

San Francisco Foster Youth Fund



NEWSLETTER | FALL 2021

2nd Annual Virtual Auction to Benefit Foster Youth

THE SAN FRANCISCO FOSTER YOUTH FUND is gearing up for our second annual online auction to raise money to support our youth in foster care. The grand opening of the auction site will be on **Monday, October 18, 2021**, and the final bids will be accepted until **Friday, November 5, 2021, at 9pm PT**.

This year's auction items are slated to be even better than last year's line-up. You can also expect to find some of your favorites from last year such as airline tickets, B&B stays, wine country getaways, artwork, jewelry, fine wine, locally-made whiskeys and spirits, sports memorabilia, restaurant certificates, sailing adventures, and much more. This has been a hard year for everyone, but especially for foster youth. So please come and join the fun, bid on an item, and help support foster youth at the same time.

Our favorite and loyal wineries will be back, including August West, Lancaster Vineyards, Sandler Wine Co., Hershey Wines, Cameron Hughes, Rose for a Day, and Beringer. We will also be adding more wineries this year so you can browse an array of fantastic vintages from San Francisco and Northern California. And as always, we'd like to give a special thanks

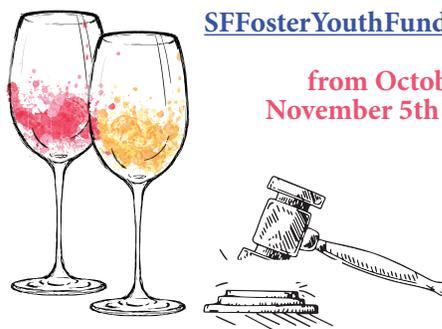
to this year's sponsors for their generous donations: Nektar, Argot Partners, HDMZ, and the San Francisco Police Officers Association.

So get together with your friends, open a bottle of wine, and be prepared to start the bidding on Monday, October 18, 2021. Every dollar we raise will go directly to help a foster youth so this is your chance to lend a helping hand, don't miss out!!!

Please join the auction by visiting

SFFosterYouthFund.ejoinme.org/2021

**from October 18th to
November 5th at 9:00pm PT**



Graduate Spotlight - Celeste W.

WHEN YOU ASK THE COMMUNITY about our scholarship recipient Celeste W., intelligence, advocacy and passion are just a few words that come to the forefront. Celeste will be earning her Bachelors of Science in Chemistry from UC Merced in just a few short weeks. While Celeste knew a major in Chemistry would not be easy, she looked forward to stepping out of her comfort zone and taking on the challenge. She knew the importance of representation in the field of science and had a desire to make a change by bringing more Black and Brown faces to the medical field. She understood the history between communities of color and lack of access to treatment. Pursuing this path would allow for her to address these systemic inequalities. One of Celeste's role models and inspirations was one of her own doctors growing up, now California's Surgeon General, Dr. Nadine Burke Harris.

Celeste not only has a heart for science, but also a commitment towards serving others. She has been a staunch advocate and educator for the foster youth community. Celeste was an active member of the Guardian Scholars on UC Merced's campus, an organization that provides a network of support for youth who have experienced the foster care system. Celeste is a



founding member of Seneca YAB (Youth Advisory Board), a working board of current and former foster youth, who work as advocates, change agents and problem solvers, partnering with counties to provide youth panels, foster parent training and state-level advocacy for improvements in the foster care system. Celeste credits Seneca as an integral component of her success, as she was a recipient of their services early on when she experienced the foster care system.

Celeste is also a member of the Youth Innovation Project Planning Committee, through the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission. Here, Celeste

is tasked with exploring the mental health needs of youth in California via engagement, development and leadership in advocacy, for transitional aged youth involved in the mental health system. In addition, Celeste was one of those chosen to participate in the Blaze Forward Fellowship, which works to address the social systems which impact the lives of transitional aged youth, and gives a select few young adults in-depth training and perspective on how to use their voices to become stronger leaders in their communities while shaping these systems.

Come December, Celeste will obtain her degree and she states that her plans after college are to continue to work within the community and further her education by either attending pharmacy school to utilize her chemistry degree, or pursuing a master's program in kinesiology or chemistry research. Celeste credits the SFFYF Scholarship as a component of her

success in obtaining her degree. "This scholarship helped relieve financial burdens I faced during my time in college. From funding the food I ate, to the school supplies I needed every semester, the scholarship allowed me to focus on school and not have to worry about how I was going to fund the necessary things I needed for my continued education."

