

Friends of Youth Forum

Spring 2012



Living the Dream

One Client's Story

Where does a young person without support or encouragement find the strength to pursue her dream? At our Celebration of Youth luncheon, client speaker Natasha Mercado bravely shared her story of pursuing her dreams after becoming homeless and her determination to move forward in her life brought her to Friends of Youth.

Growing up with drug addicted parents, Natasha and her siblings often had to fend for themselves. Expectations for the children were very low and Natasha was told to quit school to help take care of her sister's children. She tried to help her sister while continuing her education, but soon realized it was an impossible task. Kicked out of her home by her father, Natasha began couch surfing at the homes of different family members and friends. Constantly criticized for refusing to help her sister, and called selfish for wanting to finish school, Natasha was often refused a place to stay and would sometimes be forced to sleep on the streets. To her astonishment, she realized she was homeless.

Natasha began an online search for agencies that help homeless young people and made an appointment with **Friends of Youth**. Unsure what to expect at her interview with a Transitional Living intake counselor, Natasha was surprised to be asked heartfelt questions like "What are your dreams and aspirations?" She began talking about her wish to go to college and become a Radiologist and realized, "For the first time in my life I felt heard. I started to believe that I could actually obtain my goals." Natasha was admitted to Friends of Youth's Transitional Living program, enrolled in college, and has since earned her certificate as an Imaging Aide. She is now in the process of completing the Radiology Technologist Program at Bellevue College and plans to transfer to the University of Washington and earn a Bachelor's Degree in Interventional Radiology. With the support and guidance of her case manager, Natasha participated in a 6 week Workforce Development Program internship which led to her being hired as a part time receptionist at **Friends of Youth**.

Natasha now knows that her hopes and dreams can be achieved and that through **Friends of Youth** there is a community of support for her success. Natasha said it best during Celebration of Youth when she expressed to the audience, "Friends of Youth is more than my employer and certainly more than just a program. It was my beacon of light when I was lost and needed a reason to carry on. I am excited for my future now because with much love and support my dreams are being actualized."

Natasha's story demonstrates the strength of a caring community. Natasha is a shining example of what can happen when we give youth every opportunity to succeed.



Friends of Youth

CEO Corner

Terry Pottmeyer

*Coming together is a beginning, staying together is process, and working together is success,”
-Henry Ford*

For the past 9 months the five agencies that collaborate as Healthy Start have been working to find a more sustainable and financially feasible model for the collaboration. This has been a very challenging process, and we are grateful for the strong commitment from all five agencies to continuing to provide the Healthy Start program as a collaboration in our community.

After much conversation about new models we have agreed on the following redefinition:

- Friends of Youth will retain the fiscal agency role
- One Program Manager will coordinate the work of the collaboration
- The Parent Mentor Program role (volunteer portion of Healthy Start) will move to Youth East-side Services



This redefinition means that we will no longer have a Director role for Healthy Start. This role has been capably filled for many years by Keltie Wright. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the hard work, dedication and passion Keltie has brought to her role. She has been a fierce advocate for Healthy Start and her advocacy and passion will be missed.

We look forward to the continued success of Healthy Start in our community for many years to come.

Terry Pottmeyer

Technology: Friend or Foe? Youth and Family Services

Whether it's the "ping" of an incoming text message, the "brrrr" of a vibrating cell phone or the mesmerizing click, click, click of the keyboard or game controller, technology is all around us, impacting our youth in many ways.

Young people certainly enjoy the social aspects of playing video games and communicating with peers through various technology sources. The benefits to being tech savvy are many, but there can also be a down side if we forget to plan and monitor technological exposure for our youth.

A study from the Indiana University School of Medicine found that young men who played first person shooter video games like Halo or Call of Duty demonstrated more "flight or fight" responses in their brain activity. This response causes stress hormones to release into the body in preparation for action against the perceived threat and simultaneously shuts down other portions of brain activity associated with long term planning, focus, and control. Clearly this state of hyper-arousal is not conducive to learning or optimal health. The study further showed that after refraining from this type of video game for one week, brain function returned closer to those who did not play violent games.

