



# Back To School!

## DID YOU KNOW?

In addition to our children living at the Village, our NEXT STEPS program supports 150 young adults in the community who have aged out of foster care, many of whom will either begin or continue with their education. This can be a difficult time and we work closely with each person in the program to ensure they have the support and services needed to navigate towards finding their place in the world.

- A person who has aged out of foster care at eighteen in the State of Florida, is eligible to receive a monthly stipend of \$1,711. This amount represents an increase from \$1,256 which had been in place for ten years.
- They must be enrolled in an accredited college, university, or trade program.
- Full-time enrollment is required for eligibility and a 2.0 GPA must be maintained.
- Affordable housing for our young adults is a significant issue and creates barriers to education.
- 50% of foster children have no earnings within four years of aging out, and those who do have an average annual income of \$7,500
- Approximately 50% of foster children nationally do not graduate from high school and only 3% graduate from 4-year universities.

## EDUCATION IN ACTION...

Leoni Felton-Montanez is a 23-year-old in our NEXT STEPS program. Leoni has encountered some obstacles on his educational journey and has re-enrolled at Florida Atlantic University (FAU) for the fall semester to continue his major in mechanical engineering.

## A GIFT OF SELF-SUFFICIENCY IS PRICELESS...

Your gift of **\$25.00** or more will provide our young adults enrolled in school, the peace of mind to worry less about how to pay their rent, buy food and gas, and limit working hours to focus on their education. Help us help them take pride in their accomplishments and set attainable education goals. Together we can **SHATTER** some of the adverse statistics on youth who have aged out of foster care and help build sustainable lives!



**Make your gift today at [www.sosflorida.com](http://www.sosflorida.com)**