



# Places for Struggling Teens™

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*"It is more important to get it right, than to get it first."*

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## ACADEMICS IN A THERAPEUTIC SETTING

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Aired: March 5, 2012

This episode of Parent Choices for Struggling Teens, hosted by Lon Woodbury, was a discussion with guest Bryan Tomes, Executive Director of Asheville Academy for Girls, about Academics in a Therapeutic Setting. To begin the discussion Lon shared his opinion that in the past academics at therapeutic boarding schools have generally "taken a backseat" or been somewhat mediocre at best, with the exception of a few. Bryan rebutted that, "there has been an historic shift in therapeutic schools and programs offering more sophisticated academics, in addition to seeing that "school" is one of the many areas in which the student's behaviors arise."

"A school or program needs to identify a mission or vision for learning," continued Bryan. "In addition to looking at class schedules, curriculum, and the accreditation process, a therapeutic setting looks at a student's broad range of issues and their social and behavioral differences." He also discussed the importance of the size of the school and number of students per class in a therapeutic school because therapy and healing are built on relationship building.

Bryan went on to explain the importance of proper staff training in both academics and therapy as well. "It is so important to make sure the academic staff receives therapeutic training and are included in the therapeutic team meetings. They hear the goals for each child and can utilize interventions and skill building techniques in those areas of their classrooms. The students receive continuity in all areas and it normalizes the process."

Sharing a bit further, Bryan included, "Students need to see success in their academics as well as in relationships with their families and peers for a smooth successful transition after they leave a therapeutic school."

Lon added, "Sounds like a conductor of an orchestra, synchronizing all the factors, needs, textbooks, sports, arts and therapy needs."

Parents and Educational Consultants can help find the proper placement for a student needing the small or specialized classes that some students need to obtain academic success. With homework being a major problem in creating a dysfunction in families, smaller classes often allow more time for students to complete their work. Also, in a therapeutic setting, students are usually assessed to determine what kind of "learner" they are and an academic plan is created utilizing their strengths and weaknesses. Students learn organizational skills that often carry over to their next program, whether home at school or off to college.

PARENT CHOICES/ Continued pg 2

## PARENT CHOICES

There are many advantages to working with students in a therapeutic school. Especially with classes of 1-8 students, you don't have to push a kid into a mold; you let the kid create their own mold.

To listen to the full interview visit

[www.latakradio.com/Players/Lon-030512.shtml](http://www.latakradio.com/Players/Lon-030512.shtml)

**Lon Woodbury** is the owner/founder of Woodbury Reports Inc. and [www.strugglingteens.com](http://www.strugglingteens.com). He has worked with families and struggling teens since 1984 and is the host of Parent choices for Struggling Teens on LATalkRadio Mondays at 12:00pm, Pacific Time, Channel One.

**Bryan Tomes** is the Executive Director of Asheville Academy for Girls located in Weaverville, NC. This new therapeutic boarding school was founded December 1, 2011. Bryan has been working in the therapeutic school environment for over 7 years and beforehand worked in the public school sector in both traditional and special education.

THE MEDIA CAN ADULATE,  
CELEBRATE, EXAGGERATE, BUT  
THEY CANNOT IMAGINE AND  
THEREFORE CANNOT SEE.

~ JAMES HILLMAN

## PRESCRIPTIONS AND THINGS

By: Cliff Stockton

Summer is the choice among parents who see it as a logical time to do some kind of intervention that minimally interrupts the academic career of their child. Summer time in a wilderness therapy program is also when programs see the most students, it is their busiest season. So, once you have made the decision, or think you may be making one soon, use this time to prepare yourself and your child for the journey.

I am not a therapist. I am the guy that does the nuts-n-bolts of wilderness programming. My job for years was to take care of the children sent to a wilderness program, manage their medications and monitor their health. With that in mind, here are some of my thoughts on issues parents should think a little more about arrival. Of course the rule of thumb is to always check with the program you are working with in regards to their policies on all of the following.

Under most state's regulations, each child enrolled in a wilderness program must be seen by a local physician. That physician assumes responsibility for your child for the duration of their stay at the program; they will oversee, *and be responsible for*, your child's medications. Ask your doctor whether all of your child's medications are within the FDA range, and if not, why not. If it is important for your child to continue at the high level, see if the program doctor will pre-

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clear the dosages. You don't want the surprise waiting for you to either withdraw your student or change their medications at admit.

Planning ahead to supply enough medications for your child is important. All medications should come with your child in original container with current medication information on it. Problems arise when the medication arrives in a zip lock bag with handwritten information on it, comes in a bottle with someone else's name on it, or the dosage instructions are different than what the label says. Remember the six "R's" of medication: Right patient, Right medication, Right dose, Right time, Right route and Right documentation. Medications that don't meet these criteria may have to be replaced, usually at your expense, which can easily run \$300-\$600 for a month's supply.

The medications that I had the most problems with in the field were for acne, both oral and topical. Almost all of them dramatically increase sun sensitivity, which means that your child will burn, burn easily, and burn bad. I have had students wearing a big floppy hat, applying SPF 50 sunscreen, covering their face with a bandana, and armored with long sleeved shirts and gloves, and they still burned. So, be aware that most, if not all, programs are going to insist that acne medication be stopped. The good news is that the sun sensitivity wears off quickly and the reality is that fresh air, a healthy diet, daily exercise and proper hydration does wonders for acne.

Also, Adderal, Ritalin, Concerta and their derivatives and generics have environmental considerations. Using psycho stimulants create a potential for heat injuries, such as heat exhaustion/stroke. Consider a medication holiday during the program. Many parents already have their kids take a holiday during the summer so the ADHD medication will be more effective during the school year. If that's not possible, make sure that your child is adequately hydrated. I recommend students to drink 1 quart of water for each 25 pounds of body weight a day, with a minimum being a gallon. Yes a gallon, of water not soda. ADHD medications also increase risk for frostbite.

Seroquel, Geodon, Depakote, Lithium and other mood stabilizers also have some significant environmental considerations. Seroquel, Geodon and similar medications limit a body's ability to dump heat, dramatically increasing their risk for heat exhaustion/ stroke. It is more pronounced in kids who are overweight and under conditioned, but can be managed successfully. Depakote and Lithium require lots of hydration to be managed safely as well as periodic blood testing to manage their levels. Even though students may have been on these for awhile, the physiological changes they will experience in acclimating to a wilderness environment, coupled with their increased physical activity WILL change these levels. Again the safest way to manage these medications is to ensure adequate hydration.

