

The Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange is a program of Judson Center and is funded by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services.

To learn about foster care adoption and view photolistings and videos of waiting children, visit our website at [www.mare.org](http://www.mare.org).



## YOUTH NEWSLETTER February 2019

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## *If you're a teen in foster care, keep your chin up as you wait for a forever family*

If you're a teenager in foster care and you think you're too old to be adopted, think again.

Youth of all ages can be adopted by forever families.

You might not know about the work being done for you by some of your fierce supporters who strive to connect you with these forever families, but rest assured that they're trying hard on your

behalf, and they've achieved success in helping others like you find a permanent home.

We asked Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange staff to provide some encouraging words for you. These workers are among those who're working behind the scenes helping you find a forever family.

"I know families who specifically

want teens," says MARE Match Support Specialist Cortney Riggs. "They want to celebrate special occasions with you such as birthdays and holidays."

"You're never too old to be adopted," says MARE Adoption Navigator Judy McNaughton. "Everyone needs a place to call home, and plenty of families want

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# *Glamor and glitz galore at the 2019 Heart Gallery Grand Opening*

Save the date for the 2019 Michigan Heart Gallery Grand Opening because you're sure to have fun.

As a preview to the show, we asked MARE Recruitment Specialist Jessica Thompson what you can expect.

## **What makes it special?**

It's a chance for you to have a day of fun. You get to come to the theater, you get to see a short film, you get free pop and

popcorn, and if you're featured in the 2019 Heart Gallery, you get to see yourself on the display. You also might get a chance to interact with adoptive families who are attending.

## **What are some of the fun things to do at this event?**

The theater has some arcade games in the reception area that will be open for free play.

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## ***The big event***

**What:** The 2019 Michigan Heart Gallery Grand Opening

**When:** 11 a.m.-2 p.m., Saturday, April 13.

**Where:** Emagine Theater, Royal Oak.

**Cost:** Free!



# GO PLAY



*Adoption Resource Consultant Liliya, left, and Shantaina (C07907) at last year's gala.*

## **Go Play, continued from page 2**

You'll see the world premiere of the 2019 Michigan Heart Gallery Grand Opening film, and you'll get the chance to have your picture taken just like celebrities who attend a premiere movie, complete with a walk on the red carpet.

## **Will there be food other than popcorn?**

We will be having pizza, chicken tenders and salad for lunch. The theater has rented

us their grill area so that we can dine in comfort there.

## **How can I attend?**

If you're interested in attending the event, you can have your worker pre-register you, but you don't have to be pre-registered. You can arrive the day of the event and enjoy the festivities. You also don't have to be featured in the 2019 Heart Gallery display to attend the event. However, you should let one of your workers know that you want to go.

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## **Hope, continued from page 1**

to help you feel welcome in a safe environment."

"Be confident that you can bring unique qualities to a forever family," says MARE Communications Specialist Mark Fisk. "You have plenty of skills and experiences to share that

younger youth don't have, and you understand the importance of making family connections."

"Being adopted, even at age 17, means that you will have family to count on for life," says MARE Adoption Navigator Supervisor Kimberly Wolowski. "Family who will be there to celebrate your

birthday and holidays, who will come to your high school and college graduation, who will welcome you home on your college breaks, who will be there when you get married and when you buy your first home and have children. Keep the faith; there can be a family for you!"

# Share your success story!

Fostering Success Michigan is asking for students who are interested in being featured on its website.

This is an opportunity for students and professionals alike to read the success stories and learn about supports that helped others succeed. The stories will be used as a way to highlight students and their achievements. If you know of any youth or alumni of foster care between the ages of 18 and 24 who are currently enrolled in high school or college, Fostering Success Michigan would love to

hear from them.

Contact Fostering Success Student Advisor Bri Simmons at [fostering-info@wmich.edu](mailto:fostering-info@wmich.edu) to have the interview questions sent directly to your inbox.

*Fostering Success Michigan is a statewide initiative that aims to increase awareness, access and success in higher education and post-college careers for youth and alumni of foster care ([fostering-success-michigan.com](http://fostering-success-michigan.com)).*

## Hi, I'm Emma, and I write poetry

You don't need a special talent such as Emma's to find a forever family, but you can be open to helping adoptive parents find you.



Emma has told her worker that she wants to be featured in as many ways as possible to find a forever family, including this newsletter.

If you want the same, make sure to contact your worker and tell him or her.

The Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange has several upcoming Meet & Greets.

These are fun events where you can interact with prospective adoptive parents. Activities include games and arts and crafts (pictured).

## Fun times abound at MARE Meet & Greets



If you want to attend one of these events – which usually occur on Saturday – make sure to contact your worker, who will let us know about your interest.

Upcoming Meet & Greets:

May 18 in Sterling Heights.

June 22 in Kalamazoo.

## YOUTH RESOURCES

**Michigan Youth Opportunities Initiative** - MYOI is a partnership between the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, the Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative, the Oakland/Livingston Human Services Agency and many other local community partners. MYOI's goal is to ensure that young people in foster care have successful outcomes in housing, education, employment, community engagement and health.

([michigan.gov/FYIT](http://michigan.gov/FYIT) > MYOI)



**Foster Youth in Transition** - MDHHS website geared towards older youth who are experiencing foster care. It's a comprehensive, youth-oriented site with advice, interactive features, a useful glossary of foster care terms, and information on a variety of issues important to current and former foster youth. The site provides links on how to develop supports, find services, get answers to important questions and just keep you posted on what's new. ([www.michigan.gov/FYIT](http://www.michigan.gov/FYIT))