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Newsletter
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ALTERNATIVE REHABILITATION COMMUNITIES, INC.

"Education Accomplishments"

The Alternative Rehabilitation Communities, Inc. (A.R.C.) education program is comprehensive and designed to meet the unique academic needs of each student. Each A.R.C. facility has an educational program with a small learning community that inspires and educates students to maximize their success within a safe, caring, and supportive environment.

A.R.C. uses a holistic approach to teaching and learning in an environment that strives for excellence and embraces diversity. Students are challenged to excel and acquire the knowledge and skills they will need to be successful in secondary school, career education, college, and as life-long learners. Students prepare to complete high school requirements, pass GED tests, develop a career plan, and attend college and/or vocational education training. Key components of the program include the following: 1) Individualized Instruction as needed; (2) Group Instruction in Core Subject Areas; (3) Response to Intervention; (4) Credit Recovery A+ Online Curriculum; (5) Personal Development, Life Skills and Health; and Career and Vocational Education.



G.E.D. High School Equivalency Diploma

A.R.C students who are 17 or older may return to school, but this often depends on grades and credits earned. Students lacking credits and grades to complete a high school diploma usually pursue a General Educational Development (G.E.D.) diploma. The G.E.D. measures proficiency in science, mathematics, social studies, reading, and writing. Last school year, 100% of the A.R.C. students who took the G.E.D. tests passed all four section tests—Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science. These students received their high school equivalence diplomas from the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

High School Diploma

In school year 2017-2018, we have had 14 students who were high school seniors—of which four (29%) completed the required credits and graduation projects to receive a high school diploma in accordance with the graduation requirements of their home school district and/or host school district. Typically, the high school diploma is earned based on subjects studied and passed over the course of four years, from Grade 9 to Grade 12. Although the courses for this achievement are provided by A.R.C., the diploma is awarded by the student's home school district or host school district in accordance with Pennsylvania state requirements. In addition to the four A.R.C. students who earned their high school diploma, six students returned to their home school, three passed the G.E.D., and one student transitioned to another treatment program.

Promotions to Next Grade



A.R.C. requires middle school and high school students to successfully complete a minimum number of credits or courses before they can be promoted to the next grade level and/or can obtain a high school diploma. Further, students must complete four marking periods in order to be promoted to the next grade. In school year 2017-2018, A.R.C. has had 128 students who participated in the education program. Eighty students (63% of the 128 participating students) completed the requirements to be promoted to the next grade level. participated in the education program. Students who were at A.R.C. for a period of only 3 to 6 months obtained academic credits for the time they participated in the education program.

Vocational Education



During the fall and spring of school year 2017-2018, A.R.C. offered students career technical courses provided through contractual arrangement with the Dauphin County Technical School. The purpose of this initiative is to help students develop the job skills they will need when they return to their communities and are seeking employment. Career readiness training courses are very important for our students and are offered in addition to the career education program provided by A.R.C. during the school day. During this school year, 50 A.R.C. students participated in career technical courses, such as building maintenance and culinary arts. Students completed 90 hours of hands-on activities and learned practical and employability skills and concepts that will help them to obtain job skills they need when they return to their communities and are seeking employment. A.R.C. students are also provided with training to earn First Aid and CPR Certifications, which 55 students earned thus far during this school year.

Service Learning Activities



Like community service, service-learning requires students to serve their communities. However, service learning takes community service one step further by incorporating the service experiences of students directly into their school work. **Service learning at A.R.C. is defined as curriculum-based community service that integrates classroom instruction with community service activities.** The service performed by A.R.C. students must: be organized in relation to an academic course or curriculum; have clearly stated learning objectives; address real community needs in a sustained manner; and assist students in drawing lessons from the service through regularly scheduled, organized reflection or critical analysis activities—such as classroom discussions.

During this school year, 23 students participated in A.R.C.'s service learning program that involved cleaning grave sites and collecting trash/debris that accumulated over the winter at the Midland Cemetery in Steelton, PA—the final resting place for many slaves/former slaves, men of the U.S. Colored Troops, Buffalo Soldiers and numerous leaders of the area's African American community. Students also participated in Comcast Cares Day, during which they helped to clean Reservoir Park, which is the largest municipal public park in Harrisburg. Reservoir Park is also home to the National Civil War Museum and is the setting for many of Harrisburg's most popular outdoor festivals and performances.

Education-Related Activities/Events at A.R.C.

To enrich the general curriculum and instruction, A.R.C. has a wide variety of hands-on learning events during the school year, including our African American History Fair, Annual Science and Technology Challenge, Latino Day, Olympic Days, The Pine Creek Rail Trail Bike Ride and other activities that celebrate holidays such as Thanksgiving and Christmas. These assemblies expose students to new ideas and activities and give them experiences that create positive memories of the program and meaningful academic experiences. Our recent activities include Olympic Days, Career Day at the Comcast facility in Harrisburg, PA, and the Career Exploration Summer Academy funded by the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Gunterberg Foundation and PACTT.