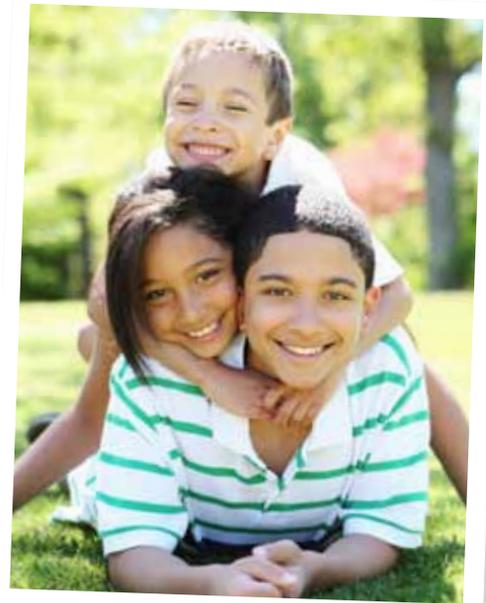


2014

Annual Report



New Mexico Friends
of Foster Children
www.nmffc.org |  nmffc



From the Board President:

Dear Friends:

Last year was a very busy one for New Mexico Friends of Foster Children. The scholarship program more than doubled, and we responded to requests for assistance for many children thanks to you and your generous donations.

We wish to especially acknowledge a certain business owner and an anonymous donor.

The two teamed up with us five years ago to provide foster children with a birthday party at **I Scream Ice Cream** in Albuquerque. The owner of I Scream Ice Cream, Bill Warren, and the anonymous donor cover the basic costs for each party. Children and adults have a wonderful time trying on hats, playing games, and enjoying lots of ice cream.

Many children in foster care have never had their own birthday parties.

Mr. Warren is a joyful, gracious host with a heart that seems to melt when foster children are mentioned, and he and the anonymous donor have created an experience that children treasure. We are honored to work with them and grateful for their generosity. We also want to thank Sarah Palmer, the Foster Parent Liaison in the CYFD Lamberton office, for scheduling the parties. (Foster parents: if your foster child has a birthday coming up, contact Sarah at sarah.palmer@state.nm.us.)

How you, our donors, have made the lives of foster children happier and more rewarding:

Two young girls were going to travel out of state to begin a new life and be adopted by family members. You provided new luggage that little girls would like. The two girls got off the plane in their new town with their clothes and special possessions in nice luggage appropriate for children – not the garbage bags so often used to carry a foster child's few possessions.

When an eight year old came into custody, no one knew that the child had worn glasses in the past. The glasses were broken and the parent had not been able to replace them since it was months before Medicaid would provide a new pair. The child struggled along in a foster home and a new school until someone suggested that an eye exam be scheduled. When the social worker learned the story of the broken glasses, she came to Friends and very shortly the child had the glasses that were so desperately needed for success in school.

Soccer fees and uniforms were provided for two teen sisters who are enthusiastic soccer players at their school and in a league. Soccer is a terrific focus for these wonderful young women and paying these expenses helps the foster parents use their limited dollars to help the girls in other ways.

Laptops are provided to children and youth who would otherwise have no access to them and who would be in jeopardy of not completing their homework successfully. In one case, a ten year old needed a laptop for homework; the foster family's computer was freezing up and was too slow for the applications needed by their foster child. In another case, a pre-teen's grandmother had no computer in the home but the youth needed one for homework. Thanks to you, these and other children have laptops to help them succeed in school.

A foster youth was selected to attend a special prep school and offered an annual scholarship that covered most of the tuition and fees. We were asked for help when plans to pay the rest fell through at the last minute. Because of you, our donors, this young person was able to attend and continues to excel academically.

Youth who have certain physical and mental challenges often experience improved concentration and behavioral skills if they have an electronic reading device. Two youth in an ARCA home placement have benefitted greatly from reading devices provided to them in 2013.

