



**PHOENIX
SOCIETY**

**2018 - 2019
YEAR IN REVIEW**

From What's Wrong to What's Strong



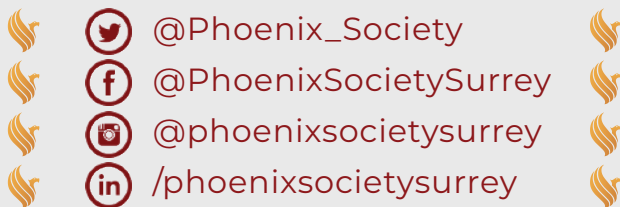
PHOENIX SOCIETY

Phoenix Drug & Alcohol
Recovery and Education Society

— Established in 1989 —

13686 94A Avenue
Surrey, BC V3V 1N1

www.phoenixsociety.com



@Phoenix_Society

@PhoenixSocietySurrey

@phoenixsociety.surrey

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VISION:

A healthy community where all people feel connected and have opportunities to discover and build on their strengths to reach their full potential.

MISSION:

The Phoenix Society is a multi-service agency dedicated to providing accessible services and opportunities to people who face barriers related to addiction, mental health, housing, education, criminal justice involvement and/or employment.

VALUES:

- **Relationships** - built on safety, trust, and integrity
- **Social Innovation** - for individual and community well-being
- **Social Justice** - equal access to health, well-being, justice, wealth and opportunity
- **Strengths-based** - discover and build on the inherent strengths of individuals