Celeste asked to pass along advice to foster youth preparing to attend college; "They should be reminded that the experiences of our lives, our stories, have instilled strength in us. Being in college, you are forced to be on your own which many of us are already familiar with. Having the independence skills we learned and developed through our experiences will be the strength you need to be successful in college. The strength to do it for yourself regardless. Not everyone holds this power, we do. We are survivors."

In Memory of Eric Hoberg

IT IS WITH GREAT SADNESS that we share the passing of Eric Hoberg, our Board Treasurer, on November 8, 2020.

Eric is dearly missed by all of us at the San Francisco Foster Youth Fund. He lived an amazing and admirable life of service and he gave so much of himself as a professional and an individual to improving the lives of foster children.

Eric served the San Francisco Human Service Agency (HSA) for over 50 years. He started in 1969 as an eligibility worker in the area of Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and then moved on to the General Assistance (GA) department. During this time, Eric witnessed first-hand the rise of street homelessness in SF, and in 1983, he transferred to the agency's first homeless division. In the days before shelters, Eric helped many desperate families find housing. Eric saw the agency through many of its hardest times, including the AIDS epidemic when 10% of HSA staff died of AIDS. Eric knew every person whose name is on the AIDS quilt hung on the walls of HSA in San Francisco. Some of those lost were his dearest friends.

Eric's first love was working with children and he eventually moved to Family and Children's Services where he served the rest of his professional career.

After Eric retired, his love for working with children lived on and he chose to donate his personal time to our SF Foster Youth Fund. Eric was the heart of our fund, volunteering thousands of hours of his personal time to support our activities and to personally mentor our scholarship recipients. Eric would advocate for our youth at every opportunity. In 2019 at a celebration of Eric's 50 years of service to HSA, a former scholarship youth from our program described how a simple note that Eric had written to her had convinced her to stay in college, securing her life's direction, and ultimate success as an independent adult. We have named the scholarship the "Eric Hoberg Memorial Scholarship" to remember the profound ways he positively impacted youth through the years.

Respectfulness and kindness defined Eric Hoberg. He will be remembered for his patience and optimism, his wry sense of humor, and his unwavering commitment to our children.

Eric's spirit lives on in our SF Foster Youth Fund and we will carry him in our heart always.



Scholarship Corner

As we reflect on the 2020/2021 school year, we cannot help but acknowledge the impacts the Covid-19 pandemic had on our foster youth community, especially those who were away at college. We saw the rapid closing of college campuses and food halls, students having to move out of the dorms, and classes transition to on-line learning. The pandemic resulted in negative mental-health symptoms, with anxiety, depression and social isolation increasing exponentially in students across the nation.

The San Francisco Foster Youth Fund jumped into action to ensure the youth not only had their basic needs met, but also the technology and resources to continue to attend school and work towards the goal of obtaining their degree. Despite the unprecedented stress of these unforeseen obstacles, our scholarship recipients persevered and we had six youth obtain their degree, and 24 others who complete a successful semester. Your continued support of the SFFYF and the youth we serve made this possible.

As always, this scholarship goes directly to the youth to allow for the flexibility of the funds to be used for any unmet need. This year, students reported that the additional funding not only offset their college expenses, but was also necessary for their everyday survival when having to vacate the dorms and losing their meal plans. According to one recipient, "once classes went virtual and we had to leave school, I had to quit my job. I was sleeping on my friend's couch for a few months and this scholarship is what kept me fed until I could get another job closer to her house".

Our scholarship recipients are breaking barriers and defying the statistics of less than 10% of foster youth who attend college, obtain their degree. 90% of the SFFYF Scholarship recipients are on track to graduate, in part, due to your support.

This year, we are honored to celebrate 6 recipient graduates with the Class of 2021.

- ◆ Celeste W. | B.S. in Chemistry | UC Merced
- ◆ Jessica H. | A.A. in Administration of Justice | CCSF to SFSU
- ◆ Regina G. | B.A. in Ethnic, Community & Feminist Studies, minor in Education | UC Santa Cruz
- ◆ Leah B. | B.A. in Government | Claremont McKenna College
- ◆ Rebeca B. | B.S. in Environmental Economics and Policy & Human Rights | UC Berkeley
- ◆ Natalie Y | B.A. in Sociology | UC Santa Barbara

Your generous donations have supported students at: UC Berkeley, UC Santa Barbara, FIDM Los Angeles, San Francisco State University, Modesto Junior College, Merced College, Sacramento State University, CSU Channel Islands, Skyline College, UC Davis, Ventura College, Laney College, ZMS the Academy, UC Santa Cruz, San Diego State University, CSU Los Angeles, San Jose State University, City College of San Francisco, Lone Star College, Bellevue College, Cal State Monterey, Napa Valley College, UC Santa Barbara, CSU Humboldt, and CSU San Marcos.

