



Message from Rick McCracken
Executive Director

B:E needs your support to continue providing critical services to young people coming out of foster care. We know what works and we have a track record to prove it, but we need to raise additional money to keep moving forward.

Three Reasons to Give to Beyond Emancipation (B:E)

- #1** Over the last five years we touched the lives of nearly 3,000 current and former foster and probation youth in Alameda County. A majority of these youth have been let down in many ways either by their family, government or society. We as a society have a moral obligation to provide them with resources and opportunities so that they can develop and fulfill their own plans and dreams for their futures.
- #2** Our services help youth ages 16-24 avoid the negative outcomes that are too frequently associated with foster care involvement - through no fault of their own - such as homelessness, unemployment and incarceration.
- #3** B:E's services - including housing, education and employment support - help youth meet their basic needs, stabilize their lives and become more self-sufficient. Services are rooted in a coaching model and are designed to encourage youth to make conscious and healthy choices in their own lives. In addition, building reliable social networks with peers, mentors and extended and chosen family members is encouraged, modeled and supported.

Please consider a gift of \$25, \$50, \$100, \$250 or more that will allow B:E to continue to support current and former foster and probation youth in Alameda County. Your support helps them reclaim their voice and their personal vision, so they can aspire to and achieve their dreams. To give a gift, you can use the return remittance envelope provided or give online at: www.beyondemancipation.org or call 510-667-7604

b:e in the know newsletter
Spring 2013

Beyond Emancipation



Mission:
Beyond Emancipation's (B:E) mission is to support Alameda County's current and former foster and probation youth to make successful transitions to adulthood and living independently. Founded in 1995, B:E now serves over 1000 youth ages 16-24 annually.

Online Survey
B:E wants to know your opinion. We are looking at the costs of printed newsletters and trying to determine if we should continue them or not. Please take a moment to visit our website and fill out a short survey about how B:E communicates to donors, supporters and clients.
THANK YOU IN ADVANCE FOR YOUR TIME!
You can choose to provide your contact information or you can submit your response anonymously.
Visit:
www.beyondemancipation.org/survey.php



Featured Client: Roberta Rodriguez, 20 at her first full-time job.

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Small Steps Towards Success: Roberta's Story

At age 14, after one long year of living in five foster/group homes, Roberta Rodriguez was welcomed into a foster home with a loving family who supported and encouraged her. Before she entered foster care, Rodriguez grew up in a family that was verbally and physically abusive and they did not value educated women. Her parents died when she was young and she went to live with her grandparents in Mexico before returning to the United States with her uncles at the age of 12.

"I was alone, my family didn't help me at all," says Rodriguez.
"They never taught me how to have a good life, how to do my best and get the best from me. I didn't really learn anything good from my family," she added.

Rodriguez didn't start learning English until she entered foster care, so high school was a huge challenge and she had to try extra hard to do well in school and pass her classes. However with support from her new family, social worker, school staff and friends, not only was she the first in her biological family to graduate high school, Rodriguez was accepted into all four universities she applied to. She decided to attend California State East Bay University in Hayward, California. Even though she came from a supportive

foster family, college proved to be very challenging and Rodriguez had to drop out within the first year. It was a hard choice, but knowing when to change course is part of staying on the path of success. She was having a hard time finding work and started to get depressed.

"I was looking for help," says Rodriguez. The EOP office at her school told her about Beyond Emancipation (B:E). She heard about an internship program at the Fresh Start Café from Alison Traina, a B:E Education and Employment Specialist. She applied and thought it was a great opportunity to learn job skills.

"The café was really good because I didn't have any experience and they gave me a chance," - Roberta Rodriguez

"The café was really good because I didn't have any experience and they gave me a chance," says Rodriguez.

She says she learned so much and values all the skills she learned on the job from her café manager, Gwen Johnson. Rodriguez says one of the most important things she has learned is that you cannot take things personally and you must always be professional no matter what. Even before starting working at the café, Rodriguez said she learned many tips and techniques on how to search

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For contact information,
download contact sheet at:
[www.beyondemancipation.org/
staff.php](http://www.beyondemancipation.org/staff.php)

Connecting Education & Employment

At the end of 2012, B:E expanded its capacity to provide high quality education, employment, and career development services to youth with the creation of the Education and Career Development Division (ECDD). Three Education & Employment Specialists now work with youth to help them make connections between their employment vision and the education necessary to achieve that vision.