Fortunately, we can reduce the negatives associated with excessive technology through awareness and planning. Limit total technology time to a minimum each day and encourage children and teens to spend time with friends doing non-techy fun activities. Person to person contact increases social skills and allows the brain function called Limbic Resonance to develop, which is the capacity for empathy and non-verbal connection between individuals.

If you are concerned that someone you know may have a problem with technology, contact a Youth and Family Services counselor at (425) 392-6367 in Issaquah to discuss strategies that can help.



New Roads Renton Residential Services

New Roads Renton is an Independent Living Skills program for 5 young men 17 through 21 years old. This is a licensed, staffed residential program worth 24 hour supervision and fosters individual responsible living with a strong focus on education and employment. Check out our website for more information.



Ribbon Cutting 4-13-2012

(Left to Right) Terry Pottmeyer, President & CEO;
Carol Almero, Director of Residential Services;
DeAnn Adams, Program Manager; Greg Dootson, Lutheran
Community Services; Phil Crocker, Friends of Youth Board Chair

Jean-Pierre Green Donor Highlight



Wedding bells are still ringing in the ears of Jean-Pierre, JP to his friends, after marrying his high school friend and now bride Jen, in February. What happens after the wedding and honeymoon? Well for JP and Jen, one of the meaningful tasks at hand is to understand and integrate their charitable giving goals as a newly married couple.

As a graduate of the U.S. Academy of West Point JP recalls feeling like he was volunteering for service in part because the mission of West Point states "...that each graduate is a commissioned leader of character..." This idea resonated with JP and in his words, "it set my mind on having a meaningful impact even after I left the Army".

This meaningful impact is realized in the way JP lives his life as a young professional through involvement with the non-profit community, including Friends of Youth. JP has a strong belief in the interconnectedness of people within the community. He believes in the value of showing youth ways to improve their lives benefits everyone and Friends of Youth offers young people opportunities to succeed.

Whether volunteering hands on or working behind the scenes, JP has shown himself to be a "leader of character". As JP and Jen bring their philanthropic values together, the benefit to the youth who are the focus of their gifts creates a lasting and positive impact. JP, along with 600 other guests, heard the stories of both a former and current client of Friends of Youth when he attended our Celebration of Youth luncheon in March. These stories illustrate the impact of community support and the legacy of investing in youth.

With the continued support of committed donors like JP, we are confident that even more youth and their families will move from uncertainty to stability and self-sufficiency. Thank you JP and congratulations to you and Jen!

Grant Updates

Governmental Grants:

- City of Snoqualmie for Youth and Family Services
- City of Everett for New Ground Everett
- King County funding for case management services tied to permanent housing.
- Ending Homelessness Program, Snohomish County, \$44,363 for employment and case management services at New Ground Everett.

The Seattle Foundation, through their dedicated support, generously granted \$20,000 toward general operating support.

We received a \$10,000 grant from our new partner, The RealNetworks Foundation, for the Landing, our emergency overnight shelter for young adults.

The Medina Foundation gave a substantial \$30,000 grant toward general operating support.

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR SUPPORTERS!!

Volunteer Opportunities

Dinner Donors Needed for Summer and All Year Long

Looking for a way to really make a difference? Join the Dinner Donor program! Friends of Youth's Landing Shelter is the only overnight emergency shelter for homeless young adults ages 18-24 on the Eastside. We provide safe shelter for the night, a shower, hygiene supplies, laundry and health services. In order to provide a hot meal to 15 clients each night, we rely on volunteers like you. Dinner donors prepare a hot, ready-to-serve meal and bring it to The Landing at 8:45pm. Want to help but can't make the commute? Sign up and have Pizza delivered on your night! Contact our volunteer coordinator to apply: (425) 869-6490 x309

- **Sunday - Thursday Evenings:** The Landing is located in the day room at the Teen Center at the north end of Bellevue Family YMCA (14230 Bel-Red Road, Bellevue, WA 98007)
- **Friday & Saturday Evenings:** At a local faith community. Contact us at 425-869-6490 x309 for details.

