

PRESS RELEASE

Regional Foundation Joins Effort to Elevate Futures of L.A. Foster Youth through Improved Access to Education and Employment *Stuart Foundation matches Aspen Institute's Forum for Community Solutions funding to support L.A. Opportunity Youth Collaborative*

Los Angeles, CA (November 3, 2014) – The Stuart Foundation has made a significant contribution to support a cross-sector, multi-agency effort that will improve education and employment outcomes for transition-age foster youth in Los Angeles. The L.A. Opportunity Youth Collaborative, led by the Alliance for Children's Rights, will use a framework of collective impact to leverage the many resources and efforts currently existing and maximize opportunities to brighten the futures for young people aging out of foster care.

The Stuart Foundation is an avid supporter of initiatives that bolster education outcomes for vulnerable children in California. As a philanthropic partner and matching funder of the L.A. Opportunity Youth Collaborative, the Stuart Foundation is poised to help ensure more foster youth ages 16 – 24 achieve these goals:

1. High school graduation and GED attainment
2. Postsecondary enrollment and credential completion
3. Workforce readiness and gainful employment

"The needs of transition-age foster youth are complex and require intense collaboration from multiple systems," said Jonathan Raymond, President of the Stuart Foundation. "The L.A. Opportunity Youth Collaborative has real potential to break down longstanding systemic barriers to education and careers for foster youth through its collective impact approach."

Seed funding for the Aspen Institute grant to Los Angeles was made possible by the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation. The Alliance is one of 21 organizations across the country to receive an "Opportunity Youth Incentive Fund" grant from the Aspen Institute to support a collaborative effort to address the needs of our nation's most vulnerable youth. In announcing the grants, Aspen Chair and Former White House Domestic Policy Council Director, Melody C. Barnes, said: "Imagine a community where K-12 and higher education leaders, foster care programs and the justice system, philanthropy and the private sector all came together to build successful pathways for our forgotten youth."

The Alliance will serve as the backbone, or coordinating entity, for the OYC. OYC partners, include: Government Agencies, Advocacy and Community-Based Organizations, Workforce Centers, School Districts, Higher Education, Philanthropists and Advisors. For a list of partners, visit kids-alliance.org/OYC.

"Los Angeles foster youth are in crisis with only 40% graduating from high school and more than half ending up homeless or incarcerated," said Janis Spire, CEO of the Alliance for Children's Rights. "These philanthropic investments are a catalyst for Los Angeles's community of partners to break

down silos and coordinate systems to significantly improve high school, post-secondary and employment advancement for the most vulnerable young people in our community.”

For more information, visit kids-alliance.org/OYC.

The **Alliance for Children’s Rights** protects the rights of impoverished, abused and neglected children and youth. By providing free legal services and advocacy, the Alliance ensures children have safe, stable homes, healthcare and the education they need to thrive. Since 1992, the Alliance has served 125,000 children ages 0-24, and favorably impacted thousands of children statewide through policy efforts. For more information, visit www.kids-alliance.org.

The Stuart Foundation, an independent family foundation since 1985, is dedicated to the education and development of children and youth. We work toward ensuring that all children grow up in caring families, learn in vibrant and effective schools, and have opportunities to become productive members of their communities. We focus our investments on projects, programs and organizations making an impact in the States of California and Washington. <http://www.stuartfoundation.org/>

The Aspen Institute is an educational and policy studies organization based in Washington, DC. Its mission is to foster leadership based on enduring values and to provide a nonpartisan venue for dealing with critical issues. The Institute is based in Washington, DC; Aspen, Colorado; and on the Wye River on Maryland’s Eastern Shore. It also has offices in New York City and an international network of partners. For more information, visit www.aspeninstitute.org.

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