



THE PROBLEM...*no, our problem*

Why does our society spend billions of dollars on foster children, only to abandon these kids when they're on the verge of becoming adults? It seems like we're dropping the ball at the goal line. After age 18 their future prospects are grim:

- 50% will end up unemployed
- 33% will require public assistance
- 25% will become incarcerated
- less than 10% will attend college
- Only 3% will actually graduate college

Emancipated foster youth have many special needs because of their challenging life experiences and their lack of a supportive family structure. These life challenges are often insurmountable without adult mentoring, educational opportunities, financial support and caring role models. Yet, we are at a point today where a college degree is often a key factor in achieving long-term success.

A SOLUTION...*with proven results*

In order to address these grim statistics, The Alex Smith Foundation, San Diego State University and the Consensus Organizing Center have partnered to create The **Alex Smith Foundation San Diego State University Guardian Scholars Program**. This is a comprehensive program provided to 10 former foster youth per year, including:

- high school component with youth taking college classes in Junior & Senior years of high school
- youth participate in 40 hours of community service
- five-year scholarships up to \$10,000 annually
- year round housing
- extensive individual guidance , support and career planning

To date, the Guardian Scholars Program has demonstrated great success:

- 120 youth have successfully completed the high school component of the program
- 100% of the youth earned a high school diploma
- 84% have gone on to college
- Average GPA of Guardian Scholars youth is 2.99 versus 2.90 for the overall general population of college students at San Diego State University

OUR COMMUNITY...*our responsibility*

Through the generosity of national partners such as the Alex Smith Foundation & the Alliance for Children & Families, the Kansas City community has been given the opportunity to be part of a solution for our former foster youth. As a leading child serving organization in Missouri and Kansas, Cornerstones of Care will work with these national partners, as well as local colleges and universities, foundations and community leaders to replicate the Guardian Scholars Program in our community.