

## From the Directors

2016

We end our 34th year on a very positive note with thanks to the generous people that have donated their hard earned money or household items. These contributions have given us the opportunity to receive 50 new former foster care youth into our program. We were able to support these young people to stay in college, find safe housing and receive on-going counseling. This year we had a record number of students applying to graduate school programs in medicine, biochemistry, and social work. This holiday season is filled with gratitude for the gifts that so many people and agencies have given us.



Our encouragement comes from the recognition of our donors, like from a recent letter from a foundation, “The crucial services that your organization provides help to further our mission as a Foundation, and ensures that we are serving children who are at risk or have been victims of child abuse and neglect. We are extremely thankful for the challenging and meaningful work you do each day, and look forward to supporting your efforts in the coming year”

With your continued support, 2017 will be a year when more foster youth enter our program and more graduates celebrate reaching their goals. Your support does not go unnoticed!

## Myeisha

My name is Myeisha. I'm 21 years old, and up until a month ago, I was living place to place and at one point I was homeless. I wanted to go back to school and work but I didn't have the support or motivation to get me there. In February of 2016, I decided to go back to school and with the help of Journey House I was able to make that happen. It was very hard getting back into school and trying to find a place to live, I wasn't emotionally stable either. Until Journey House introduced me to a Mental Health Worker Training Program that I recently completed and that gave me insight into so many things. Now I have completed my first full semester at Pasadena City College and my training as a certified Mental Health Worker. They helped me get my own apartment so that I can finally have enough stability to pursue my goals. Finally! I'm looking forward to finding a job and continuing my

education to one day become a therapist.

Myeisha has been a Journey House program participant for about one year. In that time, we have been able to offer her several resources to support,



guide, and encourage her continued success. Most importantly, she sees Journey House as a place that will always be there to listen. She reminds us that we are not just here to provide resources, but instead, to provide a place to belong for so many youth who do not have a place to call home.

# BEYOND FOSTER CARE UPDATE



The Beyond Foster Care Program at Journey House has made significant progress in 2016 thanks to support from the Margie and Robert Petersen Family Foundation. As a result, there are now more former foster youth involved in various forms of advocacy. Several specific programs have been developed to deliver on the promise of Beyond Foster Care.

First, we developed a Speaker's Panel, an exciting way to share the life experiences of former foster youth with a larger audience. The youth on the panel have spoken to civic and senior citizen groups in the region, as well at Cal State LA, ELAC, and USC's schools of Social Work.

At each Panel, youth advocates shared their insight with graduate students and engaged in conversations about the realities of life in and out of the foster care system. The overall message was that former foster youth need more than just another program or service. What former foster youth need most are committed adults who are willing to support them in life Beyond Foster Care. It was an amazing experience for the audience members and for our speakers.

Second, we officially partnered with UCLA's Luskin School of Public Affairs to prepare our own research study titled "Beyond Foster Care: The Need for Services Beyond the Age of 21." Professor of Social Welfare, Dr. Laura Abrams, who has an extensive research

background, will supervise the project as we survey former foster youth throughout the state of California.

This study will explore the experiences facing former foster youth between the ages of 21 and 30. According to Dr. Abrams, "much of the research on foster youth stops at age 21. Conducting research on the education, vocational, and housing needs of former foster youth past age 21 is quite important to guiding policy making and program development." The data collected in this study will be used to create a report that provides policy recommendations for foster care reform.

Through these programs, along with several social events, we have generated a supportive sense of community among foster youth. This sense of belonging brings some healing to a disruptive upbringing. The Beyond Foster Care participants at Journey House see the support for former foster youth for these programs, and it has proven to be uplifting, and hopefully, transformative long term.

All this progress is the result of a generous grant from the Margie and Robert Petersen Family Foundation. We are extremely grateful for the Foundation's generosity and support of the work for the Beyond Foster Care Program.

Jesse Aguiar

# THANKSGIVING CELEBRATION 2016

Thanksgiving is a holiday in which most people look forward to seeing and spending time with their family. College students will typically make an effort to go home for Thanksgiving to take a break from the stressor of the school semester and prepare for finals. Youth in our program have the same need, however, do not typically have a place to go home to for the holidays.

Every year, we take the Thanksgiving break as an opportunity to invite all our youth to Journey House

to enjoy a traditional, family style, Thanksgiving dinner. This year, we gave all our students the opportunity to prepare their favorite dish to share with us, and to help cook the turkey at Journey House. Thanksgiving at Journey House was full of joy and happiness. We are thankful for all the moments that we spend with each of the youth in our program. We are the lucky ones who get to be a part of their lives.



## Victor

I was born in Mexico and came to California at age 8. I entered the foster care system as a teenager and lived in group homes until I was 18. I had no place to live after I emancipated from the foster care system so I entered into a transitional housing program called Youth Moving On (YMO) in Pasadena. I got a part-time job working in a warehouse, but soon realized I needed more education so I started attending Pasadena City College (PCC) and did very well academically. I am proud to say that I received my Associated of Arts degree from PCC in June 2016. I am now attending California State University, Dominguez Hills. I am majoring in psychology and plan to get my bachelor's degree in two years. My ultimate career goal is to become a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT) working with families that need support and help once they find themselves involved with child

protective agencies. I enjoy salsa dancing and would love to perform on stage someday. After many years separated from my mother, our relationship is slowly getting better and she is helping me while I go to school. I heard of Journey House many years ago, but once I turned 24 I realize I needed further help to transfer from PCC to a university. Jorge and Rocio have been very helpful in getting me into Cal State Dominguez Hills. I also enjoy the Journey House social events and being around other former foster youth.





## Journey House Endowment

Our endowment, managed by the Pasadena Community Foundation, is in its second year and is growing every so nicely. The purpose of the Endowment is to provide a permanent source of financial support for our future college and vocational students. The need to support young emancipated foster youth will be never end. To contribute to this worthy endowment, please send check to Journey House with "Endowment" written on the subject line.



1232 N. Los Robles Ave.  
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[JourneyHouseYouth.org](http://JourneyHouseYouth.org)

## Mission Statement

Journey House supports former foster and probation youth to live fully independent, successful lives. Founded in 1983, Journey House provides emotional support and guidance, as well as financial aid to help them with the cost of attending college and vocational schools.

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