The mission of First Place for Youth is to help foster youth build the skills they need to make a successful transition to self-sufficiency and responsible adulthood.
1998
Deanne Pearn and Amy Lemley establish the First Place for Youth Fund and help four former foster youth move into their first apartments in Oakland. The program quickly evolves from micro-loans to a supportive housing model with wraparound education and employment support.

2000
First Place launches First Foundation, a program to help foster youth complete high school on time.

2005
Sam Cobbs is named CEO. Sam will ultimately lead the organization through more than a decade of growth.

2004
First Place is a key partner in Alameda County’s new transitional housing services for former foster youth (THP-Plus).

2008
A new partnership with Satellite Affordable Housing Associates (SAHA) allows First Place to connect former foster youth like Kim with permanent affordable housing.

2010
Responding to a high need for our services in Southern California, First Place opens our first program office in Los Angeles.

2012
The California Fostering Connections to Success Act goes into effect, extending foster care eligibility to age 21.

2016
First Place expands our work to Santa Clara County, supported by a $500,000 Game Changer grant from the 50 Fund of Super Bowl 50.

2018
First Place for Youth turns 20!
Twenty years ago, I was invited to attend a backyard fundraiser for a bold new approach to addressing the challenges foster youth face in the transition to independence. From that day, I have believed in the mission of First Place for Youth. As a supporter, and more recently as member and Chair of the Board of Directors, I have had the privilege of seeing the organization grow and evolve.

Through it all, First Place’s vision has remained one of a world in which growing up in foster care doesn’t define a young person’s life or limit their potential. We believe that all young people deserve support and guidance as they learn what it means to be a responsible adult. We have seen how the right support—grounded in evidence, fueled by compassion—creates lasting positive change. We continue to refine and further improve our programs as we learn how to best meet the needs of the youth we serve.

This year we served 1,697 young people, with 572 receiving housing plus comprehensive education, employment, and life-skills support through the My First Place™ program model. In San Francisco and Solano Counties, we saw a record number of participants earn their high school diplomas, with many heading directly to four-year colleges. After the successful launch of our My First Place Network in 2017, we are now seeing the direct impact of our programs and knowledge through the work of three partnering organizations outside of California.

First Place also faced significant changes this year, including saying farewell to former CEO Sam Cobbs, whose leadership over the last 12 years elevated First Place as a powerful voice in the national conversation on transition-age foster youth. As we enter a new chapter, we are thrilled to welcome Heidi McIntosh as our new CEO. An experienced leader on the national stage, Heidi brings with her a commitment to accountability and a deep understanding of both direct service and policy that will be instrumental in shaping our future.

We are so grateful to all of our supporters, from those of you who stood with us in 1998 to those joining us this week. As you read the stories of our program participants past and present, we want you to remember it is through your generosity that we can give foster youth the opportunity to see how much more is possible for them. Thank you, from all of us.

With gratitude,

Jennifer Friedman, Chair
Board of Directors

Dear friends and supporters

Jennifer Friedman, Chair
Board of Directors

With gratitude,
I am honored to be joining First Place for Youth as CEO. Since my first conversations with staff and the Board, I have been inspired by their unceasing belief in the youth they serve and their deep commitment to the organization’s central ideal. That same ideal, that all young people deserve the highest-quality support and guidance to help them reach their best potential, has always been at the core of my work.

As a social worker, I helped foster youth think about their futures, embrace their big dreams, and pursue opportunities that would help them achieve their goals. Moving into leadership roles where I was responsible for steering policy and developing systems of accountability at the state and national levels, I never wavered from my commitment to putting the needs of young people first.

I have seen already how First Place’s approach—not only putting youth first, but making them the drivers of their own success—energizes program participants and enables their growth. Getting to know the young people we serve, I am awed by their sense of ownership over their First Place journeys, and the courage they exhibit as they take on new challenges on the path to independence.

I am incredibly excited for the opportunity to work with the dedicated team at First Place to guide the organization’s work, continue to build on the amazing legacies of its founders and past leaders, and bring its life-changing programs into a new era of impact.

Heidi McIntosh, CEO
Kim, 2008 Alum

It’s been a long time since her First Place days for Kim, who recently celebrated her 30th birthday. We caught up with her to talk about the past and the present.

MAKE OR BREAK MOMENT
My mom worked hard to get my siblings and me out of foster care, never turning her back on us, but I turned 18 before she was able to get into a family transitional housing program. According to their rules, I was an adult and couldn’t live with my family. If not for First Place, I might have wound up on the street.

