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Fall 2018

The Gateway

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Employee Spotlight

After Addiction, Life Begins

Christina Tucker shares how working at Fellowship Hall helped her overcome obstacles and gave her a new start at life after addiction

One thing that makes Fellowship Hall such a special place for substance abuse treatment is our staff. Our alumni often express their appreciation for having qualified and well-trained staff, many of whom are in recovery themselves. Christina Tucker is one such employee who draws strength from her experience beating addiction to help others do the same. Here is her story...

It was 2008 and Christina had just been released from her third stint in prison. While looking for employment, she went to Graham Temporary Services for help. Fortunately, they placed her at the Hall as head of housekeeping. Things were looking up. But, a few months later life took a turn, as it often does, and Christina relapsed. She ended up back in prison and in 2011, she was released again.

"I came back to what I knew. I came back to Fellowship Hall to ask for a job again," Christina explained.

Unfortunately, she was told that no positions were available. But, Christina was not going away so easily.

"I just wanted to be here [Fellowship Hall] and I was not going to give up," she said.

For eight months, Christina kept in touch with the folks at the Hall until one day in

August 2012, she got the call she had been waiting on. A position in the kitchen as a Dietary Aid (which she described as "a fancy title for a pot washer") was open. Nevertheless, she gratefully accepted. It was the beginning of a great future because not only did Christina find employment again at the Hall, but her first day back to work was also the day she started college. She had enrolled at Guilford Technical Community College to study for an Associate Degree in Human Services.

After a year and a half in the program, she decided to go all the way in pursuit of a Bachelor Degree. She applied twice to UNCG and once to A&T but was denied all three times. Once again, Christina had the tenacity to not give up. She researched other opportunities to get her education and was accepted to the Western New Mexico University School of Social Work online program. She earned not only a Bachelor of Social Work in May of 2017, but continued and earned a Master of Social Work in May 2018. Currently, she is in the process of acquiring her LCAS and LCSW-A License.

As the doors to education were opening for Christina, new job opportunities



presented themselves at the Hall as well. She moved from the kitchen to work as a part-time therapy assistant and a part-time receptionist before she landed a full-time position in Admissions in June 2015, supervised by Randy Carter.

"Randy is great. He has been so supportive and allowed me to work a schedule to accomplish all my goals. He



Continued from page 1

was very understanding and caring," she said.

Her work in Admissions has proven to be rewarding for Christina. She is one of the first contacts that guests have when they call. Sometimes at that point, they are reluctant or scared and some are calling only because they have been forced to seek treatment. Having someone with her experience and education gives callers the benefit of getting the guidance and compassion they deserve.

Christina explains, "The greatest thing for me is to start on the phone [with a guest] and they don't want to come. Then, to sit with them in the lobby and assure them they will see their peers and get the help they need. Also, that this is a good place and they will be safe here. Then, to see them a few days later in the day room laughing and talking [with other guests.] Sometimes, I go up to them and ask, 'How is it?' and they say 'You were right, Christina.'"

These days, Christina is busy doing another transition at the Hall, moving from Admissions to Therapy as a Social Assessment Counselor. There she will perform in depth social assessments when guests arrive to help build their treatment plans. This new position is another great achievement in her career goals. And, she acknowledges she has come this far with a lot of help.

"Everyone here has been so supportive, including the board who approved my education reimbursement, HR has supported my changes in positions, and Kelly [Scaggs, Clinical Director] has allowed me to be an assessment counselor. It's a privilege I have been given to use my experience and education to help others suffering from addiction find their own journey. I love Fellowship Hall. I believe in what we do and I believe we do it well."



Celebrating this thing called Recovery!

Nothing like Conference weekend to fill me with gratitude. What a weekend... we had more than 500 enthusiastic attendees. This year's speakers were great and the fellowship was outstanding! Our annual E. Raymond Alexander Jr Memorial Golf Tournament kicked off Conference weekend in the rain, but our loyal golf supporters were unhindered... with 120 committed folks turning out for the 8am start and setting the stage for the rest of the weekend. Year after year, I am humbled by the outpouring of support and the expressions of gratitude that you have for the Hall. Kudos and many thanks to our dedicated Golf Committee and the Fellowship Hall Council for planning two exceptional events. I want to personally thank all of you for coming out and supporting Fellowship Hall – and being part of our family. Soon, we'll begin planning next year's events – mark your calendar now for August 2-4 – and stay tuned!

