

WESTMINSTER *House*

ADDICTION RECOVERY FOR YOUTH GIRLS
AND ADULT WOMEN SINCE 1981



ANNUAL REPORT 2019 – 2020



EXECUTIVE REPORT

Susan Hogarth | Executive Director

Over the past three decades, Westminster House has learned to appreciate the history of crises that have propelled change to meet the needs of women who struggle with addiction. In 1990, the society evolved to support women addicted to synthetic heroin as a result of the China White overdose crisis. Answering to the Greater Vancouver Housing crisis in 2010, Westminster House opened its first sober living residence for women to access affordable, safe housing after the completion of residential treatment. In 2017, 4,000 Canadians died due to opioid use. The crisis prompted medication-assisted therapy (MAT) and a new life-saving treatment at Westminster House. To support youth addicted to illicit substances, in 2018, Westminster House opened the residential youth program for girls.

This year Westminster House supported 189 women to access our service. 92% of all clients we serve have listed alcohol as a contributing factor to their substance use disorder.

As a commitment to strengthening the message of recovery, we took part in sharing our brand of recovery across Canada in partnership with the Last Door Society¹, a valuable opportunity to connect with people and service providers and as far as Halifax and share our solutions amongst each other.

Westminster House experienced another record-breaking revenue year that allowed us to help more women and their families each year. We raised over \$328,000 in fundraising and developed new business.

We ended 2020 in the face of the coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) COVID-19 global pandemic, and social distancing measures increased the threat to the lives of addicts. Westminster House responded by changing the delivery of the recovery program. Westminster House, being a social model program for 39 years, restructured its programs to reflect the new normal and underwent a voluntary lockdown. Zoom Rooms were installed, as well as computer labs and web-based client services. We transformed our programs from a connection based social model to an electronic-based social model.

Our successes could not be possible without the continued support of the donors who believe in the work we do. I want to thank our volunteers, who give Westminster House the gift of time. Our alumni base continues to grow and has gone above and beyond in to support our new clients and giving back with fundraising initiatives. Thank you to the Board of Directors who possess the unique skill of understanding my vision. Thank you to everyone – from our kitchen monitors to the women who did the heavy lifting. I am grateful for our clients who, just for today, choose to find a new way of life free from addiction.

Finally, thank you to the talented teams at Westminster House who have worked tirelessly through challenging circumstances to help save someone's life. You truly have set a standard of care, and I am proud to work alongside you in our shared belief that "Women Do Recover."

OUR VISION

women do recover

OUR MISSION

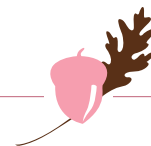
To provide residential addiction treatment for women through integrated social recovery, education, and wellness.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Scott Emerson, President
Michelle Mix, Vice President
Lisa Hutchings, Secretary/Treasurer
Mary Broadland, Director

MANAGEMENT TEAM

Susan Hogarth
Dr. Alison Granger-Brown
Tanis Mauice
Patricia Sekutowska
Dr. Dennis Wardman
Asha Altun
Jordan Veller
Tara Miller
Jason Gray



1. *Addiction Treatment for Male Youth, Adults & Families located in Canada's most vibrant and successful Recovery Community*



BUILDING ALLIANCES WITH OUR CLIENTS

Dr. Alison Granger-Brown | Clinical Director

Over the past year, we have identified and challenged specific processes and approaches within our practice; and particularly discussed the techniques to build an alliance with clients supporting them to work independently, thereby avoiding overly controlling their process. This is especially important when the use of fentanyl or fentanyl-laced drugs increases the risk of death significantly. We have discussed the ability to make numerous decisions for our clients, but there is always one that they alone will or could make.

Throughout the last year, our teams have worked to define their respective scope of practice better. In doing so, understand the ways in which they are able and qualified to support clients, including knowledge of when to refer clients to appropriate community resources. This supports the continued care of clients throughout their ongoing recovery and empowers clients to access community-based supports wherever they return to.

The trauma-informed approach is reflected in group “therapeutic” processes as clients are offered opportunities to understand the individualized impact of their story and the relationship to coping strategies. The teams have worked to integrate a foundation of trauma-informed care that works to empower clients. An example is the new ‘Trauma-Informed Care Approaches Training Manual’ developed by one of our staff who is studying for a degree in Psychology.