EXECUTIVE TEAM



Keir Macdonald
Chief Executive
Officer

Kim Brazil
Chief Financial
Officer

Nate McCready
Director of
Operations

Daniel Marks
Director of
Programs

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Pat Frewer
President

David Longpre
Vice President

Darren Fairbrother
Treasurer

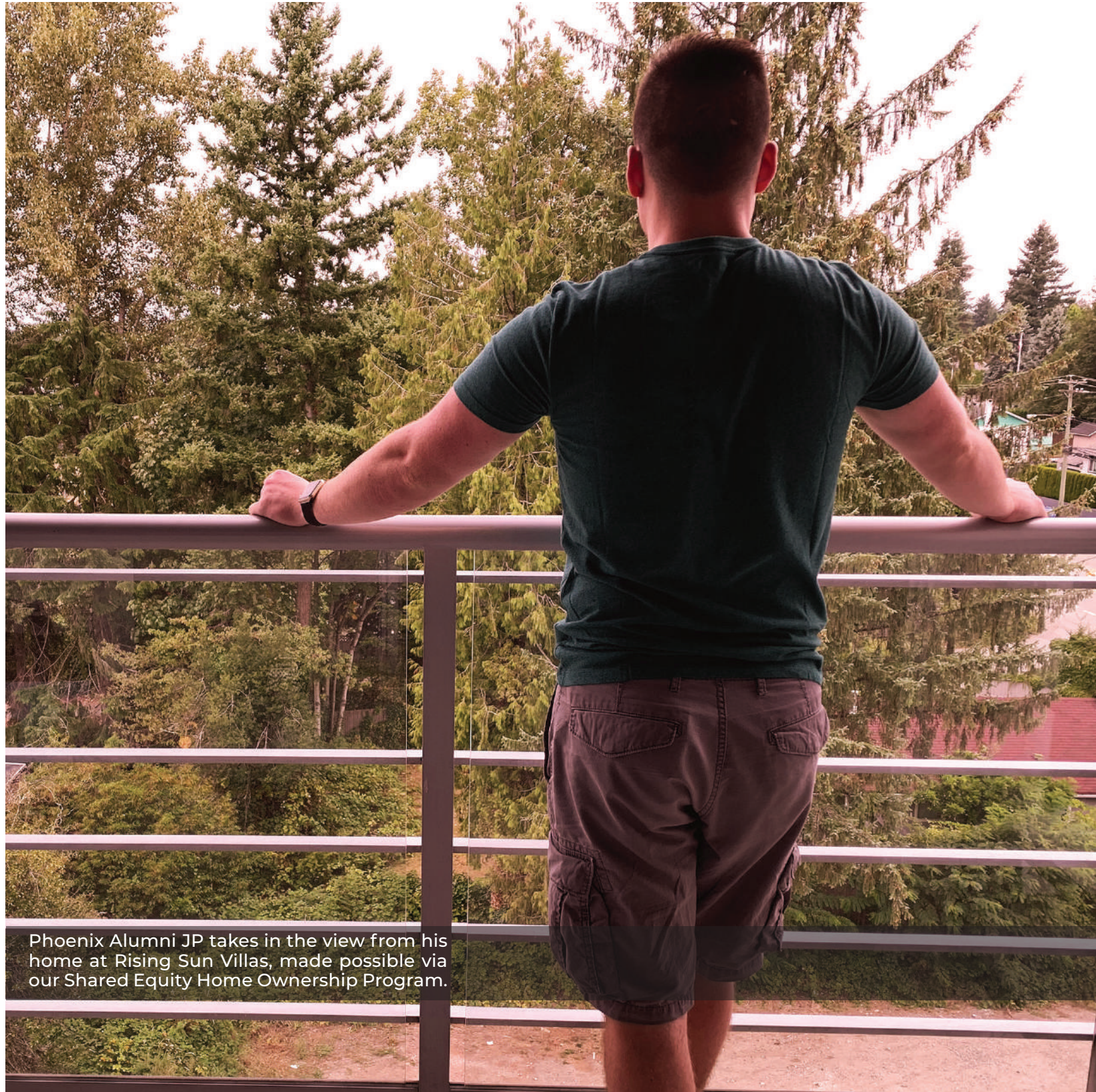


Elaine Duvall
Director

Ajay Riarh
Director

Jag Gill
Director





Phoenix Alumni JP takes in the view from his home at Rising Sun Villas, made possible via our Shared Equity Home Ownership Program.

CONTENTS

2	Letter from the Board President	8	Extreme Weather Response
3	Phoenix Society - By the Numbers	9	Phoenix Alumni: Meet Deanna
5	Letter from the CEO	10	Culture and Engagement
6	Positive Psychology	11	Music Therapy
7	Phoenix Alumni: Meet JP	12	Highlights from the Past Year

LETTER FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT



PAT
FREWER



The past year has seen the Phoenix Society continue to navigate significant change. As well, it has demonstrated how interdependent we are amongst our constituencies to keep this amazing organization growing and flourishing, along with the growth of the societal issues and challenges we must address to fulfill our mission. From our staff and managers through the Executive, our Board, and our external allies and partners, none of us can do Phoenix's work without the others. It's the leadership and commitment at all levels of our organization that ultimately keeps us strong and effective.

Last June, we had the unexpected news of our Executive Director, Karen Cooper, leaving her position to move to Ontario. This was after a relatively brief tenure of less than two years, in the wake of the departure of Phoenix's founders, the Wilsons. We found ourselves again seeking an executive leader. The Board came together and after much deliberation asked Kim Brazil, the Society's CFO, to assume the position of Interim Executive Director. Much to our delight, Kim accepted the opportunity and took it on with grace.

While Kim served as Interim Executive Director and continued in her CFO role, the Board commissioned the search for a new executive leader (which we decided to title as CEO) through Harbour West Consulting. Last summer we kind of held our breath and hoped for a deep field of qualified applicants to respond to our job offer. Harbour West did a great job, coordinated by Elain Duvall and the Board's Governance Committee. We had a short list of several candidates by summer's end, and we were especially intrigued with one applicant in particular.

Meanwhile at Phoenix the organization ran smoothly, despite finding ourselves potentially somewhat "rudderless" in the absence of our Executive Director last summer. The senior management team consisting of Kim Brazil, Nate McCready and Daniel Marks stayed the course in our day-to-day operations,

and even forged ahead with some new initiatives. Their team spirit and dedication in supporting Kim's leadership carried Phoenix through the transition to the eventual hiring of our new CEO.

