



Safe passage from addiction to sober living.

# 2017-2018 ANNUAL REPORT



## Our Mission

The Bridge Behavioral Health is a licensed substance use treatment center located west of the Haymarket under the Rosa Parks Way Bridge in Lincoln, Nebraska.

Our mission is to help men and women with limited financial resources heal the wounds of substance abuse and become productive, contributing citizens.

We achieve our mission by delivering specialized, high-quality substance abuse detoxification and treatment programs. For successful recovery, we build character and provide tools essential to maintaining sobriety and establishing healthy relationships.

We help Lincoln's most vulnerable citizens to heal, grow, and transition to renewed lives in recovery.

## Annual Highlights

- Thanks to a grant from the Saint Anthony's Foundation, we hired a family navigator and expanded our family care.
- On August 21, we hosted a rooftop fundraising event to coincide with the solar eclipse called "*Out of the Shadow: bringing light to those facing addiction.*"
- On October 28, we held our 8th annual recovery fundraising event, Tailgate Straight, with eight teams and three celebrity judges.
- On May 31, we raised nearly \$30,000 on Give to Lincoln Day and held our annual car wash and burger event.

# New Leadership

**Dear friends,**

In February 2018, after 11 years as Executive Director, Phil Tegeler retired from The Bridge.

During my tenure on the Board of Directors and the Capital Campaign Steering Committee, I witnessed the transformation that took place at 721 K Street under Phil's leadership.

I personally wish to thank Phil for his guidance during my first year and his continued support of our mission at The Bridge. It's a privilege to follow in his footsteps.

As I reflect on my first year at The Bridge, a few words come to mind.

**Gratitude.** Though faced with multiple challenges during my first six months at The Bridge, I remain incredibly grateful to the staff, the Board of Directors, city, county, and university officials, and members of the community who stepped forward to provide support and helped to ensure The Bridge would continue to provide valuable services to our community.

**Compassion.** I am privileged to work with the most compassionate professionals who complete some of the most challenging work in our community, every day and every night. Our recovery advocates, counselors, case managers, nurses, and administrative staff ensure that our services are available to our community 24/7. I am inspired by their dedication to our clients and to our mission.

**Collaboration.** At The Bridge, we



Tammy Stevenson

Executive Director

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say big problems need big solutions. Collaborations, such as the ones we have with Second Baptist Church, the Food Bank, and Ann Ringlein at The Lincoln Running Co., give us the opportunity to build solutions that address substance use and behavioral health in our community.

Please take a few moments to review some of the highlights from last year.

With sincere appreciation,

*Tammy Stevenson*



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Phil Tegeler  
former Executive Director

# Thank You, Phil

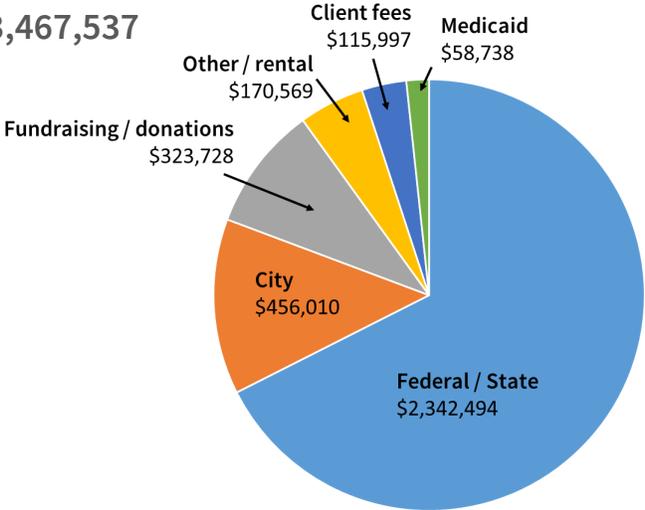
***“Phil’s legacy brought the organization’s printed mission statement to life every day. He transformed The Bridge into a safe, welcoming place for people with limited financial resources to heal. He epitomized servant leadership and treated everyone with dignity and respect.”***

**Chief Deputy Todd Duncan**

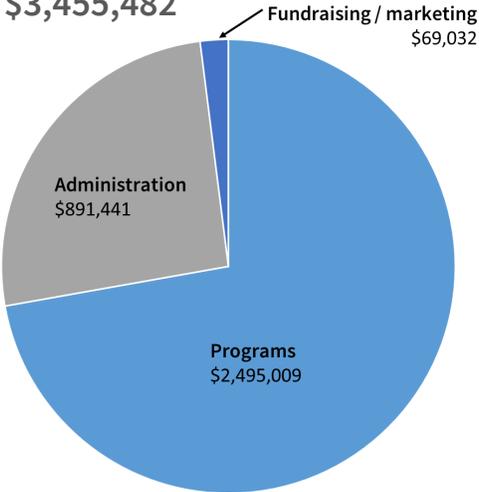
Lancaster County Sheriff’s Office  
The Bridge Board Member