Currently, the FDA only approves one antidepressant for

adolescents, Prozac (fluoxetine). There are only minimal environmental considerations with SSRI's. However it is important to note they carry a "Black Box" warning about increased suicidality in adolescents. Most of the documented suicide ideation and self harm attempts while on antidepressants in adolescents have occurred within the first four weeks with potential withdrawal effects up to four weeks if stopped suddenly. If your child is on an SSRI and you are considering changing that, my recommendation is: Get on with it, stabilize them on new medication regime for four weeks prior to the program, or wait to change their medications until they return, where they can be medically monitored during the change.

Many kids wear contacts; many of those don't even own a pair of glasses. While it is possible to manage contacts while living outside (I wear contacts) it does require that students be used to managing them. Most students are not able to do this adequately outside the home. The downsides to poor contact management are; cornea scratching and eye infections, neither of which is good. In those circumstances the field option is to have them remove their contacts, leaving them with limited visibility. I recommend getting them some "disposable" glasses; not "cute," "fashionable," or expensive ones. (Yeah, ugly Buddy Holly glasses are perfect.) Finally, resist the urge to get photosensitive coatings. Most programs do not allow kids to wear sunglasses; they tend to hide behind them and participate less which separates them from the other students who do not have sunglasses.

Many parents have invested a significant amount in custom orthodontic work for their child. While a manageable issue in at home, in wilderness programs it can become problematic. At home, if a mount breaks or wire comes loose, it is easy enough to call the orthodontist and make a stop on the way home from school. Not so easy when the nearest orthodontist may be more than three to eight hours away and may not be available for several weeks. When a wire breaks "out there" often the only solution is to cut the wire to prevent it from tearing up the inside of their mouth. This is so common I carry a pair of side cutters in my kit for just such occasions. Best solution is to have their braces adjusted and mounts checked just prior to going to a wilderness program. While you are there, make an appointment for when they return, they will need adjustment. About half of the students I have worked with have had something go wrong with their braces. Realize that this may happen while your child is out there and the program may not be able to do anything about it other than the aforementioned "cut it" resolve.

Retainers are a similar issue to glasses. Any retainer you send along with your child you should consider disposable. They get dropped in the dirt/mud/muck/cow dung; they just plain get nasty. There is also the issue of your child's compliance with wearing them. State regulations and common sense do not allow programs to hold students down

## PRESCRIPTIONS

and force retainers into their mouths. So, if your child is non-compliant with their retainer at home, keep it home until they get back.

It is also common for kids to have custom orthotics, shoe inserts, ankle braces, knee braces, even shoulder slings that they do not use often. While they can probably do ok walking through the local mall, or hanging out at the library (ahem) the additional stresses those joints will experience while hiking with a pack that weighs, well-a lot, could use to be supported. At a wilderness program kids will experience some physical challenges such as hiking with packs over uneven terrain, participating in strenuous activities. So, even if they are not currently using those appliances, send them along.

Worst case they refuse to wear them or they are not needed. But should they decide they are needed or desired they are available.

The above covers most of the issues that I would commonly see. If you have any specific questions don't hesitate to email me, I am happy to do what I can to ensure that your child and you get the most out of their wilderness "experience"

**About The Author:** *Cliff Stockton has extensive experience working in wilderness based therapy in many different capacities. For more information, visit [www.cliffstockton.com](http://www.cliffstockton.com), or contact him at [cliff@cliffstockton.com](mailto:cliff@cliffstockton.com) or 208-308-3166.*

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## VISIT REPORTS...

### CHAPEL HAVEN WEST

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Visit by: Lon Woodbury, MA March 19, 2013

The young man standing outside the apartment complex in suburban Tucson was very helpful and assured me I had found Chapel Haven West. I later found out he was a Chapel Haven student waiting for his bus ride to his job where he was learning to be an auto mechanic and was on the verge of successfully graduating from the program. My offhand impression was of a very polite and self-assured young man no different than many others of that age I've seen. There were maybe signs of a little more shyness than usual for that age, but nothing out of the ordinary.

He directed me to the office of Ken Hosto, Director of Chapel Haven West, who explained that this program was an outgrowth of the 40 year old Chapel Haven program in Connecticut. The expansion into Tucson was established almost five years ago. Ken explained that Chapel Haven West serves in Tucson a coed population of about 20 young adults at least 18 years of age who are on the autism spectrum or have related social disabilities. Most enrollments take place in July and the two year program teaches students 1) Life Skills, 2) Self-Determination, 3) Vocational or College success, and 4) Social Communication.

The plan, Ken explained, is for the students to have a paid job by graduation. The possible exception might be a student going full time for his or her college degree. The program provides the services the students need in order to transition into Independent living. The program explains themselves as using an Assisted Living Model. This does not include serving

therapeutic needs, just the needs that come from spectrum, social or developmental difficulties. The staff is always with the students during the first few months to ensure they are safe. As each student demonstrates better decision making ability and responsibility, the staff gradually eases off and gives the students more independence. Some, after graduating from the program, will move across the street and take advantage of the supportive living program. This is real independent living, but there is enough staff contact that help is readily available if the student starts having trouble.

Ken took me for a tour of the apartments the students live in and they were clean and relatively neat. They were nothing fancy but had the basics a college student might need. Actually, they were much cleaner than many college dorm rooms or apartments I remember from my college days.

Ken then took me over to the University of Arizona campus where the first year students spend a significant amount of their time. Chapel Haven has a formal relationship with the University and the students spend a lot of time at the SALT program. All the Chapel Haven students also take a for-credit independent study class open to all Univ. of Arizona students. This gives them student status with rights to the University exercise equipment, to the SALT Center, student discounts and admission to University activities etc. Part of the goal is to give all the students a University experience even though they might not be planning to work toward a degree.

I had the chance to attend a class with the Chapel Haven students in the SALT Center (A Center for all University of Arizona students with Learning Disabilities). The class was in career planning, and the topic of the day was getting a job interview and how to conduct themselves during and after the interview. They were respectful and appeared attentive. However, I suspect they were like most college students with some only pretending to pay attention. :) In their second year the focus becomes more on employment opportunities like the young man I first met waiting for his ride.

The apartment complex was not pretentious, and the physical appearance was purposely low key and designed to blend into the neighborhood. I couldn't even find the Chapel Haven sign until I was getting ready to leave it was so small and tucked away in a corner of the entryway. A casual glance of the apartment complex would show just a bunch of young college people getting on with their lives. The only noticeable difference might be the frequent comings and goings of a school van ferrying the students over to the University campus or to ferry them to a job or other needs.

My time spent on this visit was pleasant; the young adults looked good and obviously were busy getting on with their lives. I can see why Chapel Haven West did well in my annual survey last Fall for our Parent Empowerment Handbook.

