

## *Foster Care as a Support to Families, Not a Substitute for Parents*

### Unseen Heroes

I am a former foster youth. I'm 23 and from the State of California. An individual who has made my experiences stronger and cares about my well-being while in care is my former probation officer of Merced County. She no longer works with children and youth. She now works with adults. She made sure I was included in any decision-making process that involved me. If I had to go to a court review, which was every 6 months, she would personally drive me to and from court to make sure I was heard by the judge and had an equal and fair trial.

I was in five different placements and before every placement, she asked me, "How do you feel if you go to this type of placement?" "Are you okay with this?" "Is there anything I can honestly do to make you feel less anxious or nervous?"

Anytime I needed someone to talk to, she was always there for me no matter the hour of the day. She is an unseen hero, and people like her should be recognized more often.



Thank you, Children's Bureau! Attached is a photo of me with my foster parents and my former probation office on the day I graduated high school.



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Administration for Children and Families  
Administration on Children, Youth and Families  
Children's Bureau

