



Letter from the Executive Director

The last few months have been a busy and productive time at the FYI Center of Milwaukee. Last November after only a few months of operation we moved to a larger facility on Center Street.

Our staff immediately went to work organizing the office and compiling and cataloging all of the resource materials and research studies that we have accumulated to assist us in providing services to Milwaukee's youth who are aging out of the foster care system, emancipated youth, and their respective families. The staff has also collected and organized materials about other agencies, organizations, and services available to aging out youth.

The FYI Center has purchased the entire 5-part "Aging Out" documentary in DVD format. This purchase will assist our agency to raise community awareness about the needs and issues affecting youth aging out of the foster care system. On April 17 the FYI Center presented a viewing of the documentary to over 50 individuals at the Running Rebels organization and another viewing is scheduled at St. Aemilian Lakeside.

We are pleased for the opportunity to provide these viewings to organizations throughout our community. To schedule an "Aging Out" viewing for your agency, contact our office manager, Sharon Bowie.

In January the FYI Center celebrated the first anniversary of the opening of our office. We were honored by having Governor Jim Doyle's wife, Jessica Doyle, appear at this event. We also had representatives from the Mayor's office, the media, social service agencies, and representatives from U.S. Congresswomen Gwen Moore's office. Congresswomen Moore sent along a personalized letter and a Certificate of Appreciation for our the FYI Executive Director.

The Elizabeth A. Brinn Foundation awarded the FYI Center \$30,000 in January. The first award of \$15,000 was made available to assist with operating costs of the

agency, the remaining \$15,000, to assist with the hiring of a Program Director was awarded on January 31, 2006. In January the FYI Center also met with Helen Bader School of Social Welfare to discuss internship possibilities at the FYI Center for undergrad social workers. FYI Center anticipates having a social work intern in August/September 2006.

In February 2006 the FYI Center launched its Supportive Housing Program for homeless foster care youth in Milwaukee. This program, a milestone initiative for the Milwaukee area, will assist foster care youth as they exit the foster care system by providing them with the opportunity to develop critically needed life skills in a safe, supported environment. The FYI Center Supported Housing Program has been developed based on a model program developed by The First Place Fund for Youth, a nonprofit organization in Oakland, California, www.firstplacefund.org.

The staff of the FYI Center has also completed the development of our Life Skills Practicum Management Services. FYI Center's multi-modal Life Skills Program for youth aging out of foster care was developed as a result of careful and thorough research of existing programs and the "aging out" experiences of former foster care individuals.

Life Skills Practicum Management Services provides a comprehensive "holistic approach" to our Continuum of Care services and programs to emancipated youth, youth aging out of the foster care system, and their respective families designed to increase stability in their lives with regard to housing, employment, legal, accessing community resources, education, and health issues.

Services may include assistance in locating housing, budgeting, meal preparation, shopping, personal appearance, counseling, and related social support services needed to meet the youth's needs and improve the youth's ability to conduct such tasks independently. Services are provided for up to six months. Clients are able to utilize the FYI center for up to 24 months after discharge from program. Clients are monitored for the first 90 days after completion of program.

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