## CENTER FOR CHANGE

Orem, UT  
888-224-8250

Tamara Noyes - Director of Business Development

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[www.centerforchange.com](http://www.centerforchange.com)

Visit by: Ron and Kristie Campbell, March 13, 2013

Pulling into the parking lot of Center for Change in Orem, UT, I wasn't sure we were in the right place. I knew that the center was a hospital for adolescent girls and women with moderate to severe eating disorders; however these buildings looked nothing like a hospital. Seeing the sign on the wall, we parked and went inside.

In the waiting room was a desk surrounded by glass, the only resemblance to a hospital I could see. We were early for our appointment, so we waited a few minutes for Tamara Noyes, Director of Business Development, to get out of her meeting and inform the direct care staff that we were there.

As we waited, we noticed staff coming and going; each one using a key card to get into the center. Center for Change is a staff-secure facility to ensure patient safety.

We went back to Tamara's office, where she talked to us about the history of the program, the tuition, the academics, and described the overall program to us. She also explained that this is a hospital; the Center offers all levels of care, including acute inpatient for severe eating disorders and residential care for those whose eating disorders are more moderate. On a personal note however, it didn't matter how mentally prepared we were to see the ladies; no amount of preparation could equip us for the emotional aspect of visiting a place like this.

We started our tour in the school, which is unique for a hospital. Center for Change has a fully accredited school component available to the girls so that they can continue

CENTER FOR CHANGE/ Continued pg 6

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## CENTER FOR CHANGE

their studies during treatment. Because the girls are there for treatment, however, the academics are secondary. Girls do intense treatment and groups in the mornings, then if they are ready, school in the afternoon.

We talked to the Academic Director of the school to learn more about the academic component. She designs each girl's academic plan and tailors it to her needs. The academics are set up so that girls focus on one class at a time to allow them to receive the most beneficial transfer credits. The school consists of one large classroom, with a couple smaller rooms around the edges to create a standard school feeling. The walls of the large room are lined with books of all sorts, and one of the rooms contained many sandboxes and shelves lined with all sorts of figurines for expression therapy. There is also a music therapy room where the girls can express themselves through music, and a yoga room nearby.

We continued our tour, leaving the school and entering the residential part of the facility. Walking through the lower level, we saw a few girls preparing for snack. Those we saw appeared very thin. They were joking around a little with staff and appeared to be in a good frame of mind. Although the girls we saw appeared thin, we later discussed that size doesn't define the eating disorder, that many people who struggle with eating disorders are often a normal size.

Meals and snacks can be very difficult for people suffering with eating disorders. To keep the girls from being able to engage in eating disorder behaviors, all bathrooms are locked and, in the beginning phases of treatment, girls must be accompanied by staff to use them. The seasoned staff has a routine around meal time; the girls use the bathroom while a staff member stands outside the door, which is slightly cracked open, so they can listen for possible eating disorder behaviors. Although this may sound extreme, like it is violating privacy, it is important to remember how extreme and life threatening anorexia and bulimia are. Staff is there to ensure patient safety.

We entered the young adult ward. The temperature was a bit warm for me, but the staff was well aware of how high it was, and was monitoring the women and their activities. Surrounding mealtime, girls must also rest to slow their metabolisms. We noticed girls sitting cozily on the couches in the main living area.

The rooms were neutral in color with light colored blankets. Nothing hollered out hospital to me. It wasn't the sterile white atmosphere as in typical hospitals. Instead, the environment at Center for Change was warm and inviting. Young women on this floor were talking with each other and hanging out. They had finished their morning groups and were lounging on sofas in the great room, waiting their turn to prepare for lunch.

After the young adult wing, we walked through the cafeteria on our way to the acute care wing. Each girl is on an individualized food plan dependent on her needs. The kitchen staff and dietitians are fully aware of these needs and prepare



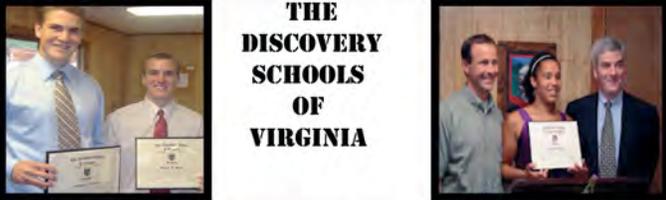
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meals accordingly. Depending on the program phase for each patient, their food is either plated for them, or they are on “family style” or the “intuitive eating” phase of the dietary program. For those who may struggle to eat the necessary calories, they have the option to receive a liquid supplement called “boost,” to give them life sustaining nutrients.

Mealtimes can sometimes be difficult for patients at the Center, a very different atmosphere from other programs I’ve visited. We witnessed a couple of girls in the cafeteria crying as they struggled to eat their snack.

After the cafeteria, we walked over to the inpatient wing. Rooms looked a little more typical of a residential treatment center and again I forgot I was in a hospital. That is until we walked through the acute ward. Here the girls are very sick. They are pale and weak with thinned out hair. Their eyes are sunken and sad. A couple had to use walkers because they were too weak to support themselves, though they had recently graduated from wheel chair to walker, indicating improvement. In this area, girls may have feeding tubes if necessary. Even with the condition of the girls in this ward, it was clear to us that the girls were comfortable with the staff as they interacted and even joked with them.

We returned to Tamara’s office after touring the facility to address any questions we had or give any feedback. It was hard to go through this tour knowing there are girls out there who hurt so badly on the inside that they have created this acute sickness in their lives. It’s most difficult for me to understand how someone so skinny can view themselves as overweight.

Reiterating what was said earlier, the facility at Center for Change was warm and inviting. As emotionally hard as it was for us to visit, the ladies are in a safe and healing environment, without distraction, where they can work therapeutically on their issues with compassionate support. Anorexia nervosa and bulimia are serious, life threatening conditions. If appropriate, Center for Change would be a viable option.



REJECTION OF THE CLASSROOM IS AN INTERNATIONAL PHENOMENON AND HAS LITTLE TO DO WITH WHETHER THE SCHOOLS ARE PUBLIC OR PRIVATE, SECULAR OR CLERICAL, OR WITH THE PHILOSOPHY OF TEACHING EMPLOYED IN THE VARIOUS SCHOOLS.

