

DAVID G. REICHERT
8TH DISTRICT, WASHINGTON

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON TRADE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT
SUBCOMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SECURITY



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4708

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
1730 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
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April 3, 2009

The Honorable David Obey, Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
H-218, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jerry Lewis, Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
H-218, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Obey and Ranking Member Lewis:

I am requesting funding in the FY 2010 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education Appropriations bill, Funding for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education (FIPSE) account for the Fostering Scholars Program. The entity to receive funding for this project is Seattle University, 901 12th Avenue, P.O. Box 222000, Seattle, Washington 98122. It is my understanding that the funding would be used to support the Student Scholarship Fund, the Post-Graduate Transition to Independence Fund, and Fostering Scholars Program personnel. I certify that this project does not have a direct and foreseeable effect on the pecuniary interests of my spouse or me.

I hereby certify that this request will be made publicly available on my official congressional website as required by Chairman Obey's new Committee policy that only posted requests will be considered.

Consistent with the Republican Conference's policy on project requests, I hereby certify that to the best of my knowledge this request: (1) is not directed to an entity or program that will be named after a sitting Member of Congress; (2) is not intended to be used by an entity to secure funds for other entities unless the use of funding is consistent with the specified purpose of the earmark; and (3) meets or exceeds all statutory requirements for matching funds where applicable. I further certify that should this request be included in the bill, I will place a statement in the Congressional Record describing how the funds will be spent and justifying the use of federal taxpayer funds.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "D. Reichert". The signature is stylized with a large, looped initial "D" and a cursive "Reichert".

DAVE REICHERT
Member of Congress

OFFICE OF CONGRESSMAN DAVE REICHERT (WA-08)

PROJECT REQUEST CERTIFICATION

By submitting this request for federal funding, I certify that:

- This project directly benefits the residents of Washington's Eighth Congressional District and merits federal funding assistance.
- None of the funds requested will be used for a new building, program, or project named after a sitting Member of Congress.
- None of the funds requested will be used to secure funds for other entities unless the use of funding is consistent with the specified purpose of the project request.
- For requests where the receiving entity is not a unit of federal, state, or local government, or where the entity receiving the funding will not be providing support to a federal, state, or local government, or will not be providing research, the organization will provide matching funds, including in-kind contributions of 5% or more above the statutory requirement.
- For requests from non-federal, -state, or -local government entities or other public institutions, the organization will submit an End User Letter(s) of Support from a public official representing the direct beneficiaries of the project. This will be inserted into the Congressional Record and disclosed on the Member's Congressional Website.
- Under separate cover, I agree to provide a comprehensive plan outlining the sources of funding for the duration of the project; the percent and source of required matching funds, anticipated sources of the funding for the duration of the project, and a detailed budget for how federal funding assistance will be used to support the project.
- In the interest of transparency, any information submitted with this project request may be disclosed for public review, including but not limited to the Committee or Member's Congressional Website and the Congressional Record.
- Should the project receive federal funding, I agree to disclose whether I hired a lobby firm; if so, the name of the lobby firm; and how much was paid to advocate for this project.

PROJECT NAME: Fostering Scholars Program

NAME OF PERSON CERTIFYING: Father Stephen Sundborg

TITLE OF PERSON CERTIFYING: President

LEGAL NAME OF ENTITY MAKING REQUEST: Seattle University

LEGAL ADDRESS OF ENTITY MAKING REQUEST: 901 12th Ave., P.O. Box 222000, Seattle, WA 98122-1090

SIGNATURE: _____

Stephen V. Sundborg

DATE: _____

3/29/09



OFFICE OF CONGRESSMAN DAVE REICHERT (WA-08)

CONGRESSIONAL SITE VISIT CERTIFICATION

In the interests of accountability and transparency, we require that either the Congressman or a member of the Congressman's professional staff visit each project site requesting federal funding. This will enable our office to more thoroughly assess the merits of each project and ensure that limited taxpayer funds are invested wisely.

Upon completion of the congressional site visit, please complete this form and have a representative from the organization (not a representative from a lobbying firm) sign it. The Congressional Staff Member visiting the site will be responsible for collecting the form at the time of the visit.

I hereby certify that on March 31, 2009 Congressman Dave Reichert/a professional staff member from Congressman Dave Reichert's office visited our organization/project for the purposes of reviewing our request for federal funding:

PROJECT NAME: Seattle University, Fostering Scholars Program

DATE OF CONGRESSIONAL VISIT: 3-31-2009

NAME OF PERSON CERTIFYING: Colleen Montoya Barbano

TITLE OF PERSON CERTIFYING: Director, Fostering Scholars Program

LEGAL NAME OF ENTITY MAKING REQUEST: Seattle University

LEGAL ADDRESS OF ENTITY MAKING REQUEST: 901 12th Avenue, Seattle WA

SIGNATURE: Colleen Montoya Barbano DATE: 3/31/09 98122

MEMBER/CONGRESSIONAL STAFF MEMBER: Lindsay Manson

SIGNATURE: Lindsay Manson DATE: 3/31/09

STATE REPRESENTATIVE
37th DISTRICT
ERIC PETTIGREW

State of
Washington
House of
Representatives

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
APPROPRIATIONS
CHAIR
WAYS & MEANS



Representative Eric Pettigrew
House of Representatives
122 H Legislative Building
PO Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600

March 20, 2009

The Honorable Dave Reichert
U.S. House of Representatives
1730 Longworth HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Reichert:

I am writing to support the FY 10 federal appropriations project submitted to you on behalf of Seattle University for their Fostering Scholars Program. This project will not only advance the University, but will directly benefit foster youth in the State of Washington by providing an opportunity for a college degree.

Seattle University has taken the initiative to address a national problem locally. Foster youth are among the most vulnerable populations. They have a higher rate for dropping out of school, homelessness, unemployment, unplanned pregnancies, and too often lack the opportunity to pursue a degree in higher education.

The Fostering Scholars Program provides full-tuition scholarships, year-round room and board, counseling, tutoring, and job opportunities for foster youth throughout the State of Washington. This program provides both short-term and long-term benefits for the student – providing the opportunity to obtain a college degree and the skills needed to secure a high wage job upon graduation.

I encourage your support for this important initiative.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eric Pettigrew".