We introduced Keir Macdonald as our new CEO in November of 2018. Keir brings to Phoenix an extensive background in social housing and in the integrated delivery of health programs, with an emphasis on addiction and harm reduction services. We'd seen in Keir a clear vision for the future of our essential work that aligned well with our emerging Strategic Plan. We'd found the leader we'd been looking for. In a few short months, while settling in and acquainting with the organization and its people, Keir also managed to implement several progressive new measures in keeping with our longer range planning.

As we begin this next fiscal year we are celebrating an important milestone for the organization. It is Phoenix's 30 year anniversary – the Society having been formed back in 1989. We are proudly marking 30 years of leadership, support, community, and legacy – and a whole lot of hard but rewarding work.

In addition to our staff, management, executive, and board, we've also seen our residents and clients adapt to change and grow with the evolution of Phoenix. We are known for our integrated programs, but it's the integration of all of our people behind our shared values and mission that keeps us strong and progressive. I want to thank all of you for your roles in embodying "from what's wrong to what's strong" as we continue to evolve, and to pursue our vital mission of supporting people to transform and reach their full potential.

Respectfully submitted,

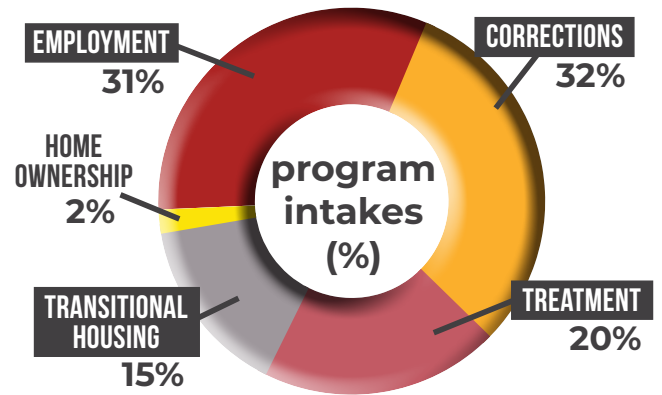




2,068

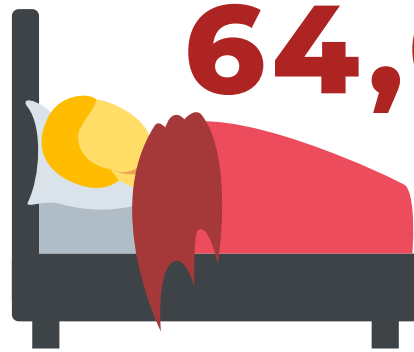
people were provided services through our Residential Addiction Treatment, Transitional Housing, Employment, EWR, Corrections, Home Ownership and Outreach programs.