As the seasons make another turn, we're heading into September – NATIONAL RECOVERY MONTH – and we've got some exciting events planned. From workshops, to our first ever Ride4Recovery, to a Legislative Breakfast, we'll be promoting recovery all month long. Check out the EVENTS page on our website for all the information and details. In October, we're planning Alumni Events in the Triad, Triangle, and Charlotte. Be on the lookout for invitations in your "In Box." Get involved!

Also in October, we'll be asking for you to support a new initiative to help us save more lives: The Partner Scholarship

Program. If you want to help those less fortunate, without the financial means to seek treatment, this is the Program for you. We're partnering with two community treatment partners, Caring Services in High Point, NC, and Residential Treatment Services (RTS) of Alamance in Burlington, NC, to offer residential treatment for individuals they refer to us, at no cost. In turn, Caring Services and RTS will provide outpatient support and long-term housing to the Scholarship recipient upon discharge from Fellowship Hall. Right now, we have enough support for four scholarships. The more support we raise, the more scholarships we can award. We are very excited about this opportunity and hope that you are too.

We continue to work at expanding our services. If all goes well, we'll be opening a new long-term transitional house for women this Fall. We're still wading through the bureaucracy around Tricare so we can start admitting active duty military and their families – something we are looking forward to. And, by the time the next issue of Gateway hits the presses, the Gratitude Garden will be complete! Walking through the Garden is a powerful reminder of love and support for those who are remembered there – and keeps me centered on why our work matters.

Thanks for all you do to support our work and stand with us to keep recovery strong.

In service,

Thank You for Another Great Conference

You did it again! Your support and attendance made this year's conference outstanding. We had more than 500 attendees this year and speakers who joined us from the west coast, east coast, and even Canada. Thank you for taking part in this annual event to encourage, inspire, and motivate one another.

The Conference wouldn't be possible without the hard work of the Fellowship Hall Council. Every year, they work to select the best of the best NA, AA, and Al-Anon speakers to present, they create the Conference theme, and they serve on a variety of committees (from the Picnic Committee to the Hospitality Room Committee) to make sure your experience is a great one. If you know one of these folks, be sure to tell them thank you – and if you're interested in serving, reach out to Wayne Smith, our Volunteer Coordinator.

Believe it or not, plans are already underway for the 69th Conference! Mark your calendars now for August 2-4, 2019, for another fantastic weekend. We'll be back

at the Downtown Greensboro Marriott but please note that this is the same weekend as the Wyndham PGA Golf Tournament in Greensboro – so if you need to book a room, be sure to do so early!



SAVE THE DATE!

**69TH
CONFERENCE**

**AUGUST 2-4
2019**

Rain is no match for Recovery!

For seventeen years, golfers with a heart for recovery have been coming out to support Fellowship Hall through the E. Raymond Alexander Jr. Memorial Golf Tournament. This year, only the second time out of seventeen years (!), mother nature decided we needed some cooling rain. What started out as a sprinkle at 7:30am, turned into a downpour not long after the 8am Shotgun start. But despite the less than perfect weather, 120 golfers braved the storm. By 10:00am, the rain stopped and the day took a turn for the better. For everyone who turned out, thank you for making this year's tournament a great day. Together with this year's sponsors the tournament raised more than \$55,000 to cover the cost of 127 scholarships to the Family Program. Please be sure to thank our sponsors!

Scholarships, winners, and a great game of golf – but the tournament wouldn't be complete without the annual recognition of an individual who embodies the spirit of the tournament's namesake, Ray Alexander. For those who knew him, he had an uncanny way of knowing when someone was considering a move that would bring on relapse... he would pick up the phone or stop in for a visit to check-in. A great friend to many, Ray used the game of golf as a way to build relationships and trust. This year's Spirit of Ray Award recipient is cut from the same fabric: Stuart Gordon is a man of great integrity and commitment, a help to others to stay on course. A longtime friend of the Hall, Stuart has served as Golf Committee Chair, on the



1st PLACE (L to R): Nicolas Martinez, Mike Gorson, Brayden Swain, and Walker Whitley (not shown).



Stuart Gordon (right), 2018 SPIRIT OF RAY AWARD WINNER with Matt Burkett (left)

Fellowship Hall Board of Directors, and more importantly as a friend, confidant, and mentor to many. Congratulations to Stuart Gordon!

Want to get involved? Contact Altina Layman about serving on the Golf Committee – we're always looking for folks who love the Hall and appreciate the great game of golf!

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS!!

Wrangler



Meet our New Board Members

MICHELLE THOMPSON



How did you come to know about Fellowship Hall?