In the next year, we plan to develop and disseminate training so that our staff are empowered and resourced to deliver even higher quality services and understand the parameters of their influence. We hope the teams will participate in and integrate learning from professional development opportunities that support the ongoing education of the intersection between the complex needs of clients and addiction recovery.

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2019 HIGHLIGHTS

189

women accessed our recovery services

78%

completed treatment

636

clients called to be put on our waitlist

RECOVERY PROGRAMS

Patricia Sekutowska | Program Supervisor

Our program has made significant progress in terms of adaptability to the current global situation.

51

women participated
in OnGoing Recovery

16-20

women participated
in Alumni Group
each week

The demographic of women that are accessing residential treatment often encounter numerous challenges during their treatment process. Many factors impede interest in and commitment to following through with the process. These include the anticipation of not being able to use substances to cope with life stressors, to manage weight gain, or managing mental health symptoms. Furthermore, women that are mothers have an exceptionally difficult time moving through guilt and shame around their role as mothers and how addiction interfered with their ability to do so.

For the past 39 years, Westminster House has thrived using the bio-psycho-social-model. Our clients have exposure to an atmosphere of recovery in a community setting that has made recovery look attractive and appealing. Our continuum of care provides opportunities for our alumni to come back to Westminster House and stay engaged in our program through sponsorship and continued care programming. Due to COVID-19 and the need for physical distancing restrictions, the social component of our program has been significantly affected.

Our clinical team recognizes the complexity of the women that we are working with and the need for best practice. We have a new addition to our team, Lee Ann Olson, Addiction Counselor. She adds a cultural component to our program with her Indigenous teachings in a weekly cultural group. Cultural programming includes smudging, meditation, learning about interconnectedness among all living things, and exploring various rituals. This aspect of our program allows the clients to gain insight and a deeper understanding of the importance of finding a spiritual connection as a solution to their behavioural stumbling blocks.

We have also recognized that body image and self-esteem can be a significant hindrance to a woman's healing process. Bringing awareness to this is the answer. The team has put together psycho-educational groups on body shaming, disordered eating, self-love, and body positivity. Having an open dialogue about this undoubtedly alleviates some of the stigmas and fosters an environment of overall wellness. We also refer women to an outpatient eating disorder program when we recognize that someone's needs are out of our scope of practice.

Another added benefit that our program has gained this year is our master's practicum student and parenting clinician, Joti Kalar. Joti comes to the facility two days per week to do a parenting group with the women who are mothers. She creates a safe space for these women to talk about their fears, hopes, and difficulties around being a mother in recovery. Joti also offers 1:1 sessions with each of the women in her group. The feedback from the clients has been remarkable. Whether the women have children in their care, have ministry involvement, or their children have grown adults with broken relationships, these sessions begin addressing the underlying issues to move towards the ultimate goal of repaired healthy relationships.

Our programming has made significant progress in terms of adaptability to the current global situation. We are continuing to seek out innovative ways to maintain our social model of recovery despite the obvious barriers. We have replaced the daily 12-step meetings with online zoom meetings, giving the clients an opportunity to experience a sense of the 12-step community all over the world. Our wellness program offers meditation, acupuncture, fitness class, and cultural group. I am proud to report that our entire team has truly come together to ensure that women are able to get what they need when they come to Westminster House.



CULTURAL GROUP

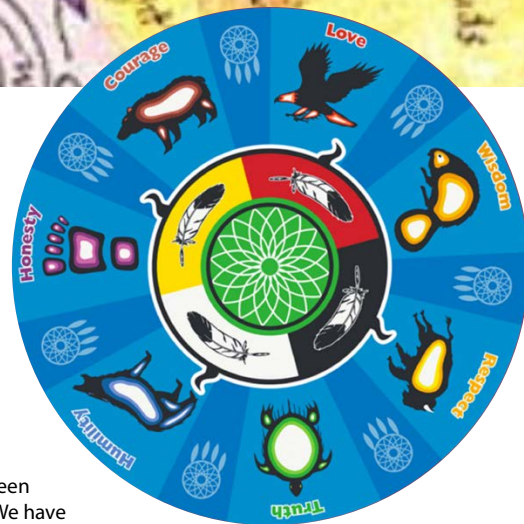
Lee Ann Olson | First Nations Counsellor

It has been a gift to have the opportunity to add a Westminster House First Nations group to programming. The cultural group includes First Nations based teachings incorporated with the bio-psychosocial model and 12 step philosophy. Westminster House is excited to offer this alternative holistic component of healing for the first time since 1981, based on the principle that 'Culture saves lives' and the groups focus on teachings from the Elders.

