

the EXTENSION

The Quarterly Newsletter for Friends & Supporters of the Extension



Fall 2023



Grateful for Every Moment

MY NAME IS CHRISTINE, AND I'VE BEEN CLEAN AND SOBER FOR THREE YEARS, and I bought The Australian Bakery on the square on August 1st. I grew up working in my dad's restaurant, so food service is something I've always been comfortable with and thrived in. So, when I got to The Extension and had to look for a full-time job, it just made sense to work in a restaurant - especially one I could walk to.

Working at The Australian Bakery became my recovery job, and I made decent money. I decided to stay even after I transitioned out of The Extension, and I progressed. It worked with my schedule, my kids could be there - I gained custody of them after completing the program, and their school was just across the street, so I could pick them up and they could come to work with me. So, everything flowed and made sense, and when Mark approached me and my fiancé, we said "why not?"

"I've seen Christine grow immensely in the time she's been at the Australian Bakery. You could always see she had a good upbringing & showed a commitment to change her lifestyle around. I have seen the good side of her, and her constant reinforcement on a day-to-day basis has helped her grow exponentially."

"With that commitment to herself, Mark approached her to sell his share of the business, with her past knowledge of the food industry & looking forward to settling down, which Christine jumped at the wonderful opportunity that was presented to her. I wish her all the best in the business world."

— Nevelle Steel, founder of The Australian Bakery

Let's back up though. See, when my mother passed away in 2020, my world shattered. My heroin addiction spiraled, and it truly almost killed me. One night, I ended up at her house and everything came crashing down. The memory is hazy because of how high I was, but I had dislocated my foot, my car disappeared, and my brother came over. He must've called an ambulance because I refused to go to the hospital. While I was in the hospital, my brother called my probation officer, and I failed the drug test he gave me.

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*I learned that there's so much more beauty in life than I ever imagined - and I deserved it.
I deserve to live a good life.*

I was extremely upset with myself. I failed my test and served 2 months in jail. I felt like a little girl inside a 33-year-old's body. I didn't know how to do anything. I didn't know how to save money. I didn't know how to grow up or how to manage my emotions. After I was released from jail, I came to The Extension, and that was the first time I started to grow up.

I learned how to save and budget money, I learned about relapse prevention, and my favorite class was anger management. I learned that anger is a secondary emotion that often covers up the real emotion underneath, whether it's sadness, grief, or fear. I learned that when people are angry at you, they aren't really mad at *you*, they're sad or scared about something else and they don't know where to put their emotion, so it comes out on you. The same is true for when you are mad at someone else. I use this knowledge every single day. Whether it's with my kids or dealing with customers in the bakery.

I'm so grateful to be at a point in my life where I can give back

to the program that saved my life. I love to go back, and I'd do anything for the women. And in my position today I get to use this life-saving knowledge to run my business. I get to use what I learned in my finance and anger management classes in my day-to-day life. I don't judge anyone for anything anymore because you have no idea what they might be going through. I've learned that when you're down, you can't give up. You just have to live one day at a time. There was a time when I didn't have my kids, I didn't have any material belongings, and I didn't think it would get any better for me. But The Extension taught me that life is good. I learned that there's so much more beauty in life than I ever imagined - and I deserved it. I deserve to live a good life. If you persevere and are willing to do what it takes, you never know how beautiful your life will turn out.

My oldest son is 18, and he still knows how to get to the dope houses downtown because I used to take him there with me. These days I find joy everywhere, even

in mundane moments. Now that I have my kids back, I get to share the things I love with my daughter. We both love cats, and she's been training our cat to go outside on a leash. So there's joy in the moment that I get to come home to my daughter and my fiancé's son playing outside in their Halloween pajamas with the cat on a leash. The ability to spend time with my family and my kids is something I'll never take for granted. Now I have a relationship with my brother and my Dad again; we just went up to Charleston, South Carolina to visit my Dad, and that's where me and my fiancé are getting married soon.

