



Eugene Mission Life Change graduation dinner.

Myth Busting

Clearing Up Common Misconceptions About the Eugene Mission



One of our great blessings is the opportunity to tell others about the miraculous work God is doing here at the Eugene Mission. Time and again, as individuals tour our campus and learn about our relational programs, they exclaim, “I had no idea!” and “I wish the community knew about this!”

At a time when so many are giving up and settling for isolating and transactional Band-Aids, we are shouting: There is a better way! Hope, healing and restoration are here!

We wish to remove any fears or misconceptions that may be holding people back from taking the next step at the Eugene Mission by comparing common myths to facts.

MYTH #1: The Eugene Mission is a “dead-end”; an “old-fashioned flophouse” that has little to offer the community or individuals experiencing homelessness.

FACTS: The Eugene Mission is one of the largest shelters on the West Coast. The Mission provides millions of dollars of services to the community each year—all without taking any government funds. The Mission has 40+ highly skilled staff members and hundreds of dedicated volunteers. The campus is centrally located in Eugene, Oregon, with 12 buildings on 7.5 acres. The Mission’s caring, innovative and transformative programs are some of the most effective in the nation. Our robust residential programs are top-notch and include the Mission’s 12 to 18-month Life Change addiction recovery program.

MYTH #2: The Eugene Mission is not welcoming or inclusive with respect to non-traditional guests.

FACTS: Every person is made in the image of God and is worthy of dignity, respect and love. We welcome and care deeply for guests of all races, nationalities, faiths, orientations and identities.

MYTH #3: The Eugene Mission subjects guests to religious requirements and unwelcome religious overtures.

“...For I am the Lord who heals you.”

Exodus 15:26

FACTS: The Eugene Mission is an unabashedly Christian, faith-based organization. We are blessed to interact with our guests with acts of service, words of kindness, prayer and spiritual guidance when guests are open to the same. Participation in religious sharing or activities is purely voluntary and is not required for receipt of services. We acknowledge that mandatory chapel service was part of the traditional rescue mission model. The Eugene Mission discontinued required chapel service over 10 years ago.

MYTH #4: The Eugene Mission’s sobriety policy is proof that it does not really care about or understand persons struggling with addiction.

FACTS: Our hearts break for our precious neighbors suffering with substance use disorder. We understand that trauma and other uncontrollable situations often result in this broken coping mechanism. However, we cannot ignore the profound adverse impact. We cannot ignore the profound active drug and/or alcohol abuse has upon both the person and upon the hundreds of guests in our care who rely upon us to help maintain their sobriety, safety and ability to make healthy progress.

We welcome guests “as they are” (including those under the influence) into our rescue center that is a separate wing in our facility. Upon entry, use of intoxicating substances must cease in order to receive services. We provide robust addiction recovery programs and support. This, we have painfully concluded, is the most loving and effective approach to helping restore our guests to health, independence and community.

We invite you to tour our campus and learn more about the Eugene Mission by contacting Mike Tardie at miket@eugenemission.org.

In gratitude,

Sheryl Balthrop

Executive Director



Rebuilding Confidence One Day at a Time

Brian Brady is up early this morning enjoying breakfast in the Eugene Mission dining hall that opens at 6 o'clock. Chef Jake Reed arrived at 4 a.m. and has made a hearty egg bake with bell pepper, potatoes and sausage. It is the kind of breakfast that starts a day off well.

"I am a veteran helping veterans," says Brian with an affable smile. "I'm excited to work this week. I really love what I do."

As guests engaged in recovery and rebuilding their lives, Brian and other R³ and Life Change program participants are filling mugs with coffee, sharing stories of work over breakfast and heading out to begin the week. We see this every day at the Eugene Mission and it is inspiring!

"I came to the Mission after spending five days at Buckley's Sobering Services," shares Brian, who is frank about his battle with alcoholism. "I was facing homelessness and had lost everything. I'm an alcoholic. When I drink, I don't stop. I needed time in a program that supported my sobriety while I sorted out everything else. I have been in programs in the past but I relapsed. The Mission has supported me on so many levels to move forward with a toolbox of skills to live as a sober person."

