

Proclamation



Jane Castor, Mayor

WHEREAS, established in 2005, **Florida Youth SHINE** (FYS) is a nonprofit youth-run, peer-driven organization of current and former foster care individuals who have experienced homelessness and related hardships, who are driven to empower, inspire, and lead, and they advocate for change in policies and laws that impact them; and

WHEREAS, Florida Youth Shine's mission includes dedication to advocacy by elevating and valuing the voices, experiences, and knowledge of youth who have experienced the child welfare system by building a supportive community, empowering fellow youth, developing leadership skills, and inspiring resilience; and

WHEREAS, with a vision of creating a Florida where every youth impacted by the child welfare system has their voices heard, valued, and respected so they shine bright, Florida Youth SHINE's motto is ***Our Youth are Leading the Change for a Brighter Tomorrow***; and

WHEREAS, Florida Youth SHINE's commitment to their mission is vital as the statistics are dire for those who age out of the child welfare system and they face challenges in leading successful lives including 40 percent will leave with no high school diploma, 25 percent will be homeless after age 18, and nearly half of them will develop substance abuse issues, and it is difficult for those youth to find adequate employment to support their everyday needs such as rent, food, and other necessities; and

WHEREAS, over the past two decades, Florida Youth SHINE has grown to include fifteen chapters including Tampa, Florida, and the organization strives to improve the lives of youth by teaching them important life skills, advocacy training, and a connection with supportive peers who serve as mentors and positive role models, and their efforts, advocacy and legislative proposals have resulted in the passing of key legislative state bills that result in providing change to Florida's foster care system; and

WHEREAS, Florida Youth SHINE, celebrating two decades of youth advocacy, empowerment, and youth voice, is hosting its ***20th Anniversary and Advocates for Children Awards*** on Thursday, November 13, 2025, at the Tampa Firefighters Museum, and the event provides an opportunity to recognize the accomplishments of passionate community leaders who support the mission of the organization by making positive changes in the lives of children.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Jane Castor, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the City of Tampa, Florida, do hereby proclaim Thursday, November 13, 2025, as

“FLORIDA YOUTH SHINE DAY”

In the city of Tampa, Florida, and urge all citizens to join me in thanking the leadership, members, supporters, and volunteers of Florida Youth SHINE for their many contributions to our community, state, and nation, thanking them for positively impacting the lives of our vulnerable youth, and in congratulating them on this 20th Anniversary milestone.

Dated in Tampa, Florida on this 1st day of November 2025.



Jane Castor

Mayor