

Newsletter

NRC-FAHE:
National Research
Collaborative for Foster
Alumni & Higher Education

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Who We Are:



The National Research Collaborative for Foster Alumni and Higher Education (NRC-FAHE) is a network of researchers and practitioners dedicated to improving practices and shaping policies that support foster youth and alumni in higher education.

Through the development of a focused research agenda, NRC-FAHE fosters communication and collaboration among interdisciplinary scholars and professionals to enhance postsecondary access, retention, and success for youth in care and foster care alumni.

The NRC-FAHE promotes innovative ways to use research and best practices to inform and influence policy making and values practice-informed research and the voice of youth in care and foster care alumni in improving access and outcomes in higher education.

Welcome Angelique Day, PhD, MSW

Welcome to 2026!

Happy Spring! I am sure many of our readers are busy preparing for graduation and well deserved celebrations for their graduates. Amongst these important endeavors I want to make sure we are not losing site of critical federal policy conversations that are happening right now that impact our students.

1. H.R. 1, also known as the "One Big Beautiful Bill Act" (OBBA) and enacted on July 4, 2025, implemented significant, far-reaching changes to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and nutrition assistance. These changes, designed to reduce federal spending by nearly \$187 billion over 10 years, started taking effect in late 2025 and continued into 2026, with key updates highlighted below.

- Key SNAP Implementation Updates (As of Feb/March 2026)
- Expanded Work Requirements (Effective Dec. 1, 2025, onwards): The age range for "able-bodied adults without dependents" (ABAWDs) subject to work requirements was expanded to include adults up to age 65. Exemptions for veterans, caregivers, and people experiencing homelessness have been removed, forcing more individuals to meet a 20-hour-per-week work requirement or lose benefits.
- Restricted Immigrant Eligibility: The law limits SNAP eligibility to U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents (LPRs). Many, including refugees and asylum seekers, are now ineligible, while some entrants from specific countries (Cuba, Haiti, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Palau) may have different access rules.
- Thrifty Food Plan (TFP) Freeze: H.R. 1 mandates that the Thrifty Food Plan, which determines SNAP benefit amounts, remain "cost-neutral". This prevents the USDA from updating benefits based on actual food price increases, dietary guidelines, or inflation, which the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) projects will result in a decrease in monthly benefits for roughly 65% of households.

- State Cost-Sharing and Penalties (Upcoming): Starting in FY2028, states will be required to share the cost of SNAP benefits and will face higher financial penalties for high error rates (over 5% or 6% depending on the specific provision), which is causing states to tighten eligibility and increase verification processes.
- Categorical Eligibility Changes: The new law curbs "Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility" (BBCE), a policy previously used by states to lift asset tests, which will likely lead to more strict asset checks for recipients.
- Nutrition Education Funding Eliminated: Federal funding for SNAP-Ed (education and obesity prevention) has been terminated.
- State-Specific Food Restrictions (2026): Several states, including Texas, Florida, and Ohio, have passed or are implementing waivers to ban the purchase of certain items with SNAP/EBT, such as sugary drinks, energy drinks, and candy, with restrictions taking effect between Jan. 1, 2026, and early 2028.
- Impact on Nutrition Assistance
- Reduction in Benefits: Estimates suggest the law will take nearly 6 billion meals off the table for SNAP participants annually, making it the largest cut in the program's history.
- Administrative Strain: The legislation halves the federal match for state administrative costs from 50% to 25%, increasing the financial burden on state agencies to manage the program.

2. As of April 2026, major opportunities exist to comment on proposed HUD rules regarding housing assistance, specifically targeting work requirements, time limits, and mixed-status households. [Work Requirements and Time Limits \(FR-6125-P-02\)](#): Proposed rule allowing housing authorities (PHAs) to impose work requirements and time limits for non-elderly, non-disabled adults in HUD-funded housing (up to 40 hours/week). Deadline: May 1, 2026. Action: Submit comments via [Regulations.gov](#).

3. In the policy section of this newsletter, there is a series of newly introduced Legislation to Follow, including bills that directly impact the Chafee and ETV eligibility and distribution. Please make sure you give those bills a read.



