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Two Montana Youths Selected for Role Model Positions in National FosterClub All-Star Program

(HELENA) Two Montana youths will spend the next year traveling to events across the state and nation, promoting public awareness of the foster system, and serving as role models for youths in foster care.

Lora Murphy and Dannielle Farmer, both 18, were selected recently to serve as FosterClub All-Stars — a program that provides leadership and service opportunities to young people between the ages of 18 and 24 who spent their formative years in foster care.

“As a FosterClub All-Star, I would really like to help other foster kids realize that, while their current situation might not be the greatest, they have other supports in their lives and they can go on to do whatever amazing things they want to,” said Farmer, a Billings resident who was in and out of foster care since she was in elementary school.

Farmer and Murphy will have the opportunity to do just that following two weeks of intensive leadership and public speaking training in Oregon this summer. Through the FosterClub All-Star program, they will use their personal experiences in foster care to motivate their peers, child welfare staff and the public to action on behalf of children and youth in care.

In addition, FosterClub All-Stars often spearhead state and local efforts to raise awareness about foster care and advocate for system improvement.

“Student Assistance Foundation (SAF) is thrilled that Lora and Dannielle were selected to receive this honor,” said Rhonda Safford, coordinator of SAF’s “A Step Ahead” College Prep Camp. “Both girls attended our college prep camp for youths in foster care and it’s extremely rewarding to watch them progress from our program to this national-level opportunity.”

Murphy, a Butte resident who was in foster care for 11 years, said she looks forward to returning home to motivate other foster youths to take charge of their futures.

“I hope to gain as much knowledge from the All-Stars as I can so I can come back and help the foster children who don’t have a voice, or who can’t voice what is right for them,” she said.

For more information about FosterClub, visit www.fosterclub.com.

SAF and DPHHS have partnered to sponsor the FosterClub All-Star program, as well as “A Step Ahead” College Prep Camp for the past eight years.

Student Assistance Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit Montana corporation that provides students with knowledge and tools to finance and pursue their postsecondary education. Funds generated by SAF are returned to Montanans in the form of education grants and public benefit programs - to date more than \$27 million. For more information, visit www.safmt.org or www.SmartAboutCollege.org.

The mission of the Child and Family Services Division (CFSD) is: Keeping Children Safe and Families Strong. CFSD works three hundred and sixty five days a year, twenty-four hours a day, to fulfill its mission. CFSD is responsible for ensuring the safety, permanency, and well-being of children who have been victims of, or are at substantial risk of being victims of, child maltreatment.