Eric Pettigrew



FINANCE PLAN
Seattle University's Fostering Scholars Program

Category	Federal Request	Seattle University & Private Foundations	Total
Student Scholarship Fund	\$250,000	\$785,000	\$1,035,000
Post-Graduate Transition to Independence Fund	\$75,000	--	\$75,000
Fostering Scholars Program Personnel	\$175,000	\$481,500	\$656,500
Program Infrastructure and Development	--	\$307,000	\$307,000
Total	\$500,000	\$1,573,500	\$2,073,500

Private donations make up \$1,200,000 of the matching funding. Seattle University and private donation matching fund make up 76% of matching funds.

FY2010 APPROPRIATIONS REQUEST FORM

REPRESENTATIVE DAVE REICHERT (WA-08)

(ONE project/program per form)

GENERAL INFORMATION

Organization making request: Seattle University		Federal Tax Status: (i.e. 501(c)3) Non-profit, 501(c)3	
Address: 901 12 th Ave., P.O. Box 222000			
City: Seattle	State: WA	ZIP Code: 98122-1090	
Point of Contact(POC): Tim Leary, Senior Vice President			
Phone: (202) 296-6160		Email: tleary@seattleu.edu	
Address: 901 12 th Ave., P.O. Box 222000			
City: Seattle	State: WA	ZIP Code: 98122-1090	
DC Representation (if any): Christine O'Connor			
Phone: (202) 585-2421		Email: coconnor@cassidy.com	
Address: 700 13 th St., NW Suite 400			
City: Washington	State: DC	ZIP Code: 20005	

PROJECT/PROGRAM INFORMATION

PROJECT TITLE:	
Prioritized: <u> 1 </u> of <u> 1 </u> total requests for your organization	
Appropriations Bill: (Please check)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce, Justice, Science
<input type="checkbox"/> Energy and Water	<input type="checkbox"/> Interior and Environment
<input type="checkbox"/> State, Foreign Operations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education
<input type="checkbox"/> Military Construction, Veterans' Administration	<input type="checkbox"/> Homeland Security
<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation, Housing and Urban Development	<input type="checkbox"/> Financial Services
<input type="checkbox"/> Legislative Branch	
Agency/Bureau (i.e. FBI; Corps of Engineers; US Navy; ARS, etc.): Department of Education	
Account (i.e. Buildings and Facilities, Aviation Safety; Capital Improvements, etc): Funding for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education (FIPSE)	
Amount requested for FY2010: \$500,000	
Total cost of project: \$ 2,073,500	
Minimum amount of FY2010 funding needed to begin or sustain this project: \$ 300,000	
Is this program authorized? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	If YES, bill number: _____ Year: _____
Is this program funded in the President's FY10 budget request? <input type="checkbox"/> NO	If YES, amount: \$ _____
Anticipated total future requests: \$0 Over the next _____ years	
Local, state and/or private funding sources: Stuart Foundation	
Total Amount: \$450,000 each year (\$900,000) Over the next 2 years (2009, 2010)	
Other sources of Federal funding: FIPSE	
Total Amount: \$300,000 Over the next 1 year	
Federal Agency Sponsor or Program Manager: Department of Education	
Office: FIPSE	
Phone Number: n/a (funding was awarded in FY 09 Omnibus so program manager is not yet assigned)	
Other agency advocate (if any):	

FY2010 APPROPRIATIONS REQUEST FORM

REPRESENTATIVE DAVE REICHERT (WA-08)

(ONE project/program per form)

Office:

Phone Number:

Are you requesting this through any other office(s):
Yes

If yes, which office(s): Congressman Jim McDermott, Congressman Norm Dicks, Senator Patty Murray and Senator Maria Cantwell

PROJECT FUNDING HISTORY (FROM CURRENT YEAR BACKWARD)

FISCAL YEAR	PRESIDENT'S REQUEST	ORGANIZATION'S REQUEST	FUNDING AMOUNT	APPROPRIATIONS BILL	ACCOUNT, SUBACCOUNT
2009	No	\$500,000	\$300,000	LHHS	FIPSE

Executive Summary/Project Description (MAXIMUM 200 Words):

- Please include a discussion of the project's merits, relevance, eligibility, and why it is a valuable use of taxpayer funds.
- Please limit your description to 200 words.
- You may attach additional information, however, please understand that the description provided below will be used for any and all public disclosure requirements.

In Washington State, only 3 in 10 foster youth graduate from high school and only 25% of that 30% enroll in a post-secondary education program. Within one year of emancipation, only 43% were employed with 45% looking for work. Of those employed 47% were making wages at or below the poverty line. The Fostering Scholars Program provides full-tuition scholarships, year-round room and board, health insurance, personal support, a program of cohort and leadership development, work-study jobs, and opportunity to study abroad, access to tutoring, therapy and counseling as needed, and the benefit of emergency funds to foster children who have aged out of the foster care system.

Education is the key to economic independence. SU is taking the initiative and devoting resources to help foster care alumni who more often live below the poverty line and lack a post-secondary education compared to the national average. It is a benefit to taxpayers to make a small investment in the education of foster children so they will no longer be dependent as adults on government funded social services. Indeed the federal government has set a precedent to support their education with congressionally-directed funding through the Department Education.

FY2010 APPROPRIATIONS REQUEST FORM REPRESENTATIVE DAVE REICHERT (WA-08)

(ONE project/program per form)

Justification of funding:

- How does this request fit within the identified bill and account (cite specific precedents and overall purpose of account)?
- How many jobs could this project create and how will it benefit Washington's 8th Congressional District?

The Department of Education has a precedent of providing education support for foster care youth through the FIPSE program. In FY 09, Congress provided \$300,000 for Seattle University's Fostering Scholars Program.

According to the Department of Education, the following is the mission of FIPSE:

"Principles and Approaches to Grant Making"

FIPSE has mainly worked through modest "seed" grants serving as incentives for improvement. FIPSE grant competitions share certain characteristics:

- They focus on widely felt **issues and problems** in postsecondary education, rather than on special interest groups or prescribed solutions.
- FIPSE programs are **responsive** to local initiative, leaving to the applicants the tasks of identifying specific local problems and proposing solutions. Responses to local problems, however, should have the potential for wider influence.
- FIPSE programs are **comprehensive** with respect to the variety of problems addressed and the range of institutions and learners served.
- FIPSE projects are **action-oriented**, usually involving direct implementation of new ideas or approaches rather than basic research.
- FIPSE is **risk-taking** in its willingness to support new and unproven ideas as well as proven ones."

