

MRS. BRANDY AVILLA (COSTALES)



The parents of Brandy Avilla (Costales) were teenagers when she was born. Unfortunately for Brandy, they were into drugs and alcohol which left her without a positive parental role model. When she was only 8 years old, her father moved to Texas with another woman leaving Brandy to not only take care of herself, but her two younger sisters as well. Without a positive role model, Brandy was constantly in and out of trouble with the school and eventually the law. She eventually began experimenting with drugs and alcohol, which resulted in her moving in and out of group homes, foster homes, detention homes, and every other program in which she was enrolled by the state legal system. Her highest level of education prior to joining the Hawaii National Guard Youth Challenge Academy was the 8th grade.

After graduating from the Youth Challenge Academy's, Class #1 in Waimanalo, she immediately joined the U.S. Navy and began to travel the world. After leaving the Navy, she continued traveling for work and eventually started several businesses. She got married to a loving husband who served in the Army, had 3 children and earned a Bachelor's degree in Business, a Master's of Science degree in Nonprofit Management, and a second Master's of Science degree in Psychology. She is currently working towards her licensure certification in both Substance Abuse and Mental Health Counseling. She spends much of her time teaching substance abuse and suicide prevention through her business, which works mainly with substance abuse clients from the state and federal prison. She is creating a group home for teens who are at a high risk of committing suicide and has begun volunteering with the Youth Challenge Academy in Kalaeloa to help current cadets make better choices and avoid both substance abuse and suicide. In addition to all of this, she also coaches people who want to achieve more success in their lives and helps them learn how to live their dreams. She swears that the Youth Challenge Academy saved her life and attributes her success in both her personal and professional life to the lessons she learned while attending the academy over 20-years ago.