Angelique Day, PhD, MSW is an Associate Professor in the School of Social Work at the University of Washington–Seattle. Much of her research focuses on foster care youth, including examining the differences in college retention rates between foster care youth and other low-income first-generation college students, and examining “youth voice” and its impact on child welfare, education and health policy reform. Dr. Day leads the Policy Review team for the NRC–FAHE.

Program Highlight

Fostering Success
University of
Wisconsin

Interview with:
**Damien Dunbar
Rutherford, Senior**



My name is Damien Dunbar Rutherford and I am in my last semester at UW- Stout. Immediately following graduation, I plan on pursuing a graduate degree. I aspire to be a clinical mental health counselor. One day I would like to open a private practice or my own business. I want to make a positive impact in my community.

NRC-FAHE: How did you first hear about Fostering Success(FS)?

DAMIEN DUNBAR RUTHERFORD: I first heard about FS from the previous program coordinator. I didn't have any support around campus, and it sounded like they had a lot of resources like hygiene products and food. It was nice to have another advisor that I could go to. When I first joined, it was the sense of community and having a social support network. But more recently, it's been help with financial security. If I have academic or mental health struggles, I can go to them. FS has been going above and beyond for me. I think it's a great program.

NRC-FAHE: How did FS help with a sense of community?

DAMIEN DUNBAR RUTHERFORD: We would do foster care dinners once or twice a month where you would meet with all the other foster kids and have a meal with them. That's good for students that come to college and don't have anyone. I think that was really useful, and it made me more involved around campus too. I made me feel like I was more integrated into the campus environment.

NRC-FAHE: Are there any ways that FS has helped you to grow?

They helped me be more comfortable, so that I could put more effort into my classes, and my work. They helped me meet my basic needs. I'm doing very well academically. If your needs are met, it'll help you grow so much. I think that's the first thing you have to address.

NRC-FAHE: Do you have a message for policy makers regarding foster care programs?

DAMIEN DUNBAR RUTHERFORD: Simply put, people who have experienced foster care need a lot of support. Statistically, they are not very successful in higher education. They make up a lot of the homeless population. It's such a disadvantaged population, and I think they just need a little bit of support. FS has done that for me. It's done so much for me in so many different ways. I don't know where I would be without it. It was the first program that got me involved in campus.

Program Highlight

Fostering Success
University of
Wisconsin

Interview with:
Gabby Hart,
**Sophomore, Social
Work**

My name is Gabby Hart and I'm a sophomore at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater! I study social work and would eventually love to work in either Child Protective Services or hospital social work.

NRC-FAHE: How did you first hear about Fostering Success(FS) and what motivated you to get involved with it?

GABBY HART: FS reached out to me via email during my freshman year with a scholarship opportunity and coming from the foster care system and a single parent household scholarships to me are a big green flag.

The scholarship goes toward my tuition, which covers my meal swipes, my housing, textbooks, things like that. They also guide me through things, especially other members of the group, other foster care kids. They tell me their experiences, and that helps me. It's broadening my knowledge.

The fact that there is a place like FS with people who have similar experiences as mine is definitely such a comfortable feeling. I love the community that FS provides for me.

NRC-FAHE: How has being in FS changed your perspective on your future and what is possible for you?

GABBY HART: Without FS, I would have to work more, which would take away from my academics and affect my grades. It also affects my social life which affects my mental health. I would love to go to graduate school and get my master's in Social Work. I think a long term goal of mine would definitely be to teach, to become a professor of social work and teach others from my experiences.

NRC-FAHE: Do you have a message to policy makers around programs like FS and how impactful they can be?

GABBY HART: I think policy makers should help FS make themselves more widely known. FS originally reached out to me. Some people who had difficult upbringings might not be aware about the services. Letting people know "we're here if you need the support."

I'm solely reliant on the three jobs I work and the financial aid that I get. I still remember the day I got the email from FS saying I got the scholarship. I was at home for the weekend with my grandma, and my grandma started crying when we read the emails. She was praying to God, thanking God. FS has helped a lot. It definitely has taken the stress off both of our shoulders.

Program

Highlight

Fostering Success
University of
Wisconsin
Milwaukee

Interview with:
Tawney Latona,
Fostering Success
Coordinator



Tawney is the founder and coordinator of Fostering Success at UWM, a program that supports foster youth, homeless youth, and other unaccompanied students. Tawney is a proud UWM alum and previously worked in the Office of Undergraduate Admissions for over 21 years, passionate about advocating for students and helping them achieve their academic goals.