That's what I'm most grateful for - my family. I don't have to worry about them knowing where the dope houses are anymore, I don't have to worry about finding money and chasing my next job to scrape by providing for them. My time at The Extension helped me learn how to live in the moment, and I want to spend as many moments as I can with them.

Grand Opening

MAKE COLLECTING ITEMS FOR THE EXTENSION FUN!



ON THE COMPUTER:

Find our Grand Opening Wish List on Amazon



IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD:

Left Side of the Street: fill up your porch with toilet paper

Right Side of the street: fill up your porch with paper towels



AT YOUR CHURCH:

Challenge your small group to compete with another with

“Undie Sunday” new men/women’s underwear or

“Sock It to me Sunday” new men/women’s socks



Email Betsy@theextension.org or call 678-410-7520



Make a donation to The Extension: SUPPORT SOBRIETY.

Enclosed is my gift of \$ _____

I pledge \$ _____ per month quarter year

I would like to be sent a reminder of my pledge.

I would like someone from The Extension to contact me.

I made an online donation at www.theextension.org

Please mail to: The Extension, P.O. Box 793, Marietta, GA 30061

Name

Address

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The Extension is a non-profit, tax exempt organization as described in the internal revenue code in section 501(c) (3). The Extension, Inc. is governed by a volunteer board of directors.

Comments or questions about this newsletter or any of the functions of the Extension, Inc. are encouraged, please send correspondence to the information below.

The Extension | 1507 Church Street Extension
P.O. Box 793 | Marietta, GA 30061 | 770-590-9075

David Schwickerath, Board Chair

Shelley Elder, Vice Chair

Doug Anderson, Secretary

Daniel Scruggs, Treasurer

Tyler M. Driver, Executive Director

A member of our staff or Board of Directors would love to come to speak to your group about issues related to homelessness, addiction and recovery. Give us a call at 770-590-9075.

ITS DINNER TIME!

Eating together is one of the oldest and truest forms of community. Baking, and breaking bread together is a great way to have fun with your friends and give back to your community. So come make a meal for The Extension Men's or Women's campus!

Just find a date on our website that works for you and come be a life saver!

Visit theextension.org/support-us/meals/ to sign up, and contact mallory@theextension.org if you have any questions!



What Are You Grateful For?

Today and my Extension family.
– Charity

My network and sober fun.
– Marie

Having a sense of humor!
LOL!
– Trinity

Waking up DRUG FREE.
– Sharon

Support from my brotherhood,
C-Mac, and all the staff.
– Rian

Sobriety, family, and 2nd chances.
– Stephanie

Being able to try again and loving myself enough to recover.
– Elaine

My daughter and my new sisters <3.
– Alana

This gratitude list and peace of mind.
– Charity

My family and my sobriety.
– Mandy
Waking up.
– Nate

A ride to the hospital.
– Joe

2nd, 3rd, and 4th chances.
– Cat

The Cougars.
– Dennis

God, The Extension, and my New Life!
– Jason

God, my kids, and my childish husband!
– Sarah

Family, brothers, and new beginnings!
– Derek

My new thinking based on my higher power, focus, and The Extension.
– Seth

I'm grateful for the healing I've received by working with these men who have chosen life over death.
– Shandra

My grandchildren.
– Bill

2nd chances.
– Nelly

My sobriety.
– Amy

Everything under the sun.
– Keith

My son and my family.
– Justin

This community.
– Shane

This program, and not being in prison.
– Vic

Fellowship.
– Eric

My family.
– James

My relationships and family.
– Teresa

Board Member Ellen Kennerly

OUR GOVERNING BOARD SERVES TO GUIDE AND CAST A VISION FOR OUR ORGANIZATION. They are experts in their field, passionate about our work, and are a force for good when they come together. Each member brings a unique and diverse perspective to the table allowing The Extension to consider our future from an array of viewpoints. Although serving on the board largely goes on behind the scenes, we've pulled back the curtain to allow our community to get to know us better. Here's what we heard from Ellen Kennerly, an integral member who brings decades of marketing and communications expertise to our organization.



