
New York State
Office of
Children & Family
Services

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**OCFS TO HOLD ADOPTION PROGRAM IN CENTRAL NEW YORK
Le Moyne College Hosts 'Heart Gallery' Kickoff**

The New York State Office of Children and Family Services has announced the latest Central New York "Heart Gallery" exhibit, featuring 43 portraits of youth awaiting adoption. The opening reception will be held on Thursday, June 5, from 6-9 p.m. at the Noreen Reale Falcone Library on the Le Moyne College campus.

A former foster youth who was adopted at the age of 20 will speak about her experiences and the importance of permanency for children of any age. In addition to the portraits, the exhibit will also include video clips of 15 children sharing their thoughts about themselves in hopes of finding a family. The exhibit will remain on display at the college library through June 30 during regular library hours.

"As you tour the exhibit and learn about the hopes, dreams and interests of these children, may you be inspired to open your heart and your home to a child through mentoring, fostering, or adoption," said NYS Office of Children and Family Services Commissioner Gladys Carrión, Esq.

The exhibit is a collaboration among the New York State Office of Children and Family Services' Syracuse Regional Office, local departments of social services, voluntary agencies, and talented photographers from the Professional Photographers' Society of Central New York. These photographers have donated their time and talents to help children find families. Ellen Dunbar of Auntie El's Photography and Videography, a Le Moyne College alumna, also donated her videography services and helped the children to feel comfortable talking about themselves in front of the camera.

The exhibit was inspired by the original Heart Gallery held in New Mexico in 2001. Heart Gallery exhibits introduce some of the waiting children through the artistic inspiration of talented photographers. Heart Gallery exhibits have been featured throughout New York State.

The exhibit will be on display throughout the remainder of the year at the following locations:

July: Utica Public Library (315) 735-2279

August: Flower Memorial Library - Watertown (315) 785-7701

September 1-12: Beard Building Gallery at SUNY Cortland (607) 753-4928

October: Broome County Public Library - Binghamton (607) 778-6400

November: Onondaga County Court House - Syracuse (315) 671-2111

December: Tompkins Public Library- Ithaca (607) 272-4555

Currently, there are more than 1,400 children in New York State who are waiting for a permanent home. Most children available for adoption in the state are in foster care. For more information about the exhibit, call the NYS OCFS Syracuse Regional Office at 315-423-1200. For more information on adopting, visit the NYS Adoption Service website at www.ocfs.state.ny.us/adopt or call 1-800-345-KIDS (5437).

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