

# Eckert *edition*

**Eckert**  
1102 7th Ave. E  
Williston, ND 58801

Shaping Lives.... Building Futures

## Outpatient Services

*By Victoria Bone, Outpatient Office Manager*

### **Eckert Youth Homes outpatient office began seeing youth, ages 14-17, in June of 2021.**

Beginning this outpatient office journey was the result of the Williams County Behavioral Health Grant that was awarded to Eckert in May 2021. Eckert was awarded the grant with plans to expand an outpatient office, hiring additional staff, and providing services to Williston and other communities within Williams County. Our outpatient office consists of our licensed addiction counselor, Frank Reck Jr., and licensed social worker, Carly Collings.

The goal of opening an outpatient office was to provide the community with an additional resource for adolescents. Our outpatient office has hosted a few community workshops that are open to the public to learn more about substance abuse with adolescents. Our licensed addiction counselor has frequently visited Williston High School to provide educational seminars to student classes about substance abuse in addition to meeting with youth on campus one day a week. Another part of our goal was to reach out to the surrounding community. Thanks to the behavioral health grant, we were able to obtain office space, one day per week, in Ray to see youth from surrounding communities. Our LAC travels to Ray one day per week and has also spent time at both Ray and



Outpatient office ribbon cutting open house.

Tioga high schools educating classes and meeting with youth. Our outpatient office is also involved with the local Juvenile Court system, we are the provider for youth in drug court or on probation. Eckert provides a Youth Chemical Awareness Program on a monthly basis for first-time offenders who are required through juvenile court mandate. The Youth Chemical Awareness Program is important as it breaks down substance abuse and how it relates to trauma. In this program, youth also learn about basic needs and general education on substance abuse and how it affects the chemicals in the brain.

So, what does outpatient treatment look like? We offer both individual sessions and group sessions, typically being anywhere from one hour to six hours a week or more, depending on the needs of each individual youth. Many of our sessions are focused on checking in on the youth and

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## *Expansion and Celebration*

The words expansion and celebration are terms to be used when a company or organization grows to accommodate the need of the community.

Organizations expand as they add more staff and include other services that were not previously available. In a nutshell, that is what this year at Eckert was about. We have added more staff to accommodate the needs of the program. We have also increased the number of beds that are available to youth in North Dakota. We previously had 8 beds, and we increased that number to 10 beds at our facility. These are just some of the things that changed on the residential side.

A celebration can be a result of an expansion of a program. Our outpatient program just celebrated one year of opening its doors to the public.

Since July 2021, Eckert Outpatient program has seen a total of 34 youth since its opening, and we are currently actively seeing 10 of those youth.

We have expanded our programming and we are celebrating that we have an opportunity to provide services to youth and families that are dealing with the challenges of substance use. Hopefully, we are able to talk to them before there is a substance use disorder, or before they would need to enter a residential program like the one at Eckert. We can celebrate when we are able to intervene in the lives of these youth and help them to make choices to live a sober and drug-free life. That is why we at Eckert are committed to our mission, "Eckert provides quality services which encourage the spiritual, educational, behavioral, emotional, and physical development of children and their families." Won't you join us?

Thank you, John L. Harper  
Facility Administrator at Eckert

how they are doing outside of the office. This includes recognizing any triggers or stressors for them and breaking those down. Sessions also focus on learning new coping skills, life skills, dealing with emotions, and doing activities in the community that promote sobriety. Some of our youths' favorite activities include go-karting, going on walks, and playing card games. Our outpatient office focuses on being a safe place for the youth to be open about how they are feeling and what they are dealing with outside of treatment. When discussing what are things the youth have learned in treatment, they have said, "That I'm not alone in my struggles and that I really enjoy the company of others," "how to control my emotions," and "I've been able to cope better."

Eckert outpatient services celebrated being open one year for the community in a ribbon-cutting open house hosted alongside Williston Chamber of Commerce in July 2022. This gave the community a chance to stop by, tour our outpatient office, and engage in activities set up throughout the office. In the next year, we hope to continue outreach within Williston and the surrounding Williams County communities to continue providing care for adolescents struggling with substance abuse.

# Milestone Celebration

By Dr. Leah Hoffman, PhD, LMAC

**In July 2022, our residential treatment program reached a milestone of welcoming 100 different youth into our program.** On any given day in our homes, a youth could encounter up to fifteen different staff members, each of whom are investing in the best interests of our youth. It is imperative that throughout the organization, youth feel physically and psychologically safe. The phrase, “Alone we are one drop, together we are an ocean...” fits the team philosophy we have at Eckert. The same rings true for the youth we have served. In land-locked North Dakota, Eckert has created our own little ocean of youth who all, at one point, were welcomed into our homes. Some have returned for multiple treatment episodes; each time being welcomed through the doors with unconditional positive regard. While relapses aren’t encouraged, they are part of the treatment process. Shame has no place within our walls. Despite the number of returns to residential treatment, youths’ strengths are recognized,

built on, and validated. This includes the belief in resilience and the ability to heal. The youth that have lived with us know they are more than a number to Eckert. During the daily grind of youth coming and going, it is easy to forget the magnitude of the work that is happening at Eckert, and just how far reaching the effects of our efforts can go. So with that in mind, this summer we took the time to reflect on our first 100 residents, the work that was done, and turned our sights to our next 100.