I was a guest at Fellowship Hall 10 years ago. I came in on October 29, 2008, and have been able to maintain continuous sobriety. I know I would have nothing today without the AA program, and I am forever grateful for Fellowship Hall launching me on this journey.

In what capacity have you volunteered at the Hall?

I started taking 5th steps after about a year, and still do today. I served on the [Conference] Council for four years and in 2014, they nominated me to be The Voice.

What about the Hall is special to you?

I came to Fellowship Hall through intervention. I did not want to come. But, after I got there it was the education I received that meant the most. I never knew alcoholism as a disease. I thought of an alcoholic as someone living under a bridge somewhere, not knowing you could be an alcoholic and still have a job, car, etc.

What advice do you have for others struggling in addiction?

The program at Fellowship Hall is not for people who want it or need it, it is for people who do it. The key is being willing to do the work. This is the advice I received.

What is life like today for Michelle?

I am a Program Manager at Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center. I am in Graduate school working on my MBA. I have two teen boys- a sophomore in college and a junior in high school. So, school, kids, and recovery are my life.



MATT BURKETT

How were you introduced to Fellowship Hall?

My parents found Fellowship Hall in 2008. I went there as a guest at the age of 25 under the pressure of my parents and not by choice. In 2013, I went back to Fellowship Hall under different circumstances. It was my choice to go. I was married by then and fortunately, I was able to go back.

Why did you decide to volunteer at the Hall?

After I left Fellowship Hall I made the decision to hang out with guys in long-term recovery and I noticed a few things about those guys. They all had developed a relationship with God that was the most important thing in their life, they all were involved in networks of recovery and they did service work. So, I decided a staple of my service work would be at the place that made a difference in my life.

In what capacity did you volunteer?

I volunteered in IOP/EOG. I came to hear the Fifth Steps, I served on the golf tournament committee for three years and served as the chairperson of the golf tournament for two years. Then I was nominated to the Council and then to the Board of Directors this year.

Who is Matt Burkett?

The most important thing in my life is my relationship with God and my family. I love being a husband and a dad and am grateful for the opportunity to participate in recovery. Today, I am happily married with 2 children, a three and a half-year-old son, who we named after the man who 12-stepped me, and a one and a half-year-old daughter. My wife and I own and operate a marketing business in the Triad. We are also very active in our church, Grace Community Church in Greensboro.

What would you like to share with others struggling with addiction?

I never met anyone who relapsed on a day when they prayed. Fellowship Hall and the 12 Steps can change your life and what will keep you after them is your relationship with God and seeking His will for your life.





By
Ogi
Overman

What it was like, what happened, and what it's like now

Whether or not in those exact words, we've heard the sentiment at every speaker meeting we've ever been to. And, chances are, we've shared it more than a time or two.

While I've probably given hundreds of AA talks, it occurs to me that I've never shared in print exactly how I got here. I'll give you a hint: It wasn't my idea.

My wife decided she had a problem with alcohol and checked herself into Fellowship Hall. Bad as that was, worse was that she pleaded with me to come to this abomination they called Family Week. Naturally, I resisted — after all, it was her problem, not mine — but she finally wore me down and I relented.

Knowing I could not make it through a day without a drink, I careened into the liquor store at 8:59 Saturday night, and Monday morning took a couple of pops of vodka, filled two airline bottles, stuffed them in my pockets, and off I went. After each class, I would sneak into a bathroom and grab a quick snort, and at lunch ducked out to the car for a refill.



By mid-afternoon, I had finished off most of the pint, just in time for the dreaded "conjoint," where a family counselor interviews the family member. It was at that precise moment that God intervened. Out of the blue I blurted out, "You know, I probably need to be in here more than Janet." Not knowing where those words came from, I tried to grab them out of mid-air, but it was too late. The startled counselor replied, "Tell me, have you been drinking today?" Then



God stepped in for round two and put the words in my mouth, "Yeah. Yeah, I have."

Seizing the moment, she grabbed clinical director Jim Fenley and another counselor and they intervened me on the spot. Squirming and sweating and willing to agree to anything just to get the hell out of there, I told them I would check myself in the day after my wife got out. I could literally see Fenley's eyes roll back in his head and read his thoughts: "We'll never see this idiot again."

Finally, God served up the knockout punch, but in His mercy allowed me to knock back a six-pack and a joint — you know, just to take the edge off — before staggering into Fellowship Hall.

