

March 2005



## TOUCHSTONE/VALUEOPTIONS CHARTER SCHOOL PREVENTION PROJECT SHINES AGAIN

### ORGANIZATIONAL GROWTH CONTINUES

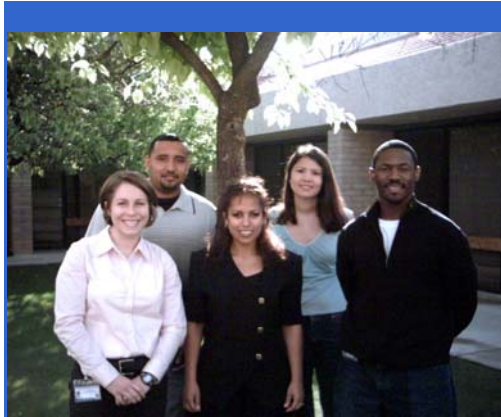
#### Service Delivery Remains Primary Goal

Six (6) years ago Touchstone Behavioral Health employed 42 individuals, today we employ 142, with vacant positions still being filled on a regular basis. We have grown consistently over this period of time at a pace that has created a challenge to maintain the high quality of personnel that we demand at Touchstone. The staff has grown exponentially in response to a parallel growth in our client population. Currently we have over 2,500 clients enrolled in services with Touchstone Behavioral Health. Touchstone has also grown state-wide. We have recently opened an office in Flagstaff,

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Nearing the end of its first three (3) years, the *Touchstone/ValueOptions Charter School Prevention Project* continues to receive rave reviews from the schools, families and communities they serve. This program, which is made available through a grant by ValueOptions, has touched the lives of literally thousands of children and families. The Prevention Project works with 'at risk' youth in the Valley's Charter Schools. During our most recent audit/site survey from ValueOptions, this program was once again recognized for its creativity and commitment to the consumers we serve.



Prevention Staff

With a growing diverse population in the Phoenix Metropolitan area, it is important to keep in mind the high demands that are placed on prevention agencies to provide services to fit the needs of those we serve. The *Touchstone/ValueOptions Charter School Prevention Project* has successfully shown a dedication and willingness to educate students, schools, families, and communities on the

various risk and protective factors in their environment.

Our goal is to incorporate the Arizona Model and the 12-principles into our prevention program. This will align our prevention program with state standards and the commitment we have to providing services to

children and families in Arizona. As we move into the 21st century, it is understood that as an agency we must keep up with the current trend of helping others achieve success in school, life with their families, avoid delinquency, and become stable and productive adults.

The most recent addition to this project has been the *Suicide Prevention* program already being provided in a number of charter schools currently served under this grant. The expansion of this program is something we are very excited about for this upcoming year. Additionally, other *evidence-based* and *best-practice* models are being explored to further expand our existing curriculum.

### BILL GATES' SPEECH

to Mt. Whitney High School in Visalia, California.

To anyone with kids of any age, here's some advice. Bill Gates recently gave a speech at a High School about eleven things they did not and will not learn in school. He talks about how feel-good, politically correct teachings created a generation of kids with no concept of reality and how this concept sets them up for failure in the real world.

**Rule 1**—Life is not fair—get used to it!

**Rule 2**—The world won't care about your self-esteem. The world will expect you to accomplish something BEFORE you feel good about yourself.

**Rule 3**—You will NOT make \$60,000 a year right out of high school. You won't be a vice president with a car phone until you earn both.

**Rule 4**—If you think your teacher is tough, wait till you get a boss.

**Rule 5**—Flipping burgers is not beneath your dignity. Your Grandparents had a different word for burger flipping—they called it opportunity.

**Rule 6**—If you mess up, it's not your parent's fault, so don't whine about your mistakes, learn from them.

**Rule 7**—Before you were born, your Parent's weren't as boring as they are now. They got that way from paying

your bills, cleaning your clothes and listening to you talk about how cool you thought you were. So before you save the rain forest from the parasites of your parent's generation, try de-lousing the closet in your own room.

**Rule 8**—Your school may have done away with winners and losers, but life HAS NOT. In some schools they have abolished failing grades and they'll give you as MANY TIMES as you want to get the right answer. This doesn't bear the slightest resemblance to ANYTHING in real life.

**Rule 9**— Life is not divided into semesters. You don't get summers off and very few employers are interested in helping you FIND YOURSELF. Do that on your own time.

**Rule 10**—Television is NOT real life. In real life people actually have to leave the coffee shop and go to jobs.

**Rule 11**—Be nice to nerds. Chances are you'll end up working for one.

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providing services through our evidence-based programs (*Functional Family Therapy, MultiSystemic Therapy and Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care*) in a majority of the outlying rural counties. Our commitment to our clients includes providing support services in close proximity to the communities in which they live. At the forefront of our focus is to manage our growth without any sacrifice to the high quality of programs we provide. Our consumer base can rest assured that at no time will Touchstone Behavioral Health ever compromise our quality in the interest of a larger "market share".

