



# ORIANA HOUSE, INC.

Fannie M. Lewis Community Corrections & Treatment Center

1829 East 55th Street

Cleveland, Ohio 44103

Phone (216) 881-7882 • Fax (216) 881-7896 • [www.orianahouse.org](http://www.orianahouse.org)

A NON-PROFIT SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT AND COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS AGENCY

## Oriana House Press Release

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Contact: Linda Weyandt, Public Relations Specialist, (330) 535-8116;

[lindaweyandt@orianahouse.org](mailto:lindaweyandt@orianahouse.org); [www.orianahouse.org](http://www.orianahouse.org)

### Collaborative Mural Emphasizing Mercy and Restorative Justice Installed on Oriana House Community Corrections Facility in Hough

A mural representing the societal need for mercy to accompany justice was installed August 30 on the exterior of the Oriana House Fannie M. Lewis Community Corrections & Treatment Center (CCTC), 1829 E 55th St., Cleveland, in the Hough neighborhood. The Mercy Mural, designed by Katherine Chilcote, Artist and Founding Director of Building Bridges Arts Collaborative, was inspired by the insights gained from four months of creative workshops with Oriana House community corrections clients and discussions with Cuyahoga County probation officers. Men and women who were sentenced to the residential reentry programs at Fannie M. Lewis CCTC and the McDonnell Center on Croton Avenue in Cleveland participated in the mural project. CCTC opened as a halfway house in 2001 and was renamed in 2011 in honor of Ms. Lewis, who served as the Hough-Ward 7 representative to Cleveland City Council from 1980 until her death in 2011.



In 2019, Chilcote arranged for Kisha Nicole Foster, a local poet, artist, and winner of a 2019 Cleveland Arts Prize for an emerging artist in literature, to lead workshops with more than 30 men and women who were serving court sentences in two of Oriana House's residential facilities. The writing workshops taught the participants how to creatively reflect on their experiences in the criminal justice system. Chilcote partnered with a team of probation officers from Cuyahoga County to get their perspective as part of the criminal justice system and worked with them to apply for grant funding for the project.

"The Mercy Mural provides a voice to the public of how we aspire to work towards restorative justice," said Chilcote. "It reflects a vast array of people's experiences in the criminal justice system that have been compiled into a visual portrayal of mercy, emulating the ways we should care for people who are reentering our society."

The mural has been produced on aluminum pieces that fill a 22-by-38 foot wall and consists of a poem surrounded by nine paintings. The images show a sequence of one-to-nine people holding a long blue tapestry, symbolizing mercy. Images of the tapestry show it being carried, extended,

uplifted, and offering protection as it is passed from one person to another. The poem, which Foster wrote, is printed on the same blue background as the tapestry and is a compilation of the insights and experiences provided by the Oriana House residents and probation officers.

Oriana House President and CEO Jim Lawrence said the agency embraces projects like this that offer community partnerships and provide ways for the agency and its clients to improve the neighborhood. "The Mercy Mural is the fourth mural to go onto an Oriana House building in Hough," said Lawrence. "This project taught our clients ways to process and express their experiences and to explore the impact that everyone can have in restoring justice. Many of the men and women in our programs have incredible artistic talent so there's a tremendous benefit to providing them opportunities to

#### Administrative Offices

885 East Buchtel Avenue

P.O. Box 1501, Akron, Ohio 44309-1501

Phone (330) 535-8116 • Fax (330) 996-2233

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tap into that and learn how to use those skills in ways to impact positive change.”

Lawrence added that the Fannie M. Lewis CCTC building was the ideal location to put another mural. “Ms. Lewis spent her life fighting to give others the opportunity to have a better life,” Lawrence stated. “She recognized the value and critical need to invest in the neighborhood and in the people who live here; and she always supported Oriana House in those efforts.”

The other murals Oriana House has in Hough include two that artist Christopher Darling designed and painted with Oriana House clients - one at the North Star Neighborhood Reentry Resource Center, 1834 E. 55th Street, (2015) and the other at the Oriana House Hough Center, 6000 Hough Avenue, (2017) – and one on the south side of the Fannie M. Lewis Community Corrections & Treatment Center (where the Mercy Mural is) that was painted in 2001 by Cleveland artist Mark E. Howard. In working with Chilcote

on the Mercy Mural, Lawrence also had Building Bridges Arts Collaborative restore the mural painted by Howard and apply a varnish to all three painted murals that will preserve them for at least another 20 years.

Funding for the Mercy Mural was provided by 225 individual donors of Building Bridges Arts Collaborative, and Cuyahoga Arts and Culture.

Oriana House is a private, non-profit agency that provides community corrections services and substance abuse treatment throughout Ohio. Building Bridges Arts Collaborative has studios in Cleveland and serves the community through public art, with a focus on bringing creative practices into environments of healing, recovery and reconciliation. <https://www.cacgrants.org/grant-programs/tools-for-cultural-partners/logos/>

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