Through a curriculum of individual coaching sessions, the staff work with youth on both long term visioning and short term planning, helping youth enroll and persist in post-secondary education, create high quality resumes, and expand

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for employment and how to follow through with applications and the interview process from Traina. During the internship, Rodriguez met with Traina and Johnson regularly. Those meetings helped her feel supported because she could talk to either one of them about anything personal or job related. Rodriguez said Johnson and Traina helped her become a better communicator. Before working with Traina she didn't know

how to fill out applications or have any skills or experience to put on her resume. Rodriguez says the café changed her life and she is

their ability to network and find jobs in the community. The ECDD also maintains two strong programs: the b2b Learning Community, in partnership with Laney College and the Fresh Start Cafe Internship Program, in partnership with Alameda County New Beginnings and Aramark. Dependent on future funding, the ECDD also hopes offer several supported employment programs this summer and fall, including opportunities for both current and former foster youth. These programs have the potential to expand the work of the division, increasing our staff capacity and our ability to deliver high quality and consistent services to larger groups of youth.

grateful for the chance to learn customer service skills and be given the opportunity. She credits Johnson and Traina for helping her along the way. Even though Rodriguez had to leave the internship early, it was for a good reason. She accepted a full-time position with benefits at a local grocery store. When she applied for the job around the time she started her internship at the café, she didn't have any skills to put on her resume. However, when they called her a few months later, she told them she had gained customer service skills during the internship. They told her she was just what they were looking for in a candidate and offered her a position.



What is B:E Employed?
It is a weekly email that lists local current job openings.

Why?
B:E clients often struggle to find jobs they are qualified for. B:E hopes that this weekly email will help remove one of the many barriers our clients face as they move towards self-sufficiency.

Who can sign up?
Anyone! Clients! Service Providers! Advocates!

Sign up online at: <http://www.beyondemancipation.org/employment.php>

Rodriguez needed a chance to prove she had skills and once given the chance at the café, she shined. "Those three months were so helpful for my life because it is the reason I have my job right now," says Rodriguez.

One of her goals is to be fluent in English and she is currently taking ESL classes at Chabot College and hopes to start taking more college classes within the year and transfer back to a four year university. She knows she wants to have a career. She isn't sure in what field but she knows she wants to do something that involves helping people. Rodriguez is now 20 and says she is preparing for her future step by step.

Donor Spotlight

Small Donations That Make a Difference

When Elena Bunnell of Oakland shops at Costco or Trader Joe's, she doesn't just think of her own shopping list. She uses each trip to the grocery store to buy something small – boxes of instant noodles, nut mix, snack bars - that will end up on the shelves of the Emergency Food Pantry at B:E.

Bunnell, who works for Alameda County, remembers reading a letter about the work done by B:E and feeling inspired to find a way to contribute.

"I fully understand that people who are hungry can't settle down and learn, or do a job application, or think about their future," she says. "Buying a few extra boxes of food whenever I'm shopping and setting it aside to drop off at BE once a month is a donation venue that's right up my alley."

While a box of individual

powdered soups, snack bars, or fruit cups may not seem like a major investment – as Bunnell says, "I buy something every time I go somewhere, so I'm not spending megabucks" – the impact can be powerful. B:E clients are often challenged to stretch their budgets to cover adequate food supplies, or find foods that can be prepared given sometimes limited access to kitchen facilities. More than simply replenishing the stock at the pantry, Bunnell thinks that her periodic donations are a tangible reminder to foster kids that someone cares.

"My own kids had someone who believed in them when they were growing up. Everyone needs to know that someone cares about them." For others who want to help B:E, Bunnell strongly suggests looking at the wish list of in-kind donations, available on the web site. Right now

Elena Bunnell dropping of donations for the B:E Emergency Food Pantry.



that list includes toiletries, food pantry items, business clothing for use in job interviews, and gift cards. "Find out what B:E needs and see if there is something that feels like a good fit for you," Bunnell says. "There are lots of ways to help."

View B:E's in-kind wish list at:
[www.beyondemancipation.org/
inkindwishlist.php](http://www.beyondemancipation.org/inkindwishlist.php)

BEYOND IDOL 2013

Contact us about several exciting opportunities to feature your brand and sponsorship at BI 2013.



Check out the new website:
www.beyondidol.com

Congratulations BI 2012 Champions

Ya Boy Lil G, Stephon Mills, & Sade Daniels



Online you can read "Behind The Scenes" features for each BI Champion. Learn more about their goals, challenges, and ideas of success.

BI is a talent competition for foster youth. BI celebrates the creativity and talent of Alameda County foster youth ages 16-24 and provides a much-needed platform for youth to cultivate and share their unique voices.



THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

B:E's work is only possible because of our generous donors. **THANK YOU** to everyone who contributed to us in 2012. We are grateful to each and every one of you.

STAY CONNECTED

There are many ways you can connect with B:E from you computer.



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