# Financials & Demographics

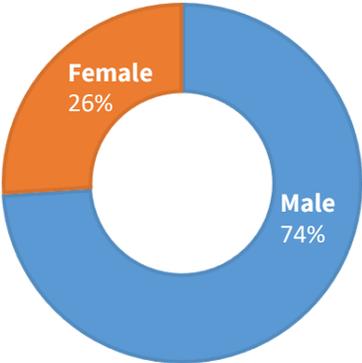
## revenue \$3,467,537



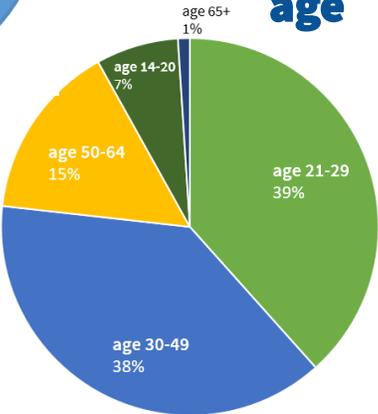
## expenses \$3,455,482



## gender



## age



## number of clients served

|                     |       |
|---------------------|-------|
| total services:     | 4,751 |
| individuals served: | 2,951 |

## annual income

|                     |      |
|---------------------|------|
| zero - \$ 9,999     | 51 % |
| \$10,000 - \$19,999 | 20 % |
| \$20,000 - \$29,999 | 12 % |
| \$30,000 - \$39,999 | 4 %  |
| \$40,000 - \$49,999 | 3 %  |
| \$50,000 - \$59,999 | 2 %  |
| \$60,000 +          | 6 %  |
| declined            | 2 %  |

## treatment beds



# Bob's Story ...

Bob's journey with alcohol and marijuana started in middle school in a small Nebraska town. By junior high, he was a ward of the state. By age 18, Bob was smoking cigarettes and taking cocaine, alcohol, hallucinogens, PCP, Xanax, opioids, and methamphetamines.

Meth quickly became his drug of choice. It was cheap, at first, and easy to get, he said.

After what he calls a "100 mph blackout," Bob woke up at Bryan Hospital to a behavioral health nurse named Lari, who works at both Bryan and The Bridge, where she job shares with another behavioral health nurse.

After discharge from the hospital, Bob signed himself in for his first treatment stint at The Bridge. He did well. He worked a good program. He listened to his counselors. And like so many others, he thought he had beat his addiction.

After he finished treatment, at age 19, his dad, often absent from his life, picked him up. How did they celebrate? With meth. And a lot of it. For three straight days. Bob was hooked again.

***"I had the seed for drug abuse planted earlier than others. Some of my bottoms were worse than others. Some people 'get' recovery quicker."***

Bob would relapse two more times. Ironic that for the second time, he woke up at Bryan, again to nurse Lari's smile.

After leaving the hospital, Bob again admitted himself to The Bridge.



When Bob gets stressed, he writes songs, plays his guitar, and talks to groups about his recovery from substance use disorder.

After his second stay in treatment, Bob transitioned into recovery, living a sober life for a couple of years. Then he stopped going to meetings. He broke it off with his sponsor. His repeated patterns of substance use returned.

Bob signed himself in for a third stay in treatment; this time, he was here for 10 weeks. Now 30 years old, after completing treatment with The Bridge, he transitioned to Houses of Hope, a peer agency. Bob then transitioned to 3/4 house living and completed that as well. He got his driver's license back, works a good steady job in construction, and rents a house with a peer also in recovery. He is sober, and he treasures a clean life.

Bob says he tries not to look too far back or too far forward. "That's when you get stuck," he says. He tries to live his life one day at a time.

***"My biggest fear now is losing it all. That's why I'm constantly sharing my story. You have to let people in. You have to admit your flaws. You have to be honest with yourself."***

Bob returns for Tuesday night continuing care meetings at The Bridge, and he attends a young people's meeting on Friday nights. He's planning his future, one day at a time.