Where Your Money Goes

Thanks to the support of donors like you, the SFFYF has continued to enrich the lives of San Francisco's foster youth. In 2020, we raised \$158,591.06 from individual donors, sponsors, combined charities campaign, online auction, and other miscellaneous fundraisers.

Since many activities that we usually fund were cancelled, we gave out fewer grants than the average year. Over 230 individual grants worth a total of \$41,885 were awarded to youth for items such as technology to adjust to sheltering/education at home, arts & craft supplies, individual sports gear, and apartment

furnishing/supplies for youth moving out on their own. Additionally, \$48,000 was given out in scholarships for both spring and fall 2020 semesters.

Our total operating expense was a mere \$4,636,62, most of which was specifically covered by an individual donor. We are proud that our team of volunteer board members enable almost all of the money raised to go directly to foster youth and this will continue for years to come.

Combined Charities

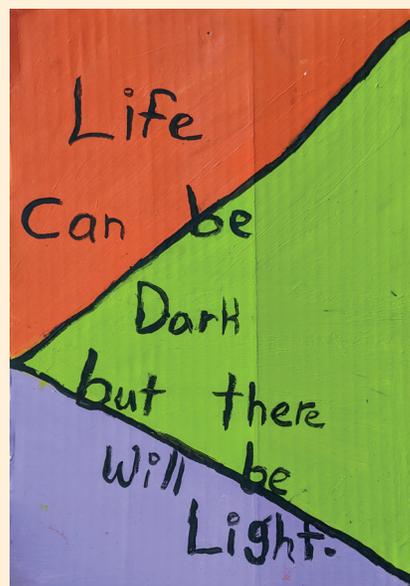
The SFFYF has always relied on the generosity of the employees of the City and County of San Francisco. The annual campaign allows employees and retirees the opportunity to donate either by payroll deduction or one-time check to their favorite causes. In 2020, 15.4% of the San Francisco Foster Youth Fund donations came through this campaign, amounting to over \$23,500, a significant portion of our total income.



Support foster youth by choosing the "San Francisco Foster Youth Fund" within the America's Best Local Charities section. Our charity number is L2408. We won't be able to go desk to desk, so please keep an eye out for emails to sign up online, or paper forms will be available in the office as well.

Contact admin@sffosteryouthfund.org with any questions. The Fund's Board, and the youth we support are deeply grateful to city workers and retirees.

"Gratitude"



by anonymous, Acrylic Paint on Cardboard
"I am grateful to have my family"

The SFFYF is accepting submissions of artwork and photography from youth centered around the theme of "gratitude."

The first 10 youth to submit work are awarded \$200 each for their contribution. To submit artwork, please email the entry to admin@sffosteryouthfund.org.

The Foster Youth Fund Is on Facebook

Join our page on Facebook! Just type the Fund's name in the Facebook search box to find us. The more people that join and spread the word, the more support we can gather.

Clean Out Your Garage, Help Foster Kids

The Fund has registered with the Community Thrift Store at 623 Valencia Street, San Francisco as a designated charity. Please donate and shop! Request that your sales benefit SFFYF.

SFFYF Board of Directors

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New Website in Development!

Want to know about the San Francisco Foster Youth Fund? Visit us at sffosteryouthfund.org for more photos, stories and information. It also offers a secure and convenient way you can donate online anytime. Our new website will be launching soon!



San Francisco Foster Youth Fund
P.O. Box 460086
San Francisco, CA 94146-0086

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(PLEASE DETACH AND RETURN)



I Support San Francisco Foster Youth!

Yes, I will participate in the online auction, Please send me a link to the email/phone number provided below.
(You can also visit our auction website on your own at SFFosterYouthFund.ejoinme.org/2021)

No, I am unable to participate in the auction, but will help with a donation of \$ _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Email: _____

Phone Number: _____

Please mail your check and this form to:
San Francisco Foster Youth Fund
P.O. Box 460086
San Francisco, CA 94146-0086