



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LOCAL ORGANIZATION OFFERS HOPE FOR THOSE IN RECOVERY

Uniontown, PA - Substance abuse is a public health crisis. The National Institute on Drugs and Addiction reported 20.4 million people in the United States were diagnosed with substance use disorders in 2019. Nearly 92,000 people died of drug overdoses in 2020.

September is National Recovery Month, a time of raised awareness and outreach.

Recovery is hard. But there is hope. Among the organizations offering a helping hand to those in recovery is Hope House of Uniontown.

"We are a faith-based sober living home dedicated to cleaning up Fayette County," Hope House CEO Curtis Jarrett said. "There's just so much homelessness and drug addiction."

Jarrett speaks from personal experience, having been down that road himself.

"I went through drug and alcohol abuse so bad," he said. "At one time, I was banned from our county; now, the county actually reaches out to me."

Jarrett said he went to rehabilitation in April 2021. When he got out, he had a small inheritance left to him by his parents. He said he knew having the money "could get real ugly for me," or he could use it to help people. He chose the latter.

"I took what money they left me and decided to start a sober living home," he said. "There was no stable sober living home in Uniontown, and there was zero faith-based."

Jarrett started Hope House with a little help from Pastor Josh Koss of Crosspoint Assembly of God Church in Carmichaels.

"If it wasn't for them, Hope House wouldn't be here," Jarrett said. "He coached me along and loved me back to life so I was able to do this." Jarrett's wife, Stephanie, also has been instrumental in getting and keeping Hope House going.

Jarrett said anyone in need of a sober living home can reach out to him. He conducts a short interview, and once accepted, residents are required to attend 12-step recovery meetings. They also attend church twice a week, on Thursdays and Sundays.

"Our biggest and most important thing is we serve, we give back to the community," Jarrett said.

Transportation to the meetings and church services is provided by Hope House, and Jarrett also employs residents at his landscaping business – Hope House Lawn & Landscaping – another venture more focused on helping people than on monetary gain.

“If they’re elderly people who maybe don’t have the money to pay, we just (mow their lawns) anyway,” Jarrett said.

Rent at Hope House is \$400 per month, with the first month free. Jarrett said donations are accepted, with proceeds going to help those who can’t afford lawn care. In the future, he also hopes to help the community by cleaning up a roadway, ideally within Uniontown.

Jarrett said on average, Hope House residents live in the sober house between 6 and 18 months. “But they can stay as long as they want,” he said. “If it looks like we’re enabling them, we’re going to get them out.”

Jarrett said many of Hope House’s residents need to learn how to do basic tasks, such as housekeeping and banking, because they grew up in situations where their parents often were not around to teach them, sometimes due to their own battles with substance use.

So far, he said, the program has been quite successful. Eight current residents have maintained their sobriety for more than a year, while several others have completed their time at Hope House and started their own sober living. The house occasionally hosts fathers and sons. In fact, one man came to Hope House from New Orleans, and after watching his journey online, his father in California reached out for help as well.

“It’s been a blessing to watch,” Jarrett said.

There is just one thing Jarrett asks of the community. “Don’t judge us,” he said. “There might be a day you’re calling us to get your son or daughter out of addiction, and we’ll be here to help.”

For more information on Hope House, visit their Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/HopeShotU>.

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