

THE ABRAXAS CHRONICLE

ISSUE 27 | FALL 2018

ABRAXAS Youth & Family Services | Colorado, Illinois, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas | www.abraxasyfs.com

PROGRAM UPDATES



High School Graduation Dreams Become Reality at LDP

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On July 13, the staff and clients of the Leadership Development Program were able to come together to celebrate the high school graduation of a student, Nathan, from West Virginia. Nathan's parents, siblings and numerous members of his extended family and his DHHR worker were able to make the trip to participate in the ceremony. Due to the short-term nature of the Leadership Development Program, with most students only enrolled in school for four to five months, graduations are not an everyday event.

Numerous staff took the opportunity to congratulate Nathan, encourage his peers, and speak to the many challenges Nathan has overcome since arriving at the program. Nathan originally came with the goal of going home at the conclusion of a three month evaluation. But, with persuasion from his family and education representatives of the Leadership Development Program, he agreed to stay an additional three and a half months, the time it would take to meet the graduation requirements of the State of West Virginia. Scheduling Nathan's courses became a challenge, requiring extra independent study courses in both English and Math during non-traditional school hours. He completed his course work in a blended learning style, with classes completed both in classroom and on the computer to maximize his time. Nathan excelled, earning a total of 7.25 credits in seven months, ranging in courses from Precalculus to Ornamental Horticulture.

When asked if he had anything to say, Nathan had a six page speech prepared. He explained some of the things he learned to his peers and provided words of wisdom. One statement that seemed to resonate with his peers, "Never let your pride keep you from accepting a helping hand. We all need help sometimes and if you ever see someone who is down and out give them a helping hand." Nathan went on to thank his family, various staff throughout the program, and his case worker for the support he received. **Congratulations Nathan!**