



**FAIRBANKS YOUTH  
ADVOCATES**

*Facilitating life transitions for at risk and vulnerable youth*

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This holiday season,  
we have so much to be  
thankful for...starting with **YOU!**



### Youth Voices

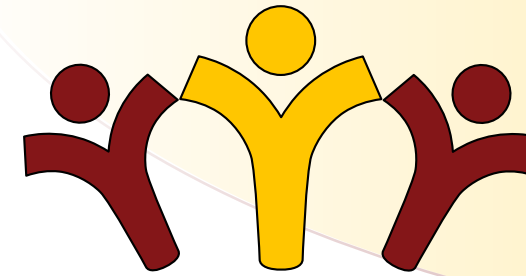
"I was struggling for a while with things. It was pretty bad. I'm working on turning my life around now, though. I'm still going to be able to graduate. I'm even thinking about college. And I'm clean—I haven't smoked weed in a long time. And you guys have helped make it possible. You guys are so supportive and kind. I would not be able to do these things without you."

*Fairbanks Youth Advocates believes that providing assistance at critical times in the lives of young people is vital to their present and future well being.*

*We are licensed by the State of Alaska as a Residential Child Care Facility with a specialization in Emergency Shelter Care.*

*Fairbanks Youth Advocates is a 501c3 non-profit, governed by a board of directors. All contributions are tax deductible.*

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# FAIRBANKS YOUTH ADVOCATES

*Facilitating life transitions for at risk youth*

### A Modern Day Proverb

Recently a knock at The Door yielded an unexpected surprise. A slender woman, dressed in an old oversized jacket softly said, "I want to pay my tithe."



She put her hand in her pocket, pulled out a wad of wrinkled cash and holding it with both hands out in front of her just simply said, "Here." She wanted no receipt, gave no name, but turned and was gone.

I felt a bit guilty; I had yet to count the cash, but I surmised quickly that clearly she could have used those funds for personal use.

Daily we are humbled, not only by the opportunity and privilege to serve the community by helping kids and families, but also humbled to receive your generous financial gifts of all sizes.

Thank you for giving deeply.

### Leon's story

"If you could wave a magic wand...where would you be?" we asked. "I would be with my family. I love my family," went the initial conversation with Leon. And yet, he was at The Door. There are many pathways that lead youth to the shelter. We don't judge how or why, we just welcome all who come.

Being an adolescent can be complicated. Being a parent of an adolescent is hard work. Sometimes all parties just need a break from the normal routine to figure out what's next. Thanks to a willingness to participate in our family mediation program, we are happy to report that after a few weeks at The Door, Leon is now back at home.

### End of Year Giving

For the second time, the West Valley High School Class of 2015 has generously donated \$5000 as a Pass The Hat matching grant challenge to the Fairbanks community through the North Star Community Foundation.



Make your end-of-year financial gift to FYA go twice as far by donating to us at:  
[www.nscfundalaska.org](http://www.nscfundalaska.org)



## Replacing Negative Messages with Positive Ones



I love to give tours of The Door; I'm proud to show off community participation at the shelter. Recently, visitors noticed the beautifully engraved birch tiles with encouraging messages secured to the

bedroom doors. Kids, like adults, replay negative messages. You know – like 'You're no good,' 'No one really cares.'

Our challenge? Replace those messages with positive ones! Consider sponsoring a tile as an individual, organization, or club. Go to Give on our website and look for Donor Recognition Tiles.

*~ do justly, love mercy, walk humbly*

*Marylee*



*Positive messages from the community greet the kids every time they open their bedroom door.*

## One Homeless Night

46 hearty Alaskans braved the cool, crisp, and then rainy night to stand in solidarity with those who have no home. The annual September event raises awareness about youth homelessness but also raised \$6,500 to help support programs at The Door. Individuals and teams gathered sponsors and committed to sleep out for a night. Alongside the many youthful overnights, 3 grandmas participated



this year! A special thank you to the breakfast crew and the Ft. Wainwright 65th Ordnance Company who watched over us as we slept! A special thanks to our One Homeless Night sponsors.



*One Homeless Night participants made shelters out of cardboard boxes and spent a night sleeping out.*



FYA's Executive Director, Marylee Bates was featured on the Corporation for Public Broadcasting American Graduate Champion series, highlighting individuals who commit their time, skill and resources to make sure that young people succeed. Visit our website to watch the video.



We are seeking to grow our Board, consider joining us. See our website for details.

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## Questions we are often asked about The Door



### How do you support kids who attend school?

We provide breakfast before school, arrange transportation to and from each student's home school, provide school supplies, a computer, coordinate tutoring, offer scheduled study time, and work closely with the school district to provide the necessary support.

### Where do kids go when they leave The Door?

We do everything possible to re-connect kids to families, or extended family members, or friends of the family, but this isn't always a reality. If kids are minors, we work very hard to transition them to a long term housing situation—but sometimes kids leave unexpectedly. Often youth transition to another program in town that is better situated to attend to their individual needs. Sometimes kids go into foster care, and sometimes they are able to get their own apartment.

## Volunteer Voices



*Sidney Houck*

I decided to do my practicum placement with Fairbanks Youth Advocates because I have always had the desire to work with "youth" in some capacity in the future.

In my case, the at-risk youth population presented itself, and The Door has not only served thus far as a great way to gain this experience

by learning and interacting with the homeless and at-risk youth populations, but it has also stirred up a passion within me that has verified that my schooling is paying off, and I am in the right field!

My biggest struggle during my placement at The Door was initially stepping into the world of a homeless teenager. They have shown me their struggles, taught me more than I ever expected and put life, in general, into perspective for me. With each life story of the youth, my knowledge expands and my heart grows larger. I am in the right place!