## Finishing Well

**There is a passage that says, “There is a time for everything and a season for every activity under the heavens.”** After spending the last six years at Eckert Dave and Tammy Reese have resigned from their position at Eckert. Dave was the Direct Care Staff Supervisor and Tammy was the part-time kitchen staff member. On Wednesday, August 31st, Dave and Tammy were honored by Eckert board chairman Rick Braaten and all Eckert staff for their years of service.

Dave started his career at Eckert when he was an intern at the Assembly of God church in Williston in the year 1980. From there, Dave met and married Tammy and they pastored for many years in the region. Before Dave and Tammy came back to Eckert in 2006, he pastored a church in Missouri for 17 years. Dave and Tammy came to Eckert to become houseparents and work with other houseparents who worked at Eckert while Eckert was a residential child care facility. In 2018, Eckert began the process of closing the residential child care facility program and prepared to open up a substance abuse treatment center for adolescents in 2020. Once the program was open, Dave and Tammy became direct care staff at Eckert. In the last few years, Dave supervised the direct care staff, and Tammy prepared meals for the residents.



Tammy and Dave Reese

Dave and Tammy will still live in Williston as Dave has taken the position as Executive Pastor at Life Church in Williston. Dave will be in charge of managing the pastoral staff at Life Church and handling many other duties within the church. We are grateful for the many years that Dave and Tammy invested at Eckert. We wish them well in their new assignment.



**Dr. Leah Hoffman, PhD, LMAC**  
Clinical Director

## Amplifying the Work We Have Been Called to Do

**Eckert's residential addiction treatment program is coming up on three years of operation in March 2023.** In the beginning, we often made the comparison between our program and an "infant" or being in the infancy stage. When we came across a never-experienced hurdle, we could fall back on the idea that "we're still in diapers!" But as we push through the infant stage, we are steadier on our feet. We've skinned our knees enough times to now walk confidently.

Eckert isn't unique in the challenges we've faced as an agency lately. We've endured COVID outbreaks, turnover, and staffing shortages. Our team has had to navigate incredibly complicated child welfare systems, family situations, and tough youth. Hurdles like these are more likely to end in peril when there is a lack of direction. Crisis without direction causes teams to go 100 mph without truly going anywhere.

Thankfully, Eckert inspired a mission before even setting course on this journey. Fred and Clara Eckert's vision was to provide a safe and comfortable place for youth to prosper. Each teammate at Eckert shares that vision. The number of youth who continue to reach out after leaving, lets us know we are fulfilling the vision. When a team takes ownership of their unique contributions to pursuing a vision, this creates an opportunity to instill the "what" and the "how" of the mission, fueled by the "why." The types of substances adolescents are using across North Dakota are getting increasingly more dangerous. A common misconception about our youth is they are irresponsible partiers, out having a good time, when in reality, youth at this level of treatment are often hurting and self-medicating.

With all the complexities, there is a lot of learning taking place at Eckert for our youth and staff. Along with personal growth, there are professional and academic pursuits taking place. Eckert continues to provide internship opportunities to social work students at both the bachelor and master level. We have numerous employees starting new programs or continuing in their higher education at the associate, bachelor, and graduate school levels.

At some point or another in life, everyone reaches a time where we need to declare we are no longer amateurs, or infants, in our endeavors. It could be a business startup, parenting, being a student, or opening a residential addiction treatment facility. Whatever "it" is, we must partner the undertaking with the mindset that we are no longer simply dabbling in the pursuit and instead, expertly fulfilling the work we have been called to do. We are committed to problem solving and adjusting as barriers arise, just like our youth do, because they need us. No one ever said this endeavor would be easy, but it is worth all the hard work, time, and emotions we have invested in the Eckert vision and mission.

# Shape a Life.... Build a Future

*You can make a difference in the lives of the youth at Eckert.*

Since our new program opened in 2020, our goal has been to provide “quality services which encourage the spiritual, educational, behavioral, emotional, and physical development of children and their families.” We have not wavered from our mission, and because of our commitment, we have seen many adolescents come through our program. One youth was reported to have said, “Eckert is where I first felt loved.” We have made the commitment to serve well the youth of North Dakota.

You can make a difference in the lives of the residents of Eckert through your faithful giving and prayers. In a time where today’s youth are faced with so many obstacles and challenges, what they need is you. A person like you who is willing to invest in the next generation of leaders and community members that need

encouragement and support from loving adults. Although we have been able to help so many residents since 2020, there are so many more that need the services we have to offer. This is evidenced by the waiting list that never seems to get any smaller.