The Fostering Scholars Program is an action-oriented, local initiative in response to a national issue – the education of foster children.

Studies have shown that anywhere from 25%-49% of foster care alumni will experience homelessness at some point in their lives. The economic impact is that these foster youth that might never achieve a post-secondary education and be living at the poverty line would be entering the Washington State workforce with a college degree and the skills needed to secure a high wage job contributing to the economy of the state.

Students throughout Washington State are eligible for the Fostering Scholars Program.

Specific language proposed for Congressman's request to the subcommittee (if any):

FY2010 APPROPRIATIONS REQUEST FORM REPRESENTATIVE DAVE REICHERT (WA-08)

(ONE project/program per form)

Is there any other relevant information regarding this request that you would like to share?

Treehouse for Kids, College Success Foundation, and Casey Family Programs provide in-kind support for the Fostering Scholars program. The Washington Higher Education Coordinating Board provided a \$5,000 mini-grant.

Treehouse for Kids, a local community-based service provider, was one of the original program partners. Treehouse continues to work closely with the Fostering Scholars Program to recruit, identify, and mentor foster college-bound foster youth in collaboration with the Fostering Scholars Program.

The College Success Foundation, based in Washington State, provides advisement and expertise on the opportunities available to former foster youth. As a mentor provider and an administrator of five college scholarships for low-income, high-potential students, the College Success Foundation has been an important partner to Seattle University in the development of the Fostering Scholars Program.

Casey Family Programs is a Seattle-based national expert in the area of foster youth and higher education. John Emerson, Casey's Postsecondary Education Advisor, was one of the original advisors to Seattle University during the programs early development stage. Mr. Emerson continues to provide consultation to program staff.

The Washington Higher Education Coordinating Board administers Washington's recently legislated Passport to College Program. Seattle University's Fostering Scholars Program was awarded a \$5000 mini-grant for the creation of a Transition to Independence Fund for the 2009 graduating class of students. The Transition to Independence Fund aims to provide graduates with support for costs associated with graduating college and transitioning to full independence. Possible needs for the Fund include: graduate school and test fees, testing materials, resume assistance, interview preparation.

CONTINUE FOR DEFENSE REQUEST ONLY:

What is the name and number of the Program Officer for this request?

Have you contacted the Program Officer?

Appropriations Account: (Please check)

RDT&E Procurement O&M Counter Drugs Medical
 Reserve Equipment National Guard Equipment Other (DW, for example)

Service: (Please check)

Army Army Reserve Navy Navy Reserve Marine Corps Marine Corps Reserve
 Air Force Air Force Reserve Intelligence Army Guard Air National Guard

Line Item Title:

Identification:

R-1/PE # _____ P-1/Line # _____ TIARA/JMIP (Intel Only) _____

Sub-Activity Group (required for Personnel and O&M):

Fostering Scholars Program

A Critical Need

The nation's support of the growing population of youth in foster care is lacking by any measure and as a result, thousands of young people are not reaching the educational and life outcomes that they each deserve. The sobering statistics on former foster youth employment confirm the narrow scope of opportunity that awaits undereducated youth. In a recent study, within one year of emancipation, 43 percent of former foster youth were employed and 45 percent were looking for work. Of those employed 47 percent were making wages at or below the poverty line. The prospects for this group do not improve with time: at four years after emancipation, 50 percent of former foster youth were unemployed. (*Foster Youth Transition to Independence Study*, Office of Children's Administration Research, DSHS, 2004).

In Washington State, where only 3 out of 10 foster youth graduate from high school before emancipating from foster care and only 25 percent of foster youth enroll in a postsecondary program immediately after high school (*Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) Performance Report*, 2005), the need for higher education to improve its outreach to and support of these students is obvious.

Despite these grim statistics however, there are many indications that these young people intrinsically understand the value of education. Their educational aspirations do not mesh with their record of low academic achievement. In one survey, researchers found that despite little promotion of college in the foster care system, more than half of all Washington foster youth surveyed had plans to obtain either a bachelor's or associate degree (*Foster Youth Transition to Independence Study*, Office of Children's Administration Research, DSHS, 2004). Nationally, foster youth face a similar predicament: high aspiration coupled with the reality of low achievement. Seventy percent of the 20,000 young adults who emancipate from foster care each year want to go to college. If we do not change the way we support the ambitions of former foster youth, the vast majority of our most vulnerable young people will never have the benefit of a college education.

Seattle University's Project

In the Jesuit tradition of social justice, Seattle University established the Fostering Scholars Program in 2006 with the assistance of Marta and Lucio Dalla Gasperina, foster youth advocates and parents of two Seattle University students. The program provides full-tuition scholarships to foster children who have aged out of the foster care system. In its first year, the program awarded scholarships to seven students – four freshmen and three junior transfer students. In its second year, the program awarded 12 students. In the third year, 10 new students were awarded, 1 graduated, for a total of 19 served overall. With the establishment of the Fostering Scholars Endowment, the University hopes to award scholarships to an additional 10-14 students over the next two years.

Students are selected based on demonstrated academic success, involvement in extracurricular activities and community service, and an ability to persevere through extraordinary challenges. Foster care youth have already shown tremendous leadership in their young lives, including leadership from within themselves to overcome tremendous obstacles. The Fostering Scholars Program is the opportunity of a lifetime for these foster youth. These students will be powerful contributors to the community in the future. As part of its mission, Seattle University places a strong emphasis on empowering leaders for a just and humane world.

Recognizing how difficult it is for foster children to get a solid college education, the scholarship also provides year-round room and board, health insurance, personal support, a program of cohort and leadership development, work-study jobs, an opportunity to study abroad, access to tutoring, therapy and counseling as needed, and the benefit of an emergency funds. Students also receive guidance from the Fostering Scholars Director in accessing the myriad of student development programs on campus ranging from the Office of Multicultural Affairs programs to intramural sports and from student academic support services to community service opportunities.

While enrolled at Seattle University, Fostering Scholars are expected to make progress toward a degree and the attainment of life and leadership skills needed for independent and fulfilled living. The financial and emotional support these students receive while attending Seattle University will allow them to concentrate on their academic achievements without the worries that so many youth face after aging out of foster care.

