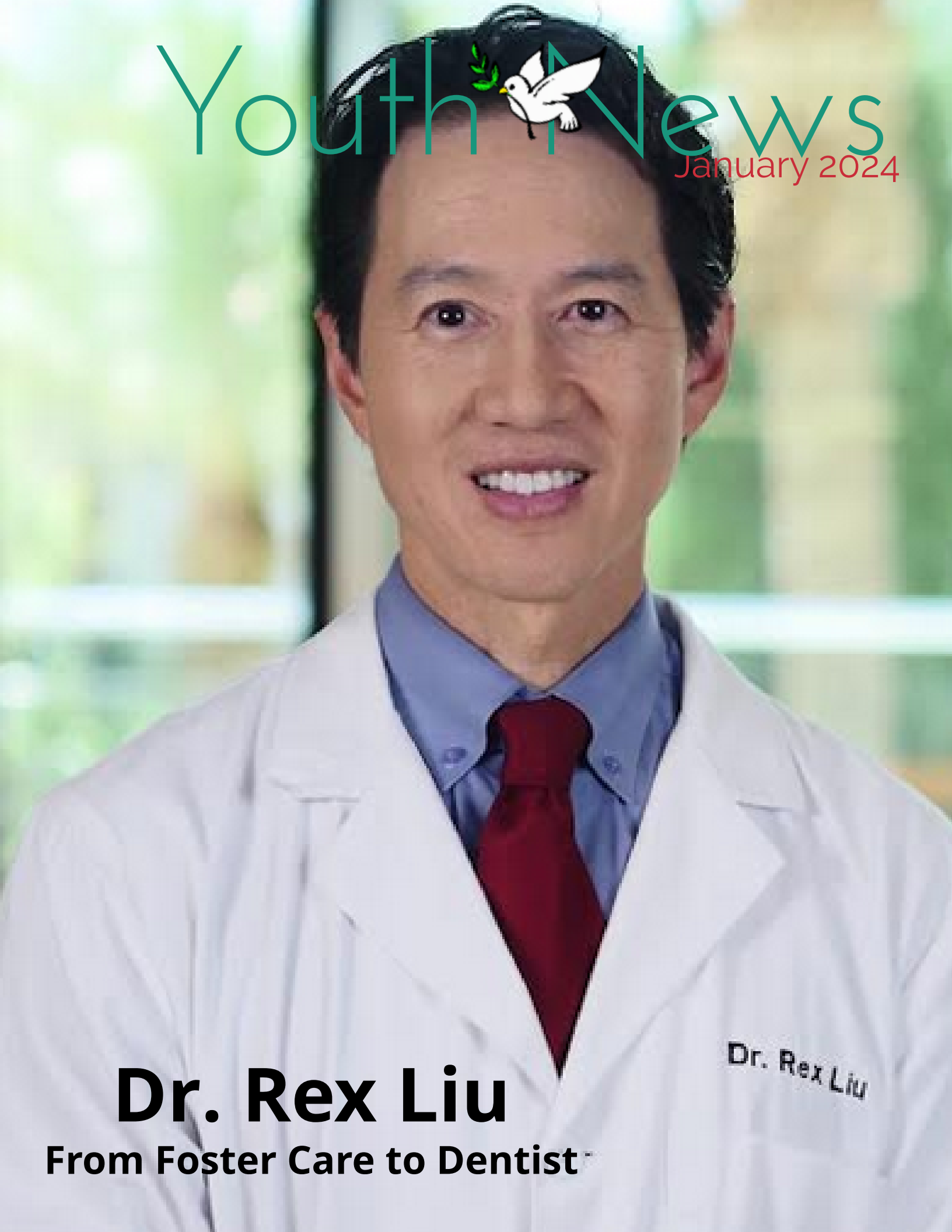


Youth News



January 2024



Dr. Rex Liu

From Foster Care to Dentist

Dr. Rex Liu



MENTORING WORKS



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Mentoring Month**

Youth News

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Happy National Mentoring Month!

Mentoring older teens and young adults is a crucial and rewarding endeavor that plays a significant role in their personal and professional development. During this transitional phase, individuals often face pivotal decisions related to education, career paths, and personal goals. A mentor can provide valuable guidance, encouragement, and wisdom, helping them navigate these choices with confidence. *Foster! Adopt! Mentor!*

WHALEr's Creation is hosting a Crowd Funding campaign. With your support we can provide job training, housing, and meals to older teens and young adults.

