

# The Triumph of **HOPE**

2018/19 ANNUAL REPORT



# OUR MISSION

Tuerk House transforms lives by providing help and hope for enduring recovery to individuals, families, and communities in the Baltimore metropolitan area who are struggling with addiction to alcohol and/or drugs.

# OUR VISION

Tuerk House will maintain its leadership in the Baltimore recovery community by continuously expanding the excellence, scope, and effectiveness of its clinical, residential, and vocational services in the Baltimore metropolitan area.

WE CARE FOR ALL,  
REGARDLESS OF ABILITY TO PAY:

**76%** of Tuerk House patients are on Medicaid or uninsured



“The stories of **hope**.—  
these are the stories of  
**Tuerk House.**”

**Bernard Gyebi-Foster**  
Executive Director

## Dear Friends,

When you hear the news today, it is easy to think that we are losing the war on addiction. I would like to tell you the stories you won't hear in the news. The stories of hope. These are the stories of Tuerk House.

### The Hope of Total Recovery

When Tuerk House merged with Total Health Care in 2017, it began a new era of addiction treatment in Greater Baltimore. Now our patients have access to more than just expert rehabilitative services. They also have access to Total Health Care's comprehensive health care services, from primary care to dental care to HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis C disease management. It is one of the region's first integrative models of rehabilitative care, and it is proving that when patients take control of their health, they can take control of their lives.

### The Hope of Ending the Opioid Crisis

In 2018, Tuerk House partnered with the Baltimore City Health Department to pilot Maryland's first Crisis Stabilization Center. The groundbreaking Center aims to fight back against the skyrocketing rate of overdose deaths brought on by the city's opioid crisis, as well as reduce the number of expensive emergency room visits that addiction costs our community each year. Already it is working: out of the more than 600 people we have cared for to date, 60 percent have successfully taken the next step into an addiction treatment program.

### The Hope of a Stronger Community

On March 1 of this year, Tuerk House began one of our most ambitious projects yet: the \$10.2 million renovation of our main campus in the heart of West Baltimore. Along with the physical transformation of our campus, we are taking on countless other cutting-edge initiatives—from health informatics to urgent care—to expand our role as the visionary treatment partner that our community needs and deserves.

As you read this report, know that there are many more stories of hope like these happening at Tuerk House every day. And they wouldn't be possible without the incredible compassion, hard work, and generosity of our staff, board of directors, and supporters like you. No one person can save our community alone. It is going to take each of us, doing our part, to keep hope and healing alive in our city. Thank you for being part of our mission.

With Gratitude,

Bernard Gyebi-Foster  
Executive Director

BATTLING THE OPIOID CRISIS:

**49%** of Tuerk House patients used opiates as their primary substance

## The Recipe for Recovery: How Chef Kirk Brown Transformed His Life with Tuerk House

For 15 years, heroin controlled Kirk Brown's every waking moment. "I would do anything and everything to get one more hit," he explains today. "It was what I woke up looking forward to. It was my everyday routine, my everyday job."

These days, Brown's "everyday job" is thankfully quite different. For more than four years, he has worked as a full-time dietary supervisor and chef inside the kitchens of Tuerk House, the organization that gave him a second chance at life. There, he oversees a team of seven chefs, ensuring that patients get the nutritious meals that are essential to a healthy recovery.

**Brown credits his transformation to the compassionate people that make Tuerk House so unique.**

"I was homeless, in and out of prison, just broken. But when I got here, the employees made me feel welcome," he explains. "They took me upstairs, gave me a bed, and gave me a shower. And since that day, I was well on my way. **I was ready to do different things to save my life.**"

Over the course of his recovery, Brown endured painful setbacks. His beloved little brother was killed in an act of street violence. His relationship was failing. He relapsed. But through it all, the staff at Tuerk House worked closely with him to make sure he had the resources he needed to get back on—and stay on—the road to recovery.

"When my brother was killed, I was getting ready to graduate [from my first Tuerk House treatment program]. But they told me it wasn't a good idea [for my recovery] for me to leave at that time," he recalls. "So they let me stay here and participate in the groups for weeks after I was supposed to."

When Brown relapsed a short while later, his Tuerk House counselors recommended he try a different strategy. They offered him the opportunity to spend six months in the Weisman-Kaplan House, Tuerk House's 27-bed halfway house for men in northeast Baltimore City. It proved to be a smart move.

"I call it the 'Wonderful Weisman House,'" Brown says with a smile. "When I got there, I didn't try to work the program; I finally let the program work for me. I learned humility, and I learned to let other people direct my path to help me stay clean one day at a time. Once I applied that to my life, my life took off."

