

January 2009



Welcome!

In 1876, before Washington was even a state, the YMCA of Greater Seattle was founded by volunteers to develop young people.

Today's YMCA serves people of all ages—and faiths, genders, races, sexual orientations, cultures and economic situations—and we continue to champion the hopes and potential of our community's youth.

Nowhere is this more evident than in our work supporting youth transitioning out of foster care and homelessness. These young people are among our most vulnerable. With fractured family lives, a history of traumatic abuse and neglect and few financial resources, they are pushed into adulthood too early. Research shows they are likely to be homeless, drop out of school, struggle to find long-term work, experience poor health, and have high incidences of post-traumatic stress disorder and depression.

The YMCA has responded by collaborating to build a community of caring professionals, volunteers, donors, young adults and alumni of foster care who together are helping young people realize their fullest potential. Our work is highlighted by a full-service young adult resource center in south Seattle, specialized transition coaching for youth aging out of foster care, and 104 units (and still growing) of supportive young adult housing. As part of a larger YMCA effort to promote wellness, youth have access to health and leadership programs throughout all YMCAs in the greater Seattle region.

In this time of economic uncertainty, we continue to work tirelessly with our partners toward ending youth homelessness and promoting improvements to foster care. Our doors are open wide to young people who need a place to live, who want to go to college, who need a job or health care, who seek a caring community of other young adults who can say "I know what you're going through."

I invite you to learn more about the YMCA's work and be part of this caring community that makes a difference in the lives of young people.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Seán Walsh'.

Seán Walsh
Director, YMCA Young Adult Services