INTAKES



1,233

Individual
Counselling
sessions
delivered



64,098

nights
people
were
housed

More
than

1,500

hours of resident volunteer
work in the community

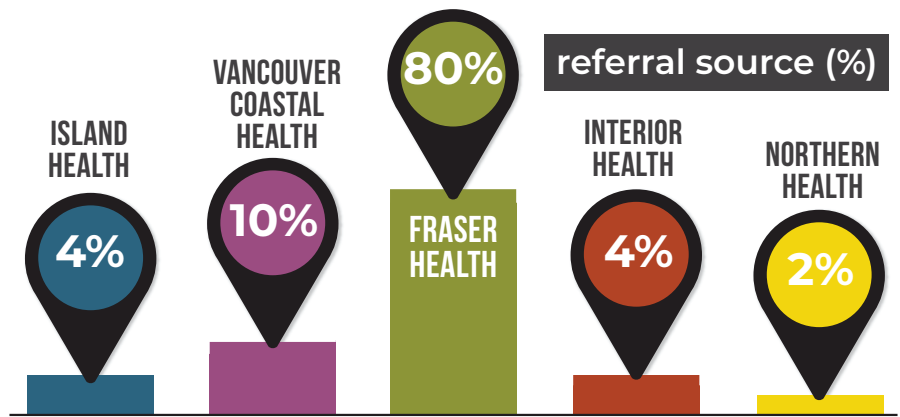


82,850

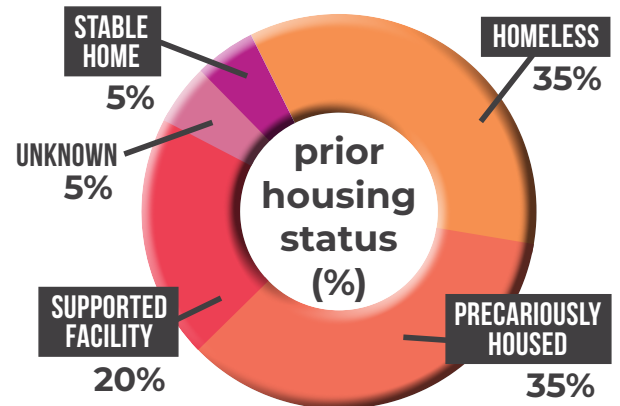
healthy meals served
across all programs



RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT STATISTICS

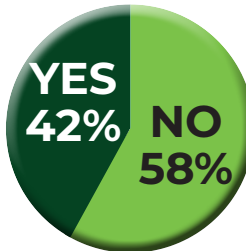


74%
treatment
completion
rate



21% Female
79% Male

concurrent
disorders



criminal justice system
involvement

41% YES **59% NO**

STEP UP PROGRAM



71%
completed
training
and/or gained
employment

TRANSITIONAL HOUSING



60%
moved to
permanent
housing

LETTER FROM THE PHOENIX CEO



From the first day I started with Phoenix back in November 2018, I knew there was something different about this place. Even before my first day, I was amazed at how many people had approached me to tell me how Phoenix had touched their lives and what a wonderful organization it is.

There were some obvious things that stood out, the quality buildings and attention to detail in the creation of the physical space, the friendly staff – but the word that kept coming up time and again was the “community” here. It is what made people feel safe, supported and welcome.

And that was just how I felt joining Phoenix. As Pat has already commented, Phoenix was led for the previous six months by Kim and a very capable executive team and I want to recognize Kim, Daniel and Nate in particular, for steering the ship. They did this so well in fact that it took at least a month before I was able to find a role for myself!

All jokes aside, what this did for me was to give me space and time to observe, listen and take in who and what the Phoenix Society was. I spent time on the treatment floors in group with our residents, hearing their stories and where Phoenix fit in for them. It was a great opportunity to learn what was working well and to hear any feedback they had on how we could make things even better.

I did the same thing with our staff teams, first meeting one-on-one with all of the leadership team and then with every program team to get a better sense on how staff of all levels and positions were feeling. These discussions were so rich and the feedback I received has already greatly shaped some of the initial decisions we have made since I joined.

Our services are required more than ever with over 4,000 British Columbians having lost their lives to an illicit drug overdose in the past 3 years – 550 from right here in Surrey. People need hope that a life of recovery is possible and I believe Phoenix provides that. Not only do our services change and even save

lives, but they are also an incredible investment for government.

According to provincial data, the average costs of services for a person living on the streets is around \$56,000 per year; in treatment that cost drops to just under \$30,000 and in supportive housing this figure drops below \$20,000. However, for over 50% of people that access our programs at Phoenix, they move from costing taxpayers tens of thousands of dollars to becoming taxpayers themselves and positively contributing to society in so many other ways. A large number of Phoenix residents are becoming the next wave of social services staff, helping those who have been where they were.

