

Rural County Leaders Fund 1,100 Computers For Foster Youth In 35 Counties

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A coalition of philanthropy, business, and nonprofit organizations today announced that Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC) and National Homebuyers Fund, Inc. (NHF) have joined forces to contribute \$400,000 to provide iFoster laptop computers to all eligible foster youth and former foster youth aged 16-21 within RCRC's 35 member counties.

Fewer than 5% of rural foster youth in California have access to a computer where they live, compared to 90% of teens across the U.S., and 79% of low income teens (Pew Research). When foster youth are provided with a computer, not only do grades and class attendance improve, but self-esteem and life satisfaction increase, while depression drops, according to recent research.

"Our Boards of Directors recognize the importance of access to technology, particularly for the most vulnerable populations," said Greg Norton, President and CEO of RCRC, and President of NHF. "We are very pleased to support the work of iFoster in providing this life changing program to ALL eligible current and former foster youth in each of RCRC's 35 member counties."

This contribution, along with ongoing support from Foster Care Counts, Ticket to Dream Foundation, Walter S. Johnson Foundation staffed by Whittier Trust, and dozens of local donors and child welfare agencies will increase the percent of California foster youth who have access to a laptop from 15% to nearly 60% this year.

Youth receiving laptops are also provided with a personalized virtual TAY (Transition Age Youth] Assistant from iFoster which matches them to the resources they need and a secure digital locker to store their vital life documents. The TAY Assistant provides access to more than 500 curated resources and is integrated into the iFoster Jobs Program which has trained and employed over 350 California foster youth in its first 2 years. TAY are young people between the ages of sixteen and twenty-four who are in transition from foster care to independent living without the support of a family or the child welfare system.

For more information about the program please visit iFoster.org, or call 1.855.936.7837.
About iFoster

Children in foster and kinship care deserve the same resources and opportunities for success as young people being raised by biological parents. Tragically, foster youth

receive on average less than 50% of what the USDA reports the average American family spends on raising their children.

iFoster is a national non-profit that bridges the gap between youth in the child welfare system and the external corporations, foundations and government agencies who have the resources to help them succeed. iFoster has built the largest and most inclusive online community of young people and organizations in foster care with currently over 40,000 members in all 50 states. On behalf of the community, iFoster negotiates and collaborates with hundreds of partners who can provide the resources, supports and opportunities that foster youth need to become successful adults.

The iFoster 1 Laptop Program has provided over 11,000 laptops to foster youth across the U.S., with the generous support of the California Emerging Technology Fund, Placer Community Foundation, Foster Care Counts, Ticket to Dream Foundation, Walter S. Johnson Foundation staffed by Whittier Trust, and hundreds of local donors and foster care agencies.

<http://www.prweb.com/releases/2018/01/prweb15141040.htm>