



# Clark County Department of Family Services

## Community Partnerships Workgroup

Minutes for 06/03/14

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### Present

Chair Leslie Murdock, Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada  
Chair Shauna Davis, Children's Advocacy Alliance  
Chair Mari Parlade, DFS  
Denise Parker, DFS – QPI  
Carolyn Potter, DFS  
Kevin Macdonald, DFS  
Jessica Roe, Adoption Exchange  
Peggy Morache, United Methodist Social Ministries  
Glenda Bona, United Methodist Social Ministries  
Cindy DeGan, Eagle Quest  
Genesis Jameson, Coldwell Banker  
Ryan Staggs, Coldwell Banker  
Cindy Lubiarz, Care Meridian

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### Agenda

- Discuss Foster Friend Program: 1) June 22<sup>nd</sup> UMSM Foster Friends Recruitment Event, 2) June 22<sup>nd</sup> UMSM Foster Friends Event flyer, 3) Foster Friend general flyer, 4) Foster Friend Program logistics, 5) Foster Friend Launch Conference

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### Minutes

#### **1) June 22<sup>nd</sup> UMSM Foster Friend Recruitment Event**

- United Methodist Service Ministries (UMSM) will be holding an event on June 22, 2014 to recruit individuals for the Foster Friend Program. The event will be held at the Trinity United Methodist Church 6151 W. Charleston, Las Vegas, NV from 2pm-4pm.
- Current foster caregivers will be invited to attend the event to mingle and discuss ways they feel foster friends can support them.
- Supervised children's activities will be provided during the event.
- UMSM is expecting 200 foster families and 100 volunteers (prospective foster friends) to attend. The max capacity of the location cannot exceed 300.
- UMSM requested for assistance with the following:
  - Filling bling bags for the families, such as chapsticks, hair & nail discounts, etc.
    - UMSM will provide their 501c3 tax deductible form for individuals and agencies who donate to the bling bags.

- Cindy mentioned there is a nonprofit that donates coloring books and other such items. She will check with this nonprofit for donations to help fill the bling bags.
    - Any donations collected can be dropped off at DFS (MLK location) in care of Denise Parker. Once items are collected, please send an email to everyone on the workgroup so we know what has already been collected.
  - Ice cream and cookies for 300 people are needed
  - Games and activities for children are needed
    - Carolyn reached out to Home Depot for the toolkit activity, and to the company that has the half pipe.
- \*It was recommended that a list of donors should be recorded so they can be recognized at the upcoming Foster Friend Conference.

## 2) June 22<sup>nd</sup> UMSM Foster Friend Event Flyer

- Suggestions were made to clarify message for the June 22<sup>nd</sup> Event Flyer:
  - Add details regarding registration
  - Include a description explaining what a foster friend is
  - Provide language explaining the purpose of the event so readers understand what the Foster Friend program is and what they can expect from the event
    - Examples given:
      - Foster families will meet with foster friends...
      - The children will enjoy games and ice cream while parents talk with foster friends...
  - Include UMSM's logo on the event flyer that they are sponsoring

## 3) Foster Friend General Flyer

- A flyer was made to recruit applicants for the Foster Friend program. This was the first draft of the flyer. Workgroup participants were asked to provide feedback to enhance the flyer. Edits will be made and the second draft will be emailed to all workgroup participants for further comments and suggestions.
  - Suggestions:
    - "You can impact a life. Be a Foster Friend." This statement should be included on the general recruitment flyer.
    - The flyer will also list various ways that a Foster Friend can assist (i.e. babysitting, tutoring, etc.)

## 4) Foster Friend Program Logistics

- Discussion ensued regarding the program logistics of Foster Friends and other programs discussed at previous meetings— Ambassador Program and the Foster Friendly Businesses.
- The comment was made that the Ambassador Program and Foster Friendly Businesses would fall under the umbrella of the overarching Foster Friend Program.
- It was recommended that a consistent message about the program be developed so individuals and agencies can consistently promote the program using various mechanisms, such as social media.

