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JUNIOR BLIND JOINS FORCES WITH LEADING FOSTER FAMILY AND ADOPTION AGENCIES TO HELP MORE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Junior Blind announces intent to merge with Concept 7, foster family and adoption agency, and to absorb Masada Homes' foster family agency program.

Los Angeles, CA (April 2017)—Junior Blind announced its intent to expand services for children and families in the counties of Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside and San Bernardino through a merger with Concept 7, a foster family and adoption agency, and the absorption of the foster family program of longtime collaborator Masada Homes. These associations will allow Junior Blind to build upon its existing services for foster youth and serve more children and families.

“We are fortunate to combine our efforts with two outstanding human service agencies,” says Miki Jordan, President and CEO of Junior Blind. “Partnering with Concept 7 and Masada will enable us to leverage our combined strengths for the benefit of children and families who need services.”

Junior Blind’s mission is to help children, youth and adults reach their greatest potential through services that include early intervention, education, recreation, mental health, residential treatment and rehabilitation programs. Serving more than 15,000 people annually, the organization has long been recognized for its work with children and adults who are blind, visually impaired and/or multiply disabled. Over several decades, the organization has also developed experience and expertise in working with vulnerable youth facing physical, developmental and emotional challenges—becoming a trusted partner of the Department of Children and Family Services.

In 2012, Junior Blind leveraged its competencies in working with youth in the child welfare system in its residential program. Residents receive individually-tailored services provided by highly-qualified nurses, physicians and mental health therapists in a nurturing, but structured environment.

Four years later, Junior Blind opened a transitional shelter care program for young children in need of short-term emergency placement due to removal from or disruption within their families as a result of abuse, neglect or abandonment. Through the absorption of Masada Homes’ foster family program and merger with Concept 7 in 2017, Junior Blind hopes to provide a full continuum of care for foster children, families and foster families.

“In line with our last two strategic plans, Junior Blind fortified programming for individuals who are blind in Northern California through mergers with The Hatlen Center and Blind Babies Foundation a few years back,” says Jay Allen, Executive Vice President and COO of Junior Blind. “Now, we must focus on our other area of programming to help ensure that vulnerable children and families in need always have a place to turn.”

Masada Homes, founded in 1989, provides quality mental health, substance abuse and vocational services to youth so that they may become healthy, independent and productive members in their communities. They elected to spin off their foster family agency program so that they could focus on strengthening their community and outpatient mental health, school-based and therapeutic behavioral services.

“Masada Homes has worked closely with Junior Blind over the years, so we are confident that our foster family agency program will thrive under their leadership,” says Bernard Smith, Executive Director of Masada Homes.

Established in 1973, Concept 7 is a foster family and adoption agency committed to easing the suffering of abused and neglected children through programs built around seven concepts: Rescue, Recognition, Relationship, Responsibility, Respect, Resolution and Renewal.

Executive Director and CEO of Concept 7 John Peel said, “With the Continuum of Care Reform upon us, it was clear that the only way Concept 7 could continue championing foster youth would be by merging with a leading organization, like Junior Blind, who is nationally accredited and has a strong infrastructure and commitment to helping children, youth and families find hope.”

Under Assembly Bill (AB) 403, also known as the Continuum of Care Reform, foster family agencies (FFAs) are re-envisioned providers of various levels of care to meet a broader range of individual child needs, improving the experience and outcomes of children and youth in foster care.

The absorption of Masada Homes’ foster family agency program and the merger with Concept 7 have been approved by all Boards of Directors and letters of intent have been signed by all parties. The mergers are currently pending regulatory approval.

ABOUT JUNIOR BLIND OF AMERICA

Since 1953, Junior Blind of America has remained deeply committed to helping children, youth and adults reach their greatest potential. Each year, Junior Blind empowers those who have physical, developmental and emotional challenges and their families through services that include early intervention, education, recreation, mental health, residential treatment and rehabilitation programs. Junior Blind is nationally accredited by the Council on Accreditation. To learn more, please visit www.juniorblind.org.

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