

# POSITIVE CHANGES

HELPING PEOPLE THROUGH A FULL CONTINUUM OF CARE.

FALL 2017

## RECOVERY IS AN ACT OF STRENGTH

It takes a strong person to chart a new course. The decision usually comes at life's lowest point. For Keene, it was when he realized he was drinking himself to death. For Kristi, it was when Child Protective Services (CPS) took her children.

Both knew they had to change. Both turned to Cenikor.

From an early age, Keene could have all the alcohol he wanted. "At 12, or maybe younger, I discovered it made me Superman."

At 22, in court for a DWI, Judge Shelly Hancock introduced him to Cenikor's long-term program at the Houston Facility. Eighteen years later, Keene was back in Judge Hancock's courtroom, this time with a thank you note.

Cenikor was the difference between life and death. "I had given up, had burned all my bridges. I prayed for something to happen, and the judge answered my prayer. Cenikor changed my life. Not just the drinking. It taught me how to live. To get out of bed in the morning. To iron my clothes. To be responsible.

"When you're flat busted with nowhere to turn, you have to make the hard decision not to drink. And you make that decision every day."

Keene has been sober for 32 years, and life is good. He has a happy marriage, good relationships, a supportive church community and a job he loves.

He recently helped an elderly friend through a health crisis because that's what friends do. "When you're sober, you can do that sort of thing."

In addition to strength, Raul Garcia, LMSW, LCDC, Clinical Manager of Cenikor's Austin Facility, says recovery takes careful planning. "It doesn't happen in an artificial environment," he says. "It happens in each person's real life."

Substance use treatment creates clarity, awareness and readiness in four basic areas: home, health, community and purpose. Before recovery begins, drugs and alcohol are the client's life purpose.

Inpatient care provides time for reflection and recovery planning. "By the end of their time with us, clients are beginning to identify a new purpose."

Society expects a person to go from an acute disease – addiction – to recovery. That isn't always the case, Raul explains. "Progress helps clients build recovery. Relapse is not failure. Quitting is failure."

Recovery is a process. In the first month after treatment, clients establish a routine. In the first six months, they create stability. After the first year, they should see personal growth. In the second year, a life purpose emerges.

"Impulsivity is the number one problem. The only way to combat that is to plan. Considering the future lessens the burden of staying sober today."

The future certainly got Kristi's attention. She had married and divorced by age 20. When she lost her fiancé in a car wreck, Kristi turned to meth to mask her feelings. She continued to use as she



met her husband and had three children. Perhaps nothing would have changed, but a neighbor reported the family to CPS. Facing the permanent loss of her children was her wake-up call.

CPS referred Kristi to Cenikor's short-term inpatient program in Waco, and her healing began. "Cenikor is a safe place with people who care. Everything Cenikor had to offer, I wanted." She took advantage of every class, every individual and group counseling session, every 12-step meeting. Then, she attended Cenikor's outpatient program. "It became less about drugs and more about how I could better myself. I learned coping skills that help all aspects of my life."

Three years clean, Kristi enjoys a stable marriage, loves caring for her three beautiful daughters, holds a responsible job and returns to Cenikor once a week to offer encouragement.

**"MY PAST BREAKS MY HEART. I CAN'T CHANGE THAT, BUT I CAN MAKE A BETTER FUTURE. THAT'S MY PURPOSE."**

- KRISTI, CENIKOR CLIENT



# LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

In fiscal year 2017, Cenikor's programs and services helped more than 7,000 people; an increase of 36% from the previous year. The increasing opioid crisis has contributed to the growing number of people seeking treatment. We proudly rise to that demand, by offering a full continuum of care to meet the individualized needs of each client who enters Cenikor.



Clients come to us when life's challenges have led to substance use. In this issue, you will read about different clients,

faced with different challenges, who completed different programs and today all make the same daily choices that continue to positively change their lives.

In celebration of National Recovery Month, Cenikor will be hosting their annual luncheons to honor those who support our mission of service and who advocate for those individuals struggling with a substance use disorder throughout the communities we serve.

