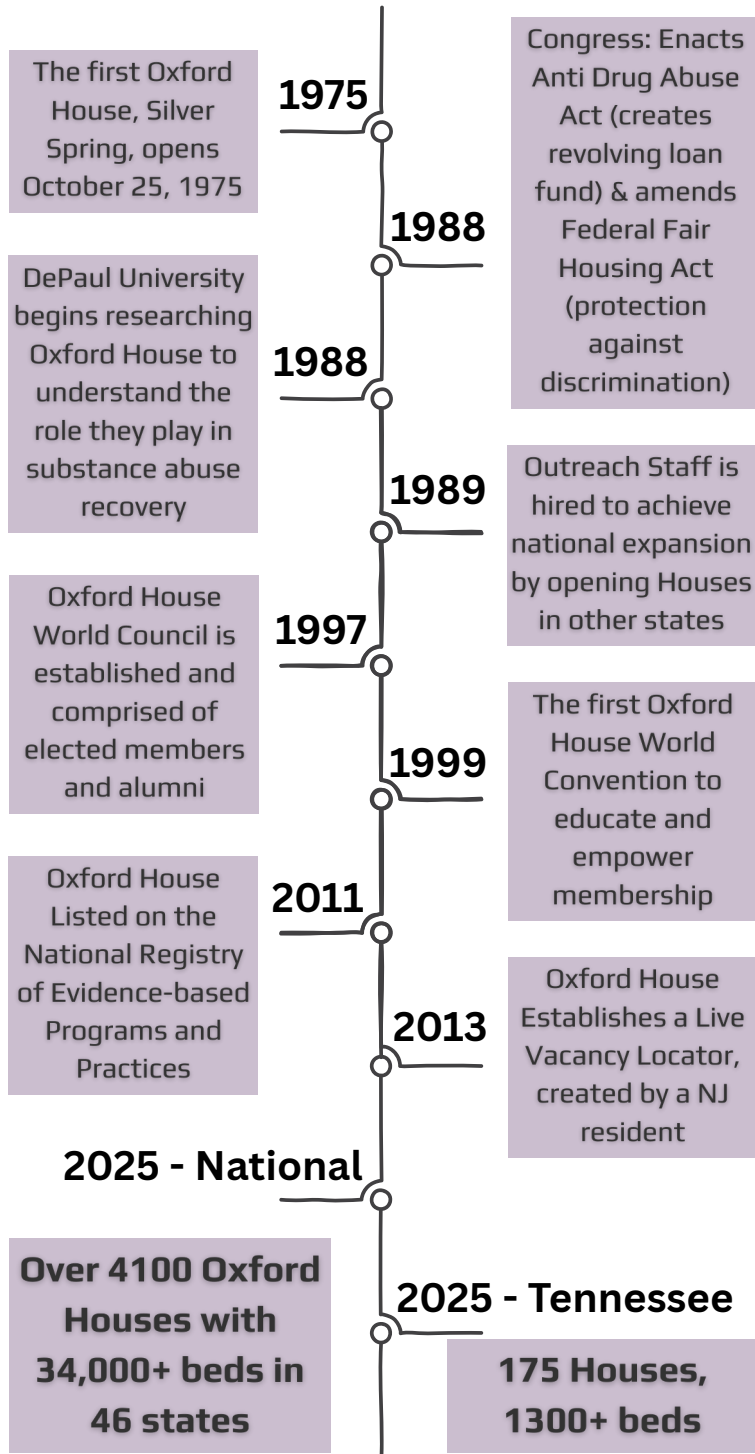


Coming Up:

May 16-18 Oxford House in Tennessee will have its annual State Convention. Oxford House has been Saving Lives since 1975, & we are celebrating 50 years of excellence! (Group photos from past state conventions.)

A Look into the Past

Oxford House - Celebrating 50 Years
(Sourced from OxfordHouse.org)



OXFORD HOUSE
50TH
ANNIVERSARY
1975 - 2025

Finding Hobbies in Recovery

For people in recovery, "Having Fun" is a concept we often struggle with. I remember my first few attempts at sobriety, I couldn't fathom enjoying life without the use of drugs. Today, I'm grateful that not only do I find joy in simple things, but there's not enough time for all of the things I want to do! The list is endless!

For me, finding healthy hobbies and interests has been an essential part of my recovery journey.

Engaging in activities that bring joy and fulfillment can help us:

- Manage stress and emotions
- Build self-esteem and confidence
- Connect with others
- Find purpose and meaning



To celebrate Spring, here's a list of potential hobbies that breathe joy and gratitude into our new lives in recovery:

1. Outdoor Adventures: Hiking, camping, kayaking, or cycling can provide a sense of freedom and connection with nature.
2. Gardening: Nurturing plants and watching them grow can be a therapeutic and rewarding experience.
3. Sports and Fitness: Joining a recreational sports team, taking a fitness class, or practicing yoga can help improve physical and mental well-being.
4. Creative Expression: Painting, drawing, writing, or photography can provide an outlet for emotions and creativity.

For me, some of my favorite things to do in my free-time are photography, yoga, visiting new parks with my kiddo, or going on adventures to historic sites. I'm excited to re-discover my love of nature and hiking this year!

How to start finding fun:

- Start small and set achievable goals
- Find activities that align with your values and interests
- Connect with others who share your passions

This summer, prioritize self-care and take the opportunity to discover new hobbies, connect with others, and find joy in the journey of recovery.

Expansion



**OH Malta
Opened Jan 2025
for men
Memphis, TN**

**OH Falcon
Opened Feb 2025
for men
Johnson City, TN**



**OH Neyland
Opened Mar 2025
for men
Knoxville, TN**

**OH Wilder
Opened Mar 2025
for men
Knoxville, TN**



**OH Zera
Opened Mar 2025
for women/child
Clarksville, TN**