

" I don't want to be anyone else."



An engaging and articulate Destiny Bromfield recently co-led the statewide Youth Advisory Board meeting. She had command of the group's attention made up of her peers in the care and custody of the Department, social workers, administrators, and Commissioner Vanessa Dorantes.

During introductions, Destiny turned to Social Work Supervisor Brian Smith, and with three spoken words provided us a glimpse of the success a six-year relationship between a young woman and supervisor can lead to with patience, understanding and commitment.

"Thank you, Dad," she stated.

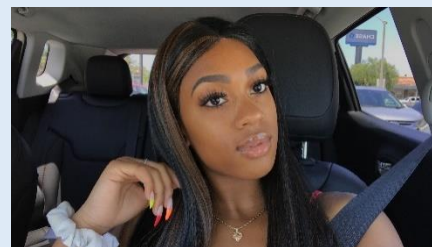
Destiny is now 21 years old, in college studying communication and professional writing, has an interest in graphic design and is content with life. "I don't want to be anyone else."

Today's Destiny evolved over time from the Destiny who first came to the Department's attention.

Born in the Bronx, New York Destiny arrived in Connecticut as a teenager with her family and quickly became involved with the Department. "I would automatically shut down," Destiny remembers when she first entered care and was "very blunt and very direct" about what she was feeling.

All around her, Destiny experienced frustration and sadness while not being able to manage her life. At times, she ran back to her family, only to return. "People misplaced my passion for aggression," she stated.

Destiny refers to Brian as "the steady" during this time. "He let me be that little angry teenager," Destiny stated. "We had our ups and downs. They knew I had more to offer."



Brian Smith has the highest regard for Destiny and her strength. "I have been the Social Work Supervisor assigned to Destiny's case since 2016," he stated. "It has been an absolute pleasure watching this young lady continue to fight through adversity and challenges to work toward her goal of being successful in life."

Destiny credits Brian who instilled a belief in her to be more "well-rounded" and to "channel emotions in a different way."

"He helped me grow and watched me grow," Destiny stated.



Social Worker Kim Soto also played a significant supporting role in Destiny's life prior to her retirement. "It did not feel like a business or their job to do. It felt more family oriented," is how Destiny described the relationship. That commitment has continued with current worker Laura Hudson.

"It truly sends chills down my spine when Destiny credits our team for her current success. Destiny has thanked us for not giving up on her and pushing her to reach her maximum potential," Brian stated.

Early childhood experiences and the insights Destiny learned during those formative years in DCF care put her in a position to assist others in a similar situation. When involved with the Supervised Apartment and Independent Living (SAIL) program, Destiny acted as an example of promise for other youth. "I had a leader, role model role to play," she recalls. "Advanced in adulting" was her mindset at the time. Her peers watched her closely.

Destiny would speak to fellow residents of the program. "DCF is here to help you," she would tell them. "Be able to take criticism and take control of your life."

"Know what you want."

Destiny is a firm believer of "moving on" and not living in history or allowing your past to define you. She has applied these concepts to her own family and the way she handles personal relationships. "Everything I got, I worked for," she stated. Her success has not been met with acceptance by some family members even to the extent of how they feel about the color of her skin.

Destiny is from Jamaica and having lighter skin almost makes one "famous" throughout the Jamaican community. Jealousy existed amongst particular family members who referred to her as a "white girl trapped in a black girl's body" or "whitewashed."

"I have learned to accept the things I can change and things I cannot change," was Destiny's response to this scrutiny.

"I don't want to be stuck in the same old place," she stated.



These same concepts also apply to how Destiny feels about her overall community. She is intent on pushing the message to respect their culture but not to get stuck in the wrongdoings of the past. "We are all human," she stated. "What else do you have to offer to yourself and those around you?"

Destiny Bromfield now has her own apartment. Here she can write, paint and blast music while hanging out with Tiglet her cat. She took an acting and modeling course and "met a beautiful group of people."

Destiny describes herself as a "certified job hopper" as her work ethic began early in her life. "I built doorbells," Destiny stated was one of her early jobs. She has made bags for Stop&Shop, Walmart and Barnes and Noble.

"I don't want to be anyone else," she stated. "This is where I wanted to be and to show DCF I can do this on my own."

What is the overall message she has for DCF staff? "You are raising these kids. They are almost a reflection of you," she stated. Think of everything you say and do.

Destiny refers to Brian Smith, her constant over the years, as "my backbone."



"He is my outside looking into myself. He is me looking at me."