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**January 27, 2014**

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**Foster and Adoptive Family Services Receives \$31,000 Grant**  
*Funding for college students in transitional housing and additional scholarship aid*

Monmouth Junction, NJ, January 27, 2014 – Foster and Adoptive Family Services (FAFS) is proud to announce that they have received a \$31,000 grant from the Dreams R Us Foundation. The majority of the funding will be managed by the FAFS Scholarship Department. The New Jersey Foster Care Scholars Program has been administered by FAFS for 10 years.

Tara Rizzolo, M.S. Ed, FAFS Director of Scholarship Programs said, “We are excited to launch this new statewide program to help provide semester based awards to students for textbooks and educational necessities. The Breaking the Housing/Textbook Barrier Initiative shows FAFS’ commitment to helping young people. We are already sharing the information with dozens of potentially eligible students.” She added, “In addition this generous donation gives FAFS additional funds for three new private scholarship grants. Every year, during my tenure, we have seen an increasing number of students apply for FAFS private scholarship assistance.”

“FAFS is constantly looking at new programs that reflect the current need in the foster care community. Many signature FAFS programs have come from discussing a particular need and then finding the resources to make a difference,” said Mary Jane Awrachow, FAFS Chief Executive Officer. “In the past year our office has received numerous calls from students who were living in transitional housing while attempting to further their education and reach for their dream of a college degree. With the generosity of Dreams R Us, we can now provide additional support to many of these students.”

The Dreams R Us grant also funds a new FAFS program called Self Esteem Dreams. This funding will provide an opportunity for children in foster care to participate in activities that may have been out of their foster families’ financial reach. Under this new program, children in foster care may be able to attend specialized camps, receive focused tutoring or other activities that these children have only envisioned in their dreams. FAFS plans to make 20 awards to families throughout the 2014 calendar year. This new offering creates a new horizon of opportunities. Self Esteem Dreams is based on the success of the existing FAFS Fostering Wishes for Children program. That program was started by a challenge grant 13 years ago from the Long Valley Presbyterian Church. Over 1,650 children in foster care have been granted wishes since that date.

The mission of FAFS is to provide support, training and advocacy to meet the special needs of foster, adoptive and kinship families, who provide safe, stable and nurturing homes for children in foster care in New Jersey. FAFS is a federal 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization, with headquarters on Route 1 in Monmouth Junction. The organization serves as a catalyst for positive advances in the child welfare system. Simply stated, FAFS is the voice of foster, adoptive and kinship families in New Jersey.