

Educating communities about the need for people to consider becoming foster, adopted/parents & mentors.



Youth News



LONEY NGUYEN

FROM FOSTER CARE TO MISS VIETNAM DC

DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMS
TO FAMILY ARTS



Inspiration, Motivational & Outstanding stories

Youth News

Inspiration, Motivational & Outstanding Stories

Educating communities about the need for people to consider becoming foster/adopted parents & mentors.

From city to city and coast to coast, our focus is FAMILY
Foster Adopt Mentor In Investing in Lives of Youth

Youth News magazine is a way to celebrate the good news of youth. *Youth News* provides fostered, adopted, kinship cared and mentored youth with real on-the-job training skills. Youth are paid as they learn how to produce this publication for the general community. Donations for ad space is how we pay youth in training. The "Dove" logo is a symbol we use as a message of good news. Our goal is to bring Outstanding, Inspirational and Motivational stories to encourage people to open their hearts and support youth.

Freelance Writers &

Contributors are needed. Teen - Adult writers, editors, sales, photographers, and marketing support is needed. *Youth News* highlights the accomplishments of young people near and far.

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Loney Nguyen

Inspiration, Motivational & Outstanding story

Loney is a two-time pageant Queen with a local title of Miss Baltimore, Miss United States 2019, and national title of Miss Vietnam DC 2014. Her platforms were centered around raising awareness on foster and adopted youth concerns and mental health awareness, as well as bridging the gaps between communities to ensure the safety of children. Her work focused on the importance of mentorship in a child's life.

Background/Education

Loney Nguyen was born and raised in Maryland. As a daughter of an immigrant single mother of two who was struggling to assimilate and adjust to a new country, Loney's family was not able to end the cycle of poverty. She had a difficult childhood and was placed into foster care as a teenager.

While in foster care, Loney lived in numerous group homes in four different counties before entering an Independent Living Program and obtaining her own apartment before she was emancipated out of foster care.



She never lived in a foster home or experienced what a true nurturing family setting looked like. Her experiences in the foster care system showed her the injustices that foster youth faced, as well as the prevalence of trauma within the population. She was able to advocate for herself throughout her time in foster care while she prepared for emancipation, and often lent an ear to other foster youth. During her time there, she was a cheerleader, a student ambassador, the Social Work Association Queen, and the proud Chapter President for the Phi Alpha Honor Society, Theta Rho Chapter.

At 17, she enrolled in the Social Work program at Coppin State University, and graduated Summa Cum Laude. Loney balanced her rigorous academic and extracurricular activities while working three jobs to maintain and create her own financial security. At 22, Loney earned her Master's degree in Social Work at the University of Maryland Baltimore, School of Social Work with concentrations in Clinical and Mental Health specializations. Additionally, she completed her field internship in forensic social work with the Baltimore City State's Attorney Office, Special Victims Unit. Loney was chosen from 1,450 students to deliver the commencement speech for her graduating class.

Professional:

As Maryland's appointed Foster Youth Ombudsman, Loney Nguyen serves as a passionate advocate for youth in foster care across 24 local jurisdictions in Maryland, including Baltimore City. Loney works tirelessly to protect the rights of youth and works to ensure accountability in treatment and service delivery.

Loney provides a platform for the voices of the children and youth in Maryland and other cities' foster care systems to be heard. She is empowered to investigate and attempt to solve complaints about state and local agencies regarding foster care on behalf of foster children, related to their care, placement, or services. Loney discovered her passion for social work while advocating for herself and other foster youth while she was placed in foster care as a teenager. Loney has worked tirelessly to raise awareness and abolish the stigma and negative perceptions of foster youth. She obtained a Master's degree in Social Work and is a Licensed Certified Social Worker, Clinical. She began her service with the State of Maryland in 2014. She has served in two local Department of Social Services in different capacities including forensic social worker in the Child Advocacy Center, investigating allegations of sexual abuse, as a foster care social worker in the Independent Living Unit, and as an Independent Living Coordinator in the Ready By 21 unit.

As an expert in youth engagement, she understands that it takes a village to raise a child and knows the power of positive mentorship in the lives of youth.

Loney is the two-time recipient of the Maryland Association of Resources for Families and Youth, Youth Achievement Award, and has received recognition from Senator Barbara Mulkuski as the 2013 She Matters SHERO recipient. Her experiences helped her adopt the belief that every child deserves a childhood free of abuse and neglect.

Modeling:

Loney is a published model with experience in print, runway, spokesmodeling, and promotional modeling. She began her modeling career when she won a regional-wide model search judged by Darryl "DMC" Mcdaniels (from Run DMC) and Bianca Chardi from America's Next Top Model) to serve as a spokesmodel for WHALER's Creation. She has appeared on a Public Service Announcement airing on and fashion segments for Fox News and WBAL-TV.



Loney has been published in the Baltimore Times, Annapolis Times, IN Magazine, NXUP Magazine, Surreal Beauty Magazine, and two published calendars.

Foster! Adopt! Mentor!



Message from Director of Programs

Greetings Readers,

My name is Loney Nguyen, pronounced Lonnie Win. My pronouns are She/Her/Hers. I am a licensed clinical social worker with over 12 years of lived and professional child welfare experience. It is a great honor to serve as the new Editor-In-Chief for the *Youth News Magazine*.

Serving in this capacity has come full circle for me. As a teenager growing up in the child welfare system, I sought all the opportunities that I could to gain the skills that I needed to be self-sufficient and thrive. I discovered the non-profit organization, WHALER's Creation, and began participating in their programs. I have always credited my professional development through the skills training offered at WHALER's Creation. As I grew and pursued my education, I began serving the organization in various capacities. It was the start of an impassioned career working with youth, and it has become the driving force in my mission to support and empower youth to advocate for themselves and show youth

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how to make a difference in their own lives. It is with your readership and contributions that this is made possible. This principle is at the heart of my work as a social worker.

