



# GRADUATE STORIES



**Army Veteran, Alfredo S.** entered Hope's Transitional Housing Phase of residency in 2016. "Freddy" also participated in the Discipleship program and graduated in late 2017 and continues to support and give back to the mission and others within the community. Alfredo found it difficult to procure affordable, permanent housing, and his veteran status eventually opened up doors through the Hope for Veterans Assistance Programs. He now resides in his own apartment, making him a dual graduate of both the Discipleship and Transitional Housing programs.

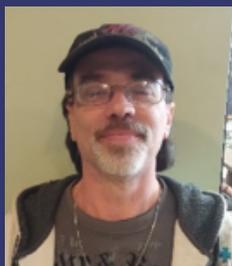
**Bryan N.** arrived at Hope two years ago in the dead of winter after suffering the bitter cold of living in a tent on the side of the mountain in Mount Penn. In a move based on survival, Bryan walked up the 19 steps of the Mission and enrolled in the Code Blue Emergency Shelter Program. From the very start, Bryan exhibited an initiative to volunteer with a "servant's heart," and work with the Hope Case Managers to address the issues that led to his homelessness. Bryan's hard work led to a transition into Safe Haven & Discipleship phases of residencies leading to his graduation in late 2017. Bryan now works in the new Shillington Hope Outlet Store, and he recently completed his GED through RACC. He also attends Hope's Workforce Development Classes aimed at developing important social and vocational skills necessary for securing permanent employment.



**Chad J.** came to the mission after several years of living on the streets. He was dealing with the challenges of drug addiction and hopping from place to place lost in a cycle of despair. Chad volunteered immediately in a variety of capacities and was determined not to return to the streets. Chad graduated from the Discipleship Program in 2017. He found employment at a local Marriott and recently was offered a promotion due to his solid work performance. The pictures below are of Chad's baptism in the Schuylkill River last year, as he wanted to publicly proclaim his faith in Christ. Chad recently moved to his own place for the very first time fully restored and filled with Grace.

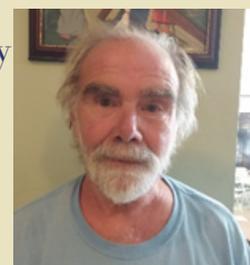


**Army Veteran, Charles S.** is a young man who came to the mission struggling with drug and alcohol addiction and mental health issues. This dual diagnosis made it difficult for Charles to maintain employment while having to attend appointments and counseling sessions. Mission BBQ proved to be such a blessing with their willingness to work with a brother in need. The picture to the right was taken in May, while Charles shared his story about how his fellow employees helped support him in so many ways and how satisfying it is to be living independently in his own place.



**Chris S.** is a long-time disciple who recently graduated and moved into Hope's Transition Program. Chris has not only graduated from the Discipleship Program but has enrolled in Hope's TUMI Bible Certification Program through World Impact. Chris is also attending a local church in Reading where he is part of their Men's Ministry Leadership Team.

**Joe B.** is a Discipleship graduate with a Degree in Botany from Penn State University who has supervised the mission's six raised bed gardens over the years and is currently a Shillington Outlet Store employee. Joe also finds the time to attend our TUMI Bible Certification Program with the hopes of graduating and becoming a missionary within the near future.



**Jorge C.** began volunteering at the HRM after entering Code Blue two years ago. From there he enrolled in Hope's Discipleship Program where he learned about God and served faithfully in the production area of our Reading Outlet Store. Jorge graduated this past winter and moved back into permanent housing with his wife and children.

**Justin S.** has remained a faithful truck driver for the Mission over the past year as both a Safe Haven and Discipleship resident. Justin was home-planned to the mission by his parole officer, and he has made great strides in every aspect of his life. Recently, Justin earned the chance by his P.O. to move back home, however, he opted to enter the Work Transition Program in order to save money, buy a car, and stabilize himself further before moving back to Hamburg. His desire is to be able to move back home fully restored, ready to be the man God intends him to be!



**Navy Veteran, Tom B.** came to Hope struggling with drug addiction and deep depression. After receiving the treatment necessary to move forward with his life, Tom entered the Discipleship Program serving as Maintenance Manager until his graduation. Tom entered the Work Transition Program where there were some bumps in the road along the way. Hard work and perseverance resulted in a permanent job and a place of his own for this dual-graduate of the Mission.

**Robert F.** was a long-time resident of the mission serving faithfully in the kitchen. Bob brought so many smiles and positive comments to the residents of the Hope Rescue Mission throughout the years. Robert loved to give a daily blessing to anyone who needed one. After establishing a transition plan with his Case Manager at Hope, Robert now has his own place a few blocks away from the mission.



**Lonnie F.** is a very special graduate of the Hope Rescue Mission. Our brother, Lonnie, recently transitioned to the next life to be with the Lord. He was one of the hardest working residents in the mission's rich history, ever-faithfully cleaning the shelter. Lonnie's first love was cleaning the chapel every day in honor of the Lord. He relished his Discipleship meetings and sang wherever he went, even as his body was being ravaged with cancer. Lonnie exhibited a pride in his work right up to the end of his life. Lonnie is now singing with a heavenly choir. We do know that the heavenly halls and golden streets in eternity will be gleaming and smelling fresh with Lonnie on duty, and we have joy in our hearts that we will see him again. Amen!

## DISCIPLESHIP GRADUATES

Mark A	David O	Bryan N	James L	Eduardo P
Jose F	David S	Stephen N	DeJuan A	
Armando F	Bryan N	Joseph B	Robert U	

## TRANSITIONAL HOUSING GRADUATES

Kerry M	Alfredo S-D	Brian M	Timothy K	Robert S
Mike S	Mario M	John D	Juan A	Robert F
Tom B	Philip D	Dimas C-O	Javier R	Gabriel H
Jesse K	Lawrence M	Mike N	Melvin C	
Fidel S	Elizer N	David R	Juan M	