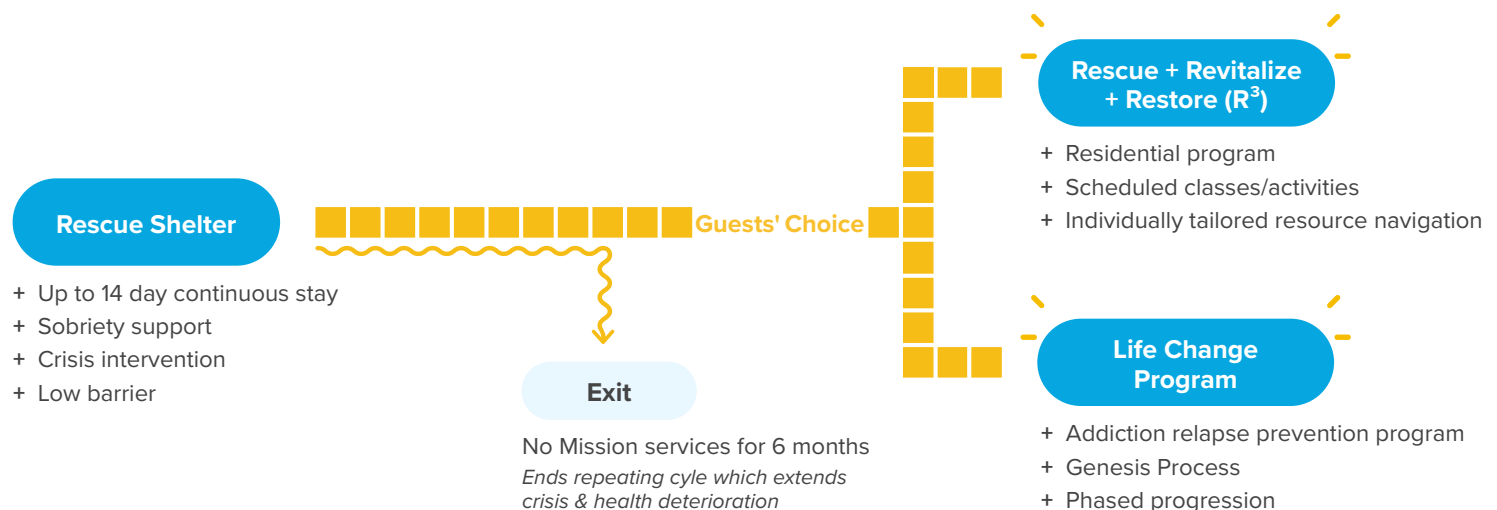
Brian displays new-found resolve and confidence, something he acknowledges did not happen overnight.

"I was discouraged coming in but my navigation team was encouraging and helpful," says Brian. "Recovery is possible but it takes time."

Brian's journey at the Eugene Mission began in the Rescue Shelter, the point of entry for all guests beginning their path off the streets. The Eugene Mission offers two residential programs: Rescue + Revitalize + Restore (R³) and the Life Change addiction relapse prevention program. All guests of the Eugene Mission are enrolled in one of the two programs after completing their stay in the low-barrier Rescue Shelter where guests are welcome, even if intoxicated, as long as they do not present a danger to themselves or others.

The Rescue Shelter offers a continuous period of stabilization and assessment up to 14 days. Most new guests are exhausted, malnourished, cold and worn down from the chaos of the streets and the ravages of addiction. By "continuous" we mean that guests no longer come and go, a practice that kept many guests stuck in patterns of addiction for years, even decades. Guests are supported with compassion, intake assessments, warm meals, showers and a beginning recovery plan. If a guest chooses to leave the Mission during their initial stay, they cannot immediately return. This reduces the crisis-repeat-crisis-repeat cycle that transactional services counterintuitively enable.

Advancement Through Eugene Mission Programs





“The Eugene Mission is the way to a better, blessed life! I know they were monumental in turning my life around and towards God.”

— Brian Brady

There is Hope for our guests; we see it every day. We approach remedying the underlying causes of each person’s circumstances in dignifying ways that recognize guests' unique gifts, not just their physical needs. Guests get better with the dignity of purpose-filled days, structure, authentic relationships and being in charge of their own path to recovery.

“I was in bad shape when I arrived here,” recounts Brian. “I was just five days sober and I needed to get back into the basics of following a daily routine. Ultimately, my alcoholism was completely out of control.”

