Mentor Me

Inspiring Youth to Create Their Pathway to Success Through Education

PROMISES2KIDS

Creating a brighter future for foster children®

2018 San Diego Foster Care Education Summit

Mentor Me
Inspiring Youth to Create Their
Pathway to Success Through Education

October •22 • 2018
7:30am to 3:30pm
San Diego Marriott La Jolla
4240 La Jolla Village Drive
La Jolla, CA 92037

san diego county office of EDUCATION
FUTURE WITHOUT BOUNDARIES

San Diego Foster Care Education Summit

This year's theme, "Mentor Me," will include presentations and workshop sessions that guide youth and supporting partners in furthering foster youth education. The event will also allow youth to educate guests on the importance and elements of mentorship, its connection to education, and the impact it makes on foster youth directly.



Hotel Information

San Diego Marriot La Jolla
4240 La Jolla Village Drive,
La Jolla, CA 92037

Click here to make a reservation at the San Diego Marriot La Jolla

This hotel does not provide shuttles to the San Diego International Airport.

Parking Information: Onsite Parking will be available at the cost of $15 per vehicle.

Schedule of Events

Registration, Coffee & Refreshments		7:30AM- 8:30AM
Opening Session		8:30AM-9:30AM
Presenting Key Note Speaker	Senate President Pro Tempore Senator- Toni Atkins	
Welcome Speaker	Honorable Judge- Kimberly Lagotta	
Welcome Speaker	SDCOE- Michelle Lustig, Ed.D, MSW, PPS	
Welcome Speaker	Promises2Kids CEO- Tonya Torosian	
Key Note Speaker	Director of Movement BE- Nate Howard	
Break		9:30AM- 9:45AM
Session A		9:45AM- 11:00AM
Break		11:00AM- 11:15AM
Session B		11:15AM- 12:30PM
Networking Lunch		12:30PM- 1:15PM
Youth Voice		1:15PM – 1:45PM
Break		1:45PM – 2:00PM
Youth Voice		2:00PM – 2:15PM
Mentor Me		2:15PM – 3:00PM
Closing Remarks		3:00PM -3:30PM

Opening and Welcome Speakers



Senate President Pro Tem, Toni Aktins

Dedicated to public service, Toni Atkins was elected in 2018 as California's first woman Senate President Pro Tem. Prior to that, she was San Diego's first ever Speaker of the State Assembly. She first began serving our communities in the mid-1980s as director of clinic services at Woman Care Health Center and later as a San Diego City Council member from 2000 to 2008, which included her position as acting Mayor in 2005, before being elected to the State Assembly in 2010.

A pioneer in the fight for affordable and homeless housing, veterans, the environment, women's health, and LGBT rights, Assembly member Toni Atkins has balanced budgets while investing in California's future – and fought hard for working families. Toni's legislative victories include authoring laws to help small businesses, preserve dignity for transgender individuals, protect wildlife, assist victims of domestic violence, protect our environment, ensure coastal access, address our housing and homeless crisis and strengthen family justice centers, among other accomplishments.



Honorable Judge Kimberlee Lagotta

Judge Kimberlee Lagotta was appointed to the San Diego Superior Court in 2010 and has served in the juvenile division for the past five years. As of January 2018, Judge Lagotta was appointed as the Presiding Judge of the Juvenile Court. Judge Lagotta's previous judicial assignments include misdemeanor domestic violence court (2010), felony criminal readiness court (2011-2012) and felony criminal trials/motions court (2013).

Judge Lagotta serves on a variety of San Diego Superior Court Committees including the Executive Committee, Juvenile Court Policy Committee, Criminal Courts Policy Committee, and Domestic Violence Policy Committee. She additionally serves on numerous local and statewide committees.

Judge Lagotta graduated from the University of San Diego, School of Law in 1989. She received her B.A. in Political Science from the University of San Diego in 1986. Prior to becoming a judge, she worked for twenty years as a Deputy District Attorney in the San Diego District Attorney's Office prosecuting serious and violent felony crimes including sexual assault, child abuse, domestic violence and homicide. In 1999 and 2009, the Deputy District Attorneys Association with Outstanding Achievement Awards recognized her for her prosecution of high profile sexual assault and homicide cases resulting in life sentences.

Welcome Session Speakers



Michelle Lustig, Ed.D, MSW, PPS

Michelle Lustig, Ed.D, MSW, PPS has served as the Director of Foster Youth Services Coordinating Program and Homeless Education with the San Diego County Office of Education since 2004. She has over 30 years of experience in public and private child welfare, research and education. Dr. Lustig has served as a part time professor at the USC School of Social Work and the Cal State University, San Marcos School of Education. She has worked for The Child and Adolescent Services Research Center, San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency, Child Welfare Services and Casey Family Programs. She has created several nationally recognized programs that support and increase school stability, and academic outcomes for students in foster care. Under her leadership, a model interagency database was developed that allows secure access to health and education data for children under the jurisdiction of juvenile court in San Diego County. In addition, she spearheaded the creation of a countywide cost sharing transportation agreement that ensures students in foster care are able to remain in their school of origin. Dr. Lustig believes that educational attainment is the gateway to a successful life and works to ensure that every student she serves has the opportunity to fulfill his or her academic potential.