NRC-FAHE: How did you get involved with Fostering Success(FS)?

TAWNEY LATONA: The program started in 2013 at the University of Wisconsin-Stout, where a former student with lived experience in foster care established an initiative to support students with similar backgrounds. Beginning with approximately 30 students, the program was driven by her personal commitment and firsthand understanding of the challenges faced by this population.

In 2017, while working in admissions at the UW-Milwaukee, I was asked to be the campus foster care liaison. After attending a conference presentation about FS at UW-Stout, we mobilized a group of volunteers to develop a similar program at UWM. This grassroots effort laid the foundation for what is now FS at UWM.

Today, 11 of the 13 Universities of Wisconsin campuses offer FS programs. The model has expanded through strong community partnerships, including state investment, nonprofit organizations, independent living programs, and local donors. Built on passion and sustained through volunteerism and community support, the program is dedicated to helping students not only persist in college, but thrive, graduate, and transition into meaningful careers within the state.

NRC-FAHE: Can you speak a little bit more on the academic supports that are provided to students, like tutoring, mentoring or study groups.

TAWNEY LATONA: The Universities of Wisconsin FS programs are supported by strong collaboration dedicated to student success. At UWM I'm in the Student Success Center, which serves as a hub for many of these services. All students have access to a wide range of academic supports, including mentoring, tutoring, and Supplemental Instruction (SI). SI is a particularly effective resource in which a student who has previously succeeded in a course attends class sessions and facilitates review sessions and discussions to reinforce course content. One of my favorite services is Academic Skills tutoring, which focuses on things such as time management and effective study strategies.

Our early alert system, Navigate 360, allows faculty to proactively identify and support students who may be experiencing challenges. When concerns arise, notifications are sent to the student, their College Success

Coach, and their Academic Advisor. Students are then connected with appropriate resources.

Many FS programs have a student organization. These groups provide opportunities for study sessions, advocacy, and social events. They play an important role in building community, helping students feel connected, supported, and confident that they are not navigating their college experience alone.

NRC-FAHE: Can you think of ways where the program specifically addresses unique needs of youth previously in foster care?

TAWNEY LATONA: Foster youth often face many challenges, including housing insecurity, financial instability, limited family support, and the impacts of trauma. In response, we take a highly intentional and coordinated approach to addressing these needs. Our program provides comprehensive support services, including ensuring year-round access to housing and offering emergency grant funding during times of acute need.

Each campus has a different process for emergency grants. Some are offered directly through FS programs, while others, like UWM, are processed through the campus-wide emergency grant program. A key focus of our work is helping students maximize their financial aid packages and ensuring they apply for scholarships in a timely manner.

Additionally, trauma-informed mental health services are available across our campuses. When appropriate, we assist students in connecting with licensed, community-based therapists who accept their insurance, allowing for consistent, long-term support beyond campus resources.

NRC-FAHE: What do you feel is the most rewarding part of working with this program?

TAWNEY LATONA: I would say the most rewarding part of this work is witnessing students who once doubted that they belong in college walk across that stage at graduation. By that point, they have developed greater confidence, demonstrated their capabilities, and are well prepared for the next chapter of their lives. Seeing their journey from simply surviving to truly thriving is so transformational.

Article Highlight:

["Role of juvenile incarceration in education: Understanding barriers and promoters of secondary and postsecondary attainment for transition-age youth in foster care."](#) by Kune Park

Purpose of the Study:

Postsecondary education is widely recognized as a pathway to economic stability, higher lifetime earnings, improved employment prospects, and reduced reliance on public assistance. For young people who have experienced foster care, earning a college degree can be particularly beneficial, yet they consistently face educational disadvantages. These challenges are even greater for youth with dual-system involvement, those who have been involved with both the foster care and juvenile justice systems.

Although prior research shows that involvement in either the child welfare or juvenile justice systems is associated with lower rates of high school completion and college enrollment, there is limited research on the specific role of juvenile incarceration in shaping educational attainment among young people with foster care experience. This study addresses that gap by estimating the effects of juvenile incarceration prior to age 17 on secondary and postsecondary outcomes by age 23. It further identifies key risk and promotive factors that influence educational trajectories during the critical transition to adulthood.

