



## Fletcher Group Partner Success Story

# THINKING BIG IN WV

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## OFF AND RUNNING!

Pastor Matt Johnson wanted more. He was already running a sober recovery program from his Suncrest United Methodist Church in Morgantown when he contacted Karen Coburn, the Fletcher Group's Outreach and Engagement Specialist for West Virginia. "I'm not sure she knew what she was getting into," says Johnson. "But from that moment on we've been moving at warp speed—much quicker than anyone could have expected. It's amazing. The doors keep opening, the opportunities keep coming, and we just keep jumping in!"



### START SMALL...

"Our community really needs Recovery Housing," says Johnson. "But I didn't know where to begin till I met Karen." Now the path is clear. "We already have a property lined up and want to open a house for men and a house for women as soon as possible. We envision a larger facility down the road and we're also talking with West Virginia University about a sober living house for students. It's exciting. And, yes, we're busy!"

### ...BUT THINK BIG

With over a thousand United Methodist churches across the state of West Virginia, another challenge for Johnson is sharing his vision with other communities, particularly those that may lack the resources he's been blessed with in Morgantown. "The first step is building a proof of concept here," says Johnson. "But the vision of a statewide network of Recovery Houses is always in the back of my mind."

## INSPIRED

Matt Johnson's first talk with Fletcher Group Founder and Chief Medical Officer Ernie Fletcher left its mark. "I'll never forget Governor Fletcher saying, 'Matt, your dream is too small. Think big.'"

"I don't know how he knew, but for me that's been a driving force all my life. I've always wanted to be able to take a bigger risk and dream a bigger dream. So Ernie saying that was a lightning bolt moment. I knew instinctively that I was working with the right people and doing the right thing."







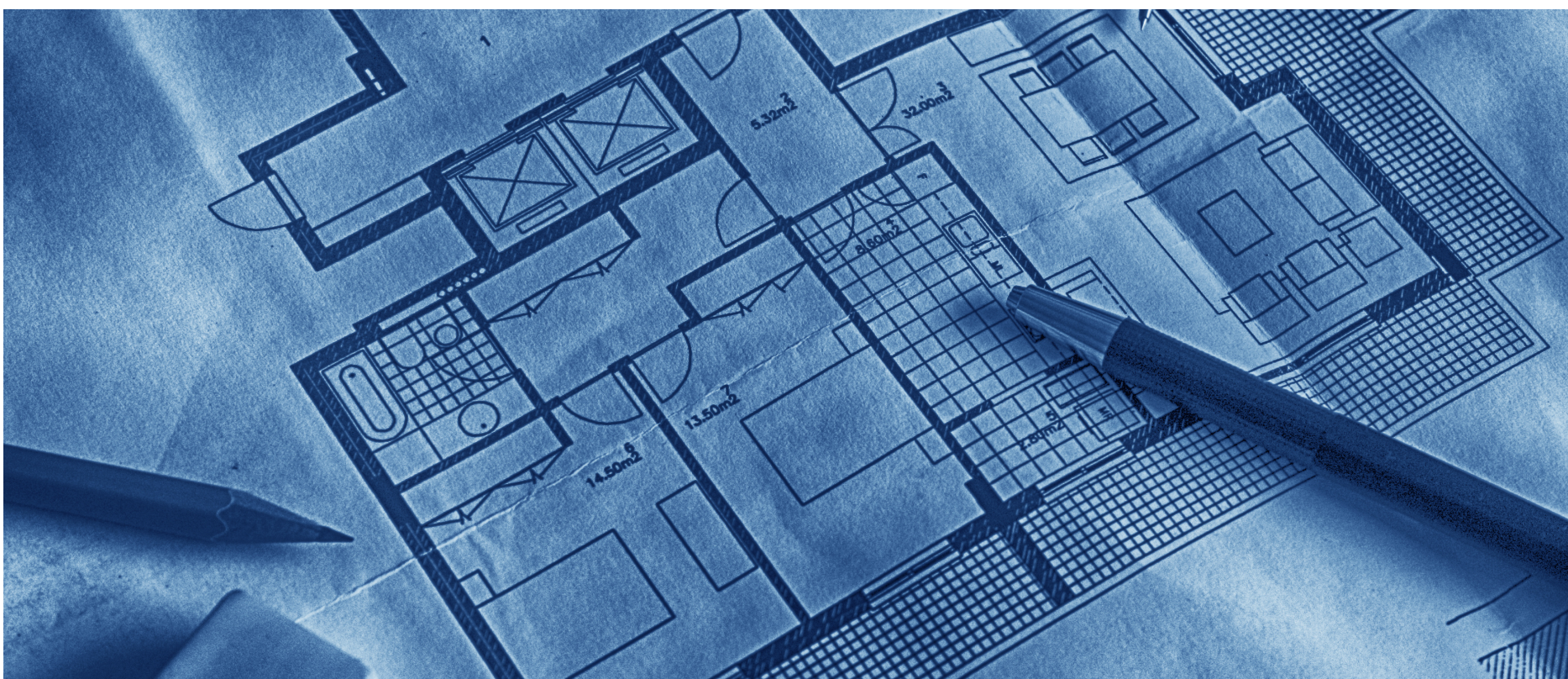
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## NOT "FOR," BUT "WITH"

*Matt Johnson has no history of substance use himself, but has learned to honor and defer to the lived experience of those who have. That includes members of his own staff who attend weekly training sessions in house management and peer-driven support. "I'm not the expert," says Johnson. "My job is to channel and highlight their experience in a way that helps others. I like to say that what we're doing is not work for people in recovery. It's work with people in recovery. That's an important distinction underpinning everything we do."*



## TRAINING DAY

*While meeting weekly with Coburn, Johnson and his three House Managers—Josh Weigner, Jodi Switzer, and Patrick Vaughn—receive weekly management training from Fletcher Group National Outreach and Engagement Specialist Tony White. White, Weigner, Switzer, and Vaughn share a passion driven by their own personal experience in long-term recovery.*

## DECISIVE HELP

*"I really wouldn't have known where to start without the Fletcher Group's direction, encouragement, and connections," says Johnson. "Thanks to their experience and proven record of success, I have so much more credibility than I would have on my own when presenting our vision to others. We simply wouldn't be where we are without Karen, Tony, and the Fletcher Group."*

## WHAT IT'S LIKE TO WORK WITH TONY

*"Our training sessions with Tony White are supposed to be an hour," says Matt Johnson. "But they're usually much longer because they're so rich with valuable information and insight. We love hearing of Tony's experiences and really appreciate the way he shares and draws us out as we work to develop the culture and partnerships our community needs."*

