Human-centered Change Manager to Lead Transformational Efforts that Keep Families Together

A Foster America fellowship in partnership with: Washington State Department of Children, Youth & Families

Foster America fellows leverage their diverse professional backgrounds as they assume leadership roles at child welfare agencies, improving outcomes for our nation’s most vulnerable children and families. In collaboration with Schmidt Futures Foundation, we are developing partnerships with and building bridges between public child welfare and human service agencies to prevent family separations of children involved in child welfare. Fellows will promote equitable outcomes for kids who are at risk of entering foster care, utilizing an adaptive strategy to improve agency policies and practices for finding, licensing, and supporting kinship caregivers. We are recruiting and placing well-supported Foster America fellows in three locations across the country, and building on existing approaches to ensure children are timely placed in family settings. This team of fellows will also share and leverage ongoing learning across the country as they discover solutions that promote equitable outcomes for children and youth. APPLY TO JOIN THE TEAM!

About this Role: In partnership with Washington State Department of Children, Youth & Families (DCYF), we seek an equity-driven service designer and/or behavior change expert to guide the adoption of evolving technology, processes, and service strategies to improve the kinship placement experience for staff and families. DCYF is deeply committed to increasing the number of licensed kinship placements and increasing resources for families, focusing on specifically addressing equity gaps. The fellow will support the implementation of new technological infrastructure that is working towards improved timeliness of the kinship licensing process, increasing the number of kinship homes licensed, and ensuring kinship families receive the supports they need to thrive.

The fellow will utilize expertise in design thinking, collaboration, and creative facilitation to guide the development of an engaging training and coaching model that shifts DCYF towards a “Kin-First” culture. Change management strategies will be key to move from a culture rooted in a legal framework, to a relational mindset that emphasizes providing supports for families first. Imperative to this process is co-designing with staff and families to ensure that stakeholder needs are met.

Over the course of 18 months, the fellow will:

- Build the organizational capacity (strategy, mindsets, systems, and tools) for advancing new kinship care licensing processes, practices, and technologies, streamlining effective processes.
- Design strengths-based equity-centered training and coaching model for internal/external stakeholders to promote adoption of new systems.
- Consistently center the needs, experiences, and ideas of families in the creation of a more “Kin-First” culture at DCYF, highlighting successes.

Position Highlights:

- Reporting directly to Deborah O’Neil, join a team that is dedicated to increasing equitable kinship outcomes.
- Alongside families, internal experts, and partnering agencies, this role will help inform evolving processes and practices within the kinship care system redesign.
- Lead change efforts through the design process from insight generation, prototyping and iterating on solutions, and packaging efforts for scale-up.
- Work on the cutting edge of building a child welfare model focused on family well-being, supporting families together.
- Collaborate with a network of fellows and child welfare agencies working together to improve the broader resource family licensure process.
**About the agency:** Under the transformative leadership of Luba Bezborodnikova, Assistant Secretary of Licensing, Washington State Department of Children Youth and Families (Washington DCYF) has recently secured a contracted vendor to technologically modernize the department’s infrastructure for foster parent licensure. While progress has been made within Washington, the agency remains dedicated to enhancing services for children, youth and families. The fellow would join a team that has deeply invested in improving kinship care practices, and already launched numerous innovative solutions. The team’s enthusiasm for a fellow to build capacity for needs-driven solutions for families, speaks to their commitment for equitable outcomes.

**About the fellowship:** The Foster America Fellowship is an opportunity to radically improve the lives of our nation’s most historically exploited by designing and implementing innovative solutions to some of the foster care system’s most complex problems. Fellows apply the skills they have cultivated in other sectors as they transition to full-time, 18-month positions at child welfare and human service agencies. In their roles, fellows focus on high-impact reform projects to create better and more equitable outcomes for children, families, and communities affected by child abuse, neglect, trauma, and poverty. Each role is designed to have an immediate and lasting local impact while also informing solutions that can be scaled nationally. Foster America fellows receive extensive training and professional development with a cohort of peers, positioning them to thrive and grow as social change leaders during the fellowship and beyond.

**Fellowship support includes:**
- Cutting-edge training focusing on leadership, liberatory design, child welfare context, racial equity, innovation, and more
- An influential network of purpose-driven professionals including fellows, Foster America staff, and the child welfare field’s most innovative leaders as faculty
- Individualized project and leadership coaching, mentorship, and support
- Career development for alumni who pursue positions in child welfare and related sectors

**Eligibility Requirements**
- Fellows must have U.S. work authorization.
- Fellows must be able to work full-time for at least 18 months starting April 12th, 2021.
- Fellows must work on-site at their host agency.
- Fellows must travel quarterly to attend training sessions that last from three to five days.
- Fellows must pass all host agency employer requirements, which may include background checks, drug screening, and civil service exams.

**How to Apply**
- Applications are accepted online [here](#here).
- Early application is advantageous to candidates.
- Information about our application process, selection timeline, and other open fellowship opportunities is available on our website [here](#here).
- To learn more, join a webinar! You will learn about Foster America, hear from current fellows, and be able to ask questions. To see the schedule of webinars, click [here](#here).

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