

UTA HALEE ACADEMY

Dedicated to improving the lives of youth, families and communities.



2015 ANNUAL REPORT

A Letter from the Director

Our student population - young women whose trauma demands specialized treatment and care - is a population whose needs offer new challenges, and new opportunities.

Dear Friends:

In 2015, we continued our work to cultivate a culture of empowerment for our young women at Uta Halee through our Therapeutic, Education, Vocation and Extracurricular skill-based program elements. Uta Halee's philosophy involves giving youth both empowerment and empathy through Restorative Justice, evidence-based treatment curricula and the unique opportunities available on our campus.

Last year, we began offering a CNA Vocational tract to our students which has been a great success. Young women who have graduated from the program with a certificate earned in the CNA program are working as Nursing Assistants in their home communities.

Our on-site student clubs help our young women to develop leadership skills as they pursue their passions. The Art Club proposed, planned and painted a beautiful mural in our dining hall. *The Odyssey*, our on-site newspaper, publishes stories, poetry and student art every week. The Book Club reads and discusses a novel once a month. The Fitness Club organizes on-campus runs, weight training sessions as well as seminars on the importance of good nutrition and wellness.

Through our frequent focus on community service and restorative justice, we balance empowerment with empathy as young women learn to love themselves and others. Moving forward to 2016, I am excited to see where the creativity, imagination and hard work of our student leaders will take us.

Kristina Lesley, Program Director



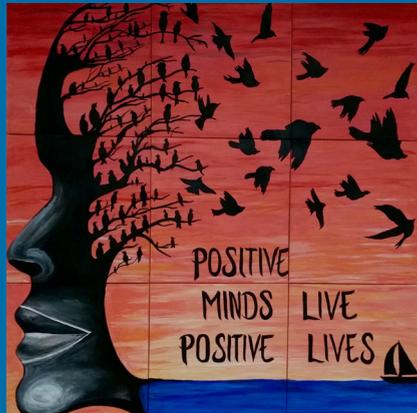
Gender-Responsive Programming

In 2015, a report released by the Public Welfare Foundation, NoVo Foundation and Boston College Law School examined the shortcomings of juvenile justice's ability to address the specific needs of girls.

The report found that current methods (criminalization, juvenile justice referrals or detention) do not follow the latest research which indicate girls need individualized approaches tailored to their social environment, risk and needs. So, "...even the most well-intentioned juvenile justice system tends to...pull girls deeper into a system that is not built to help, heal or respond to girls' developmental needs," silencing a girl's potential for rehabilitation, recovery and release.

The research has shown that the reasons girls enter the juvenile justice system are complicated, myriad, and are often layered with significant prior trauma, sexual exploitation and abuse.

Our gender-responsive services begin with three principles: safety (physical and psychological), relationships and shared power with girls across all systems. These principles are enacted at Uta Halee Academy by, very simply, giving girls a voice in their Treatment Plan, in the daily programming, and in the recognition of their accomplishments.