Youth News strives to educate, motivate and inspire people to support older teens and young adults. You can help with a monthly donations of \$10.00. Donate at: <https://givebutter.com/fosteryouth>

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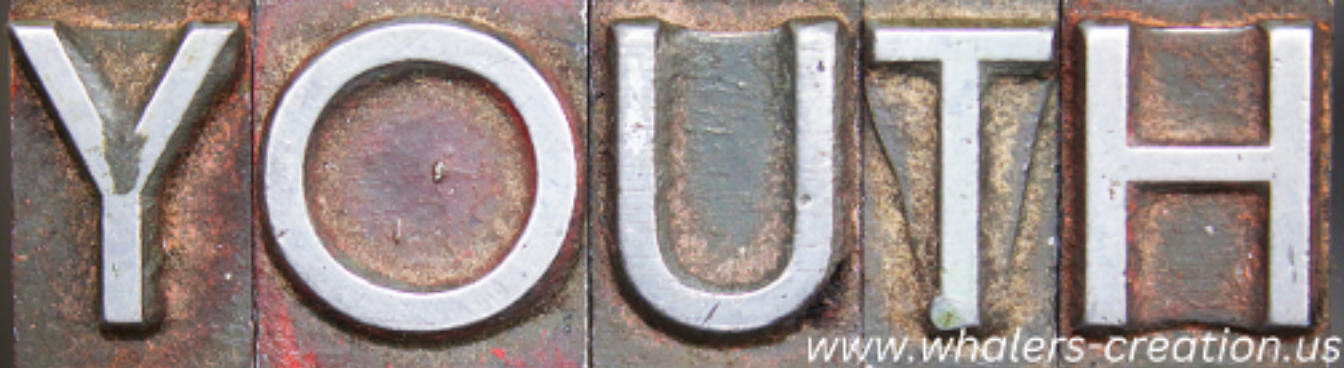
La'Toria Kern

Executive Director/Publisher



Youth News is an online magazine developed by teens, adults and senior citizens working together to bring readers Educational, Motivational, & Inspirational Stories