~ VICTOR & MILDRED GOERTZEL  
CRADLES OF EMINENCE



## IN BALANCE RANCH ACADEMY

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Visit by: Lon Woodbury, MA, March 20, 2013

In Balance Ranch Academy is located outside Tucson, Arizona and was founded by Patrick and Betsy Barrasso about nine years ago. The Barrassos had originally started an outpatient clinic in Tucson serving mostly adolescents with substance abuse problems. The clinic is still functioning but they soon learned that outpatient services were just not enough for many young people. In 2004 they founded the Ranch Academy on a ranch property an hour or more outside Tucson close to Tombstone AZ working with adolescent males with an emphasis on substance abuse. They now have about 50+ students in this residential program. In 2006 the continuum of care was expanded to establishing the In Balance Transitional Living program in a suburb of Tucson for young men ages 17-24. All are thriving as indicated by both the Ranch and Transitional Living doing very well in the most recent Woodbury Reports annual survey.

I started the day at their downtown offices which also operate as the center for the outpatient clinic. It was a comfortable and modern suite of offices where I met with clinical director Shannon Petrovich and admissions director Betsy Barrasso who described the overview of their continuum of care programs. I got the picture that this is a very sophisticated program with a lot of thought and experience going into all the elements of the program to give a total healing experience for the boys. Everything the staff does is oriented toward healing substance abuse problems and learning sober living, while being able to also handle many co-occurring disorders.

My time was too short to get a full understanding of all they do but I can outline some of the major elements. They use several treatment modalities in order to ensure that the individual needs of each student are met. One important element is their use of Positive Peer Culture (PPC). They were trained in this by one of the gurus of Positive Peer Culture Larry Brendtro. This takes peer pressure which in mainstream society is too often negative, and turns it around to where in their programs the peer pressure is positive. From this, they emphasize that the students are “agents of change.” This also encourages students to take personal ownership in the programs and their own recovery.

They use twelve-step recovery throughout their programs. Part of the reason is for the future, wherever in the world they might go, they will be able to find a recovery

INBALANCE/ Continued pg 8

## INBALANCE

group to help them. They also build on the spirituality found in twelve-step recovery. This takes form in a number of spiritually based ceremonies such as frequent camping trips to learn to connect with the lessons from nature as well as for similar purposes the use of sweat lodges, medicine wheels, and use of drums, masks and shields helping to symbolize their spiritual journey brought down to concrete activities.

Experiential activities are extensive. I was told they have about 120 expeditions each year, and frequently do rock climbing, fun runs, snowboarding etc. These are usually framed in a narrative of metaphors to help each student grasp a lesson(s) they need to learn. Their equine-assisted therapy and horsemanship is often an important part of this, again learning lessons valuable to gaining control over their own lives by learning boundaries, relationships and the multitude of lessons that can be learned through interactions with horses.

They have eight clinicians who conduct specialty groups. The boys are grouped into four of what they call milieus with each assigned a therapist. This grouping brings the boys experience down to a smaller number that is a little more intimate as well as having the practical advantage of being able to better keep track of every boy, especially in how he is doing.

Working with the family is important with parents frequently coming to the ranch and participating in weekly phone or skype calls with parents interacting with their sons. This allows the staff to work with the whole family getting them all on the same page so far as supporting and validating their son's progress in recovery.

They are making significant changes in their academics. In the past they had been working from the high school curriculum provided by Keystone and the University of Nebraska. However, they are dropping those two services and are developing their own multimedia classes which can not only appeal better to the young student, but can allow them to focus more precisely on the specific academic and emotional needs of the students.

After this introduction, Betsy took me on the long drive out to the ranch. It is out in the middle of nowhere, and the first sight is rather unique. The property the Barrassos bought had been a dude ranch of some kind, and the owner had built a old style western town, something like you might see on a western movie set. The inside of most of the buildings had been converted to offices, dorms, etc. All the old style western buildings had been renamed to the function they served in the school, and had been cleaned up, painted etc. Other than that, it looked much like the old almost ghost towns dotted around the West with false fronts and wood boardwalks. One exception was the new academic building, something more than 4,000 square feet for offices, classes, and an extensive cafeteria. In addition there were several utility buildings and a large riding arena.

The buildings were more or less clustered around the

graveled driveway with an impressive giant sculpture in the middle - a medicine wheel on top of the twelve steps.

A couple of students toured me around the facilities, showing off the dorms (they were clean and neat), the function of the various buildings and talking about their experiences and what they had learned. The students were articulate, well dressed, positive about the Academy and being older students, talked some about their plans for the future as well as shared their stories of how they came to be enrolled at the Academy. While we were touring, a number of students returned from a several day horseback ride looking very much like they had been on the trail several days. Tired, dirty and they had a top priority of getting a shower, but not until after they had cared for the horses. Despite all that, they looked like they had the self-confidence and satisfaction from an adventure well done.

I had lunch with the staff, and from their introductions I learned most of the staff had been with the Academy for a number of years. Longevity is always a good sign of quality work in a school. The group sounded dedicated, confident and satisfied.

That afternoon we returned to Tucson to visit the Transitional Living program in a modest suburb. The collection of buildings were designed to blend into the neighborhood so it looked like just another residential home. It is close to the University of Arizona and several other colleges that the students might take classes at. It was a very comfortable collection of a house and a few other buildings that had every appearance of being a home. The boys I met with were open about their story, their plans, and seemed to be participating in many of the same activities as their peers not in a program (music, non-violent video games etc.)

The young men graduate through three phrases in their time in the program, each designed to enhance their ability for success for living independently. They do many of the similar things the boys at the Ranch do in experiential outings, physical fitness, snowboarding, counseling and service activities. A highlight for the young men are several trips to annual weekend 12-step retreats called Fellowship of the Spirit (F.O.T.S.), and Regional meetings of the Young People in Alcoholics Anonymous (YPAA). These are fun and rewarding experiences that seem to be a highlight of the young men.

I felt their reputation they had earned among Independent Educational Consultants as shown through the results in the Woodbury Reports annual survey was well earned. Good things are happening in both programs.

SO FAR AS I CAN REMEMBER,  
THERE IS NOT ONE WORD IN THE  
GOSPELS IN PRAISE OF  
INTELLIGENCE.  
~ BERTRAND RUSSELL

## THE ART OF BECOMING SMART

Calgary, AB, Canada  
Aleem A. Nassar, BC Comm., BA, MBA, Founder/President  
403-680-7864  
aleemnasser@gmail.com  
www.theartofbecomingsmart.com

The Art of Becoming Smart is an academic coaching program for high school and college/ university students designed for struggling students who are feeling hopeless and have a negative self-image due to low academic grades, which affects their relationships, career path and personal health, in addition to their feelings as a disappointment to their parents and others. This small coaching program only selects ten students per month.

Aleem Nassar, founder and president of The Art of Becoming Smart created this coaching program after overcoming his own struggles while attending college. Aleem spent months on research: talking with top mark students and instructors, attending educational seminars and studying books on academic success which resulted in learning that to achieve the success he was looking for, his first step was to change his beliefs about school and focus on his personal views and thoughts.