- Concerns were raised about the expectations and parameters of what a foster friend can and cannot do, especially when it comes to having direct access to foster children (i.e. providing short-term respite care or babysitting for 6 hours or less)
- It was agreed that a structured process -- *including delineation of clear cut expectations, parameters, DO's and DON'T's* -- still needs to be developed prior to the Foster Friend program being launched. For those Foster Friends that will have direct access to foster children, they will need to have received the necessary background check clearance and training beforehand.
- It was clarified that the June 22<sup>nd</sup> UMSM Event would be used to gauge the interest in the Foster Friend program, but that at no time would the volunteers have any access to the foster children until *after* they have gone through the clearance and training process – which this Workgroup will be tasked with delineating.
- It was further clarified that UMSM is spear-heading the faith-based component of the overarching Foster Friends program, which this Workgroup is developing.
- It was recommended that a subcommittee should be created as soon as possible to develop the logistics, structure and process of the Foster Friend program.

#### **5) Foster Friend Launch Conference**

- A conference will be held in September to kick-off the Foster Friend program. The conference will highlight the program details and will outline how the community can get involved. Foster families will be invited to speak at the conference to share their experiences and explain how foster friends can help them.
- A subcommittee will be formed to start planning the conference.

#### **\*\*Action Steps**

- Create a subcommittee to develop the Foster Friend Program structure, process & logistics
- Create a subcommittee to plan the Foster Friend Conference and Launch
- Gather donations to help with the June 22<sup>nd</sup> UMSM recruitment event. See details above.

#### **\*\*Next Meeting – Tuesday, July 8, 2014 10am-12pm, DFS Central 121 S. MLK**

\*The Focus of this Meeting will be on developing the structure, process and logistics of the Foster Friends Program. This will be a Working meeting, so please bring any proposed material. The goal is to have a preliminary draft of the Foster Friends program by the end of this meeting.



# FOSTERING HOPE



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## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT - KEVIN WISNIEWSKI

"Working with clothing and people is fun," Kevin Wisniewski explained. Kevin has volunteered more than 175 hours at [RE]FRESH helping shoppers choose outfits. Kevin's retail expertise has proven invaluable during her time at [RE]FRESH. "I can't believe how much enthusiasm there is and how many opportunities there are at [RE]FRESH for adults and teens get to shop, volunteer, or get involved," she said. "Our displays are great. We have tons of variety, and there's always someone available to help!"



Helpful and knowledgeable is exactly how others describe Kevin. She has a great sense of fashion and really helpful ideas," said Talisa O'Brien, Director of [RE]FRESH. "She is always looking for ways we can make [RE]FRESH better. It's great to have someone I can count on as much as Kevin."

Kevin likes the fact that her volunteer efforts at [RE]FRESH support the Coalition and that the store provides foster youth with invaluable work experience. "They have something they can put on their resume," she explained. Thanks, Kevin, for all your time and dedication to [RE]FRESH and kids in foster care! For volunteer opportunities at [RE]FRESH, visit <http://www.refreshstl.org>.

## OLD BAGS™ AT THE FRONTENAC HILTON - THE BEST GIRLS' NIGHT OUT IN TOWN!

On **Tuesday, April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2013**, hundreds of women will enjoy specialty drinks, delicious food, and decadent chocolates while bidding on new and gently-used designer handbags.

**Check your closet** and your girlfriends' closets too! Have handbags in very good condition, or perhaps brand new? We would love to have them! We also would love donations of jewelry and gift certificates.

To donate, contact Lisa at 314.367.8373. All donations are tax-deductible and will help the Coalition find forever families for children in foster care. For more information about Old Bags™, contact Lisa Foehner at [lisafoehner@foster-adopt.org](mailto:lisafoehner@foster-adopt.org) or 314.367.8373. Tickets are \$75 until April 24<sup>th</sup> (\$100 after) and are available now at <http://www.foster-adopt.org>.

**RAFFLE** - Our Raffle is for a fabulous Prada "Vitello Daino" large pocket hobo in sand/beige, generously donated by **Neiman Marcus**. Value is \$1,550. The winner will be drawn at Old Bags™ on April 30<sup>th</sup>, but need not be present to win. Chances to win are \$25 or five for \$100. Raffle tickets for this stunning Prada are available at <http://www.foster-adopt.org/oldbags>. A BIG thanks to **Neiman Marcus** for generously donating this fabulous raffle bag.



Celebrating 24 Years  
of Finding Homes  
for Children

**WIN THIS PRADA! TICKETS AT FOSTER-ADOPT.ORG**



# VOLUNTEERS MAKE A DIFFERENCE!



## VOLUNTEERS HAVE A BLAST WITH KIDS!

We wish to extend a big thank you to volunteers from **RubinBrown, Junior League of St. Louis**, and the **United Way's GenNext** group who played lots of games with the kids at our October Training Extravaganza. Many thanks to **Angela Wakefield** and **Stephanie Matthews** from **Wells Fargo** for coordinating art projects for the kids.