Tonya L. Torosian, MSW, CFRE

Tonya Torosian is the Chief Executive Officer of Promises2Kids, a 37-year-old non-profit founded as the Child Abuse Foundation. Best known for building the Polinsky Children's Center, Promises2Kids is dedicated to creating a brighter future for foster children.

Torosian's work in child welfare and nonprofit management spans 30 years and three states. She developed programs and policies for child and youth-based organizations in Illinois, Arizona and California. A tireless advocate for children and youth throughout her entire career, Torosian began first as a social worker, then as an executive charged with developing strategic alliances and implementing processes, systems, and policies.

Tonya is a certified fundraising executive and received her Masters of Social Work degree from Arizona State University with an emphasis in Planning, Administration and Community Practice. She has served on the board of several nonprofit organizations, including the San Diego chapter of the Association of Fundraising Professionals, where she was President.

Keynote Speaker



Nate Howard, Movement BE

Nate Howard is a professional speaker, poet, educator, and social entrepreneur. In May 2013, Nate made the front page of the LA Times for sparking a movement against racial profiling after 79 LAPD officers shut down his event at USC. Realizing someone was attempting to tell his story, he founded Movement BE, a non-profit organization that conducts workshops to help young people discover their story. With the motto of "tell your story before they do," Movement BE has directly impacted thousands of students across the country. Nate was selected on the inaugural NBCBLK28 list as one of the top 28 black leaders in the nation under 28 years old. He was later featured on the Today Show as one of the "Best and Brightest: Game Changers Making History." Most recently Nate was honored in his hometown of San Diego as the " Young Entrepreneur of the Year."

Nate's belief is that we should focus our activism on education, empowering youth to create change so that the movement is proactive and sustainable. Seeing poetry as a means of self-expression, he challenges school systems to see its use as vital for the development of youth, giving them the courage to find their story to challenge the status quo. Nate has recorded his poetry on songs with artists Ty Dolla Sign, Kendrick Lamar and political activist Dr. Cornel West.

Nate is a graduate of the University of Southern California. His biggest inspirations are Martin Luther King Jr. and Maya Angelou.



2017 Education Summit Participants

Session Group A 9:45AM – 11:00AM

Academic Success, Holistic Support, and Cultivating a Sense of Belonging in Higher Education through the Resources and Assistance for Former Foster Youth (RAFFY) Program

Presenters:
Jaymie Gonzaga, MiraCosta College
Cristine Sidela, MiraCosta College
Adrian Sidela, MiraCosta College

Presently, there is an estimated 12,000 current and former foster youth enrolled in California's community college system. Resources and Assistance for Former Foster Youth (RAFFY) is an innovative program at MiraCosta College that intentionally tailors resources towards supporting community college students that are former foster youth. Alongside collaborations with EOPS (Extended Opportunity Programs & Services), Student Equity, and community partners, RAFFY is a student-centered program that supports retention, transfer, degree completion, and holistic student development through financial support, community building, and mentorship. Attendees of this workshop will learn best practices for how to build a program to support current/former foster youth in higher education. This workshop will also include RAFFY Student Voices, which features current RAFFY students and alumni of the program who will share meaningful reflections about their journey through higher education.

It's Not Drama, It's Trauma

Presenters:
Theresa Reed, Pasadena City College - Foster/Kinship Care Education and EOPS Foster Youth Programs

Participants will gain insight into how trauma reshapes the brain, how this is manifested in adulthood and how to help students heal utilizing interactive activities and reflection exercises. Participants will learn how behaviors or quirks we dismiss as being "dramatic" really are a result of trauma, how Foster care is a traumatic experience, how development is affected by trauma, and learn ways to build resilience in the youth they engage with. We will even touch on the potential for vicarious trauma in those working with foster youth.

Mentor Me:

"Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I may remember. Involve me and I learn." Benjamin Franklin

Session Group A 9:45AM – 11:00AM

Show Me the Money: The FAFSA and Beyond for Foster Youth

Presenters:
Deborah Pruitt, John Burton Advocates for Youth
Jeff Belcher, Fresno Unified School District
Britney Belcher, Sierra College

Attendees will learn proven strategies to help high school seniors see the benefits of post-secondary education, believe that there is a path for them, and complete the FAFSA to receive financial aid. We will bring together a high school foster youth liaison with a college financial aid expert and student to cover the A-Zs of financial aid – for youth and for professionals - and make it simple to ensure that foster youth students get all the financial aid they are eligible for. We will cover strategies that school district personnel can implement to reach all foster youth seniors in their district to create a transition plan and complete the FAFSA and how those same strategies can be applied in other contexts. We will also review the FAFSA application and the questions that are critical for foster youth, to make sure they get the best possible financial aid package. The college financial aid expert will explain the steps that must be taken after submitting the FAFSA to make sure that the application is complete and all financial aid is awarded in a timely manner. We will also cover how to keep getting financial aid, stay in school, and avoid financial aid debt resulting from overpayments. Finally, you will hear first-hand from a student about the real-life pitfalls in the financial aid process and how to avoid them.

