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Winston Churchill**

The San Cristobal Ranch Academy is a therapeutic learning center where residents embrace a broad range of opportunities designed to help them make a productive transition into adulthood. Through a combination of ranch, educational, wilderness, employment and counseling services we help 18 to 25 year-old men struggling with poor self-esteem, anger, depression, school failure and substance abuse learn to live and work in diverse environments.

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GATEHOUSE ACADEMY

Wickenburg, Arizona

Glenna Conway – Assistant Director of Marketing

928-231-5004

Visit Report By: Kristie Henley, December 14, 2005

The main campus of Gatehouse Academy is located in the downtown area of the small Arizona community of Wickenburg. As we pulled into the parking lot of the administration building, we were greeted by the Assistant Director of Marketing, Glenna Conway. Gatehouse Academy is appropriate for students ages 17-25 with chemical dependency, and in many cases, dual diagnosis issues.



After a quick trip into the office to sign the necessary resident privacy forms, we headed out to the Hassayampa River Ranch where residents spend the first three months of the program. At the "Ranch," residents work intensely on the first three steps of the 12-Step program. The Ranch campus is located about 30 minutes from the Gatehouse main campus on a winding, bumpy gravel road. As soon as we arrived at the Ranch, we immediately began our tour of the men's cabin. The cabin houses up to 16 residents and has a separate room for 1 staff member. Next, we walked over to the women's cabin where up to eight young women live with an in-house staff member. The women's cabin had a full kitchen, living room, several bedrooms and a cozy back porch where all the residents gather and talk. Both cabins were kept neat and tidy, but the women's cabin was much cozier. The entire ranch is operated on generator power; however unless a staff member told you this, you wouldn't even realize it.

After viewing the cabins, we visited the 15 horses living on the Ranch campus before walking up to the "bird-cage," a building where residents spend several hours a day studying the "Big Book" of Alcoholics Anonymous. When we walked in, the residents were in a circle discussing their patterns of addiction while working together to assist each other in finding potential solutions. We left the birdcage and headed up toward the main house where the men eat their meals. The entire ranch felt cozy and warm, and had a safe feeling that made me want to hang around all day.