

The Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange is a program of Judson Center and is funded by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. To learn about foster care adoption and view photolisting and videos of children, visit our website at [www.mare.org](http://www.mare.org).



## PROFESSIONAL NEWSLETTER Spring 2021

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# Join us for the Grand Opening of the 2021 Michigan Heart Gallery

Get ready and mark your calendar for MARE's biggest event of the year, the Grand Opening of the 2021 Michigan Heart Gallery.

And grand it is. After the pandemic forced us to hold the entire event virtually last year, we're hoping to host at least a partial live grand opening this year on Sept. 18 at the Emagine Theater in Royal Oak.

Hosting the event virtually taught us that some adoptive families don't necessarily want to travel to Royal Oak, but they still crave the experience of the event. That's why we're planning a hybrid version of the grand opening with some of it going virtual so outstate

and out-of-state adoptive families can enjoy it at home.

We're still working on the details of this year's Michigan Heart Gallery Grand Opening and will share them on our website and on social media once we've finalized the specifics. However, we're pretty certain that the show will start at 11 a.m. on Saturday, Sept. 18.

If you have youth(s) on your caseload, we're hoping they can attend the event or have virtual viewing parties at their residences. Again, we will let you know about those details.

*Follow us on Facebook and Twitter and check out [Mare.org](http://Mare.org).*

### What is the Heart Gallery?

If you're a new worker, you might wonder what the Michigan Heart Gallery is.

The Michigan Heart Gallery is a traveling photographic exhibit of youth who live in foster care and await adoption, and many of the youth on [Mare.org](http://Mare.org) also are featured in the Heart Gallery.

It generally features the photographs of about 150 youth on [Mare.org](http://Mare.org).

Reach out to us if you'd like to help display any part of the Michigan Heart Gallery!

Contact us at 800-589-6273.





*Pictured from top left are Kim Ross, Jessica Franks, Judy McNaughton, Kelli Ostrosky.*

*Shown from bottom left are Kim Wolowski, Amber Tiemeyer, Aimee Loudon and Kimberly Grover.*

## *Navigators stand by ready to help*

We've added new faces to our familiar lineup of MARE adoption navigators, so we thought we'd give you a look at them and remind you – or let you know – what they do. Adoption navigators are experienced adoptive parents who are available to help guide families through the adoption process and answer

their questions. If you have a family interested in being connected to a navigator you can reach them at 800-589-6273 or they can complete a general inquiry form on our website at [www.mare.org/For-Families/General-Adoption-Information-Inquiry](http://www.mare.org/For-Families/General-Adoption-Information-Inquiry) and a navigator will reach out to your families.

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## Calendar of Events

**Saturday, June 12**  
**MARE Meet & Greet**  
10:45 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

**Thursday, June 24**  
**MARE Meet & Greet**  
5:45.-7:30 p.m.

**Saturday, July 10**  
**MARE Meet & Greet**  
10:45 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

*For more information  
regarding these events  
contact Jessica Thompson,  
MARE Recruitment  
Specialist: [jessica\\_thompson@judsoncenter.org](mailto:jessica_thompson@judsoncenter.org)*

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## MARE contact info

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TTY: 734-794-2984  
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## ALL ABOUT ME!



