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Growing Roots to Open Wings: A Nonprofit Empowering Foster Youth Through Caring Connections and Resources

Growing Roots to Open Wings, a groundbreaking nonprofit founded by licensed clinical social workers Katie Callahan and Andrea Constantino, successfully hosted its official launch party on June 8th, 2023, at the Kowloon in Saugus, MA. The event marked a significant milestone for the organization as it embarked on a journey to ensure that every kid aging out of foster care in Massachusetts is connected to one caring adult.

Growing Roots to Open Wings or the Grow Program acknowledges the unique challenges faced by young adults transitioning out of the foster care system. Without stable connections and support networks, they are more vulnerable to homelessness, unemployment, and mental health challenges. The organization aims to bridge this gap by providing caring adults who can serve as mentors, role models, and ongoing sources of support.

The launch party served as an opportunity to introduce Growing Roots to Open Wings to the public, local businesses, community leaders, and potential supporters. The event created awareness about the organization's approach to personal growth and empowerment, highlighting the importance of caring connections and available resources.

The evening was filled with inspiration as Katie Callahan and Andrea Constantino, the visionary founders of Growing Roots to Open Wings, delivered compelling speeches. Their expertise and dedication in the field of clinical social work set the tone for an evening focused on personal transformation and empowerment.

Growing Roots to Open Wings draws inspiration from the countless youth the founders have encountered along their journey, but one individual, Aryana Leigh, had a particularly profound impact. Aryana delivered an inspirational speech at the launch party, sharing her personal experiences and emphasizing the importance of caring relationships and available resources in overcoming adversity.

"The journey of foster youth is one that requires unwavering support and guidance," said Katie Callahan, LICSW, Co-Founder and the "Dreamer" of Growing Roots to Open Wings. "We are inspired by the resilience and strength we've witnessed in the youth we've met, especially Aryana. Our organization aims to provide foster youth with the support system and resources they need to thrive."

Andrea Constantino, LICSW, Co-Founder and the "Leader" of Growing Roots to Open Wings, added, "The launch party was a testament to the shared commitment of our community to make

a difference in the lives of foster youth. We believe that every young adult deserves to have a caring adult in their corner, supporting them as they navigate the challenges of adulthood."

The night couldn't have been made possible without the help of Krisann Kiley, the "Doer" and CFO of Growing Roots to Open Wings and the "Helper" Jesse Sadin who shared what a difference one person can make.

For more information about Growing Roots to Open Wings, its mission, and ways to get involved, please visit massgrowprogram.org.