



**iowacollaboration  
foryouthdevelopment**

## Mark your Calendar

### Jan. 26-27 & Apr 27-29- Learning Supports Training

The DE Learning Supports Team is busy preparing for two large events in 2010 that will have Safe, Healthy and Caring Learning Environments as the focus. Both events will be held at the Scheman Center in Ames, Iowa.

### Feb. 10—ICYD Council Meeting

An ongoing date has been set for ICYD Council Meetings. Meetings will now take place the second Wednesday of every month from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm. Location TBD.

### Feb. 13—Elevate Youth Conference

REGISTER NOW for the FREE Elevate Desire to Inspire Conference, February 13, 2010! Spend the day from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the ISU Scheman Center meeting other youth from a variety of clubs and organizations that support a myriad of causes. To register, [Click Here](#).

## Youth Development News

### College and Workplace Readiness

This report provides a developmental perspective on what young people need to be ready for college, the workplace, and the transition to adulthood. To read the report, [Click Here](#).

### Pepsi Refresh Project offers grant opportunities

In 2010, Pepsi will spend million of dollars to fund good ideas, big or small, that make the world a better place. To learn more about this opportunity, [Click Here](#).

### National Mentoring Month

Harvard School of Public Health, MENTOR, and the Corporation for National and Community Service are proclaiming January as National Mentoring Month. To learn more about the importance of mentors, [Click Here](#).

### Alliance for Excellent Education focuses on High School Graduation

The Alliance for Excellent Education offers resources concerning the economic benefits of increasing high school graduation. It also touches on the importance of preparing students for post-secondary success. To visit the website, [Click Here](#).

## A Note From Our Chair...

*Preston Daniels is the director of the Department of Human Rights and is Chair of ICYD.*

The ICYD Council has spent the last several months studying the issues affecting youth, and has prioritized increasing the graduation rate as the most pressing cross-cutting youth issue in Iowa, the actual Goal is: "By 2020 Iowa will increase the graduation rate from 89% to 95%". The Council believes that a targeted approach is needed, so a few underperforming communities will be asked to participate in a sharing of information and ideas and to assist the Council in developing strategies that will make a positive change in their respective communities. Each of the ICYD Council member agencies recognize they have a role to play in achieving this lofty goal and we will be working together to reduce the barriers to learning for students and creating more opportunities for them to be successful.

We welcome any comments and suggestions to help us work toward achieving ICYD's purpose,

Preston Daniels

## SIYAC Update

*For this month's issue we will be hearing from the State of Iowa Youth Advisory Council Life After Graduation Chair, Jessa Marfal of Des Moines North High School. Jessa will be answering the question, "How can youth be involved in helping increase the graduation rate:*



The graduation rate across the state of Iowa is, overall, above the national average. It is when you look specifically at the Des Moines area that the numbers start to change. At my school, Des Moines North, the graduation rate is only at 49%. I'm starting to notice that more and more of this is because students are not going to school and are not getting the credits needed to graduate. Some of the students who do go to school sit in class and do not do class work. The way this could be affected by other students is to encourage these students that are not going to class or doing their work to try harder. Teenagers care what other people think of them, even if they say they don't. If one student is talking about not going to class and another student tells them it is not "cool" or

'how are you going to pass if you don't go to class?', that student may change the decision to skip, meaning they'd go to class and actually get something done. Good peer pressure and small remarks like that may actually make an impact on the bigger picture, and make Iowa's youth more successful in their education. I would encourage my peers to not be complacent about your classmate's decisions, but rather to reach out to them and help them understand the consequences of their choice to skip or not try.