A Place to Belong: 
Foster Youth Voices from CA Community Colleges

Western Region Council of Black American Affairs
2011 Regional Conference

Linda Collins, Executive Director
Career Ladders Project

Carol Belle-Thomas Moss,
City College of San Francisco

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The Career Ladders Project

fosters educational and career advancement through research, policy initiatives and direct assistance to community colleges and their workforce partners.
Data Points

- Over 70% of foster youth want to go to college
- 46% of FFY drop out of HS, 25% become homeless and 51% are unemployed.
- 7-13% FFY enroll in college v. 60% all youth
- 1-11% FFY get degree v. 30% general population

The Children’s Advocacy Institute (2007). University of San Diego School of Law.
Data Points

• Black youth age 16 to 24 face the worst employment rates.
  
  – In 2010, 43 percent of recent black HS graduates and 73 percent of black college graduates were working.

• Black children are four times as likely as white children to be in foster care.

Retrieved from *Portrait of Inequality 2011: Black Children in America*. Children's Defense Fund

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Children’s Bureau
Community College Pathways For Former Foster Youth (CCP)

Focuses on linking community colleges across California to strengthen outcomes for former foster youth

- Achieve postsecondary educational goals
- Access careers with family sustaining wages and advancement opportunities
CCP: Promoting effective practice and supporting sustainable strategies

- Work with Interdisciplinary Leadership Teams
- Promote data collection and inquiry for program improvement
- Support local innovation
- Connect instruction and student services
- Connect FFY to: learning communities; pathway programs; structured offerings; on & off campus resources, public benefits
- Embed attention to FFY in regular college processes
- Promote partnerships across education, social services and community orgs to support post-secondary attainment
- Share strategies across Community of Practice and encourage wider uptake across the state
- Promote policy change with state systems and policy makers
Fostering Connections To Success Act (HR6893)

- Promote permanent families for children in foster care
- Improve outcomes for children and youth in foster care
- Increase support for American Indian & Alaska Native children
- Improve the quality of staff in the child welfare system

STATE OPTION: Extend foster care support to age 19, 20, or 21 years of age with continuing federal support
AB 12 California Fostering Connections to Success Act
Extending Support for Foster Youth beyond age 18

What is AB 12?
Allows foster youth under the age of 17 (as of January 2011) to be provided transitional support up to age 20 (possibly to 21 if funding is made available by 2014).

The Goal:
To provide young adults who leave foster care with the social, emotional and practical skills to achieve their potential and succeed in life.

www.CAFosteringConnections.org
AB 12 Participation Requirements

1. Complete secondary education/equivalent credential
2. Enroll in post secondary/vocational education
3. Participate in activity designed to promote or remove barriers to employment
4. Employed (at least 80 hours per month) OR
5. Be unable to do one of the above due to a medical condition
Priority Registration For Foster Youth: AB 194 Effective Jan. 1, 2012

“Having priority registration has been a huge help, because I am able to get most of my classes needed and the professors I want. In addition, it will help me to get through my classes quicker and transfer to a University.”

- student from foster care, Orange Coast College
“A Place to Belong"

Former foster youth speak out about programs that work in the California Community Colleges:

Core Elements Of The B2b Work

The b2b Learning Community is a 2-year program at Laney College. The program includes:

- 2 week Summer Orientation
- 4-Semester Looping Cohort
- Student Internships
- Academic Counseling
- Case Management
- Break Activities
- Financial Literacy
- Food pantry
- Team Building: Ropes Course
- Graduation & transfer assistance
- Leadership Development: Coaches of Color
- Financial Assistance: EOPS, FAFSA, fees paid
b2b Student Demographics

Fall 2011

- Ethnicity:
  - African American: 68%
  - Latino: 12%
  - White: 4%
  - Multi-Racial: 16%

- Gender:
  - Female: 60%
  - Male: 40%

N=25
Guardian Scholars Program (GSP)
at City College of San Francisco

- “Open enrollment”
- Academic and career counseling
- Scholarships
- Book vouchers
- Food assistance
- Transportation assistance
- Emergency housing assistance
- Off-campus mental health referrals
- Linkages to transfers to 4 year universities
For more information:

Linda Collins
LCollins@CareerLaddersProject.org

Carol Belle-Thomas Moss
cbellethomas@gmail.com

www.CareerLaddersProject.org

http://ccpcop.wordpress.com