What Phoenix does is special. For those battling addiction and in need of a comprehensive pathway to recovery, we are regarded as one of the leading residential treatment programs in BC. Our integrated program offering the highest quality treatment, followed by our two year transitional housing program is incredibly unique and among one of the major things that distinguishes our program from stand-alone treatment services. But our offering does not stop there; we provide employment and education services onsite so people have access to the services they need to regain participation in the workforce – and in many ways their place in society.

So much of what we do here at Phoenix is a result of the amazing staff, board and community partners that we have. I want to specifically acknowledge Pat and the rest of our board of directors for giving me this amazing opportunity to lead such an incredible organization.

In closing, I would like to acknowledge Phoenix founders Michael and Ann Wilson. Without your tireless efforts for close to three decades, Phoenix would not be what it is today.

Yours sincerely,



**DAVID
RENAUD**
MSW, RSW
Clinical Lead

POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY: THE WAY VS. A WAY

“The job description read ‘minimum five years’ experience.’ I was only out of the University of British Columbia two months after getting my degree in social work. I applied anyways, and to my surprise, in October 2014, I was hired as a counsellor with Phoenix Society,” David Renaud recalls thoughtfully.

David, not one to self-promote, disguises those qualities that likely got him hired behind a mountain man persona: a face to chest beard, denim, and the occasional flannel shirt. His lanky six-foot-something frame is disarming, if not endearing, and likely when David was interviewed for the job, his gentle brown eyes spoke his empathy long before a word left his lips.

Over the years the strength-based philosophy of recovery at Phoenix has evolved in tandem with its expanding resources, culminating in 2019 with the release of the Bright Mind curriculum: a 12-week program in **Positive Psychology** developed for Phoenix by David, in collaboration with students Victoria Lapp and Caelum Nutbrown.

David explains, “I think there are two approaches to this work. You can either provide doctrine, instruct people to follow it and tell them they will be saved if they do. Or you provide the culture and allow people to grow within it, in their own way.” David concludes, “You can tell people there is *the way*, or you can tell people there is *a way*. In focusing on the strengths people bring to community, helping them to build assets for everyone to benefit from, the community in turn provides the space for people to exhibit their strengths. It’s a reciprocal relationship, one Phoenix has cultivated well.”

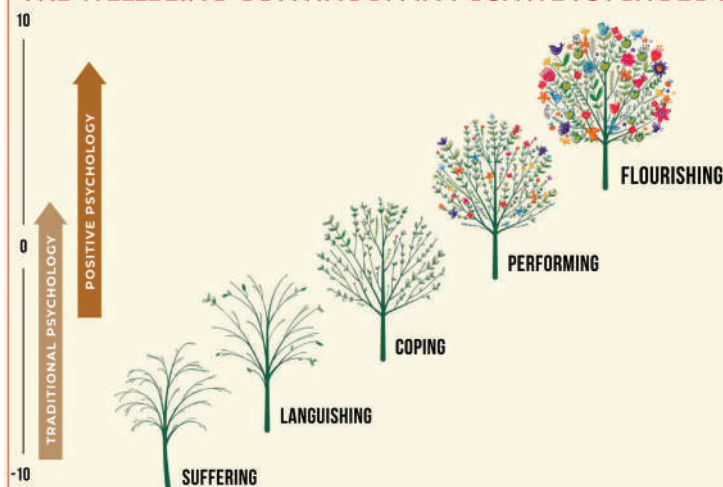
Positive psychology involves the study of:

1. Positive experiences
2. Positive traits (strengths)
3. Positive institutions (assets)

As a practice, positive psychology advances the aims of:

1. Identifying human strength
2. Building human strength
3. Realizing a life worth living

THE WELLBEING CONTINUUM IN POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY





JP
PHOENIX
ALUMNI

MEET JP: "I CAN SEE THE LIFE IN YOUR EYES"

"I was one hundred twenty-five pounds, scabs spotted my face, my arms bruised with track-marks"—although JP's story is a familiar one relative to addiction, the experience is very personal — "no hope, no trust, no anything left inside me, I knew if I didn't get help, I was going to die."

