



## Gagaifo Tufuga

Program Director

# Meet Gagaifo “Junior” Tufuga— West Ridge Academy Program Director.

Junior was introduced to this line of work over 10 years ago. As a Residential Coach his job was to supervise the students and ensure that their daily task and expectations were being met. He quickly learned that working with these young students ignited a passion for helping teens and being a mentor to them. Although his current role requires him to be at a desk the majority of the time, He’s constantly drawn back to working hands on with both staff and students.

Junior began in this field as a mentor. Working with kids diagnosed with bipolar, severe depression, and high suicidal ideation. From a mentor, he accepted opportunities to move into a supervisor role —managing a team of four up to a staff of 40. He has trained in variety subjects for different companies, and has come to realize that challenges are something he seeks and for that reason accepted this role as a program director at West Ridge Academy.

Junior is an alum from Chaffey College, located in Rancho Cucamonga California. As a supervisor he became EMT certified, to help assist in a variety of medical issues such as sore throats and stomach aches, to medical crisis like difficulty breathing or diabetic complications. He is a certified trainer in a restraint technique called Positive Control System (PCS). As a trainer of PCS, Junior has helped programs drastically change not only a decreased number of restraints but also helped to reduce the amount of injuries to staff and students.

Junior’s drive and passion for his job comes from knowing that he can make a difference. He has had individuals that have been influential in his life and hopes to make the same impact in the lives of the kids that he works with. His support system is also his strength. It’s made up of a loving wife and two beautiful kids. They are the reason he works so hard, and believes in teaching his kids by example the value of quality work and a rich belief in serving others. On his free time, you’ll find Junior relaxing in front of a fishing hole and just chillin’.