



## ***MHS Association Member Ministries at Work***

July 2023

MHS Association is the health and human services network of Anabaptist ministries across the United States and Puerto Rico. Anchored in Anabaptist values, MHS Association seeks to integrate faith and work for its member organizations while inspiring and strengthening them to fulfill their missions. This 79-member Association represents senior living organizations such as retirement communities or stand-alone housing, physical and intellectual disability services, mental/behavioral health, addiction and counseling services, homeless programs, child welfare/foster care/adoption services, and a hospital system. As a network of Anabaptist organizations, we work to inspire unique collaborations (employee health and liability insurance programs, network groups, annual MHS Assembly, and regional partnerships), promote our shared values through leadership and governance training and education programs, and provide faith-grounded strategic business tools and resources to advance each member's health and human services mission (webinars, newsletters, leadership training, consulting services, etc.)

MHS Association members are connected to various denominations and conferences across the greater Anabaptist network of churches. MHS Association membership is voluntary. Many MHS Association members have historic ties to a church, conference, or former Mennonite agencies (MCC, Mennonite Board of Missions, etc.)

To provide a snapshot of the missional work of MHS Association member ministries, we want to share several stories. The first is a story from Oaklawn about \*David, a current client.

Like most little boys, David wanted to be just like his dad when he grew up. But David's dad dealt with issues of drug abuse. "I remember being 11 and seeing him smoke crack, and I just couldn't wait to smoke crack," he said. "At the age of 12, I had the opportunity. I was 15 when I tried meth, and that was it. That was my drug of choice my entire life. I just wanted to be a drug addict." Until one day, he didn't.

Today, David is 8 months sober – but more than that, he's finding recovery. Sobriety is usually about appeasing someone else, but *recovery* is a lifestyle you choose for yourself, says Heidi Heckaman, an Oaklawn recovery coach. She's been working with David for a little over a year.

David's path to recovery is complicated – like most. He was kicked out of school when he was 14 and went to work roofing until he joined the National Guard at 17. He was a regular substance user from the time he was 15 to 25. There were times when the substance use negatively impacted his life – like his relationship with his children and ex-wife, or when he got kicked out of the Guard after failing a drug test. In many ways, he maintained a normal life – he held a job and owned a home. But he also dealt drugs on the side. In 2014, he was arrested for selling drugs and went to prison for 3 years. After release, he had a short stint of sobriety, but eventually started to use again. He violated his probation and was sentenced to house arrest in 2021. That's when he found the Upper Room, a local sober living community. He got sober again but relapsed four months later.

“I went back to the streets for a month before I was finally like, ‘I don’t want this,’” he said. “The last time I got high it was different. I didn’t enjoy it because my mind was made up.” He didn’t want to be an addict anymore. He went to rehab in January of 2022, then back to jail for violating his house arrest. He thought he was going back to prison, but the judge gave him a second chance.

He’s still under house arrest – for a few more months. He’s in treatment at Oaklawn. And he’s honest about the fact that he still wants to use drugs– every day. But using doesn’t align with his goals.

“I know I’ll never reach my goals if I use. So that’s what I keep in mind,” he says. “Treatment is day by day. I focus on my support. The groups are good for certain things. I really like having the fellowship there.” And his faith has become an important part of his life and recovery. Now, he’s discovering that his calling is to help others. He plans to become a recovery coach and hopes to run his own rehabilitation center one day. “My kids make me happy and my life makes me happy, but my real happiness comes from when I benefit somebody else’s life,” he said. “That’s something that will last and stand with them forever.”

This story illustrates the vision of Oaklawn to help people live in harmony with self, others, and God, through healing and growth of the whole person. Oaklawn, which began in 1962, was started by MCC. It provides mental health and addiction treatment for children, adolescents, and adults in Elkhart and St. Joseph counties in Indiana.

The second story comes from Bridge of Hope, a national program serving women and children who are homeless. Keisha\* and her children moved to a new area from out of state during the pandemic to be near her aging parents. It was a tough time to move, and even harder when their housing fell through. Keisha and her children moved into a motel room and what started as a temporary option lengthened into months.

Finding a job and affordable housing were harder than Keisha anticipated, and paying weekly motel bills meant her savings dwindled quickly. In desperation, she made a call to the local United Way 211 hotline that connects people in need with a wide range of resources in the community. It was not an easy call to make, but that’s when she learned about Bridge of Hope.

Keisha did not like to ask for help and felt like she should be able to handle her situation. But she needed a home, a job, and community support. With the help of Bridge of Hope, she met her group of Neighboring Volunteers from an MC USA congregation, who jumped in and surrounded her and her children with love and support.

“My Neighboring Volunteers were always a phone call or email away to make sure my family was well adjusted and never alone. They encouraged me to be and do better every day. They would make dinner for my family and help with my kids. I am so grateful to have met such wonderful people. I’ve grown and learned so much,” Keisha said.

This story illustrates the mission of Bridge of Hope – engaging Christian faith communities in ending family homelessness through neighboring relationships that demonstrate Christ’s love. Bridge of Hope



has a network of 23 locations in 13 states and embraces the core values of following Jesus, embracing the Church, choosing hope, and practicing cultural humility.

**Mennonite Health Services** 12/31/2022  
**Balance sheet**

Assets

|                           |                  |
|---------------------------|------------------|
| Cash and cash equivalents | 525,150          |
| Investments               | 1,088,213        |
| Receivables               | 57,797           |
| Fixed assets              | 9,099            |
| Prepaid expenses          | 35,223           |
| Total assets              | <u>1,715,482</u> |

Liabilities

|                   |                |
|-------------------|----------------|
| Accounts payable  | 12,928         |
| Accrued expenses  | 96,382         |
| Total liabilities | <u>109,310</u> |

Net assets

|                      |           |
|----------------------|-----------|
| Beginning net assets | 1,793,966 |
| Net income           | (187,794) |
| Total net assets     | 1,606,172 |

|                                  |                  |
|----------------------------------|------------------|
| Total liabilities and net assets | <u>1,715,482</u> |
|----------------------------------|------------------|

**Activity statement**

Support and Revenue

|                              |           |
|------------------------------|-----------|
| APG management               | 159,410   |
| Membership fees and programs | 765,944   |
| Conference fees              | 118,629   |
| Investment income            | (225,433) |
| Loss on disposal of assets   | (143)     |

|                           |                |
|---------------------------|----------------|
| Total support and revenue | <u>818,407</u> |
|---------------------------|----------------|

Expenses

|                           |         |
|---------------------------|---------|
| Membership services       | 740,723 |
| Mennonite Health Assembly | 133,116 |
| Management and general    | 132,362 |

|                |                  |
|----------------|------------------|
| Total expenses | <u>1,006,201</u> |
|----------------|------------------|

Net income

(187,794)