

The Wave

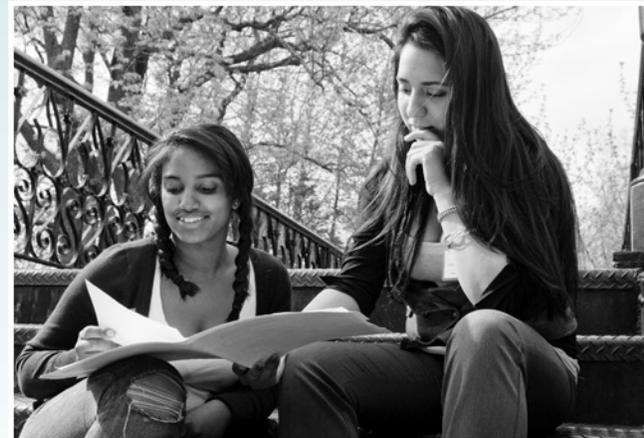
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Angel's story: Perseverance motivates a client's success

A DELINQUENCY CHARGE THAT LANDED 15-year-old Angel in the Rhode Island State Training School was, she says, "The best mistake I ever made." The unusually harsh sentence for a first time offender followed on the heels of a history of bad grades, excessive truancy, and fighting in school.

Discouraged by her persistent failures, Angel dropped out of school at age 14. The five months she spent in the training school was a life changer, she said. "Seeing the girls come in and out of the training school with situations a lot worse than mine, made me appreciate the life I had."

Angel's good behavior in the training school, motivated by her desire to get home to her ailing mother, earned her an early release and a referral to Tides Family Services. With the help of Tides, she enrolled in Cranston East High School as a junior and is currently earning As and Bs.



Angel is tutored by her caseworker, Nalui Garcia, a Lasallian Volunteer from Berkeley, California.

"A lot of her progress can be attributed to an improvement in self-awareness and esteem," said Nalui Garcia, a Lasallian Volunteer, and one of Angel's caseworkers.

Angel has applied to five colleges with the University of Rhode Island and La Salle University at the top of her wish list. Her best bet for success, offered Nalui, is admission to URI's Talent Development program, which would give Angel the preparatory work she will need to compete in college classrooms.

Because of her mother's ill health, Angel and her younger sister Alice live with their father, John, who says he is grateful for Tides' intervention. "Tides has been really good for Angel. It has given her the push she needs to succeed."

Angel's progress in school and at home are supported by her father, John, pictured at left with Angel.





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 THE CEO

● BR. MICHAEL REIS



IN THIS EDITION OF *The Wave*, we focus on one teen whose miraculous turnabout demonstrates the value of family and school support, and our newest program — the Virtual Learning Academy, where high-risk youth are earning their diplomas through online teaching programs.

Tides has invested \$100,000 in this essential program, because currently there are no other funding sources available.

Every youngster that we are able to help earn his/her high school diploma significantly reduces the probability of incarceration. Studies have shown that the key risk factors to delinquency are low attachment to family and school. That is why Tides has always focused on helping to rebuild families and working closely with schools. If we can keep our kids in school we have a better chance to keep them out of trouble and with their families.

Institutionalizing our youth should always be the last resort and reserved for those who pose a serious threat. In all other cases, youngsters are best served by community-based programs, such as Tides. We have found through our own experiences — supported by national studies — youth who received community-based supervision and after care services were far more likely to attend school, find a job and avoid further offenses during the six months after release from incarceration.

Since 2007, 700 cases have been referred to Tides from psychiatric hospitals, the Rhode Island State Training School, residential placements, shelters and family court. Of the 500 that have completed Tides' Preserving Families Network, 85 percent were returned home at case closings.

From a cost factor alone — \$25,000 a year per client for Tides' community based programs as opposed to the \$80,000 for residential placement and more than \$100,000 for a year in the training school — it just makes sense to support the programs that work and save tax dollars.

All of the studies emphasize the need to reinvest money in high-risk communities. It is the proven way to stabilize families. It is how we can make our communities safer. At Tides, we support families. We help maintain kids in school and support them with job training programs.

And we never give up on a kid — never.

TIDES HOSTS BREAKFAST MEETING FOR AREA BUSINESS OWNERS

SOME 20 AREA BUSINESS OWNERS WERE INVITED to join the newly-formed Tides' Council to The President at a March 22 breakfast held in the Pawtucket site. The advisory council will meet twice yearly to assist Tides administrators in how to meet the ever-growing challenges of running the agency.

The Council for the President will augment Tides' Board of Trustees, which has fiduciary responsibilities and whose members serve specific time limits. "I truly believe that by reaching out to the community and engaging business leaders, Tides can more effectively serve the needs of our clients and their families," Br. Michael Reis, FSC, Tides' president and CEO, said.

Department of Children, Youth and Families outgoing Director Patricia Martinez was the main speaker.

Pawtucket classroom site for virtual learning

TIDES' VIRTUAL LEARNING ACADEMY CAMPUS is giving 17- to 19-year-old youths their final chance to earn a high school diploma and, for some, the gateway to a college education. Now in its second year, the Virtual Learning Academy is a voluntary, tuition-free online computer program for Tides' clients who dropped out of high school in their junior or senior year.

The self-learning software is tailored to each student's academic level. A grant from the Ocean State Charities Trust purchased the computers and Tides bought the software programs, which cost \$450 per student.

Students attend daily classes, although they can work on their lessons at home as well. Students are required to complete 36 lessons in each of four subjects — social studies, math, science and English.

"Many of our students discovered that the GED program is much harder than they thought it would be," Peter Capalbo, dean of students, said. "Here they can learn at their own pace. It's up to them how they want to progress."

Eighteen-year-old Yesenia has been in the program for six months. A high school dropout, she finds the Virtual Learning Academy just what she needs to earn her diploma.

