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**Family Residences and Essential Enterprises, Inc. (FREE)**  
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**\*\*\*\*PRESS RELEASE\*\*\*\***

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**FREE PARTNERS WITH SUFFOLK COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE IN  
YOUTH RE-ENTRY TASK FORCE**



From L to R: Sue Sorrentino, Senior Vice President, Day and Transition to Work Opportunities, FREE; Gerard Cairns, Vice President, Education and Youth Services, FREE; Suffolk County Sheriff, Vincent DeMarco and Regina Savarese, Assistant Vice President, Education and Youth Services, FREE

**Old Bethpage, NY** – Family Residences and Essential Enterprises, Inc. (FREE) is proud to announce that they have entered into a partnership with the Suffolk County Sheriff's Office to assist in their Youth Re-Entry Task  
More...

Force. The Youth Re-entry Task Force is comprised of more than 100 individuals representing many of Suffolk County's non-profit organizations, as well as local, state and federal government employees.

"FREE has been an integral part of our work to help divert justice-involved youth into appropriate services to address the underlying causes of criminal behavior and recidivism," said Suffolk County Sheriff DeMarco. "They are innovators in the field of human services, and I am especially grateful for the contributions and expertise that Gerard Cairns and Regina Savarese continually offer as active members of the Sheriff's Youth Re-entry Task Force."

In 2013 and 2016 the Sheriff's Office was granted an Achievement Award from the National Association of Counties (NACo) for its youth initiatives and the work of the Youth Re-entry Task Force. The awards are granted to counties for programs that serve to improve services to county residents, and are judged on their innovativeness, effectiveness, and for delivering results.

The Youth Re-entry Task Force has:

- Served as a vehicle to enhance community relations between government and the county's human service providers
- Helped to intensify the county's focus on driving down the local jail population through Alternatives to Incarceration for non-violent youthful offenders and, in some cases, appropriate treatment alternatives in the wake of the opioid epidemic
- Collaboratively developed the kinds of services and programs to help youth and other populations address the underlying causes of criminal behavior, thereby reducing inmate recidivism
- Developed sub-committee to tackle specific issues related to education, grants, housing and mental health.
- Worked as a group to educate policy and law makers, the media and the general public about issues concerning youthful crime and rehabilitation.
- Advocated for service improvements and made recommendations to improve and streamline systems that impact the operations of the jail.

FREE is an active member of the Suffolk County Sheriff's youth taskforce and provides input and resources regarding ways in which to effectively serve youth who are transitioning from the Suffolk County correctional facilities and re-entering Long Island communities. The focus is on developing connections with other community providers and systems involved in the lives of these youth in order to create a continuum of care so that youth are well-supported in their areas of need i.e. mental health, housing, education and job placement, etc., in order to reduce recidivism and improve community safety.

Specifically:

- FREE connected with other taskforce providers in order to link re-entering youth from the court system with community supports
- FREE's Youth Symposium included a number of providers from the taskforce on their panel and workshop: **An Inspiration for a new Generation** in which over 150 people attended
- FREE works with the Sheriff's office on identifying young adults returning to the communities from the Suffolk correctional facilities served by the **GIVE** program in order to provide them with outreach and support
- FREE assisted in compiling a community resource guide including FREE's services that goes to incarcerated minors

**About Family Residences and Essential Enterprises, Inc.**

Family Residences and Essential Enterprises, Inc. (FREE), founded in 1977, benefits and proudly supports more than 4,000 individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities, mental illness and traumatic brain injury. It is the mission of FREE to assist individuals of all abilities realize their full potential. FREE provides a diverse array of supports and services including: housing; recovery services; transition to work; employment; day, community and family services; respite; crisis services; education and after school support; specialty health services; and advocacy.

FREE also collaborates with a variety of diverse 501(c)(3) nonprofit partners on educational, vocational, rehabilitative and a myriad of other creative initiatives to enhance the local communities and the lives of more than 25,000 people that reside within them. Each of the valued partners of the Family of FREE Network has a unique mission, vision and strategic goals that are aligned in purpose, and embody the spirit of the meaningful work we do every day. For more information, please call 516-870-7000 or visit [www.familyres.org](http://www.familyres.org).

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