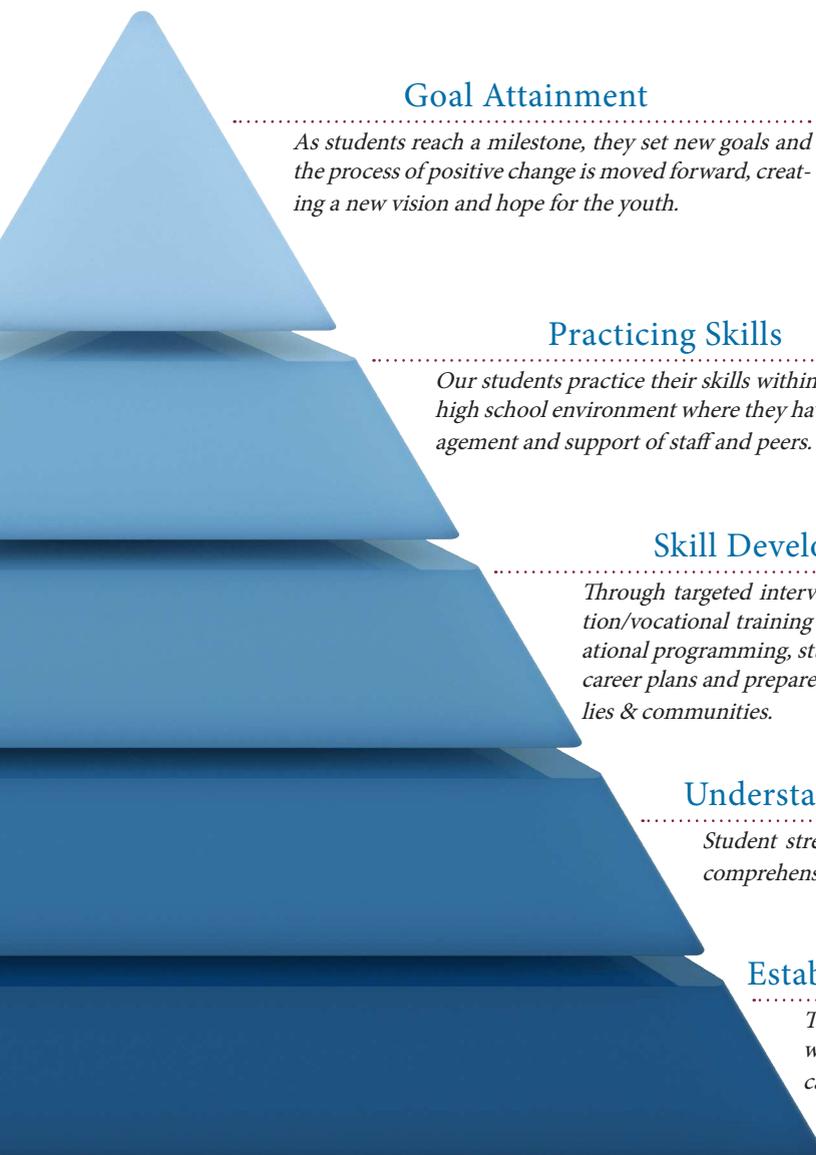
Uta Halee students spread holiday cheer during their first choir performance. The opening song was a collaboration written by several students and performed with guitar accompaniment. Students were able to spread joy within their community while also learning how to use music as an outlet for self-expression.

Uta Halee students founded several clubs on campus that offer opportunities to develop and practice social skills while participating in the activities they love. Art Club students shared a positive message through the piece they created for the campus dining hall.

In 2015, our program focused on serving our young women and the community through restorative community justice initiatives which framed several community service projects. UHA's young women donated their time at the local homeless shelter, and raised money to help support programs that benefit children in need.

ROP's Academic Model™

The Academic Model™ is the framework for Uta Halee Academy's programming and services. Under the direction of this framework, Uta Halee Academy provides a safe, high school environment where students develop their skills and strengths with the help of supportive faculty and staff. Evidence-based cognitive behavioral interventions, accredited education, and a wide variety of CTE tracks prepare our students to return to public school, or to complete their GED or high school diploma. Community service and restorative justice principles foster a sense of social responsibility, which helps to guide our students to achieve their goals, and to succeed.



Goal Attainment

As students reach a milestone, they set new goals and the process of positive change is moved forward, creating a new vision and hope for the youth.

Practicing Skills

Our students practice their skills within a normalized high school environment where they have the encouragement and support of staff and peers.

Skill Development

Through targeted interventions, accredited education/vocational training and unique athletic/recreational programming, students build skills, develop career plans and prepare to reunite with their families & communities.

Understanding of Needs & Strengths

Student strengths and needs are determined through a comprehensive assessment process.

Establishing Safety & Caring Relationships

The Academic Model™ is a strengths-based framework which begins with a foundation of safety, realized through caring relationships between staff and students.



