

**News from the North Dakota Department of Human Services
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Dickinson resident named outstanding foster youth

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Human Services honored Shae'lene Bremer with the 2007 Outstanding Foster Youth award at the annual Children and Family Services Conference held in Bismarck in late July. Child welfare professionals selected Bremer because of her leadership abilities, personal accomplishments, and volunteerism. She joined 11 other individuals who were honored.

Information about foster children is confidential, however the department has received authorization to release Bremer's information.

"Shae'lene and the other award recipients exemplify the best of the best," said Dawn Pearson of the department's Children and Family Services Division. "Shae'lene has overcome adversity in her young life and is on the path to a great future. She is a positive role model for other foster youth and provides support and encouragement as they strive to make good choices."

Bremer, who has been in foster care for several years, currently lives in an out-of-state residential foster care facility. Her goal is to become a nurse, and she has applied to attend Job Corp.

Staff at Stark County Social Services and the facility where Bremer resides nominated her. Bremer has actively volunteered at a hospital, a multicultural center for youth, and at the Lutheran Social Services Center for Children and Youth.

This year Bremer attended the Volunteers of America and independent living conferences in South Dakota. She currently volunteers at a nursing facility.

On any given day, about 1,400 children ranging in age from infants to 18 are in foster care in North Dakota, most as a result of neglect or abuse situations. The Department of Human Services, the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitations – Division of Juvenile Services, counties, private agencies, the Tribes, and foster parents provide child welfare services with the goal of keeping children safe, while also addressing permanency needs and child well-being.

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