



Self-Reliant Communities

For Immediate Release

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Isles Youth Institute Commencement June 21 at 10:00AM



Photo: Isles Youth Institute Graduation 2015

Trenton, N.J. –The 2016 Isles Youth Institute Commencement Ceremony will take place on Tuesday, June 21, 2016, at 10:00 AM at the Mercer County Park Marina and Boathouse in West Windsor, NJ. Commencement will include an awards ceremony and student speeches, with a reception to follow. Trenton resident, author, entrepreneur, and Isles Trustee Tracey Syphax will be the keynote speaker. We expect an audience of families, teachers, friends, and other supporters.

The commencement ceremony is the culmination of a year’s worth of academic and job training for students at Isles Youth Institute (IYI), an alternative school that emphasizes leadership development and civic engagement for students who have dropped out of traditional high school. Students participate in afterschool activities and volunteer extensively in the community. Staff works with students to help them apply to college and pursue employment.

Isles, a community development and environmental nonprofit in Trenton, NJ, started New Jersey’s first YouthBuild in 1995. Since then, more than 1,000 young people have successfully completed Isles Youth Institute.

“I am really proud to be graduating. At first, I didn’t think I could do it. I’m 19 now, and I thought it would have happened when I was 17 or 18. The hardest part was staying motivated. It was frustrating at times, but slowly it got easier, the teachers, the staff, they helped out, my family helped out, helped me get my head on straight. When you have people behind you, backing you, and you know they’re really for you, it makes it easier. Isles helped me better myself, and I’m looking forward to continuing my education,” says Euquan Jackson, a 2016 graduate.

“Our students are the most resilient people I know. They embody the true meaning of grit,” states Shenette Gray, Director of Isles Youth Institute. “Our young people will become the change agents of this capital city and revive that great slogan ‘Trenton Makes and the World Takes’ ...this is the exact purpose of education.”

The IYI Commencement Ceremony will take place on Tuesday, June 21st at 10:00 AM at the Mercer County Park – Marina and Boathouse, 334 S Post Road, West Windsor. The event is open to the public. For more information, please contact Shenette Gray at 609-341-4751.

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