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COMMUNITY FORUM: THE REAL COST OF FOSTER CARE

A Panel Discussion about Foster Care and a screening of *From Place to Place*

RALEIGH, NC – The next *Community Voices* Forum Series discussion on the topic of foster care policy and its effect on young people is scheduled for **Thursday, May 26, 2011 at 7:00 PM in the School of Social Work Auditorium on the campus of UNC in Chapel Hill**. This forum will explore the impact of foster care policy young people while discussing some of the themes developed in the movie *From Place to Place*.

“There is no doubt that foster care is one of the most misunderstood and under-resourced of our social safety net programs,” said Kevin Rogers, Executive Director of the North Carolina Social Justice Project. “We hope this event will help to shed a bit more light on the topic.”

Former foster children face a variety of hurdles. Many have little or no contact with birth families, insufficient support systems and are at higher risk of becoming single parents or living with mental illness. Fully 60% of male former foster children will be convicted of a crime and 40% of the women will end up on public assistance.

Before the discussion, attendees will have the opportunity to watch a screening of the movie *From Place to Place*, a feature documentary about the invisible children who grow up in the foster care system.

“*From to Place* is unlike any other documentary I've seen about the plight of youth aging out foster care,” said Dr. Johanna Greeson, co-organizer and foster care researcher and advocate. “We are introduced to some unlikely heroes and challenged to consider what we can do to follow in their brave footsteps. As a social work researcher and child welfare advocate, my commitment to social justice called me to consider how to acknowledge this May as National Foster Care Month. Organizing a Community Forum and showing *From Place to Place* was the only right answer.”

This event is designed to involve all stakeholders in creating a common understanding of the current situation, trends, and possible outcomes. The discussion will be led by the following panelists confirmed to date:

- **Kelly Andrews** – Administrative Office of the Courts, NC *Guardian ad Litem* Program
- **John Holtkamp** – Division Director, Durham County Department of Social Services
- **Hon. Marcia H. Morey**- Chief District Court Judge of the 14th Judicial District
- **Ray Kirk, PhD** – Director of Independent Living Services, Inc.

The North Carolina Social Justice Project (NCSJP) is a progressive non-partisan, non-profit organization that researches the causes of, solutions to, and advocates for the elimination of, the widespread social inequality among traditionally under-represented groups in North Carolina.

Please visit www.ncsjp.org for more information.

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