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Meet our new staff member!

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Curious to see how a former ATC graduate is doing?

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What can you learn from playing with horses?



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October 2007

Family Workshop

Crossroads welcomed parents from all across the country to attend the semi-annual Family Workshop. On Thursday night the parents were welcomed to the Green Gate Village Inn, in St. George Utah. The families checked in and had some time to get settled before the opening dinner. While at dinner the families were introduced to staff members and Clinical Director, and the schedule for the weekend. After dinner the families had time to walk around St. George Main Street and enjoy the street festival.



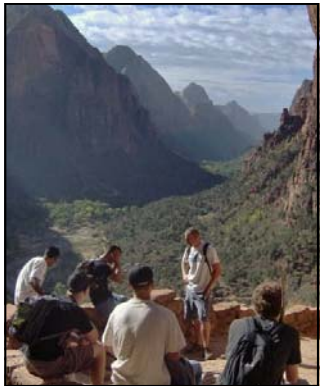
Parent **Bob D.**, learns to emergency dismount a horse during the equestrian therapy at the Family workshop.

Friday morning started with Equestrian therapy at the home of Clinical Director Matt Eschler. The families were introduced to the horses and were given a few ground rules to make the experience safe and fun for everyone. It took a while for parents and students alike to get used to the horses. The first activity was trying to bridle one of the horses. What the participants did not know at the time was that two of the horses were wild Mustangs that were not used to interaction with humans yet. Another key to this activity was that horses mirror human emotions. The students and parents had a seemingly easy time bridling all but the two wild horses. It was a good chance to see the horse up close and get used to being in their presence. Some of the

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Zion's Hike

Over the last few weeks the Crossroads students have been able to hike around Zion's national park. Therapist, **Ryan Stevenson**, sees great values in getting the students out of their normal environment and into nature to reflect on life. **Ryan** was able to take two groups of students the hike around the Emerald Pools in September. This month he was also able to take, **Jonathan S., Sunjay S., Kyle D., Richard S., and Nick C.** to hike Angels Landing. Angels' landing is a strenuous hike to a beautiful look out.



While at the top the students and **Ryan** had the opportunity to reflect on life. They had a group therapy lesson on substance abuse and addiction. They were also able to participate in visualization and meditation exercises. **Richard** said "The hike was awesome, its one the best things I have done since arriving here." We look forward to have more active therapy sessions in the future .



Thug Life, or am I am Warrior?

Thugs or warriors? Conflict resolution has everything to do with either being a thug or a warrior. You see thugs are all about violence, winning and making someone a loser while warriors are all about telling the truth and progressing. What are you? A thug or a warrior?

Nelson Mandela was born in the early 1900's. He had to make some incredibly difficult choices early on in life that forced him into choosing the thug life or owning the life of a warrior. By age nine Nelson was placed into foster care. Nelson spent his youth and adolescence in the home of a powerful leader in Africa. As a young man Nelson Mandela was a warrior for the peace movement in Africa. Because of his views of his government he was placed in prison for treason. Nelson Mandela was not imprisoned for good cause and he knew it. Did he complain and get angry? No. Rather he organized the prisoners into study groups. They would teach lessons and reenact plays through the use of prison camp songs and by utilizing the daily free time for class work. This movement led to this once stark Prison Island to be renamed "Island University". Mandela recognized that to be a warrior he could not be a victim of circumstance. He teaches us that we all can choose our responses rather than react to other peoples responses. After two decades he was finally released from the "Island University". Mandela chose to not to seek revenge. He knew he was robbed of twenty plus years of freedom, but chose to use this experience to better others rather than destroy his captors. a negotiator of truth and peace not a thug that sought retribution. Warriors learn from their experiences and use

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Life After Crossroads

For many parents and students, graduation from the Crossroads Program seems like an elusive goal, and a long hard road. Though the path to independence is often filled with ups and downs, it is a path worth taking. To help shed some more light on the path to independence we spoke with Crossroads' graduate Brent Hogan and his mother Sandy Hogan.

