



NOTE TO NEWS MEDIA: The best day/time to cover the Summit will be **Wednesday, June 12, from 12:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. during an interactive Career Fair at the University of Providence Conference Center.** For more information or to schedule a media interview, contact Steven Coop at (406) 880-1145 or SCoop@ReachHigherMontana.org.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Cullen Gilbreath
Marketing and Communications Manager
Reach Higher Montana
(406) 285-1107 or CGilbreath@ReachHigherMontana.org

Reach Higher Montana Summit for Youth in Foster Care is June 11-13, 2024 in Great Falls

Students throughout Montana will gather at the University of Providence's University Center Ballroom in Great Falls from June 11 to 13 to participate in the Reach Higher Montana Summit for Youth in Foster Care.

Hosted by the nonprofit Reach Higher Montana and the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS), the free summit provides an opportunity for youth in foster care to prepare for life after high school—whether that includes being on track to graduate from high school, preparing for postsecondary education, or securing employment.

“We are thrilled to welcome nearly 40 youth to this year’s summit,” expressed Steven Coop, Reach Higher Montana Program Manager. “We are genuinely excited to meet these students, understand their aspirations, and connect them with the resources they need to achieve their future goals.”

During the Summit, students will not only participate in various workshops and sessions but also get a taste of college life. They will stay in dorms, dine in the cafeteria, and truly experience the atmosphere of the University of Providence.

In addition, students will participate in an interactive Career Fair featuring several local businesses. Representatives will provide an overview of their business and/or career opportunities.

“This is a fun way for youth to connect to businesses and learn more about what career opportunities might meet their interests,” Coop said. “The Career Fair has been successful in the past in helping with job interviews and landing employment.”

In addition to learning how to search and apply for scholarships and Education and Training Vouchers (ETVs) that provide up to \$5,000 per year for education-related expenses, participants will learn essential career and life skills, including how to find and maintain employment, build relationships, locate community resources, and manage money.

“We are here to support Montana youth as they begin to make important decisions about the next chapter in their lives,” said DPHHS Director Charlie Brereton. “This Summit provides an excellent opportunity to learn valuable information regarding potential academic and employment opportunities and other available resources.”

Every student who participates will receive a laptop computer or a life skills package containing tools and resources to help them prepare for life after high school.

This year marks the 19th year that youth in foster care have had the opportunity to attend the summit.

For more information or to schedule a media interview, contact Steven Coop at (406) 880-1145 or scoop@ReachHigherMontana.org.

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About Reach Higher Montana

Reach Higher Montana is a division of the Montana Higher Education Student Assistance Corporation (MHESAC), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit Montana corporation. For more information, visit www.ReachHigherMontana.org. The mission of Reach Higher Montana is to help students strategically pursue educational opportunities.

About the Montana Chafee Foster Care Independent Program

The Montana Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (MCFCIP) is a part of the DPHHS Child and Family Services Division. Youth in foster care face unique and difficult challenges as they turn eighteen and leave the foster care system. The services offered by the MCFCIP are intended to help Montana foster youth get the life skills they need to transition into adulthood successfully. By assisting youth in achieving self-sufficiency and obtaining future goals, the MCFCIP enables youth in the foster care system to create a healthy lifestyle and a successful future. For more information, go to [Foster Care Independence \(mt.gov\)](http://FosterCareIndependence(mt.gov))

Foster Care Education and Training Voucher

Eligible Montana foster care youth can receive up to \$5,000 a year to help cover the cost of attending a postsecondary institution through the Foster Care Education and Training Voucher (ETV) program. Learn more at [Youth in Foster Care | Reach Higher Montana. Helping Students find their Future](http://YouthInFosterCare|ReachHigherMontana.HelpingStudentsfindtheirFuture).