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Needs of Older Foster Youth to be Focus of Blue Ribbon Commission Meeting

National Researcher to Share Recent Findings that Show Foster Youth Lagging Far Behind Their Peers

The California Blue Ribbon Commission on Children in Foster Care will hold its fourth meeting on December 12-13, 2006, in Monterey to focus on the needs of older foster youth. The 42-member commission builds on the momentum that currently exists in California to improve the state's foster care system which includes 88,000 children and youth. The commission was appointed earlier this year to provide recommendations to the Judicial Council of California on the ways in which courts and their partners can improve outcomes for children and families.

WHAT: **Blue Ribbon Commission meeting that focuses on needs of older foster youth.** The meeting will feature recent research report that documents the ways in which foster youth lag behind their peers as they prepare to exit foster care, including in the areas of education, employment and health. A panel of local foster youth will speak to the everyday challenges they face as they transition out of foster care at age 18.

WHO: **Distinguished commission members** (judges, government officials, child welfare professionals and advocates).

Among others, members include:

- Justice Carlos R. Moreno, of the California Supreme Court and Commission Chairman.
- Assemblymember Karen Bass, Majority Leader and Chair of Assembly Select Committee on Foster Care.
- Mary Ault, Deputy Director, California Department of Social Services.
- Will Lightbourne, director of Social Services Agency, Santa Clara County

(over)

- Judge Leonard Edwards (Ret.), former judge of the Superior Court of Santa Clara County.

Leading national researcher Amy Dworsky, University of Chicago Chapin Hall Center for Children

Foster youth panel

WHEN: Tuesday, December 12, 2006

6:00 p.m. Opening dinner and keynote presentation on importance of foster youth having lifelong permanent connections with caring adults

Wednesday, December 13, 2006

8:30 a.m. Commission meeting convenes

9:00 – 12:00 The Needs of Older Youth (panel presentation)

- Research report from University of Chicago
- Foster youth panel

6:00 p.m. Commissioners attend opening dinner for annual court-sponsored “Beyond the Bench conference.” The dinner features keynote presentations on opportunities for foster care reform and panel discussion among state government leaders on California solutions.

WHERE: Marriott Hotel
350 Calle Principal
Monterey, California

Portola Plaza
2 Portola Plaza
Monterey, California

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