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ISLES Youth Institute celebrates five years of helping Trenton Area Soup Kitchen

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ISLES Youth Institute Evening Program has been participating in community and service learning projects with the Trenton Area Soup Kitchen (TASK) consistently for 5 years. If students need community service, a resume builder, or may simply just lack employability skills, this service-learning partnership with TASK can help alleviate those barriers, according to Stacy Heading IYI Afterschool Manager. "We should celebrate this milestone with a culminating event, and host it at a city based facility," said Heading.

On Thursday, Dec. 13 they celebrated a 5-year milestone of this great collaboration with a Spoken Word and Live Entertainment at the Passage Theater 205 E. Front Street. The atmosphere was festive and fun-filled the moment you entered the playhouse. During the reception hour, the DJ was spinning music in the main lobby while a light meal was being served. Trenton Mayor Reed Gusciora was there to support IYI and said a few words of encouragement at the reception. As the guest moved upstairs the TASK FunkTASKtics band provided exciting live music while an IYI Day of Service video played showing IYI in various community service activities. Mr. Stacy Heading and Mrs. Rashida Miller, welcomed everyone standing in front of the Trenton Makes Mural backdrop with our local famous artist Mr. Leon Rainbow in attendance, supporting the IYI students who helped him create the mural. Assemblywoman Verlina Reynolds- Jackson shared some kind words before presenting ISLES and TASK with a Legislative Resolution from her office recognizing their joint efforts and years of service in the community.

The entertaining duo of George Williams, an IYI student and Ms. Anita Wemple Manager of IYI Youth Services host the rest of the show. The spoken word and entertainment included students from the Trenton Public School District 9th Grade Academy, The Xinos and Kudos Youth Group of National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa Inc. Pi Chapter, members of TASK and community residents. Special Guests included poet Todd Evans and Angela Neely, tap dancer Quenten Couch just back from the Apollo Stage in New York and a stellar duo tap dance performance by Aniyah Harris and Kaitlyn Tift of Chambersburg Dance Studio. Mrs. Shenette Gray, Director of ISLES Youth Build closed the program thanking the many people who support ISLES including, Ms. Jamie Parker Manager of Programs at TASK and Damion Parran Managing Director at Passage Theater. A great night was had by all and the importance of giving back and serving your community was the underlying theme of the evening. "Isles has been a grant partner with the Department of Children

and Family (DCF) AND Families Offices of Adolescent Services for Almost 10 years. They are committed to the youth they work with daily, which is clear by their presence throughout the local community. DCF and the Office of Adolescent Services is grateful for the thoughtfulness and creativity by Isles to build up and enrich our youth's and community every day."

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