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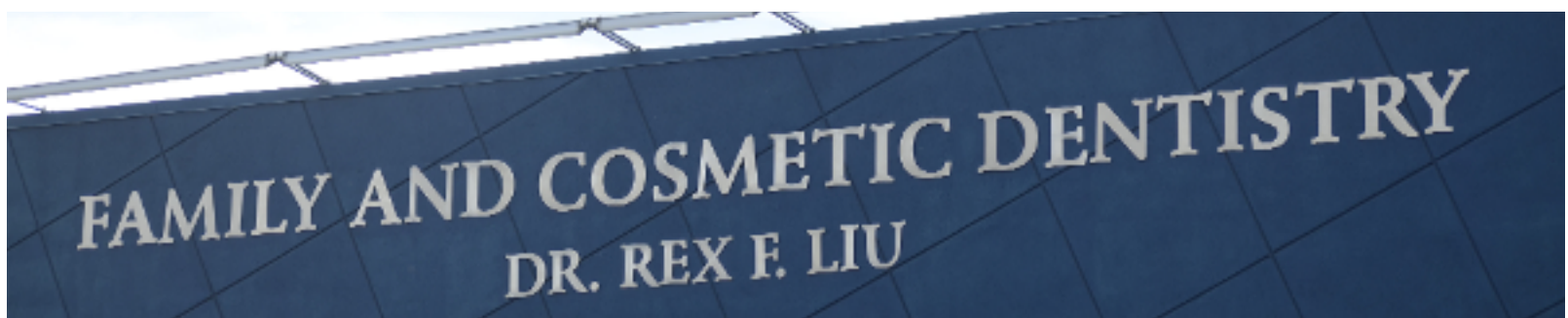
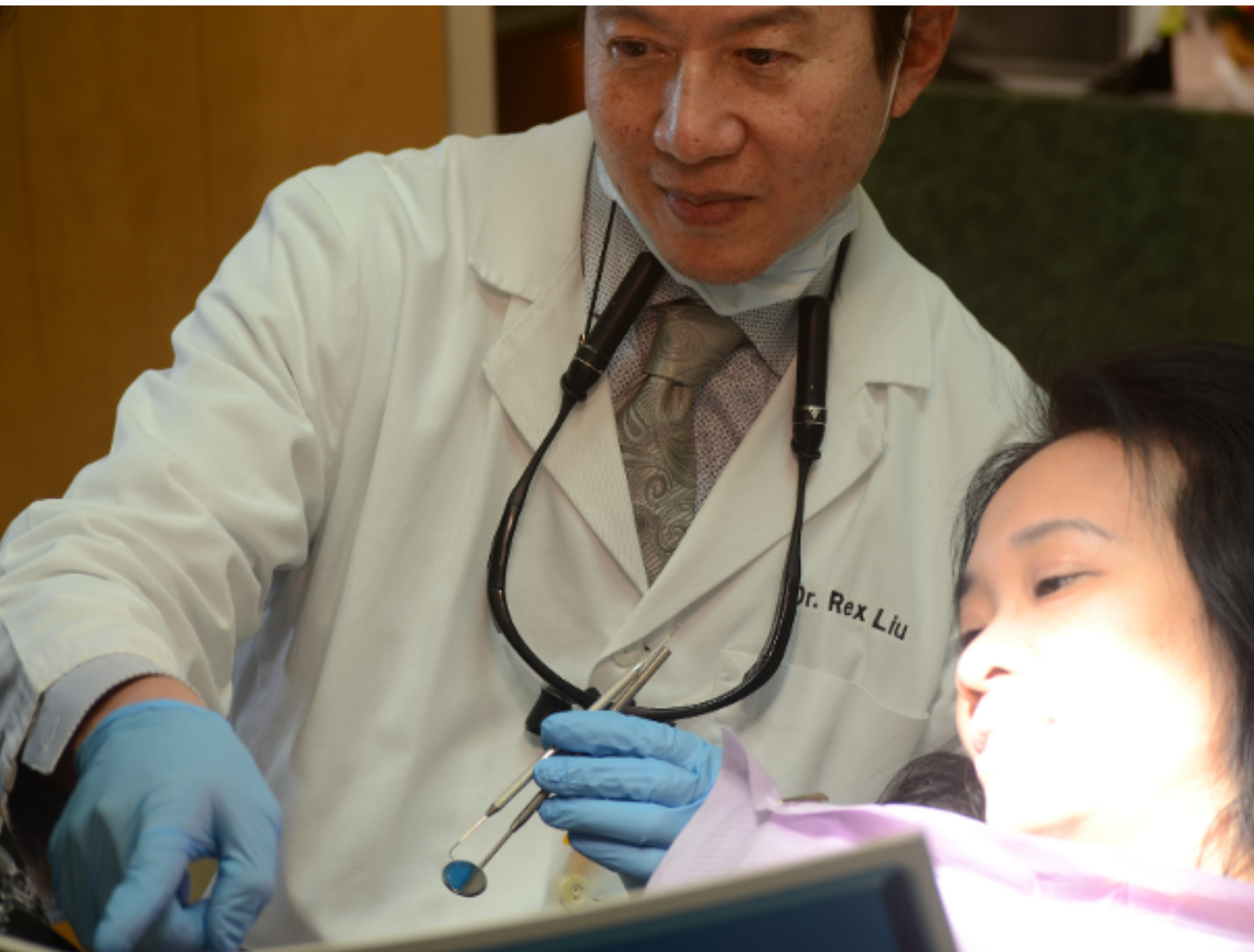
Teens -Young Adults (16-24). Classes are in person & virtual! Bring a friend.

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Subject: Job Training Classes

Dr. Rex Liu: From Foster Care to Mentoring Teens on Becoming a Dentist



Dr. Rex Liu hails from Frederick, MD, an area where, during his upbringing, there were no other Asian families. Being left to feel somewhat different, but he found his love in school academics and school activities. Working hard in school lead to many successes later in life.

Growing up in foster care, he regards it as a protective measure necessary for his well-being during the early '70s. In two different foster homes in Maryland, he recalls distinct memories, like being with a police foster parent, learning to handle nunchucks at age eight. His fondest memories revolved around reunions with his mother. He loved going to the movies with her and falling asleep together in a theater. Even today they still have their special weekly lunch date.

His high school life was active, heavily involved in student leadership since sixth grade. These experiences continued to influence his path through college, dental school, and translated into his current professional role, emphasizing leadership and patient interaction.

A pivotal moment was receiving an invitation to a scholarship dinner at Steve Wynn's house, an eye-opener for him and his mother, exposing them to a different world. This encounter reinforced the importance of education and community service.

His career choice was influenced by his parents' healthcare professions. Despite later discovering his father's desire to become a dentist, both parents encouraged Dr. Liu to pursue his opportunities, emphasizing the value of his English fluency. He and his siblings excelled academically, with one sister even attending Harvard University and is neurosurgeon today.

