



Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute 2019 Foster Youth Internship Program® Application Instructions

The Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute's (CCAI) Foster Youth Internship (FYI) Program® is a competitive, highly esteemed congressional internship for students and recent graduates who meet **ALL** the eligibility requirements below. Participants will be placed in the Washington, D.C. legislative offices of Members of the U.S. Congress and write a federal child welfare policy report throughout the course of the summer. The dates for the FYI Program are May 28 - July 26, 2019. The candidate **MUST** be available for and commit to the entirety of the program to qualify.

About the Foster Youth Internship Program®

The FYI Program began in 2003 as an effort to raise awareness to federal policymakers about the needs and unique perspectives of young adults who spent time in U.S. foster care. CCAI works with congressional offices to secure a congressional internship for each intern. In addition, CCAI organizes orientation, retreats, advocacy trainings and various networking opportunities with experts in child welfare, government and business. These combined experiences allow the interns to create a policy report that is presented at briefings to Congress and the White House and released to policymakers and advocates across the country. As a result of the program, federal policymakers learn firsthand the experiences of youth in foster care and go on to use their new knowledge to inspire legislative change to federal child welfare and adoption policy. Interns participating in the FYI Program benefit both personally and professionally, gaining experience and skills that will bolster their careers for years to come.

This is an immersive nine-week, educational and civic experience. Participants are not considered employees of CCAI nor the congressional office where they are placed for an internship. CCAI provides a weekly stipend funded through donations received for interns, as well as covers major expenses such as housing in Washington, D.C., transportation to/from Washington, D.C., and public transportation to/from the congressional office internship. Interns are responsible for some smaller expenses. Interns are required to live in dormitory-style housing assigned by CCAI for the duration of the program and to adhere to the guidance of their Programs and Resident Assistant, an alumnus/alumna of the FYI Program.

Congressional Office Internship

Each congressional office placement differs. CCAI does not guarantee that the intern will be assigned projects that are related to child welfare. Office responsibilities will likely include the following:

- Open, sort and deliver incoming mail
- Answer phones, greet constituents, run errands, deliver priority letters and acquire signatures
- Copy, file, fax, data entry and work on small legislative projects
- Work directly with congressional staff to research issues and compose constituent correspondence
- Attend committee hearings, sit in on meetings, attend press conferences and take excellent notes
- Provide constituent services and give tours of the U.S. Capitol Building
- Attend and assist with congressional briefings and meetings, including various events organized by CCAI

Policy Report

By applying to and later agreeing to be a part of the Foster Youth Internship Program®, you are agreeing to be fully engaged in the intensive congressional policy report writing process of the program. This involves selecting a topic in a timely manner, performing in-depth research, working closely with an advisor, writing and extensively editing the report. The process involves, but is not limited to, adhering to all report deadlines set forth by CCAI; attendance at and full participation in all mandatory CCAI meetings and briefings; being respectful toward other interns, advisors and the CCAI staff; being open to new ideas and suggestions; and completion of the report and entire internship program.



Eligibility

Applicants must meet **ALL** of the following eligibility criteria to be considered for a position in the program.

1. Applicants **are expected** to have strong writing, grammar and research skills.
2. Applicants **are required** to have a strong interest in improving federal child welfare policy.
3. Applicants **are required** to have spent at least 24 consecutive months and/or at least a total of 36 months in United States foster care during any point in their lives and be willing to share their experiences to raise awareness and effect change.
4. Applicants **are required** to have completed at least four semesters at an accredited institution of higher learning, such as a college, university, or vocational school by the start of the internship (May 28, 2019).
5. Applicants **are required** to be currently pursuing a degree at accredited institution of higher learning such as a college, university or vocational school prior to the internship (May 28, 2019) **OR** have attained a degree at an accredited institution of higher learning such as a college, university or vocational school within the past two years (on or after May 2017).
6. Applicants **are required** to be in Washington, D.C. for the **entire** duration of the program (May 28 - July 26, 2019) and participate in **all** mandatory weekend and evening events. Because of the unique group dynamic, as well as important orientations, training and end-of-program events, selected participants **will not** be allowed to arrive to the FYI Program late or leave early. Those considering applying for the 2019 FYI Program with known conflicts with the program dates are encouraged to apply the following year.