You may imagine that by operating a program like this and offering the services that we do, our staff would experience compassion fatigue and you would be correct. The thing that encourages our staff is when we hear of a resident making positive life changes and overcoming the challenges of chemical addiction. Read what one youth said to one of our staff when asked “What does Eckert do well?” “Here is what this former resident said: **“Taking broken kids and showing them that there is still a chance at a better future.”**

*Would you take a moment and consider a partnership with Eckert?*

Your faithful giving makes it possible to plant seeds in the hearts of these young people. Did you know that Eckert has an endowment fund? When you contribute to the Endowment Fund you may qualify for a tax credit of 40%. Please consult your tax professional for more information. Thank you in advance for your partnership with Eckert as we make a difference in the young people of North Dakota. Fred and Clara Eckert saw the need and responded, will you?

# Eckert

**I want to  
help a child  
in need!**



**Your tax-deductible gift will help provide care, counseling and shelter to adolescents struggling with addiction.**

**This Gift is made:** \_\_\_\_ In Memory of \_\_\_\_ In Celebration of \_\_\_\_ Other

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Please send an acknowledgement to:

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email :** \_\_\_\_\_

**Amount of gift: \$** \_\_\_\_\_ *(please make checks payable to Eckert Youth Homes)*

**Donor's (Your) Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

\*Mail this form and payment to Eckert, PO Box 2291, Williston, ND 58802

# Friends of Eckert

April 2021 - August 2022

## *Thank you to the following for cash donations:*

Zion WELCA - Noonan	C & D Water Services	Angela Palmer
The Jerome and Darlene Langseth Endowment Fund	Wegner Homes, Inc.	Yvonne Hurley
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Jerome & Patricia Hanson Family Foundation	Writing Rock Church - Alkabo	Martha Sorenson
Dwight Richter Insurance Agency, Inc.	West Prairie WELCA - Williston	Martin and Arlis Haug
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	Royce Rolfson	Elizabeth A. Czubay
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Gloria Dei Lutheran Church Quilters	Allan Laurel	Orrin Dockham
Henry and Randi Jangula	Loren Perrin	Jackie Collings
Rheanda Axtman	Christine Verespe	Arlene Tvedt
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Bill and Ruth Glenn	Dina Norby	
Breeun Willard	Sandra Kirkegaard	
	Whitney Hampton	
	Erin Eldridge	

*Thank you!*

We also wish to acknowledge those individuals and businesses who contributed to Eckert in previous years.

## *In Memory of:*

**Karla Akovenko**

**Roy Deubner**

**Ronald C. Pedersen**

**Dale Orf**

Gwen Roffler

**Stephanie Lee**

**Amaya Acheaw**

Jon and Linda Ness

**Albert and Mary Lou Dhuyvetter**

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Edwin and Loretta Engebretson

**Pat Sundheim**

**Stan Sundheim**

Gwen Roffler

**Our daughter, Connie Jean Wold**

Orrin and Joyce Moe

**John Fosland**

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**Marlin Braaten**

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**Donna Anfinson**

David and Monica Hartsoch

**Bill Nero**

Andrea Finders

**Ron Shimek**

DeLores Shimek

**Arlene Tvedt**

**Mark Soholt**

**Joli Scanlan**

Timothy Evenson

## *In Celebration of:*

**Williston Police and Fire**

**Departments**

Adrienne Stepanek

**My 12 healthy grandchildren**

Betty Bruins

**Our sons and their wives**

John and Janet Johnston

**Our children and grandchildren**

Ronald and Elizabeth Lund

**13 healthy grandchildren and**

**3 great-grandchildren**

Larry and Vicky Schaff

**Hunting the Eckert land with family**

Kent and Lois Reierson

**Jaxsin, Havik, Vail and Hope**

Rocky and Sharon Prestangen

**Our 7 healthy grandchildren**

Larry and Myrna Nelson

**Ashley Weisz**

**Jeremy Hansen**

American State Bank & Trust

**The Kemp Family**

Robert and Deb Kemp

**Our children and grandchildren**

Rollin and Joyce Wolter

**In Thanksgiving of 55 years together**

Patrick and Durelle Hatlestad

**Christmas**

Stuart and Michelle Dolan

**God's son, Merry Christmas**

Stewart and Carol Vachal

**Caregivers**

Linda Stordahl

**Our 12 grandchildren**

Duane and Lavonne Hartel



1102 7th Ave E.  
Williston ND 58801

[www.eckertyouth.com](http://www.eckertyouth.com)

Please direct all inquiries to  
John L. Harper at (701) 572-7262.

## Eckert Receives Donation of \$1,166 from CHI St. Alexius



On July 22nd, 2022 Eckert was a part of the CHI St. Alexius Golf Tournament held at the Links of North Dakota. Eckert staff manned a game where the golfers attempted to chip a golf ball into a kayak from 30 yards. The golfers donated \$10 for three chances to get the golf ball in the kayak. Eckert was able to raise \$583 from this game. CHI St. Alexius matched what we raised dollar for dollar to bring the total to \$1,166!

John L. Harper receives a check from Dubi Cummings at CHI St. Alexius.