

Meet Dismas Resident: Mark Russell

is family.

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501.c.3 organization.
Donations are tax deductible.



Mark Russell

Dismas resident Mark Russell doesn't hesitate when asked what makes Dismas special—he knows. "It's just a family. It really is. The commitment to the personal care and treatment of the residents—I've never been to a place like that."

This dedication to the individual, Mark says, is what is helping to make his

reentry process so successful. Through friendships with his fellow residents and an enthusiastic, helpful staff, Dismas offers a family atmosphere that encourages and supports residents. "I don't have any family. All of my family passed away when I was in prison, and when you don't have that support and a roof over your head, all of the things that you wanted to do just fall away.

It just falls away until you have nothing. Dismas is like my family now. I know that if I need something they're going to help me in any way that they can."

For Mark, that help has included assistance in getting his birth certificate, thereby granting him the ability to work. For other residents help has included everything from securing necessary medical care to obtaining a driver's license. This individualized care is part of why Mark believes the Dismas model works so well. "Dismas helps all of the residents, but it doesn't help us all in the same way. The different things that Dismas has available are really so helpful, but not everybody needs everything that Dismas offers. You may not need them all, but everybody needs something and they'll work with you to figure out what you need."

Mark is enjoying his work at a popular Nashville restaurant and is excited for the possibilities that his future holds. The Dismas family is proud of him and his progress, and he credits Dismas with giving him help when he needed it most. "Dismas helped me to stay grounded. I had no rudder on my ship, no home base, and Dismas was my anchor. They showed me that someone cares and gave me guidance, love, and resources. You just can't get that anywhere else, not like at Dismas. It's home."

Dismas Mourns Loss of Family Member John Jenkins

John Jenkins, Jr., Dismas Resident since March 2017, passed away on September 11, 2017 at Alive Hospice in Nashville, TN. He was 59 years old. John came to Dismas because he thought the program would provide the kind of structure he needed. What he didn't expect was the level of support he received from the community. John said he'll never forget how the volunteers took an interest in getting to know him on a personal level. Being a part of the Dismas family allowed him to see that he could make good decisions to live his best life. He knew that everyone needs a loving, supportive family and felt that at Dismas every day. Our Dismas family is grieved that his presence will no longer be with us, but we are tremendously grateful for the time we got to spend with John. Our lives have truly been enriched by his kindness, and he has impacted our lives for good.



Mercury Court's Impact on Dismas Residents

Dismas community partners help to ensure that residents are given the medical care, financial education, and reentry assistance that they need to successfully transition back into society. The Clinic at Mercury Court is a shining example of these dedicated, faithful partners. Since opening in August 2012, The Clinic at Mercury Court has deep roots in providing care to underserved communities. Previously, Urban Housing Solutions kept offices on the Clinic location and served the surrounding community—primarily consisting of homeless



and low-income people. The Care Coordinator at Urban Housing noticed the need for primary care and partnered with Vanderbilt School of Nursing to become The Clinic at Mercury Court, to provide medical care.

The primary service of The Clinic at Mercury Court has been medical care, and in 2016 extended services were offered in Substance Use and Behavioral Health issues. Dismas is proud to be one of The Clinic's first community partners. Beyond basic medical needs, individuals seen at the Clinic may experience a unique array of problems. A thorough screening is provided, with care from a social worker and an entire team offering wraparound services for a holistic approach to care. The Clinic is a transitional facility, which now includes Dismas residents who are transitioning out of incarceration. Services are offered to clients for as long as is needed.

Clinical Manager Christian Kettle says that he enjoys working with Dismas and looks forward to a partnership that continues throughout the Dismas expansion. The Clinic at Mercury Court has demonstrated that their commitment to Dismas is solid and that they will be there to take care of Dismas residents as they pledge to be of support in any way possible in the future, making them a true member of the Dismas family.

Dismas Welcomes New Board Members at the Annual Business Meeting

Dismas held its Annual Business Meeting at Scarritt Bennett on August 17, 2017. This was an opportunity for the organization to share the accomplishments and opportunities for growth from the previous fiscal year and to outline the new and continued initiatives of the current fiscal year.

