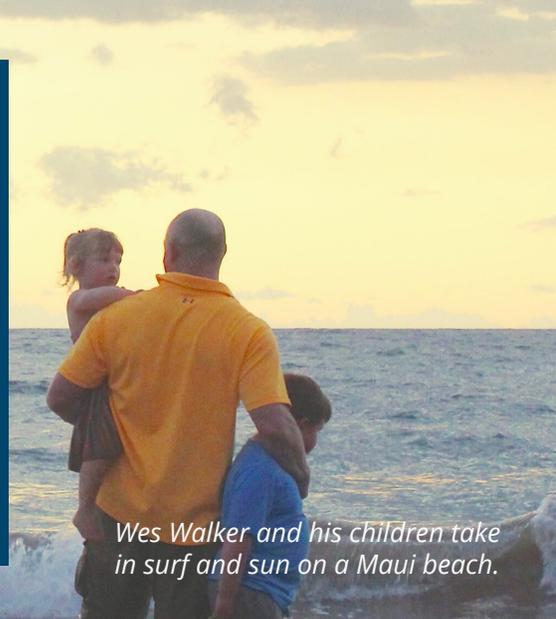


FALL • 2019

the journey

A CONNECTION TO FRIENDS, SUPPORTERS
AND RESIDENTS OF WELCOME HOUSE



Wes Walker and his children take in surf and sun on a Maui beach.

Grief, addiction, tragedy, cancer. In his moments of weakness, Wes Walker finds joy, gratitude, and courage.

"Living with cancer is kind of like being in God's waiting room: praying for the best but preparing for the worst," says Wes Walker. "The challenge is to escape thinking about it long enough to enjoy the present and to be grateful for each new day."

In February, this father of a young son and daughter, a successful financial advisor, and a good friend to Welcome House, was diagnosed with stage 4 melanoma after a scan revealed large tumors in his lungs.

Fortunately, Wes' body has responded well to immunotherapy, with the tumors shrinking considerably. As he

continues on an aggressive path to healing, he shares regular updates with more than 900 followers on Caring Bridge, an online personal health journal, rallying friends and family on the road to healing - a journey grounded in faith and hope.

Wes' health challenges are only one chapter in his life story. He has also persevered in grief following the loss of his beloved dad. He has faced the darkness of addiction. He battled back after being shot by an intruder and left for dead at his rural farmhouse. He has walked the lonely path of broken relationships.

-see Victory on page 4



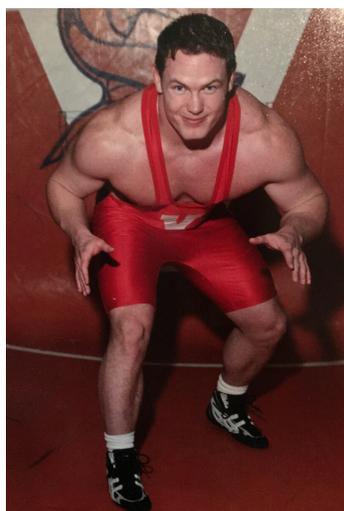
Welcome House

Choosing Joy

"This last year has been hard without a doubt, but I've learned some things about myself because of it. It sounds crazy, but I've had more "true joy" the last eight months than any other time in my life."

- WES WALKER

on finding joy and contentment in the face of adversity.



Above left: A powerful force on the mat, Wes Walker was a 3-time All American wrestler and Magna Cum Laude graduate at Missouri Valley College. **Center:** Wes' wrestling coach Mike Machholz presenting the Hall of Fame honors. **Above right:** Wes with freshmen opponent Topher York on Hall of Fame weekend. **Far right:** Wes at the University of Kansas Medical Center where he is undergoing immunotherapy to rid his body of cancer.



Leading the Way

In step with Jamie Boyle, President & CEO

Dear Friends-

When we began producing *The Journey* a couple of years ago, one of our goals was to help break the stigma of addiction in sharing the stories of our residents, our graduates, and our community. This is a place for bringing to light the courage of those who seek the help they need without feeling ashamed or isolated. It is a place for sharing gratitude with the generous community that supports our efforts.

Our movement is inspired by the personal journeys of survivors — alcoholics, addicts, those struggling with mental health issues, their family members, and friends — to bring truth to the forefront and to create a culture of encouragement and understanding.

Though each individual's journey is unique, our donors and volunteers make it possible to meet these needs in their common spirit of generosity, caring, and support.



The journey of recovery simply would not be possible without the time, talents, encouragement, and resources our community provides to Welcome House. Our quality programs and services forever change the lives of recovering men and their families, thanks to you. And it's not just what you give or how much - it's **the way you give** - with acceptance, love, high expectations, and compassion. You inspire us to be better husbands, fathers, sons, friends, and colleagues.

As we look to the coming season of holidays and abundance, it is important to express this most important truth of all: **we would not be here without you!** Thank you for all you do to advocate, lift up, and advance our mission.