**The Bridge hosts continuing care meetings on Tuesday nights. Clients have a better chance of recovery when they stay in touch with counselors and address transition challenges.**



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# Navigating Family Care



**Thanks to a grant from the St. Anthony Foundation and Laura Acklie & Jeff Schoemaker, The Bridge now has a family navigator and expanded family care services.**

Family care includes “before, during and continuing” support services for clients, family, and friends. Sometimes care might start with a phone call from a mom in crisis, for example. Her son or daughter is under the influence of drugs and alcohol. It scares the mom, and she calls us at The Bridge. Hillari, in her role as family navigator and passages coordinator, helps callers like her understand substance use disorders.

First, Hillari makes sure the *caller* is ok. It’s like affixing one’s own oxygen mask before helping someone else secure theirs. She asks if her child is safe. She asks if her child is currently receiving treatment. She talks to the mom about what *she* can do: talk to her child about voluntarily considering treatment. In short, Hillari helps the mom first.

Mary, our family care counselor, initiates a family approach to substance use disorders. During treatment, when the time is right, our family counselor gathers families together to address relapse triggers and boundary issues. They discuss family dynamics, holiday traditions, and communication. They get families to talk with one another. There’s no clear-cut timeline for recovery. No one-size-fits-all plan.

After a client transitions from treatment, it’s more important than ever that family support takes on greater meaning with a new sense of urgency for successful recovery. Clients need post-treatment support more than ever.

Family care is more successful with interaction, not intervention.



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# Civil Protective Custody

Civil Protective Custody (CPC), defined in Neb. Rev. Stat. Section 53-1, 121, has been offered by The Bridge since 1983. Law enforcement can admit someone under the influence of alcohol or drugs if they determine the person is a danger to themselves or others. This safe, medically-supervised program provides an alternative to jail when chronic addiction or episodic alcohol and/or drug use endangers lives.

Staff provide intervention, treatment, care coordination, and education. Clients are discharged to a responsible party or when they are no longer a danger to themselves or others, and are never held for more than 24 hours.

## Licensure

The Bridge has been licensed by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) for 35 years. Regulations have not changed since 2004. Previous on-site visits by DHHS Licensure produced no findings on how we operate CPC.

However, in the spring of 2018, DHHS reinterpreted the regulations and expressed concern that we were holding clients too long. In response, we adjusted our

discharge procedures, and DHHS renewed our license in September 2018.

## Funding

The Bridge is accredited in Crisis Stabilization, Detoxification/Withdrawal Management, Intensive Outpatient Treatment, and Residential Treatment. For over 20 years, we have received funding for CPC from the Division of Behavioral Health (DBH) and Medicaid. Yet in the spring of 2018, The Bridge was given until July 1 to submit a plan for accreditation to retain funding for CPC.

The only way to accredit CPC was to convert it to a social detox program, which would require substantial physical changes to the unit, and hiring additional staff. In the end, we would have served only 25% of the clients we serve today.

The Bridge notified DBH that we would not seek accreditation, as we saw no feasible way to meet these new requirements without financial support. Our budget now faces a \$160,000 loss in annual funding.

Despite this, The Bridge has and always will remain committed to serving these individuals in our community.

We continue to seek long-term, sustainable funding sources to make up this deficit.

## Community Impact

The Bridge is the only agency in the area that provides CPC. In FY2018, we processed more than 3,600 admissions. If we did not provide CPC, the Lancaster County jail, law enforcement, and hospitals would be greatly impacted. Most importantly, those with addiction would be impacted. Extreme weather, medical complications, and being unable to care for themselves while acutely intoxicated would most likely result in more crimes, accidents, and deaths.

*“LPD relies on partnerships and collaboration to keep those in Lincoln safe. Each year, thousands find themselves in crisis because of drugs and alcohol. Our officers work with The Bridge’s caring staff to limit victimization and promote an improved quality of life void of the controls of addiction. We are fortunate to have the services of The Bridge in our community.”*

**Chief Jeff Bliemeister**  
Lincoln Police Department



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*Thank you to our 2017-18 donors. Our apologies if any names have been omitted. Please contact us for immediate correction.*



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*How your donations help*

### A few examples of how your donations can work for us:

\$500

Can help replenish our emergency budget for client medications & doctor appointments

\$250

Can help us purchase two dozen treatment workbooks for our residential clients

\$100

Can help with emergency client transportation and vehicle maintenance

\$50

Can provide food and veterinary care for our service dog, Eddie

### Gift and Estate Planning

Did you know you can also use your will and estate plan as a tool to make a difference for years to come? You don't have to be wealthy to make a planned gift.

Any amount can make a meaningful difference. Please contact Executive Director Tammy Stevenson to discuss planned gifts.

[www.TheBridgeNebraska.org](http://www.TheBridgeNebraska.org)