Prior to the meeting, a new board orientation was held for all new board and advisory board members. The premise of that meeting was to acclimate and onboard new constituents to our program model, the history, and future goals.

The crowning moment of the meetings was the dinner that each new and returning board member

shared in an event to get better acquainted. There are now 8 members on the executive committee, 31 members on the board of directors, and 29 participants on the advisory board.



Dismas is grateful for the work and leadership of the board to enhance the organization's work and impact in the community.



Robert Hairston of Healthtrust – A Volunteer Who Rolls Up His Sleeves

Bob Hairston is the quintessential embodiment of all a nonprofit could ask for in a board member. Passionate, engaged, and committed, Bob has been a crucial resource to the work of Dismas in the community. He has not hesitated to go above and beyond for our fundraisers, special events, and volunteer connections. Bob works in Strategic Sourcing at Healthtrust, and Dismas is excited to share with our community more about Bob



Robert Hairston

and his role in our organization.

Bob is grateful for the opportunity to help make a difference, "It is astounding, the number of people who are not aware of the situation, whereby upon release from incarceration, there's a big question mark for most ex-offenders – what do we do? When I think that I might have a tiny bit to do with allowing someone to get their driver's license back, advocating for

housing and jobs, essentially removing that block that you have to check off, it makes me feel good. I guess at the end of the day, when you see results, you feel good about what you're doing."

Bob is also a faithful volunteer for Dismas' Violence Interrupted sessions, a thrice-yearly class for those who are on the verge of incarceration for gun offenses offered in partnership with the District Attorney's Office.

"I just see some instant results, it gives a very quick alternative to incarceration."

The underlying causes of mass incarceration are the motivation for Bob's passion for Dismas and the issues surrounding our cause. "That is something I'm concerned about – the rates of incarceration in the United States, in particular. And I've been a student of things that contribute to that, such as the War on Drugs. If there are incentives to incarcerate, we're all at risk."

"That's one of the things that keeps me interested in Dismas, and the fact that there are metrics associated with what we do and the fact that we do so well in those metrics that we choose to follow, or I should say that follow us, because ex-offender agencies are all subject to the same evaluations."

Volunteering for Dismas brings about its own enjoyment, "I like seeing the involvement of the residents," Bob says, "I like seeing the residents go from A to B in terms of growth and development, and the fact that they feel part of a family, which is one of our grounding principles. It's very rewarding, because quite frankly a lot of them are either estranged from their families or don't have them. Part of moving forward is establishing a family foundation."



Bob at the 2017 Forgiveness Luncheon



Bob with Dismas Advisory Board Member, Ron Davis at Violence Interrupted

Staff Transitions

In some bittersweet news, Dismas announces that Program Director, Scott Pieper has moved on to a great opportunity with the Williamson County DUI Court. Scott served Dismas for nearly six years, faithfully guiding our residents and walking alongside them through their reentry journeys. Keeping with the mission and spirit of Dismas, Scott ensured that everyone who came through our doors, from residents to volunteers, felt like they were part of the family. His kind, caring, and compassionate heart showed each resident that they were valued and did not hesitate to go above and beyond to meet their needs. He has been a true role model for all our residents and has had a significant impact on the organization during his time here.



Scott Pieper (right) with
Dismas CEO Gerald Brown

New Staff



Robin Sloan, Program Coordinator

Dismas welcomes Robin Sloan as our new Program Coordinator! Robin brings with her six years of experience in community outreach and journalism, where her writing focused on the experiences and struggles of veterans acclimating to civilian society. Through these experiences, Robin's eyes were opened to the challenges that citizens face when attempting to rejoin their communities after time away; knowledge that she is able to utilize in her role at Dismas House, a transitional housing program for former offenders.

Prior to coming to Dismas, Robin worked for several Middle Tennessee newspapers and organized outreach events for the youth of Clarksville, Tennessee, focusing on civic engagement and personal growth. Additionally, Robin served for five years as a Youth Minister.