This past year generous private donations in the sum of \$1,200,000 and the renewal of a \$450,000 grant from the Stuart Foundation, a national leader for children and youth, continue to make the program possible. Additionally, Seattle University's partnerships with state leaders in foster care advocacy, Treehouse and the College Success Foundation, are critical to the program's success. In order to create viable options in higher education for former foster youth, Seattle University is committed to forging community and governmental partnerships to help prepare foster youth for attending and graduating from college. Seattle University recognizes how important educational access is for all young people today, and is committed to making the college dream possible for the most vulnerable of our youth – those exiting the foster care system.

The generous grant from The Stuart Foundation will help advance the program in areas of administrative and operational services helping to establish the infrastructure needed to sustain the program for future college-bound foster care youth before the grant ends in three years.

Budget

Category	Federal Request	Seattle University & Private Foundations	Total
Student Scholarship Fund	\$250,000	\$785,000	\$1,035,000
Post-Graduate Transition to Independence Fund	\$75,000	--	\$75,000
Fostering Scholars Program Personnel	\$175,000	\$481,500	\$656,500
Program Infrastructure and Development	--	\$307,000	\$307,000
Total	\$500,000	\$1,573,500	\$2,073,500

FY 10 Federal Request

Seattle University respectfully requests a federal partnership of **\$500,000** to help fund expansion of the Fostering Scholars Program. Funding for this scholars program may be sought in the Department of Education's **Funding for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education (FIPSE)**.



Fostering Scholars Program

The Fostering Scholars Program provides undergraduate financial, personal, and educational support, so that former foster youth who seek to achieve a college education have the opportunity to attend Seattle University and take full advantage of university life, both inside and outside of the classroom.

What does the scholarship provide?

- Scholarship funding to cover academic tuition, books, supplies, and fees.
- Year-round on-campus housing and meal plan.
- Student health insurance, including coverage for both physical and mental health needs.
- Assistance finding on-campus employment opportunities.
- Personal and academic support, advocacy, and mentorship.
- Assistance with financial aid and planning.
- Opportunities for professional and personal networking.
- Linkages to all university programs and activities available to all Seattle University students, including:
 - Student orientation
 - Academic advising
 - Peer mentoring and assistance at the campus Learning Center, Writing Center, and Math Lab
 - Study skills instruction
 - Career development services
 - Community service, leadership, and study abroad opportunities
 - Much more!!

Who is eligible for the scholarship?

Seattle University encourages current or former foster youth who meet the following criteria to apply:

- Highly motivated to attend and succeed in college
- Actively participating in the Foster Care to College Mentoring Program or the Treehouse Coaching to College Program
- Between 17-25 years old (or legally emancipated, if still a minor)
- Offered admission to Seattle University as either a freshman or transfer student
- Eligible for financial aid by completing the FAFSA by the priority filing date

To receive more information about the Fostering Scholars Scholarship Program, please contact:

Colleen Montoya Barbano
Fostering Scholars Program Director
(206) 296-5310
montoyac@seattleu.edu

STUDENT ACADEMIC SERVICES
Fostering Scholars Program

901 12th Avenue P.O. Box 222000 Seattle, WA 98122-1090 www.seattleu.edu/sas Tel.: (206) 296-2260 Fax: (206) 296-2166



Statement of Seattle University's Fostering Scholars Program

The Fostering Scholars Program at Seattle University welcomes the opportunity to submit written testimony for the Committee Hearing on Children Who Age Out of the Foster Care System.

Seattle University

With just over 7,000 students, Seattle University is the largest independent university in the Northwest. With a 29 percent student of color population, it is also one of the most diverse universities in the West. Seattle University is guided by its mission:

Seattle University is dedicated to educating the whole person, to professional formation, and to empowering leaders for a just and humane world.

Through its Fostering Scholars Program, Seattle University supports one of the most underrepresented and underprivileged groups in higher education – youth who age out of the foster care system. In Washington State, where only three out of ten foster youth graduate from high school before emancipating from foster care and only 25 percent of foster youth enroll in a postsecondary program immediately after high school (*Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) Performance Report, 2005*), the need for higher education to improve its outreach to and support of these students is obvious. By developing an integrated program of support for former foster youth at Seattle University, the Fostering Scholars Program works to improve the prospects of foster youth, and to transform the poor outcomes we often witness from children emancipating from our nation's foster care system.

Foster Youth and Higher Education

The nation's support of the growing population of youth in foster care is lacking by any measure and as a result, thousands of young people are not reaching the educational and life outcomes that they each deserve. The sobering statistics on former foster youth employment confirm the narrow scope of opportunity that awaits undereducated youth. In a recent study, within one year of emancipation, 43 percent of former foster youth were employed and 45 percent were looking for work. Of those employed 47 percent were making wages at or below the poverty line. The prospects for this group do not improve with time: at four years after emancipation, 50 percent of former foster youth were unemployed. (*Foster Youth Transition to Independence Study, Office of Children's Administration Research, DSHS, 2004*).

Despite these grim statistics however, there are many indications that these young people intrinsically understand the value of education. Their educational aspirations do not mesh with their record of low academic achievement. In one survey, researchers found that despite little promotion of college in the foster care system, more than half of all Washington foster youth surveyed had plans to obtain either a bachelor's or associate degree (*Foster Youth Transition to Independence Study, Office of Children's Administration Research, DSHS, 2004*). Nationally, foster youth face a similar predicament: high aspiration coupled with the reality of low achievement. Seventy percent of the 20,000 young adults who emancipate from foster care each year want to go to college. If we do not change the way we support the ambitions of former foster youth, the vast majority of our most vulnerable young people will never have the benefit of a college education.

STUDENT ACADEMIC SERVICES

Fostering Scholars Program

901 12th Avenue P.O. Box 222000 Seattle, WA 98122-1090 www.seattleu.edu/sas Tel.: (206) 296-2260 Fax: (206) 296-2166

Why Former Foster Youth Need Extra Support to Attend College

It is well documented that because they experience high rates of school instability and other risk factors associated with school failure (such as early childhood maltreatment and neglect and learning disabilities), foster youth often perform poorly in school and are rarely well prepared for college. As Burley and Halpern documented in a 2001 study of foster youth in Washington State, compared with non foster youth twice as many foster youth repeated a grade, changed schools during the year, or enrolled in special education programs (*Educational Attainment of Foster Youth: Achievement and Graduation Outcomes for Children in State Care*, Washington State Institute for Public Policy, 2001). Of those foster youth exiting care in 2004, 35.4 percent received some type of special education services (*DSHS Performance Report*, 2005).

