

MARCH 2021

# THE CROSSWALK: BENILDE HALL'S NEWSLETTER

Benilde Hall—Safe Haven—Matt Talbot



## MARCH'S ISSUE:

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## BENILDE HALL ACQUIRES NEW HOUSE FOR CLIENTS, NAMED AFTER DR. THOMAS HALL

*Closed on March 26th, 2021, the Dr. Hall House will be open to clients on April 1st.*

Dr. Thomas Hall served as an ally while providing clinical support as well as local and national advocacy for those in recovery for most of his adult life. For over 29 years, Dr. Hall taught addiction counseling classes at Kansas City Kansas Community College. In 1999, he became the head of the Addiction Counseling program and remained so until retiring in 2016. Dr. Hall is the former Executive Director of the Community Back Anti-Drug Tax (COMBAT) Commission for Jackson County and the former President of the Benilde Hall Board of Directors and currently sits as National Chair of the Vietnam Veterans of America PTSD/Substance Abuse committee.

"I'm pleased Benilde Hall is expanding to support people in their recovery. Early recovery is so vulnerable when you go out on your own." Dr. Hall shared about Benilde Hall's new housing development, adding "addiction is not something that you can just get rid of in a few highly controlled months of treatment. It takes a while. Addiction and recovery change the fabric and the arc of your life." Recovery houses can serve an important part in the recovery process and allow people in recovery "to find the traction they need to continue their recovery and then to begin to not just survive but to thrive in their own life." A client may be ready to move out of a transitional living environment, but may not be ready to live alone early in their recovery journey. The Dr. Hall House will serve as an important tool for clients who are ready to take the next step in their recovery journey.

Dr. Hall stated that this project will benefit Benilde Hall clients because a recovery house "gives them [clients] the next step, independence, with support. It fully recognizes the complex and layered challenges that people in recovery must deal with, especially in the first couple of years of recovery. That that's a very vulnerable time, to have some kind of support that will take into consideration the challenges that they're meeting without having to explain to everybody their situation all the time or feel bad about what they've been doing before they entered in recovery, to be around people who just get it, and are oriented to the same mission, is in itself therapeutic."

All credit for development of this project goes to the staff, leadership and board of Benilde Hall, without whom this support for our fellow citizens would not have happened.

Source:

Hoskins, A. (2016, May 17). From veterans to homeless, KCKCC's Tom Hall made a difference. Wyandotte Daily. <http://wyandottedaily.com/from-veterans-to-homeless-kckccs-tom-hall-made-a-difference/>.

## **Benilde Hall's Expansion**

**A Letter From Executive Director, Ken Vick.**



Benilde Hall is working to help provide safe housing and mental health services for the homeless population in the Kansas City community. As we continue to find ways to serve more people, we have been blessed with the purchase of a new house. We are pleased to announce that we will be calling it the Dr. Thomas Hall House. Dr. Hall has been an incredible asset to Benilde Hall for many years. His ability to assist the functioning of Benilde Hall has made a huge difference in the quality of services/programming. He is a passionate supporter of the men we serve and has an affinity for serving veterans. We are honored that we are able to name the house after such a great person. The house will add six more beds for level 4 services. This will allow Benilde Hall to add a less restrictive treatment service for men that have been moving through the Benilde Hall program. It will allow these men to take another step toward being active members of our community. Building more stability and improve outcomes for the men we serve will benefit our community and city. The men served are a great example of what recovery looks like.

Kenneth Vick  
CRADC, CRPR, MARS, CTTS, LAC  
Executive Director

## Benilde Hall Success Story: Derek Clark

Growing up, Derek Clark had a difficult home life. He had an abusive father who struggled with substance use disorder. Derek's substance use began with drinking and then progressed to stealing drugs from his father when he was 13. His father passed away at 14 and Derek felt that he did not have a "steady male role model" in his life. At 17, Derek became a father. He earned his GED after an overdose and started studying to become an electrician. However, throughout his early adulthood, Derek struggled with his addiction. "I would be productive and then I would fall back into being an addict," Derek says. He almost finished school but started taking drugs again. "School didn't matter once I started doing drugs."

During this time, Derek also dealt with recurring homelessness. When Derek was 30 years old, his substance use disorder continued to control his life. "I became really into drugs and that was pretty much my entire life. I wasn't working, just doing drugs until I got a couple of felony drug charges." After receiving felony drug charges, Derek completed time at a court diversion program through Jackson county called Drug Court. He describes that he "didn't do very well at it." Derek went to jail and then spent 28 days at the Comprehensive Mental Health Services treatment facility. Derek did not have a place to go home to after completing his treatment program, so he decided to stay at Benilde Hall.