The recent devastation of Hurricane Harvey coupled with historical flooding, had a major impact on the Houston community. Some of our team members helped rescue family and friends or experienced the loss of their personal possessions: homes, vehicles

and treasured items, and other team members weathered the storm alongside our clients. Fortunately, clients remained safe throughout the storm and continued to receive treatment at our Houston facilities. Since the storm, the floodwaters have receded around the buildings and the minimal leaks discovered, have been repaired.

I am appreciative of the ongoing support provided by Cenikor's board members and Cenikor's team members who selflessly serve our clients each and every day.

Bill Bailey, President/CEO

## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT: CARRIE ETHERIDGE AND NANCY HARRIS

**"FIND SOMETHING YOU LOVE TO DO AND YOU'LL NEVER HAVE TO WORK A DAY IN YOUR LIFE."**

- HARVEY MACKAY

Carrie Etheridge, LCDC, Intensive Outpatient Counselor in Killeen, and Nancy Harris, RN, MS, Nurse at Odyssey House, Houston, both have hearts for helping others.

Carrie, who retired from the U. S. Army, says she enjoyed "every moment of serving my country. I went in for three years and stayed for 22." Women gravitated to her for guidance, so a friend suggested she turn her talent into a second career. After becoming a

chemical dependency counselor, she worked with adolescents for 10 years before joining the team in Killeen.

"Adults are different," she says. "They have to learn to get past their mistakes and move on. They need me to believe in them. Nobody's perfect. God gives me a second chance. I want to help others find their second chance."

Carrie believes in Cenikor. "The leaders are encouraging, welcoming and friendly, Bill Bailey included. The first time I encountered this, I thought, 'This is the CEO, and he treats us like people!'"

Nancy tried retirement three times, most recently from the Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center, before she decided it wasn't for her. She found the job that was "created just for me," at Odyssey House. In addition to health assessments, drug screenings, staff training, client education and interacting with physicians, Nancy is the resident Grandma, available

*Bill Bailey, President/CEO pictured with Nancy Harris, Nurse celebrating five years of service with Cenikor.*



to listen whenever the teens need a sounding board.

Her background in psychiatric nursing helps her understand the mental health aspects of substance abuse. She's the first to say, "Now doesn't that feel good?" when a teen has a clean drug screen.

"Odyssey House allows adolescents to know they aren't alone. They stumbled, but they don't have to stay down. They can learn coping skills and move ahead. There's hope. I love to see them go out the door and know they have learned something. Odyssey House and Cenikor provide a stepping stone for them."



*Bill Bailey, President/CEO pictured with Carrie Etheridge, Counselor celebrating 10 years of service with Cenikor.*

# REBUILDING A LIFE IS A DAILY DECISION

Stacie Woodall, MCJ, BS, LCDC, understands what it takes to rebuild a life. She's done it.

As the Outpatient Manager of Cenikor's Care Counseling Center in Waco, Texas, she sees her clients' challenges from both sides of the street. She was in and out of recovery for 17 years before she got sober eight years ago.

Men and women new to recovery "obsess about drugs and alcohol," she says. There are so many things to draw them into the old lifestyle. She tells them it gets easier with time. "They need a support system and a structured routine. I believe in schedules. Every day needs to be planned, and they need to follow the plan."

After detoxing, immersion in recovery is essential. That's where Cenikor's short-term inpatient program comes in. "Removing drugs and alcohol from the system is physically and psychologically shocking. We have just ripped away their 'solution' to all issues, so they must begin a new way of thinking. They're a captive audience, surrounded by others in recovery and a team of professionals who have their best interest at heart."

Every counseling session, meeting or activity prepares clients for a new way of life. Before they leave inpatient care, it's crucial to have an appointment with an outpatient counselor. "It's too easy to leave the residential program and think, 'I'm good. I can handle this.' They need to leave with a referral in hand."

Clients who can't return to a stable living environment may choose Cenikor's Sober Living, which offers a safe place to live with peer accountability. "As they work and become financially independent, they live as sober, productive members of society."

