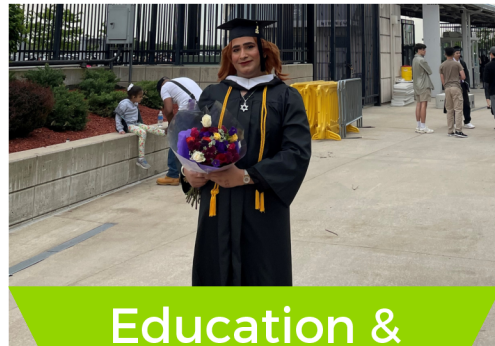


Housing



Education & Empowerment



Community

## 2024 BY THE NUMBERS

### 20 aged out foster youth served in 2024:

- **4 members** graduated and are employed and living in stable housing.
- **5 members** are currently enrolled in 2- or 4- year college programs, with 3 of those members on track to graduate in 2025.
- Other members completed their vocational training programs as a Certified Nursing Assistant, Certified Home Health Aide, and Certified Medical Assistant; or are enrolled in programs in Radiography, Ultrasound Technician, and Patient Services Technician.

Founded in 1999, Roots & Wings is one of few organizations of its kind in the state of New Jersey that solely focuses on the betterment of the often forgotten 18-24 year old individuals who have left the foster care system without a family or home of their own to turn to for support.

Roots & Wings' provides program members with free housing and professional guidance as they focus on their educational/vocational training, the development of life skills, and their understanding of financial literacy.

While repeatedly setting and achieving goals, program members transition into adulthood with the life-changing skill set necessary to become resilient, self-sufficient, and financially independent adults.

**Our mission is to provide safe housing, emotional support, life skills, and educational opportunities for youth aging out of foster care; empowering them to rise toward their greatest potential.**

- **1 in 5** aged out foster youth experience homelessness before the age of 21\*
- **1 in 5** aged out foster youth become incarcerated before the age of 21\*
- **Only 57%** report being employed at the age of 21\*

\*Source: The Annie E. Casey Foundation

# OUR PROGRAM MEMBERS ARE BEATING THE ODDS

Tamia first entered foster care at the young age of 10 and spent much of her adolescent years shuffling from home to home.

Despite the ongoing challenges and constant confusion in her life, Tamia remained focused on her academics, **ultimately graduating high school at 16 with a 4.0 GPA**. Even so, college proved to be an obstacle before finding Roots & Wings.

While at Roots & Wings, Tamia has maintained a 4.0 GPA while studying Communications and has earned her place on the Dean's List every semester. She is on track to graduate with her Bachelor's Degree in 2025!

Tamia thrives on helping others, spending much of her time volunteering and giving back. We are excited to see what the future holds for Tamia!



*Tamia*  
Current Program Member



Quay was an active student at Montclair State University studying Criminal Justice when he discovered Roots & Wings. Though Quay was excelling academically and had his sights set on a successful future, he was facing homelessness and struggling to find stability.

Once entering Roots & Wings, Quay had a sense of relief knowing that his critical needs were taken care of. He could now spend his energy focusing on his education and career path.

**Quay graduated Roots & Wings in 2021.**

Today, Quay is a graduate of the rigorous Fire Academy and a full-time Fire Fighter. He is also a dedicated father and primary guardian to his beautiful daughter. Quay is extremely grateful for his time with Roots & Wings and remains hopeful about his future as well as the future of his daughter.



*Quay*  
2021 Program Graduate

Visit our website at [www.rootsandwingsnj.org](http://www.rootsandwingsnj.org)  
or Learn more by scanning the QR code!