When Derek came to Benilde Hall, he didn't have a driver's license, he was in debt, and didn't have hope for the future. "Benilde Hall changed my life. It wasn't a complete 180 in a day, but eventually, I started realizing that what I was doing wasn't working. It wasn't making me happy. I wasn't being a productive person," Derek says. Once Derek was eligible to work at Benilde Hall after his 30-day restriction, he started on lawn care weed eating and picking up trash. He continued to work hard at Benilde Hall and moved up to maintenance and eventually became the head of the lawn crew. Derek also started going back to school and now studies networking.

Derek has been working at Benilde Hall for four and a half years. He lived at Benilde Hall for nine months until former Executive Director, Kent Jewell, called Derek into his office and offered him a permanent job and an apartment. He lived in an apartment for a year while he settled his debts. Derek purchased a house and is almost finished with his schooling. To those struggling with substance use disorder, Derek recommends that they regularly attend AA or NA meetings after they finish their time at Benilde Hall. "Almost all of my friends did drugs and I didn't have friends that didn't do drugs or were like-minded like me," Derek says. He has been sober for four and a half years.\*

\*This story was originally published in August 2020. Derek celebrated his 5th year of sobriety in February 2021.



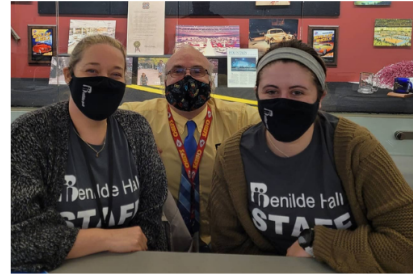
To read more Benilde Hall Success Stories, go to [facebook.com/BenildeHall](https://facebook.com/BenildeHall).

Past Benilde Hall Success Stories can be found on [benildehall.blogspot.com](http://benildehall.blogspot.com).

## PAST AND UPCOMING EVENTS

### BENILDE HALL AT THE SCOTT EIKE WARMING CENTER

The Scott Eike Warming Center at Bartle Hall closed on March 17th. For three days, Benilde Hall staff went to Bartle Hall to pre-screen homeless individuals who fit the criteria for becoming a client at Benilde Hall or Safe Haven. Potential clients were asked a series of pre-screening questions such as their employment status, when their homelessness began, if they are interested in recovery, if they are a veteran, if they have a case manager in the community, etc.



Benilde Hall was one of several KC non-profits that worked to get as many homeless individuals housed before the Warming Center closed for the season. Between Benilde Hall and Safe Haven, staff spoke with 27 individuals who were interested in either the Benilde Hall program or the Safe Haven program.

### SAVE THE DATE: 11TH ANNUAL TEE OFF AGAINST HOMELESSNESS GOLF TOURNAMENT- OCTOBER 1ST, 2021

Mark your calendars for Benilde Hall's 11th Annual Tee Off Against Homelessness Golf Tournament on October 1st, 2021.

8 AM REGISTRATION/ 9 AM TEE TIME-LUNCH-RAFFLE-PUTTING CONTEST

Last year, Benilde Hall had to cancel its annual golf tournament due to COVID-19 guidelines. However, restrictions are now being lifted by cities across America as cases go down and vaccines are made more accessible. If proper social distancing guidelines are followed, outdoor golf is considered a safe activity to participate in.

To register, contact Tonya Gundersen by phone at (816) 918-3264 or by email at [tgundersen@mail.benildehall.org](mailto:tgundersen@mail.benildehall.org).

A vertical poster for the 'Tee Off Against Homelessness' golf tournament. At the top, the text 'Tee Off Against Homelessness' is written in a blue, cursive font. Below the text is a graphic of a golf club head with a white golf ball on the green grass. The poster has a light beige background with a decorative horizontal line. Below the line, the text reads: 'Benilde Hall is proud to extend an invitation to participate in our 11th Annual Tee Off Against Homelessness Golf Tournament'. The date and time are listed as 'October 1st 2021' and '8am Registration / 9am Tee Time'. The location is 'Drumm Farm Golf Club, 15400 E 34th St S, Independence, MO 64055'. At the bottom of the poster is a small graphic of a golf ball on a green tee.

**Tee Off  
Against  
Homelessness**

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October 1st 2021  
8am Registration / 9am Tee  
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Drumm Farm Golf Club  
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Independence, MO 64055

## HOW TO HELP



Want to help? There are many ways you can assist us with our mission!

Monetary donations are always appreciated, and we will provide a tax donation receipt.

You can go to <https://www.benildehall.org/how-to-help/donate.html> to make a monetary donation.

Are you hiring? You may employ one of our residents. Feel free to post your available positions on our job board, or email [info@mail.benildehall.org](mailto:info@mail.benildehall.org) with job info!

Is your organization looking for volunteer opportunities? Call 816-842-5836 x 100 to register your volunteers to assist with needs around our campus.



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Godfrey S. Kobets



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