In addition to academic needs, foster youth also have unique social, emotional health needs. In their ten-year study of 479 foster care youth and review of 659 case records, Pecora and his colleagues report that a disproportionate number of former foster youth have clinical levels of depression, social phobia, panic disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, or drug dependence. Overall, former foster youth are twice as likely as youth not in foster care to have mental health problems (Pecora et al, 2005).

Beyond the academic and health related barriers to obtaining a college education, there are several other unique barriers that arise for foster youth who aspire to attend college. For example, it is not uncommon for students who have aged out of foster care to become discouraged or drop out when their on-campus residence or dining facility closes for the holiday or summer break and they are left with nowhere to go. Understanding and addressing this and other complexities of a foster youth's life is critical for institutions of higher education who seek to promote college success for former foster youth.

Fostering Scholars Program

In June, 2006, Seattle University welcomed its first seven Fostering Scholars and will welcome four additional Scholars in 2007. Once on campus, scholarship recipients receive year-round room and board; full tuition and fees; health insurance; personal support; a program of cohort and leadership development; work-study jobs; access to tutoring, therapy and counseling as needed; and the benefit of an emergency fund. Students also receive guidance from the Fostering Scholars Director in accessing the myriad of student development programs on campus, ranging from Office of Multicultural Affairs programs to intramural sports and from student academic support services to community service opportunities. While enrolled at Seattle University, Fostering Scholars are expected to make progress toward a degree and the attainment of life and leadership skills needed for independent and fulfilled living.

Private donations and a generous grant from the Stuart Foundation, a national leader for children and youth, make these program components possible. Additionally, Seattle University's partnerships with state leaders in foster care advocacy, Treehouse and the College Success Foundation, are critical to the program's success. In order to create viable options in higher education for former foster youth, Seattle University is committed to forging community and governmental partnerships to help prepare foster youth for attending and graduating from college. Seattle University recognizes how important educational access is for all young people today, and is committed to making the college dream possible for the most vulnerable of our youth – those exiting the foster care system. The Seattle University Fostering Scholars Program urges Congress to affirm its commitment to children and youth in care by strengthening and expanding programs, such as the Education and Training Voucher (ETV), aimed at supporting the college aspirations of youth aging out of foster care.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit a written statement on behalf of Seattle University's Fostering Scholars Program.

STUDENT ACADEMIC SERVICES

Fostering Scholars Program

901 12th Avenue P.O. Box 222000 Seattle, WA 98122-1090 www.seattleu.edu/sas Tel.: (206) 296-2260 Fax: (206) 296-2166

Foster Care by the Numbers

National Foster Care Data

U.S. child population served in foster care during any one year	1%
Children served in foster care during 2004	Over 800,000
Children in foster care on September 30, 2004	518,000
Children in foster care who are children of color	58%
Children in foster care who are male	53%
Children exiting foster care who had been in care for one year or more	50%
Children exiting foster care who had been in care for three years or more	19%
Number of placement changes per year	1-2
Youth who age out of foster care each year	21,720

Foster Care Study Results

Children in foster care who have chronic medical problems	50%
Alumni (adults formerly in foster care) who experienced seven or more school changes, kindergarten through Grade 12	65%
Alumni who completed high school (compared to the general population of 86%)	74%
Youth emancipating from foster care who plan to attend college	70%
Alumni who attended college (compared to the general population of 51%)	37%
Alumni who completed a bachelor's degree (versus 28% for 25 to 34-year-olds in the general population)	3%

Compiled by Research Services, Casey Family Programs.

WHAT IS FOSTER CARE?

Foster care was designed as a temporary solution for children who have experienced abuse or neglect and need to be removed from their families. Children are placed with foster families or in group care facilities while case workers and judges attempt to stabilize families so that safe reunification is possible. About 50% of children who enter foster care are reunited with their birth family. When reunification is not possible, the child welfare system attempts to find children permanent families through adoption or guardianship.

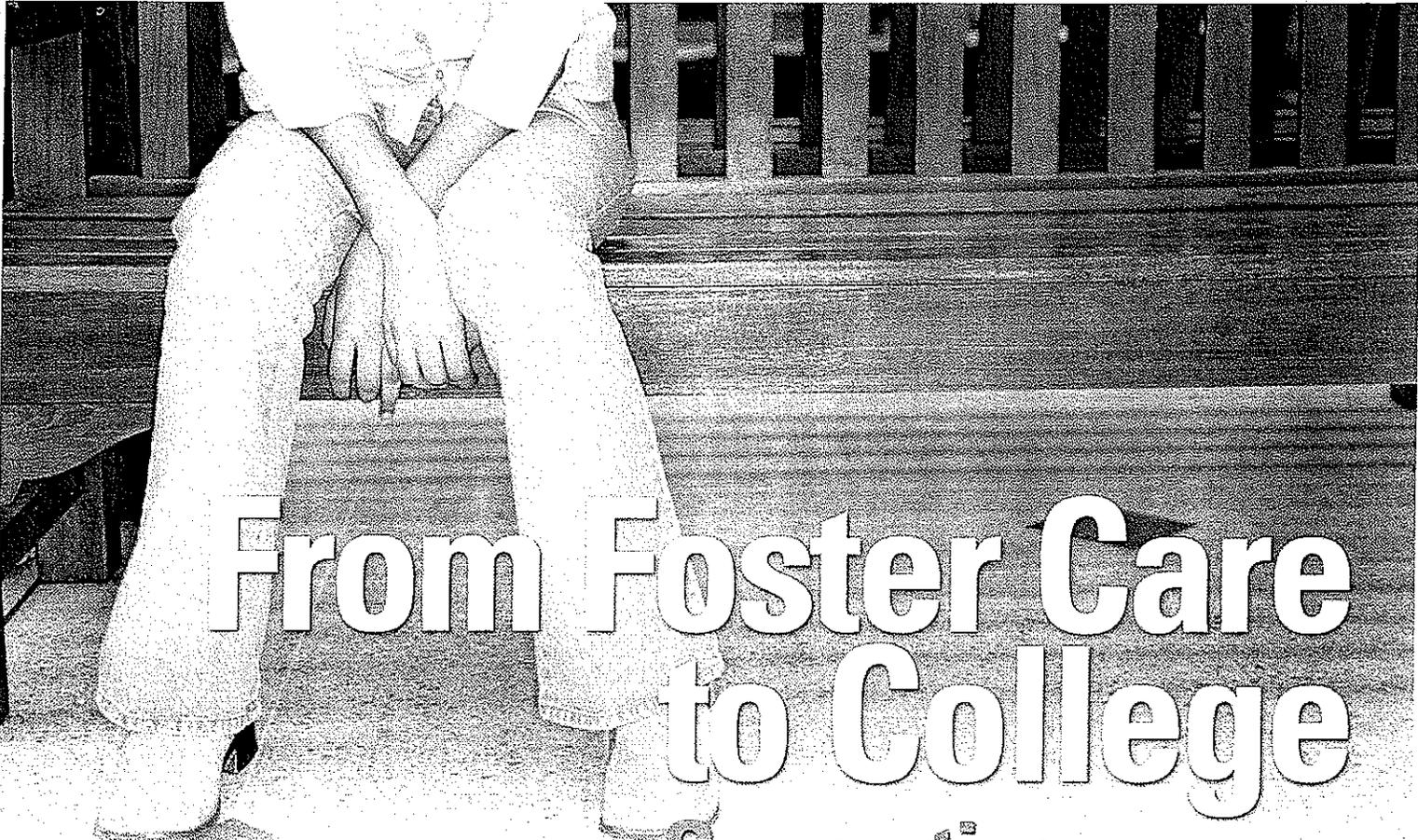
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From Foster Care to College

