



Powerful Alternatives

A Newsletter for Supporters of Alternatives For Girls

SPECIAL FEATURE -

For the 18th Year in a Row, 100% of High School Seniors in AFG's After-School Program Graduate

Thanks to your steadfast support, young women at AFG are graduating high school and making big plans for their future.

walk across the stage with their peers.



"I don't know where I would be if I hadn't found AFG," shares Eboni, one of the graduating seniors. Eboni plans to study Psychology and open her own practice in the future.

This spring, high school seniors everywhere were counting the days until graduation. Graduating from high school is an important milestone for every young adult, but for some, the path to graduating is filled with obstacles, like homelessness or violence in their communities.

Despite these challenges, because of your support young women at AFG get the help and resources they need to

For the 18th year in a row, 100% of the high school seniors in AFG's After-School Program will be doing just that.

The Girl with the 10 Year Plan

Eboni is one of these graduating seniors. She is just 18 years old, but already has a 10 year plan.

"I plan to study cosmetology so that I can get a job that will help me to earn money to pay for college. First, I will go to a

[See High School Grads, continued on page 2](#)

Because of *you*:

Finding Steady Ground: Danielle's Bright Future

Your support provided Danielle and her sons safe shelter and a support system when they needed it most.*

After her family was evicted from their home, Danielle* had no idea what to do. She and her twin boys, both only one year old, had no where they could go. No one to turn to.

Finding Steady Ground

Danielle knew they had to find

some place safe to stay until they could get on their feet. That's when she remembered Alternatives For Girls.

She called AFG and hoped that there would be space for her and her sons. There was, and they quickly moved in. "I was nervous when we first entered the shel-

ter," Danielle remembers. "I was scared because, I never thought I'd be in that predicament. I was scared of how people would think of me, and if I would be judged."

"The AFG staff are the family that many girls don't have."

Once they were settled in, Danielle felt instantly relieved by the warm welcome from the staff and other young women. "The Resident Advisors were really

*Name has been changed to protect her confidentiality. [See Finding Steady Ground, continued on page 3](#)

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local community college to study my prerequisites. Then, I plan to transfer to a university to study Psychology, get my master's and doctorate. Finally, I will open my own private practice," Eboni recites. She's committed these goals to memory. A step by step plan for her future.

Bumps in the Road

Her road for the future didn't always seem so clear. "There was a time in 10th grade when I wanted to drop out. Things were bad, and I felt like giving up," Eboni recalls. A dedicated teacher convinced Eboni to stay in school, but her struggles did not end there. "My senior year was harder than I thought it would be. I picked up two jobs and it was overwhelming at times."

"I don't know where I would be if I hadn't found AFG."

Eboni started coming to AFG's After-School Program during her junior year. "I don't know where I would be if I hadn't found AFG," Eboni shares. "AFG has helped me on so many levels. From helping me improve my confidence, to helping my family when we needed extra support. AFG has been one of my biggest support systems these past two years."

Looking Forward to the Future

Thanks to your support, Eboni is now a high school graduate

with big plans for her future. Although she is looking forward to the next chapter, there are some parts of her high school experience that she will miss. "The thing I will miss most about high school is being around a group of people who have so much ambition," Eboni says of her fellow classmates. "We've watched each other grow into who we are today."

Although she will miss some aspects of high school, Eboni is looking forward to a lot, especially having a flexible schedule. "I am looking forward to having control over how I spend my day and organizing it how I want it to be instead of having to be in school for eight hours a day," she shares.

You Help Girls & Young Women, Every Day

Year after year, girls like Eboni come to the after-school program, and get the support they need to stay focused on their education, graduate high school, and make plans for the future. Your support makes this possible. Thank you for believing in the futures of girls and young women. 



What's going on at AFG?

Read all about it:

Home Depot employees give AFG's building a spring refresh:

The group of 15 employees brought painting and landscaping supplies to work on two major projects, painting the newly remodeled Outreach Department space and landscaping outside of AFG's main entrance. Thank you, Home Depot, for helping to keep AFG a safe and welcoming space for the girls and young women who come to AFG for support!

Girls in the After-School Program create a new mural at AFG:

The idea for the mural was created by the girls and young women themselves and is meant to represent the soul of AFG. The mural, pictured left, shows that at AFG, girls and young women learn and grow, and as they continue their journey in the world they share their dreams, culture, and experiences everywhere they go. Just as a dandelion spreads its seeds in the wind. The mural was made possible by the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs, Corpus Art Inc., Culture Source, the NEA, and local artists Julianne Lindsey and Elton Monroy Duran.

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supportive and helpful. They gave me a lot of guidance and were people that I could turn to when I needed support. They are the family that many girls don't have," Danielle shares.

During her time at AFG, Danielle worked to prepare herself to live independently with the help of the staff. "They helped me with responsibility, time management, doing chores, how to budget, parenting. They helped me handle my own business so that when I was out on my own, I knew how to support myself," she remembers.

