

In Harmony

people, programs, events

Harmony Hill School, Inc.

2014

A Message from our President/CEO

Dear Friends,

Much of the continued success of our programming is due in large part to our dedicated staff. It *has been* a trying year for our staff and this agency; but I want to highlight their accomplishments and applaud their commitment to our mission and overall philosophy. Without their perseverance and willingness to adapt to the many changes that we have all undergone this past year, we would never have been able to maintain the level of care and treatment we provide day in and day out to our boys and their families. We have had to reduce staffing and merge living units this past year. During this time we were also applauded by the Council on Accreditation (COA) and received an *expedited* accreditation from them in July! In addition, a standard Safety Review by DCYF brought forth no issues that required Harmony Hill to make any changes to our day-to-day practices. The Department is currently working with us to develop Safety Plans for our clients that could become a template used throughout the state.

Harmony Hill School is part of a new network system which rightfully places a great emphasis on keeping youth in the home and their community as much as possible. Being a high end residential treatment facility, the youth that we serve often have some of the most complex needs within the system. Harmony Hill School discharged 85% of our residential youth during the 2013 year to a less restrictive setting and of those discharged, 49% were placed back with their families or legal guardians. Collaborative efforts among our youth, families, clinical department, education faculty and residential staff make these reunifications with family or independent living a reality.

I would like to thank our Board of Directors for their continued leadership and trust in all that we do here at Harmony Hill School. Their guidance and support through these twelve months has truly allowed us to feel confident that every strategic step that was made was done so with the utmost thought and concern for the integrity of this organization, with its best interests at heart for our students and staff.

It is mostly due to the determination of our devoted team that we were able to end 2013 on a high note and begin moving toward some very positive initiatives in 2014. We are in the stages of finalizing new programming opportunities and partnerships to better serve our youth. We have changed our restraint model to *Safety Care*. Moving forward, we will continue to provide Rhode Island and Connecticut families with the enhanced level of expertise and commitment that we always have as leaders in residential and educational care.

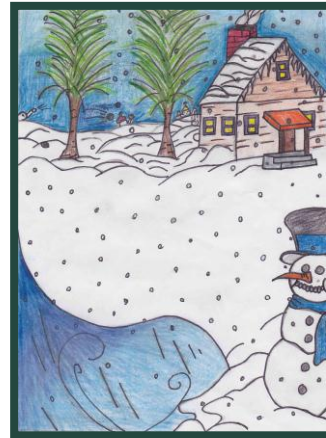
Programmatically, there were many highlights from this past year, which you will read about in this annual edition of *In Harmony*, including news about Harmony Hill's expedited re-accreditation from the Council on Accreditation (COA), our 31st Annual Golf Tournament and our upcoming 32nd Annual Golf Tournament, new curriculum options for our students and various ways we have given back to the community.

Wishing you all well for a wonderful 2014!

Sincerely,



Eric James
President/CEO



First Place Winning Design

Harmony Hill School held a contest for its students to design the artwork used for our 2013 Holiday Cards. Each student was given the opportunity to work with our Visual Arts Educator, Marcy Feeney, to create winter scenes for the design. The grand prize winner and 4 other winners received gift cards to stores of their choosing

HHS Receives COA Re-Accreditation with Flying Colors!

The Council on Accreditation (COA) peer reviewers were on campus in July 2013. Harmony Hill School, Inc. has been re-accredited! In addition, Harmony Hill School, Inc. was expedited through the Pre-Commission Review Report (PCR) process as a result of having no out of compliance ratings in any of the fundamental practice standards. This is an amazing achievement and we received the highest accolades!

There are several components to the accreditation process beyond the site visit itself. Many people worked very hard on this endeavor, but nobody worked harder and more diligently than our twelve COA Section Leaders. The process of accreditation is a major undertaking and these individuals worked hard for many months independently and with their staff gathering evidence to support the best practices in place at the agency. Quality Improvement remained at the forefront, managing the Leaders and keeping the agency on track.

From start to finish, the reviewers reported that they were so impressed with the work that is being done by the staff at Harmony Hill School and the quality of care given to our youth. Accreditation is an ongoing process and we continually work carefully to insure that we are always providing the highest standards of care for our youth and families.





Harmony Hill students created Paper Mache skulls to go along with their *Day of the Dead* art lesson during October and November. The lesson was a collaboration between the Social Studies and Visual Art classes.

Career Choices

What do you want to be when you grow up?