Once there, I promised myself to try to make it the 28 days (so the insurance would kick in), but after that, all bets were off. Well, much to my surprise, something miraculous, beautiful and life-altering happened during that span. To condense the story, if Janet and I make it to our next AA anniversary, our chips will have an XXX on them.

While my life-mate was cajoling me to come to Family Week, her prayer was that I would simply make it through the week. But God had a much better plan.

He always does.

ALUMNI GATHERINGS

...IN THE TRIANGLE OCTOBER 1
7:00 PM - 8:00 PM
@ Camel Club in Raleigh
4015 Spring Forest Road

Mike Yow will be our guest speaker with treats from the Dusty Donuts food truck!

...IN THE TRIAD OCTOBER 10
7:30 PM - 8:30 PM
@ Fellowship Hall in Greensboro
Alumni Outpatient Center
5140 Dunstan Road

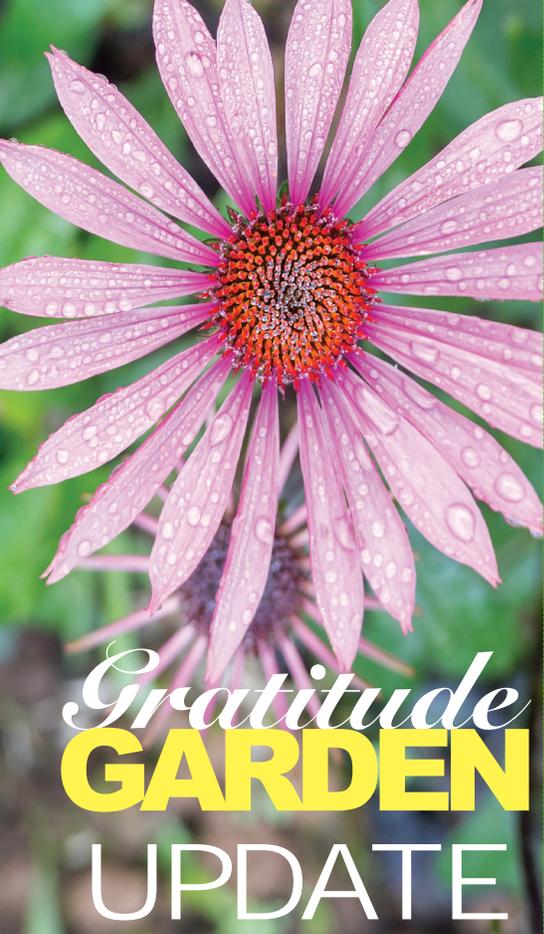
Mike Yow will speak and we'll enjoy delicious bites from Big Burger Spot!

...IN CHARLOTTE OCTOBER 10
6:30 PM - 7:30 PM
@ Dilworth Center in Charlotte
2240 Park Road

Mike Yow & Charles Odell will welcome our guest speaker on recovery. We'll close with an Ice Cream Social!

Join us for a fun evening of fellowship and help us plan our next gathering.

To RSVP online, go to www.FellowshipHall.com and click under EVENTS



Gratitude GARDEN UPDATE

Thanks to you the Gratitude Garden is a reality!

We are excited to announce that the Gratitude Garden project will be completed this Fall. With the help of more than 343 donors, we've raised \$220,000 to construct the Garden. This spring, phases I and II were completed; phase III will be installed this Fall, as soon as the weather begins to cool. The last phase includes three groves of trees that will offer shade and comfort to Garden guests. We'll also be installing the remaining 10 benches that will honor or remember a loved one.

Thanks to every one of you that contributed to this project. We believe it's an important component to our campus, providing an outdoor space for guests, families, and staff to soak in nature's best. We invite you to visit the Garden next time your on campus – just take the sidewalk between the Main Building and the new Alumni Outpatient Center. And don't worry, if you'd like to honor a loved one, you may still purchase a memorial brick via our website; bricks will be available until there are no empty spots left. Thank you for bringing the Garden to life.

