Your Gift Matters to Students Like Keenan!

Thank you for helping change his future.

As a young teenager, most people would have described Keenan as a normal, happy kid. He was active in sports and had a close-knit circle of friends. But what others didn’t know was that Keenan’s happy-go-lucky attitude was a facade.

On the inside, Keenan was extremely anxious, depressed and afraid of failing. He needed to achieve perfection. He disguised this with arrogance and a carefree manner.

“It was easier to live this way than to allow myself to have uncomfortable real-life feelings,” Keenan said.

He even hid his feelings from his parents. Keenan worried that if they knew the truth, they would have thought they were doing something wrong.

Eventually, Keenan’s masquerade reached a breaking point. He started to struggle; his grades began to fall. Everything started to pile up. The smallest issues became huge. Unable to cope with overwhelming feelings, Keenan became more anxious and very depressed.

Keenan on the campus of Salve Regina University in Newport, where he is a freshman.

“I didn’t feel motivated to do anything. I knew I wanted to do better, but I just didn’t know how.”

Keenan’s bright future

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“I didn’t feel motivated to do anything,” Keenan said. “I knew I wanted to do better, but I just didn’t know how.”

That’s when his teachers and parents decided it was time to try something new. Together, they looked into a couple of options. They decided on The Providence Center School—a special education school for students in grades pre-K through grade 12 who have emotional or behavioral problems that make learning difficult. It was the best fit for Keenan’s needs.

The transition was easy. Keenan felt much more comfortable in the unique, intimate learning environment that The Providence Center School offered. He was finally able to get the one-on-one time with his teachers that he desperately needed and his grades started to improve. The compassion and understanding of the teachers and counselors helped Keenan address his need for perfectionism.

“I used to believe I needed to be perfect,” he said. “All I needed to do was just train harder and just study harder. But now I know that wasn’t realistic. No one is perfect.”

The Providence Center School’s individualized approach made a difference in helping Keenan to discover his authentic self. “They helped me to be genuine, to be real in the moment. I learned techniques that I can use to manage my emotions.”

In June, Keenan graduated from The Providence Center School. He is thankful for the guidance he received. “They gave me an opportunity to succeed,” he said. “My family and I are deeply grateful. They redirected my future and inspired my dreams.”

Keenan now attends Salve Regina University, where he earned a $72,000 Presidential Scholarship.

“They gave me an opportunity to succeed.”
You helped transform Mariana’s life!

How your support is helping our community access life-saving treatment

Mariana’s childhood involved experiences that no child should have to endure. She was sexually abused, lost her mother and lacked a stable, loving home.


Mariana’s pain rooted itself deep within her. Depression and severe anxiety took hold of her and she developed symptoms of epilepsy. Living in Puerto Rico at the time, Mariana’s world was a place where little or no mental health services were available and even discussing one’s psychological issues was taboo. She felt this pressure, and hid her pain for many years without treatment.

In her 30s and now living in Rhode Island, Mariana’s seizures worsened and her weight became a significant health issue. Depression took over. Getting out of bed each day was a struggle. Food became her only comfort. She tried to commit suicide and was hospitalized.

That hospitalization was the turning point in Mariana’s life.

Upon discharge, she was referred to The Providence Center’s community support teams to receive the mental health services she had needed for so long. The specialized services of the Latino Team were a perfect match for her. Comprised of a culturally aware and bilingual staff, the Latino Team has a unique understanding of the lifestyle, strengths, needs and challenges of the Latino community.

“They could see how unhappy I was in my own skin, and understood why I felt uncomfortable opening up.”

A lifetime of hiding her pain put Mariana on the defensive when she started treatment. “I was angry and disrespectful. I pushed everyone away,” she said. “I was hesitant to participate in treatment.”

But, the harder Mariana pushed back, the harder her counselor, case manager and psychiatrist worked to connect with her. “They never gave up on me,” Mariana said. “They could see how unhappy I was in my own skin, and understood why I felt uncomfortable opening up.”

With health issues still plaguing her, Mariana enrolled in InShape, a wellness program at The Providence Center. That’s when the pieces started to fall into place for her. She worked with a health mentor specialist to improve her eating habits and incorporate exercise into her daily routine. She lost over 60 pounds and quit smoking with the help of The Providence Center’s wellness services. Mariana is working with an employment specialist towards a future career in cosmetology.

“I have never felt so motivated,” she said. “I didn’t know I could live this way. Before coming to The Providence Center, I would take one step forward and two giant steps back. They always believed in me, and I am truly grateful.”

Mariana wants to inspire others like her to overcome the stigma and struggles of mental illness. She recently wrote “Mariana: My Personal Overcoming” about her journey toward recovery and is working to share her story with the community.

Double your Impact today!

Every dollar you give by December 31st will be matched by an anonymous donor.

Make your gift today at www.providencecenter.org/donate

For more information on how you can support The Providence Center, please contact Lisa Desbiens at (401) 528-0127 or ldesbiens@provctr.org