



This past June, Isles Youth Institute celebrated its 20th Commencement Ceremony. More than 1,000 students have benefited from IYI.

Train & Educate

Raised in a single parent household, Anibal Croux was forced to move numerous times in a few short years. He was bullied at school, and dropped out.

Searching for a safe and supportive environment, Anibal joined Isles Youth Institute (IYI) in 2014. He found precisely what he was looking for: guidance and support to balance his home life with his school work.

And he began to thrive.

In June, Anibal graduated and earned his certificate in Pre-Apprentice Construction Training. Interested in computer animation, he enrolled at Mercer County Community College and plans to transition into Digital Media Arts College.

Anibal interns at IYI, and he also works at the Urban Agricultural Farmers Market, learning new skills while saving money for college. When asked how he is, Anibal is known to reply, "I am doing fine." And he is.

Build Wealth

"This is who I am."

Lawrence Foreman learned about the value of saving from his grandfather, although he never trusted banks and avoided credit cards. As far as financial institutions were concerned, Lawrence didn't exist. But he and his wife Sharon wanted to buy a home.

A Trenton native, Lawrence works for a modest wage at Princeton University, where he heard a financial health presentation by Isles. He was skeptical, but interested. Soon, he was meeting regularly with an Isles financial coach, putting money in the bank, and building his credit score. He used Isles' innovative ways to save and stay on track. He learned how to work with financial institutions and how to leverage his savings toward a down payment on a house.

This summer, Lawrence and Sharon bought their first home.

Lawrence didn't just change his address. He changed how he handles his financial life. As Lawrence put it, if not for Isles, "I'd still be renting, with poor credit. I'd lack the confidence to go to financial institutions, sit down and show them 'This is Lawrence Foreman. This is my credit rating. This is who I am.'"



In 2015, Isles provided financial capability services to 249 employees of Princeton University, Capital Health, Womanspace, and other local nonprofits.

Revitalize Communities

For most of us, a home means family, comfort, and security. For those that live in older, deteriorating houses, that is rarely the case. These homes are typically energy inefficient and dangerous for children, given the high lead levels in a home's dust.

Mary Miller of East Trenton knows this first hand. "After many years of supporting Isles (since 1995), I never imagined that one day I would seek assistance for my own personal need," she writes. "The cold harsh winter of 2014 dealt me the unexpected dilemma of needing a replacement gas heater. As an 80 year old widow on a fixed income, this was not something that I could undertake."

Thanks to Isles' innovative approach to renovating occupied homes to improve their efficiency and health, Mary was able to replace her old heater at no cost.

In a note included with her yearly donation, Mary writes, "My home is warm again and I am settling back into normal mode, thanks to all of you. May you be blessed to continue the excellent work you are doing to enrich the lives of others."



Over the past 3 years, Isles made more than 130 homes healthier, more lead safe and energy efficient.

Live Green & Healthy



Isles now supports more than 65 school and community gardens in Trenton, growing tens of thousands of pounds of fresh food.

Ayoku Sweeney had little backyard gardening experience when she first reached out to Isles in spring 2014. Curious about organic and community gardening, she wanted to know more—especially the challenges and opportunities of growing in an urban environment.

She soon joined Isles' Incubator Garden, where community members spend a year learning gardening basics while connecting with other trainees and experienced gardeners in our Isles Garden Support Network.

As Ayoku describes, "The experience is great. Being connected with what you consume, and knowing that you had a hand in seeing it go from this tiny seed or seedling into this fruit or edible leaf is indescribable. It's important for me to know where my food comes from and it surprises me to uncover flavor nuances not experienced with store produce. Connecting with fellow classmates and forming friendships with like-minded people is even more priceless. We feel part of a community movement."

After her training, Ayoku plans to share her passion and knowledge with her friends and neighbors. She tells us, "I want them to see the possibilities and benefits of knowing where food comes from, and that they have a choice to access fresh, healthy produce."