SEPTEMBER 2018 National Recovery Month

Prevention Works • Treatment is Effective • People Recover

- 10** **September 10, 2018... Recovery Message Training, 6pm to 8pm** at Fellowship Hall's Alumni Outpatient Center in the SECU Lecture Hall. This FREE event is open to the public and is designed for those in recovery, recovery allies, professionals working in recovery, and community members who want to better understand recovery.
- 18** **September 18, 2018...How to Best Serve Those Impacted by Opioid Addiction 9:00am to 10:30am** at Greensboro Chamber of Commerce offices in the Cone Health Board Room. LIVED EXPERIENCES: Healthy Relationship Initiative's Professional Training Institute will present a free workshop for counseling professionals on how to best serve individuals and families impacted by opioid addiction and recovery. The workshop is a partnership between Fellowship Hall, UNCG Spartan Recovery Program and Healthy Relationships Initiative. Space is limited; advance registration is required.
- 18** **September 18, 2018...VOLUNTEER PICNIC, 5:30pm** at Fellowship Hall! If you serve as a volunteer at Fellowship Hall as a driver, 5th Step Volunteer, on The Council, Board of Directors, or another duty - you're invited to our annual Volunteer Picnic. Will gather at the Picnic Shelter for food, fellowship, and fun.
- 22** **September 22, 2018... Ride4Recovery 9:00am** starting at Fellowship Hall! Join us for our first ever Ride4Recovery, an escorted motorcycle tour in the countryside to benefit Fellowship Hall's new Partner Scholarship Program. We'll meet at Fellowship Hall at 9am with kickstands up at 10am for a one-hour ride to Riding High Harley Davidson in High Point. We'll end the ride with food and a 50/50 raffle. \$25 per bike, \$5 per passenger. Online registration will open on August 20th!
- 26** **September 26, 2018... Legislative Breakfast 8:30am** in the Alumni Outpatient Center's SECU Lecture Hall. Fellowship Hall invites you to a Legislative Breakfast with special guest and speaker, NC Attorney General Josh Stein. Mr. Stein will be speaking on the state of the opioid crisis in North Carolina. A light breakfast will begin at 8:30am, the keynote at 9:00am. To RSVP, email AltinaL@FellowshipHall.com by September 21st.
- 27** **September 27, 2018... Language, Stigma, and Advocacy: Looking Beyond the Opioid Epidemic 11:30am.** We'll be hosting the Poe Center's panel discussion and luncheon. Ticketed event.

TO RSVP VISIT OUR EVENTS PAGE AT
FELLOWSHIPHALL.COM

Announcing the new Partner Scholarship Fund

It's no secret to us that alcoholism and drug addiction is a disease that can affect anyone. We know that it doesn't matter what color our skin is, how old we are, where we live, what our level of education is, or how much money we have in our bank accounts – this disease can truly strike anyone.

But many of the factors listed above DO impact who has access to treatment, life-giving treatment that can set an alcoholic or addict on the road to recovery and save a life.

Each month, Fellowship Hall admissions department receives hundreds of phone calls from people who are seeking treatment. About one third of those calls are from people who meet all admissions criteria except for one – they lack the means (with insurance or financial resources) to cover the cost for treatment. Because our mission is to save the lives of those suffering from alcohol or drug addiction, our Board of Directors have devised a way to help: the new Partner Scholarship Program.

The Program will provide full scholarships for residential treatment (about 30 days) to individuals referred to us from two local treatment agencies: Caring Services in High Point and Residential Treatment Services in Burlington. We selected these two organizations as our Partners as we launch this new program, because

- 1) they do not offer residential treatment and often guests in their population require it
- 2) they do offer long-term care and transitional housing options for their guests who are in recovery
- 3) and most importantly, they have agreed to take

Scholarship recipients back into their care upon discharge from Fellowship Hall.



With the help of Caring Services and RTS, Scholarship recipients will be those individuals most likely to benefit from our residential treatment – folks who are serious about getting well and willing to do the work. And, with the help of these two agencies, these individuals will receive a continuum of care which GREATLY improves their chances of remaining and sustaining their recovery.

What's the best part of all this? You can help.

The Program provides a way for you and Fellowship Hall together to provide treatment to the financially less fortunate. To get the program started, the Board seeded the program with \$64,000 for this year's launch, enough for four Scholarships. Our task now is to raise additional support for Scholarships in the coming year and beyond. Our goal for 2019 is to raise \$96,000 and provide 6 Scholarships; we hope to increase the amount raised each year.

The more we raise, the more individuals we can help. And over time, we hope to add to our list of Scholarship partners.

Will you join us and help a fellow alcoholic or addict get into treatment at Fellowship Hall? We hope the answer is YES. We believe everyone deserves the chance to recover.

To make a donation, visit our website or complete the form below. Thank you for lending a hand to those in need.

HELP SOMEONE REACH RECOVERY

Yes! I want to help someone get the help they need through Fellowship Hall's Partner Scholarship Program.