I understand the power of positive mentorship in the lives of youth. This magazine builds self-esteem, confidence, and open doors to provide career and educational opportunities for youth in order to encourage bright and successful futures. Our editorial team consists of students and young professionals who are passionate about pursuing their careers in media arts. They are young leaders and I am proud to be able to mentor them as they develop their own brand and discover their niche in the industry.

The world is changing in unimaginable ways, leaving many young people to question how their futures might unfold during such challenging times. My goal as Editor-In-Chief is to help build a supportive community around youth as they develop the skills to educate readers on things that are relevant and impactful in their lives. It is with your readership and contributions that this is made possible.


Thank you for supporting our magazine. I hope you enjoy the read!

Much Love,



Youth News 

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Dear Lillie,

I am finally in love! I met the man of my dreams. He is everything I want in a man. Great job, beautiful home, no kids, financially secure, and really good looking. My problem is he is six-inches shorter than I am and I'm only 5'6". My friends make jokes about him and I love wearing heels, and with him, I can't. He just asked me to marry him. Should I listen to my friends and find a taller man or just stop wearing heels?

Thank you,
Heelless.

Dear Heelless,

Your problem is not your friends or your heels. It sounds like you care a lot about what people are saying about you. Let me say that is such a waste of time and energy. Put yourself first and learn to love yourself and you will not have to ask friends or heels.

Best of luck,
Lillie

Dear Lillie,

My twins were scheduled to graduate from high school today, the class of 2020. We planned a huge celebration, expecting 150 people. Because of the pandemic, everything is canceled. The twins are the first generation in our family to graduate high school. I walk around smiling, but inside I'm burning up with anger. I wanted to show off the twins' accomplishments to my family and couldn't. Please help me with my anger, I can't shake it.

Sincerely,
A Real Mad Mom!

Dear Real Mad Mom,

Congratulations! I am happy for you and the twins. I agree their accomplishment needs to be celebrated, but keep in mind the real celebration are your amazing twins. They broke the cycle. With that said, there are 101 ways to honor the twins, especially using social media. Replace your anger by creating another way to honor them. COVID-19 has forced families to research what others have done to celebrate the class of 2020. Remember we're all in this together.

Hope this helps,
Lillie



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Youth Spotlight



J'Nya Pressely

J'Nya, 17 years old, is an upcoming high school senior who has already finished her high school requirements. She is currently in a dual enrollment program working towards an Associate's degree with aspirations of becoming a pediatrician. She has been a honor role student since elementary school and is a member of the National Honors Society for High School Scholars. She has received letters from six universities asking her to consider attending their school. Born in South Carolina, this young scholar enjoys being a co-captain for her step team, singing on her church choir, and being co-captain of the vanity cheerleader for her high school. In addition to being a top scholar, J'Nya is one of the most polite, well-mannered, and kind-hearted people you'll ever meet, especially when addressing adults with a sweet "Yes Sir or Yes Ma'am" reply. Wow, she is amazing!



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Praising the Moment

"My biggest supporters are my parents. They have sacrificed so much for me to achieve my dream of attending college—and now, I am one-year in." -Abel Hernandez



Abel Hernandez is a 2019 graduate of the Medical Professions Program at East Career and Technical Academy. Graduation was a proud moment for him and his family. It was an overly exciting accomplishment that they

yearned for. Hernandez, 19, has always envisioned himself attending college. Though it was not easy, Hernandez has now accomplished a successful first year at Nevada State College in Henderson, Nevada.

As a Mexican American, Abel Hernandez has faced many barriers that have made him work especially hard for his dreams and aspirations. Abel recalls being a high school student and working to help his family financially. During that time, his father was working in construction. "My father worked in the heat and in very harsh conditions," he said. "I remember him breaking his leg, that's when I started to work." Abel began working as a high school student to help support his household while maintaining good grades. His motivation was making his parents proud because he knew just how much they sacrificed for his future and well being.

Abel's parents, Gricela and Ignacio, migrated to the United States from Michoacán, Mexico in search of better opportunities than the ones in their native land. Abel appreciates his parents and realizes how much they went through to even be in this country. "My parents had nothing when they arrived in the United States. They have worked their whole life and sacrificed so much," he said.

"They have always wanted the best for me."

Abel's dream is to become a Registered Nurse. He wants to be able to help others and make a difference. Abel wants to help save lives and care for people in need. He aims to break barriers within his culture and prove his capability in a rewarding environment. He aspires to build a career where he can showcase his passion and determination to succeed. Abel will be applying for the Nursing Program at Nevada State College this upcoming September. "My goal now is to continue to earn straight A's and get accepted into the program," he said. "I know I have the right mindset for this career and want to prove my commitment to help."

With a current grade point average of 3.9, Abel Hernandez has demonstrated dedication. He wishes to continue with the momentum he started, and finish the rest of his college journey strong. Abel is proud of pushing himself and working through the workload he once thought he couldn't handle. He works beyond class times and

helps his peers articulate the nature of assignments. Abel summarizes his first year as successful and extremely fruitful because he is now more than ever sure of his future career choice. "I want to make an impact in the world by helping others," he said, "I will make a difference in the medical field with hard work and willpower."

Written by: Rebeca Garcia



Rebeca Garcia is a Mexican American writer. She is a dog mom to Nala and Chewy and is currently obsessing over James Patterson's thriller series. In her free time, she writes in her blog, Crossing Borders. As a social justice advocate, she voices testimonials aiming to spread racial and cultural awareness.



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