Participating in an outpatient program is the next post-inpatient right choice. Reinforced with the right mindset and a good foundation in recovery, clients return to a life with all the challenges, but without the crutch. They need a strong support system and a community of people who also are making good daily choices. In Cenikor's outpatient programs, clients participate in education groups, processing groups and individual counseling one to three times each week.



"Somewhere along the line, adults forget what it's like to have fun," Stacie explains. "We have a creative staff of counselors who know that simple activities can help us enjoy life. We give assignments – go to a park, cook a meal, ride a bike. Have fun."

A strong 12-step program is another right choice. In Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, Celebrate Recovery and similar programs, men and women support each other as they rebuild, repair and maintain their lives. "It's important to have others close by who understand the journey."

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**"RECOVERY COMES DOWN TO THIS: ARE YOU DOING THE NEXT RIGHT THING? IF NOT, THEN YOU NEED TO MAKE A DIFFERENT CHOICE. IT'S A DAILY DECISION."**  
- STACIE WOODALL, MCJ, BS, LCDC  
OUTPATIENT MANAGER

## MICHAEL: KEEP IT SIMPLE

Michael was in a cycle. When he worked off-shore for four or five weeks at a time, he was sober. During his weeks on-shore and off work, he partied. "I was from New Orleans," he said. "We worked hard and partied hard." This went on for 27 years, until "I got sick and tired of being sick and tired."

He knew he needed to stop, but it took a while. He moved to Houston to be near his sister and brother, found a good job, quit using, visited friends who had evacuated to Houston after Katrina, started drinking with them, then using with them, and returned to New Orleans.

"Finally, I said, 'God, I'm tired. I can't take this anymore.' I loaded my truck and drove to Houston." His brother and sister suggested Cenikor. His beginnings at the Houston Facility were shaky. He resisted the program and began to pray for God to humble him. He made a promise: "God, I'm going to stop thinking about leaving and start thinking about staying." When I surrendered, a weight was lifted off my shoulders."

He tried a couple of jobs that didn't work out, then became the first Cenikor employee at Turner Industries "I told Brian Daigle, VP at Turner Industries,

unless I win the lottery, I plan to retire from there."

Michael completed the Cenikor program in 2008. "I'm not in Cenikor anymore, but Cenikor is in me. I go there for breakfast every day before work. I go before church on Sunday and offer rides to anyone who wants to go. I encourage the residents. I tell my story."

He keeps his life simple. He says routine and boundaries keep him focused on recovery. He has strengthened relationships with his siblings, three children and 11 grandchildren, and he has a new relationship with his childhood sweetheart.

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**OUTPATIENT DETOX**

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Baton Rouge, Louisiana | Houston, Texas | Killeen, Texas  
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Killeen, TX | San Marcos, TX | Temple, TX

[www.cenikor.org](http://www.cenikor.org) | 1.888.CENIKOR



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### AUSTIN

#### Annual Recovery Luncheon

TBD

**Contact:** Ayden Liles, Facility Director  
737.300.2965 | [eventaustin@cenikor.org](mailto:eventaustin@cenikor.org)

### FORT WORTH

#### Annual Recovery Luncheon

Friday, September 29, 2017

**Contact:** Don Goad, Facility Director  
817.812.6624 | [eventfortworth@cenikor.org](mailto:eventfortworth@cenikor.org)

### DISCOVER THE CHANGE

#### Baton Rouge | Fort Worth | Houston

Join us at one of our upcoming Discover the Change luncheons to learn more about how we help individuals, their families and the communities we serve. Complimentary lunch will be served along with a guided facility tour and informational session.

Contact [marketing@cenikor.org](mailto:marketing@cenikor.org) for the next luncheon in your area.



Honorary Benefit Co-Chairs  
John & Kathy Collado

### HOUSTON

#### 50th Anniversary Celebration Gala

Cenikor is celebrating its 50th Anniversary with an evening to Celebrate the Stars of Cenikor on February 16, 2018 at 6:30 p.m. at the exquisite Royal Sonesta. The gala will include an exquisite multi-course sit down dinner, award-winning entertainment and testimonials from those whose lives have been transformed and renewed through sobriety and recovery.

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