A Bright Future for Danielle, Because of You

Danielle also appreciated how the staff made her and her sons feel at home. "We used to go on different outings as a group, like going to concerts or events with

the kids. I enjoyed those outings because when I was growing up, I didn't get a lot of those opportunities," she says.

After just four months, Danielle and her sons were able to move out of the shelter and into their own apartment! "AFG helped me move into my own place, get furniture, and everything that I needed," Danielle shares. She has a good job and is planning to go school to get a degree in pharmacy. Although her experience with homelessness was difficult, Danielle is so happy she came to AFG. "I knew I needed help, and that at AFG I would get the help I needed. It was all worth it in the end."

It's because of your support that Danielle and other young women like her have a safe place to stay and the support they need to build a bright future. Thank you. 

You're Invited!

During AFG's monthly open houses, you'll get a first-hand look behind the scenes.

Have you ever visited Alternatives For Girls during one of our monthly open houses?

Join us to tour AFG, learn about our programs, find out how you can volunteer or get involved, and see some of the beautiful murals throughout our building, like the one the girls in AFG's After-School Program just completed.

Below are the upcoming open house dates:

**Monday, July 16th
from 5:30 to 6:30 pm**

**Wednesday, July 18th
from 10:00 to 11:00 am**

To RSVP, contact Jessica Pate at volunteering@alternativesfor-girls.org or 313-361-400 x248.

We hope to see you there!

Mission:

Alternatives For Girls' mission is to help homeless and high-risk girls and young women avoid violence, teen pregnancy and exploitation, and help them to explore and access the support, resources and opportunities necessary to be safe, to grow strong and to make positive choices in their lives.

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Departments:

Shelter and Transition to Independent Living:

AFG's Shelter Program provides a stable home, counseling, and life skills training to homeless young women age 15-21 and their children. The goal is to empower them to lead productive and fulfilling lives.

Outreach and Education Services:

AFG's Outreach Program helps teens and women engaged in high-risk activities, such as street-based prostitution, drug use, and gang involvement, to understand the risks of such activities and transition to safe choices and healthy lives.

Community Based Prevention:

AFG's Prevention Program serves girls ages 4-18 who are at risk of pregnancy, gang involvement, abusing drugs or alcohol and school truancy. We engage them through after-school programs, a teen leadership program, and a summer camp.

Powerful Alternatives is a publication of Alternatives For Girls

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For all you do, thank you.

BRIEFING ROOM

Rise N' Shine Wish List

AFG's free, six week summer camp for girls in southwest Detroit begins July 10th. You can help make this a summer the campers will never forget through a gift of one of the items below:

Healthful snacks

Paper towels and paper plates

Plastic ware (cups and utensils)

Sunscreen (50 SPF or higher)

Swim suits (adult sizes)

Flip flops (adult sizes 6-11)

Beach towels

Thank you for your kindness.

If you live near Alternatives For Girls, you can drop off items at 903 West Grand Blvd from 9:00am - 5:00pm Monday through Friday at the front desk. Otherwise, you can mail your donation to: Alternatives For Girls, Attn: Taylor Gawlik at 903 W Grand Blvd, Detroit MI 48208. *Questions?* Please call 313-361-4000 ext. 273.

Role Model Dinner Celebrates Resilient Girls and Women

On March 28th, Alternatives For Girls held the annual Role Model Dinner at Cobo Center in Detroit. **The event raised over \$285,000 to support girls and young women!**

The evening was full of fun, inspiration, and hope, as AFG celebrated the 2018 Role Models and the accomplishments of the girls and women in AFG's programs. After

an hour of mingling and a silent auction, the program kicked off with a live auction. Rhonda Walker, Local 4 News Morning Anchor and 2008 Role Model Awardee, emceed the event. The dinner provided an opportunity for guests to hear from many of the young women whose lives have been impacted by AFG's programs. Guests heard stories of struggle and triumph, and many reflections on the theme of the night, Rise Up, City Rose, which focused on the resiliency of girls and women.



The program was a time of reflection and inspiration as the young women of AFG and the 2018 Role Models shared their stories. Leah, AFG Peer Educator and former shelter resident, shared during her speech, "The thing that I love most about AFG is that they try to understand a person's goals, dreams, and needs. They work with you and they are about making sure you are okay." Leah struggled to focus on her education while facing homelessness, and because of your support of AFG, she received help enrolling in an online school, is working several jobs to support her family, and is on the path to accomplish all of her goals!

A special thank you to the dinner co-chairs, Pam Rodgers and Faye Nelson, the Role Model Dinner Committee, Rhonda Walker, Chris Aslanian, all of the dedicated volunteers who helped make the event possible, and everyone who attended the event for showing such overwhelming support for the girls and young women in AFG's programs!



Alternatives For Girls

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www.AlternativesForGirls.org

At AFG we respect everyone who comes to us for help – as they work towards a brighter future. So, while their stories are true, names and images may have been changed to protect their privacy. Thank you for understanding.