College Credit

Many colleges and universities allow students to obtain academic credit for internships. Ask your academic advisor to determine if you are eligible to receive academic credit.



COMPLETED APPLICATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY CCAI NO LATER THAN 11:00PM EST ON JANUARY 10, 2019

To be considered as an applicant for the 2019 FYI Program, you must complete BOTH Part I and Part II in their entirety.

PART I is the application form via the online portal, Wufoo. To complete, it is necessary to fill out each section in the application form. Please be prepared to upload ALL four supporting materials in PDF format: (1) résumé, (2) essay, (3) short response scenario questions and (4) official transcript. Please note that ALL four supporting materials as listed above MUST be submitted in PDF format by the applicant through the online form— materials emailed or mailed separately for Part I will not be accepted.

PART II involves the recommendation forms *and* letters – one personal recommendation and one professional recommendation. Each letter of recommendation MUST have an associated recommendation form, both submitted in PDF format by the recommender directly to CCAI’s Director of Programs, Kate McLean, at fosteryouthinternship@gmail.com. Recommendations submitted by the applicant will not be accepted. Recommendation forms are available on the CCAI website at www.ccainstitute.org/programs/view/foster-youth-internship-apply.

PART I: APPLICATION FORM PART II: RECOMMENDATION FORMS AND LETTERS

- APPLICATION FORM.** The application form can be accessed [here](#) or at <http://bit.ly/FYI2019>.
- RÉSUMÉ.** Be sure to use the exact format as the example on the last page of this application (which includes work experience, school and community involvement, and the dates you were employed). **Do not** submit more than one page. Please submit in PDF format as “Last Name, First Name_Résumé_FYI2019”.
- ESSAY.** Essays **must be double-spaced, use 12-point Times New Roman font, use proper spelling and grammar, numbered pages, and saved in PDF format as “Last Name, First Name_Essay_FYI2019”**. Your essay must include all three of the following: (1) how your life experiences have shaped your interest in and skills for this internship program (2) how this experience fits with your goals and future aspirations, and (3) legislative changes you would want to make to the child welfare system at the federal level based on what you have seen and your experiences. For example, how would you improve foster care for current and future foster youth? Supporting research is *required*, and applicants **must cite sources in the MLA or APA format. Do not submit more than four pages; only the first four pages will be considered. ALL essay guidelines must be followed.**
- SHORT RESPONSE SCENARIO QUESTIONS.** Answer each of the following questions in 150 words or less per question via direct submission on the online form.
 1. In your congressional office, you are among interns who are well-connected and come from different backgrounds and cultures. Like many Hill interns, your day-to-day responsibilities are largely administrative and at times may not be perceived as glamorous, yet they are very important to your congressional office. How would you manage yourself in this diverse setting and your interactions with congressional staff and interns who may and will have different views than you do in your congressional office? Please explain how you would adapt and resolve any conflict you feel or experience.

2. Throughout the summer, you and your FYI cohort will spend time researching and writing policy issues affecting foster youth across the country in order to create a policy report that will be presented at a congressional briefing, White House briefing and released to child welfare advocates across the country. You will become a published author! After you submit your final policy report to CCAI staff and your policy report advisor, your cohort will be tasked with creating a title and theme for the 2019 Foster Youth Intern Report. You have given it some serious thought and think your title is the perfect fit. You suggest your idea to the group, and the group does not like it. How do you work with your cohort to agree on a title and theme? What communication skills do you have that would be an asset in this situation?
3. The Foster Youth Internship Program® is a highly esteemed congressional internship that demands high motivation and commitment from interns. As part of the program, CCAI also organizes retreats, advocacy trainings, and various networking opportunities with experts in the child welfare field. Though these are all amazing opportunities, you find that you are becoming overwhelmed by living in a new environment, the number of commitments and the workload of the summer. Share your self-care tips on how you would manage your time and juggle responsibilities. Discuss your time management, ability to implement corrective measures to stay on track, and maintain professionalism in this scenario.

