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**For immediate release:**

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## **Essex Vicinage Hosts 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Aging-Out Youth Conference**

The Essex Vicinage will host a conference and information fair on Wednesday, May 18 for youth ages 16 to 21 who are aging out of the foster care system, Assignment Judge Sallyanne Floria announced.

The event, “Stepping Up and Stepping Out,” will be held from 8:45 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. in the atrium at the Rutgers University School of Law, 123 Washington St., Newark.

Now in its 10<sup>th</sup> year, the conference provides an opportunity for attendees to learn about the options and resources available to them as they age out of the foster care system. Workshops will cover issues such as budgeting and finance, housing, job opportunities and career and college readiness.

Approximately 150 youth and more than 40 exhibitors, including potential employers and college recruiters, are expected to attend. College recruiters also will assist participants with college applications and financial aid forms.

Participants also can compete for prizes in a talent show that includes singing, poetry and art work.

The event is coordinated through a joint partnership of the vicinage, the Newark Municipal Court, the Junior League of Montclair-Newark Inc., and United Way of Essex and West Hudson. Also assisting are the Rutgers Child Advocacy Center, the New Jersey Department of Children and Families, the Court Appointed Special Advocate of Essex County (CASA), the New Jersey Child Placement Advisory Council, the Association for Children of New Jersey, the Essex County Office of The Law Guardian, the Attorney General’s Office and the Office of Parental Representation.

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