In his coaching program, Aleem teaches and mentors students with tools that he has created, including an eight part module system all designed to bring up the student's academic grades, increase motivation, enhance communication and listening skills, create self-confidence and perform in group study groups effectively, all guaranteed to improve the student's grade levels or if grades do not improve, they can re-take the entire coaching program at no cost until their grades do improve.

Also available to students are personalized 2-week Intensive Smart Shops in a wide area of topics that include: improving test and exam writing, time management, eliminating text anxiety and much more.

[This information came from their website.]

## LA PALOMA TREATMENT CENTER

Memphis, TN  
877-345-1887  
Paige Bottom, MBA - CEO  
[www.lapalomatreatment.com](http://www.lapalomatreatment.com)

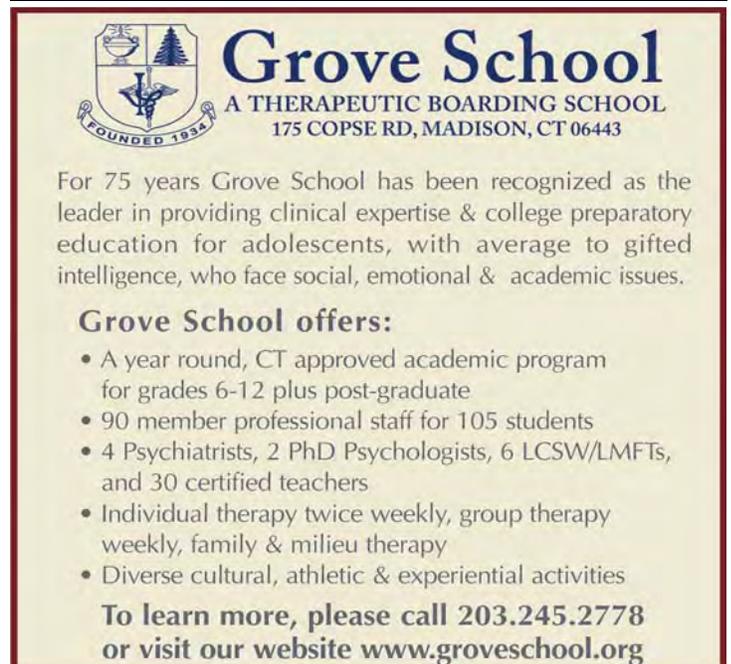
La Paloma Treatment Center is a residential and outpatient facility, formally known as Foundations Memphis, and one of four programs under the Foundations Recovery Network that works with young adults, 18 and over who are struggling with chemical addictions and dependency coupled with co-occurring mental health issues.

The leadership team at La Paloma Treatment Center consists of Paige Bottom, who is the CEO and has had extensive experience working with adolescents with addictions and psychiatric problems in addition to working

LAPALOMA/ Continued pg 10



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## LA PALOMA TREATMENT CENTER

with several Fortune 500 companies before obtaining her MBA, where she worked in NC and CA. Jocelyn Penner, MA, MA, LMHC, CAP, ICADC is the Clinical Director and held the position of Director of Family Services at the Hanley Center in Florida and Pat Friedman, LPC is the Director of the Detox and Assessment Unit. Rob Waggener is the CEO of the Foundations Recovery Network. The FRN is accredited by CARF and NAATP.

Using the Foundations Treatment Model which incorporates motivational methods and strategies, patients participate in medically supervised detox if necessary, daily group sessions and individual therapy, CBT therapy, intro to 12 step principals, including AA, NA and DRA; life skill classes and optional therapies including yoga, music and EMDR.

There are separate residences for men and women on campus, a complete fitness room, and meditation areas around the grounds, a basketball court, in addition to daily recreational activities.

*[This information came from their website.]*

## RUSHFORD AT STONEGATE SPRINGS

Durham, CT  
Amy Hickey, VP, Business Development  
860-852-1059  
ahickey@rushford.org  
www.rushford.org

Rushford at Stonegate is a residential treatment program for young men ages 13-17, located on the 43 acre Stonegate Springs campus. This 90 day program is designed for adolescent males and their families who are struggling with drug and alcohol addictions.

Rushford is licensed by the State of Connecticut and accredited by the Joint Commission. Vice President of child and adolescent services at Rushford, a Hartford Healthcare Partner is Dr. Frank Bartolomeo, who has been working with adolescents and their families for over twenty years in a variety of settings including RTC's, schools, clinics and hospitals and most recently as the Executive Director at Academy at Swift River.

Therapy techniques at Rushford focus on positioning themselves as partners in problem solving with the young men they work with. Other therapies included at Rushford include cognitive behavior, motivational enhancement therapy, the use of the "Seven Challenges<sup>®</sup> Harm Reduction Model", 12 step interventions and support, the Gorski - Cenaps<sup>®</sup> Model for Recovery and Relapse Prevention and twice weekly family therapy to strengthen the family bond for long term recovery support. With the focus on helping these young men overcome their addiction problems, counselors assist in empowering them in making the changes necessary to live a healthy life without the dependence on drugs or alcohol.

Recreational therapy for young men in this age bracket includes working out in a fitness center, participating in the challenge course, hiking the many trails on the campus and playing on the basketball courts.

*[This information came from their website.]*



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Cell: (402) 990-5371  
doug.cxyz@boystown.org



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## TUTORS INTERNATIONAL

Oxford England

Adam Caller, Educational Consultant/Senior Partner

44 (0) 1865 435 135

Adam.caller@tutors-international.com

www.tutors-international.com

Tutors International is a worldwide organization that provides experienced private tutors to work with children of all ages and nationalities from pre-school to college. They provide tutors in a wide variety of situations from helping students re-take critical exams, helping them with the transition of moving between international school systems, and supporting adolescents with AD/HD and dyslexia. Tutors International is also available where a family's lifestyle makes for a difficult 'fit' with standard schooling.

Tutors International was established in 1999 by Director, Adam Caller. He received his teaching degree from the University of York in 1991. He taught in the private sector for many years and was a tutor to prestigious families in France, Switzerland, Italy, Greece, California and England. Adam has received specialist training in dyslexia and Attention Deficit Disorder and he is a member of the Independent Educational Consultant Association.

Tutors are available for full-time tutoring positions, for major support and tutoring outside school hours, or for home-schooling. Tutors International is able to source international tutors including multilingual travelling teachers to accompany families travelling around the world, or those whose lifestyle necessitates frequent travel. If parents or professionals feel that the student needs a educational assessment it can be arranged by Tutors International, the tutor will be able to address your child's needs effectively by the assessment.