STABILITY FOR THE FUTURE
First Place put me into an apartment right away, and later the staff helped me with the affordable housing application so I could move into the Madison Street apartments as soon as they opened. First Place helped me get my first long-term job, too, as a part-time file clerk at a law firm. I remember feeling so lucky to be 19 and making almost double minimum wage. I kept that job for seven years.

SETTING PRIORITIES
My daughter Amina was born a few years after I completed the First Place program. I worked two jobs the whole time I was pregnant, because I wanted to be able to provide for her. After she was born, I cut back to one job so I could focus on being a good mom.
HOLDING IT DOWN
I was 25 when my mother passed away from cancer. I stepped up to take care of my youngest brother. He moved in with me and, with a teenager and a toddler to take care of, I picked up a second job again. It wasn’t always easy—three of us in a tiny apartment—but I wasn’t going to let either of them down.

TODAY
I work at a law firm still, now full-time with full benefits, and Amina and I recently moved into a two-bedroom apartment. She’s doing great in first grade, so artistic and a little bit of a class clown. My brother is a junior at Cal State East Bay and plans to earn an MBA. I’m so proud of him, I’m proud of Amina, and I’m proud of myself.

REAL CONNECTIONS
The world looks at foster kids differently, expecting us to fall into the same cycles our parents did, with no hope of success. I wanted to break that cycle. At First Place nobody looked at me just as a foster kid. They really saw me, and I knew they wanted me to do well. Even now, when I run into staff I know, they ask how I am, and it’s not small talk. That relationship still matters.
Two years after leaving First Place, Cynthia reflects on how the support she received put her on a better path.

**A STEADYING HAND**

It was a rocky start for me at First Place. I didn't believe in myself, and I had a bad habit of giving up when things got hard. I hadn't finished high school, had never had a job, and didn't know what I wanted or how to get it. Even in the beginning, when I wasn't sure what I was doing, my First Place team was supportive and ready to help.

**FIGURING IT OUT**

At first, I wasn't thinking about school. I was really focused on work. I found a job right away, and I learned that for me, getting jobs was the easy part—sticking with them was harder. I also figured out that if I didn't go back to school, it would be really hard to get a good, well-paying job. That's when I started getting more serious about my future and the opportunities First Place was giving me.

**MAJOR STRIDES**

I re-enrolled in high school and started working with Daniel [Education and Employment Specialist] on what I needed to do better at work. He and Mariya [LA County Manager] were my biggest supporters; they even came to my high school graduation! They encouraged me to keep going, so I started at Pasadena Community College. By the time I turned 21, I'd been promoted at work, earned my associate's degree, and was deciding where to transfer for my bachelor's.
STAYING FOCUSED

Now I’m working full-time as an administrative assistant while I take online classes at Cal State LA. It’s a lot of work doing both, but I’m enjoying it. I’ve decided to major in psychology. I’m not sure exactly what I want to do yet, but I know I’m more interested in research than clinical work. I want to get my master’s degree, at least.

SET UP FOR SUCCESS

My First Place team helped me budget and encouraged me to save, and I left the program with over $8,000. I used some of that money to pay my part of the move-in costs for my current apartment, a two-bedroom I share with a friend. Looking back, I probably could have done even better on budgeting, and that would be one of my biggest pieces of advice for those in First Place now: savings, savings, savings!

KEEPING IN TOUCH

Living on your own is going to get stressful sometimes, guaranteed, but First Place gave me the tools I need to be mentally, emotionally, and financially stable and able to do things on my own. And even though I’m not in the program anymore, I know I can still reach out to my team to tell them what’s going on in my life, or to ask for advice. I know they’ll always care about me.
Fearious has earned a reputation as a real go-getter since joining My First Place, always putting in the work to reach his goals.

**TAKING THE FIRST STEP**

Before I got to First Place, I was struggling. I had dropped out of college, I couldn’t stay where I’d been living, and I wasn’t sure what I was going to do. One of my friends had joined My First Place, and I decided to check it out.

**THE RIGHT TEAM**

It makes a big difference to have someone there for you, helping you, and pushing you to go the extra step. That’s what I get from Stephanie [Education and Employment Specialist] and Gloria [Youth Advocate]. I trust them, and they’ve never given me a reason not to. It feels like a wholesome family environment, for real.

**RESPONDING TO OPPORTUNITY**

Stephanie and I started talking about my options right away. I didn’t feel ready to go back to college, but I also didn’t know what kind of job I wanted. She told me about a tech internship program and asked if I’d be interested. Before, without knowing somebody believed in me, I might have said, “Nah, I probably won’t do well.” But with First Place having my back, I decided to see where I could go with it.
WORKING 9 TO 5
I finished the classroom part of my internship without any problems, and now I’m doing hands-on work in the IT department at Kaiser Permanente in Oakland. I really like learning the ins-and-outs of computers, finding the problem and figuring out where to go from there.