Dr. Rex Liu's journey is truly remarkable and serves as a testament to the transformative power of positive thinking and determination. His unconventional path, funding his education through the singing telegram business, showcases the importance of embracing one's passion and being open to unexpected opportunities.

The diverse clientele he amassed, including celebrities, models, and on-the-strip entertainers, highlights the universal appeal of his unique approach. Dr. Liu's uplifting interview emphasizes the significance of pivotal moments in shaping life trajectories. His stories inspire us to face challenges with resilience, find strength in adversity, and embrace change as a means to carve our own paths toward success and fulfillment.

A key takeaway from Dr. Liu's experiences is the impact of mentorship on individuals facing similar

challenges. His call to action encourages us to consider the power of mentorship in the lives of teens in foster care. Volunteering to mentor or offering support can make a positive difference in the lives of young individuals navigating difficult circumstances.

Living in Las Vegas, Dr. Liu gained exposure to diverse industries, including entertainment, hospitality, and sports. This exposure likely played a crucial role in shaping his multifaceted perspective and contributed to his ability to navigate life's twists and turns. Las Vegas, known for its vibrant and dynamic environment, provided a unique backdrop for Dr. Liu's personal and professional growth.

His office staff are warm, caring and inviting. They support him and made our trip very enjoyable. The certificates and awards on his office walls are countless. From foster care till today, Dr. Liu has always stood out among his peers.

Dr. Liu's story is not just a narrative of personal success but also an invitation for all of us to reflect on the power of positive thinking, resilience, and mentoring. By embracing these principles, we can contribute to fostering brighter futures for those in need, echoing the spirit of hope exemplified by our very own: the amazing Dr. Rex Liu



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- **Enhanced Unemployment Insurance** — Extends unemployment benefits to workers laid off amid economic contraction brought on by COVID-19
- **Expanded Food Assistance Programs** — Provides food to low-income pregnant women and mothers with young children, helps local food banks meet increased demand and offering home-delivered meals to low-income seniors, ensures children who depend on free and reduced-price meals at school continue to have access to nutritious foods in the event of extended school closures
- **Increased Medicaid Funding** — Boosts federal support for states to respond to expected increased volume and absorb unexpected costs that will deliver approximately \$35 billion to states, including an estimated \$440 million to



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Reese Thomas

Rehabilitative Mentor

Football became his lifelong passion from the age of five. He vividly remembers telling his mother at that young age about his dream of playing professional football. Despite excelling as a star athlete in high school, becoming one of the top five players in his city, he now feels he might have chosen a different college had he had the chance. He enrolled in University of Nevada Las Vegas, and moved to Las Vegas, which marked a significant change in his life. Adapting to the new environment, he encountered mountains for the first time, a stark contrast to Southside Chicago's landscape.

His college years were challenging; lacking direction, he pursued his football passion. However, he struggled financially, having to work odd jobs to support himself. His academic performance suffered due to this distraction. Eventually, with football not working out as planned and academic struggles, he found himself recommended to social work, discovering a natural affinity and wishing he'd chosen this path earlier over football.

Reese Thomas was born in 1972 in Englewood, Chicago, however his friend kept telling him he was Colorado. He grew up in a low-income neighborhood. He recalled facing challenges growing up in an unsafe environment but managed to navigate through the hardships.

Although he experienced bullying in his rough neighborhood, he remained positive, making friends and even befriending his bully before losing touch. Despite the bad moments in his childhood, there were also joyful ones.





He cherished his admiration for Bruce Lee, indulging in ninja activities and briefly attending martial arts classes for six months. He fondly recalled dressing up as a ninja, reenacting movie scenes with friends, and had a strong passion for Christmas, especially receiving footballs as gifts. Mr. Reese's dedication to mentoring teens and using his past experiences to guide them reflects a commendable commitment to making a positive impact on young lives. By encouraging young men and women to think before they act, he is instilling valuable lessons that can shape their decision-making and future. His passion for helping youth overcome challenging circumstances, coupled with his roles as a mentor, and caring individual, showcases a holistic approach to support.

The fact that Mr. Reese is a proud father adds a personal dimension to his understanding of the significance of his role. This firsthand experience likely contributes to his empathy and insight into the challenges faced by young people today. His genuine care and passion for saving young lives exemplify the positive impact that a dedicated mentor can have on the well-being and development of the next generation.

To reach to Reese: helpuniversity.org or text : 702-738- 3185

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Five- Ways to Discover Animal-Assisted Healing

A Beginner's guide to include animal assisted healing into your wellness plan.

