

# The Wave

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## THE MAN, THE MUSIC AND TIDES



**T**RAVIS WIGGINS, A VETERAN CASEWORKER WHO HAS BEEN HERE FOR 10 YEARS, has twin passions — his music and Tides Family Services. And when he melds the two, young kids transitioning from the Rhode Island Training School to their neighborhoods are discovering hidden talents that could provide a pathway to limitless opportunities.

Hidden deep in the bowels of a decrepit factory in Cranston, is The Boiler Room; a music studio where Travis cuts his CDs. His band — Who Dem? — is a local favorite fusing hip hop, rap, rock and R&B.

Travis, who works out of Tides' Providence site, was hooked on music since he heard his voice on a tape recorder when he was 10. Tides, he said, influences his music:

“My music is about positive things. It is uplifting. The kids who want to do rap or music, I can guide them. I encourage them to write down their feelings and put it to music.”

Eighteen-year-old Gerrod is a Tides' client. While making music with Travis may not be his main goal in life, working with someone who shares his interests has helped him set his sights towards a college education — an unrealistic possibility before his referral to Tides' Youth Transition Program.



Tides caseworker Travis Wiggins, right, listens to a playback of a rap recorded by Tides client Gerrod, standing at left, and music engineer Kenny Mercado.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



## TIDES FAMILY SERVICES

### OUR MISSION

is to provide high-risk youth with comprehensive, preventive services that promote personal growth and better connect them with their families and communities.

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# MESSAGE FROM LYNN C. HUNTER

TIDES BOARD OF TRUSTEES • FUND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE CHAIR

**C**ARING FOR RHODE ISLAND'S TROUBLED YOUTH gets harder, the state's budget looks bleaker, and the need to spend tax payer money wisely has never been greater... and this is where Tides comes in. Tides is effective, efficient, fiscally prudent and, above all, caring.

Tides Family Services has a treatment strategy that works. Most programs seek to lock up challenging kids. Out of sight, out of mind. But for most troubled young people home-based care is far more effective. At Tides, kids, families, clinicians, and case workers collaborate to solve problems, not sweep them under the carpet. With Tides, parents and kids feel safer. Communities feel safer. Repeat crimes are fewer. And it costs far less: from as low as \$10,000 per kid rather than \$100,000 at the Training School. That's so much cheaper than locking them up, and, for a time, throwing away the key.

Tides is riding the wave of the future. In-home services, not residential care, are the most effective treatment option. And Tides and its partners are building statewide provider networks to make this happen. We provide clients and families an array of intensive community-based services with the cooperation of families, while the youths learn new ways of living and behaving... where they belong... in their own homes and neighborhoods. Tides works 24 / 7 / 365 to keep troubled kids on track working to rebuild their lives.

So, our programs work and we are growing to meet demand: We need you to help us continue to serve our youngsters so that small miracles can happen every day. We need to provide services for these young people where they are: on the streets of our state's poorest communities. Kids and families in crisis can't wait. In Rhode Island, in this economy, with young people in poverty and despair, the time for action is now!

Please join us in making these good works possible. We promise you: we never give up on a kid... Never! Check us out on line or give us a call to find out why kids deserve access to Tides... and why we deserve your support. Tides Family Services offer the low cost, effective approach to helping Rhode Island's youth in crisis. You may reach us at : [www.tidesfs.org](http://www.tidesfs.org) or (401) 822-1360.

## THE MAN, THE MUSIC AND TIDES CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

"It's helping me move forward and find better stuff to do than just hanging out on the streets," Gerrod said.

Like the Pied Piper, kids gravitate to Travis and he knows how to use his power for good:

"I often use the music studio as a bartering tool. If they do something positive such as going to school every day, I will bring them to the studio."

Tom, 19, is new to Tides, but he has already fallen under Travis' spell.

"Travis is a great guy. He makes me feel comfortable," he said. "Tides is providing me with a lot of opportunities to achieve my goals."

Tides suits his personality, Travis said. It's a career that gives him freedom and at the same time the satisfaction of helping kids and their families stay together while healing the wounds that often keep them apart.

