



Message from Rick McCracken
Executive Director

Your investments not only allow our programs for current/former foster/probation youth to grow, but also contribute to staff development/training, hiring of new staff, and keeping our infrastructure working, which includes paying rent and keeping our lights on.

Why INVEST and GIVE to Beyond Emancipation (B:E)?

By investing in B:E, you are investing in programs and services that invest in current/former foster/probation youth.

B:E and community partners **invest** in coaching cohorts and programs so we can change the statistics and see more foster/probation youth succeed.
"Everything that is helping me out, it can help more people," -DeVaughn Gray.

Clients **invest** in themselves. Both DeVaughn and Carolann (featured in this issue) chose to **invest** in their education and have seen their hard work pay off. Both graduated community college and will be transferring to a four-year university.

B:E and Laney Community College staff **invested** time and resources into the b2b Learning Community. As a result of this successful collaboration, California College Pathways has expressed interest in b2b as a replicable model of partnership.

Volunteer/Mentor Linda Gardner, began **investing** in Carolann in 2010 when she became her b2b tutor-- which led to her becoming a solid connection in her life. Four years later, Linda watched Carolann graduate from Laney College.

It takes a team. It takes a partnership. Mentoring, Teaching, and Engaging.
Connecting individuals with other individuals who are willing to **invest**.

Please consider a gift of \$500, \$250, \$100, \$50 or more that will allow B:E to continue to support current/former foster/probation youth in Alameda County.

To give a gift, you can use the return remittance envelope provided or give online at: www.beyondemancipation.org/donate or call 510-667-7604.

INVEST and GIVE to B:E today!

b:e in the know newsletter
Summer 2014

Beyond Emancipation

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this issue

b2b Learning Community P.1

Success Story: Carolann P.2

Success Story: DeVaughn P.3

Why **INVEST** in B:E? P.4



B:E Housing Client, Kimberly and her son prepare the community garden for spring planting.

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.

"Champions aren't made in the gyms. Champions are made from something they have deep inside them- a desire, a dream, a vision."
Muhammad Ali

What is b2b?

The b2b Learning Community is a collaboration between Laney Community College's EOPS program and B:E.

It's designed to support current and former foster/probation youth to be successful at Laney Community College and prepare for a satisfying and rewarding career.

b2b has achieved outstanding results:

Foster youth are far less likely to graduate college than other youth.

b2b participants have achieved college retention rates twice as high as those of current and former foster youth nationally.

b2b Learning Community Celebrates Another Year

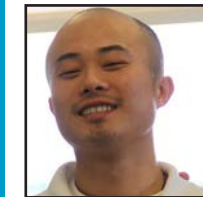
What do the 2014 b2b graduates have to say?



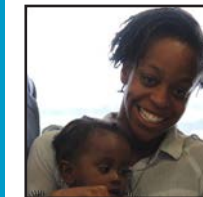
"Education is important to me because it is the foundation of knowledge and knowing what the world is all about. This past year, I learned that education can open doors to many opportunities and help you accomplish many goals in life."
De'Andre Baker, 20



"Education is important to me because I will be able to get a better job to provide for my family and future children. Without these opportunities, I would have died or been in jail. School saved my life."
Lamika Ferdinand, 24



"Education is important to me because I will get far in life. This past year I learned that education can help me take the next step in building my career."
Chase Guan, 21



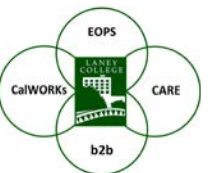
"Education is important to me because it strengthens my knowledge of the world around me. This past year I learned that education can be the greatest accomplishment you can receive."
Mayari Hardman, 20



"Education is important to me because it's important to be well informed. This past year I learned that education can change my perspective and open my eyes."
Aruthur Savangsy, 23



In May, b2b celebrated its fourth year. Twelve youth completed the 2013/14 cohort. Five youth graduated from the two-year program and six youth completed their first year.



"Those **individuals** who will be **recognized** today who are finishing after two years, **congratulations**, because that was **determination**. That was **mindset**. That **didn't just happen**."

Dr. Mildred Lewis,
Laney College Dean of Student & Academic Affairs

"You can all be **winners**, it may be hard, it may be tough. I **promise** you that **B:E, Laney College**, and this group of **people surrounding you**, will **support you**. You have **people in your corner**. **Muhammad Ali** had a team. **You have a team**. I really encourage you to take advantage of that."
Richard McCracken, B:E Executive Director

"I want to say that I am very **proud** of each one of **you** and I am proud of you for **choosing to invest** in yourself and allowing us to support you in that regards."
Dr. Elnora Webb, Laney College President

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Beyond Emancipation Cohorts: Creating Connections that Support Transformation



Carolann Perales, 23

Perales didn't really want to engage or interact. Over time, and after being in various cohorts, she began to open up. She says before she was in the shadows and now she is in the light. "That stuff, it opens you up," said Perales about the coaching and team building in the cohorts.