For the Fall: Friends of Youth School Supply Drive

Having all the right supplies to begin the school year can make a tremendous difference to a young person's success in school. Friends of Youth is collecting back-to-school supplies for homeless and at risk youth. Items can be dropped off between August 1 - 17, at the following locations:

- Issaquah Counseling office located at 414 Front Street N, Issaquah
- Duvall Counseling office located at 26420 NE Virginia Street
- Snoqualmie Counseling Office 7972 Maple Avenue SE
- The Friends of Youth Administrative Office located at 16225 NE 87th St, Suite A-6, Redmond, Monday through Friday from 8:30AM -5:00 PM.

For a complete list of volunteer opportunities, please visit our website at www.friendsofyouth.org/volunteer.aspx

Youth Connection

3
IN
A
ROW

Looking for volunteer hours? Look right here!

Hosted on the third Sunday of each month. Grab your friends and spend 3 hours (1-4 PM) making a difference while obtaining the credit you need. If interested, please e-mail Cheryl at Cheryl@friendsofyouth.org, pre-registration required. See our web site for more details at www.friendsofyouth.org.

May 20: "Sweet Dreams!" Redmond - Design and make one of a kind pillow cases to be given to young people within Friends of Youth programs.

Meghan Mann Volunteer Spotlight

Meghan Mann had a vision: Create a service club providing opportunities for all Wellington students (K-6) to become more conscious of the needs of others and to serve their community in positive ways. All she asked was that volunteers bring willing hearts and working hands. Attendance is "open"-students can attend month to month. Parents are also invited to help, and they do! The Helping Hands Club has completed two projects to benefit **Friends of Youth** and each time over 100 students and parents came for the afternoon to support the activities. Meghan's vision has truly come to life and our clients are better served as a result of their generosity. Thank you Meghan!



Contact Us

cheryl@friendsofyouth.org

Cheryl Schnelle
425 869-6490 x309



Upcoming Volunteer Events

May 2012						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
3 IN A ROW	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

3 IN A ROW

May 20: Redmond - Teen Volunteer Theme: "Sweet Dreams."
May 19: Keller Williams Day of Caring at New Ground Bothell
May 22: Faith Lutheran Church "Change the World" Volunteer Activity

June 2012						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						2
3	4	5	6	7	8	8
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

June 22: Liberty Mutual Day of Caring
 **June 1:** Issaquah Open House
 141 Front St. N, Issaquah, WA 98027

-  twitter.com/#!/FriendsofYouth
-  facebook.com/friendssofyouth
-  linkedin.com/company/friends-of-youth/

If you are interested in volunteering at Friends of Youth, please contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Cheryl Schnelle at 425-869-6490 x309 or cheryl@friendsofyouth.org

July 2012						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

July is National Grilling Month!
 Consider becoming a Dinner Donor and bringing a home grilled meal to The Landing youth shelter.

August 2012						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
			1	2		4
5	6	7	8	9		11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

 **Aug. 10:** School Supply Distribution Day at Snoqualmie Counseling Office
 **Aug. 3:** Issaquah Open House
 141 Front St. N, Issaquah, WA 98027

Friends of Youth

425-869-6490

www.friendsofyouth.org

Terry Pottmeyer
President & CEO

Contact:

Asa Irwin

Interim Development Director

asa@friendsofyouth.org

425-869-6490 x308

To make a donation or
inquire about events:

Megan Gregor

megan@friendsofyouth.org

425-869-6490 x317

To Volunteer:

Cheryl Schnelle

cheryl@friendsofyouth.org

425-869-6490 x309

**Make a HOLE IN ONE
for youth this summer...**



Look
for our
Tee Off
Fore Kids
virtual
Golf
Tournament!!

Together Center
16225 NE 87th St., Ste. A6
Redmond, WA 98052-3536

Spring 2012

Friends of Youth 