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**Local, At-Risk Students Hoping to Spend Their Summer on the Road-to-Life**

**WARWICK, RI. – April 15, 2009** – With more than \$3,000 already raised, six promising Rhode Island youth are looking for help to reach their goal of raising \$10,000 in support of their trip across America this summer. The youth are all students of the Rhode Island Network, a region of North American Family Institute (NAFI). NAFI is a human services agency that works with at-risk youth, adults and families in Rhode Island and nine other states along the Eastern seaboard. MaryAnne McIntyre, Education Director for the Rhode Island Network, first pioneered the [Road-to-Life project](#) in 2005 as an innovative way to provide experiential learning to promising urban students in her programs.

“The Road-to-life is designed to provide a one-of-a-kind, hands-on learning experience to our students. Many of them have never left their neighborhoods, or the state before,” McIntyre stated. She continued, “They have never been to the wilderness or seen the beauty of our national parks. Yet, we expect them to be environmentalists, to live ‘green’. How can someone value something that they don’t fully comprehend? It is our responsibility to give them this awareness of the environment.”

McIntyre and NAFI believe that through sharing what makes this country great---the people, the wildlife, the environment---with these relatively sheltered students, they are able to help foster in them an appreciation and respect for natural surroundings and differing cultures. Moreover, during this once-in-a-lifetime trip, which takes the group from Rhode Island to Yellowstone National Park, the Grand Canyon, San Francisco and back, youth often come away learning even more about themselves and in turn, are able take what they’ve learned from this three-week adventure and apply it to their everyday lives.

This is the third time Road-to-Life will bring several youth across country and will be the largest group attempted, thus far. Four students traveled with McIntyre and her team in 2005 and in 2007, they shared the experience with three students. They are asking for [community support](#) as they try to raise \$10,000 over the next two months. The funds raised will manage the costs of this year’s trip for six students. To learn more, please visit [www.give2gether.com/projects/road-life/](http://www.give2gether.com/projects/road-life/).

**About North American Family Institute**

[North American Family Institute \(NAFI/NFI\)](#) is a leading human service agency dedicated to serving youth, adults and families with the highest level of care, based upon principles of dignity and respect. Today NAFI/NFI serves tens of thousands of clients each week in a rich array of programs that include case management approaches, family and youth wraparound services, specialized foster care, group homes, independent living apartments, treatment centers, schools and shelters, among them. These community-based programs serve diverse populations, including special education students, adults with mental health issues, children from social services, mentally retarded and developmentally delayed, youth in juvenile justice and homeless youth. NAFI/NFI’s goal is to help its clients grow and thrive in order to better change their lives and the world around them.