

Child Welfare News

2ND ANNUAL YOUTH EMERGING SUCCESSFULLY (Y.E.S) CONFERENCE



The 2nd Annual Youth Emerging Successfully (Y.E.S) Conference was held at George Mason University on July 20, 2015. COG partnered with the National Conference of State Societies (NCSS) Cherry Blossom Princess Alumnae Organization to recognize 13 young women who have graduated from high school despite many

hurdles while in foster care and on the verge of aging out. The participants of the conference were heading towards college, vocational studies, or trade school.

The Y.E.S conference encompassed a tour of George Mason University's campus and workshops that provided the young women with soft-skills and financial literacy. Capital One representatives gave the graduates tips during the *Me, Myself, and Money* workshop on how to prepare for unexpected costs, budgeting, and avoiding credit pitfalls. During *College Life 101*, the young women received advice from panelists for preparing to have a successful first year in higher education. Fed Cap's Washingtonians for Children led the *Developing YOUR Personal Brand* workshop to teach the graduates how to best create their personal brand, market themselves to employers, and practice workplace and social media etiquette. The young women also had the opportunity to have professional headshots taken and a session on how to use those headshots for networking profiles such as LinkedIn. Furthermore, the *Rising Stars* workshop focused on personal leadership and developing career goals and aspirations based on strengths, personality characteristics, and opportunities.

After a refreshing lunch, the participants received an empowering keynote address, encouraging them to be their best selves despite the cards they have been dealt and to make a positive impact on communities through their future endeavors. The afternoon concluded with raffles for dorm room essentials such as shower caddies, comforter sets, and more. Each graduate received a gift bag including a laptop or tablet in honor of their newest accomplishment of graduating from high school and continuing on to a higher education.

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For more information on the Metropolitan Washington Child Welfare program, please visit us

www.mwkog.org/childwelfare

CHILD WELFARE PROJECTS



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2ND ANNUAL Y.E.S CONFERENCE PHOTOS



© Joan Brady

George Mason University Campus Tour



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Capitol One Financial Literacy Workshop



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College Life 101 Workshop



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LinkedIn Photo Shoot and Consultation



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Personal Branding Workshop



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Rising Stars Workshop

KINSHIP AWARENESS IN NORTHERN VIRGINIA

Kinship care consists of a family member or fictive kin caring for a child who has been removed from their biological parents. Unfortunately, in the state of Virginia, funds are not allocated to using Kinship as a placement option for youth in foster care. According to a recent law in the state of Virginia, youth will now age out of the foster care system at the age of eighteen rather than twenty-one. Jurisdictions of Northern Virginia are using the month of September to bring awareness to kinship and the difference it could make for many young people.

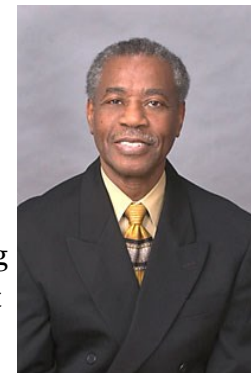
On September 24, 2015, the Northern Virginia Kinship Group hosted their First Annual Kinship Symposium titled “Celebrating Family: Moving Kinship Forward”. This group includes: Arlington County, the City of Alexandria, Fairfax County, Loudoun County, and Prince William County. The Kinship Symposium was an opportunity for child welfare professionals to further understand the dynamics of kinship care and what it may look like in practice. Dr. Sharon McDaniel, founder and CEO of A Second Chance, Inc.—a kinship care agency—shared both her personal and professional experiences on the best practices of kinship care and in what ways they affect not only a child, but the foster care system as well. Heidi Redlich Epstein, Director of Kinship Policy for the American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law, presented from a legal standpoint how extended families can be used for kinship care based on federal and state laws. As a former relative caregiver and current kinship expert, Dr. Joseph Crumbley, LCSW engagingly presented ways in which child welfare professionals can engage relative caregivers and use strengths to manage the risk factors of kinship care. A kinship panel concluded the afternoon by answering lingering questions and concerns for moving kinship forward. Moving kinship forward not only means placing children with relatives or fictive kin, but also finding life long connections for youth, especially those on the verge of aging out.