## PARENTS' DAY OUT MADE POSSIBLE THANKS TO AWESOME VOLUNTEERS

**NASCAR Speedpark** hosted another Parents' Day Out for "our" kids in 2012. We greatly appreciate the Foster Friends and Junior Board members who supervised the children at this event.

## LIMITED FREETIME? WANT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE? LIKE WORKING DIRECTLY WITH KIDS? BECOME A FOSTER FRIEND!

Foster Friends Volunteers host and supervise foster children at Parents' Night Out events held at fun locations such as **NASCAR Speedpark** and **Circus Flora**. Foster Friends have the opportunity to play with foster kids or volunteer at a Coalition event about once a month, but participation is never mandatory. Foster Friends help when their schedule allows. Friends must be 21 years or older and submit to an annual criminal background screening through the Family Care Safety Registry. To find out more, contact Shelley at [shelleythomasbenke@foster-adopt.org](mailto:shelleythomasbenke@foster-adopt.org) or 314.367.8373 x2229.

## AMAZING LITTLE WISHES SEASON!

Your generosity sent **3,698 Little Wishes** to local children in foster care!

Thanks to our volunteers who donated hundreds of hours in December, processing granted Little Wishes to ensure that children in foster care received their gifts in time for the holidays. A very BIG thank you to our "Little Wishes Elves": **Tina Amrein, Connie Aunger, Carolyn Buselmeier, Shae Calcari, Kristi Clausen-Wheeler, Mike Czopek, Cathy Denison, Karen DeStefano, Kelly Floyd, Jennifer Goaring-Diver, Kelly Hearn, Kim Hoher, Colleen Hogan, Tracy Imo, Kit Jensen, Beth Kazlauskas, Julie Kiehl, Marti Lanese, Angela Lawson, Bob and Laurie Lewis, Chelsie Lesicko, Jayme Lowe, Laura Lueken, Trinna Luttschwager, Rachel O'Shia, Nancy Penrod, Bethany Rahmoeller, Anna Rhodes, Rebecca Pickens, Amber Rauscher, Chris Schmidt, Donna Seibman, Michelle Shockley, Sherry Taylor, Bruce Thomas-Benke, Amir Tolebeyan, Wilmetta Toliver-Diallo, Sally Vikman, Angela Wakefield, Steve Woodrow, Jodi Woodrow,**

and **Julie Zucker.**

We also truly appreciate the following companies whose employees were a HUGE help as Little Wishes volunteers: **Covidien, Bank of America, Thomson Reuters, Wells Fargo, and the Cooperating School District.**

We are grateful for our Little Wishes Shopping Day partners! Friends at **Kirkwood Walmart** hosted Shopping Day for a seventh year. As always, **FedEx** paid the shipping costs for all of the gifts and dozens of enthusiastic FedEx volunteers packaged them.

More than 100 girls greeted shoppers on Shopping Day. Many thanks to **Mason Ridge Girl Scout troops 888, 1598 and 1720, Sorrento Springs Girl Scout troops 410 and 4241, and American Heritage Girl troops 1345 and 1411.**

Thanks to **KSDK NewsChannel 5** for another wonderful year of Little Wishes and "A Place to

Call Home." Without their amazing partnership, many local foster youth might not feel the true joy of the holidays, or the security of forever families.

We are blessed to have the support of **Trek Bicycle**, who ordered and assembled over 125 bicycles for foster children.

**Mike Czopek** is our hero! A technical specialist with Thomson Reuters, Mike volunteered as a Little Wishes Elf in December. After helping, he said, "I could automate part of this process to make it a lot faster." Mike worked his magic - saving us countless hours as well as improving quality control. We are very grateful for Mike's help!

We were thrilled to receive donations of gift cards, MP3 players, and many other items from **Ansira**, who provided birthday gifts for more than 30 foster children who otherwise would not receive presents. **Nestlé Purina** brought joy to many families by providing them with delicious holiday meals. Purina also gave holiday gifts to three lucky families!

We were so pleased that the following groups provided holiday gifts for some of our struggling families: **Olympiad Gymnastics, United Services of St. Louis, Enterprise Consulting, Mercy Hospital-Behavioral Health Unit, Amazing Love**

**Community Church, and the family of Nikole Perkins.**



KSDK's Ryan and Dana Dean greeted shoppers with the Girl Scouts.

