

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition
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\$300,000 Grant to Meet Needs of Children in Foster Care

St. Louis, MO - The Dennis and Judy Jones Family Foundation made a \$300,000 investment in the Foster and Adoptive Care Coalition to increase the number of foster and adoptive homes in Greater St. Louis. The 2017 grant will address this crucial need, as the number of children entering foster care has risen over the past three years, here and throughout the country, largely because of the opioid epidemic.

Matt Jones, son of Dennis and Judy Jones, awarded the grant, saying “Children come into foster care through no fault of their own. They deserve the very best trained and supported foster parents to help them heal from trauma. My focus is to serve more children under this program.”

The Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition created **The Dennis and Judy Jones Family Foundation Foster Care and Adoption Program** to prepare a special cohort of 50 foster and adoptive parents during the grant year. The basic requirements to become a foster/adoptive parent in the State of Missouri include 27 hours of training, extensive background checks, and home study. Through this initiative, foster and adoptive parents will receive an additional 14 hours of nationally-recognized trauma training and specialized support services. These supports will be provided by expert staff, including those who are foster/adoptive parents themselves.

Melanie Scheetz, Executive Director of the Foster and Adoptive Care Coalition, commented, “The research is clear; we know what works to keep children stable and supported in their foster homes. However, the resources were not available until now. We are thrilled that The Dennis and Judy Jones Family Foundation caught the vision of how we could approach foster care and adoption differently and are deeply grateful that they took action to make a significant investment in the future of our children.”

The Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition piloted the program for 18 months before approaching Matt Jones with this idea. Jessica Allen and her husband, Colin were early participants in the pilot and are currently fostering a 13-year-old girl. “We feel so fortunate to be a part of her life, particularly during these important developmental years. We are close with her maternal grandmother, too. Using the skills we learned from the Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition, our two families have come together to create a support system for her and each other.”

Children in immediate need for foster parents include teenagers, sibling groups, and drug-exposed infants. Those interested in learning more about the requirements and process can call the Foster and Adoptive Care Coalition at 314-367-8373 (314-FOSTER3) or visit www.foster-adopt.org.

About The Dennis and Judy Jones Family Foundation

The Dennis and Judy Jones Family Foundation was formed in 2000 after the founder of Jones Pharma, Inc., the late Dennis Jones, sold the company to King Pharmaceuticals. His wife, Judy Jones was instrumental in creating its purpose: to promote the growth and education of underprivileged children. The foundation is widely recognized for their impactful philanthropy.

About the Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition

The Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition serves the foster care and adoption community in Greater St. Louis, with the mission of permanency for children in foster care. They are known locally for their collaboration with KSDK NewsChannel 5, “A Place to Call Home,” and nationally for their innovative programs, including Extreme Recruitment® and 30 Days to Family®.

To learn more

Contact Shannon Nichols, Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition, at 314-376-8373 or shannonnichols@foster-adopt.org.
Foster and Adoptive Care Coalition * 1750 S. Brentwood Blvd., Suite 210 * St. Louis, MO 63144