

Annual Report 2015



Equipping Students with Foster Care Experience for College Success

OUR VISION

The vision of the Wily Network is to improve college graduation outcomes for youth with foster-care experience at four-year residential college programs by establishing the Wily Network on college campuses in the Greater Boston area.



INTRODUCING THE WILY NETWORK

Dear Wily Supporters,

I have long believed in the importance of community and the need for each of us to rely on friends, family, and strangers to take care of us. I have been lucky enough to have participated in many supportive communities throughout my life and recognize that they have the power to help us feel an authentic sense of belonging and empowerment. It is the value I place on these feelings that inspired me to start the Wily Network.

Establishing the Wily Network was my first experience building a community from scratch. While many aspects of the process have been quite challenging, building a network has been remarkably easy. I have learned that people are genuinely invested in helping those who haven't grown up with a safety net. It seems that the desire to help is contagious, and for that I am truly thankful.

We will start to work with our first students in 2016, and I want to express my gratitude to all of you who have helped the Network move from a concept to a program in just one year. Without you, our launch would not have been possible. We hope you will continue to support our program and the tireless efforts of our scholars as they work towards graduating from college, building their own networks, and ultimately creating long-term communities in which they and others thrive.

Please help us build the network by donating or volunteering your time. We look forward to introducing you to our first scholars in the near future.

Have a happy, healthy new year,

Judi King

OUR MISSION

- 1.** To ensure that college students who lack permanent homes and families have the tools and networks of support necessary to thrive in four-year residential programs.
- 2.** To empower these Wily Scholars to transition successfully into post-college life and become vibrant members of their communities.

The Wily Network will provide services in each student's college community that are both extensive and intensive. Each Scholar will receive a flexible and dynamic combination of supports including on-campus college coaching, financial literacy education, and affordable year-round housing.

Help Us Help Students Like Sonia

A composite profile of the students we met in 2015

PICTURE THIS

Sonia is 17 years old. She wakes up one Saturday morning, in her fifth foster home since the age of two, and her new foster parent hands her a thick envelope. Wary but hopeful, she opens the envelope and is thrilled to find an acceptance letter to Brandeis University.

Excitement shifts to anxiety in a matter of moments. Brandeis and several grants designed to support youth with foster care experience will cover her tuition, room and board. But when Sonia turns 18, she will age out of the foster care system and find herself with few, if any, adults to support her. She will have no money for books, no one to mentor her through her college experience, and no home to return to during school breaks.

Sonia wonders: Who will I call in an emergency? Will my roommates ask about my family, and what will I say? How will I manage my bills? How will I pay for a cell phone? Will I find anyone there who understands me and what I have been through? What am I supposed to do with all these financial forms?

Sonia has worked hard to reach this goal, yet she is understandably fearful that she can't manage college alone.

Each year in the U.S., 20,000 youth age out of foster care at age 18 with no home or resources, and fewer than three in 100 will graduate from college. We want to change the odds for Sonia and another young people like her in Massachusetts.

Introducing Our First Wily Network Coach

Katherine Castañeda MacDonald, LICSW



Kat has 11 years of experience working with youth and families in the Boston area. She has worked in a variety of positions in residential, school, re-entry, home-based, and community settings. Her work has focused primarily on mind-body interventions, social and racial justice, dynamics of trauma and attachment, and post-traumatic growth. Kat is thrilled to be working for the Wily Network. She looks forward to engaging with Wily Scholars and supporting Wily's program development. Her previous clinical and program development experience will bolster her capacity to help the Wily Network build