Clients are able to arrange activities that go beyond ordinary schooling and Tutors International will do everything they can to make these activities happen such as: voice coaching, diving instruction, and private tutelage with a professor at Cambridge. Support is available for all the key exams: 11+, Common Entrance, ISEE, GCSEs, A levels, IB, and SATs. They can also arrange challenging educational adventures for the summer vacations and gap years.

*[This information came from Adam Caller.]*

**MATURITY BEGINS WHEN WE ARE  
CONTENT TO FEEL THAT WE ARE  
RIGHT ABOUT SOMETHING, WITHOUT  
FEELING THE NECESSITY TO PROVE  
SOMEONE ELSE IS WRONG.**

~ SYDNEY J. HARRIS  
1917-1986

## EXTENDED INSIGHTS...

### HOW VANTAGE POINT CHANGES LIVES.

By: Jamie Ahern, MSW, CSW

Sometimes, I review my life and consider all that's happened in my world.

Lately I've been thinking a lot about the Vantage Point program at Aspiro, and I'm amazed with where we're at right now and what amazing clinicians we've got on board. As a former Vantage Point field guide-turned therapist, I have seen the workings of this program from the angle of "brush your teeth, pack your bags, walk the miles, and change your socks" to individual therapy sessions and phone calls with loving, albeit anxious parents.

For those who aren't familiar with the Vantage Point program, let me fill you in. First, however, let me give you the typical pitch I'd give another professional. Here goes:

"Vantage Point is a wilderness adventure therapy program designed specifically for adolescents and young adults who struggle with a variety of neurodevelopmental and cognitive issues such as autism spectrum disorders, severe Attention Deficit-Hyperactivity Disorder, executive functioning deficits, learning differences (ex: Non-Verbal Learning Differences), social relationship management problems, impulse control and even traumatic brain injuries."

Whew! Now, let me tell you what I know to be true about the Vantage Point Program and its students.

Vantage Point is for those adolescents and young adults who have been left behind, marginalized, misunderstood, lost, teased and bullied. It's for those who have struggled tremendously in school, with their family and with building relationships with others. They often want so badly to be understood, to have friends, to be less anxious, and to not be confused and overwhelmed in social situations.

When I think of a Vantage Point student, I think of a 15-year old boy named Cameron I worked with when I was a field guide. During an initial therapy session with another therapist and me, Cameron broke down, cried and stated, "I just want to be normal. I just want to have friends."

At Vantage Point, this young man experienced, for the first time in his life, being accepted into a peer group and forming real friendships. He was no longer picked on, bullied or just "tolerated." He was understood. His guides were patient with him. He did not get "left behind" when he struggled to keep up with others. In fact, he became loved and respected by his peers for having a positive, cheery outlook and a fascination for reptiles - of which Utah has no shortage. He was made fun of for these things in the past. Before coming to Vantage Point, he was isolating himself in his basement. After becoming accepted into a supporting, nurturing environment, Cameron was challenged to work on developing healthy

VANTAGE POINT/ Continued pg 12

## VANTAGE POINT

copied behaviors. He began to talk about his thoughts and emotions. His therapist, Jamie Kaczmarek, worked with Cameron on developing specific social relationship management skills. Cameron, who had significant executive functioning deficits, became more independent and learned to cook his own meals, pack his backpack, keep track of his gear, plan ahead, transition more quickly, and make good decisions. Although Cameron will probably never be what society considers “normal”, he began to feel more normal and accepted during his stay with Vantage Point. When he left, Cameron was more confident in social situations, he was able to more independently care for himself and he had further developed his ability to face challenging situations and overcome. He felt more “normal.”

That is what I know Vantage Point to be.

It is, hands-down, the best place for these kids to make some serious changes in their emotional, behavioral and social well-being. In an effort to become the best treatment program that we can be, we have made some excellent additions to our clinical team in the last year.

As a Vantage Point therapist, I have a very strong belief that our clinical team is the best out there. We love our jobs, our company, and the amazing students we work with. As a former Vantage Point field guide, however, I know it’s not just about the therapists! As a field guide, I was involved in extensive training in working with Vantage Point students. After all, it is a very unique population; I’d even say the most interesting and fun-loving population! Our Vantage Point field guides are particularly patient and maintain a focus on keeping Vantage Point students engaged in treatment. After all, these students have become skilled at avoiding engagement in school, with family or with other people in general. I can recall many, many times “on trail” when a Vantage Point student would shut down because they were overwhelmed, anxious and/or emotionally dysregulated. It required copious amounts of patience, empathy and creativity to assist these students in processing their thoughts and emotions to overcome their shut downs and continue through the day. Our field guides are so caring and skilled. I am very proud that I get to work with these amazing people.

One of my favorite theoretical frameworks is Positive Psychology. Within this framework is a belief in actively expressing gratitude, and how this active pursuit of being grateful can improve our “happiness.” In that spirit, I will close by saying that I am grateful for my past year at Aspiro and the Vantage Point Program. I am grateful for a company and its professionals that care about the happiness of our students. Further, I am grateful for the happiness that working with these wonderful, quirky, and fun loving young men and women provides me!

*Aspiro Group family of programs are based on a Wilderness Adventure Therapy (WAT) model. The Aspiro family of programs are a hybrid between traditional wilderness therapy, and adventure programs such as Outward Bound or NOLS. For more information, contact Josh Watson, LCSW, Director of Admissions and Marketing, 801-349-2740, [jwatson@aspiroadventure.com](mailto:jwatson@aspiroadventure.com), or visit [www.aspiroadventure.com](http://www.aspiroadventure.com).*

## SEEN N HEARD...

**News from Echo Springs:** Echo Springs has some exciting announcements, as some team members take advantage of new adventures. Lisa Sutton, Admissions Advisor, is taking her career in a new direction. She’ll be greatly missed, having made a significant contribution to Echo Springs over the past eight years. We wish her well in her career advancement. We are pleased to announce that Lucinda Kay, President of Let It Shine, LLC will be expanding her role with us to include admissions counseling. Lucinda has worked behind the scenes with Echo Springs for over three years on message development and communications, website management and expanding our social media presence. 208-267-1111

**Woodbury Reports Visits New England Programs:** Kristie Campbell, BS Psy, Educational Consultant, and Ron Campbell, BS both with Woodbury Reports, Inc., recently visited several New England schools and programs. Among them were Chamberlain School, Latham Centers, Cardinal Cushing Center, Germaine Lawrence the Merck Center, Berkshire Hills Music Academy, Academy at Swift River, Lakeview NeuroRehabilitation Center and Shortridge Academy. 208-267-5550

