

# San Francisco Foster Youth Fund

NEWSLETTER | FALL 2025



## 2025 Mighty Fine Wines - Wine Tasting & Auction

**WE ARE EXCITED TO** announce the return of our annual Mighty Fine Wines event on Thursday, October 30, 5:30-8:30 P.M. We look forward to hosting top wineries and our dedicated supporters for an evening of great eats, fine wines, and a lively silent auction featuring contributions from local businesses.

Indulge in an exquisite array of offerings: Enjoy wine pours from esteemed partners like August West, Emme, Lancaster, Lynmar, Mansfield-Dunne, Sandler, Soda Rock, and Williamson; sample brews from Lagunitas, and savor delicious food provided by Fifth House Catering, Cowgirl Creamery, and Cupcakin' Bakery.

The auction highlights feature a curated selection of luxury experiences and high-value items: Enjoy an exclusive wine tasting for four at Quintessa, spectacular sailing on the Bay, and getaways with hotel stays at the Westin St. Francis and Hotel Trio in Healdsburg. Other prizes include unique wines, tickets to premier local events, and gift certificates for top restaurants and spas!

This year's auction will launch online on October 15th and closes on October 30th at 8:00 PM PT. Prizes will be available for pickup for winners at the event, though you do not have to be present to win.

Tickets will be on sale in advance for \$60 directly from Zeffy. Each ticket comes with a complimentary SFFYF wine glass to take home!

We hope you'll join us in person or online, to bid, celebrate, and support the SFFYF. Together, we can continue creating opportunities that help foster youth thrive.

### Event Tickets

To purchase tickets, visit <https://bit.ly/MightyFineWines2025> or scan the QR codes:



### Auction



## From Foster Youth to Social Worker: A Journey of Resilience & Purpose

**THE SAN FRANCISCO FOSTER YOUTH FUND** has walked alongside me since the very start of my college journey, and I can honestly say I would not be where I am today without their support. When I first stepped onto the campus of San Francisco State University (SFSU), I carried both excitement and uncertainty. College felt like such a big step, and there were moments I wasn't sure I'd be able to make it through. But SFFYF believed in me. That belief—shown through scholarships, encouragement, and the reminder that I wasn't alone—helped me push forward even when things felt overwhelming.

At SFSU, I discovered my passion for public health and earned my bachelor's degree, along with minors in Race and Resistance Studies and Women's Health Issues. Those studies opened my eyes to the ways that health and justice are connected to people's everyday lives. From there, I knew I wanted to keep going. With SFFYF's continued support, I pursued my master's degree in Social Welfare at UC Berkeley. In May 2025, I walked across that graduation stage with my MSW, a moment that felt like the culmination of years of hard work, perseverance, and the encouragement of a whole community cheering me on.

Now, I'm proud to share that I am working as a Protective Services Worker for San Francisco County in the Early Interventions unit. Every day I have the chance to support children and families, to

show up for them in moments where care and compassion can make all the difference. It's not easy work, but it feels deeply meaningful, like the path I was always meant to walk.

Looking ahead, I'm still shaping my goals. I can see myself stepping into leadership one day, helping create policies that focus on prevention and keeping families strong. I've also thought about future social workers, passing along the guidance and support I was lucky enough to receive. No matter what direction I take, my heart is set on continuing to serve children and families in ways that bring healing and hope.

Outside of my career, what brings me the greatest joy is being a mom. My 10-month-old baby is my everything, and motherhood has given me a new perspective on both life and work. Watching my child grow, laugh, and discover the world reminds me why I do what I do, and it keeps me grounded in love.

To the SFFYF community, thank you. Your support has not only helped me achieve my dreams but has also allowed me to create a future where I can give back. You've been part of my story every step of the way, and I carry that with me in everything I do.



# Our Promise Delivered: SFFYF 2024 Impact Report

WITH YOUR CONTINUED GENEROSITY, the SFFYF has worked to enrich the lives of San Francisco's foster youth since 1986.