By Loney Nguyen

As we step into a new year, it's a perfect time to explore different avenues for improving our well-being. Beyond the familiar routines of exercise and healthy eating, there's a wonderful resource that's often overlooked—animal-assisted healing.

Research studies indicate that contact with animals can 1) decrease heart rate, 2) decrease blood pressure, and 3) decrease/increase certain chemicals in the body (e.g., oxytocin, cortisol). Overall, animals can have a calming effect on the client; this provides a rationale for animal-assisted therapy (Odendaal, 2000).

The idea is simple: animals have an amazing ability to support our mental, emotional, and physical health. Integrating animal-assisted healing into your life as a beginner could be a fantastic step towards a more balanced and fulfilling lifestyle.

Here are some beginner-friendly ways to explore animal-assisted healing:



Animals can be mentally and emotionally rewarding in many ways. Consider asking your care provider about opportunities for animal-assisted therapy!

Tip #1 - Meet Shelter Pets:

Visit local animal shelters to spend time with pets waiting for their forever homes. Just sitting and playing with these animals can instantly boost your mood and bring a sense of joy. You might discover a special connection that could lead to fostering or adoption.

Tip #2 - Nature Walks with Animal Companions:

If you have a pet or a friend's pet you can walk, take them out for a stroll in a nearby park or nature trail. The fresh air and the companionship of an animal can be incredibly uplifting and can introduce you to the calming effects of nature combined with animal bonding.

Tip #3 - Practice Mindfulness with Animals:

Take a few minutes each day to practice mindfulness with your pet or animals in nature. Simply sitting quietly, observing the animals behavior, and being fully present in the moment can cultivate a sense of calm and deepen the bond between you, your furry friend, or nature.

Tip #4 - Start Small at Home:

If you're considering getting a pet, start by researching different animals and their needs. Consider the time and effort required to care for them. Even small pets like fish or hamsters can provide companionship and relaxation. Look for documentaries, podcasts, or online courses about animal behavior, the benefits

of animal companionship, or stories of people whose lives have been positively impacted by animals. Learning more about the subject can deepen your appreciation for the healing connection between humans and animals.

Tip #5 - Learn About Animal-Assisted Therapy:

Take some time to read about animal-assisted therapy online or in books. This will help you understand how animals can help with various health conditions and might inspire you to explore more structured sessions in the future.

Contact Us to Start Your Healing Journey:

If you're interested in exploring animal-assisted healing further, contact us about the services we provide at [Advocacy Angels Healing Inc.](#) Take the first step toward incorporating these experiences into your wellness routine by reaching out to begin your healing journey.

As we embrace the new year, let's welcome the healing power that animals bring into our lives. By incorporating the companionship and interaction of animals into our wellness routines, we open ourselves to holistic healing, nurturing a healthier mind, body, and spirit.



*Advocacy Angels
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How to Become a Foster

Becoming a foster parent involves several steps, which may vary depending on your location. Here are some general steps to become a foster parent:

1. Contact your local foster care agency: The first step is to get in touch with your local foster care agency. You can find the agency in your area by searching online or contacting your state or county department of social services.
2. Attend an orientation session: Most agencies require prospective foster parents to attend an orientation session to learn about the foster care system, the needs of children in foster care, and the process of becoming a foster parent.
3. Complete the application process: After attending the orientation session, you will need to complete the application process, which includes background checks, home inspections, and training.
4. Complete training: Foster parents are required to complete training before being licensed. The training covers topics such as child development, the impact of trauma on children, and how to work with birth families.
5. Receive licensure: Once you have completed the application process and training, the agency will evaluate your application and decide whether to grant you a foster care license.





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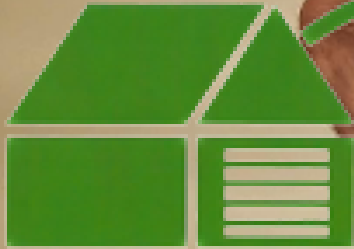
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US Adoption Resources

- Centers for Disease Control International Adoption Health Guidance
- U.S. Department of State Bureau of Consular Affairs Adoption Process
- AdoptUSKids.org
- Child Welfare information Gateway
- Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute (CCAI)

Additional Resources

- Adoptive Families Magazine
- Adoptive Parents Committee
- American Academy of Adoption Attorneys (AAAA)
- Child Welfare League of America
- The Center for Adoption Support and Education
- Dave Thomas Foundation
- Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute
- International Social Services
- National Adoption Center
- National Council for Adoption (NCFA)
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