This study used data from the CalYOUTH study, a longitudinal survey of transition-age youth with foster care experience in California. CalYOUTH surveyed young people at ages 17, 19, 21, and 23, and the surveys were linked to administrative child welfare records. We examined associations between juvenile incarceration (prior to age 17) and secondary and postsecondary attainment by age 23 among these youth (n=626).

Key Findings:

Findings show that

- 1) educational aspirations did not match educational achievement,
- 2) dual-system involvement was associated with greater instability,
- 3) juvenile incarceration significantly reduced odds of educational attainment, and
- 4) high school completion was critical.

First, at age 17, educational aspirations were high. Results showed that 84% of respondents hoped to attend college and 80% expected to earn a degree. However, by age 23, educational attainment fell short of these expectations: 40% had enrolled in college, and just 11% had completed a postsecondary degree. These results highlight the gap between aspiration and achievement.

Key Findings:

Second, differences between youth who had been incarcerated and those who had not were evident. Nearly one-quarter of participants had experienced juvenile incarceration before age 17. Youth who had been incarcerated demonstrated significantly greater instability across multiple measures. They experienced more foster care placement changes, reported more frequent school changes, and had higher rates of school suspension. Youth with incarceration histories were more likely to report alcohol or drug use issues and were less likely to report having adequate emotional support. Among those who completed high school, racial disparities were evident: youth who had been incarcerated were more likely to be Black and less likely to be Hispanic compared to their peers who had not been incarcerated.

Third, regression analyses revealed that juvenile incarceration was negatively associated with educational outcomes. Youth who were incarcerated prior to age 17 had 66% lower odds of completing high school and 45% lower odds of entering college by age 23 compared to youth without incarceration histories. Substance use issues were associated with a lower likelihood of both high school completion and college entry. Youth who had experienced school suspensions were less likely to complete a college degree. However, college expectations emerged as a promotive factor. Youth who aspired to earn a college degree were significantly more likely to enroll in college.

Fourth, participants who had experienced juvenile incarceration were less likely to complete high school or obtain a GED than those who had never been incarcerated. However, once youth earned a high school credential, prior incarceration history was not associated with differences in college enrollment. These findings should be interpreted with caution given the smaller sample sizes at later stages. Similarly, among those who entered college, incarceration history did not influence the likelihood of earning a degree by age 23.

Importantly, disparities accumulated over time. By age 23, 76.8% of youth with a history of incarceration had completed high school compared to 87.5% of those without incarceration histories. The college gap was wider: only 28.3% of youth with a history of incarceration had entered college (vs. 43.2%), and just 6.7% had completed a degree (vs. 12.7%).



Dr. Kune Park

Dr. Kune Park is an Assistant Professor at Michigan State University's School of Social Work. She earned a PhD from the University of Chicago and an MSW from the University of Michigan. Her research focuses on child welfare services and policy, child welfare-legal system intersection, educational experiences of marginalized youth, and the transition to adulthood for youth in care. Her research builds on field experience in public schools, juvenile detention centers, state child welfare agencies, and research institutes.

Park brings over 14 years of experience in child welfare and juvenile justice research. She has worked with juvenile correctional facilities, including the Cook County Juvenile Detention Center in Illinois. After her MSW, she served as a Research Associate on child welfare projects, including Title IV-E waiver demonstrations, studies of youth transitioning from child welfare to corrections, and a Michigan initiative on school-justice partnerships.

Park has received grants from federal and state agencies, including the Department of Justice's NIJ predoctoral research grant and funding from MDHHS for child welfare race equity projects. She has published and presented widely on transition-age youth in foster care, legal system involvement, racial disproportionality, and educational experiences of marginalized youth.

Future Implications:

This study highlights the ongoing educational challenges facing youth with dual-system involvement while also pointing to factors that can support their success. Young people with a history of incarceration were more likely than those with foster care experience only to experience school instability and substance use challenges, both of which can disrupt academic progress. The findings suggest that efforts to reduce unnecessary school changes and reform discipline practices, expand access to substance use treatment, and increase the availability of stable, therapeutic placements may help improve academic trajectories. Stronger collaboration between schools and child welfare agencies may also improve the ability to develop individualized education plans that provide appropriate and consistent academic support.