Robin holds a Bachelor of Science in History from Austin Peay State University. Her passion lies in connecting people from diverse backgrounds and finding ways to improve the collective community through open dialogue. She feels particularly strongly about helping former offenders find their voice in the Nashville conversation.



Todd Gilpin, Case Manager

Todd Gilpin has joined Dismas House of Nashville as Case Manager and has several years' experience in the field of Social Services - specifically Drug and Alcohol and Co-Occurring Disorder rehabilitation.

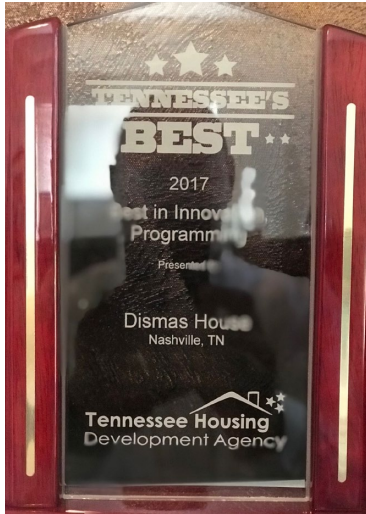
Prior to Dismas, Todd served with Samaritan Recovery Community as an Associate Counselor. He assisted clinical staff to implement the best possible treatment model to clients. While holding that position, he began supervision with Casey/Wilson Consulting to become a Licensed Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counselor which is anticipated in 2020. He has also completed training for Peer Recovery Specialist and has received his state certification. He also co-facilitated an Intensive Outpatient Program at HUGGS.

His passion to be a support to ex-offenders stems from his personal background of being an ex-offender himself. Having had completed the program at Dismas House in 2016 upon re-entry from prison, he has been given a second chance at life and is devoted to further reduce the recidivism rate of former offenders and to aid in the expansion of Dismas House of Nashville to serve a greater population of future residents.

Dismas Honored: Best in Tennessee

Dismas was honored to be recognized as the Best in TN by the Tennessee Housing Development Agency at their 2017 Governor's Housing Conference on September 21, 2017!

The goal of the Governor's Housing (Summit) Conference is to share information and build relationships among the varied elements of the housing industry. The Tennessee's Best Awards were designed to highlight the great work going on in the State of Tennessee.



Dismas has gone beyond putting on roofs, upgrading water heaters, building with volunteers, to serve some of the "least" among us. Helping people return to society takes personal interaction, above and beyond a warm and safe place.

We will continue to provide innovative ways to better serve and positively impact the reentry community with housing and social services.



Dismas CEO, Gerald Brown with Resident, Mark Russell

DISMAS HOUSE OF NASHVILLE CORDIALLY INVITES YOU TO THE 1ST ANNUAL

VOLUNTEER Appreciation Event

THURSDAY, JANUARY 25, 2018
6:30 P.M. – 8:30 P.M.

Rocketown | 601 4th Avenue South | Nashville, TN 37210





DISMAS
is family.

1513 16th Avenue South
Nashville, TN 37212

The Future of Dismas

We are close to calling Charlotte Avenue home



Dismas is excited to announce that we have raised 70% of the \$8.5 million capital campaign goal! Thanks to the very generous financial support of the Barnes Trust, the Joe C. Davis Foundation, Tennessee Housing Development Agency, the Clark Legacy Foundation, and individual contributions of Dismas Board Members; we are close to underwriting the future home of Dismas. Our new campus will be located on the 2400 block of Charlotte Ave in Northwest Nashville. We still need the support of funders to begin construction in the winter of 2018 with hopes of assuming occupancy in early 2019!

The expansion will allow Dismas to serve up to 200 male former offenders annually with housing, supportive services, and evidence-based programming that is proven to successfully transition our clients back into society. The new campus will also afford us the opportunity to provide new programming for non-residential clients that will focus on prevention or an intervention to incarceration.

To learn more about our expansion project, visit www.dismas.org or reach out to Gerald Brown, Chief Executive Officer at gbrown@dismas.org.