

# Results from a Formative Evaluation of Two Employment Programs for Young People Transitioning Out of Foster Care

## Speaker Biographies

**Hannah Daly** is a research analyst in the Center on Labor, Human Services, and Population at the Urban Institute. She applies quantitative and qualitative methods, to study policies and programs related to well-being for families and youth. Hannah has previous experience in civil rights and environmental justice policy analysis and in partnering and working with community organizations to put on and support programming. She graduated with a BA in Public Health and a minor in Anthropology from the University of California, Berkeley.

**Serita Cox** is the driving force behind iFoster, and brings to bear her lived experience, devoted commitment to a number of youth development initiatives, and over a decade of experience in executive-level management in Silicon Valley, corporate strategy consulting and non-profit strategy consulting. For her work with iFoster, Serita has been recognized as a White House Office of Social Innovation Citizen Innovator, an Echoing Green Fellow, and an American Leader of Change.

**Jiffy Lansing** is a PhD candidate in the Human Development and Social Policy program at Northwestern University and was formerly a Senior Researcher at Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago. Ms. Lansing's research interests include educational persistence and career preparation for vulnerable youth populations. Ms. Lansing has training and experience in qualitative and mixed methods research approaches. Ms. Lansing has led research studies on programs serving low-income community college students, incarcerated youth, youth reentering the community after incarceration, youth aging out of foster care, and youth at-risk of dropping out of high-school. Ms. Lansing has worked on federally-funded studies focused on policies and practices related to promoting adult well-being and self-sufficiency for vulnerable youth. She has also partnered with state and city agencies to develop evaluations that inform policy and implementation of programs that support a successful transition to adulthood for young people in circumstances that present challenges to transitioning to a stable and satisfying adulthood.

**Sean McGinnis** is the Chief Program Officer at Lawrence Hall. Sean has an MSW from University of Illinois at Chicago: Jane Addams College of Social Work. During his time at Lawrence Hall he has helped to develop youth employment programs with a focus on being trauma informed and youth centered. MY TIME started as a pilot program in 2013 with a focus on youth in the foster care system. Since that time Lawrence Hall has expanded their approach to youth employment to begin helping other opportunity youth populations build the social/ emotional skills and self-confidence to enter the workforce.

**Michael Pergamit**, a senior fellow in the Center on Labor, Human Services, and Population at the Urban Institute, is a labor economist whose research is focused on vulnerable youth. He codirects an evaluation of a paid internship program for youth in Washington, DC, and Baltimore public schools; an evaluation of a mentoring/case management program in Washington, DC, and Maryland; and a demonstration involving pilot testing employment and training programs to aid disconnected youth. He was the project director for

the Multi-Site Evaluation of Foster Youth Programs (Chafee evaluation) and is currently helping design the next set of evaluations. Previously, he led a project exploring the relationship between growing up in a vulnerable family and movements into education and the labor market as a young adult; a study predicting safe exits from shelters for runaway and homeless youth; a study examining correlates of early initiation into the labor market; and a labor market needs assessment of disadvantaged youth in Chicago. Pergamit also works on issues of integrating and accessing public benefits and services. He currently codirects an evaluation of two programs providing housing and services to families involved in the child welfare system, as well as a study of multiple benefit use by low-income families. Before joining Urban, Pergamit spent 10 years at the National Opinion Research Center and 13 years at the US Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). For 10 years he was the director of the National Longitudinal Surveys at the BLS. He has a PhD from the University of Chicago.

**Debbie Reddic** is an iFoster Jobs Program Alumni who works as a peer mentor and navigator, connecting other foster youth to the resources and supports they need. As a TAY AmeriCorps member, she is building her skills and working towards accomplishing her dream of starting her own non-profit to support foster youth. Debbie is studying Psychology at CalState Northridge. As someone whose foster care experience began the day she left the hospital as a newborn, she is no stranger to the foster care system and is passionate about advocating for current and former foster youth.

**Darren Robinson** is an alumni of the MY TIME program.