The Hogan family found the Crossroads program through a therapist that they were working with. The therapist mentioned that Utah was a great place for Therapeutic Programs, so the Hogan family started looking at program options. At that time Sandy says that they were in desperate need for help. Their family was struggling, under a lot of pressure and needed help to redirect their son. Brent has been coasting through 2 years of college and during that time had started to become more disrespectful, irresponsible and dishonest. The Hogan family decided that Crossroads was a good fit for Brent. He was a student in the Crossroads program for 15 months.

While at Crossroads the road was not always easy for Brent or his family. When Brent was asked about how he struggled in the program he said he struggled in just about every way. It was hard for him to make the adjustment from living at home, where everything was paid for and money was never a problem, to living within a budget that was suitable to his income. Brent also struggled to life without a car. He soon understood that as he progressed through the steps of the program that he would be granted more privileges and more freedoms. As he worked hard to get into step II Brent was able to earn his driving privileges again. For Sandy she had a similar experience letting the program work. *"There were times through the program that were not easy as parents to watch our son struggle. He was not only challenged, he has to be accountable for his actions and goals not met."* She went on to say that *"It was important to let the program help our son when he was struggling, because for the first time, the program taught him that he had to take responsibility for himself, and not lean on us as his parents. He has to learn to become more independent and self sufficient."* The Hogan family was patient as they watched Brent struggle through his individual challenges. As they trusted in the program they watched Brent work hard and begin to face his challenges head on eventually change his life around.

While Brent was a student in the program he gained valuable experiences and skills that helped prepare him for life on his own. One of his greatest accomplishments was earning a 3.0 GPA at Dixie state college. Brent was proud of himself since that was a significant raise in his grades from before. Turning his schooling around was a goal Brent set before arriving in Utah. Brent has been able to transfer his credits from



Brent and Sandy rappel down the mountain at a Crossroads family workshop.

Dixie State College to Southern Utah University where he is currently finishing his last year of school. Brent said that more importantly *"I feel like I have accomplished something and have gained the strength and will power to say no to things that will not help me progress in life."* He went on to say that before moving to Utah he was not able to say no to peer pressure. His time in the program helped him to grow up and realize that being an adult is being a person who has the courage and strength to say no to things that will bring you down.

While Brent was a student of the Crossroads Program he not only learned to budget, and become his own person, Brent learned to create meaningful relationships. He met a lot of successful and knowledgeable people that helped him to turn his life around, and who could help him to make good decisions in the future. Brent was also able to establish a good relationship with his family. Brent says that he has been able to earn back the trust and respect of his family that he had previously lost. Sandy says, *"We are so much closer as a family, which is such a wonderful feeling. Brent is now a young man who is trusting, responsible, caring, loving and respectful. We could not be more proud to say he is our son."*

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Since graduation Brent has been living on his own in Cedar City where he attends the University of Southern Utah. He says the best part of living on his own is, *"knowing for the first time in my life I have decided to be an adult"*. Brent has done very well since graduating from the crossroads program and everyone here looks forward to seeing him graduate USU in the spring. His advice to current students would be *"stay in the program and graduate. I endured many tough times while I was there, but I know it was for the best, it made me a stronger person."* He echoed similar advice to parents, *"Trust the staff, they have your sons best interest at heart. There were times I called home and wanted to leave. My parents and I knew that graduating the program would be a stepping stone to bigger and better things. Quitting wasn't even an option."*

For all of our students there will be struggles along the path to independence, but the struggle is worth it. For Brent and his family it meant a new future, and a foundation they could build upon. With a little hard work, his can be a reality for your family too.

Students on the move:

Congratulations on all your hard work:

- **Kyle D.** Advancing to Step II
- **Richard S.** completing his GED, and starting his new landscaping job.
- Welcome back **Even G.**
- **Nick C.** Starting a Job at the Movie Theater

Thanks for your Support!