☺ My favorite food is: *Mac n cheese with hot dogs added*

☺ My favorite color is: *Green and white*

☺ My favorite animal is: *Elephants and giraffes*

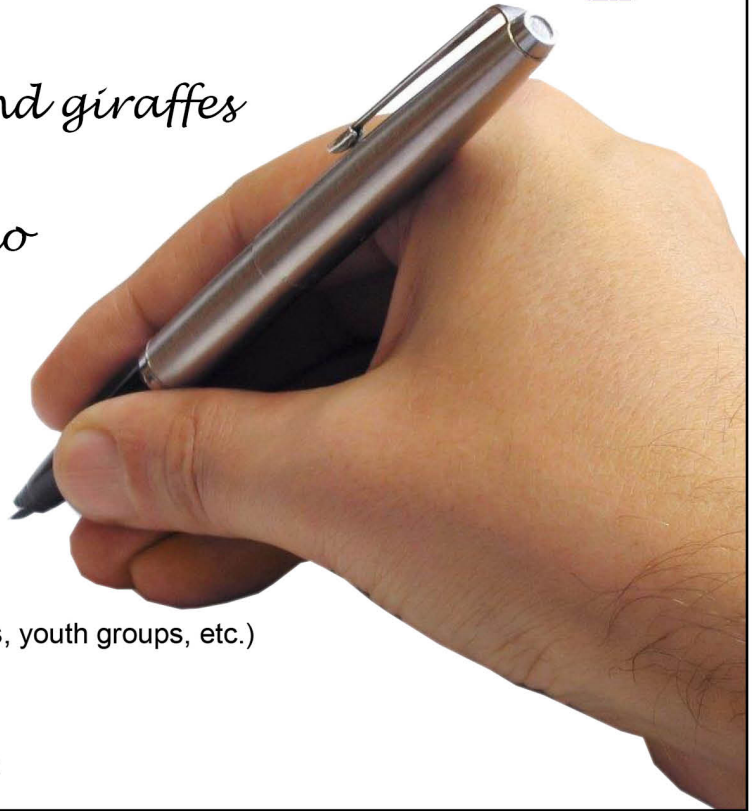
☺ My favorite toy/game is: *Twister, Uno*

☺ My favorite subject in school is: *Math*

☺ My favorite thing to do after school is: *Eat*

☺ Activities I participate in include: (clubs, sports, youth groups, etc.)

☺ My favorite thing(s) to do on the weekend are:



## *Helping youth shine on MARE website*

### **Use these tools for telling terrific tales about them**

You know that all the children on the MARE website are extraordinary, yet conveying their amazing attributes in a narrative sometimes becomes difficult.

That's why getting the "What I Want People To Know About Me" – or "All About Me" – and the "What Others Say" forms filled out is important. These MARE forms can make a child's narrative outstanding.

For instance, check out the narrative for Kevin (C09128). His worker not only had Kevin fill

out the youth form, but she also completed the "What Others Say" document. As a result, adoptive families learn that "any family would be blessed to have Kevin."

Getting the forms filled out can lead to attention-getters such as the one for Nehemiah (C08346) that reads, "Nehemiah is serving notice to all those restauranteurs out there. Give him a chef's hat and an apron, let him learn what it's like cooking on the line and get yourself a top chef." Since Nehemiah filled out the "All About Me" form, potential adoptive

families learn that his faith is important to him, and he enjoys going to church.

Filling out the "What Others Say" form becomes particularly helpful when children are unsure about their adoption plan and aren't forthcoming with information about themselves. Even if you don't know much about a child, chances are pretty good that someone at the child's placement knows more. He or she can fill out the form to provide more details for a narrative.

See [Forms](#) on page 4





# MARE's Calendar of Events

## – A contract reminder –

MARE would like to take this opportunity to remind agencies that adherence to contractual obligations, as well as policy and procedures, ensures that children of Michigan's child welfare system will be uniformly served, resulting in opportunities to connect children with forever families.

**Section 210(c)(8) of the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services Contractual Agreement refers to MARE Related Responsibilities and states: "The contractor shall notify MARE no less than quarterly of planned adoption related events, scheduled or tentatively scheduled for the next quarter. These activities shall include but are not limited to orientations, training dates, workshops, adoption fairs, recruitment activities, post adoption support activities and guest speakers. The contractor will indicate if the events are open to the public or limited to a specific audience and any costs for family participation."**

Remember to submit your events at least quarterly to MARE Support Staff Karen Gowan at [karen\\_gowan@judsoncenter.org](mailto:karen_gowan@judsoncenter.org). This can also be done via MARE's Calendar of Events Form, through a Contact Us form submission on the MARE website or by simply emailing your event flyer to [mare@judsoncenter.org](mailto:mare@judsoncenter.org).

MARE applauds the efforts of Michigan's adoption workers to find forever families for children waiting to be adopted and welcomes the opportunity to provide information, referral and support to all those who promote adoption.

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### Forms, continued from page 3

The forms also come in handy when meeting a child on your caseload face-to-face for the first time. You can print the forms and take them with you as a way to get acquainted with the child and set him or her at ease.

By having the forms filled out, you

supply MARE with more information about the children you oversee, which leads to better stories about how incredible they are. The forms provide a unique insight into each child's personality that can be conveyed in his or her narrative.

And because children's likes and

dislikes as well as personalities constantly change, you can use the forms for the yearly updates of their narratives.

*The "What I Want People To Know About Me" and the "What Others Say" forms are available to workers at [Mare.org](http://Mare.org) > For Professionals > Worker Forms.*