

FHF AIDS PARENT WHO WAS SCAMMED

by: *Raquel Castaneda*

Iris Maldonado called Families Helping Families of Jefferson (FHF) after she went through an ordeal with a fishy company. This company claimed to prepare students for college by teaching them how to interview and apply to colleges and providing coaching to help them decide which college to go to. The catch is families have to pay \$1000 out of pocket for these services plus a monthly charge. These services are already available to your child for FREE through student counselors at their high school. This company pressured many families into their scheme and the Maldonado family was one of them. Iris got mixed into this because she wanted the best for her son and did not realize it was a scam.



This experience left the family feeling betrayed and the path toward college seemed to narrow for Brian. Iris said that Brian no longer wanted to go to college and was very upset about the whole ordeal.

Since Brian was a senior, Iris wanted assistance to find legitimate transition information and resources for her son, and help to end her dealings with the company in question.

I contacted the company in question and after some back and forth, I was able to cancel any future payments. I then contacted the Better Business Bureau. It took a while, but with persistence, I was then able to get the family a full refund from the company.

During this time, I sent the family tons of legitimate college resources and information on where to apply for real scholarships and grants; provided them with a copy of FHF's "Louisiana College Guidebook for Parents and Students on Higher Education and Disability"; and researched local college's Office of Disability Services, their disability policies, and contact information. The information provided assistance in helping Brian decide which college was the right choice for his needs. In addition, it helped the family get back on track for planning Brian's transition from high school to college.

Because of the support and information received from FHF, the Maldonado family was able to get their money back and sever ties with the company in question and remedy the road to transition planning. Since Brian has graduated from high school and is planning on going to college.

If you find yourself in a similar situation or need assistance in finding college and scholarship information, please contact FHF and we would be glad to help guide you onto the right path.