His counselor also helped him open up his first bank account and obtain employment in the Tuerk House kitchens, where he worked his way up the ranks to his current supervisory position.

"**Tuerk House taught me how to be dependable once again,**" Brown explains. "It taught me how to step up to the plate as a man. I have my kids back in my life—three older girls that are calling me daddy again—all because of the things I learned here. I never want to be back on the streets using drugs. **This program has truly changed my life.**"

THE FACE OF TUERK HOUSE:  
**71%** of Tuerk House patients  
are African-American.

"This program truly  
saved my life."

Kirk Brown

Hear Kirk Brown's Story:

Go to [TuerkHouse.org](https://www.tuerkhouse.org) to watch his video and  
make a donation that could change a person's life.



WINNING THE WAR:

60%

of Crisis Stabilization Center patients have agreed to go into treatment

## A Revolutionary War: Tuerk House's Groundbreaking Pilot Program Fights Back Against the Opioid Crisis

For nearly 50 years, Tuerk House has been considered a pioneer in substance abuse treatment. So when the Baltimore City Health Department needed a partner it could entrust to pilot a revolutionary new concept aimed at combatting the opioid crisis, Tuerk House was the natural choice.

The result is the **Crisis Stabilization Center**—the first in Maryland to provide patients who are in the depths of opioid and/or alcohol addiction with a 24/7 alternative to the emergency room.

Patients are typically evaluated and admitted to the Center via a hospital referral, an emergency medical system (EMS) team, or the Baltimore Crisis Response team. Upon admittance, the Center's specialized team of nurse practitioners and nurses monitor the patients' stability around the clock, providing medication-assisted treatment to manage withdrawal symptoms if necessary. Once patients are stabilized, the Center's social workers and peer recovery specialists work with them one-on-one to connect them to the resources they need to get on the path to long-term recovery.

The model is designed to simultaneously reduce high-cost emergency room visits and improve patient outcomes. And it has proven to be highly successful. Of the 635 unique patients the Center has cared for to date (April 2018 – May 2019), **60 percent agreed to go into treatment** and 40 percent have remained in treatment.

According to Angela Longe, director of medical services at Tuerk House, one of the keys to the Center's success is the unique patient experience that it offers. **"From the patient's standpoint, it's very individualized,"** she explains. "They don't have to wait eight hours in an ER. They are seen right away. They get three hot meals and a shower. They are connected to life-changing services like transitional housing and transportation to work—things an ER typically isn't equipped to provide."

Now Tuerk House is preparing to transition the Center from pilot program to permanent solution. That will include a move into the neighboring \$17 million Hebrew Orphan Asylum renovation when it's complete next year.

"One of the great things about the new location is that we'll be able to increase our capacity from 15 beds to 40," says Longe. "And **that's what we want: to help as many people as we can get into treatment** so that they can return to the community and be productive citizens."

## Home Safe Home:

## NEW Residential Treatment Homes Offer Long-Term Healing & Life Skills

In early 2019, Tuerk House expanded its ability to care for the community with the opening of two new residential treatment homes: Nilsson House, a 12-bed women's home in North Baltimore, and Howard House, a 16-bed men's home in Ellicott City developed in partnership with Howard County. A third addition—Gwynn Oak House in Baltimore County—is set to open later this year.

Unlike many halfway houses which function primarily as sober living spaces, **patients at Nilsson House and Howard House receive full-service, on-site residential treatment from a multidisciplinary staff of nurses, clinical supervisors, certified peer recovery specialists—even registered dietitians—for anywhere from three months to one year.**

"This gives people the time to deal with their underlying mental health issues," says Albert Arrington, site manager for Howard House. "Patients always want to come in and fix everything right away. Here we can say, 'Let's slow down and work through the deeper things that need to get addressed.'"

Jasmine Qualey, site manager for Nilsson House agrees: "Our residents know what they're doing will kill them, so we have to understand: what made things so bad that they have to use in order to cope? If we don't address the root causes, then we are just delaying the inevitable."

**Residents and staff alike have been overwhelmingly impressed with the new homes.** At Nilsson House, themed guest rooms—like the Cotton Candy Room and the Beach Room—make stays more fun. Each home rests on more than an acre of green space to give residents the breathing room they need. And both homes offer robust social services programs—such as vocational training and financial counseling—to ensure residents are ready to succeed in the real world when treatment ends.

**"Our residents know that we care about them and love them,** but they also know we're not here to play," says Qualey. "They develop goals, and we hold them to those."

"It's been a challenge to get things up to our standards and level of care, but we prevailed," Arrington adds. "And it's really working—better than I've seen it work ever before."