Tattoos can be problematic when youth are looking for employment. A young woman determined that her gang-identifying tattoos had to be removed or she would not find a job. Friends was able to work with a practitioner skilled in the removal of tattoos to help this motivated young woman, who has moved forward with employment and life changes.

We love to highlight the scholarships you fund. In 2013 we awarded scholarships to 14 applicants, and 13 of these youth enrolled in school and completed the steps to obtain the \$1000 scholarships. The students come from a broad range of ages, educational status, and geographic areas of New Mexico. They say that knowing someone believes in them is itself a gift, one that makes all the difference in the world. Through your support, you let foster youth and former foster youth know that people truly care and want them to succeed.

Continued...

Helping New Mexico's Kids in Foster Care Be Kids

With your help we also support activities that benefit groups of foster youth.

For example, we:

- Assist the Building Futures & Foundations Mentoring Project by providing funding to help youth attend events with their mentors, help the youth leadership meet and learn skills essential to the world they live in, and support events like fun runs and holiday get-togethers to celebrate the lives of these amazing young people.

- Sponsor a keynote speaker chosen by the youth planners for the annual Independent Living Conference for foster teens. This conference brings together youth who are facing challenges unique to foster care and aging out, and who are anxious and excited to interact with presenters who can help them look at their futures in new ways. The presenters often speak from their own personal experience in and after leaving the foster care system.

- Participate in Bernalillo County Court Day to bring foster children into the courtroom to help them become comfortable with the judicial process, learn how the process affects them, and appreciate how important it is for them to be involved in the legal proceedings in their case.

- Fund a museum night in a rural county for foster children, their biological and foster parents, and all the children in the foster homes. Artists offered their help, and everyone had dinner together, received a tour of the museum and engaged in art activities.

And we continue to fund bikes, dance lessons and costumes, sports fees and activity fees, and musical instruments and lessons, and to meet special requests, just as we have done since the beginning of New Mexico Friends of Foster Children.

At the heart of all we do is the idea of HELPING KIDS BE KIDS. We thank you daily for allowing us the means by which we can make this happen. You are an amazing gift to children in foster care and beyond.

THANK YOU!



Judy Flynn-O'Brien, President

Special Gifts to NMFFC

IN MEMORY OF
 Sydney DeLois Fowler
 Betty Louise Hammer
 Helen Moeller
 Janice Trujillo

IN HONOR OF
 Jay & Lori Chambers
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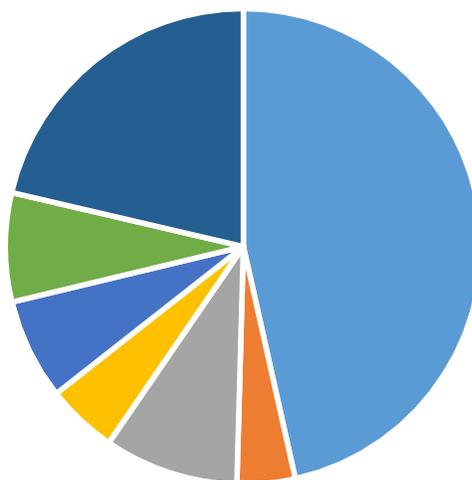
Mrs. Ann Halford
 J P Jacobs
 Patty & Fred Jaegar
 Zade Moore
 Sally & Ed Pias
 Linda Sullivan

2013 Financial Snapshot

Private Gifts	\$11,619	16%
Grants & Contracts	\$53,821	76%
Golf Tournament	\$5,380	8%
Product Sales	\$90	0%
Interest	\$41	0%
Total Income	\$70,950	100%

Program	\$79,396	87%
General & Admin	\$9,561	10%
Fundraising	\$2,357	3%
Total Expenses	\$91,314	100%

2013 AWARDS: Distribution & Highlights



- Scholarships
- Laptops
- Sports & Equipment
- Group Events & Birthday Parties
- Bikes & Other
- Education
- Arts & Music

- ★ Sponsored a Christmas Party for 200 children in foster care
- ★ Co-sponsored a conference for 75 older youth
- ★ Supported youth organization with mentoring and leadership events
- ★ Collaborated with CYFD on multiple, statewide adoption recruitment events and foster parent appreciation events
- ★ Supported & participated in court education day for foster youth



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2 0 1 3 D O N O R S

New Mexico Friends of Foster Children extends a warm thanks to our donors over the years. This list acknowledges the contributions of our 2013 supporters. Donors who gave during the current calendar year will be acknowledged in the 2015 annual report.

