

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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New Foster Family Shows the Power of Love

Essex County woman proclaims: "This is what I was born to do."

Monmouth Junction, NJ, May 1, 2009 – Foster and Adoptive Family Services (FAFS), along with the New Jersey Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS), presented Zakiyyah Johnson and Kristoffer Green with the Outstanding New Foster Family award at the annual Resource Family Recognition Dinner on May 1.

The event, which took place at the Sheraton-Eatontown Hotel in Eatontown, NJ, coincides with May's National Foster Care month. The Newark couple has fostered for just one year and is currently fostering three children. There is a sibling group consisting of a 1-year-old girl and a 3-year-old boy and then there is a 2-year-old boy.

These children came into their home afraid and confused. The 2-year-old, who the couple hopes to adopt, arrived at 9 ½ months old. He had been bounced around from different foster homes. Unfortunately, he was a drug-exposed baby with many other medical issues.

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But Johnson and Green immediately felt a connection to him. As Johnson once said, this 2-year-old boy has been a survivor during his young life. If he was going to keep fighting for his life then she was going to fight for it, too.

The 1-year-old girl and 3-year-old boy are siblings from West Africa. They were supposed to be in their home for just two weeks. They each had their own medical struggles. The girl had a heart murmur and a very low immune system while the boy had supposedly never spoken. But as two weeks turned into the last seven months, the 3-year-old began to speak and say hello.

Despite the many hardships, Johnson once proudly said: “This is what I was born to do.” And thanks to the support of her friends, family, co-workers, and her two biological children, Johnson and Green have made a significant difference in the lives of these three children in need.

FAFS is a nonprofit organization dedicated to meeting the special needs of the more than 5,000 foster, adoptive and kinship families in New Jersey, who provide care for more than 9,000 children. FAFS advocates for improved foster care and adoption services, provides support to foster, adoptive, and kinship parents, and promotes an enhanced understanding of foster care and the adoption of children from foster care.

The new FAFS Foundation is a nonprofit that provides the parent organization with financial support for many of its privately-funded programs. For more information about the Foundation please call 609-977-4880 or visit the Web site, www.fafsfoundation.org.

For more information about FAFS or its services please contact Mary Jane Awrachow, Executive Director, at 609.520.1500.