It was at the beginning of July 2016, when JP walked into the Phoenix Centre, and was placed onto the third floor. Shared with 12 men, JP's recovery program began.

It didn't take long for JP's leadership qualities to be noticed, and after two months he was asked to be a Team Leader on the floor (a position designed to enhance one's confidence and communication skills). "Even my mother said, 'I can see life in your eyes again,'" recalls JP.

However, JP's rooted anxiety lead him back to the Downtown East Side and out of Phoenix.

"You can imagine how disappointed I was in myself, but I didn't give up," remembers JP.

JP reapplied to Phoenix, and after 30 days he returned to the third floor. This time, after six months, JP earned a place in the Transitional Housing program (second stage housing). But again, he relapsed.

Given the option to leave Phoenix or go to the treatment floor, JP chose the latter. Embracing Phoenix, its counselling and supports, he went 'deep' into his recovery efforts. He progressed off the treatment floor, back into Transitional Housing, then into the Rising Sun Home Ownership Program, and finally JP became an employee of Phoenix.

Nothing of his physicality represents his former self. Having gone


through the Phoenix experience, not only is there life in JP's eyes, but also gratitude—for life.

Today JP is studying Psychology, is employed with Phoenix, owns his home, and remains in recovery.



"I was one hundred twenty-five pounds, scabs spotted my face, my arms bruised with track-marks — no hope, no trust, no anything left inside me, I knew if I didn't get help, I was going to die." - JP





**SHIBHA
NARAYAN**
EWR Supervisor/
Outreach Worker



**PHOENIX
SOCIETY**

EXTREME WEATHER RESPONSE: HELPING THOSE IN NEED COME OUT OF THE COLD

Shibha Narayan, an Outreach Worker for Phoenix, was also the supervisor for Phoenix's first **Extreme Weather Response (EWR)** program this past winter. "Phoenix provided fifteen beds (mats); five for women and ten for men, from November 2018 to March 2019, when required by extreme weather conditions within the city of Surrey," recalls Shibha.

Shibha, a student of criminology, has no biases when involving herself with the needs of the homeless—and in particular within a shelter setting—though the dynamics to do so can become complicated in very short-order. Shibha explains, "There were some challenging, gut-wrenching moments, like when a guest who appeared to be older came in to access the shelter. As I first saw her it made me feel sad and hurt; it made me think of my grandparents and what would have to happen for them to be in this situation. When we took her information down at intake we noticed that she was nearly 80 years old. When I spoke with her, she informed me that she had been homeless for six months, as she refuses to live with her relatives because the environment is not suitable. Hearing that broke my heart."

Aside from the physical logistics to house the homeless at Phoenix – which included refurbishing a large meeting room with sleeping mats, blankets and pillows, room dividers and a refrigerator – there was also the human component, where the facilitators embraced the experience with compassion and humility.

Ivan, one of the kitchen staff, helped prepare sandwiches, granola bars, and oranges, for a brown bag lunch, as well as hot coffee and tea. Other Phoenix residents, within their newfound sobriety, supported the facility from 7:30 pm to 7:00 am. Matt, a recovering alcoholic who worked several shifts, reflects on

his experience, "The atmosphere and the smell of booze didn't trigger me in anyway, but rather drew out of me a greater empathy for the situation."

"The EWR shelter at Phoenix brought together so many positive values from so many people— and though challenging at times, our experience, compassion and professionalism ensured a safe and warm home for most to have a good night's sleep," concludes Shibha, with a kind smile.

PHOENIX CENTRE EXTREME WEATHER PROGRAM: DECEMBER - MARCH



**15 MATS EACH NIGHT
OPEN 76 NIGHTS
847 GUESTS SERVED**





**DEANNA
PHOENIX
ALUMNI**

From left to right: Erin, Jamey, Gina, Deanna & Jaenine.