Family, Staff & Community Involvement

Uta Halee Academy's program starts with a foundation of safety. Safety is accomplished through our culture of supportive relationships between students and qualified, trained staff which fosters an optimal learning environment. In 2015, our initiative to provide a safe, caring environment resulted in the following outcomes:

10

family contacts
per student per
month

7

Community
Advisory Board
meetings

77

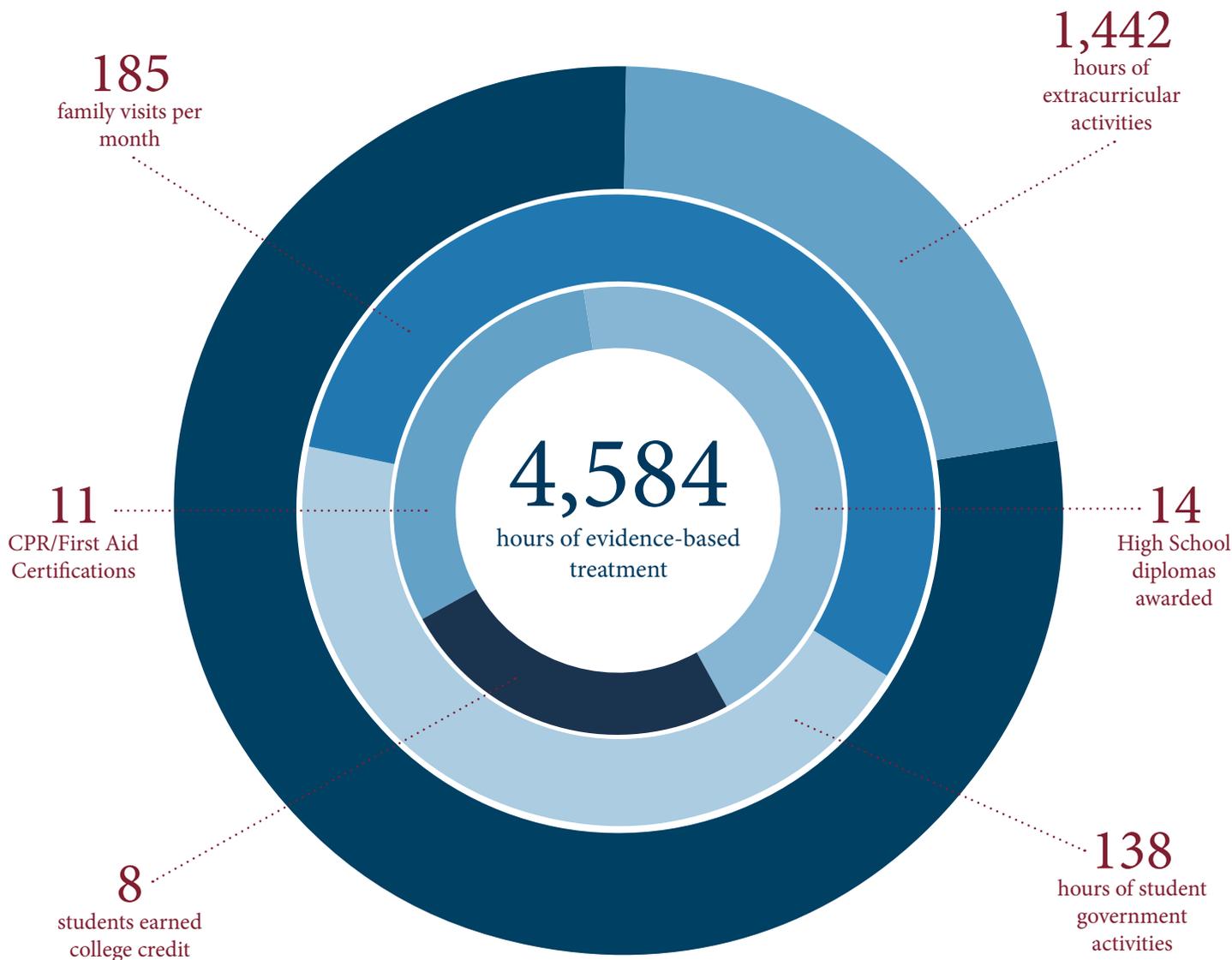
hours of staff
training

661

hours of
community
service

Developing & Practicing Skills

Uta Halee Academy offers evidence-based practices which are supported by therapeutic services delivered by a highly qualified and credentialed Clinical Team. This talented team has grown to meet the needs of our students through a diversity of approaches and methodologies which include nine evidence-based practices to address trauma, the effects of trafficking and substance abuse.