Dr. Sharon McDaniel,
founder and CEO of A
Second Chance, Inc.



Heidi Redlich Epstein, JD,
MSW



Dr. Joseph Crumbley, LCSW

WEDNESDAY'S CHILD BACK TO SCHOOL DRIVE

As a parent or student, we know that heading back to school is an important time of year. Children surely enjoy picking out cool backpacks and everything that goes in them from pencils and paper to binders and flash drives. However, many youth in care do not get the opportunity to go back to school shopping with a family. Considering this, COG and the Ritz Carlton Pentagon City Hotel found it appropriate to step in.



As the summer drew near to an end, COG partnered with the Ritz Carlton Pentagon City Hotel and COG staff to provide school supplies to Wednesday's Child children who are still waiting for their forever family. Thanks to our generous partners, COG received backpacks filled with school supplies for 23 Wednesday's Child children. Due to the abundance in donations, school supplies were also extended to other children in foster care throughout the region who were headed back to school also. These supplies included folders, binders, notebook paper, pens, pencils, and more.



Steven W. Gibbs, Director of Human Resources (left)
Dilia Davis, Assistant Director of Human Resources (right)
The Ritz-Carlton Pentagon City

RECENT CHILD WELFARE FEATURES

Wednesday's Child



Seth (3) is a beautiful bundle of joy who loves music! The ideal adoptive home for Seth will help this little one continue to catch up developmentally to other 3 year olds. To learn more about Seth, please call 88-TO-ADOPT-ME, or click [here](#).

Photo credit: Aude Guerrucci



Joey (15) is in the 10th grade at school, and gets along well with his teachers and peers. In his time outside of school, Joey loves to skateboard. To learn more about Joey, please call 88-TO-ADOPT-ME, or click [here](#).

Photo credit: Aude Guerrucci



Jermaine (13) loves the swings! Although mostly non-verbal, Jermaine has a fun and friendly attitude which makes him adored by all of his classmates and teachers. To learn more about Jermaine, please call 88-TO-ADOPT-ME, or click [here](#).

Photo credit: Aude Guerrucci



Jeremiah (13) is a bright young man full of character and spirit. Jeremiah is quite serious in his aspirations of studying Christian theology, but always remains creative. To learn more about Jeremiah, please call 88-TO-ADOPT-ME, or click [here](#).

Photo credit: Shelley Miller



Jasmine (16) has an infectious smile that lights up a room. She dreams of graduating high school, opening up her own fashion boutique, and even becoming a forensic scientist. To learn more about Jasmine, please call 88-TO-ADOPT-ME, or click [here](#).



Destinie (13) is very soft-spoken with a kind and gentle spirit. Destinie loves to read, sing, and take care of animals. She hopes that can one day be her responsibility in a forever home. To learn more about Destinie, please call 88-TO-ADOPT-ME, or click [here](#).

Photo credit: Shelley Miller

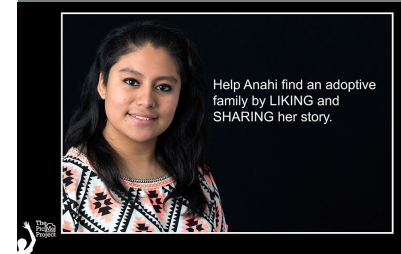


Tyler (17) is not only an excellent athlete, but a caring and friendly young man. Tyler is also a great role model for the other youth in his group foster home. To learn more about Tyler, please call 88-TO-ADOPT-ME, or click [here](#).

Photo credit: Shelley Miller



17 year old Darren is extremely polite, soft-spoken, and charming. Darren enjoys school and excels in many of his classes. Darren really wants to be a part of a family, and continue to play the sport he loves, basketball.



Help Anahi find an adoptive family by LIKING and SHARING her story.

Anahi is an outgoing, playful, sweet 14 year old who is hoping for a forever home. Anahi knows she wants to join a helping profession one day because so many people have helped her, and she is grateful for their support. She is always thinking of others and how she can make them feel special, especially her best friends.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT ADOPTING ANAHI OR DARREN, OR TO JOIN THE PICME NETWORK, PLEASE EMAIL PICME@MWCOG.ORG.