

YES! I want to be a friend of the Foster Kids of the Merrimack Valley, Inc. by contributing \$ _____

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Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

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_____ I have enclosed my check made payable to Foster Kids of the Merrimack Valley, Inc.

_____ I would like to make a single gift of \$ _____ on my credit card account.

Please charge my Visa MasterCard

Credit Card # _____ Exp. Date _____ CCV _____

Print name of cardholder _____ Signature _____

Cut here and send with payment. Thank you!

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To learn more about Larry,
read the best-selling

WARD OF THE STATE

Now Available on Amazon

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OFFICERS:

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Eileen F. Giordano, Vice President
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*Foster Kids of the
Merrimack Valley Inc.*

Because Every Kid Counts

Serving All Foster Children in the
Merrimack Valley

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Larry F. Giordano

FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT

Larry Giordano is the President and Founder of Foster Kids of the Merrimack Valley, Inc., a non-profit organization created to support the growing needs of foster children in the Merrimack Valley region. Larry was raised as a foster child after he was abandoned by his mother in a Springfield Hotel when he was five days old. He lived in a foster home until he was 17, at which time he entered the US Air Force. His years in foster care shaped the man Larry Gagnon became and as a tribute to his foster mother, he took her surname Giordano and became Larry Giordano. As a foster child himself, Larry knows the incredible value of community support to a child during their most impressionable years and it truly "takes a village". He was inspired by this great sense of community to create this organization to support foster children in the Merrimack Valley.



Today, Larry is a recognized leader in the Merrimack Valley with an exceptional resume of community service. He currently serves

as Kancho, Master of the Methuen Karate Association. In previous years he served as Methuen City Councilor,

Massachusetts Commissioner of Public Safety, Methuen State Representative and Methuen Police Officer.

Our Mission

The Foster Kids of the Merrimack Valley is dedicated to serving the needs of foster children in the Merrimack Valley with a goal to bring a positive influence into their lives and provide programs that support the children as they grow.



Founded in 2005, the **Foster Kids of the Merrimack Valley**, Inc. is a registered 501(c)3 non-profit organization, Tax ID 26-1347672. The mission of the organization is to serve the needs of foster children now in the care of the Department of Children and Families (DCF) in the Merrimack Valley, including Lawrence, Methuen, Andover, North Andover and Greater Haverhill. Our goal is to create programs and provide resources that will create a positive influence in their lives and support the children as they grow.

WHO ARE THE CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE?

Children in foster care are "just kids" who, through no fault of their own, have been removed from their parent/s due to abusive or neglectful circumstances. There are over 250,000 children in the United States entering the foster care system each year. More than one half of these children and families will receive services and return to their parents. However, the remainder will stay in foster care until they age out of the system. The stress of the trauma experienced by these children, along with family issues and unstable home lives, can have devastating effects. These foster children fall behind in school with just about half of them graduating from high school and only 2% nationally completing a bachelor's degree or beyond. The trauma these children have endured can follow them the rest of their lives. One in four foster kids is or has been homeless. Even now, over half of adults who are foster kids are unemployed. These statistics are alarming, and these children need our help now.

Special Programs

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM (HELENE GIORDANO MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP)

A scholarship fund has been established for youth who are in the care of the Massachusetts Department of Children & Families (DCF) and are pursuing education at accredited institutions of higher learning. The Foster Kids of the Merrimack Valley will annually award two eligible students scholarships ranging up to \$2,500. Selection of recipients will be based upon their application and proven academic merit and financial need.

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY/SANTA'S HELPERS PROGRAM

Our hallmark event provides a memorable Christmas party for foster children in the Merrimack Valley, ages birth – 12. Through the generosity of Santa's Helpers, every child receives a bag of gifts from Santa, along with a pizza party, games, and more.

PACK-IT-UP PROJECT

Foster children often use plastic bags when moving between homes. We supply duffle bags to help them make a more dignified transition. We collect new backpacks filled with school supplies to ensure all our kids start the school year prepared for success.



Accepted Donations

The Foster Kids of the Merrimack Valley, Inc. asks the community to help them make a difference by making a tax-deductible donation.

DONATIONS NEEDED INCLUDE:

- Backpacks (new) with school supplies
- Gift Cards from local retail stores
- Duffle Bags (new)
- Books
- Cash
- Toys
- Games