Creating Positive Outcomes

Students are given specific Treatment Plan goals. As they progress in their program, students meet these initial goals and award ceremonies, graduations and rewards celebrate these milestones. When this happens, new goals are established and the process of positive change is moved forward.

Student Success: Sara's Story

Sara was difficult to place in other area treatment programs. It was clear from her past that she needed a treatment and education program which would enable her to begin the process of positive change. Uta Halee Academy's program and staff gave Sara exactly that: for two years where staff and other students witnessed a remarkable - and, touching - transformation.

While at UHA, Sara followed her Treatment Plan, which prescribed specific evidence-based treatment groups, individual therapy and group/family therapy. She also put her mind to pursuing her education, and began to earn high school credits. Day after day, Sara became hopeful, and more engaged in the program.

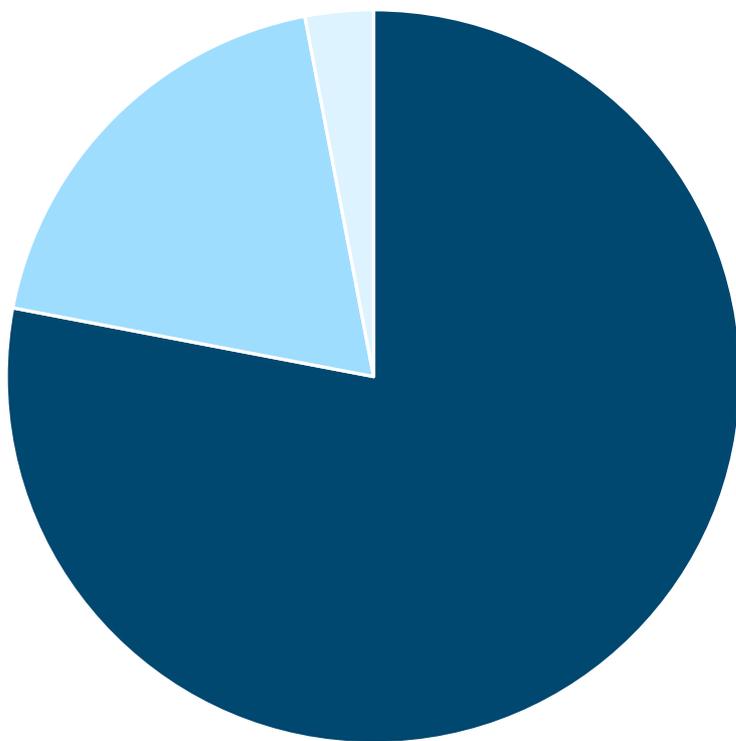
She embraced the on-campus clubs, and was soon elected President of the Student Council. As President, Sara acted as a mentor to other students, encouraging them to express themselves in healthy outlets, and to engage in community service and other campus activities. She brought awareness of the effects of bullying to the campus through a movie, followed by a discussion.

After two years, Sara graduated from Uta Halee Academy with a high school diploma. She returned home, and is living with her aunt while holding a full time job. This past summer, Sara returned to Uta Halee's campus to give a speech for a special event. In her speech, Sara underscored the importance learning to love and forgive herself as key elements which led to the life she has today...which is happy, and full of promise.



Financials & Community Engagement

Rite of Passage provides the best value in juvenile justice and residential care. This value is due, in part, to our company's investment in our mission to improve the lives of youth. We are a cause-based organization that answers to our customers, and invests in outcomes and quality services.



■ Personnel ■ Direct Student Services ■ Operating Expenses

Social Responsibility

As a socially responsible company, ROP promotes the well-being of youth, families and communities. Last year, ROP students completed over 50,000 hours of community service across the United States.

Social Responsibility is the cornerstone of what we do, and we incorporate this initiative into every aspect of our business.

Community Advisory Board

Todd Milbrandt
Dan Egan
Dr. Dee Acklie
Christy Al-Nemah
Shawn Weyh

Community Partnerships

The Open Door Mission
The Lydia House
Quality CNA/CMA
Minority Outreach Resource Education
Methodist College
Florence Home
American Cancer Society
College of St. Mary
Goodwill Industries
Omaha Chamber of Commerce
Kiwanis Club
Heartland Juvenile Services Association

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