"At first I was ashamed to be centered as a foster youth, but now I feel like everybody has a story," says Perales. "After being in cohorts with other foster youth, I feel like I'm not the only person who goes through hardships in life. I came out as a different person."

Perales made a decision to strive for better because she wanted to do better than others in her life. She wants to be self-sufficient and not be dependent on SSI or other social services. She says her family can be negative and it used to bother her, but now she has learned to accept it and that you can't change people. Perales says she grew stronger and learned a lot about herself while in the B:E programs. She sees herself differently, has a higher self-esteem and is more positive. She says one of the greatest skills she has learned is to advocate for herself and ask for help when needed.

Perales says that participating in B:E programs was an experience she will never forget and she appreciates the connections she has made. While working at the President's Office at Laney, Perales developed a person-

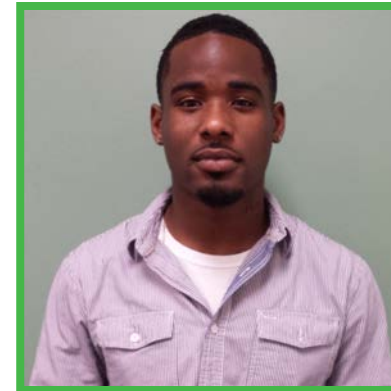
al relationship with Dr. Webb, the Laney College president. She also became very close with the staff at B:E and EOPS, where she currently works. She says, "They believed in us and made us feel special."

Perales also made a connection with Alison Traina, B:E's Education and Employment Specialist. Perales is shy and always hated public speaking, but with Traina's encouragement, Perales became more comfortable with it and found her voice.

Perales appreciates the relationship she formed with her b2b tutor Linda Gardner. She met Linda in 2010 and Perales was happy she attended Perales' graduation in May. "She taught me everything, even if she doesn't know, she is down to do whatever. She always has a strategy to help," says Perales.

Perales has been told she is making a lot of progress by different people in her life. "They tell me that I have grown and improved, I feel like I have accomplished a lot."

She has many hopes for the future. She envisions having a good job as a social worker and a place of her own. She hopes one day to be able to study abroad in Paris. She wants to give back and volunteer at orphanages in Mexico. She also wants to adopt one day after she finishes college. She will continue to work for EOPS this summer and is excited to finish her last semester at Laney this fall.



DeVaughn Gray, 21

He began to value his freedom and future.

When asked to define success, Gray says: "Success is being able to be happy for the most part. Being happy with yourself and pat yourself on your back, even if nobody else pats you on your back." He also notes that being able to see your accomplishments and appreciating what you worked hard for is success. He acknowledges that a lot has been offered to him and he is glad he took advantage of all the opportunities he could. Gray says that if it wasn't for B:E's support, he would not be where he is right now.

Gray first connected with B:E in 2009 after he left his group home. Since then, Gray has participated in B:E's two-year b2b program and two New Beginnings Fellowships. He also interned for B:E as the New Beginnings Program Support Intern. Gray says that the programs have provided him with great experiences and gave him hope for a better future. He said he appreciates the opportunity to network and build relationships with "folks that matter," and learn skills to keep himself organized. One of the greatest tools he said he learned from b2b and New Beginnings is how to have one-and-one conversations with important people and have relationships with his elders.

Gray says when he first started participating in the b2b cohort he didn't quite understand the coaching process or purpose. After time went by, he says he gained confidence, opened up, and developed relationships. He met people who were facing similar or worse situations.

"I started to feel like a family environment," said Gray. "It really opened my eyes. If they can do it, than I can do it. They were facing worse predicaments than me. The sessions became really real," says Gray. Gray says that at first going to school consistently and doing homework was a challenge. "Even though I was in college, I wasn't college ready," said Gray. B2b was his anchor for a period of time when he really needed it. It was there when he was looking to find himself and find how to live. One of his proudest moments, outside of finishing the b2b program, was when it came time to petition for graduation. He made a plan and executed the tasks himself. The feedback he received from peers and teachers who proof-read it validated his self-sufficiency and how far had come in life. He still keeps a copy in his backpack as a reminder. "It is something I did myself, something I cherish, and I know I did a good job," says Gray.

Gray says he appreciates being part of the New Beginnings Fellowship because he knows it was an experience that most people don't get. "It helps you get that professional experience while getting paid," says Gray. He said he felt so good dressing up in business attire with his county badge. On the bus people would ask him what he was doing and he would proudly tell him he was an intern for Alameda County. "The New Beginnings program is something I want to see go along as far as it can, expand to other counties, be an opportunity for more people. The opportunity is grand," says Gray.

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B:E's work is only possible because of our generous donors.
THANK YOU to everyone who has contributed to us in 2014. We are grateful to each and every one of you for your investment.

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