**Q&A Associates Inc Discontinues Operation Of Willow Creek Lodge:** Angie Shockley owner of Q&A Associates along with our management team are deeply saddened to announce that we will no longer be a managing owner of Willow Creek Lodge. Willow Creek Lodge, which opened in December of last year, has seen remarkable results with the young adult clients they have served over the past months. The program has been extremely successful in treating clients that have suffered from chronic stress and anxiety, trauma, depression, ADHD, Borderline Personality Disorder and Asperger’s Syndrome. Unfortunately Angie was notified very recently that the owners of the Willow Creek property will no longer be honoring their lease agreement. This has come to a shock to the team at Q&A and we extend our sincerest apologies to those families and referring professionals that had prospective clients coming our way. This program and clinical model is a unique and successful program and our intention is to re-create this in West Virginia, where the other Q&A programs are located. 208-207-0930

**Creating A New Dream:** Sober College’s proposal has been accepted by Guinness World Records to break the record for the world’s largest dream catcher. For a young adult in recovery, the battle to live a healthy and sober life is ongoing. One can even say the nightmare is never really over as they struggle to maintain their sobriety. Sober College, a residential treatment facility for young adults (17-26) recognizes this struggle and in an attempt to create a symbol of hope for their future, its residents and staff will attempt to construct the world’s largest dream catcher. 818-274-0304 ext. 107

SEEN N HEARD/ Continued pg 14

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## SEEN N HEARD

**Transition Ceremony at Little Keswick School:** We just celebrated our yearly Transition Ceremony at Little Keswick School, saying goodbye to ten of our students. We are so proud of these boys and look forward to hearing about their future success at The Berkshire School, John Paul II Catholic High School, TX, Brandon Hall, Marvelwood School, Whitfield School, MO, Middlebridge, Wyomissing Public High School, PA, FL Chamberlain, and Villanova Preparatory School, CA to name a few. 434-295-0457

**John Dewey Academy Announces New Dean Of Students:** We are pleased to welcome Eric Krawczyk to the Castle as our new Dean of Students. Eric will work as a Primary Clinician, as well as supervising various aspects of student life in his role as Dean of Students. Eric, who holds a B.S. from Cornell University in Natural Resources with an emphasis on Education, is a Licensed Professional Counselor with an M.A. from the University of Colorado at Denver in Counseling Psychology and Counselor Education. He is also licensed as a Board Certified Professional Christian Counselor and as a Professional Special Services Counselor for ages 0-21. With Eric's arrival as the new Dean of Students, Andrea will be able to transition more fully into her role as Dean of Academics. 917-597-7814

**Wediko Is Pleased To Announce Sousa As Executive Director:** Harry W. Parad, PhD, will become Wediko's Clinical Director and Amy Sousa, PhD, will take on the position of Executive Director of Wediko Children's Services. 617-292-9200

**Northwest College Support Welcomes Carlberg:** Northwest College Support recently brought on board-certified psychiatrist Dr. Nicole Carlberg as part of their professional team. Dr. Carlberg specializes in addictions, PTSD, pain disorders, generalized anxiety disorder, relationship transition issues, loss, life-skills/coping, self-esteem and self-reliance enhancement, interpersonal boundaries, and mental health stabilization with co-morbid medical conditions. 877-485-2776

**Skyland Trail Welcomes Lee:** Skyland Trail Welcomes Donald Wade Lee as Certified Peer Specialist and Alumni Program Coordinator. As a member of the multidisciplinary treatment team at Skyland Trail, Lee will apply his unique perspective and training to help clients with motivation and engagement, skill building, and problem solving. Lee also will help develop and launch an alumni program. 404-273-6054

**Seven Seas Foundation Announces Launch:** Seven Seas Foundation is excited to announce the launch of its first program, beginning this June. Seven Seas is a program helping young men 18 years and up that are best described as "failure to launch" (one of the most at risk populations in America today), get unstuck off the couch, and living a passionate and purposeful life. Symptoms of this demographic include addictions to technology/video games, substance abuse, entitlement and lack of direction and motivation. 805-845-2900

**Meadows Staff Featured at International Trauma Conference:** The Meadows Wickenburg staff was featured at the recent 24th Annual International Trauma Conference, co-sponsored by The Meadows. The leading neuroscientists and treatment developers, including The Meadows' Senior Fellow, Shelley Uram, MD, and Meadows' Psychiatrist, Jon G. Caldwell, DO, PhD, presented to nearly 600 attendees during the four-day conference. The focus of this year's conference was "Psychological Trauma: Neuroscience, Attachment, and Therapeutic Interventions." The conference presented current research findings on how people's brains, minds, and bodies respond to traumatic experiences; how they regulate emotional and behavioral responses; and the role of relationships in protecting and restoring safety and regulation. 317-344-2922

**Samuel Joins Lake House Academy:** Sharon Laney is pleased to announce that Jane Samuel is joining Lake House Academy as the Admission Director and Parent Coach, working closely with our new families prior to and after enrollment. Jane brings a wealth of experience to Lake House and has served in many roles during her career. She began her career teaching and coaching in the public school system until discovering the therapeutic school network where she served as the Admission Director in the founding of two programs. She later became the Program Director for a young adult program and then the Head Mistress for New Leaf Academy at Rock Mesa. For the last 7 years, she has served as the Head of School for Auldern Academy, developing and improving services to high school girls. 828-355-4595 ext. 8001

**Hafkin Comes To Cherokee Creek:** We are excited to welcome our newest therapist to the CCBS team. Jacob Hafkin comes to Cherokee Creek as a 2013 graduate of the University of North Carolina School of Social Work. At UNC he obtained certificates in Substance Abuse Counseling and School Social Work in addition to his MSW. Prior to joining the CCBS team he has worked in a therapeutic capacity in both the public school and juvenile justice systems. 435-215-0500

**Christian Track Offered at Turn-About Ranch:** Turn-About Ranch is now offering a Christian Track to any and all students looking to connect their faith to their recovery. This specific program will provide each student with a certified Christian counselor who will provide weekly individualized counseling sessions to address his or her therapeutic issues with a faith based approach that is designed to help students deepen and/or discover their faith. 800-842-1165

**WinGate, Lane and Sutton Visit Woodbury:** Long overdue is the announcement that Greg Hitchcock and Scott Hess of WinGate Wilderness Therapy Expeditions stopped by Bonners Ferry recently to visit with the staff at Woodbury Reports. WinGate Wilderness: 800-560-1599 | Echo Springs: 208-267-1111 | Bill Lane & Associates: 858-488-5319

**Newport Academy Opens Day School In IL:** The area's first high school for teens recovering from alcohol and drug addiction, eating disorders or other mental health issues will open in