Bringing these teachings has helped women grow spiritually and is an introduction to what has been lost in addiction and has, in its way, contributed to empowering women in their healing journey. We have had the opportunity to have guest speakers to share their knowledge and share how Culture had a direct impact on their recovery. Drums were gifted and painted to represent the four directions and the strength of the women who are honoured and respected as life-givers.

There is an opportunity on the rise to take the women to a sweat lodge and have teachings shared based on ceremony and community. There is a vision to expand the group and have more First Nations teachings to connect with the creative side, such as beading and making dream catchers.

Culture Club Groups include the Medicine Wheel, the Four Directions, The Seven Grandfather Teachings, Smudging, Drumming, Singing, Tipi teachings and women's pow wow dancing.





ADDICTION MEDICINE

Dr. Dennis Wardman | Addiction Physician

When clients better understand the impact of medication on their health, we see a remarkable increase in optimal health outcomes.

Prescribing the right sequence and dose of medication to women who need long term mental health and addiction medication continues to be a challenge. The use of opioid replacement therapy (ORT) and opioid agonist therapy (OAT) can be a struggle for the patients who are treated for their addiction in a 12-step community. As an expert and trained professional in addiction medication, I am concerned about the medical needs of every woman, especially given the relapse rate. Our goal is to have the women stabilize in treatment before making decisions on medical needs.

This year, we created a comfortable doctors' space with a waiting area that created privacy for each patient. We have had successful outcomes in treating women with Opioid dependence and opening the doors to the alumni to continue to access addiction medicine has proven to be successful in monitoring their medical needs. This practice has further increased the recovery rate for the Westminster House program.

PHARMACY

Salim Datu | Pharmacist

The pharmacy staff are responsible for the dispensing, counselling and review of all medications for residential clients and alumni of Westminster House.

Taking a multidisciplinary team approach, we aim to solve challenges such as multiple health disorders, complex medication management needs, adverse drug reactions and opioid agonist therapy (OAT). We create functional medication plans for each client that includes education and support during treatment and after. When clients better understand the impact of medication on their health, we see a remarkable increase in optimal health outcomes.

YOUTH PROGRAM

Asha Altun | Addictions Counsellor

Westminster House has always envisioned an all-girls youth treatment program. The challenge with this dream was the lack of resources and, most importantly, funding. Developing a program geared towards youth girls and the challenges they face as a new generation entering the world of substance abuse takes specialized workers, and counsellors trained in the field of adolescent youth, and the means to break out of the shadow of harm reduction. We had to let the community of health care providers, parents and youth themselves know that there is another option to not just abstinence, but a fully recovered life from drugs and alcohol and that is Westminster House.

We jump-started the youth program in August of 2018 and hired trained youth professionals and members of the Canadian Addiction Counsellors Certification Federation. We developed the basis of the program, including groups, schedules, policies and procedures. In the spring of 2019 we developed a creative component, providing the youth program with artistic outlets to express themselves. Since opening, the youth program has received donations from private and public who believe in our philosophies. We have supervised practicum students from Douglas College, had volunteers from the New West Recovery community, and developed relationships with service providers.

We had 17 youth girls participate in our program.

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Timeline

- **1981**
A group from the local AA community in New Westminster rented a house for women whose lives had been devastated by addiction and had nowhere to live. The Julien House Society was formed and incorporated in April that same year.

- **1985**
The Society formalized the recovery program and incorporated the 12 steps. The women began attending three twelve-step meetings per day, one of them the morning meeting of Narcotics Anonymous – a meeting now referred to as AMNA; a meeting the women still attend today.

- **1986**
The future of Westminster House became uncertain. Operating the house was not an easy task, bills had to be paid, and for four years the directors of the society used out of pocket money to keep the doors open.

