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STRONGER FAMILIES, BRIGHTER FUTURES

Youth in Foster Care Have Dreams Too

On May 25th, a new mural by international artist Alloyus Mcilwaine commemorating **John Legend's** musical roots in Philadelphia was unveiled at The Fire, a local venue in Northern Liberties, where talented artists waiting to be discovered could perform. Among them, a young John Legend who performed there many times while attending the University of Pennsylvania. The Fire's owner **Karen Saillant**, a world-renowned opera singer, has her own roots in Philly and a memorable connection to Turning Points for Children.

From birth to age 18, Karen and her older brother were raised in Philadelphia's foster care system, fostered through one of our legacy organizations the Children's Aid Society of Philadelphia. While Karen would stay in one home for much of her adolescence, her brother hopped between homes, both never finding their forever families.

Although her childhood was tumultuous, she held steadfast to a dream of becoming a professional opera singer even when she was told it was not possible.

Imagine hearing the words: ***“It’s going to be very difficult for you to have success in your life because you’re a foster child and it just is not possible.”***

But Karen would go on to prove them wrong.

[Read the rest of Karen’s story here](#)

**A photo from the ribbon cutting ceremony of the mural entitled
“Legendary Performances”.**



Pictured from left to right is Lawyer Niki Ikahihifo-Bender, Philadelphia Eagles Player Jordan Mailata, Karen Salliant owner of The Fire, and Mural Arts Philadelphia Executive Director Jane Golden. Photo credit goes to Mural Arts Philadelphia.

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