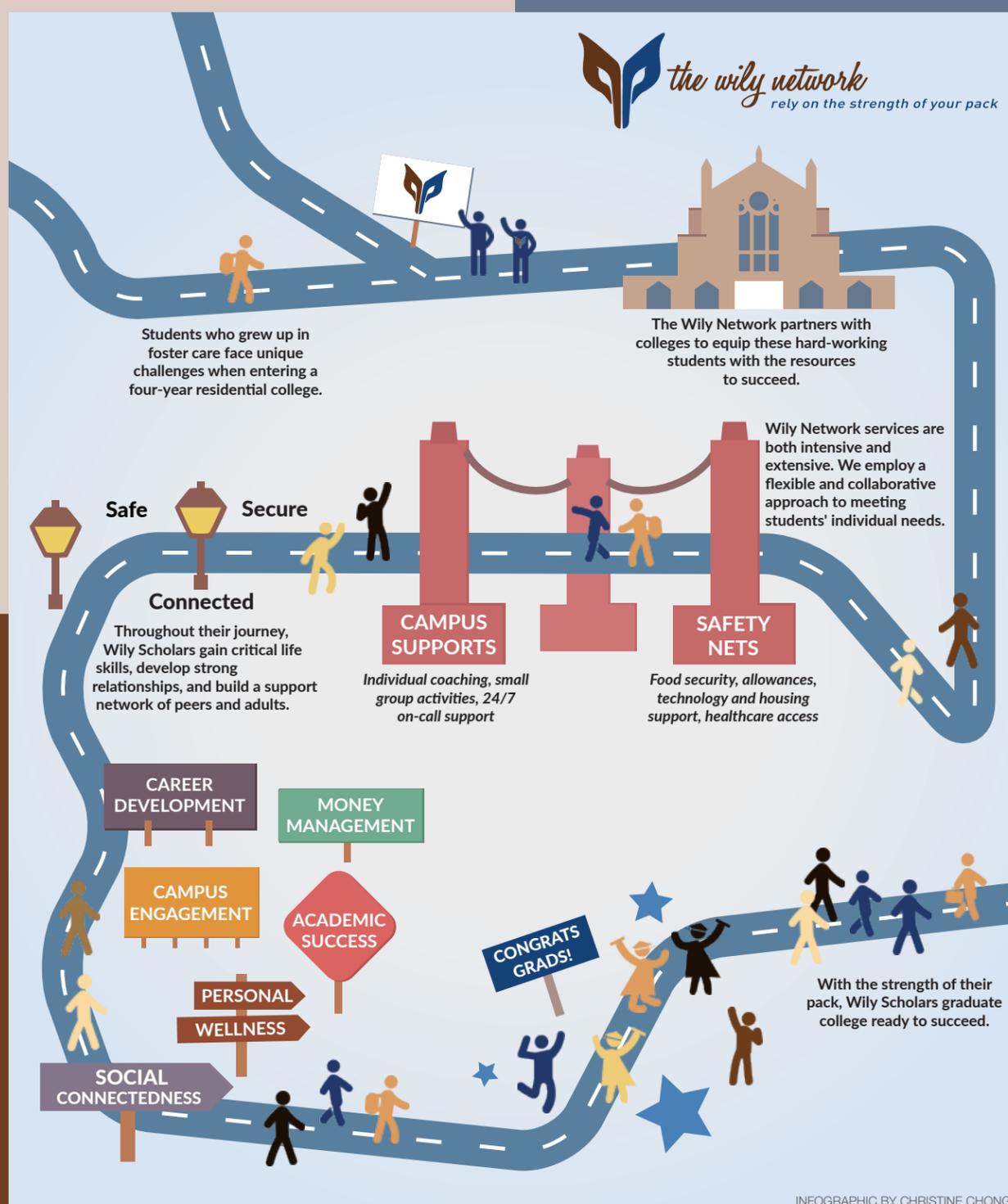
and implement a strong, holistic, sustainable, and trauma-informed model. Kat received her BA from Oberlin College and her MA in Social Work from Simmons School of Social Work.

How Your Donation Dollars Can Help

\$55,000	Sponsors a Wily Coach for one year
\$50,000	Sponsors a student's Wily scholarship for four years (this is in addition to tuition, room and board)
\$6,000	Provides summer housing, board and expenses for a Wily Scholar
\$5,000	Provides a yearly stipend for a Wily Scholar
\$800	Provides a dorm setup for a freshman

To donate please send a check or visit: thewilynetwork.org/donate

The Wily Network is a 501(c)3 organization. All donations are tax-exempt.



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"However self-sufficient we may fancy ourselves, we exist only in relation — to our friends, family, and life partners; to those we teach and mentor; to our co-workers, neighbors, strangers; and even to forces we cannot fully conceive of, let alone define. In many ways, we are our relationships."

— DERRICK BELL