

## **Helping Youth Rebuild After Detention Through Reentry Support and Project Thrive**

With the generous support of the Tower Foundation, the AFC Unit launched its innovative Juvenile Justice Youth Reentry Project this past year. Inspired by the many legal services reentry programs available to incarcerated adults, we adapted the concept to meet the unique needs of vulnerable youth who need support in their transition from juvenile detention and residential facilities. Too many children placed out-of-home already have endured much trauma and loss and wrestle with the challenges associated with medical, emotional and developmental disabilities. Our Juvenile Reentry Team is helping change the trajectory for youth as they transition back into their communities. Samantha Gallivan, our reentry social worker, has joined forces with our juvenile justice attorneys Theresa Lorenzo, Jeffrey Priore and Cristiana Rafidi, as well as our education attorneys, Melinda Gullo, Clare Smokowski and child advocate Alicia Artis. Together, they are making a real impact on children's lives, helping them to access supportive family resources, appropriate schooling, vocational programs and post-high school opportunities, supported independent living programs or OPWDD or OMH housing, appropriate school, vocational programs, medical and mental health care, wraparound supports, and pro-social activities, such as sports and the arts.

The AFC Unit has been thrilled to address the needs of dozens of clients through the generous support of our legal community to our Project Thrive Fund. One young client recently returned to live with her mother has new bedroom furnishings, replacing those she lost when the ceiling caved in. After we assisted a 19 year old client find an apartment to begin life with her healthy newborn child, Project Thrive helped provide her with items to meet her baby's needs. A young teenager placed with her grandmother near Darien Lake was able to get a pass to the amusement park to join her friends on a relative basis! And the list goes on! Thank you for your support.