

MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF
SOCIAL
WORK



FOSTER YOUTH ALUMNI SERVICES PROGRAM
MSU SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK



FAME SUMMER CAMP: PREPARING HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS FOR COLLEGE LIFE

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION: BARRIERS FOR FOSTER YOUTH ALUMNI

- College Access
 - At age 19, only **18%** of foster care alumni are pursuing a four year degree versus **62%** of their peers. (Center for The Study of Social Policy, 2009)
- Retention/Graduation Rates
 - At age 25, less than **3%** of foster care alumni have completed a bachelor's degree or higher versus **24%** of their peers (Davis, 2006)
 - Only **26%** of foster care alumni who enroll in college have earned a degree or certificate within six years of enrollment compared to **56%** of their peers (Cochrane & Szabo-Kubitz, 2009)
- Lack of Support Networks
- Transition to Adult Living



OVERVIEW OF FAME PROGRAM

- Started in 2007 –Foster Youth Alumni Services
- Founder Angelique Day
- Goal of improving educational outcomes for foster youth alumni and ensuring their success as MSU students
- Housed in/Supported by MSU School of Social Work
- AmeriCorps
- In 2010 changed to FAME: Fostering Academics-Mentoring Excellence



FAME SERVICES- OVERVIEW

- Coaching Program
- Mentoring
- Student Activity Board
- Care Packages
- Referral Website
- Campus Champions
- Summer Camp for High School Students



FAME SUMMER CAMP

- 3-4 day camp
 - Campers stay overnight in dorms
- FAME students - counselors
- Prepares youth for college and real world
- Leadership opportunity
- Cost of camp – usually paid for by state



COMPONENTS OF CAMP

○ Work –

- Employment: Resume building, mock interviews
- College prep: admission statements, “real-life” experience on campus
- Financial Aid preparation
- Money management/budgeting

○ Fun –

- poetry slam, pompon squad,
- Build relationships with other foster youth
- Empowerment



CAMPER DATA - RESEARCH OUTCOMES

- Camper data –
 - Pretest-posttest survey and 4-5 month follow-up
 - Focus groups
- Campers reported
 - Increase in self esteem
 - Increase in self-efficacy
 - Increase in interest in attending college

*Riebschleger, J., Williams, S.S., Wilson, C., & Kyles, N. (2012). University students' reported impacts of mentoring foster youth who are transitioning from high school to adult life: A research study. East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University.



CAMPER EXPERIENCES: IN THEIR OWN WORDS

- “To me, out of all the colleges I [have] been to for camp, this one was the best one...We had kids that have been through what we’ve been through, and our age, and just, a lot of positive people we had around us. Because, you can learn from other people; it’s just something you can’t get from a book. They just knew first hand what we’ve been through.”
-Shelia

CAMPER EXPERIENCES: IN THEIR OWN WORDS

- “I think something that surprised me was that the camp counselors had been through what we had as foster youth...I have been to a lot of camps at MSU and you don’t ever see that and to have a camp that has similar stories as yours is shocking. It helps a lot.” -Latoria
- “It pushed me more in high school, to stay focused on graduating so I can get to college.” -Andre

COUNSELOR DATA – RESEARCH OUTCOMES

- Counselor data –
 - Survey
 - Interview
- Counselors reported
 - Rich mentoring experience
 - Positive professional and personal relationship changes
 - HOPE for the future



COUNSELOR EXPERIENCE: IN THEIR OWN WORDS

- Rich and Variable Mentoring Experience
- Student 2 relayed: “I felt my job was to be a support system...maybe if they need some advice or some sort of contact, maybe I could find a way to get that for them. I was a resource for the kids.”
- Student 3 said: “I felt a connection. I could relate to their stories.”



COUNSELOR EXPERIENCE – IN THEIR OWN WORDS

- Positive Personal Relationship Changes
- Student 1 asserted: “I built a better relationship with my mom and family members... [camp] taught me how to look at the bigger picture and not to blame family for foster care.”
- Student 2 explained: “[Camp helped me] open up... to other individuals without building that rapport first. This taps into my background with trust issues. I’m now more willing to trust you first and then deal with whatever comes my way later.”



COUNSELOR EXPERIENCE – IN THEIR OWN WORDS

- Positive Professional Relationship Changes
- Student 1 emphasized: “Camp has allowed me to take on more leadership roles. I’m more outspoken, totally more comfortable with public speaking.”
- Student 3 said: “...I learned... to be willing to help, but help from a distance. When dealing with children or with the opposite sex, build boundaries and guidelines from the beginning...”



COUNSELOR EXPERIENCE – IN THEIR OWN WORDS

- HOPE for the Future
- Student 2 declared: “...The big picture is that you’re not alone... when you feel that no one cares about you, there are... This camp is empowering... when people are so negative to you, you become negative to yourself. This camp is uplifting.”
- Student 3 concluded: “There are people who do care about foster kids... I love that MSU is a place that offers that. You can be someone beyond what you’ve been told or what you think.”



FAME CAMP: HOW TO GET INVOLVED

- Donations
 - School supplies, snacks
- Mock Job Interviewers
 - Students' favorite
 - Professionals from various professions
 - 2 hours
- Refer students
 - High school students currently/previously in foster care
- Spread the word!!



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QUESTIONS??

THANK YOU!

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