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## Three graduates speak

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LARRY HENDRICKS Assistant City Editor | Posted: Tuesday, June 15, 2010 5:10 am | (0) Comments

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Mark, 44, graduated from the jail's Exodus program a year ago.

"It's a wonderful program," he said. "It gives you something to do in jail and the program works."

Mark said he had been in Alcoholics Anonymous before, but he relapsed. He also had trouble with methamphetamine, considering himself a "poly user."

After jail, he moved into the Foundation House, a halfway house for men in Flagstaff. In December, he moved out and got a place with two sober roommates.

"Exodus gave me the opportunity for surrender," Mark said, adding that he had a year of sobriety on May 1.

He now runs a handyman service.

"Recovery has to be the No. 1 thing in my life," he said, adding that if it isn't, he is in danger of relapsing.

\* \* \*

Justin, 22, received 4 months in prison for a felony DUI. While on probation, he relapsed.

"At that time, I wasn't thinking about sobriety," Justin said.

His probation was revoked and part of his requirements in the Coconino County Superior Court DUI/Drug Court program was to go through Exodus. At first, Justin said he was ambivalent about sobriety. But as he heard the stories of the other inmates -- their hopes, their desires for sobriety --

he was hooked.

The program helped him realize alcohol was a problem in his life. He regularly attends AA meetings.

"Just having guys in recovery come in (to jail) really helped me in wanting sobriety," Justin said.

After release, he began hanging out with old friends and his old way of life, and he relapsed. After another stint in jail, he went through a 28-day inpatient treatment program at The Guidance Center. He then landed a spot at the Foundation House and is now a server for a local restaurant.

Justin added that he is hoping to someday go to college and get a degree in hotel and restaurant management.

\* \* \*

Vaughan, 26, an Exodus graduate, became the manager at the Foundation House after release for his third probation revocation because of drinking.

"I needed to be told what to hear," he said of the program.

After graduating from Exodus, he was sent to the Foundation House to live as a condition of his probation.

"It turned out to be the best thing I could ever have done," Vaughan said.

In addition to being the manager, he is now enrolled in Coconino Community College and is even on the Foundation House board of directors.

After graduating from college, he said he plans to work in the medical field.

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