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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ashley Addiction Treatment Celebrates 40 Years of Health and Happiness for People and Families

Prominent local leaders commemorate treatment provider's long-standing legacy and continued fight against substance use disorders

Havre de Grace, Md. (January 18, 2023)—[Ashley Addiction Treatment \(Ashley\)](#), a premier provider of both inpatient and outpatient treatment and recovery support services, is celebrating 40 years of bringing compassionate, evidence-based care to people who suffer from substance use disorders and those who love them.

To mark the milestone, on January 17 “Founder’s Day,” Ashley hosted alumni and prominent local leaders on its tranquil 147-acre inpatient campus nestled on the Chesapeake Bay in Northern Maryland. Both U.S. Senator Chris Van Hollen (D-Md.) and Harford County Executive Bob Cassilly applauded Ashley for its commitment to healing people and their families and its critical role in the worldwide fight against substance use disorders.

“Today, we celebrate four decades of Ashley and their passion for transforming and saving lives—both here in our community and nationwide,” said Cassilly. “At a time when so many people are struggling to build better lives, I’m honored to have them as such a crucial part of our community and find their generosity and commitment to service inspirational. I look forward to the expansion of their research capabilities, which will enable even more effective treatment approaches and continue to save lives for many more decades to come.”

In December 2022, it was announced that Van Hollen and Congressman C.A. Dutch Ruppertsberger secured \$420,000 for Ashley to educate Harford County High School students about substance use disorders.

“Forty years ago, Mae and Father Martin founded Ashley to improve how addiction is treated, and over the last decades, they have empowered individuals struggling with substance use disorder and given them and their families hope. I’m honored to recognize the tens of thousands of lives they’ve helped save and rebuild while also delivering a direct federal investment to bolster their student addiction prevention programs. With these funds, Ashley can help more young Marylanders steer clear of addiction and towards a bright and healthy future,” said Van Hollen.

Ashley’s rich history dates back to 1964, well before its founding, when Father Joseph C. Martin and Lora “Mae” Abraham first met during one of Father Martin’s internationally-recognized



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“Chalk Talks” about addiction and wellness. After completing treatment for alcoholism, Father Martin traveled the world spreading the message that addiction is a disease, not a moral failing, which was not widely recognized or heard of at the time. After hearing this notion for the first time, Abraham, who also suffered from alcohol use disorder, vowed to never let herself or anyone else feel ashamed of their circumstances. Soon after, the inception of Ashley was borne out of friendship and a shared mission to lift the stigma of addiction, especially for women who, at the time, didn't have a voice in the industry and were often shamed making it nearly impossible for them to seek help.

The visionary duo’s dream came to life when the doors of [Father Martin’s Ashley](#) opened in 1983. It’s credited as the first treatment center in the world to develop a specialized curriculum for relapse patients.

“Father Martin did something extremely powerful for Mae—he removed the stigma and shame from alcoholism—which ultimately, ignited the vision for Ashley, a legacy that would last well beyond both of their lives,” said Alex Denstman, Co-CEO and president of Ashley. “I was just 18 years old when I first came to Ashley for treatment. As someone in long-term recovery, I attribute much of what my life is today to our founders and that drives me to help others achieve the same. I can think of no better way to honor Father Martin and Mae than by continuing to build and expand upon the prestigious foundation they laid so more people can find and become who they want to be.”

Ashley is a long-standing and time-tested treatment provider that employs 320 compassionate staff members and has served more than 55,000 patients and their families. As a science-led organization, Ashley remains on the cutting edge of addiction treatment and publishes its own research, which not only strengthens its programs but helps inform the field of substance use disorder treatment. People continue to choose Ashley because of its wealth of experience, evidence-based and holistic approach to treatment and various levels of scholarships to assist patients in their recovery journey. At Ashley, connection is the key to recovery. Its campus provides beautiful landscape views and a variety of amenities to help naturally inspire, motivate and heal each patient’s mind, body and spirit.

To learn more about Ashley or to view its extensive list of services and programs that help those impacted by substance use disorders and their families, please visit ashleytreatment.org.

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ABOUT ASHLEY ADDICTION TREATMENT

Ashley Addiction Treatment (Ashley) is a nationally recognized leader in the evidence-based treatment of substance use disorders. Ashley’s comprehensive programs integrate a full spectrum



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of medical, clinical and holistic treatment methods and result in frequent publications of ongoing research into effective treatment methodologies. Ashley's driving principle – "everything for recovery" – guides healing for each individual with respect and dignity. Accredited by The Joint Commission and a division of Ashley Inc., a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, Ashley has treated over 55,000 patients since 1983 and has awarded more than \$65 million in scholarships to assist patient recovery. Offerings include inpatient and outpatient treatment, sobriety enrichment, community outreach, family and children's education, and specialty programs. For more information, please visit ashleytreatment.org.