"The teacher helps us more and the work is easier," she said.

Yesenia is scheduled to graduate next year and plans to attend college.



"I just want to get my diploma and get a job so I can provide for myself."

JERRY, VIRTUAL LEARNING ACADEMY STUDENT

At 17, Jerry is in a hurry to finish his education. He has been a student in the Academy for two months and hasn't missed a day of classes.

"I just want to get my diploma and get a job so I can provide for myself," he said.

Jerry plans on continuing his education at the New England Technical School.

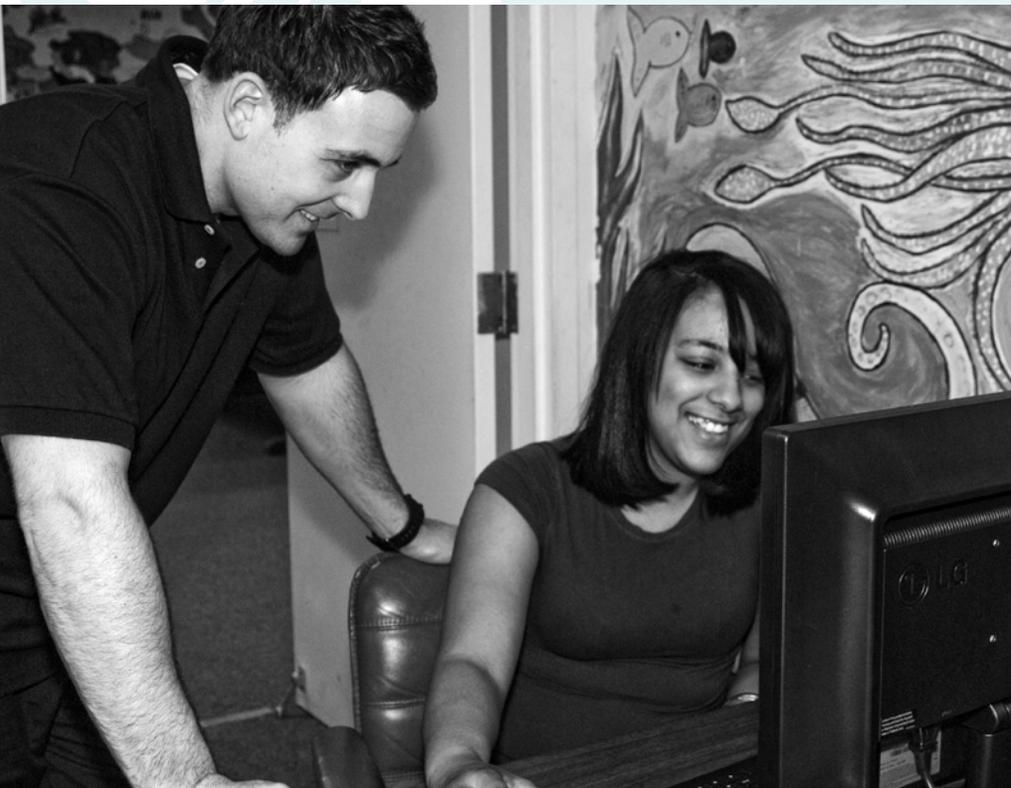
In its first year, the Academy graduated four students. This year, according to Capalbo, four of the 11 students are scheduled to receive their diplomas.

"These are kids that don't fit in a traditional academic setting," Capalbo said. "In this program, they have found a place where they can succeed and hopefully go on to further their education."

SUPPORT A STUDENT AND NAME THAT SCHOOL

You can help invest in Tides' kids future by donating all or part of a student's tuition. Tides invites corporations, businesses, civic groups and individuals to participate in the Tides' Name That School/Support Our Students project. Your gift of \$5,500 will provide a student with tuition for one year.

For more information and to learn how your corporation, business or civic group can name our school, contact Director of Development Frank Sullivan at 401.822.1360 or fsullivan@tidesfs.org.



Yesenia, 18, a Virtual Learning Academy student receives help from teacher Greg Payette.



TIDES OPENS SIXTH SITE IN NEWPORT COUNTY ▶ Christie Davis, Preserving Families Network outreach and tracking supervisor of Newport County, Jessica Pawlowski, assistant vice president of Tides' Treatment Program, along with Christopher Gontarz, chairman of Tides' Board of Trustees formally open the doors of Tides' sixth site in Middletown. Tides other offices are located in Woonsocket, Pawtucket/Central Falls, Providence, West Warwick and Wakefield.

JULY 15 ▶ TIDES' ANNUAL CELEBRATION

Tides Family Service's invites you to a celebration at the Aldrich Mansion, Warwick Neck, on July 15. Mark your calendar for an exciting evening of cocktails and silent auction, followed by dinner and dancing. This year, Tides honors former Governor Donald and Mrs. Suzanne Carcieri. Honorary chairs are Anthony and Paula Bucci. For more information and to reserve seating, contact Frank Sullivan, director of development, at 401.822.1360/fsullivan@tidesfs.org

TIDES' NEW WEBSITE IS UP AND RUNNING

Our volunteer website design team from Citizens Bank has been working diligently for months and the results of their efforts can be viewed at www.tidesfs.org. The website permits supporters to make cash donations to Tides through the auspices of Network for Good. Stay tuned for further developments and in the meantime, let us know what you would like to see on the website pages. Tides is grateful to Senior Vice President Pat Chamberlain of Citizens Bank and to the talented team of web designers, including Chris Green and Paul Brunetti.

SEND US YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS! Would you like to receive your newsletter via email? Send us your email address and we will include you in our growing list of supporters who receive communications via email. For more information, send an email to elussier@tidesfs.org, and include your full name and address. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

THE WAVE
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