

NEWS RELEASE



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WAKE COUNTY TEEN'S FOSTER CARE EXPERIENCE CREATES PATH FOR BRIGHT FUTURE

More families encouraged to become foster parents, help young adults achieve success

Mia Powell is one of thousands of students who recently headed back to the classroom in Wake County. But, just a few years ago, graduating from Southeast Raleigh High School and going to college seemed like a pipe dream for this 18 year old.

"I am really enjoying my time at Wake Tech," said Powell. "I absolutely did not believe I would be where I am today three years ago."

Her life looked a lot different in 2012 when she entered Wake County's [Foster Care Program](#). She didn't have a strong support system and needed positive direction. She got both from her foster family and her social worker.

"The more time that I spent with my social worker and her co-workers, the more I became interested and inspired in social work," said Powell.

That inspiration led her to enroll in Wake Technical Community College where she's completing general education classes. By taking this important step to achieve her career goals, Powell can remain in the foster care program beyond her 18th birthday.

"The network of support that our foster care system provides is critical for young adults like Mia as they embark on their journey to successful independent living," said Human Services Social Work Supervisor Kim Herrington. "We need more families who are willing to open their homes and their hearts to these teens and help encourage them to finish high school and go on to college."

Currently, there are 105 children ages 13-15 in the County's foster care program and only 15 foster families that take care of teens in Wake County. There are also 22 contract agencies the County can access for families if unable to provide a licensed Wake County home for the child. As the population grows, so will the demand for foster families in our community.

“For me, I do not consider these kids foster children. These are my own children, and I bring them into my life as a part of my family,” said Ethel James, Powell’s foster parent. “We need more people that love and care for children, and we need more parents to step up to the plate to serve our community.”

Powell credits her foster care experience with motivating her to make big plans for her future. She eventually wants to transfer to North Carolina Central University and major in social work and minor in mass communications. She hopes to use the knowledge she’ll glean to start her own foundation one day to serve young adults like her in the foster care system.

“I’ve had such great role models over the past three years,” said Powell. “I want to help youth in foster care just like they helped me.”

If you would like more information on how to become a foster parent, please visit www.wakegov.com/humanservices/children/howto or contact Tonya Askew at 919-212-7474.

(Editor’s Note: Mia Powell is available for media interviews, and her picture is available upon request. Reporters can reach her at 919-914-1022 or miapowell2015@icloud.com.)

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