



MEET GEORGE FOLK

Each of us has an opportunity to leave a legacy – an opportunity to live for a purpose that’s bigger than ourselves. George Folk, Founder of both Action Alliance Foundation and its for-profit partner, Action Alliance Services, has done just that.

A native of Pennsylvania, George started drinking at the age of 15. It became a daily habit, except for his four years in the Navy. During those years, he didn’t drink at sea, but made up for it every 30 days or so, when his ship was in port.

Following his honorable discharge from the Navy, George began working in construction, eventually becoming a construction supervisor. Unfortunately, his drinking also increased during this time. In 1989, he achieved a period of sobriety, but began drinking again in 1991, resulting in DUIs and a near-death motorcycle accident.

In 1995, a judge gave George a choice – prison or moving to a recovery residence. He chose the recovery residence.

George also got a major wake-up call when he was ordered to attend a Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) Victim Impact Panel as part of his sentence. One of the panel’s speakers was a woman whose husband had recently been killed by a drunk driver. Ironically, the woman’s husband had been convicted of drunk driving years before, when he killed two children on bicycles. Attending the impact panel, working the AA program and residing at a recovery residence each made a major impact on George’s pursuit of sobriety, which is now 29 years strong.

The role a well-run recovery residence can make on saving and changing someone's life was clear to George from the start. After achieving a period of sobriety, he started working for the company that owned his initial recovery residence, including roles as house manager and general manager. Seven years after moving into his initial recovery residence, George acquired six homes and formed a new entity: Action Alliance Services (AAS). He grew the business from six to 18 homes in just six months. Simultaneously, he served as President of the Board of Directors for Woodglen Recovery Junction, the most successful non-profit treatment center in Orange County, for 17 years.

"There are so many stories of people whose lives have been both saved and changed because of Action Alliance. One particularly memorable one is a resident who was homeless for 30 years, living under a bridge. He was dying. We were able to get him into detox, move him into one of our homes, and he's now seven years sober," says George. Over the years, AAS realized that there is a segment of the homeless substance abuse community that is not immediately employable and has no other source of income. As a result, these individuals have been unable to qualify for a bed at an AAS house. Action Alliance Foundation (AAF) was established in 2021 in response to this problem. "As a non-profit, AAF raises charitable funds to help sponsor homeless alcoholics and addicts who need time to heal and become employable," explains George.

Away from Action Alliance, George enjoys spending time with his family (his wife, two daughters and five grandchildren), and is also an avid golfer. "Running Action Alliance helps in my own sobriety journey," says George. "You've got to give it away to keep it." He continues to work the AA program, and is even the long-time sponsor of one of AAF's board members.

"I get so much satisfaction out of my work with Action Alliance," concludes George. "God told me to do this, and I said ok!"