## Direct Grants for Youth (\$89,231) & Scholarships (\$36,000)

In 2024, our support had a direct and significant impact on foster youth, covering both practical needs and enrichment opportunities:

- ◆ We awarded **over 400 individual grants**. These funds are critical, providing youth with experiences and essential items that would otherwise be out of reach.
- ◆ **Practical Support:** Essential technology (tablets and laptops), household items for nonminor dependents, funding for cherished family visits, driving lessons, furniture, guard card training, speciality hygiene items, bike repair, work uniforms and so much more.
- ◆ **Enrichment:** Life-changing experiences like summer camp, proms, gym memberships, art supplies, professional studio recording sessions, sports fees, ancestry testing, and lessons in swimming, dance, gymnastics, or martial arts.

## Specialized Grant Programs (\$13,888 given in 2024)

- ◆ **Hair Care Grant:** This grant remains essential in helping youth feel beautiful and confident for milestones like the first day of school, graduation, and birthdays. A total of 64 grants were awarded, and the number continues to grow as more youth access this resource.
- ◆ **Culinary Experience Grant:** This program paid for meals for youth, their protective services worker, and guests (Court Appointed Special Advocate, family, or friends), offering a chance to break bread and celebrate important milestones such as birthdays, graduations, emancipations, and reunifications. Youth and their guests experienced diverse cuisines from around the world.

## Maximum Impact Through Volunteerism

- ◆ Our dedicated board of directors volunteers their time to run all of our programs.
- ◆ Our entire administrative overhead for 2024 totalled just \$5,532.04. This represents a mere 3.68% of our total expenses.
- ◆ Our Mighty Fine Wines 2024 event expenses were completely covered by generous event sponsors and in-kind donors.

This volunteer structure keeps our overhead low and ensures your donation has the maximum possible impact, giving San Francisco foster youth the opportunity to jump, swim, dance, and sing their way through life for years to come.

## Bridging the Gap: How Higher Education Opportunities Empower Foster Youth

WITH THE TRANSITION into adulthood and completion of high school, youth in foster care encounter a pivotal and often challenging period. With limited support systems, lack of access to higher education, and the absence of stable family structures, they are expected to navigate the future under significantly more strain than their peers. For these young people, the transition out of care—commonly referred to as “aging out”—can feel overwhelming. One of the most powerful tools for breaking the cycle of instability is access to higher education and vocational training. But too often, that access feels out of reach.

Financial barriers further hinder foster youth from pursuing higher education. Many foster youth age out of the system without reliable financial support or family to fall back on, leaving them without the ability to pay for college or trade school. Although there are some state and federal programs designed to help foster youth with education costs, these resources are often insufficient or difficult to access. For many young people in foster care, the prospect of paying for school seems impossible, leaving them with few options for upward mobility. They may not have support to help complete financial aid applications, explore college programs, or understand how to apply for scholarships. For these reasons, foster youth often believe that higher education is not an option for them.

Many foster youth lack the financial safety net to afford tuition, housing, books, or even transportation to and from campus. This is where targeted resources can make a tremendous difference. Scholarships and financial aid programs specifically designed for foster youth can bridge this gap, offering critical support that allows them to pursue higher education or vocational training. Organizations like the SFFYF are committed to provide up to \$1,500 per semester for youth who are in foster care, helping cover higher education costs such as college tuition, textbooks, and living expenses.

Your donations to the San Francisco Foster Youth Fund are key in ensuring foster youth have access to the resources and support needed to pursue education beyond high school. Our scholarships provide young people with the tools they need to build a better future by addressing the educational gaps that often result from their experiences in the foster care system. Together, we can help mitigate the effects of instability, enabling them to achieve their full potential.

With your investment in the youth of San Francisco, you are helping create accessible pathways to higher education and skilled trades, and we can help ensure that foster youth experience long-term stability they deserve to build a successful future.

## Where Are They Now: Kenneth T. - Class of 2020



**YOU MAY REMEMBER KENNETH**, one of our scholarship recipients we profiled in 2020 after he obtained his Bachelor of Arts in Pan-African Studies from California State University, Los Angeles. We caught up with Kenneth to hear everything he has accomplished since emancipating from care. After obtaining his undergraduate degree, Kenneth moved to San Jose to become a para-educator for both the KIPP Schools and the Rocketship Public School through City Year, a national service program that serves high-needs public schools to provide academic and social-emotional support to students.

Kenneth has built his career around supporting young people and creating opportunities for their continued growth. He has spent years helping students succeed and communities thrive. Most recently, Kenneth accessed the SFFYF Eric Hoberg Scholarship and returned to higher education to earn a Master of Arts in Human Resource Management (Class of 2025), an accomplishment that less than 1% of youth who were in foster care reach. We congratulate Kenneth and recognize him as an inspiration and example for others.