- ★ **A Southern Utah Counseling Experience**, for you above and beyond help with the family workshop.
- ★ **Brent and Sandy Hogan** for their willingness to be interviewed for the newsletter, and their continued help and support of the Crossroads program. You guys are amazing!
- ★ **The Alger Family**, for your help with print services.



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Welcome to the Crossroads Family



Chet Woodbury joined the Crossroads team this last month. Chet will be the night manager, and will be living on site at the Crossroads 4-Plex. Chet will be responsible for the nightly devotionals and evening check-in with the students. Chet will also be responsible for the Saturday morning deep clean of the apartments, and organizing and coordinating service projects for the Crossroads students.

Chet grew up in Hurricane Utah, where he enjoyed playing football and keeping active. After graduating high school Chet served a 2 year mission for his church in Panama. While he was there he learned to have a good work ethic and to serve others. Since returning home from Panama Chet married his beautiful wife Erin, and has been coaching football at Hurricane High School. Chet says that coaching football has helped him to learn how to motivate others to do their best. Working with adolescence in this capacity has been a good experience for him, and he looked for more opportunities to work in similar fields. Chet is still exploring career options and is interesting in doing things that might propel him into a successful future. He brings with him motivation to succeed and do well at everything he tries. On his free time Chet likes to hunt, and spend time in the mountains and nature. He also enjoys spending time with his family and especially his nieces and nephews.

We are excited to have Chet as a part of the Crossroads team. It is exciting to have new staff members who are excited and can bring new ideas and strengths to the program. Chet's dedication to excellences is an example we can all follow. Chet is excited to work with young adults because *"They have a lot to look forward to. Their lives are at an exciting stage where most of the major decisions are being made. It's exciting to be an influence for good."*

"Warrior" continued from pg their knowledge to better their communities. Mandel did not seek revenge, but instead he became a leader that shared power with the very faction that imprisoned him! He was a negotiator of truth and peace not a thug that sought retribution.

What is your focus in times of conflict? Do you use an internal scale of justice to validate vendettas at home or work? Healthy focus and internal dialog is the way of the warrior. Asking better questions is the way to create resolution to all conflicts. If you have a friend that gossips about people and you are frustrated you can be a warrior and ask yourself "what is missing in their life that drives this behavior?" The questions we ask ourselves create our meaning of reality. We respond to how we identify with reality. Our own identity and the questions we ask drive our responses. Our responses determine whether or not we are thugs or warriors. **Be a warrior!**

"Family Workshop" continued from pg 1

parents and students were uncomfortable around such large animals. After everyone was used to the animals, there were several other communication games that were played. Each of the activities taught respect for the animals, and gave greater understanding to how we communicate, where we are weak and how we can become better at communication. The experience was a lot of fun and education for all who participated. After the equine therapy, there was a BBQ lunch that allowed time to sit and talk. Later that afternoon and evening families had the opportunity to meet with program staff to check up their individual student's goals and progress. Family therapy sessions were also conducted throughout the weekend.



ATC students Sunjay S., and Taylor S., try to get comfortable around the horses. Here they are attempting to mount a horse for the group.



ATC student Nick C., learns how to mount a horse bareback.

The active sessions was followed Saturday with a class room discussion. Clinical Director, **Matt Eschler** and therapist, **Ryan Stevenson** taught the parents and students about the importance of effective communication. The families and students learned skills that would help them to better communicate and

understand each other in the future. The class broke for a lunch break at Don Jose Mexican Buffet just down the street. When families returned there was a slide show with the pictures from the weekend to enjoy. After class was over the families had the remainder of the weekend to themselves to spend time with their students. Some families were able to make it to Zion's national park and others enjoyed the Rodeo and down town St. George.

The weekend was an opportunity for the families to see how much progress their students have made since arriving in Southern Utah. It was also a chance for staff, families and therapist to get on the same page for treatment plans a goals. For everyone who attending it was a bonding and learning experience. We hope to see you all again for the next workshop!



Brett M. and his parents groom a horse together at the Family Workshop.