With gratitude,

Jamie Boyle, President/CEO

giving@WelcomeHouse

Whether you give a little or give a lot, it all adds up to expert services and hope-filled care for residents of Welcome House.

- Share a one-time or monthly gift.
- Give in-kind items from the Wish List on our website.
- Donate at WelcomeHouseKC.org or mail your check to:

Welcome House • 1414 E. 27th Street • Kansas City, MO 64108

Cold Weather Clothing Drive

As winter approaches, our residents need cold-weather clothing, coats, hats, and gloves. Denim jeans, new socks, and new underwear are in demand, as well. Please consider a donation drive at your office, school, or church. Your donations will be gratefully accepted any time at Welcome House. For other needed items, please see our Wish List at WelcomeHouseKC.org. Thank you!



Our Mission

Welcome House is committed to providing a **high-quality, moral,** and open **residential** program to **recovering** alcoholics and drug-addicted men facing the difficult **transition** from treatment, incarceration, and homelessness to **reintegration** back into society as **productive citizens.**

get in touch

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A Successful Swing!



presented by
AdventHealth
Shawnee Mission

The 2nd Annual Swing Fore Recovery Classic was more than par for the course. It was an extraordinary day of kindness and generosity for Welcome House!

With a full flight of 144 golfers and 12 celebrity players, our September 9th tourney featured our unique brand of fun: a celebrity live auction, supersonic golf ball launch, men in skirts, cool golf swag, and classic Kansas City barbecue!

Best of all, it was a stellar day of support, with more than \$90,000 raised for our residential recovery program and many supportive services. From all of us at Welcome House, thanks for taking a Swing Fore Recovery!

Clockwise from top left: Former KC Chiefs kicker **Jan Stenerud** was a fave in the celebrity lineup; **Bobby Dernier**, former outfielder for the Cubs and Phillies, and former Kansas City Royals pitcher **Jaime Bluma** banter at the live auction; Striking their best skirt pose: **Hugh O'Donnell, Tom Fields, Gary Jenkins, Lonnie Switzer, and John Wathan**; a sellout tournament made for an extra long cart caravan; **Aaron Gardner, Rennie Shuler-McKinney, Jeff Moffatt, and Eric Schwartz** monitor the hole-in-one contest; Great Life Golf & Fitness Team: **Darren Lea, Doug Albers, former Royals pitcher Mike Boddiker, Megan Marshall, and Jessica Lea.**



SAY HELLO TO JIM SEARING CERTIFIED PEER SUPPORT SPECIALIST AT WELCOME HOUSE



Jim Searing's personal journey in recovery began over 10 years ago when he began seeking help at area treatment centers and detox hospitals. He describes that period of his life as a difficult time, going in and out of treatment, and in and out of recovery - but never really changing.

It was finally during his second stay at Welcome House over two years ago that Jim says "something clicked" for him.

"I began to take my recovery seriously and commit to the personal responsibility for making a change," says Jim.

After gaining stability in his life, Jim pursued credentials as a Missouri Associate Alcohol Drug Counselor. He was hired as a

Certified Peer Support Specialist at Welcome House where he has served for over 18 months now.

Jim works with a full caseload of Welcome House residents, providing support and resources to address the various challenges they face on the road to recovery.

"It is gratifying when I see men "defrost" and return to functional life in society - returning to their work, to their families, and to personal accountability," says Jim.

In addition to his work at Welcome House, Jim manages a sober living home where Welcome House graduates continue to live.

new hope for an

OPIOID-FREE RECOVERY JOURNEY



Welcome House pilots a Medication Assisted Treatment component to support residents with opioid addiction.

For residents battling opioid addiction, new hope is on the way at Welcome House.

In July, we launched a pilot program at Welcome House, available only to a limited number of individuals, to assist in the delivery of Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) for men seeking recovery from opioid addiction. In collaboration with Comprehensive Mental Health Services and Truman Medical Center Behavioral Health, our care team works closely with eligible patients and their referring/ prescribing physicians to treat opioid addiction using the individual's prescription medication in conjunction with the Welcome House Recovery Program.

Upon admission, a Medication-Assisted Recovery Services (MARS) certified staff member at Welcome House works closely with the new resident and their prescribing doctor to ensure that the required medication is stored securely and that all other medication compliance protocols are met.

For now, the MAT Program is limited to two prescription medications, Vivitrol and Suboxone, which are used to deter relapse in opioid dependence when used as part of a larger treatment plan that includes individual counseling.

The new MAT Program provides Welcome House with yet another tool in our fight against substance use disorder, as well as the opportunity to help participants transition from active addiction into long-term, 12-Step-oriented recovery.

VICTORY!

continued from page 1

"These experiences formed a permanent storm in my mind for most of my life," says Wes. "What an awakening these past eight months have been when the storm is quieted by one question: am I going to live?"

