



Letters to the Editor

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Testimony to Vineyard House's good works

To the Editor:

I am writing this letter to make our community aware of Vineyard House, an organization that may not be widely known, but whose existence is so crucial — not only to the individual that is personally struggling with drug and alcohol addictions, but also to the people in the lives of the afflicted. The residual damage of these diseases has a trickle down effect on the entire community, especially one as unique and isolated as Martha's Vineyard.

I have a friend who has been haunted by the demons of drug addiction and alcoholism for years. He has suffered from depression for much of his life. It has been a long and difficult road. Last year he went to a detox facility off-island.

He made progress at this institution but at the end of the six-week treatment period he was terrified to come home to the Vineyard. He did not feel ready. He knew he would be coming back to an environment filled with the same stressors and triggers he had previously been unable to manage.

Fortunately he was able to secure a spot at the Vineyard House. He has been a resident in this safe, supportive atmosphere for a number of months. He has been able to slowly transition into his old job. He benefits from the unity felt with the others who are fighting the same battles. He is healing and moving in a positive direction.

I can honestly and sincerely say that the Vineyard House saved my friend's life. The environment has offered him a safe haven with stability and support. These insidious diseases are all-consuming, unpredictable, and continually threatening.

Success can only be measured one day at a time. Hopefully, this friend will continue to recover. Hopefully, he will be able to look back on this part of his life as the distant past. Hopefully, he will remember how the people affiliated with Vineyard House reached out to him, making it possible for him to gain confidence and eventually start believing in himself again.

Vineyard House benefits not only the people struggling with addiction, but also those who are connected — by "six degrees of separation" — all the other victims of the disease. I thank them for their dedication in offering this parachute for a soft landing.

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