PREPARING FOR INDEPENDENCE
I’ll need to take care of all my own bills and stay responsible once I’m on my own. Gloria and I spend a lot of time getting me ready for when I’m not in the program anymore. We have a whole collection of notes put together, budgets and everything. She calls it “The Fearious’ Future Binder.”

WHAT’S AHEAD
First Place has taught me that you need to have a plan but keep an open mind, and I really like thinking about the future now. I’ve started talking with friends about us getting an apartment together, and I’m looking at going back to college, too. I’d like to try some digital art classes because I’m really into comics and animation. My dream would be to work at DC or Marvel Comics someday.
First Place for Youth is an outcome-driven organization. The young people we serve come to us from a diverse range of past circumstances, which means they begin our program having widely varied proficiency in academics, employment, and life-skills. The My First Place™ program (MFP) is designed to provide participants with a gradual on-ramp while
While 40% of the nation’s former foster youth experienced homelessness by age 24,

**93%** of MFP participants maintained safe, stable housing after completing the program.

Only 78% of foster youth earn a high school diploma or GED by 21, but

**98%** of MFP youth earned or were actively pursuing their high school diploma or GED while in program.

**87%** of college-eligible MFP participants enroll in a post-secondary program, compared to just 20% of foster youth nationwide.

**84%** of MFP participants secured employment while in our program, while only 29% of California’s foster youth are employed after exiting foster care.
HOPEWELL, INC + THE CHILDREN’S VILLAGE
As members of our My First Place™ Network, both Hopewell and The Children’s Village are implementing our My First Place program to refine and expand their support services for foster youth. Together, they will serve 60 foster youth this year.

MISSISSIPPI
Through an innovative public-private partnership with the Mississippi Department of Child Protection Services and the Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative, we are helping redesign services for all Mississippi youth in foster care, ages 14 to 21. We have also launched Mississippi Youth Voice (www.misyouthvoice.org), a project empowering former foster youth to advocate for youth-centered changes to the state’s foster care system.
EDUCATION & EMPLOYMENT PARTNERS

First Place for Youth is grateful to all our education and employment partners supporting our participants on the path to success in work and school. This year, we would like to give special thanks to:

Art + Practice
Cypress Mandela Training Center
Dreisbach Enterprises
Five Keys Schools and Programs
The Giving Keys
Kaiser Permanente
Oaklandish
TalentPath by Treehouse + TalentPath partners Chegg and Adobe
lead investors  

Individual + Family Giving

READY TO LAUNCH 2016–2020 $15M GROWTH CAMPAIGN

We are grateful to the following donors who have generously committed during our growth campaign:

$5,000,000 and above
Anonymous

$1,000,000 and above
Charles and Helen Schwab Foundation
Silicon Valley Community Foundation

$200,000 and above
Farallon Capital Management
Anonymous
Jennifer and Abe Friedman Family Philanthropic Fund
of the Jewish Community Foundation
of the East Bay
Peery Foundation
Keith Shultz and Karen May

$100,000 and above
Louis L. Borick Foundation
The Crankstart Foundation
Eileen Harris Norton Foundation
Steven LaFrance and Todd Feeley
Pinpoint Foundation
Dr. Elizabeth Reilinger
The Greg Smith Charitable Fund

$75,000 and above
The Myra Reinhard Family Foundation
Reissa Foundation
Jocelyn Ross and Ben Blumenfeld
Grace Voorhis and Steven Voorhis

$50,000 and above
The Anonymous Fund
at the East Bay Community Foundation
The Kathleen Burke and Ralph Davis Family Fund
Kappy Dye and Stephen Dye
David B. Gold Foundation
The Hanley Foundation
Hellman Foundation
Wayne Jordan and Quinn Delaney
Westly Foundation

$25,000 and above
Anonymous
Mickey Arabelovic and Karla Gallardo
The Cameron and Jane Baird Foundation
Cassandra Benjamin
Victoria Brunn
Sam Cobbs and Lavonna Martin
The Michelle and Robert Friend Foundation
Georgia Lorenz and Michael Lorenz
George Miller
Andrew Monach and Junko Okazawa-Monach
The Rob and Eileen Ruby Philanthropic Fund
of the Jewish Community Foundation
of the East Bay
Thomas Wilson and Donna Wilson

