



# Florida Youth SHINE News

Florida Youth SHINE  
Board of Directors

**Jesse Wilson**  
Statewide Chair  
Jacksonville

**Brian Smith**  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair  
of Membership  
Pensacola

**April White**  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair  
of Legislation  
Pinellas/Pasco

**Danielle McMahan**  
Fundraising Co-Chair  
Hillsborough

**Manny Oliver**  
Fundraising Co-Chair  
Palm Beach

**David Eagne**  
Secretary  
Broward

**Lindsay Baach**  
FYS Youth Coordinator  
Ft. Lauderdale

**Christina Spudeas**  
FCF Executive Director  
Ft. Lauderdale

*Striving High for  
Independence and  
Empowerment*

## A message from Our Chair



I write to you today from Chicago, Illinois where I have had the opportunity to take part in a Systems of Care conference due to my role as Foster Parent and Teen Advocate within my local CBC. This conference has been geared toward increasing the knowledge and quality of information shared between service providers within the mental health field, child welfare system, and the Department of Juvenile Justice. I have thought about you all often while at this conference and know you all would be enjoying this experience and learning as much as I have. In addition to the workshops I have been able to attend, I have also met a lot of great young adults from youth advocacy programs from all over the country but none quite like Florida Youth SHINE. This week I have learned how unique we really are.

Our power continues to lie in the fact that we are truly the voice of the youth in care and we want to accomplish so much more than a fun trip and new friends along the way. Though both are important parts of Florida Youth SHINE and we often walk away with an extended FYS family, our accomplishments and professionalism over the years are what have made us the network of doers we are today. I continue to be proud of everything FYS stands for and am honored to have recently been elected as your Statewide Chair.

In addition to my recent election, you all selected an incredible board of representatives throughout the state to work as a team of leaders to support the efforts of our local chapters as well as our statewide goals. We are excited to begin our terms with FYS and are always looking for your input.

Together we will expand our reach and take FYS towards its next step in greatness. As your board we have already started working on several exciting projects to increase membership, increase communication, and increase knowledge. I ask that you all assist us in these projects by getting connected with us through Facebook (like Florida Youth SHINE), checking your chapter email regularly, texting, blogging (send in your blog to [secretary@floridayouthshine.org](mailto:secretary@floridayouthshine.org) to see it on the FYS website), Twitter (follow FLYouthSHINE), and our FYS website. I know we all have a lot on our plate and many individual goals to accomplish, but our shared passion for FYS and the amazing work we are able to accomplish together allow for great things to happen. Please continue to send quick responses as our efforts to grow Florida Youth SHINE continue daily.

On behalf of my fellow members of the 2011-2012 Florida Youth SHINE board, I look forward to working with all of you throughout the year.

--Jesse Wilson



## FYS 2011 Board

(from left to right):

Brian Smith  
Jesse Wilson  
April White  
David Eagne  
Manny Oliver

(Danielle McMahan not pictured)





# FLORIDA Youth SHINE News

When asked what our chapters' top accomplishments over the last few months were, here's what they said:

## Jacksonville

- Significant increase in membership
- Increased recognition of the local FYS Chapter
- Goal setting

## Manasota

- Attended our first statewide FYS meeting in June
- Started support group for youth in care
- Council met with IL judge to discuss court reviews
- Council discussed recommendations to CBC for better, more youth involved JRSSR proceedings

## Miami

- Shared stories with over 50 attorneys during pro bono trainings
- Influenced the strategic plan of OurKids with suggestions and recommended solutions
- Increased foster parent involvement that led to increased youth involvement

## Pinellas/Pasco

- Engaged our peers in focus groups to learn about their needs when aging out of the system
- Financial Boot Camp August 1-4

## Orlando

- Became a chapter of Florida Youth SHINE in May

## Tallahassee

- Worked with Independent Living Program to make life skills training more youth driven and hands on
- Developed close relationship with the teens at Disc Village group home

## Hillsborough

- Had 2 members honored by FCF as outstanding youth advocates
- Raised over \$250 for Relay For Life with 8 members participating in the relay
- Held a BBQ for case workers and staff within the system of care during National Foster Care month to say "thank you" for all their hard work

## Vero Beach

- Participated in our circuit's dependency summit along with other FYS members
- Met with local reporters to tell our stories of our time in care

## Broward

- Participated in the Tracey McPharlin Dependency Initiative and trained 40 attorneys on the needs of youth in the foster care system
- Increased awareness of FYS by visiting teens in group homes within the country

## Palm Beach

- Partnered with Home Safe (a local group home) for chapter meetings
- Participated in local Everybody's A Teacher Initiative

## Pensacola

- Increased membership
- Organized chapter's first fundraiser with Chick-fil-a
- Educated their local CBC (Family First Network) and DCF on their experiences while in care, working with local judges on a Model Court Committee

## Upcoming Meetings

### Broward

Monday, August 1  
5:30pm @ ChildNet  
broward@floridayouthshine.org

### Hillsborough (Tampa)

Wednesday, August 17  
4:30pm @ DCF Regional Office  
hillsborough@floridayouthshine.org

### Jacksonville

TBA  
jacksonville@floridayouthshine.org

### Orlando

Thursday, July 28  
orlando@floridayouthshine.org

### Miami

Tuesday, June 26  
SHINING Stars Event  
5:30pm @ United Way Miami  
miami@floridayouthshine.org

### Pinellas/Pasco

Thursday, July 28  
7:15pm @ Highland Rec. Complex  
pinellaspasco@floridayouthshine.org

### Pensacola

Friday, August 12  
5:30pm @ Navarre United Methodist Church  
circuit1@floridayouthshine.org

### Vero Beach

TBA  
verobeach@floridayouthshine.org

### West Palm Beach

2nd Saturday of the month  
HomeSafe  
palmbeach@floridayouthshine.org

### Tallahassee

3rd Saturday of the month  
Kool Beanz Cafe  
tallahassee@floridayouthshine.org

### Manasota

Monday, August 8  
manasota@floridayouthshine.org