## Scholarship Corner

**OUR SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS** are turning dreams into reality thanks to your support. From tuition and books to living expenses, these funds help foster youth thrive throughout their educational journeys. Every contribution makes a lasting difference and keeps opportunities within reach and each story of growth and achievement is a reminder of how powerful community support can be.

Behind every scholarship is a foster youth gaining tools, stability, and encouragement to succeed. These funds cover essentials that help our students focus on learning. With continued community support, we can ensure more young people have the chance to reach their educational goals and be leaders in our future.

***We are honored to celebrate 6 recipients graduating with the Class of 2025.***

- ♦ Albert T. (BA Psychology) San Jose State University
- ♦ Nikeyda F. (BA Education & Social Transformation) UC Los Angeles
- ♦ Jeremiah G. (BA Film) UC Santa Cruz
- ♦ Christopher R. – City EMT
- ♦ Kenneth T. (Masters of Human Resource Management) National University
- ♦ Isabel R. (Masters of Social Work) UC Berkeley

**Your generous donations continue to support students at:** Berkeley City College, California State University Long Beach, California State University Sacramento, City College of San Francisco, City EMT Program, Diablo Valley College, Graceland University, Northwestern University, Providence Vocational School, San Diego State University, San Francisco State University, San Jose State University, Shasta Community College, Touro (Masters), Umpqua Community College, University College Dublin (Masters), University of California, Berkeley, University of California, Los Angeles, University of California, Merced, University of California, San Diego, and University of California, Santa Cruz.



## Hidden Emotion

In shadows cast by a fractured past,  
Emotional wounds that forever last.  
In foster care's cold and harsh embrace,  
A child lost in a tangled maze.

Words like daggers pierced the soul,  
Leaving scars that never made me whole.  
Invisible chains bound tight and deep,  
Haunting dreams that never let me sleep.

Trapped in a cycle of fear and pain,  
Invisible scars, like pouring rain.  
Distrust and anguish etched within,  
A battle no one knew how to win.

Yet through the darkness, a flicker of light,  
A spark of hope in the endless night.  
Strength grew from the ashes of despair,  
A survivor's spirit, resilient and rare.

The wounds may linger, the memories stay,  
But in the healing, I find my way.  
A tapestry woven with threads of strife,  
Each thread a part of my resilient life.

So I stand tall, with scars in tow,  
A testament to the strength I now know.  
Emotionally bruised, but not defined,  
A survivor's journey, heart refined.

It is an honor to publish this original poem by JA, a former foster youth, who has courageously shared his story through verse.

## Sustain Our Impact

We depend on your generosity to continue funding these crucial dreams & experiences. Please consider becoming a monthly donor. We're excited to partner with Zeffy, a leading nonprofit platform that covers all processing fees, so your support goes 100% to the youth.

The SFFYF Board and the youth we support are deeply grateful for your commitment. Please scan this QR code below to make a one time or monthly donation to support our cause.



## Clean Out Your Home, Help Foster Youth

A huge thank you to Community Thrift! This amazing community partner is responsible for a substantial donation of \$4,784.10 to the SFFYF in 2024. Located at 623 Valencia Street in San Francisco, they allow you to designate a charity when you donate or shop. Next time you clear out your closet or hunt for a bargain, please choose the San Francisco Foster Youth Fund. Find more information at [www.communitythriftsf.org](http://www.communitythriftsf.org).

## SFFYF Board of Directors

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## Visit Our Website

Want to know about the San Francisco Foster Youth Fund? Visit us at our website, [www.sffosteryouthfund.org](http://www.sffosteryouthfund.org) for more photos, stories and information. It also offers a secure and convenient way you can donate online anytime.



**San Francisco Foster Youth Fund**

P.O. Box 460086

San Francisco, CA 94146-0086

Designed by e.g. communications.

(PLEASE DETACH AND RETURN)

## I Support San Francisco Foster Youth!

- ☐ Yes, I will attend Mighty Fine Wines on October 30, 2025 - scan the QR code to buy tickets
- ☐ Yes, I will participate in the online auction - scan the QR code to access the auction site
- ☐ No, I am unable to participate, but will help with a donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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### Event Tickets



### Auction



**Please mail your check and this form to:**

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