Keeping Your Sanity: Compassion Fatigue and Self-Care

Presenters:
Mindy Kukich, San Diego County Office of Education
Susie Terry, San Diego County Office of Education

Working and serving youth who are involved in foster care can be a rewarding experience. However, there is a cost to caring. The challenges and stress associated with caring is something we do not often talk about. This workshop explores the impact that caring can have on caregivers. We will explore vicarious trauma (also known as secondary stress), warning signs, and strategies to work through it. In addition, we will explore the benefits of self-care while focusing on practical tools and resources you can use daily to make self-care a daily practice.

Mentor Me:

"The delicate balance of mentoring someone is not creating them in your own image, but giving them the opportunity to create themselves." Steven Spielberg

Session Group B 11:15AM – 12:30PM

Moving from "How's School Going?" to Hands-On Academic Case Management

Presenters:
Simone Tureck, John Burton Advocates for Youth
Lyle Batalona, YMCA Youth & Family Services

As a case manager, caretaker, mentor or foster youth supporter, how can you affect college enrollment, retention and long-term success? What should the week-by-week meetings with youth enrolled in college consist of? We know that merely asking about school just isn't enough, but what is?

This workshop will focus in on how to tailor case management and mentorship to best support youth to and through post-secondary education. John Burton Advocates (JBAY) for Youth is leading a two-year initiative to transform housing programs serving current and former foster, probation and homeless youth, into college success programs based on a core practice model.

The workshop will include an interactive discussion, activities, and a presentation by JBAY and a housing provider participating in the initiative. Attendees will learn about hands-on, academic-focused case management, and will leave with practical tools they can use with students now.

Extended Foster Care and the Foster Youth Mentor Program

Presenters:
Elizabeth Rosas, County of San Diego - Health and Human Services Agency - Child Welfare Services

Attendees will learn about the history of how EFC was created, will learn about current EFC policies and practices, and will learn about the ways EFC has innovated to meet the needs of Non-Minor Dependents (NMD). Attendees will also learn about the Foster Youth Mentor Program and the ways in which mentors help to support youth in foster care by building and maintaining positive, supportive relationships with youth in care.

Mentor Me:

"A mentor is someone who sees more talent and ability within you, than you see in yourself, and helps bring it out of you." Bob Proctor

Session Group B 11:15AM – 12:30PM

Using Trauma Informed Youth Engagement Strategies to Help Foster Youth Succeed Educationally

Presenters:
Mara Ziegler, Public Counsel
Nisha Kashyap, Alliance for Children's Rights

Anyone can share with foster youth the requirements to graduate high school or college, but it takes unique skill and specialized knowledge to know how to help foster youth move from information to action. All youth in foster care have experienced some trauma and this trauma history impacts educational outcomes in ways that the youth and those working with them may not have considered. Although "trauma-informed practice" has become a familiar term, this workshop will help you understand what this actually means in the context of working with foster youth to meet their educational needs and goals. Through an interactive approach, participants will learn how to apply trauma-informed practice principles in the education setting and will take away handouts and concrete instructional strategies to empower, engage and promote resilience for those students who have experienced trauma, and how to improve personal satisfaction while supporting these students.

Techniques for College Success

Presenters:
Veronica Castillo, Cuyamaca College-NextUp
Pamela Fleming, Cuyamaca College-Financial Aid Foster Youth Liaison
Judi Smith, Cuyamaca College-EOPS-Unlimited Potential (UP!)

Youth and supporters will learn the techniques and steps to ensure college success. We will discuss steps to be completed while in high school and during the transition phase to college. We will focus on receiving aid, matriculation, enrollment and retention, declaring a major with economic benefits, building student community, successfully completing classes, and developing meaningful counselor relationships.

Mentor Me:

"Nobody makes it alone. Nobody has made it alone. And we are all mentors to people even when we don't know it. "Oprah Winfrey

Promises2Kids

Promises2Kids creates a brighter future for foster children in San Diego County. From the moment they come into foster care and through to adulthood, Promises2Kids provides the hope, support, and opportunities these special individuals need to change their lives for the better…now and for years to come.

Our programs include:

- **Camp Connect**: A program that reunites sisters and brothers who are separated in the foster care system through a four-day, residential summer camp, family dinner nights and 10 additional day events throughout the year.

- **Guardian Scholars**: A program that, beginning in high school with Junior Guardian Scholars, supports foster youth with case management and mentoring to ensure they graduate from high school, are exposed to a variety of careers, advance to specialized vocational programs, community college or a university, and complete their higher education with the help of our scholarship program.

- **Foster Funds:** Foster children often feel alone and isolated and may go without simple pleasures of childhood such as birthday gifts, a sports uniform or a musical instrument. Promises2Kids has special funds set up to support these needs not met through typical funding.

- **A.B. and Jessie Polinsky Children's Center**: An emergency shelter for children who are removed from their homes due to abuse and neglect, this facility protects and cares for more than 1,100 children a year.

Thank you to the Committee for your support with the 2018 Foster Care Education Summit!