Wes' priorities have emerged stronger than ever, with an intense focus on his faith, family, and friends. On October 5th, he was inducted in the athletic hall of fame at his alma mater, Western Missouri College, where he was an acclaimed scholar and athlete. He used the opportunity to benefit Welcome House, taking to the mat with a freshman wrestler and inviting friends and family to donate to Welcome House. Wes offered to personally match the first \$5,000 in donations, and raised altogether more than \$12,000.

"Wes exemplifies courage, generosity, and selflessness," says Welcome House CEO Jamie Boyle. "In spite of tremendous challenges of his own, he continues to be a champion for others."

"We are truly touched and grateful for all he has done to support Welcome House," says Jamie. "All of us here will continue to rally and pray for his full recovery!"

Drug overdose deaths continue to rise in United States

Did you know?

- In 2017, the number of overdose deaths involving opioids (including prescription opioids and illegal opioids like heroin and illicitly manufactured fentanyl) was 6 times higher than in 1999
- Around 68% of the more than 70,200 drug overdose deaths in 2017 involved an opioid.
- From 1999 to 2017, more than 700,000 people have died from a drug overdose.
- Roughly 21 to 29 percent of patients prescribed opioids for chronic pain misuse them. Between 8 and 12 percent develop an opioid use disorder.



- On average, 130 Americans die every day from an opioid overdose.

U.S. Centers for Disease Control

living the journey



Community, Resources, and Recovery at Welcome House



ALL IN A DAY'S WORK

Welcome House team draws on personal life experiences and professional expertise to serve residents.

Left to right: Jim Searing, 2017 graduate and employee since September 2018; Scott Saylor, February 2019 graduate and employee since July 2019; Casey Urso, 2016 graduate and employee since 2017; Micah Haen, graduate and employee since 2016; Jamie Boyle, 2012 graduate, employee, and Board Member since 2014.

Though they continue in their personal recovery journeys, each of these Welcome House team members will be the first to say that their own experience is not a prescriptive for another man's journey.

"We can definitely share empathy, as we've been down many of the same dark roads that our residents have traveled," says CEO Jamie Boyle, "but our work is chiefly guided by 12-Step Recovery Principles, professional training and best practices."

Welcome House employs eight professional team members, all in long-term recovery, five of whom are graduates of the program. All have pursued and received the required education, certification, and licensure for their professional roles.

Micah Haen, CRADC, CPS, MARS, MPS, serves as Operations Director at Welcome House where, among his many responsibilities, he counsels residents one-on-one, and works with other agencies, program staff, and residents to create treatment and referral plans.

"Our team knows that none of us has the power or ability to stop an individual from drinking or using. That responsibility falls solely on the resident. Our job is to provide support, resources, and encouragement, and to be an accountability partner," says Micah.

Scott Saylor agrees. Having recently joined the professional staff at Welcome House as Administrative, Marketing, and Development Support Manager, Scott says it is both humbling and rewarding to interact with residents as well as lay counselors, mentors, and workshop leaders who contribute their time and talents.

"We share a brotherhood of understanding. No matter what darkness our residents may be experiencing, we have been there; we have lived it, too."

- Scott Saylor
Administrative, Marketing, and Development Support Manager at Welcome House

Jamie says the team stays active in their personal recovery by participating and leading activities at Welcome House, as well as in the greater community.

"We do something every day to further our own sobriety, while extending a hand of opportunity to our residents to explore new possibilities and to work to build trust with the people who love and care about them," says Jamie. "We are living examples that things do change and their lives really can be better than they ever imagined."

your legacy?



Welcome House

1414 E. 27th Street
Kansas City, MO 64108-2924

Save the date



April 15, 2020
7th Annual
Welcome House
Breakfast

US POSTAGE PAID
NON-PROFIT PERMIT
2658
KANSAS CITY, MO
64108

HEROES IN RECOVERY

Jason Hoover awakens to a fresh canvas for his new self and a better life.

Jason Hoover came to Welcome House on the 9th of July, 2018, actively participated in the recovery program, graduated, and moved to his own place exactly eight months later on the 9th of March, 2019. He says that what initially brought him to Welcome House was really no different from anyone else's story.

I was down and beaten. At first, all I was looking for was a way to get off the street and stay sober," says Jason. "But what I found at Welcome House was a way to better myself - to actually become a better person."

"Lots of us have learned how to survive one way or another. What I learned was how to live and how to take my life back."

- Welcome House Graduate Jason Hoover

As an active alumnus, Jason teaches weekly classes as part of Welcome House University, serves as a lay counselor, attends all-house meetings, and volunteers at Welcome House fundraisers and events. He remains a regular at 12-Step meetings, has a home group and a sponsor, and feels that his recovery has finally been integrated into the bigger picture of his life. Jason sees the positive effects in his work and in his relationships with his daughter and his daughter's mother.

A writer and artist, Jason describes his work in both areas as having been "reawakened" by his success in recovery. "I rediscovered who I am and who I want to be. I found my own humanity and sense of self as a result of my time at Welcome House."



Jason Hoover with one of his artistic works.