Nationwide Vision
Our newly-formed My First Place Affiliate Network has begun training and supporting our first partner, HopeWell in Boston, MA. Plans are underway to expand our reach in New York City, Arizona, and Mississippi.

Growing in California
First Place served 1,460 young people this year. Our newest program in Santa Clara County grew to house 56 young people, and we expanded our capacity in San Francisco and Los Angeles through new housing partnerships.

Banking on Bigger Things to Come
With more than $10 million dollars pledged to date, our $15 million Ready to Launch Growth Campaign is building a financial foundation that will allow us to continue to grow and enrich our programs.

First Place for Youth is deepening our services in California and building a national network.
DEAR FRIENDS

With your support, First Place continues to aim for new heights! We’ve been busy at work, navigating the opportunities and challenges of a dynamic environment. As the economy continues to grow, especially in our home state of California, our youth are presented with exciting new academic and career prospects, but they also face obstacles like rising costs of living. It’s our job to make sure they are well-positioned to access and benefit from this economic prosperity. I’m proud to say we have risen to the challenge, readying our youth for success as we continue to work to level the playing field.

We are proud to celebrate serving more youth this year than ever before through our flagship program, My First Place, largely driven by continued growth in LA and the Bay Area. Not only did we increase this service capacity, we did so while improving educational and employment outcomes for these youth, equipping them to pursue diverse careers. In Santa Clara, we soon hope to serve young adults through age 24, offering them a longer runway as they build careers and pursue degrees.

This past year we laid the foundation for national growth by establishing our national affiliate network and signed our first affiliate agreement in Boston. We’ve been encouraged by the positive response to our affiliate offering. The demand for our technical assistance and partnership is great, and opportunities are ripe. We’re pushing forward and exploring additional partnerships with foster care providers in New York City, a collaborative of homeless youth providers in Arizona, and a unique statewide collaboration in Mississippi.

We’ve also made policy gains that prioritize the needs of transition age foster youth. This year, we advocated for field-wide standards to promote strong positive outcomes for youth in extended foster care, including supporting the passage of California Senate Bill 612 (Mitchell) for which we provided bill language, feedback on amendments, and supportive staff and youth testimony.

We are energized by all we’ve accomplished this past year, and we are excited for what’s in store as we continue to work towards a future where youth in foster care achieve the same life outcomes as their non-foster care peers. We hope you’ll continue to be by our side as we celebrate not only our 20th anniversary, but many more to come.

Sincerely,

Sam Cobbs, CEO
Steven LaFrance, Board Chair
ITZEL’S STORY

After six years in a foster care group home, I knew I wanted independence when I turned 18, but I felt like I didn’t have a lot of choices. Other kids my age could go to school or go to work, mess up or succeed, and either way their parents were there for them. When you’re in foster care, it feels like you only have yourself.

My friend told me about First Place and how I’d have support but be able to make my own decisions. It sounded perfect. I was so excited to move into my apartment. It was really happening; I had my own place!

**Here I can make plans, and I plan everything. I have people who help me stay on track and who care enough to ask me “How’s school? How’s work?”**

At first, though, I wasn’t making the right decisions. I didn’t have a job, and I wasn’t putting in much effort in school. I was spending a lot of time alone, and I realized that even though I had help, my success was still going to be up to me.

So I started working, got focused on finishing high school, and decided to go to college. I even did two internships while working and finishing school this summer.

I was so busy, but it was worth it. I was named *Intern of the Year* for the Santa Clara County Office of Education, and I earned enough to put some money into savings. Now I’ve had my job for a year, and I’m in class four days a week. I’m studying to be a social worker because I want to help other kids see they don’t have to feel stuck.

Without First Place, I might have found a way to get by, but I’d be struggling. I wouldn’t have time to even think about school or the future. Here I can make plans, and I plan everything. I have people who help me stay on track and who care enough to ask me “How’s school? How’s work?”

I know that in the end, I have to be responsible for myself, but First Place gives me options. I won’t ever take that for granted.
EDUCATION

96% of First Place youth earned or were working toward their high school diploma/GED. (50% of foster youth nationwide will not graduate from high school.)

Getting on Track

When Dillon came to First Place, he didn’t have his diploma and wasn’t going to school. His First Place team helped him re-enroll and encouraged him to stay focused. Dillon graduated high school in spring 2017 and is now attending Southwest College.

“I like school, but you have to stay dedicated, go every day, always do your work, and not procrastinate. Without First Place for Youth I wouldn’t be able to do that. They gave me the opportunity and helped me become who I am now.”

DILLON
83% of First Place high school graduates continued on to post-secondary programs. (Only 20% of foster youth nationwide will enroll in college.)

Making Degree Plans

Lawrence is making the most of his educational opportunities at Chabot College, where he’s studying Criminal Justice and Communications and earning his Case Management certificate. He plans to transfer to a four-year college to complete his bachelor’s degree.

“School is going well, but it’s always good to have that extra support. My First Place team have been there for me through a lot. I talk to them about everything, and I know I can go to them for anything.”

LAWRENCE
EMPLOYMENT

77% of youth in program obtained employment. (Less than half of youth who age out are stably employed two years after leaving care.)

Caring for Others

Galina is building her professional skills and learning about career paths that suit her interest in caring for others. She recently began two part time jobs: home health aide and after-school program leader at an elementary school.

“I’ve been trying to see what kind of work I really want to do. My Education and Employment Specialist helped me with my resume and learning how to carry myself in interviews, and now she’s helping me prepare to go back to school.”

GALINA
Fixing Problems

David’s love of learning how things work has led him to exploring careers in aviation. He’s currently finishing his Aircraft Maintenance Technician license and plans to keep advancing in the field.

“Problem solving and fixing things have always been my favorite things to do. I want to move beyond a career in mechanics. I talk to my First Place team a lot about what comes next, and I definitely want to get a degree in aerospace engineering or aviation management.”

DAVID

First Place youth are three times more likely to earn a living wage than foster youth nationwide.
**HOUSING**

75% of First Place youth transition to stable housing after leaving our program. (Half of all foster youth who age out of care experience homelessness or housing instability.)

**Doing Something For Yourself**

At our Alameda Point Collective apartments, Ciara had daily, on-site support from staff as she built the skills to live independently. Now, she’s putting what she learned into practice in a First Place apartment closer to her school.

“It feels awesome having a stable home, knowing that you have somewhere to sleep at night, and having support. It changes your mindset a lot. It motivates you to go out and work, to do something for yourself.”

CIARA
INDEPENDENT LIVING SKILLS PROGRAM

ILSP provides foster youth ages 16–20 with education and employment support and helps them connect with additional resources for their transition to independence.

It’s Like Family

With the help of ILSP, Asia graduated high school on time and enrolled in a dental assistant certificate program, a first step toward her goal of becoming an orthodontist. Now that she’s 18, Asia is exploring her housing options and hopes to join My First Place.

“When I come to First Place, it’s like family. They make sure I finish my homework, and they helped me get a learner’s permit and enroll in college.”

ASIA
FINANCIALS

Revenue
Government $15,117,686
Foundation, Corporate, Fund, and Individuals $3,365,770
Donated/Miscellaneous $107,666
Net Assets Released from Donor Restrictions $3,345,018
Total Revenue $21,936,140

Expenses
Program $17,501,685
General/Administration $2,288,657
Fundraising $1,000,306
Total Expenses $20,790,648

Statement of Financial Position
Current Assets $8,424,140
Fixed Assets $578,848
Other Assets $521,643
Total Assets $9,524,631

Total Liabilities $1,582,913
Net Assets $7,941,718
Total Liabilities and Net Assets $9,524,631

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