I'm making a gift of \$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 \$ _____

My check is enclosed I wish to remain anonymous

Title (Dr., Mr., Mrs., Ms.) First & Last Name

City

State

ZIP

Phone

Email

Give securely online at FellowshipHall.com OR mail your check, payable to Fellowship Hall, to: Fellowship Hall, PO Box 13890, Greensboro, NC 27405. **THANK YOU!**

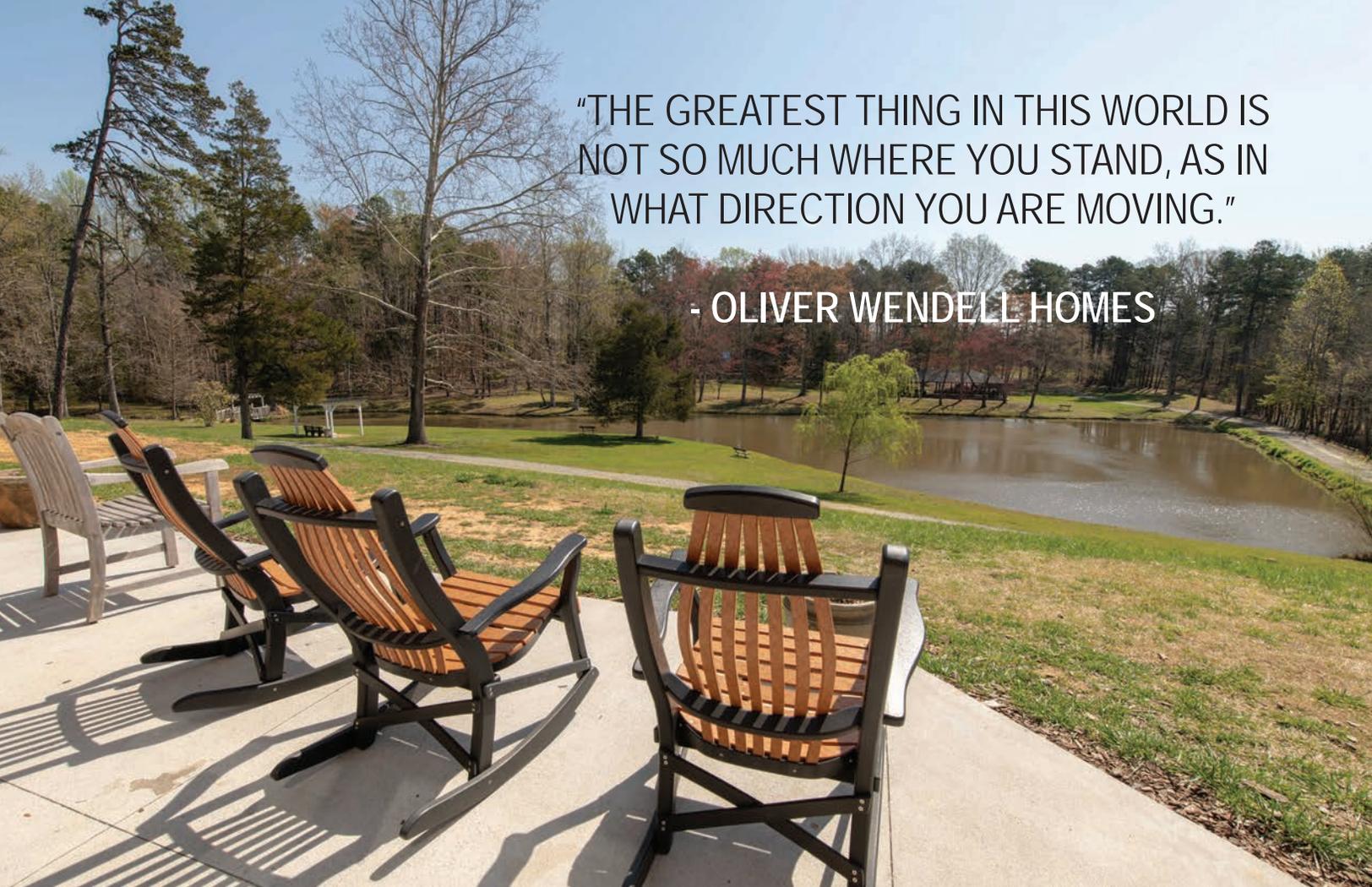


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"THE GREATEST THING IN THIS WORLD IS
NOT SO MUCH WHERE YOU STAND, AS IN
WHAT DIRECTION YOU ARE MOVING."

- OLIVER WENDELL HOMES