Supporting Independent Students

BY JOHN EMERSON

Maria lived in a dozen foster homes and several group homes during her seven years in foster care. She attended eight high schools, placed in programs ranging from special education to gifted education. Despite her spotty educational background, Maria graduated from high school and was accepted at San Diego State University. One of the primary reasons she selected San Diego State was that the school offered residential housing, and she needed a place to live after aging out of foster care when she turned 18. She did not realize she would end up on the streets during one semester break of her freshman year because the residence halls closed, and she had no family home. During other term and vacation breaks, Maria lived in her car or stayed at the homes of various friends. She eventually graduated from San Diego State, and is now employed full time and plans to attend law school. She also volunteers at a nonprofit agency that advocates for children and adolescents in foster care.

Maria's journey through foster care and college shares elements with that of thousands of other young adults who have become "wards of the courts" after experiencing severe abuse or neglect. More than 500,000 children and youth are in foster care on any given day in the United States; half of them are over the age of 10 and more than one quarter remain in foster care for three years or more. Each year some 20,000 youth age 16 and older transition from foster care to legal emancipation and find themselves on their own. Without adequate independent living skills, resources, or safety nets, many experience homelessness and unemployment.

The majority of these children experience seven or more unplanned school changes while in long-term foster care, barely half of them graduate from high school, and estimates suggest only 7 to 13 percent of them enroll in higher education. Casey Family Programs recently completed a study that found only three percent of former foster youth had attained bachelor's degrees compared to 27 percent of the general adult population. Certainly, youth who age out of state foster care systems are an underrepresented group in higher education. With more than 70 percent of those in foster care expressing desires to attend college, the promise and lifelong benefits of the college experience are rarely realized by these vulnerable young adults.

In a recent report issued by the Institute for Higher Education Policy, author Thomas Wolanin observes that foster youth have yet to follow the path of low-income students, racial and ethnic minorities, women, and students with disabilities in bringing their needs to the attention of higher education. He stresses the importance of "concentrated and effective efforts on their behalf to ensure their access and success in higher education." Senior student affairs officers (SSAOs) throughout higher education can help meet this challenge. The establishment of specialized support programs for students from foster care is becoming a highly effective strategy for community colleges and four-year institutions.

SSAOs as Advocates

The National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NAFSAA) stated in a July 2006 position paper, "College Access, Financial Aid, and College Success for Undergraduates from Foster Care," that nationally representative data have not been collected and analyzed on former foster youths' progress through the higher education system. Consequently, very little is known about their journeys to and through college. The report notes that the absence of sound data and information is preventing advocates, analysts, and policymakers from meeting the educational needs of this vulnerable population. NAFSAA recommends that postsecondary institutions undertake key initiatives to ensure that the needs of students from foster care are recognized and fulfilled before and after they are admitted to college. SSAOs can play important leadership roles in advocating for improved support services in a number of significant ways:

- Initiate outreach activities to high school guidance counselors, advocates, and child welfare professionals. Youth in foster care need to know about postsecondary education and training opportunities, financial aid options, and

related support systems. Most are unaware of the range of postsecondary education and training options available in their communities.

- Invite and strongly encourage foster care alumni to participate in campus tours, orientation programs, and summer bridge programs. These programs are seldom known or accessed by young adults in foster care. They can provide essential gateways to higher education.
- Work with financial aid administrators to identify incoming students from foster care. Financial aid information will help identify students from foster care, especially the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) question, "Are (a) both of your parents deceased, or (b) are you (or were you until age 18) a ward/dependent of the court?" (Step Three, question 53 on the 2006-2007 application). Knowing who these students are and reaching out to them is an important first step.
- Track access to college and success of students from foster care. This information will enable student affairs staff to identify how well they are serving these undergraduates. Very few colleges are aware of how effective their support service systems are for these students.
- Establish a holistic scholars program that provides unique academic and social support for young adults from foster

"Growing up as a foster child was harsh because it often felt like you were alone in a bad situation. After total turmoil, foster children are expected to listen to complete strangers and be obedient to foster families and social workers and, at the same time, be independent and self-reliable. Then, when we turn a certain age, we are released into a very hard world and expected to support ourselves."

—CLARA



care. Identify a coordinator who is responsible for the successful integration of these students into the campus community. Consideration should be given to replicating successful programs such as the Guardian Scholars developed by the Orangewood Children's Foundation in Orange County, Calif.