Educational disruptions, such as placement instability, school changes, or disciplinary actions, may represent key intervention points where targeted services may improve outcomes. Finally, integrating educational planning into post-incarceration reentry efforts may support academic persistence, reduce recidivism, and promote long-term wellbeing for young people with dual-system involvement.

Charting the Course: A Blueprint for Child Welfare Financing and Accountability Reform

A concern exists among child welfare stakeholders about the child welfare system's mission fulfillment due to continued deaths related to child-maltreatment, continued reports of abuse, the large number of families referred to the child welfare system, challenges with achieving timely and stable permanency, and poor long-term outcomes for children and families.

In May 2024, the Bipartisan Policy Center formed a Working Group on Child Welfare Financing and Accountability, consisting of 15 child welfare leaders, to inform recommendations for financial and accountability reforms within the child welfare system, with the ultimate goal of better supporting the child welfare system's mission.

This working group met for 18 months and created the shared vision for change described in the six recommendations detailed in the following section.

Reform Recommendations

Reform 1: Adjust the federal formula grant to consolidate federal funding streams for child welfare and better support the states and tribal partners.

Reform 2: Create a formula grant that supports the important role of courts in the child welfare process and provides financial support.

Reform 3: Extend the use of evidence-based services across the child welfare system, allow states to define evidence-based services, clarify current eligibility to receive Title IV-E funding and increase those who qualify, and expand Medicaid coverage.

Reform 4: Adjust federal financing to consider the variety of permanency options to focus on the needs of youth who exit foster care without connection to permanent families

Reform 5: Change federal funding to support state experimentation with the ability to demonstrate proven innovations.

Reform 6: Create a uniform training program for those working within child welfare and a center focused on child welfare data and measurement to help states and tribes with accountability measures. Additionally, the federal government should support states and tribes in improving recruitment and retention of the child welfare workforce.

Moving Forward

The reform recommendations above were made available on December 11, 2025. Working group members will continue their work by sharing these recommendations with stakeholders in the child welfare community to begin discussions on how to improve safety, permanency, and well-being through reforms focused on financing, flexibility, and accountability.

Recommendation

- Provide your feedback: [Share Your Feedback on the Blueprint for Modernizing Child Welfare Financing and Accountability](#).
- View the recorded event for the report: [A Bipartisan Blueprint for Modernizing Federal Child Welfare Financing • Bipartisan Policy Center](#).
- If you have questions or comments about the report, direct them to Rob Geen, BPC Fellow: rgeen@bipartisanpolicy.org.

Policy Updates

CONSOLIDATED APPROPRIATIONS ACT UPDATES

On February 3, 2026, congress enacted the Consolidated Appropriations Act, removing the section 8 specific student financial assistance income provision. This means that student financial assistance for those receiving section 8 is treated the same as those who do not receive section 8.

For further information on the Consolidated Appropriations Act, visit [link](#).

FEDERAL BILL HIGHLIGHTS

H.R.7463 (Rep. Chu, Judy [D-CA-28]) – Foster Youth Postsecondary Education Access and Success Act

This bill was originally introduced in the House on February 10, 2026. It currently sits in the House Committee on Ways and Means for review. The bill currently has 1 bi-partisan co-sponsor.

The bill proposes allowing states to offer youth a grace period if they do not meet Satisfactory Academic Progress(SAP) and remain eligible for ETV, increasing ETV awards to up to \$12,000, requiring states to inform youth about ETV, allowing states to use Chafee funds for outreach, and requiring ACF to develop a standard ETV application.

To learn more and track the 119th Congress bill, go to: [link](#)

H.R. 7343 (Rep. Miller, Max L. [R-OH-7]) – Foster Youth Workforce Opportunity Act

This bill was originally introduced in the House on February 4, 2026. It currently sits in the House Committee on Ways and Means for review. The bill currently has 1 bi-partisan co-sponsor.

The bill proposes allowing ETV funds for programs like Workforce Pell grant programs, apprenticeships, GED, and remedial education, and extending eligibility for remedial education to 6 years from 5.