How long have you been on The Extension's board?

One year

What made you want to be a part of The Extension's work?

The horrific damage that Substance Use Disorder inflicts on individuals and communities is solvable. This is an equal opportunity disease that affects all income brackets and ethnic groups. The Extension has created a unique evidence-based model that works to eradicate the stigma attached, raise awareness, and provide nuts and bolts tools for individuals choosing the path to recovery. I'd like to help broaden the reach of the Extension however I can.

How would you characterize your experience of being on the board?

A learning experience.

What do you find is the most impactful part of being on the board?

The collaboration that is critical in instilling a culture of growth rather than comfort.

What would you tell someone who wants to be a part of an organization but isn't sure what capacity to serve in?

Jump in. You won't know until you do.



First Baptist Marietta

VOLUNTEERS ARE ON THE FRONTLINES OF OUR WORK. They show up every day when we need them most—dinnertime. They serve, nourish, and cherish our residents with a generous love oozing out of every dish. They are the hands and feet of The Extension, invaluable components to the body of fighting homelessness and addiction. Our volunteers are some of the most loyal, kind, and compassionate people you would ever be lucky enough to meet. First Baptist Marietta is one of many groups who have faithfully served at The Extension for decades, and we decided the best way for our community to know what it's like to serve dinner at The Extension is to hear it straight from those who have done it like clockwork hundreds of times.

In 2004, The Winter Shelter transitioned to The Men's Extension, and our Associate Pastor at FBC Marietta became aware of the need for groups to provide meals. I volunteered to organize meals and servers, and we scheduled Sunday School classes and other groups to provide a meal one Monday night per month. When The Women's Extension opened, we added one Monday night per month to serve a meal to the ladies. Participating at The Extension allowed me to be a servant of the Lord helping others. I had wonderful conversations with the residents. When my children were in their teens, I brought them along to help serve and we all experienced a blessing through serving others.
— Susan

The JOY Class has helped with meals for The Men's Extension for many years, and our class has always received a blessing from sharing a meal with the Men. We hope they know how much we care about their recovery. We have prayed for their recovery and their walk with God. When The Women's Extension opened, the JOY Class was eager to get



involved. We got to know some of the ladies very well and were invited to some of their graduations. These times with the men and ladies have been very dear to us, and we continue to pray for all of them.
—Pat

The Practice Class at First Baptist has served meals at the Men's Extension for years

- we started out with chili and all the fixings in January. Later, we added a picnic night in June when we have hot dogs or BBQ. Many in our class look forward to serving and sitting down with the gentlemen afterward to learn their stories.

— Laura

I enjoy a sense of fulfillment when meeting a need for someone who truly benefits from it and appreciates it.
— Hannah

Sobriety is a daily fight for these folks, and it takes more focus than can be imagined. To be able to care for our brothers and sisters in a physical way by sharing a meal at a table with them shows love like Jesus showed love to us.
— Logan

As the coordinator of the young folks who are serving, I love watching them truly enjoy helping those in need, building relationships as they serve. We are so grateful to be able to be the hands and feet of Christ.
— Nancy



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The solution for homelessness & addiction

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“The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.” – Mahatma Gandhi

The 24/7 class has been serving the men and women of the extension since our church became involved. We always enjoy our fellowship with the residents, and it’s been a great opportunity for class members to serve together. After serving at the extension for many years I was First Baptist’s coordinator for our church wide involvement. COVID hit while I was responsible for our meals, and I’m so happy to share that our classes were able to work with the team at the extension and safely provide meals even during the pandemic, when they were a critical need for the residents. It was a challenge that we were led to overcome and a reminder that the residents are facing their own challenges daily. It is a blessing to be able to support them on their journey.
– Kelley

Serving meals at The Extension has brought me joy to see the guys come through with a smile even though they have struggles. I am thankful for the opportunity to contribute in making our community better by bringing dinner to complete strangers and hope they will pass along the kindness.
– Zach

The Extension Alumni Presents
DJ Boo, live entertainment and

Java Jam 2023

