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HISTORY OF SHORTRIDGE ACADEMY

At age 17, Shortridge founder Adam Rainer was sent to an emotional growth boarding school in Idaho for many of the same challenges that Shortridge students face today. This 30-month experience provided a second

chance for Adam to strengthen family relationships, gain personal insight, and reignite a passion for learning and healthy living. After graduation, Adam went on to earn an undergraduate degree from the University of Denver, and an M.B.A. from the Cox School of Business at SMU. It was at SMU where Adam wrote his business plan for what would become Shortridge Academy, and Shortridge welcomed its first students in the fall of 2002.

Adam's vision for the school has always been progressive. Although his teenage experience undoubtedly influenced the initial structure of Shortridge, shifting from a deficit-based model to a strengths-based framework quickly became a primary focus. Emphasizing strengths development, including students in decision-making, and encouraging leadership led to a different kind of therapeutic school. In 2008, Adam and Shortridge staff began relationships with researchers from Tufts University and the University of New Hampshire, and refined the school's approach to be more consistent with Positive Youth Development and authoritative parenting. In addition, the school implemented a formal program evaluation to measure outcomes of its strengths-based model.

Shortridge's philosophy has always included the belief that academic and therapeutic work are closely intertwined, and the school is structured to optimize that connection. In 2009, Shortridge was awarded accreditation from the prestigious New England Association of Schools and Colleges. This achievement was the result of leadership from a management team of seasoned educators, clinicians and administrators, and governance by an exceptional Board of Directors. The Board is comprised of investors and non-compensated industry experts, with Adam serving as President. With a separate Research Advisory Board that includes Dr. Richard Lerner of Tufts University and Dr. Jackie Lerner of Boston College, and consultation by Dr. Kristine Baber of the University of New Hampshire, the school continues to implement innovative strategies in its Positive Youth Development model.

Recently, Shortridge's academic and clinical leadership has strengthened its focus on the intersection of learning issues and therapeutic growth, and has integrated a broad range of accommodations and strategies to scaffold students across all aspects of the school. This integration demonstrates the school's commitment to meeting the changing needs of adolescents as they work toward leading healthy and productive adult lives.

With Shortridge graduates thriving in college, careers, and even a few in their own newly-formed families, the outcomes are quite remarkable. The following testimonials from recent graduates are an example of the kind of feedback we receive regularly from students and their families:

"I just wanted to let you know that I was accepted to my first choice college, and I am over the moon! I wouldn't be in this position if it wasn't for Shortridge and the support I received while there. "

"It has taken me awhile to find my way, but I want you to know that I think of you all often, and am so thankful for all the things you did for me. "

"I really appreciate the fact that you pushed me to be the best I could be. "

"I just want you to know that my daughter is doing great. She still has some emotional issues but for the most part is handling those issues pretty well. She has been accepted to all the colleges she has applied to, and has been working hard in school which is a complete turn-around. She still keeps in touch with a couple of students she knew at Shortridge. My wife and I agree that it wa the best dollars we could have spent. So I just wanted to say thanks. "

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