- **1990**
The Society moved to the location on Seventh Street, and a bingo license from the provincial government was issued to raise funds, ensuring Westminster House would be able to continue to provide services to women.

- **1999**
The Society entered into a contract with the Province to provide program funding.

- **2000**
Awarded the Donor Award as a finalist for excellence in the prevention and treatment of substance abuse.



ADMISSIONS

Jordan Veller | Operations Manager

Last year, the admissions at Westminster House were a roller coaster; many up and down days and up and down weeks. After every slow-wave, there is always a wave of busy-ness, and we would have to turn women away. The most rewarding for me was to witness the clients who accessed Westminster House treatment programs made positive changes.

This seems to be the pattern at Westminster House, and our solution is to make the best of the quiet times by facilitating more intimate groups and provided extra counselling. It also gives us a chance to catch up on all the missed (printing of invoices) and paperwork that we push to the side while we focus on helping our clients recover. After all, our mission is to help women; paperwork is secondary.

Here is a snapshot of our successes at Westminster House between April 1, 2019 – March 31, 2020: 636 clients called to for Waitlist. We had 189 clients come through Westminster House and 181 came as smokers. 51% of these clients came in with a dependency on alcohol versus all other drugs. 78% of these women completed treatment, and of those women, 51% opted into the OnGoing Recovery Aftercare Program.

51%

of clients dependent
on alcohol versus
other drugs

96%

of clients
were smokers

MEAL PROGRAM

Tara Miller | Kitchen Manager Chef

One of our goals this year was to expand our menu at Westminster House to include more plant-based meals and explore different protein options available while introducing a variety of fruits and vegetables to our clients. We revamped our menu to include a minimum of 5 plant-based meals per week as well as gluten-free, dairy-free, and vegan options for our clients with specific dietary needs. Our nutrient-rich power bowls and Buddha bowls have been well received, showing clients it is possible to make easy, cost-effective, and nutritious meals when they leave our program.

We use local produce through our supplier as well as supporting local businesses and utilizing community gardens in our neighbourhood. In our horticulture program at the "Last Door's" Keystone² resort, client's plant, garden, and pick produce to bring back to our facility. We are bringing food from the farm to our Westminster House table.

In our alumni program, we allow alumni and second stage housing residents to work alongside our chefs with food preparation, stocking supplies and serving our clients. This allows alumni to give back to Westminster House while building connections with current clients as well as gaining valuable skills needed for employment and other future opportunities.

2. *Keystone is our community garden located in the hills of Mission, BC. The garden is owned and operated by Last Door Recovery Society.*

51,275

meals were served to
clients, alumni &
their families

2002

The Society receives CARF Accreditation (Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities) a signal that the program is committed to continually improving services, encouraging feedback, and serving the community.

2003

Westminster House signs the first contract with Fraser Health as a Stabilization and Transition Living Residence for Women.

2004

The Society purchased the property on Seventh Street with a Federal Grant to provide long-term sustainability of the program.

2009

The Society won a Federal Grant and did the first capital renovation that included a new kitchen, exterior upgrade, and full electrical upgrade.