MEET DEANNA: ENLIGHTENMENT AND GROWTH THROUGH HER PHOENIX EXPERIENCE

Deanna's determination to experience a life of joy, free from alcohol, seems to have come to fruition, but certainly not without a fight. There was a time when depression, resulting from her addiction, gave way to an attempt at suicide. Describing herself as an unfriendly drunk, Deanna had all but alienated her family and friends, furthering her isolation.

Two previous attempts at recovery were unsuccessful but her third attempt, at Phoenix, proved to be what she needed.

"The amazing staff, and programs like Existentialism and Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT), opened my soul in ways I couldn't have imagined. Three months at Phoenix, I was evolving; I took interest in the other girls and began to open up with compassion and love."

Deanna's newfound sobriety was soon to be tested; one week before her 90 day program was completed, Deanna learned that the waiting list for on-site Phoenix transitional housing was far too long to accommodate her upon the completion of her treatment. While the organization continues to aggressively work to increase transitional and rental housing stock for those who complete Phoenix residential treatment programs, at the moment there is only space for roughly one in three participants.

Weighing in the balance was Deanna's life – so with little time to spare she and three other women: Jamey, Jaenine, Erin, (with Gina joining in later) found a six-bedroom house meeting their criteria – other than the monthly rental price tag.

"The amazing staff, and programs like Existentialism and Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT), opened my soul in ways I couldn't have imagined. Three months at Phoenix, I was evolving; I took interest in the other girls and began to open up with compassion and love."

- Deanna

Not to be defeated, Deanna engaged with the Phoenix team, who unwaveringly contributed to the first month's rent. Other financial logistics were worked out with the Ministry and Options.

"I'm certain that each of us at the house experienced enlightenment and growth because of our Phoenix experience—we live it every day."

The joy in Deanna's life is reflected in renewed family relationships, her discovery of art and writing, and with Jamey, Jaenine, Erin and Gina—her recovery family.





**CHARLES
AYOTTE**
Culture and
Engagement
Lead

FROM A MULTICULTURAL PURPOSE TO AN INTERCULTURAL PURPOSE

Charles Ayotte's appointment to the position of Culture and Engagement Lead at Phoenix was not an arbitrary decision. And as the position's title might suggest, diversity and connectivity are primary characteristics in its obligation—enter Charles.

Charles is Cree (based on his mother's lineage), a mature man, with an appearance that is sturdy, yet gentle.

Up until 25 years of age, Charles was strewn in addiction and its consequences, though his essence was unwittingly mentored in a language guiding him towards a 'being-of-service' career. He flashes a broad, friendly smile; "I remember being asked if I'd like to go into counselling. I responded by saying, I don't need counselling!"

In January of 2001, Charles arrived at Phoenix. "At the time the facility was a five-bedroom house. I interviewed for a counsellor's position while sitting on an upside-down bucket in a very small office."

Over the next 18 years, Phoenix evolved into its founders' (Mike and Ann Wilson) vision: a sprawling state-of-the-art facility, meeting the needs of recovering addicts, counsellors, and administration, while utilizing a 'strengths-based' philosophy. However, with the ever-changing landscape of addiction, the demand for intervention beyond these beliefs was the impetus for the Phoenix Society to get creative.

From being a Counsellor, to a Transitional Housing Manager, to the Culture and Engagement Lead, Charles' experience is an invaluable resource; when fused with the positive and

endearing values of his indigenous heritage, Charles' voice is distinct: "I would very much like to lead us from a multicultural to an intercultural purpose, benefiting everyone in need of the service of recovery."

DID YOU KNOW?

There is an Indigenous Sweat Lodge in the rear of one of the Phoenix buildings with an Elder who has offered supports to the residents through Elder counselling and weekly Sweat Lodge ceremonies.





MUSIC THERAPY: FROM HOPELESSNESS TO A PLACE OF HOPEFULNESS

"We must see that music theory is not only about music, but about how people process it. To understand any art, we must look below its surface into the psychological details of its creation and absorption."