Brian enrolled in the R³ Program and moved into the Eugene Mission’s residential Men’s Center. With the help of his assigned Navigator (the amazing Tanya Minor), Brian settled into a daily routine of classes, activities and life-skill mentoring that focused on community-building and accountability.

“Basically,” shares Brian, “I needed to get up, shower and get dressed. Even that basic self-respect had been lost.”

As Brian began to stabilize and get into a routine, he volunteered for daily shifts as the front office switchboard operator.

“The phones ring off the hook and I was answering phones, directing calls and helping people,” says Brian. “I was pretty good at it! I started to gain confidence in myself; self-confidence that had been lost.”

Brian is a veteran of the U.S. Navy and, with the help of his navigator, he was able to connect with Veterans Services and Easter Seals. Brian enrolled in a program to become a peer support specialist and with several months of sobriety and active engagement in the R³ Program, Brian began to put together a resume while working with his navigation team to look for career-track employment.

“I wasn’t ready to go back to work initially,” explains Brian. “I needed to be firmly grounded in my sober journey and I



Brian Brady working on his caseload

needed to regain my strength and physical endurance. When I started here, I was walking with a cane.”

Earlier this month, Brian was hired as Veterans Employment Specialist with the Easter Seals of Oregon. Brian was recently featured on the evening news visiting homeless encampments and helping with the annual Point-In-Time (PIT) count.

“I have a real heart for the people living out there,” shares Brian. “I have the lived experience to attest that there is a better way. There is hope.”

As this newsletter goes to print, Brian will be moving into an apartment secured through a veteran’s program.

“I thank the Eugene Mission for their compassionate support of me while holding me accountable to my goals,” says Brian. “I am so grateful and so excited for my future.”

Way to go Brian! We knew you could do it.

Notable Numbers For February 2023



1,921

volunteer relational engagement hours with Mission guests

Mission guest vocational training & life skill hours

6,755



71%

of Mission guests met program benchmarks

Meals served to unhoused individuals

63,199



100's

of men, women and children received Hope, a healthy living environment and all necessities along with relational engagement, programming and navigation services

Eugene Mission Volunteers

Volunteers at the Eugene Mission do far more than just help with serving meals. Our volunteers are High Impact People (HIP) serving alongside our guests, leading workshops and classes and sharing interests and sober hobby development. When our guests see healthy and committed volunteers demonstrating compassion and cheerful encouragement, it benefits and supports their progress in healing.

Volunteers begin with an orientation and tour of our 7.5-acre campus and an introduction to our R³ and Life Change programs. We are continuing to build our R³ Program and welcome volunteers to help lead classes and enrichment activities, outings and hobby development. To get involved, see the tour invitation below.



"I am a huge fan of The Eugene Mission's volunteer program that is focused on building healthy relationships. The guests here are people, not projects, and I want to invest in them. It has been a wonderful experience for all of us. I look forward to my Friday morning class which facilitates a 'personal growth' paradigm to guide people through discussions on how to build healthy habits. My class ends just as lunch is starting and I am frequently invited to stay for lunch, and I do! The food is great and so is the company."

— Jane Kammerzelt,
Eugene Mission HIP

Wish List

- + We would welcome a small tractor for groundskeeping on our 7.5-acre campus.
- + For our guests who are preparing for employment: razors, deodorant and men's pants in good condition sizes 26"-36".
- + For the women's fitness initiative: yoga mats, small hand weights, resistance bands, medicine balls.
- + We are in need of a 10-12 person passenger van to transport our guests to recovery groups, church, community service projects and appointments.

Ways to Give

When our guests get well, our entire community benefits. Our success rate with our guests multiplies through generations and through the broader community. The Eugene Mission does all of this with ZERO public funding—just private donations from generous community members and through the hard work of our staff and community volunteers. Please consider joining our efforts!

- + Become a monthly sustaining supporter at eugenemission.org/giving/
- + The Eugene Mission gratefully accepts donations of stock.
- + Remember the Eugene Mission in your estate planning: FEIN#93-0563797.
- + Donate using the envelope included with this newsletter.



Join Us for a Tour!

We love sharing our campus and stories with our greater community. Join us for a tour of our campus and new Hospitality Program in the Learning Center.

To schedule your visit contact Mike Tardie at:
miket@eugenemission.org.