**See Us In Action:**

**Visit [TuerkHouse.org/News](https://www.tuerkhouse.org/news) to see all of the ways Tuerk House is stepping up to care for the people of Baltimore and beyond.**





## The Blueprint for Better Outcomes: An Inside Look at the \$10.2 Million Tuerk House Renovation Project



These days at Tuerk House, it's not unusual to hear the sounds of patients laughing, nurses collaborating... and power tools buzzing. That's because construction is now underway on the main campus's \$10.2 million renovation—the **largest capital project in the organization's history**, and one that will transform the decades-old facility into a state-of-the-art treatment center for patients in Baltimore and beyond.

**"The goal is to modernize our campus, improve the environment of care for our patients, and increase our capacity to care for more people,"** explains Bernard Gyebi-Foster, executive director of Tuerk House. "When we do that, we will achieve our ultimate goal which is to improve outcomes for our patients."

Among the improvements will be an all-new residential area. Guest rooms, which currently bunk four to six patients at a time, will be transformed into modern, two-person guest suites. A reformatted women's wing will ensure female patients have complete privacy away from the men's wing. At the same time, the renovation will add 24 more patient beds for a total of 96.

**"We'll be able to care for 30 percent more patients while still giving our residents more dignity and comfort than ever before,"** says Chris Maynard, Tuerk House's director of fund development. "It's about showing people a better way to live."

Beyond the residential area, every detail of the campus will be updated, all the way up to the roof which will be outfitted with **cutting-edge solar panels**—a move that will help the non-profit save considerable energy costs. Smarter workflow designs inside will allow Tuerk House to expand key services, including its fast-growing partial hospitalization and medication-assisted treatment programs.

Although the renovation was projected to be complete in 2023, Tuerk House leaders are now aggressively seeking funding in order to bump the completion date up to 2022. "Expanding to 96 beds—that means additional people we can help, more lives we can save," Maynard points out. "So time is of the essence."

So far, Tuerk House has received \$1.8 million in grants from the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and has been able to supplement that with \$800,000 of its own resources. But community support will be critical to the project's completion.

**"We are changing the model of how we get people care and how we get people on the pathway to a better life after they receive care—but we can't achieve that without donors"** explains Gyebi-Foster. "We've been fortunate to have a very dedicated group of supporters that have created a legacy of generosity for our organization. It is them—and other organizations and community members like them—who will be the linchpin of our success."

"The philanthropic return on investment for our donors will be tremendous," adds Maynard. "Even with our switch to solar energy, we are showing that we use the resources that are entrusted to us wisely in order to make a visible difference on our campus and in our community."

Support the Renovation:

Go to [TuerkHouse.org](https://TuerkHouse.org) to make a donation now. With your help, we can complete the project by 2022 and get more patients on the path to recovery sooner.

## Executive Staff



**Bernard Gyebi-Foster**  
Executive Director



**Mayra Diaz**  
Director of Clinical Operations  
and Programs



**Angela Longe**  
Director of Medical Services



**Diana Thompson**  
Director of Human Resources



**Fredrick Jones**  
Director of Finance



**Kofi Owusu, MD**  
Medical Director



**Sherry Williams-Smith**  
Admissions Manager



**Floyd Matthews**  
Site Manager,  
Weisman-Kaplan House



**Albert Arrington**  
Site Manager, Howard House



**Jasmine Quailey**  
Site Manager, Nilsson House



**Chris Maynard**  
Director of Fund Development



**Kirk Brown**  
Head Chef

## Tuerk House, Inc. Income Statement

(Fiscal Year - July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019)\*

Tuerk House ended FY2019 with a positive net income for the second consecutive year and continued its path toward **long-term sustainability**.

HOW WE'VE  
GROWN TO SUPPORT  
OUR COMMUNITY:

**2,679**

patients cared  
for in FY2019

vs 1,102 patients  
cared for in FY2018

## Board of Directors



**Darien E. Nolin**, Chairman  
Director of Strategy & Operations  
at Lee Montessori Public Charter  
School



**David Pittenger**, Secretary  
Consultant/Former CEO of the  
National Aquarium



**Danny Bellamy**  
CEO of Total Health Care



**William N. Burgee**  
Director of Property  
Acquisitions &  
Relocation, Department  
of Housing & Community  
Development



**Richard Greene**, Treasurer  
CFO of Total Health Care



**Bernard Gyebi-Foster**  
Executive Director of Tuerk  
House, Ex-Officio

## Members



Administrative Offices:  
2701 North Charles Street  
Baltimore, MD 21218  
667-212-3631 | [TuerkHouse.org](http://TuerkHouse.org)