$10,000 and above
Anonymous (5)
Dr. Joffre Baker and Diana Baker
Anne Marie Benfatto and Carole Gilbert
Barbara Bennett and Jeffery Bennett
Tangerine Brigham
Michael Conn and Mary Conn
Brad Dickason and Barbara Dickason
Karen Euston
Michele M. Ferrier Trust
Sterling Franklin
David Guggenhuime and Marjorie Guggenhuime
Nancy Heinen and Dennis DeBroeck
Evan Huckabay
Robin Johansen and Robert Johansen
Paul Kennedy and Molly Moore
David L. Kirp Fund
Linde-Sands Family Fund
Anthony J. Maggiore
The Alexander M. + June L. Maisin Foundation
of the Jewish Community Federation and
Endowment Fund
Barbara Metcalf and Thomas Metcalf
Maria Morga and Miguel De Avila
Morgan Stanley Foundation
Employee-Voted Grant
The Morrison + Foerster Foundation
The Annette Nibley Fund
at the East Bay Community Foundation
Laurence O’Neil and Suzanne Mellard
Praise the Lord Foundation
Ian Reinhard
Marie Riehle and Daniel Altemus
Ronus Foundation
Betty Schafer and Jack Schafer
Schafer Family Philanthropic Fund
Adam Sisson and Karen Sisson
Mr. and Mrs. Lee C. Smith
Anna Stern
Sidney Stern Memorial Trust
Jay Stowsky and David Kerr
Taylor Charitable Foundation
Summer Watson and Jihad Betts
Hilda West and Tom Dufurrena
Donors
FISCAL YEAR 2018: JULY 1, 2017 TO JUNE 30, 2018

From all of us at First Place, thank you for being part of our impact in the lives of at-risk foster youth

$2,000,000 and above
Anonymous

$1,000,000 and above
Silicon Valley Community Foundation

$500,000 and above
Charles and Helen Schwab Foundation

$250,000 and above
Google.org Charitable Giving Fund of the Tides Foundation

$25,000 and above
Anonymous

Donors listed in **bold** began their support of First Place for Youth with our organization’s launch 20 years ago—and are still giving today. Our heartfelt thanks to these longtime partners in our vision.
$10,000 and above
Mickey Arabelovic and Karla Gallardo
Atlassian Foundation International
The Cameron and Jane Baird Foundation
Bank of America Foundation
Barbara Bennett and Jeffery Bennett
Michael Bush and Melba Wu
The Kathleen Burke and Ralph Davis Family Fund
Kappy Dye and Stephen Dye
Michele M. Ferrier Trust
The Michelle and Robert Friend Foundation
David Guggenhime and Marjorie Guggenhime
Nancy Heinen and Dennis DeBroeck
Wayne Jordan and Quinn Delaney
Junior League of San Jose
Paul Kennedy and Molly Moore
Kimball Foundation
Georgia Lorenz and Michael Lorenz
Anthony J. Maggiore
George Miller
Andrew Monach and Junko Okazawa-Monach
The Annette Nibley Fund
at the East Bay Community Foundation
Praise the Lord Foundation
Ronus Foundation
The Rob and Eileen Ruby Philanthropic Fund of the Jewish Community Foundation of the East Bay
Anna Stern
Wells Fargo
Thomas Wilson and Donna Wilson

$5,000 and above
Anonymous
Amgen
Cassandra Benjamin
Victoria Brunn
Cynthia Chen and Lanhee Chen
Tina and Andrew Coleman
Michael Conn and Mary Conn
Beth DeAtley
Danielle DeBroeck
Brad Dickason and Barbara Dickason
Karen Euston
William and Flora Hewlett Foundation
In-N-Out Burger Foundation
Gwen Libstag
Eugenia Loken
Los Angeles Trial Lawyers’ Charities
The Alexander M. + June L. Maisin Foundation of the Jewish Community Federation and Endowment Fund
The Laurence V. Mathews Charitable Fund
Barbara Metcalf and Thomas Metcalf
Maria Morga and Miguel De Avila
The Morrison + Foerster Foundation
Prosperity Now
Marie Riehle and Daniel Altemus
Linde-Sands Family Fund
Mr. and Mrs. Lee C. Smith
Sidney Stern Memorial Trust
Taylor Charitable Foundation
June Wang and Edward Chang
$2,500 and above
Anonymous (3)
Anne Marie Benfatto and Carole Gilbert
Tangerine Brigham
Clorox Company Foundation
Sam Cobbs and Lavonna Martin
Falik Family Philanthropic Fund
Comerica Bank | Comerica Charitable Foundation
The Dewan Family
Michael Fisch and Victoria Camelio
Google
Katherine Gunther
Evan Huckabay
Intel
Kathie Jacobson
Robin Johansen and Robert Johansen
David L. Kirp Fund
Loka Properties
Matson Foundation
The Joseph and Mercedes McMicking Foundation
Microsoft
Ellen Roth Nagler and Jeffrey Nagler
Laurence O’Neil and Suzanne Mellard
Piedmont Community Church
Robert Half International
Adam Sisson and Karen Sisson
Hilda West and Tom Dufurrena

