



Mary and Alex Gillette

Family finds help from Catholic Charities

By Kristan Schlichte
Catholic Charities of Idaho

BOISE — Despite the concerns of her parents and siblings that something “just wasn’t right,” Alex Gillette was so bright that she had been placed in a program for gifted children. Her moodiness and “quirks” were dismissed by teachers and school nurses as common to children with uncommon talents. Mary, her mother, wasn’t so sure.

to take a second job to raise the money needed for testing and assessments.

“This was a difficult time for all of us, but I could not sit by any longer and watch my daughter suffer with paralyzing panic attacks and emotional confusion,” Mary said.

The specialist determined that Alex was suffering from Asperger Syndrome. “We all felt dismayed and relieved at the same time,” Mary said. “Finally

us in the right direction to find someone to provide counseling for Alex and her special needs,” Mary said.

The search for affordable counseling led them to Catholic Charities of Idaho. Alex comes weekly for her session with Carol Tidwell, an intern from the Counseling Program at Northwest Nazarene University, Nampa. Carol and other interns from NNU and Boise State University value their opportunity to work with CCI clients and receive supervision from licensed clinical social workers as they learn to become counselors. Because of that affiliation, CCI is able to charge fees on a sliding scale to accommodate families like the Gillettes who would not otherwise be able to afford professional counseling.

“I feel like an ambassador of hope,” said Tidwell. “I love working with the staff and clients of Catholic Charities of Idaho. It is such a welcoming environment and each person is valued and supported regardless of their economic status.” Mary says

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