Thank you to **Home Wine Kitchen Restaurant** for partnering with us for the holidays by collecting toys and naming an appetizer in our honor.

**Old Hickory Golf Club** donated more than 75 beautifully wrapped gifts for children in foster care!

**Kraus Farms** donated holiday gifts to EVERY CHILD at Bletel Residential Facility. What an amazing holiday they had! The thank you note we received from 16-year-old Michael at Bletel sums it up:

*"Thank you for the gifts that you have given me. It means so much to me since I've never had a real holiday. Thank you from the bottom of my heart."*



# UPCOMING EVENTS

## JUNIOR BOARD TRIVIA NIGHT

What is St. Louis known for? Trivia Nights! The Junior Board is hosting a Trivia Night to benefit the Coalition on **Friday, April 5<sup>th</sup>**. The theme of the night is Things You're Embarrassed You Know. Trivia Night will be held at the Edward Jones Atrium (conveniently located at I-270 and Manchester Road). Doors open at 6:30 p.m. and trivia starts at 7. Cost is \$25 per person, 10 players on a team. This includes snacks, beer, wine, soda, and water. You can bring your own food. There will be a Silent Auction, Heads or Tails, Best Theme Table Prize, and much more! Get your team together for a fun evening of competition! Tickets are available now at <http://www.foster-adopt.org>. Tweet by using the hashtag #thingsyoureembarrassedyouknow.



## GO! ST. LOUIS FAMILY FITNESS WEEKEND

The Coalition has been selected for "GO! For a Cause," a partnership between GO! St. Louis® and non-profit organizations. We're excited to have this great opportunity to further our efforts to support youth in foster care. Benefits of running with The Home Team include: water bottle, [RE]FRESH Swag Bag and \$10 [RE]FRESH Rewards, personalized webpage, technical shirt, food, and more. GO! St. Louis will take place on **April 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>** in downtown St. Louis. To run and fundraise, call Lisa at 314.367.8373 x2234.

## BOOKSIGNING AND FUNDRAISER AT THE BOOK HOUSE STL

April is Child Abuse Awareness Month. On April 6<sup>th</sup> from 7 to 9 p.m., The Book House is hosting two authors who will share their stories of survival and healing, and their journey into recovery, giving hope to others. A portion of the book proceeds will benefit the Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition and The St. Louis Children's Home Society. Nathaniel Sewell, author of Bobby's Socks, and Author Miracle T. Kelly, who wrote Teri, How I Forgave God, will speak.



## 2012 BY NUMBERS

[RE]FRESH is a Fashion Forward Resale Boutique from the Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition. It is conveniently located at 1710 South Brentwood Boulevard and offers clothing, and accessories at fabulous prices. Foster and adoptive families receive a special discount and all of the proceeds benefit the Coalition. [RE]FRESH is open Thursday through Sunday and has awesome sales and happenings every weekend. For more information, visit <http://www.refreshstl.org>.

Donations of volunteer time and fabulous new and gently-worn clothing and accessories have helped [RE]FRESH become a top destination for St. Louis resale shoppers. To make a donation or find out about volunteer opportunities, please call 314.881.0331.

**2,438** Items of clothing for foster youth    **393** Number of Volunteers at [RE]FRESH    **59** Youth in the Associate Program  
**599** Items of clothing for foster/adoptive families    **6,001** Total volunteer hours donated by the community!

## A BIG THANKS TO 2012 [RE]FRESH VOLUNTEERS!

### Individuals:

Nathan Adams  
 Natalie Bourke  
 Courtney Buxton  
 Attiya Charrington  
 Victoria Coleman  
 Jane Covington-Randle  
 Taylor Crawford  
 Katie Dorsey  
 Phyllis Drayton  
 Aaron Ealy  
 Karen Erickson  
 Arlo Franz-Greene  
 Christian Gober  
 Katie Goodwin  
 Devon Hannan  
 Linda Hannan  
 Cheryl Houston  
 Marissa Krieg  
 Lori Lueken  
 Phuung Luong

Trinh Luong  
 Halah Madani  
 Rebecca Martin  
 Taylor McCray  
 Kieran Mettler  
 Brandon Moseley  
 Sarah Murphy  
 Chelsea Odonkor  
 Brianna Parker  
 Miranda Reid  
 Erin Riley  
 Sami Ross  
 Mindy Schanzle  
 Alexandra Schnarre  
 Jonay Scheetz-Reed  
 Peggy Schweitzer  
 Danielle Smart  
 Damien Strubberg  
 Lily Suchumski  
 Joan Suda  
 Kayla Watkins-Johnson