- Address as many physical and health issues as possible prior to the start of academic programs. Since most students from foster care will not have health insurance coverage, work with the campus health centers and community resources to ensure that their physical and mental health issues are addressed in a timely manner.
- Provide opportunities for work-study. Work opportunities on campus will help students obtain needed financial resources while keeping them connected with campus resources and staff.
- Be prepared to keep residential halls open during winter and summer breaks. Campus housing often is the only home for students from foster care. Coordinating with campus housing officials and community housing resources is critical to ensure that all students have safe and stable places to live all year long.

Creating Networks for Foster Care Students

SSAOs must champion the success of students from foster care at all levels of the institution. The California State University, Fullerton (CSUF) Guardian Scholars program effectively links the student affairs administration and senior leadership of the university in meeting the needs of this distinct population. "In order for them to be successful, students from foster care require services that must be a high priority for SSAOs and, consequently, the university," says Robert Palmer, vice president for student affairs at CSUF. "Our president's administrative board (PAB) consists of the senior leadership of the university. My presence as the senior student affairs officer has ensured a broad base of university support for the Guardian Scholars program."

Heidi Lockhart, director of Fullerton Community College's program for students from foster care, stresses the importance of linking student services to help students build and maintain webs of support throughout their academic careers. The greater the support networks, the more successful the students. "We have identified key staff members in the various student services areas to assist our students. New students from foster care are immediately linked with appropriate services through these designated staff," describes Lockhart.

College students from foster care usually present personal and academic profiles that require focused attention. For these students, the usual social support systems are lacking, and support from new college relationships must be assured to maximize college retention. A trusted and stable adult relationship is critical to students from foster care. This component is key to all effective programs because foster care children lose trust in adults—a common reaction to childhood abuse and neglect, according to the National Institute of Mental Health.

Established programs utilize a range of support strategies that:

- Ensure students have regular contact with a trusted academic or program advisor who has knowledge about foster care and its effect on young adult development and college success.
- Arrange for secure housing options. Some schools now provide students from foster care with priority residence hall space. This needs to include housing during school breaks and even during the summers.
- Assist students in finding a stable and skilled college mentor or coach—a graduate, a college staff member, friend, relative, peer, or community member.
- Arrange financial aid assistance that includes public and private aid opportunities specifically designated for students from foster care as well as work-study opportunities, emergency funding, and 12-month financial planning.
- Promote active and collaborative peer learning and studying opportunities. Isolation is the enemy of college success, especially for students from foster care who may be reluctant to seek and join communities of learners.
- Ensure that students are informed about the full range of student support services and how to access them. They often need constant encouragement and guidance to take advantage of services in a timely manner.
- Inform students about available transportation vouchers and/or subsidies. Transportation issues can present major barriers to students, especially at community colleges.
- Help students with child care needs. Students are often reluctant to talk about these needs.

"I had a lot of anger and pain to deal with when I started college; all this prevented me from building normal relationships. I didn't trust anybody. I felt ashamed because I came from foster care and moved so much."

—DAVID

“When you have to think about, ‘What am I going to eat and how am I going to survive?’ you can’t put your full attention on four classes. I was still in survival mode my first year and astronomy just wasn’t a class that was helping me to survive.”

—ROBERTA



- Stress the importance of frequent interactions with professors, instructors, support staff, and other campus personnel. Students from foster care often have difficulties trusting adults, especially in new settings.
- Guide students to specially designed services, groups and opportunities, including gay, bisexual, lesbian and transgender (GLBT) support groups and organizations for students with disabilities, first-generation college students, and students of color. Introduce students to the Federal Trio Programs, which offer educational opportunity outreach programs for low-income, first-generation and disabled students, and strongly encourage participation.
- Regularly monitor academic progress and offer follow-up advising to ensure students access available support services.
- Promote active involvement in first-year orientation, college culture, summer-start, first-year experience, College 101 classes, and bridge programs. Young independent students are often unaware of these opportunities or do not know how to access them.
- Give students technology access and support, especially stable e-mail accounts. Buying and maintaining personal computers may be an expense well beyond students’ means.
- Guide students to study skills, time management, and college success classes and workshops. Because of frequent school changes, skill development in these areas may be deficient.
- Help students meet their spiritual and cultural needs by guiding them to opportunities on campus and in the community.
- Encourage students to participate in social, recreational, and community service opportunities. Healthy extra-curricular involvement is important to all students, but especially to students who may be reluctant to try new experiences.

Key Components of Successful Programs

Some 30 college programs are currently supporting students from foster care. Most are institutionally based; some have

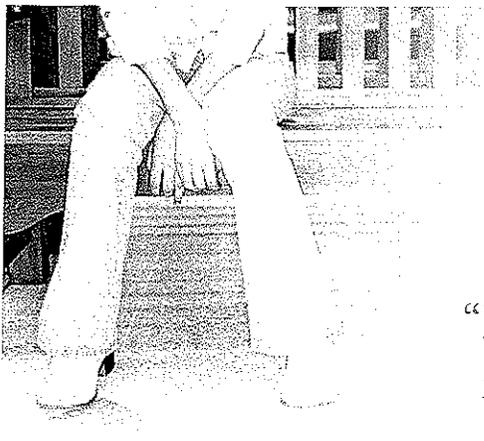
been initiated by private scholarship programs or community nonprofits, including the Orphan Foundation of America (OFA), the Washington Governors Scholarship Program, the Silicon Valley Children’s Fund’s Youth Education Scholarship (YES), and Linkage to Education in Sacramento. These programs work with college student support services and financial aid offices to ensure scholarship recipients are recognized. With the leadership of the nonprofit Orangewood Children’s Foundation, the Guardian Scholars model is spreading and is now in approximately 20 schools, primarily in California. The model leverages the expertise and resources of the private sector and public agencies to support former foster youth in their efforts to gain college educations. With the support of the Lumina Foundation, replicas of the program are now offered at Ball State University and Ivy Tech Community College in Indiana. Other programs are being implemented at Michigan State University, Seattle University, Texas A&M University at Kingsville, Austin Community College, California Community Colleges, and the University of California, Santa Cruz.

The support programs are grounded on the premise that these students present life challenges that are often insurmountable without adult mentoring, improved college opportunities, financial support, and caring role models. “Our goal is to empower former foster youth to fulfill their potential at San Francisco State University by giving them personal attention, connections, and access to all the services we have and they deserve,” states Xochiti Sanchez-Zarana, Educational Opportunity Program pre-collegiate/community partnership coordinator.

