

## HAMILTON COUNTY

### **Beech Acres honors foster parents for decades of service**

Beech Acres Parenting Center, which for over 40 years has been providing foster care and kinship care programs for children in Greater Cincinnati, Dayton and Montgomery County, recognized kinship care and foster parents who have provided 5 years of service in a special night of thanks at the American Sign Museum in Cincinnati.

This program, sponsored by the TQL Foundation, took place during National Foster Care Awareness Month.

Honored for their 5 years of foster care were Nicole & Steven Gaunce of Milford, Lauren & Michael Gerde of Delhi, Kaitlyn & Michael Golek of Oak Hills, Scott Klink and Elizabeth Hardin-Klink of Northside, Brad and Rebecca Messenger of Mt. Lookout, Melissa and Scott Regan of Morrow, Christopher and Kim Ryan of Mason, Scott and Sherri Springer of Mt. Carmel, Mary Kay Stein of Sharonville and Max and Shana Warner of Norwood.

Every night in Hamilton County, more than 1,500 children are in need of a loving foster home. Statewide, more than 16,000 children are in Ohio's foster care system. Beech Acres provides comprehensive training, ongoing support, and peer connections to ensure foster parents can be successful. Foster parenting is an enormously rewarding experience – providing a loving home to the most vulnerable children in the community. More information about becoming a foster parent is available at [beechacres.org](http://beechacres.org).

This year, Beech Acres placed added emphasis on supporting kinship care parents, who are the aunts, uncles, grandparents and other family members who are often pressed into service at a moment's notice to care for a loved one's child. Kinship caregivers reduce traumatic experiences for children because they are more likely to know and understand the child's circumstances and needs. Beech Acres provides support to help kinship providers keep children in a familiar family setting. Nationwide, 2.7 million U.S. children are living in kinship care situations.