



photo, courtesy Center for an Urban Future

Dear Colleague,



The **Center for an Urban Future** released a report, **"Fostering Careers"** about the employment challenges facing young people who "age out" of foster care. This report, covered in the **Wall Street Journal** (*Job Hurdle After Foster Care*, by Joseph De Avila, September 6, 2011), cites **F·E·G·S's Academy** as a best practice model that is working to address this complex issue.

Each year in New York City, approximately one thousand young people leave the foster care system to navigate the adult world on their own. Although some manage to succeed in life, many do not. The report notes that funding for the Academy and other promising programs serving this population is limited, and recommends that the Mayor's Center for Economic Opportunity (CEO) and others, fund and evaluate program models that provide integrated education and workforce services to foster youth.

**The Academy** was initially funded by the Heckscher Foundation for Children and developed in partnership with five foster care agencies—Children's Village, Good Shepherd Services, Jewish Child Care Association, SCO Family of Services and Safe Space—and in cooperation with the New York City Administration for Children's Services (ACS). The Academy has since received support from a number of other foundations, and is "open" for referral to all of the City's foster care agencies.

The Center for Urban Future has brought to the forefront the critical issues facing foster care youth, gaps in funding, and models that have the potential to change the paradigm for serving this population. Together, we have an opportunity and a shared responsibility to make a difference for these young people and society.

Sincerely,

**Gail Magaliff**  
CEO

### The Academy Supporters

F·E·G·S is grateful to the foundations that have supported the Academy: Andrus Family Fund · Annie E. Casey Foundation · Child Welfare Fund · Heckscher Foundation for Children · J.P. Morgan Chase Foundation · Joseph Leroy and Ann C. Warner Fund · New Yorkers for Children · The Pinkerton Foundation · Robin Hood Foundation · Stella and Charles Guttman Foundation · Tiger Foundation

“Reaching for the Future: The Academy  
It is often said that no single model can meet the developmental needs of foster youth, which run a spectrum as diverse as other youth . . . The gap to be filled is on the lower end, with foster youth who have dropped out of high school or fallen behind—teens struggling with lower literacy skills, little to no work experience, and possibly emotional trauma. Few services or models are designed to help these high-needs youth.  
. . . **But there are a handful, and perhaps the most successful is the Academy, run by F·E·G·S Health and Human Services System in the Bronx.**”

“The Academy provides a wide spectrum of education and employment services, including pre-GED and GED training, career and college exploration, sheltered internships, supported external internships, support for job interviews and job search/placement services. The structure puts a high premium on the Academy's 'no reject/no eject' policy, which states that youth who leave can always come back . . . Results thus far are impressive for this population: Four out of ten obtain jobs, almost half pass the GED or increase their academic level, and most youth who enter the program stay with it and gradually improve their work readiness and education.”

“The Center for Employment Opportunity (CEO) should fund one or more institutions that provide integrated workforce and educational services to foster youth, and evaluate the results. The Academy appears to be a highly promising approach to assist foster youth in achieving better employment and educational outcomes, and similar programs operated by Fedcap, Children's Aid Society and The Door also point the way toward a model that could dramatically improve foster youth outcomes at a citywide scale.”

**Fostering Careers,**  
**Center for an Urban Future**  
September 2011