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**EX-OFFENDERS NOT FORGOTTEN, IGNORED, AVOIDED, OR FEARED
For Parolees With a History of Substance Abuse, Bill's Place Is More Than Home In Many Ways**

Gainesville, GA, August 19, 2009 – Nine months ago, it was improbable. But on August 21, Brandon M., a 28-year-old former alcoholic and methamphetamine user and current parolee, is being named Honorary Graduate of Distinction at his GED commencement ceremony – a result of the support he has received from Bill's Place.

Bill's Place is a residential recovery program that provides more than an environment that is conducive to clean, sober, and responsible living. In addition to Brandon and the three other men residing here having a home while they are on parole, they also receive support from "Miss Vivienne," which has helped them to earn their GEDs and Georgia work-ready certification and to get steady jobs – all while attending AA and NA meetings, handling personal obligations such as child support, and maintaining their collective household.

"Miss Vivienne" is longtime Gainesville resident, Vivienne Speer, who owns and operates Bill's Place in dedication to her brother, Bill, who died from a heroin overdose 18 years ago. Said Ms. Speer, "I couldn't help in a way that made a long-lasting, positive difference for him but because of him, I can with these men. And they're doing great! Brandon's graduating with distinctions, Daniel is handling his child support responsibilities, Dustin is studying for the SATs to get into college, and Marvin is working as a construction apprentice!"

It is also Ms. Speer's intention to have Bill's Place be a model for state and national recovery programs to reduce the rate of recidivism and thus the amount of taxpayer money spent on re-incarceration. "Statistics show that 70% of non-violent offenders return to prison due to alcohol and drugs. Rather than paroling them into the environments that contributed to their substance abuse and incarceration, I believe it is more effective and less costly – dollar-wise and community-wise – to have them live in a structured environment that supports them in recovering from their addictions, getting education, finding jobs, and learning to accept the consequences of past acts. They soon choose to accept 'tough love and support' and realize they can't do the same thing and expect different results, like staying clean. At Bill's Place, we endeavor to stop the revolving door once and for all."

Ms. Speer is in the process of filing Bill's Place as a nonprofit so it can receive tax-deductible donations and grants. Until the 501(c)(3) designation is granted, she continues to use her own funds to pay all of the costs associated with Bill's Place, from the mortgage and utility bills to food and clothing to education and medical care for the residents. To date she has spent more than a quarter of a million dollars. When asked if spending all of this money on Bill's Place is worth it, she responded, "It is to me, but ask the men if it's worth it to them."

"People look up to me now," said Brandon. "I'm an example that it's possible (to be drug-free)." Added Marvin G., "I'm glad (Ms. Speer) gave me the opportunity to come here. I feel good about myself now." For Dustin B., "This is the best thing that's ever happened to me. Second chances are needed." And perhaps Daniel P. spoke for all of them when he shared, "I was surprised I was accepted. I thought no one wanted me. But Miss Vivienne did... This has been one of the most rewarding experiences I've ever had in my entire life."

About Bill's Place, Inc.

Bill's Place, Inc. is a Georgia corporation whose mission is to support parolees with a history of substance abuse in being clean, sober, and responsible members of society, as well as to reduce the rate of non-violent offender recidivism in the state of Georgia and across the U.S. The organization provides a safe, nurturing, and structured environment and life skills support, including housing, food, clothing, and access to resources for recovery, GED and higher education degrees, Georgia Work Ready Certification, and jobs to its residents. For more information, contact Vivienne Speer at (770) 539-4190 or info@billsplaceonline.org, or visit www.billsplaceonline.org.

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