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Contact: 608-422-7800 or dcfmedia@wisconsin.gov

Youth Achievements Ceremony celebrates academic success

MADISON – The 13th annual Youth Achievements Ceremony was held yesterday at the Executive Residence to honor an admirable group of Wisconsin students. Governor Tony Evers and First Lady Kathy Evers joined Department of Children and Families (DCF) Secretary-designee Jeff Pertl in recognizing youth with experience in out-of-home care who recently graduated from high school, completed milestones in post-secondary education, or who attained other educational achievements.

“This graduation is more than a ceremony,” said DCF Secretary Jeff Pertl. “It’s a celebration of all the hard work and determination that brought these incredible young people here and all of the exciting things that lay ahead.”

The 42 graduates who were able to attend the celebration represented the 95 identified foster youth throughout Wisconsin who are known to have reached commencement in the 2024-2025 academic year.

Ms. Bregetta Wilson, a founding member of the Youth Advisory Council and foster youth alum, spoke and inspired guests. Bregetta is the president and CEO of YWCA Southeast Wisconsin where she oversees current initiatives and advocacy efforts. Prior to joining the YWCA, Bregetta worked at DCF as the lived experience coordinator where she helped lift the voices of individuals to ensure their input was included in policies and legislative changes. She is a graduate of Cardinal Stritch University and Alverno College.

For more information on Wisconsin’s Independent Living services for youth reaching adulthood, visit <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/ys/independentliving>.

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