Typically, three diverse components are integral to the success of these programs: the educational institutions, external champions, and external catalyst organizations.

Educational Institutions

Institutions must address financial aid, housing, and mentoring in any program targeted to students from foster care. Many foster care youth report failing to enter their post-



“My biggest worry was not really failure, but just not fitting in and feeling like an outsider.”

—KAMI

secondary programs or dropping out due to inability to navigate the financial aid system.

A specialist from an institution's financial aid office can be a trusted liaison to students from foster care and assist them with securing adequate aid using public and private funding sources to avoid overwhelming debt burdens at graduation. A dedicated program director who provides a strong voice on campus for students' success and works closely with SSAOs and staff is needed to oversee any new programs.

Housing is challenging at most schools, especially community colleges. In the absence of residence hall space, some institutions have developed creative solutions such as pooled funding for first and last months' rent and security deposits, co-signing rental contracts, finding apartments near campus, involving landlords in the program, establishing relationships with community housing agencies, and working with foster care independent living programs.

Students continually express the value of relationships with adults who make unconditional commitments to their success. The Orphan Foundation of America provides scholarship recipients with online mentors matched by career interests. Mentors are trained and supported by a mentoring coordinator, and students and mentors report high satisfaction with this kind of support system.

External Champions

Whether it is an influential individual or number of individuals, external champions must passionately care about student success and provide strong voices of advocacy. They can engage a school's leadership, chart a program's direction, assist with student selection, identify financial resources, promote ongoing advocacy for the program within the school and the community, act as a resource for student mentors, and support graduating students and early exiters in a variety of ways.

Catalyst Organizations

External organizations with knowledge and experience in foster care transition can support program staff and the institution. For the Guardian Scholars program, the Orangewood Children's Foundation is the designated catalyst organization. The external organization, based in either the public or private sector, can help:

- identify and cultivate school leadership and external champion support;
- advise and guide on best practices;
- manage difficult student and program issues;
- provide financial resources for students and programs; and
- recruit and select participating students.

Beating the Odds

Higher education institutions will develop programs to best fit the needs of their students, cultures, and structures. Schools must value creativity, flexibility, collaboration, and innovativeness to achieve successful programs. Gene Howard, executive director of the Orangewood Children's Foundation, explains, “There is no cookie-cutter model or approach. The students will bring you situations that you could not have imagined. The learning in this program is continuous, but offers foster youth a true opportunity to rise above the circumstances of their birth and create a new life.”

In the last five years, these programs have graduated hundreds of undergraduate students from foster care—students who have truly beaten the odds in attaining their college degrees and moved on to careers.

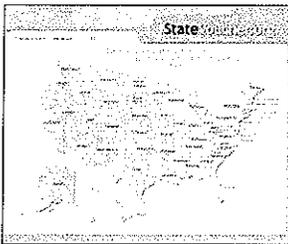
The young adults who make it to postsecondary programs after leaving foster care are frequently challenged by a multitude of personal, academic, and financial barriers that impede their progress and college success. The small but growing number of programs dedicated to reaching these students and providing networks of support are realizing impressive results. As the Institute for Higher Education Policy points out, if foster youth attended postsecondary education at the same rate as their peers, nearly 100,000 additional foster youth would be attending college. Student affairs professionals must ensure these students find welcoming and understanding communities ready to provide safety nets of services that can make the difference between failure and success. ■

John Emerson is senior manager of education for Casey Family Programs. Established by United Parcel Service founder Jim Casey, this Seattle-based national operating foundation has served children, youth, and families in the child welfare system since 1966.

Improving Outcomes for Students in Foster Care

Initiatives at federal, state, and institutional levels offer students from foster care a wider range of options to better prepare them for college and to help them access needed financial aid and support services.

- Thirty-three states have laws or policies that provide state-funded scholarships or tuition waivers to foster youth who are making the transition from foster care to higher education. (www.nrcys.ou.edu/nrcyd/state_pages.shtml)
- Iowa and Indiana recently joined several other states in extending support and Medicaid coverage for foster youth to age 21. College students from these states now have critical health coverage. (www.jimcaseyouth.org/docs/iowa_extends_law.pdf)



◦ The federally funded and state-administered Education and Training Vouchers (ETV) program provides up to \$5,000 annually to students from foster care. The program is available in all states. (www.statevoucher.org/)

- The Murray/DeWine amendment (S.1429) to the Higher Education Act reauthorization provides for improved postsecondary education opportunities for foster youth by helping TRIO and GEAR UP programs serve students in foster care.
- California has enacted the Higher Education Outreach and Assistance Act for Emancipated Foster Youth, which calls for the trustees of the California State University and the board of governors of the California Community Colleges to expand access and retention programs to better serve students from foster care.
- Targeted college support programs are increasing retention and graduation rates for students from foster care, including the Guardian Scholars program at California

State University at Fullerton, Ball State University, University of California, Los Angeles, and a growing number of California community and four-year schools; the Foster Care Alumni Program at Austin Community College; the Renaissance Scholars Program at California Polytechnic State University; Linkage to Education in Sacramento; and the Fostering Scholars Program at Seattle University.

- Privately-funded scholarship programs with support services include Orphan Foundation of America, Casey Family Programs, Washington Governors Scholarships, Orangewood Children's Foundation, the Foster Care Youth Endowed Scholarship Program at Michigan State University, and the United Friends of the Children College Sponsorship Program.
- Washington and Hawaii state legislation extend foster care services or higher education board allowances for foster youth pursuing postsecondary education or training.
- California community colleges are spearheading the California Community College Foster Youth Initiative to identify and train a designated financial aid staff person in each institution to assist and support students.
- Virginia residents who were in foster care when they received their high school diplomas or GEDs are eligible for grants to pay for tuition and related fees at Virginia community colleges.
- The Washington Education Foundation (www.waedfoundation.org) employs independent student officers to support their independent scholarship recipients, including those from foster care.
- Casey Family Programs (www.casey.org) has published *It's My Life: Postsecondary Education and Training Guide*, which provides recommendations, strategies, and resources for improving college access and retention for students from foster care. It is available for free by e-mailing PostsecondaryEdGuide@casey.org.