To learn more and track the 119th Congress bill, go to: [link](#)

H.R. 7432 (Rep. LaHood, Darin [R-IL-16]) – Foster Youth Housing Opportunity Act

This bill was originally introduced in the House on February 10, 2026. It currently sits in the Committee on Ways and Means and the Committee on Financial Services and Means for review. The bill currently has 1 bi-partisan co-sponsor. The bill aims to limit the use of 30% of Chafee funds for room and board to an average of not more than 30% of payments to the State over 5 years, clarify that Chafee funds can support services for obtaining or keeping stable housing, and extend Chafee service eligibility to age 26 for housing support.

[H.R. 7432 continued]

Additionally, the bill would require HUD and ACF to give guidance on policies to improve housing access, best practices for using Chafee funds with HUD programs, and partnership building between Public Housing Authorities and Child Welfare Agencies. Lastly, the bill would mandate ACF and HUD to report to Congress with data on foster youth receiving housing aid, youth outcomes—including housing stability and homelessness—findings from evaluations, and recommendations for better coordination between child welfare and housing programs.

To learn more and track the 119th Congress bill, go to: [link](#)

H.R. 6753 (Rep. Landsman, Greg [D-OH-1]) – Campus Housing Affordability Act

This bill was originally introduced in the House on December 12, 2025. It currently sits in the House Committee on Financial Service.

The bill currently has 4 co-sponsors, including 3 bipartisan.

This bill amends the 2006 Transportation, Treasury, Housing, Urban Development, Judiciary, D.C., and Agencies Appropriations Act and the 1937 Housing Act to allow students to use Section 8 vouchers for campus housing. Currently, college students can't use HUD's Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) for campus housing. The bill would allow HUD Secretary to waive certain requirements, increasing awareness to live on campus.

To learn more and track the 119th Congress bill, go to: [link](#)

Policy Updates

S. 2077 (Sen. Welch, Peter [D-VT]) – Expanded Coverage for Former Foster Youth Act

This bill was originally introduced in the Senate on June 12, 2025. It currently sits in the Committee on Finance. The bill currently has 6 co-sponsors.

This bill updates Medicaid rules for former foster youth, expanding coverage to those placed in foster care until age 26 by including those who exited to guardianship with kinship caregivers or emancipated before 18, and repealing the requirement that they be enrolled in Medicaid while in foster care. It also mandates states to create outreach and enrollment programs.

To learn more and track the 119th Congress bill, go to: [link](#)

H.R. 7117 (Rep. Olszewski, Johnny [D-MD-2]) – Fast Track To and Through College Act

This bill was originally introduced in the House on January 15, 2026. It currently sits in the House Committee on Education and Workforce. The bill currently has 1 bi-partisan co-sponsor.

This bill aims to amend part A of title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070 et seq.) to increase college completion rates and reduce costs by accelerating degrees, aligning secondary and postsecondary education, and improving credit transfer. It proposes developing multiple early college fast track pathways, including a pathway with career and technical education, work-based learning, and alignment with high-demand industry sectors or occupations.

To learn more and track the 119th Congress bill, go to: [link](#). Related bill is [S.3359](#).

H.R.6625 (Rep. Davis, Danny K. [D-IL-7]) – RISE from Trauma Act

This bill was originally introduced in the House on December 11, 2025. It currently sits in the Committee on Education and Workforce, the Committees on Energy and Commerce, and the Judiciary, for review. The bill currently has 1 bi-partisan co-sponsor.

This bill aims to improve support for children and families experiencing trauma. Of specific interest to NRC-FAHE is the amendment of Part B of title VII of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 293 et seq.), which emphasises recruiting individuals from communities with high trauma, violence, or addiction to expand Health Professions Training for Diversity.

To learn more and track the 119th Congress bill, go to: [link](#). Identical bill is [S.3461](#).

H.R.6606 (Rep. Bonamici, Suzanne [D-OR-1]) – Opportunities for Success Act of 2025

This bill was originally introduced in the House on December 11, 2025. It currently sits in the House Committee on Education and Workforce for review. The bill currently has 2 co-sponsors.

This bill aims to improve the Federal Work Study Program by expanding access, increasing funding, and updating the formula to prioritise students with greatest need. It invests in low-income students, raises the five-year FWS budget, and reforms fund allocation based on Pell Grant funding relative to other institutions and student need.