Adrianna Ward  
 Caitlyn Ward  
 Hannah Westerman  
 Joshua Williams  
 Kevin Wisniewski  
 Rebecca Wu  
 Mandy Zhang

**Groups:**  
 Brentwood High School  
 National Honor Society  
 Clayton High School  
 College Bound  
 Cooperating School  
 Districts  
 Delta Sigma Pi  
 Emory Alumni Group  
 Junior League of  
 St. Louis  
 Lutheran Foundation  
 of St. Louis

Maritz  
 Oakville High School  
 Key Club  
 People to People  
 Rites of Passage/Deltas  
 Saint Louis University  
 Make a Difference Day  
 Saint Peter Kirkwood  
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# FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

Dear Friends of the Coalition,



It's April? Already? As 2013 gets going full-steam ahead, I want to thank each of you for all you did to make 2012 an exciting, successful, and memorable year for the Coalition. But mostly, thank you for your phenomenal support that allowed us to expand programs and serve more children and families.

The Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition is proud to launch the Carleen Goddard-Mazur Training Institute! Carleen Goddard-Mazur grew up in foster care and was an accomplished equestrian, licensed pilot and boat captain, professional model and nurse. She sincerely believed that children could do and become anything and she wanted to make sure that every child has a chance to succeed in life. Ms. Goddard-Mazur left a generous bequest designated to help foster children. The Coalition received a gift of \$500,000! Her legacy allows us to fund an endowment program and establish the Training Institute in her memory. Because of Ms. Goddard-Mazur's generosity, child welfare professionals across North America will be trained in the extremely successful Extreme Recruitment® and 30 Days to Family™ models. Trainings are already scheduled in Toronto, Nashville, Boulder, and Philadelphia. This gift will impact the lives of hundreds of foster children in 2013 alone!

In Jefferson City, Senator John Lamping introduced and championed Senate Bill 47 that expands the list of qualified legal guardians who can receive subsidies in the same manner as those available to adoptive parents. If the bill passes the House, this will allow us to explore more potential guardians for children in foster care. Thank you, Senator Lamping!

The Coalition celebrates our 2nd full year in Brentwood this month. Drop in any time and you will feel the energy generated by a staff that is passionate about the welfare of children! We love to share our important work visitors.

Happy Spring!

Jane Deuker, Board President

## THE COALITION IS A FOUR STAR CHARITY!

Charity Navigator, America's leading independent charity evaluator, evaluated over 6,000 of America's largest charities. The Coalition is ranked among the highest of charities, with four stars!



## COALITION IN ACTION

### PARENTING TAKES MORE THAN LOVE. IT TAKES SKILLS, TOO!

Jim and Elizabeth have three adopted children, Brianna (14), Mark (12), and Oscar (11). Elizabeth called the Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition's Crisis Intervention Team when her children's behavior became unmanageable. Elizabeth reported that Mark became increasingly aggressive, coming at them "full force." At one point, Mark even threatened his siblings with a knife. Yelling, screaming, and cursing were a daily concern. Elizabeth and Jim weren't only concerned with Mark. They worried about Brianna's tumultuous transition to high school, her falling grades, volatile interactions, and tense relationship with her father.



**" Thanks to Crisis Intervention, this family is no longer struggling every day. "**

With the help of Crisis Intervention, the Martins began using new communication skills successfully. They spent time with their Crisis Intervention Specialist focusing on their similarities, common interests, and family and individual strengths. These commonalities and strengths helped them begin strengthening their family bonds and allowing them to spend valuable, conflict-free time with one another. Jim and Elizabeth tell us that they value their new, better approach at parenting and that they know that each of their children need, an individualized approach. There are less battles for control with the kids. Brianna spends one-on-one time with her Dad. They planned, shopped for, and cooked a meal together. They look forward to making this one-on-one time a part of their routine. Jim and Elizabeth have learned that Mark does his best with structure, prediction, and a non-emotional parenting approach. Mark is participating in school activities again and the number and severity of conflicts he engages in at home has drastically reduced. Thanks to the Crisis Intervention Program at the Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition, this family is no longer struggling every day.

**We post new success stories each month! Read more at [www.foster-adopt.org](http://www.foster-adopt.org).**