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"Alone we can do so little;  
together we can do so much."  
*Helen Keller*

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Collaboration and connections are vital to our organization. We are fortunate to have **Ohio University** and an engaged community to provide many wonderful opportunities, and this has been true since we opened in 2018. Students in the **College of Health Sciences and Professions** hosted *The Purple Gala* to help with costs early on and each year, *Race for a Reason* has been a meaningful way to connect residents with healthy activities that support community causes. **Medical students** and our **COMCorps** member are involved through **HCOM**; the students interact with residents to learn more about addiction and recovery, and our **COMCorps** member coordinates health and wellness activities at Serenity Grove. This academic year, we have two full-year **OU social work interns** and during the fall, we hosted two semester-long students engaged in **service learning** with three more already scheduled for the spring.

Dr. Tom Vander Ven brought students from his **Sociology/Criminology class** to learn about addiction, recovery, and recovery housing as a critical component of the recovery process.

Dr. Julie Paxton had seven students from her **Economics class** lead a six-week financial planning and budgeting class. One of those students, a graduate student from South Africa, also hosted a presentation on the food, traditions, and customs of her home country and encouraged residents to attend the annual **International Student Dinner**; four of our residents attended along with our **COMCorps** member.

These collaborations and connections create an opportunity for meaningful interaction, real dialogue, learning and growth--and that reduces stigma and

increases understanding between people from every walk of life. We are grateful.



OU Social Work interns Jolana Hurtis and Kate Congelli.



COMCorps member Raina Torres, OU intern Jolana Hurtis, Executive Director Betsy Anderson, OU intern Kate Congelli, and Peer Recovery Support Specialist Wendy Ledsome tackle the seemingly endless fall leaves.



Economics students and residents explored attitudes about money and spending while tackling financial issues during the fall. A special addition included a presentation about South Africa led by Joy Makua and enjoyed by all.

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Pictured below: Executive Director Betsy Anderson wears many hats. Yes, she can supervise staff, write grants and attend meetings, but she can also fix the dining room table, do superwoman on the BOSU, shovel a long snowy driveway, chauffeur residents to appointments, organize celebrations, help residents problem solve...the list goes on and on. She provides a role model of what solid recovery looks like and our board is thankful for those many hats she wears!

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For several years now, Michelle Greenfield has led a Meditative Outdoor Experience with our residents on a Sunday afternoon once per month. Staff and board members often join residents to connect meaningfully in this outdoor activity. On the remaining Sundays, a reading discussion group or craft activity takes place, again providing fun and engaging ways for participants to connect with each other.

There are many reasons to celebrate at the house, and birthdays top the list.



Board member Eileen Lynch has a long history of baking special desserts for special occasions.





When a resident leaves Serenity Grove we circle up to say our goodbyes, and to share what we most admire about their growth. Sometimes family members attend, and a golden pride in Mom can be seen here.



And then there are supporters and friends who sometimes move away. Susie and Molly have been a special part of our clan for years. We circled up to share what they have meant to us before our big goodbye.



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