The bill rewards institutions with high Pell Grant enrollment and graduation, boosts funding for Job Location and Development programs, mandates institutions to prioritize low-income students in work-based learning, allows students to earn FWS wages during non-enrollment, and requires at least 7% of FWS funds for work-based learning. It also creates a \$30 million pilot for internships, and surveys FWS to recommend program improvements to Congress.

To learn more and track the 119th Congress bill, go to: [link](#)

Upcoming Webinars

Debbie Riley, CEO of the Center for Adoption Support and Education

Date: Thursday, April 30, 2026
Time: 1pm-2pm PST

The presenter will be Debbie Riley, CEO of the Center for Adoption Support and Education. Her presentation will focus on the intersection of mental health and schools. More information about this webinar will be available soon.

Register for the April webinar at this [link here.](#)

NRC-FAHE webinar: Kara Graham

Date: Tuesday, May 12, 2026
Time: 12pm-1pm PT

The presenter will be Kara Graham, Graduate Research Associate in the College Impact Laboratory at The Ohio State University and a Ph.D. Candidate in Higher Education and Student Affairs. Her presentation is "Budgeting Blind Spots: Examining Off-Campus Living Allowances and Poverty". Drawing on comparisons with the Supplemental Poverty Measure, this work provides an assessment of institutional off-campus living allowances at public two- and four-year institutions to evaluate their adequacy and equity.

Register for the webinar at the [link here.](#)

The I'm First! Guide 18.0: A More Powerful, All-in-Once College Resource

Date: Thursday, September 15, 2026
Time: 11am-11:45am PDT

Join the webinar to look inside the newly expanded I'm First! Guide to College, the trusted college resource for first-generation, low-income students. With over 50 new pages, this year's workbook represents a major evolution of the guide. Explore new content for younger students focused on the impact and value of college; updated application tips, financial aid tools, and FAFSA guidance; timely, practical advice on using AI responsibly in admissions; and much more!

Even if you've used the I'm First! Guide before, this edition is truly different and more comprehensive than ever. Hear from fellow TRIO Directors about how they use the workbook, learn how your school can be featured in it, and access exclusive discounts COE has secured for TRIO providers. Learn more [here.](#)

Register for the webinar at this [link here.](#)

Upcoming Conferences

Title:
Hand in Hand Foster Care Summit

Date:
May 8, 2026
8am - 5pm CDT

Location:
Dallas College West Dallas Center
Dallas, Texas

About:
Students and young adults with foster care experience and professionals who want to strengthen college and career outcomes for those students are invited to join this free special event.

For foster-experienced students or young adults, ages 16-24, programming focused on career exploration, job readiness, apprenticeships and internships, and life skills will be available.

For college staff, workforce partners, employers and community organizations, join to align systems, strengthen partnerships and improve career pipelines for foster-experienced students.

Presented by:
Hand In Hand Support Program
Registration link:
Click the [link here](#) for more info.

Title:
2026 Passport to Careers Washington State Conference

Date:
May 14, 2026
9am-4:30pm PDT

Location:
Virtual

About:
The annual Passport to Careers Conference returns virtually in 2026! At this one-day conference, you'll have an opportunity to learn from experts, expand your professional network and enjoy the camaraderie of colleagues from across the state who are working to create educational parity for students with experience in foster care or unaccompanied homelessness.

Presented by:
Washington Passport Network
For more information on the conference, click [this link](#).

Title:
We are the Change 2026

Date:
June 11, 2026
11am - 5pm EST

Location:
University of Indianapolis
Indianapolis, Indiana

About:
The Indiana Foster Youth Alliance (IFYA) Annual Youth Conference is BACK for its 11th year! This conference is an event designed by IFYA members that provides resources, education, and tools to young people (age 14-22) with experience in the Foster Care system.

Presented by:
The Indiana Foster Youth Alliance
Registration link:
Click the [link here](#) for more info.

Have an event you would like featured?

Let us know!
nrc.fahe@gmail.com

Thank You!

Thank you to our leadership team:

Angelique Day, PhD, MSW
School of Social Work
University of Washington

Lisa Schelbe, PhD
College of Social Work
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