- OFFICIAL ACADEMIC TRANSCRIPT.** The official transcript must reflect your most recent semester from your current or most recent institution of higher learning. Please submit in PDF format as “Last Name, First Name_Transcript_FYI2019”.
- ONE PROFESSIONAL LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION & ONE PROFESSIONAL RECOMMENDATION FORM.** These should be references from a professor, faculty member, current or former supervisor, etc. Please note this recommendation has two parts – (1) letter and (2) form. Both must be submitted in PDF format to fulfill the recommendation requirement. To help match recommendations to applicants, please have your recommender save the letter and form respectively as “Applicant Last Name, Applicant First Name_ProfRec_Letter/Form_FYI2019”. Recommendation forms are available on the CCAI website at <http://www.ccaiinstitute.org/programs/view/foster-youth-internship-apply>.
- ONE PERSONAL LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION & ONE PERSONAL RECOMMENDATION FORM.** These should be references from a mentor, advisor, neighbor, coach, etc. Do not submit a reference from a family member, foster parent, or friend. Please note this recommendation has two parts – (1) letter and (2) form. Both must be submitted in PDF format to fulfill the recommendation requirement. To help match recommendations to applicants, please have your recommender save the letter and form respectively as “Applicant Last Name, Applicant First Name_PersonalRec_Letter/Form_FYI2019”. Recommendation forms are available on the CCAI website at <http://www.ccaiinstitute.org/programs/view/foster-youth-internship-apply>.

Only letters and forms submitted directly by the recommender to CCAI Director of Programs, Kate McLean, via email at fosteryouthinternship@gmail.com will be considered. It is the applicant’s responsibility to confirm with the recommenders that they have emailed the letters and forms to CCAI. Allow plenty of time for the recommenders to write the letter, as well as time to follow up with them directly.

IMPORTANT NOTE: When CCAI receives a completed application (both Part I and Part II) in its entirety, CCAI will send a confirmation email to the applicant within two business days to notify that the application has been received.

Applicants will be notified the evening of February 1, 2019 whether the selection committee has chosen to move forward with their application. The next step in the application process will be an interview via Skype. Interviews will only be conducted with 20 applicants the week of February 4, 2019. The 2019 Foster Youth Interns will be notified on February 15, 2019 of their acceptance into the program.

If you have questions after carefully reviewing this application and the information available on CCAI’s website about the Foster Youth Internship Program®, please contact CCAI at fosteryouthinternship@gmail.com or (202) 544-8500.

ONE PAGE RÉSUMÉ EXAMPLE

First and Last Name
Street Address, City, State, Zip Code
Phone number / Email address

EDUCATION

University Name, City, State
Major
Minor
Expected graduation date (month/year)

SCHOOL INVOLVEMENT

List the years of involvement in high school and college related service/volunteer organizations, leadership positions, student government involvement, etc.

EXAMPLE:

Alpha Phi Omega National Community Service Fraternity, Vice President, 2015-Present
Business Leaders of America, Member, 2016-Present

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

List the years and location of ALL involvement in community related service/volunteer organizations, leadership positions, government or political involvement, child welfare/foster care/adoption volunteer work, etc.

EXAMPLE:

Business/Organization Name, City, State
Position Title, Dates Employed

- List duties, responsibilities and accomplishments
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PAST AND CURRENT WORK EXPERIENCE

List the all of the organization/company names, city and state, along with the position held and job responsibilities in a bullet point format.

EXAMPLE:

Business/Organization Name, City, State
Position Title, Dates Employed

- List duties, responsibilities and accomplishments
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