Lake Bluff on Monday. Newport Academy Day School will be the first recovery high school serving Chicago's North Shore teens, age 15-19. The school will occupy a suite of offices at 900 N. Shore Drive in Lake Bluff in the same building that houses the Lake Bluff School District 65 administrative offices in a light industrial area that includes Pasquesi Home and Gardens. 866-382-6651

**Announcing Alchemy Adventures:** We are excited to announce the name of our new company: Alchemy Adventures. Our goal is to create unique trips abroad that guide our clients through a true cultural and transformative experience. We want to not only help our adventurers understand the language, the values, and differences of each culture, but the story that each land has to tell. 208-352-2242

**Introduction to Integrated Innovations:** It is with great excitement that Terry Edelman announces his new mentoring and crisis intervention program situated to serve Eastern Washington and North Idaho. Integrated Innovations is a crisis intervention program geared toward helping adolescents in the home. Terry Edelman has over 20 years of experience working with troubled teens and young adults in residential treatment, foster care and mentoring programs. Having developed several Crisis Intervention Programs, Terry discovered most teen / young adult issues start in the home and can be managed in the home with support and well planned interventions. 208-651-0095

**Soltreks - The Power of a - One-on-One:** Soltreks focuses program options on Individualized and Customized "One-on-One" wilderness treks for young adults and the adult population. The "One-on-One" is a powerful wilderness experience allowing for a higher level of personal attention and individual reflection creating the space for greater insight and awareness. "One-on-One" Treks are ideal for individuals who are seeking a time out to reexamine their life. A non-clinical approach the trek focuses on personal growth and self-discovery. 218-834-4607

**Expansion Of Mental Health Services at West Ridge Academy:** For almost 50 years, West Ridge Academy has been providing excellent clinical care for youth and their families within the residential treatment setting. Over the course of time, we have come to recognize a vast need for access to more comprehensive services along the entire continuum of care. In an effort to more fully respond to the ranging needs of youth and families within our community, West Ridge Academy has opened two new programs: West Ridge Academy's Outpatient Clinic & West Ridge Academy's In-home Services program, also referred to as TENEO. In addition to individual and family therapy, West Ridge Academy will also be offering psycho-educational and support groups for adolescents. 800-262-2697

**Mountain Springs Preparatory Academy Welcomes Buckner:** Mountain Springs Preparatory Academy is excited to announce the expansion of our administrative team, adding

SEEN N HEARD/ Continued pg 16



## Young Adult Program

**Benchmark Transitions™** is a comprehensive, multi-disciplinary approach to residential transitional living for young men and women, ages 18-28.

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- Structured & nurturing environment
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**Benchmark Transitions™** Dual Treatment options –

**Benchmark Recovery & Aftercare™** students are those who have a history of substance use, abuse or addiction, often combined with a behavioral health dual diagnosis, that has prevented them from fully gaining independence.

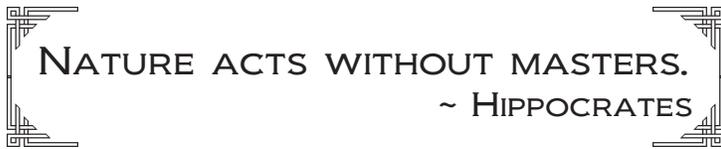
**Benchmark Behavioral Health™** students are those who have not exhibited issues with drugs and/or alcohol, but who often have a clinical diagnosis combined with failure to launch into adulthood successfully.

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**SEEN N HEARD**

John Buckner, LAMFT as an additional Dean of Students. John has worked in the helping profession for over a decade. He has worked as front line staff at therapeutic boarding schools, as a service coordinator at a geriatrics community center, as a volunteer at a crisis center, as a psychosocial rehabilitation specialist for the state of Idaho, as a milieu director in residential care, a private practice therapist, and as a therapist at a residential treatment center. 435-691-0245

**Shadow Mountain Recovery Announces 90 Day Treatment Program:**

Shadow Mountain Recovery recently announced a restructuring of it's 9-12 month extended care drug rehab program for young men. We want to make sure we offer a solution that fits and provides credit for recovery work already done. We can now address the individual needs of each young man looking for extended care treatment. Whether they have been at a primary drug treatment center for 30 days, or a wilderness program for 60, we are offering the opportunity to meet them where they are in their recovery journey. 800-764-7250

**Summit Prep Co-founder appointed by Governor to PAARP:**

Rick Johnson, co-founder of Summit Preparatory School has recently been appointed to the Montana Board of Private Alternative Adolescent Residential or Outdoor Programs (PAARP). 406-261-9437

**PLACES FOR STRUGGLING TEENS™**

published by Woodbury Reports, Inc.

**Lon Woodbury, Publisher** - IECA, MA, CEP, is an educational consultant who has worked in schools and programs for emotional growth, character education, and consulting for parents of struggling teens since 1984. Prior to that, he taught in public schools and was involved in public policy while working for the US Senate and the Executive Office of the President. Lon received his BS and MA degrees from the University of Idaho. His practice includes a referral service for parents and professionals, and the publication of this Newsletter and the *Parent Empowerment Handbook*,™ a resource of *Places for Struggling Teens*.™

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**PARENT CHOICES FOR STRUGGLING TEENS:**

The following Guests were featured on Lon's Internet Talk Radio Show, Parent Choices For Struggling Teens in June 2013, which airs Monday at 12:00pm Pacific Time on [www.latakradio.com](http://www.latakradio.com), Channel 1.

**WHEN YOUNG ADULTS STILL NEED TO GROW UP**

Jayne Longnecker-Selby sat down with Lon Woodbury today on Parent Choices for Struggling Teens to discuss the vast differences in today's young adults and the difficulties they face in growing up as compared to the youth in the 1950's and 60's.

**THE 7 TRAITS OF REAL MEN**

Fredrick Goodall parenting expert and founder of the parenting website - Mocha Dad - spoke with Lon Woodbury about the traits real men have as opposed to the stereotypical ones portrayed by TV sitcoms as a bungling buffoon whose wife is in charge.

**WHEN A PROGRAM GOES TO THE DOGS**

Dr. Ken Huey, PhD, the CEO and founder of Change Academy Lake of the Ozarks (CALO) spoke with Lon Woodbury today on Parent Choices for Struggling Teens, on how the use of Golden Retrievers as canine therapy dogs at their program are creating an impact on teens struggling with a history of severe trauma and attachment disorder.

**Personalized Help For Parents In Crisis**

Woodbury Reports Educational Consultations help parents think through the out-of-control behaviors their child is exhibiting and suggest appropriate placement options. All of our consultants have raised teenagers and helped hundreds of parents professionally. We believe parents should be in charge of decisions regarding their children so we research options to make educated suggestions rather than telling our clients what to do.



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