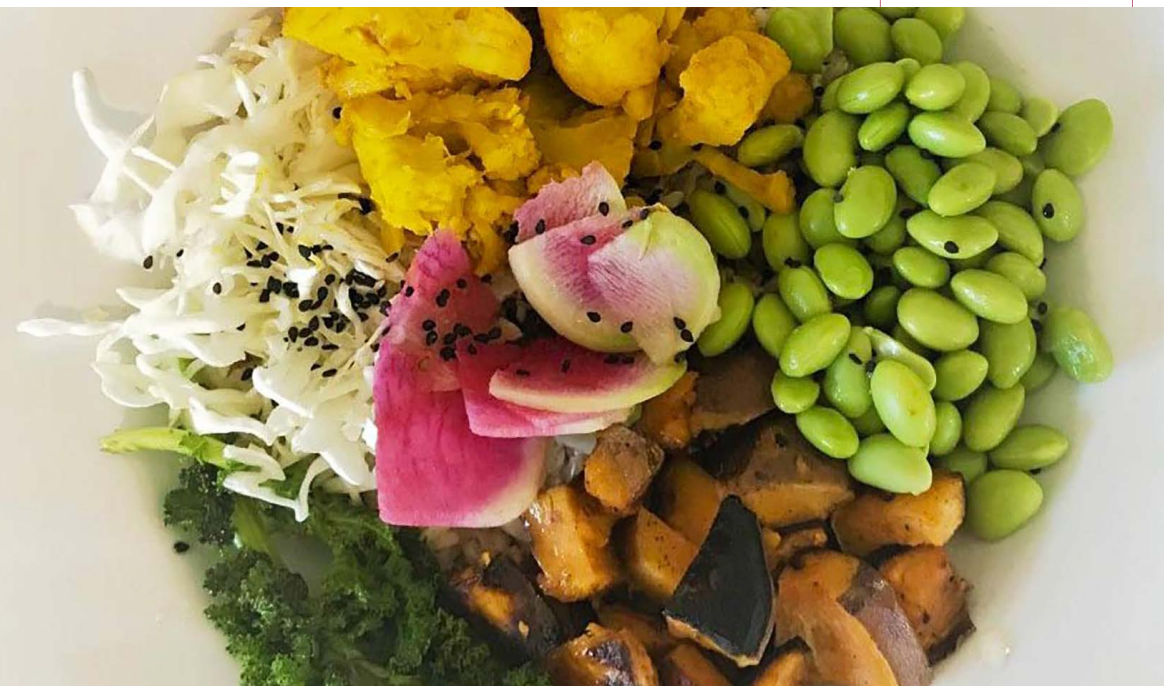
The Society re-brands introducing the Acorn as the symbol of recovery as an acorn needs to hit the ground hard to reveal the strong oak within.

2010

The Society secured a property on Seventh Street for an aftercare pilot project named the Transitional Living and OnGoing Recovery Project

2011

The Society secured funding from a donor and the OnGoing Recovery Program was formalized.



2012

The Society purchased a property on Third Ave. for Ongoing Recovery Sober living. The facility is used to provide safe, affordable housing to women who had completed the Westminster House Primary Care Program.

2013

The "Win a Vespa Raffle", was introduced and raised over \$70,000 over a 5 year period for OnGoing Recovery.

2015

The Society won a Federal Grant and underwent the second capital renovation including a welcoming courtyard, commercial kitchen, and bistro style dining hall.

The Society introduced the Meal Program welcoming families and alumni to participate in weekly meals and events at the facility.

The Westminster House partners with Douglas College and creates the Award of Education. Nicole Karpluk was awarded the first scholarship and enrolled in the Youth Justice Program in partnership with Douglas College.

2016

The Society hosts a 35th Anniversary Tea with Friends Celebration where the board of directors reveal the renaming of the Society to Westminster House Society.

A Sober Living residence is opened with a family unit suitable for children.



BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Kaley Merritt

Creating an Aftercare plan after treatment is a crucial part of the recovery process. Aftercare plans would include programs like Relapse Prevention, Alumni Group and ongoing counselling. Alumni also have access to our Meal Program for them and their families as well as education bursaries and employment opportunities.

In addition, there is an opportunity to take part in a 5-day retreat at Rainbow Lodge, which builds unity and connection amongst our Alumni. However, there is no funding for these Aftercare programs, and we rely entirely on fundraising initiatives to make these programs possible. Providing Aftercare programs and keeping our Alumni connected help not only with the ongoing Recovery of the Alumni but also serve as role models for our new women.

Over the last year, we did a 50/50 Raffle for Recovery, where our alumni went throughout the greater Vancouver area selling tickets and doing outreach. Our booth could be seen at events, festivals, trade shows, and malls throughout the summer. Raffle for Recovery raised a total of \$15,920. Our fundraising team participated in car washes, garage sales, selling Purdy's chocolates, social media contests and hosted our first ever Spaghetti Karaoke Dance. The Spaghetti Karaoke Dance sold out, selling 200 tickets to an evening with delicious food and entertainment.

Because of our efforts, 51 women participated in OnGoing Recovery, 16-20 women participated in Alumni Group each week, 70 women participated in the Rainbow Lodge Recovery Retreat. \$25,405 was invested into education bursaries, and 3,895 meals were served to Alumni and their families.