I know that every day I have done something that matters. I have planted a seed. This goes beyond music and Tides. I want to know that when I go to bed at night, I can ask myself 'What did I do to say that I lived today?'"

## VOLUNTEER PROFILE: LIZ LIMONES

**W**HEN ELIZABETH “LIZ” LIMONES was assigned to Tides Family Services for her Lasallian volunteer post, her first response was, “Who goes to Rhode Island?” A native of California, and a graduate of St. Mary’s College, Moraga, California — a De La Salle Christian Brothers’ school — all Liz knew about Rhode Island was what her advisors told her: “It was small, all-white and suburban.”



“The first couple of months were tough,” she recalled. “It was a different climate and a different culture, but working with the clients convinced me that I was in the right place at the right time.”

The Lasallian Volunteer Program, based on faith, service and community, requires its participants to commit to at least one year of service to the poor and a maximum of three years. She receives a small monthly stipend and her room and board.

Now in her second year with Tides, Liz works as a social worker in Tides’ Providence School. “I like the face to face contact with the kids and I like working closely with the families and the opportunity to meet with them in their homes,” she said.

The 23-year-old is young enough to relate to teens and her growing up years in an inner city gives her a special bond with Tides kids’ issues.

“I grew up in a big city with gangs and while I never experienced what these kids go through, I can respect them,” she said.

Today, Liz is far more comfortable in her surroundings. She and fellow caseworker Jen Ferencko recently started a girls group that focuses on social services. One of their first volunteer tasks was helping to build a playground at a local YMCA.

“I’m glad I stayed in Rhode Island and didn’t listen to people who had negative opinions,” she said. “Rhode Island grows on you. It’s a nice place.”



Liz Limones, second from left, co-founded a girls group at Tides’ Providence site. The group concentrates on community activism and recently helped build a playground at a local YMCA. From left, Kidian, 17; Liz, De’Jon, 18; Rondelle, 18 and Monica, 18.



Tides Annual Golf Tournament Chairs Jim and Karen Anderson, with Tides CEO Br. Michael Reis.

## TIDES ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT RAISES \$25,000

TIDES FAMILY SERVICES’ FIFTH ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT, held October 5th at the Rhode Island Country Club, raised \$25,000, which will help refurbish and renovate its buildings.

This year 124 golfers hit the links for a full day of golf, silent and live auction and dinner. Our thanks to all our donors and golfers who make this yearly event possible, and to our hardworking committee led by Chairs Jim and Karen Anderson. Committee members included Chris Gontarz, Louis Ritz, Robert Stosser, Br. Michael Reis, Erin DiOrio, Mike Schmitt and Karin Varin, event coordinator. Rick Coleman was the lucky winner of the \$5,000 cash raffle.



# TIDES CELEBRATES SILVER ANNIVERSARY AT ANNUAL HUMANITARIAN AWARD DINNER

**T**IDES RAISED \$45,000 AT ITS ANNUAL EVENT held May 29 at the Aldrich Mansion in Warwick. The funds will be used to renovate and refurbish Tides' buildings.

Tides By The Bay Chairs, General Treasurer Frank and Gabriella Caprio, presented the 2009 Humanitarian Awards to Citizens Bank President Joseph MarcAurele, NBC10 General Manager Lisa Churchville, and June Langevin.

Many thanks to event supporters, Makrod Investment, Inc.; The Reis family, Citizens Bank Foundation, Centreville Bank and the De La Salle Christian Brothers, with special thanks to Terrence Moran of McLaughlin and Moran; William Figulski of Barefoot Wines and Nancy and Greg Laboissonniere of Cowesett Wine and Spirits. We also wish to acknowledge the many businesses and individuals who contributed to our silent and live auctions.

Tides By The Bay committee members included Nancy and Greg Laboissonniere, June Langevin, Melinda Ragosta, Elaine Roberts, Rae-Scott Skinner, Tom DeAngelis, Anthony Paliotta, John Mailloux and Br. Michael Reis, CEO. Barbara Grace DeCesare was event planner. She was assisted by staff members, Sue Moulton, Carla Bisbano and Louise St. Jean.



Tides Humanitarian Award recipient June Langevin enjoys the evening with Tides CEO Br. Michael Reis.

**THE WAVE** FALL 2009

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