- Marvin Minsky

Music Therapist Felicia Wall began her career at the Phoenix Centre six years ago. "There wasn't a whole lot of space available in those days, so I'd pack a large suitcase with bongo drums, tambourines, Mexican shakers, and whatever else I could fit into it, drag it into my group counselling sessions, then repack it and drag it back home after the session," recalls Felicia.

Eventually, she was provided with a permanent group room, in the basement of the Phoenix Centre. "Although I was grateful to have the space, it wasn't a relaxing therapeutic space; it was rather stark, concrete floor, pale green walls and florescent lighting. So, with the support of the Phoenix staff and the help of some community members, we went to town; murals, patio lights, piano, shelving (for bongo drums) and comfortable fabric chairs, not to mention a stage to hold talent shows."

Compared to other working spaces at Phoenix, the oversized basement group room is unorthodox—but then again, so is Felicia's Music Therapy program.

In a warm tone of voice reflective of her gentle manner, Felicia offers the value music therapy has amongst Phoenix residents; "The use of music and musical elements helps the client with emotional processing and expression, reflection and self-awareness. It helps with one's confidence and self-esteem. Also, it helps to connect with the inner spiritual self," she smiles, "I witness authentic transformation of the individual, *going from a place of hopelessness to arriving in a place of hopefulness*. I'd pack my suitcase with instruments a million times if I had to, if that's what it takes to get to that place."

PHOENIX RESIDENT FEEDBACK:

"Music therapy has helped me become aware of some of the feelings I have felt during the playing of music. This awareness has been instrumental in awakening areas that I believe were needed in order to put some of these emotions behind me in a healthy way."

"It's easier to move through my emotions and it helps to learn more about our peers and their journey."

"Music therapy lets us see what others may be feeling but cannot express themselves [through words]. It is illuminating."



"Residents find their voice, gain confidence, process grief and access strength in themselves that they did not know they had."

- Felicia Wall





JUNE 2018

Phoenix Executive Director, Karen Cooper, leaves the organization. The Board of Directors names Kim Brazil, Phoenix Chief Financial Officer, Interim Executive Director.

MAY 2018

Step Up – a new pilot employment program officially launches, with funding provided by the Canada-British Columbia Workforce Development Agreement.



AUGUST 2018

Phoenix Society officially launches a new website.

JULY 2018

In partnership with the **Downtown Surrey BIA**, Phoenix hosts its annual event “Eat, Play, Live Well” in support of a healthy community free of substance misuse.

DECEMBER 2018

- Phoenix hosts its annual **Christmas Open House** to connect with the community and celebrate recovery, with over 400 guests in attendance!



- Our vitally important **ASTEP employment program** (partnership via Options) was also renewed, and will continue to serve over 200 people each year.
- A **15 mat Extreme Weather Response (EWR) Shelter** opens at the Phoenix Centre.

NOVEMBER 2018

Keir Macdonald officially welcomed to the position of CEO by the Board of Directors.



JANUARY 2019

Introduction and official roll out of Via Strengths and Phoenix's **Positive Psychology curriculum**.

FEBRUARY 2019

- Culture & Engagement Lead** position created to promote awareness of cultural diversity and multiculturalism, while helping to build bridges of understanding between individuals and community groups.
- New **Clean Streets program** implemented in partnership with the Downtown Surrey Business Improvement Association.

MARCH 2019

- Partnership with the City of Surrey to offer all Phoenix residents a 3 month city recreation centre pass for \$5 begins.
- Proposal for **Correctional Services of Canada (CSC) Daytox Program** approved. The Daytox Program is a 16 day curriculum run over the course of 4 weeks. The focus of the program is to help stabilize individuals, to create safety and a sense of community.



CSC DAYTOX PROGRAM

13959 - 100th Avenue
Surrey, BC



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CELEBRATING 30 YEARS IN THE COMMUNITY





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