Touchstone/ValueOptions Charter student letters follow...

Dear Ms. Janelle:

I want you to know how much I love your program and how important Touchstone is to me. Ms. Janelle, I like every Monday because you come in and teach me a lot of different things that I should know. I like how you teach me....

Sincerely, KG

“When I Grow Up”

When I grow up I don't want to be in a gang . I just want to hang out with my friends and be cool without drugs, guns or knives. When I see a person that I know and he/she is doing something that he/she is not suppose to do then I am going to say what happens once you commit a crime.

I don't even know why people do want to hurt their own family because everyone is brothers and sisters. If you hurt someone it is like you are hurting yourself.

Sincerely, YG

**Touchstone Behavioral Health Self-Assessment Team** moves forward. In collaboration with Arizona State University and four other nonprofit organizations around the Valley, we are involved in a six-month self-assessment process focused around five key questions.

**What is our mission**

**Who are our customers**

**What do our customers value**

**What are our results**

**What is our plan**

The self-assessment team has just completed compiling facts and data related to an environmental scan in preparation for a retreat on April 21st and 22nd, 2005. We will bring together a larger group to look at our work and recommend directions for our future.

Why are we doing this? We want to use this time of stability and growth for our organization to be able to step back and look at ourselves to ensure we are laying a strong foundation for our future services.

### E-Newsletter

The newsletter is posted on our website at [www.touchstonebh.org](http://www.touchstonebh.org). To receive a copy of the newsletter by e-mail, please sign up on our website.

Rita Torres, employee of the 2nd quarter is recognized for her hard work, dedication to Touchstone and ability to work as a team player. Rita has been with Touchstone for two years. She handles all the purchasing needs, facilities upkeep, clerical support and ensures the reception center is always manned to provide good customer service .

Rita has created a structured system for the Administrative Services area. She recognized the fast growth at Touchstone and knew from her years of working in Administration that procedures needed to be put in place to be more efficient.

Ms. Glass, CFO at Touchstone, says that she has been very impressed with Rita and the method in which she has developed her department.

There are many endeavors going managed by Rita's department and she works so well with her staff prioritizing projects and completing them on time. I can always count on Rita for any assignments that I give her and I really appreciate all the assistance.

During the growth that has occurred in Rita's two years at Touchstone, she has facilitated about four different moves either adding additional space or moving out of one space into another. And has somehow maintained a smile through all of this.

The Executive Committee recognized Rita's efforts in streamlining processes and ensuring that the Administrative duties at Touchstone are carried out smoothly, efficiently and with professionalism.

### **Rita Torres, Administrative Services Coordinator**



## **EMPLOYEE'S OF THE QUARTER**

### **Marsha Nessler, Case Management Coordinator**



Marsha Nessler, employee of the 3rd quarter began her work at Touchstone as a Family Support Partner. It quickly became clear that Marsha had skills that extended far beyond her job duties as an FSP, including being a natural leader. She was selected to be the Case Manager Team Lead and was the first FSP in any agency in the valley to be promoted to this position.

The Case Management department has grown and changed tremendously constantly. Marsha has done a wonderful job helping her staff adjust to those changes. She is extraordinarily efficient and extremely responsible as well as kind and supportive. She is an excellent representative of Touchstone Behavioral Health and embodies all the characteristics that we look for in an employee and in a person.

“Her dedication, loyalty and her personal interest in helping the families make her an invaluable employee, one that we hope to have here for some time to come” says, Frank Saverino, Clinical Director.

Steve Ginsberg, COO, relates that Marsha possesses those intangible skills and innate ability to put both her colleagues and consumers in a comfortable position. Others come to her for support and she serves as a positive role-model for her entire department.



## Touchstone Behavioral Health Staff Supports Troops Serving in Iraq

The employees of Touchstone Behavioral Health have committed themselves to sending care packages to friends and family members of Touchstone who are serving their country in Iraq. Since last summer, we have mailed multiple packages to about eight different servicemen in Iraq.

“Mailing the packages is a testament to the amount of support that our staff have for the troops defending our freedom”, stated Sharon Glass, CFO, who started the benefit.

whether we should or should not be in Iraq, we want to ensure that the service men and women know that we fully support them.”

Some of the items that have been sent are phone cards, toiletries, snacks, batteries, boot socks, magazines, powered drinks (we have been told that the water is awful), cards and most of all our prayers for their safe return. You don't know you miss something until you are away from home and go without. They have responded with some of the most heart warming letters about receiving their surprise packages. They

tell stories about how they share the packages with their comrades. They truly represent the best America has to offer. We received one letter from GySgt. David Crosby who stated, “it always brings a smile to our faces when we receive mail, especially unexpected packages. It is a good feeling knowing that people who don't even know us are behind us, whether they agree with us being here or not.”

It is a privilege and a pleasure for us to support the men and women who defend our freedom.

*It always brings a smile to our faces when we receive mail, especially unexpected packages.*

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**Address Correction Requested**

**TO:**

### Editor's note

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