

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.



YOUTH NEWSLETTER January 2016

Page 1 - Join the Heart Gallery gala
Page 2 - The many talents of Akira
Page 3 - Join the MARE Speakers Bureau
Page 3 - Adoption Night with the Pistons
Page 4 - Calendar of Events



This Could Be Your Chance To Take A Bow!

Join in the 2016 Michigan Heart Gallery Grand Opening festivities in April

MARE would like to invite all waiting youth to attend the 2016 Michigan Heart Gallery Grand Opening! You won't want to miss out! Any youth who attend will be sure to receive the red carpet treatment!

Here's how it works:

- If you would like to attend the 2016 Michigan Heart Gallery Grand Opening, regardless whether you're in the exhibit, make sure you contact your worker to pre-register you or have him/her call or email MARE Recruitment Specialist Jessica Thompson. She'll make sure that your name is on the list of those attending the Grand Opening in April.



- If your worker scheduled you to participate in a photo shoot to have your picture taken for the Heart Gallery, it will be included in the traveling photographic exhibit that features photos of youth currently in the foster care system waiting for their forever family.

- A Grand Opening of the Michigan Heart Gallery will take place in April at the Emagine Theatre in Royal Oak. Last year's Grand Opening featured refreshments, entertainment and a red carpet for youths who attended. Youths also received a special gift to go along with getting the star treatment for the day.

2015 Michigan Heart Gallery Grand Opening Photos by Melissa Covell



Meet the talented, creative Akira



“I like to draw;
I love to write.
I write music
and stories
and poetry.”



‘You Don’t Understand’

By Akira

Why do you see through me?

You don't see what's inside

You look beyond the soul and it makes me want to cry

I feel like just a shadow

Like you're using x-Ray vision

I'm just a human

I need the love I'm not getting

But you didn't bring me down

I'm like a sandstorm with a smile

Someone who found victory

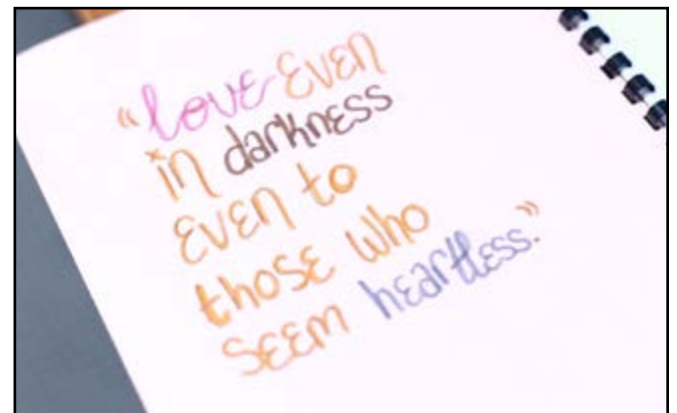
But.....

Has forgotten victory comes with a price

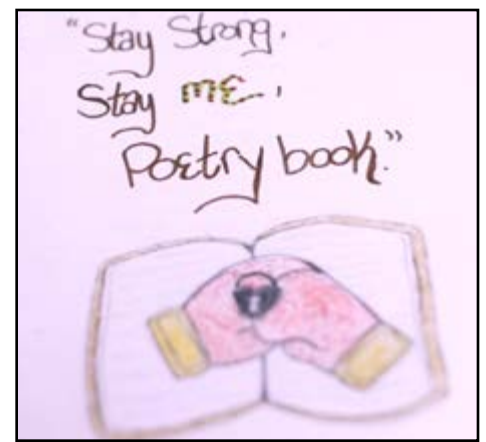
Of what?

A price of forgetting you no matter how deep you've gone

But how deep can you really go?



“I would describe my personality as very random. I don't really have a specific definition.”



We need your help to speak up

Want to use your story to change the system, educate the public, or inspire other young people? Youth who have been in foster care are the REAL experts ... they know the foster care system from the inside.

If you previously have experience talking in front of people or you have never have, but you want to learn the skills to talk in front of people, this is your chance. Your voice can provoke real change in the system. Your peers will look to you as



a role model. Foster parents and caseworkers want your advice about how to provide better care for their foster children.

Feeling inspired? Put your insider knowledge to work!

Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange (MARE) received a Grant from AdoptUS Kids to develop a Youth Speaker Bureau, and we need your help!

If you are interested please contact Jennifer Brooks, MARE Youth Specialist, Jennifer_brooks@judsoncenter.org

DETROIT BASKETBALL

ADOPTION AWARENESS

AT THE PALACE OF AUBURN HILLS

SUN, FEBRUARY 21

vs. NEW ORLEANS PELICANS • 3:30PM

Come and support the Detroit Pistons as they partner with the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange! With every ticket sold, a portion of the proceeds go back to MARE! Every guest will also receive the opportunity to shoot a free throw on the Pistons court after the game and a Pistons gift!

EXCLUSIVE TICKET PRICING:

- LOWER-LEVEL RISERS: \$50
- LOWER-LEVEL ENDS: \$30
- UPPER-LEVEL CORNERS: \$17

Ticket includes: FREE Pistons gift, opportunity to shoot a free throw on the Pistons court and a donation back to MARE

Buy Tickets at Pistons.com/MARE Offer Code: Pistons

Offer cannot be redeemed at The Palace Ticket Store. For additional information, please contact Nicole Laidlaw: 248.375.4065/ nlaidlaw@palacenet.com

CALENDAR: SHARE YOUR SUCCESS STORY

OF EVENTS

January 16, 2016

Meet & Greet
Detroit

January 23, 2016

Meet & Greet
Westland

February 27, 2016

Meet & Greet
Holland

March 19, 2016

Meet & Greet
Brighton



For more information regarding these events please contact Jennifer Brooks, MARE Youth Specialist: jennifer_brooks@judsoncenter.org

Fostering Success Michigan is seeking student stories to be highlighted on their website!

We are currently seeking students who are interested in being featured on our website. We have all heard the statistics and know about the obstacles students face. This is an opportunity for students and professionals alike to read the success stories and learn about what supports helped youth succeed. The stories will be used as a way to highlight students and their

achievements.

If you know of any youth or alumni of care between the ages of 18 and 24 who are currently enrolled in high school or college, we would love to hear from them.

Contact Fostering Success Michigan Student Researcher, Brittney Grant, at fostering-info@wmich.edu to have the interview questions sent directly to your inbox.

We look forward to featuring youth and alumni stories from across the state!



YOUTH RESOURCES



FosterClub - FosterClub is a national network for young people in foster care and young foster care alumni. The site includes blogs from current foster youth, success stories from youth who have come out of the foster system as well as celebrities who faced foster care. It also provides a listing by state of contact information for professionals and hotlines. (www.fosterclub.com 503-717-1552)



Michigan Youth Opportunities Initiative - MYOI is a partnership between the Michigan Department of 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. (www.michigan.gov/fyit/0,1607,7-240-44524-162619--,00.html)



Foster Youth in Transition - An organization that is geared towards youth who are aging out of foster care. It's a comprehensive, youth-oriented site with information, advice, interactive features and a useful glossary of foster care terms. This is a website with 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 517-373-9219)