



Fostering Futures NY

Supporting foster families in building better futures for children and youth

InTouch



'The team has meshed so well with our family'



Scott and Renee Muir have been foster parents for about five years. During that time, they fostered seven children. When Renee was first contacted in 2014 about Fostering Futures, she wanted to get involved.

"When the program was explained to me, it seemed like a great idea," Renee says, "but my first thought was that I could be a volunteer to help other foster families."

When she found out that volunteers would be assigned to support *her* family, Renee looked at FFNY from a different perspective. "I wasn't sure what I was going to ask them to do. I wasn't used to having people help me."

The Muirs fit the definition of successful foster parents. They were thrilled last year when their daughter Rachel, whom they adopted from foster care, won a prestigious Horatio Alger Scholarship. The four-year college scholarship is given to high school students who have faced and overcome great obstacles in their lives. She was one of 106 awardees chosen from 4,000 applicants nationwide.

"Children in foster care have gone through trauma and can have behavioral issues," Renee says. "That's why I wondered whether team members who weren't familiar with these problems would be able to handle it."

A year later, Renee remembers her concerns with a laugh. She says the FFNY team has been "wonderful," especially for the 10-year-old child currently in the Muirs' home.

"They've meshed so well with him," Renee says. "It's kind of like it was meant to be." Most of the adults he knew previously were service providers, and his relationships with team members have brought what Renee calls "normalcy" to his life. They have taken him to the movies and to the ice cream shop. One team member taught him to ride a bike, and another taught him to tie his shoes.

FFNY team members provide child care so the Muirs can have an occasional evening out, and bring hot meals when Renee has to work late. "Now I don't know what I'd do without them," she says.



Fostering Futures NY (FFNY) recruits and trains small teams of volunteers from the community that give practical support to foster families and serve as 'extended families' for foster parents and children.



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Meet our new Volunteer Coordinator



Debbie Favro joined FFNY in April as the program's Volunteer Coordinator and has already begun to meet with volunteers and community organizations. She is an FFNY volunteer from St. Timothy's Lutheran Church, which was one of the original teams established by the program.

"I have the privilege of working with a large foster family of six children who were adopted and three biological children," she says. "The foster parents do not have extended family in the area, so our team gives them the extra support they need. I have been providing meals and transportation, and spending time with one of their daughters who demands a great deal of attention from her parents."

Debbie worked for the New York State Education Department for 20 years as a supervisor for the National School Lunch Program in New York City metropolitan area. She retired from state employment in 2010 and went to work as a resident life assistant at St. Margaret's Center in Albany.

"Working in the pediatric skilled nursing facility opened my eyes to the world of medically fragile children, youth and adults. Interacting with residents, individuals, and parents of children with serious disabilities taught me a lot about strength of character, which I wouldn't trade for the world."

Thanks to our supporters

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- The Review Foundation Fund
- Community Foundation Capacity Building Grant
- The Schenectady Foundation
- First Reformed Church of Schenectady
- Troy Savings Bank Charitable Foundation
- William Gundry Broughton Charitable Private Foundation, Inc.
- St. Timothy's Lutheran Church
- Stewart's Holiday Match
- Stewart's Shops

Welfare Research, Inc.

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