

## **THIS IS ONEIDA “I AM A BRAND NEW PERSON”**



The story of Amaryllis, class of 2013, in her own words: “It’s hard to tell where I’m from originally. I’ve always had a roof over my head, but I’ve never really had the stability that every growing person needs to acquire, at least not until OBI. I guess one could say I’m from this neat little town tucked away by the ‘Big City.’ I say I’m from there because that’s where my problems began. That neat little town definitely changed me for the worse. We moved there right after my dad died, and I fell straight into the wrong crowd, started doing drugs, got heavily addicted, and dove headfirst into that type of lifestyle. Everything in my life suffered because of this – my relationship with my family, my grades, my school attendance, and especially my reputation. . . .

“My mom decided with my aunt that boarding school was best and sent me off the next school year to OBI with hopes of getting my life together. When I first came to OBI last year, I absolutely did not want to be here. I was still the arrogant child that thought I was cool and wound up getting myself kicked out and falling face-first back into everything I’d done, even though I thought I was ‘saved.’ Eventually, I got tired of the lifestyle I was so caught up in. Whenever my mom and I got into a fight, the words that came out of my mouth didn’t even sound like me. I had entirely changed; I didn’t recognize myself, so I decided to get clean. I’ve been sober for over a year now and plan to stay so.

“This year I made the personal decision to return to OBI to separate myself from my old ways. OBI is helpful in that way. I truly consider this place my home. It has provided me the stability of a place surrounded by people who genuinely all care about me. . . . OBI gave me the setting I needed to finally get back on honor roll for the first time since seventh grade. While here, I’ve also learned the benefits of a job well done. Oneida has taught me to be a great worker, not that I particularly enjoy the jobs I have to do sometimes, but I don’t mind it. Working isn’t something I complain about anymore. . . .

“I could go on for days about all the things OBI taught me, but, most importantly, it has taught me self-respect. I didn’t know the meaning of self-respect until a few months ago; I am a brand new person. A few weeks ago I saw some of my old party friends, and we talked for an hour or so. They all said I had changed so much that I was unrecognizable, and I owe it all to OBI. The person I am now hates the person I used to be. . . . Now, I know who I really am and what I want to be. I’m mature for my age, and, in my opinion, I’m respectable. I’ve experienced the ups and downs of life, and I’m finally in a place where I am truly happy and content.”

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