$1,000 and above
Anonymous (11)
The Aims for Arts Fund at the East Bay Community Foundation
Apple
Dr. Joffre Baker and Diana Baker
Banchik Family Foundation
Dr. Andrew Bender
Elizabeth Bender
Jo Ann Bertges and Jack Bertges
Cecilia Blasé
Maisha Brown
Jeffrey Calder and Patricia Calder
Carla Carstens
James Carter and Jane Carter
Aaron Chan and Darryl Glass
Chevron
Sammy Coates
Iris Commins
Scott and Valerie Corvin
The Charles and Karen Couric Charitable Fund
Suzanne B. Crandall and J. Taylor Crandall
Hannah Davies
Steven Douglas and Melissa Heller
Isabella Fahrney
California Junior Scholarship Federation at Fallon Middle School
Amanda Feinstein and Paul Leonard
Patrice Fusillo and David Hytha
Gauba Family Fund
Maria Giannell
Mary Haak-Frendscho and Thomas Haak-Frendscho
Linda Hall
Roger Hallsten
Robert Harvey
Hellen Hong
Gayl Huston and Ralph Pais
Laurie Kappe
Caroline Klyce and Henry Klyce
Lisa and Victor Kohn Trust Fund
Kimberly Koro and Markus Koro
Angela Korpela and Eric Korpela
Mark Landry and Judith Boasberg
Monica Landry
The Langdon Family Charitable Fund
Deborah Leland and John Hunter
David Levine and Sherrie Zacharrius
Audrey Lyndon and John Williams
May Foundation
Carolyn McFarland and Rick McFarland
Claudia Miller and Brian Perry
Lori Miller
Stephen Carl Miller, Jr.
Andrea Molinari
Cassidy O'Hara and Ronald Filice
Genevieve Orta
Rebecca Owens
Courtney Owyang
Joan Pancoast and Richard Pancoast
David Perry
Pfizer
PG+E Corporation
Robert Richards and Anita Richards
Angelique Shepherd-Stump and Jim Stump
Darrel Shultz and Gloriela Shultz
Valerie Sophier
Mary Sprague and Mark Rose
Jean Sternlieb and Alvin Sternlieb
Geoffrey + Robin Strawbridge
Charitable Fund
Superstar Foundation
Richard Swain and Marcy Swain
Zenith Insurance
Fazeela Thompson and Todd Thompson

Thomas Toldrian and Ancella Toldrian
Barbara Tucker
Joseph Tuman and Kirsten Weisser
Annette Tumolo
Laura Tyson and Erik Tarloff
Erika Van Buren
John Wagner
Alice Walker
Jamie Wang and Joseph Wang
Samantha Wang
Carrie Whisler
Dr. Joseph Whitehouse and Arnette Whitehouse
Zum-O-Zar Fund

$500 and above
Anonymous (11)
Kirsti Aho
Tracy Albers and Dennis Albers
Jacob Anderson-Bialis and Deborah Anderson-Bialis
The David Arpi + Natalie Gubb Fund
Kristine Ball and Gavin Ball
Leslie Ballinger
Bank of the West
Nancy Bardach and Dr. Eugene Bardach
Lorna Basso and Bruce Basso
Benz Communications
Jessica Berg and Michael Berg
BHP Billiton
Emily Brizendine and William Brizendine
Amanda Brown-Stevens and Adam Van de Water
John Burton Advocates for Youth
Camp Charitable Foundation
Ronnie Caplane
Casaes Orain
Susan Coryell and Bruce Penrod
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Jennifer Friedman, Board Chair
Keith Shultz, Board Vice Chair
Kappy Dye, Board Treasurer
Georgia Lorenz, Board Secretary
Andi Owen
Andrew Monach
Anthony J. Maggiore
Cynthia Chen
Hilda West
Marvin O’Quinn
Mickey Arabelovic
Nancy Heinen
Paul Harder
Steven LaFrance
Thomas Wilson

LOS ANGELES REGIONAL BOARD
Adam Sisson
Ellen Roth Nagler
Evan Huckabay
Mark Geller
Paul Harder
Summer Watson

SANTA CLARA COUNTY REGIONAL BOARD
Angelique Shepherd-Stump
Darryl McDavid
Ravi Gauba
Rebecca Owens