\$328,000

total fundraising

\$15,920

raised from
Raffle for Recovery

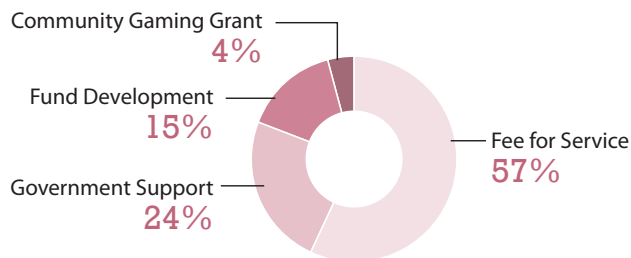


FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

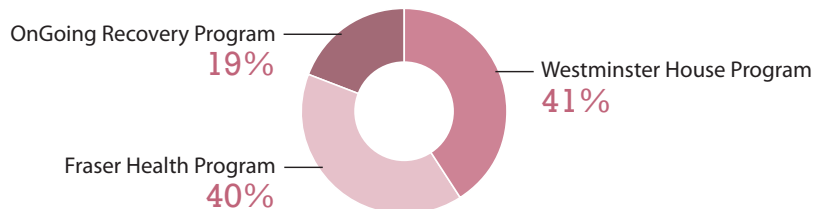
Lisa Hutchings | Treasurer

(Audited)

REVENUE



PROGRAM EXPENSES



Audited Financial Statements available upon request.

2016

The Society receives a Day of Giving from Avison and Young, and a second courtyard is built.

Westminster House received non-profit of the year from the New Westminster Chamber of Commerce.

2017

Fraser Health provides a contract increase to Westminster House.

New West Recovery is branded as a community project with Last Door Society. The Westminster House recovery message goes on the road across Canada.

2018

Westminster House Society Board of Directors approve a youth program.

Raffle for Recovery implemented.

Opened the Youth Program that included family suites for visitation.

Purchased a new van.

2019

Implemented a First Nations group to programming.



Thank you to our generous donors

OAK TREE

Strong and Indestructible

Province of British Columbia
Wheeler Family Foundation
Hockey Helps the Homeless
Ministry of Mental Health
& Addictions
Private Foundation
RBC Foundation
Seedling Foundation

SAPLINGS

Branches reaching out to others

Westminster House Alumni
Government of Canada
Rainbow Lodge Recovery Retreat
Fraser Health Authority
Alex Cristall
Mr. and Mrs. PA Woodward's
Foundation
People's Pharmacy
Duke Point Truck Parts
Washington University in St. Louis

ROOTS

Strength that Holds

Susan Hogarth
Darlene Galer
Brent Tully
Kaley Merritt
Michelle Mix
Barbara & Harry Veller
Reginald Daggitt

OAK FLOWER

Where it all begins

City of New Westminster
Robert Toews
Dennis Wardman
Ashley Altun

Cammy Coughlin

Strong Side Conditioning

Bill Good

Linda M. Lane

Saphida Migabo

Sylvia Hotel

Tanya Tully

ACORN

The Heart of the Process

David and Marion Edwards

Purdy Chocolates

Katilyn Davies

Ladies Auxiliary Branch 2

Rosalie A. Bergen

Sherrill Purves

Trish Bannerman

Catherine Mendoza

Richard Jones

TWC Recovery Society

United Way Thompson

Nicola Cariboo

Charlford House

Barbara Allison Leighs

Carolyn Millar

John Newton

Last Door Recovery Society

Lori McCarnan

Mary Benn

Raymond & Lenora Pinkoski

Ronald Argue

Ruby Peterson

Sharlene Lively

Turning Point Recovery Society

The Benevity Community
Impact Fund

Madelaine Bak

Geraldine Harder-Anderson

Harold Kinsey

Jane Thornthwaite

Meghan Stewart

Shirley Johnson

Theresa Charron

Wanda Kirkpatrick

Lisa Dewick

Shannon Merritt

Tanya McCullough

Lisa Harry

Mark Ware

Suzie Otty

Thank you to the many people who donated anonymously and for those who were able to donate under \$50. We greatly appreciate your support.

Thank you to the everyone who purchased a raffle ticket or merchandise to support Westminster House.

WESTMINSTER House

Westminster House Society

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**The Westminster House
Acorn is a symbol of hope.**

**An acorn has to hit the
ground hard to break open,
grow, and reveal the strong
oak within.**