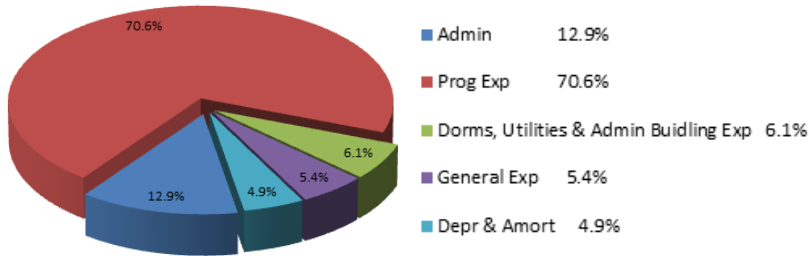
In September, Harmony Hill opened a new class for our secondary students under the direction of Resource Teacher Deborah Radcliff and Co-Teacher Vuthy So, called *Career Choices*. In response to concerns expressed such as, "What will our student's lives be like in ten years?", "How much serious thought have our students given to the future?" These are all valid questions and we're happy to tell you that our students are spending this school year thoughtfully considering what their life will look like in ten years.

Using the *Career Choices* curriculum, classes explore a step-by-step decision-making process which will enable all students to articulate the answers to three questions: Who am I? What do I want? How do I get it? Through this process, our students are challenged to envision a future that includes: graduation from high school, matriculation and graduation from post-secondary education or training and transition into the workforce with the training and skills necessary for economic self-sufficiency.

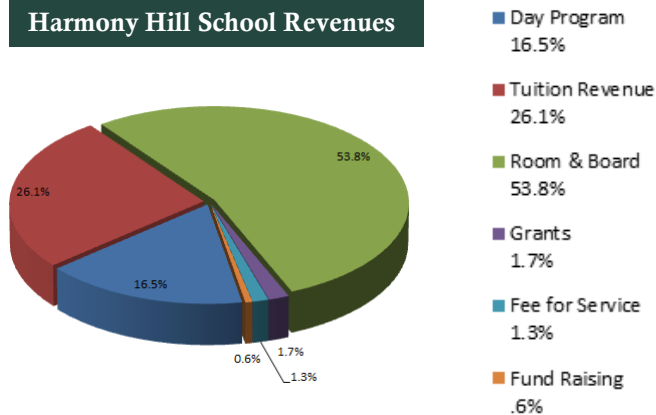
As students and teachers work through the *Career Choices* material, they are discussing everything from job interviews to mortgage payments, to how to feed a family of four on a tight budget. Our students are learning why being successful in high school is important to future life satisfaction and how setting goals and staying true to their passions will lead to the achievements that they desire.

2013 Financial Review

Harmony Hill School Expenses



Harmony Hill School Revenues



31st Annual Golf Tournament

Harmony Hill School held its annual golf tournament on September 23, 2013, at the picturesque Crystal Lake Golf Club. On behalf of the students and staff of Harmony Hill School, we want to offer our sincere thanks to all that supported this year's event and made it a huge success! We are very excited to report that this year's tournament raised over \$10,000! The funds raised during the tournament will afford our students with various enrichment opportunities throughout the year as well as funding to our on-site Challenge Course.

Everyone had a great day out on the greens and we are looking forward to doing it again next year at Crystal Lake on September 22, 2014! Until then, we wish to express our appreciation for your generosity and we are so grateful for your support of Harmony Hill School and the work that we do for children and families in Rhode Island and nearby Connecticut. Without our donors' support, this year's tournament wouldn't have been the huge success that it was. With your continued support we are able to offer our students the things they need most: hope, healing, security, respect, and self-esteem.



Giving Back

Over the 2013 Holiday Season the staff and students at Harmony Hill School held activities that raised funds for both the Gloucester Food Pantry and the Rhode Island Food Bank. This past November our elementary classroom held a bread sale that raised \$285.00 for the Rhode Island Food Bank. Under the guidance of Harmony Hill's Elementary Teacher, Heather Axton, students have been participating in this fundraising activity for the past 3 years raising almost \$800.00 for the Rhode Island Food Bank. "I feel, especially at this time of year, that it is important for our students to learn that giving is as rewarding as getting", Mrs. Axton expressed.

In addition to our Annual Bread Sale, Harmony Hill Staff collected non-perishable food items for the Gloucester Food Pantry. For this year's annual Holiday Party, Harmony Hill Employees opted to donate a canned good for the Gloucester Food Pantry as an "admission" into their annual celebration. Staff also collected non-perishable food items in the weeks leading up to the end of the year. Many items were delivered to the Gloucester Food Pantry.

Harmony Hill also continues to give annually to support The Tomorrow Fund. Every Friday staff will donate funds to participate in a dress down day. The Tomorrow Fund is the only local nonprofit organization that provides financial and emotional support to children with cancer and their families.