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Pat Williams | Elephant Butte
Women of the Moose | Truth or Consequences
Lois & Claire Wrede | Elephant Butte
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Thank you, Lady Roadrunners

The New Mexico Friends of Foster Children's Tenth Annual Golf Tournament took place on a gorgeous fall day at the beautiful Sierra del Rio Golf Course in Elephant Butte. It couldn't have been a nicer day and the tournament couldn't have happened without the hard work of the Roadrunners Women's Golf Association, a dedicated and dynamic group of women in Elephant Butte and Truth or Consequences that adopted the Friends' tournament a few years ago. In advance of the tournament, Lady Roadrunners encouraged members of the community to become sponsors and donate raffle items. On tournament day, they created a festive atmosphere as everyone played golf, bought raffle tickets, and enjoyed lunch.

The Lady Roadrunners' commitment to helping kids and the energy and excitement that they create around giving money to help kids is remarkable. They have been wonderfully supportive of Friends and the foster children we serve, and they have taken great interest in the scholarship program. With their help and the generosity of the communities of Elephant Butte and T or C, Friends has raised thousands of dollars to benefit New Mexico's foster children and youth.

Lady Roadrunners, you make a difference for New Mexico kids. Thank you!

Pictured: Lady Roadrunners Teddy Dorland, Beth Seewald and Pat Williams at the raffle table.



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College Tuition Waived for Foster Youth

**Are you a young person who is aging out of foster care,
or a former foster youth under the age of 25?**

(If you are an adult working with foster or former foster youth, please help get the word out to them.)

Do you know that New Mexico passed a law this year waiving tuition and fees for foster youth at public colleges and universities in the state?

New Mexico's law waives tuition and fees at such schools as UNM, NMSU, Highlands, Western and Eastern, as well as CNM and other community colleges. You must enroll in the community college or university before your 25th birthday. What's great about this is that a foster youth who didn't go straight to college after high school can still benefit from the tuition waiver.

To qualify for the tuition waiver, you must have been in state or tribal foster care when you turned 18, or on the day you graduated from high school or received a GED in New Mexico, or on or after your 14th birthday if your parents' rights were relinquished or terminated.

Young people who have been in state care can request a letter from CYFD certifying that they meet one of these qualifications.

Senate Bill 206 was passed with a lot of hard work on the part of current and former foster youth, who testified in committee hearings, met with legislators, and wrote letters in support of the bill. Many members of the child welfare community, including NMFFC, also got involved and advocated for this change. SB206 passed unanimously and was signed by the Governor in March. New Mexico now joins 21 other states in providing tuition waivers for young people who have been in the foster system. Huge thanks go to everyone who helped make tuition waivers in our state a reality!

For more information, contact Patrice Perrault, Youth Services Bureau Chief, CYFD at (505) 841-7786, or Arturo Fi-

erro, Education Coordinator, NM Child Advocacy Networks, at (505) 217-0220.

Youth who are working with a Youth Transition Specialist from CYFD can also find out more from their YTS.

Plus, exciting Medicaid changes!

There is more great news for youth who have aged out of the foster care system. Youth who had Medicaid when they aged out of the foster care system are eligible for Medicaid now up to the age of 26. There are no income requirements and you don't have to go to the Medicaid office to apply. The process is simple: just contact your Youth Transition Specialist (if you have one or had one) to help you with the process. You may also contact Patrice Perrault if your YTS is not available.