

# WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

*Phyllis I. Vroom, PhD, Dean  
and the School of Social Work Alumni Association  
Invite you to attend*

*The Fifth Annual Dean's Diversity Lecture*

## ***INVISIBLE CHILDREN: MINORITIES AND THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM***

***Danita A. Echols, MSW***

Thursday, March 31, 2011

2:00PM—4:00PM

WSU Campus at

Spencer M. Partrich Law School Auditorium

471 W. Palmer, Detroit, MI 48202



Danita A. Echols, a 1998 MSW graduate of Wayne State University School of Social Work, is a Human Resources Developer with the Michigan Department of Human Services and is a trainer at the Department's Child Welfare Training Institute. Prior to her training role, Danita Echols worked for the Department of Human Services as a children's foster care specialist, case manager and social services specialist for over fourteen years. She also has foster care experience working in private agencies. Danita has presented at state, national and international conferences discussing the challenges and barriers facing youth transitioning out of the foster care system. Danita has personal knowledge of the subject; as a child she eventually made her own transition out of foster care in

Michigan. Having faced personal challenges in the foster care system, she brings a unique perspective as a foster care trainer and as this year's lecturer. In 2009 Danita co-authored "*Growing Up in the Care of Strangers: The Experiences, Insights and Recommendations of Eleven Former Foster Kids*" published by the William Gladden Foundation Press.

This lecture event will include as panelists five former and current foster youth transitioning out of foster care. Each panelist will share their story and discuss personal experiences encountered in the child welfare system; experiences such as placements, labels, separation issues, current life situations, barriers in negotiating a way through the foster care system, and challenges experienced when leaving the system. The audience will be able ask questions of the panel to elicit responses to their personal stories.

**This event is being co-sponsored by the WSU School of Social Work and the WSU Social Work Alumni Association, and has been approved by the Michigan Social Work Continuing Education Collaborative for 2 Continuing Education Contact Hours. Course approval # MICEC-0058. Registration will take place at the event. Questions? Call the School of Social Work 313-577-4429**