Novus

Missoula, MT
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Novus, a program of Achievement Transitions Group, Inc., is a Christian based, mentor supported, transitional living program for young adults ages 18-24 years old. This family focused program is designed for those students who are transitioning from home or from a residential/inpatient program toward living on their own.

ATG was founded in 2004 by James R. Morton, Jr., MS, who was an Army Officer in Special Forces. He worked at Mount Bachelor Academy in the wilderness department and at Alldredge Academy developing curriculum before creating Integral Steps and Second Step, LLC. Casey Dunning, the Mentor Director, previously worked as a smokejumper and has worked for various government and private agencies designing and testing parachute systems as well as working for the Forest Service and the youth ministry in his church.

Independent living skills are taught through effective coaching, teaching and mentoring, with the focus on five areas of transition: Faith through establishing a supportive Faith community; Relationships through developing healthy and supportive relationships; Vocation by way of work experience and skill development or furthering their education; Independence through learning, practicing and growth in significant life skills; and Wellness, focusing on areas of self care, which may include nutrition and food preparation, physical health, positive recreation and emotional health.

This is generally a one year program, yet for some it may take longer. The process from time of enrollment to transition is broken down into four phases: Intensive, the initial move in process; Orientation and Acclimation, which includes a two day outdoor expedition and a parent workshop and visit; Learn, Practice, Grow and Refine, which shows how the family system is growing toward transition and includes two parent workshops with visits following; and the final Transition phase, which includes establishing a subsequent transition plan.

[This information came from the Novus website, brochure and newsletter.]

San Cristobal Academy

Taos, NM
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Founded in 2001, San Cristobal Academy is a drug and alcohol rehabilitation center for young men ages 17-26 years old located on a working horse ranch in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains. This program is both a therapeutic and transitional learning center for those who may struggle with anger and depression, low self esteem, substance abuse, poor school performance or low motivation.

Don Lewis, MA, MS, Director at San Cristobal Academy, graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point, received his MA in Counseling Psychology from National University and his MS in International Relations from Troy State University. Prior to his work at San Cristobal, Don worked at Gatehouse Academy as the Program Director for the intensive care portion of the program. Marty Ferrero, MA, is the Director of Residential and Recovery Services. Previous to his work at San Cristobal, Marty worked with the Hazelden Foundation as the clinical supervisor of the men's intensive residential and extended care programs at Hazelden Springbrook in OR. Marty also received a Master's Degree in Addiction Counseling from the Hazelden Graduate School of Addiction Studies in MN. San Cristobal is a full member of NATSAP.

This year long program is divided into three stages, where students in Stage one live and work in a structured environment, focusing on their drug and alcohol recovery, attending five AA/NA meetings per week and working with a substance abuse counselor. Stage two offers semi independent living, where they learn to become accountable for their education, behavior and relationships. In Stage three, residents live in town, attend the University of NM for course work, in addition to working part time and meeting regularly with their counselors. Therapeutic approaches at San Cristobal Academy include Cognitive Behavioral Therapies (CBT), Motivational Interviewing, positive peer culture and animal assisted therapy.

[This information came from the San Cristobal Academy website and NATSAP Directory.]

An unwilling teenager cannot be monitored... Kids can always outwit you if they really want to... Parents have remarkably little power to maintain control over the adolescents who need it most.

– Judith Rich Harris