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NACC Welcomes the Second Cohort of NACCLR Members!

NACC is thrilled to introduce the second cohort of lived experience experts on NACC's National Advisory Council on Children's Legal Representation. The council is comprised of young professionals, advocates, and leaders who have navigated the child welfare system and seek to contribute their expertise to advancing NACC's mission and core strategies.



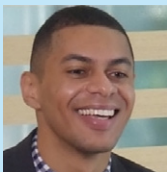
Ivory Bennett, M.Ed. | DALLAS, TX

Ivory Bennett (She/Her/Hers) is a Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania native who is currently a Manager of Teacher Leadership and Development in Dallas, Texas. Additionally, Ivory is an active advocate for both education and foster care equity — she has 17 years of lived experience in foster care. Outside of education, Ivory is an avid writer with a particular passion for poetry and play-writing. Ivory loves international travel, holistic health practices, vegan soul food, and tending to her plant babies.



Jade Garza, JD | QUEENS, NY

Jade Garza is a native-born West Texan, where she spent seven years in kinship foster care. After aging out of care, she attended the University of North Texas, where she received her Bachelor of Arts in English, Writing, and Rhetoric. Though always motivated by her own experiences in care, Jade found her passion for child advocacy through work with CASA of Denton County as a Volunteer Advocate, and later became a Casework Supervisor. In 2022, she received her Juris Doctorate from the Maurice A. Deane School of Law at Hofstra University. During law school, Jade served as a Legal Extern for the National CASA/GAL Association for Children. She has also volunteered with the D.C. Family & Youth Initiative as a Board Governance Committee Member, and interned in Hofstra's Youth Advocacy Clinic. Jade is a passionate advocate for children, families, mental health, and social initiatives with the potential to support families. Jade will begin her post-graduate legal career as an Agency Attorney Interne in the Division of Family Court Legal Services, representing the New York City Administration for Children's Services.



Louis Gasper | ROCKVILLE, MD

Louis Gasper works as the Jurisdictional Project Coordinator for the Capacity Building Center for States (ICF) where he leads project management and coordination efforts for the Tailored Services department. Louie has a bachelor's in political communication from the Evergreen State College and transitioned full-time from his role as a Young Adult Consultant. Louie has worked on reforming the child welfare system since he was 13 years old, collaborating and leading projects ranging from the local to the international level with various organizations. Within these organizations, Louie has served in various capacities as a chapter president/leader, chairman of policy, legislative committee representative, programs and policy intern, "all-star" intern, conference facilitator, peer fellow, change management consultant, and youth trainer. In the scope of his work, Louie has participated in projects based on relationship-building, group home reform, youth advocacy, housing/homelessness, LGBTQIA+ rights, race relations, social worker and foster parent accountability, permanency, mental health, sexual and physical abuse and trauma, and child welfare systems reform. As an agent of change, Louie consistently

► **Youth Advisory Board** from previous page

looks for opportunities to employ strategic planning processes that offer clear, mission-based solutions. Louie also currently holds a position on the National Association of Black Journalists Political Task Force Executive Board as Secretary/Treasurer. His interdisciplinary approaches and skills for analyzing public policy, reviewing legislation, writing and editing, project management, media monitoring and curation, and communications enhances his work to offer a unique approach to solutions addressing child welfare reform.



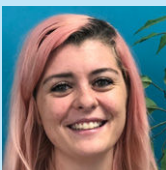
Stormy Lukasavage | WICHITA, KS

Stormy Lukasavage (he/him/his) is an established professional advocate from Topeka, Kansas who has experience working with FosterClub, National Association of Counsel for Children (NACC), National Foster Youth Institute (NFYI), and the Children's Bureau in the Administration on Children, Youth and Families (ACYF) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Having joined the Kansas Youth Advisory Council in 2010, Stormy's advocacy journey began by helping craft the Kansas State Legislature's Senate Bill No. 23 which enables foster youth to graduate from any postsecondary institution with an altered, lower minimum curriculum of 21 credits. This is significant because youth in care often struggle with attaining a high school diploma due to the transitional nature of foster care and this lowered credit minimum helps elevate graduation rates without sacrificing critical education requirements. Stormy eventually became president of Kansas' state council and subsequently coordinated two of the biggest youth conferences focused on youth development and life skills in Kansas' history. In 2019, Stormy graduated with his bachelor's degree in criminal justice with a minor in acting, the latter he studied in London. Stormy was the first Kansas participant in the prestigious FosterClub All-Star Internship and now works as part of the organization's National Foster Care Youth and Alumni Policy Council by bringing his experience with the criminal justice system to the policy-making table. Stormy is planning to attend law school in 2023.



Melissa Mayo | HILO, HI

Melissa Mayo, at 22 years old, is an alumna of foster care and a proud Native Hawaiian. Melissa spent five years in foster care and is now the President of the HI H.O.P.E.S. Youth Leadership Board in East Hawai'i. Melissa is also a current Jim Casey Young Fellow with Jim Casey Initiative and has been an ambitious leader, with a passion for creating positive change and empowering her peers in the child welfare system. Melissa also uses her advocacy work in her role as the Pono Process lead, promoting youth self-advocacy and assuring the rights of children and youth are being honored and upheld while in foster care through Hawai'i's grievance process at EPIC 'Ohana Inc. In addition to Melissa's advocacy work, she is currently working on obtaining her bachelor's degree in Political Science and Administration of Justice at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo. She is also currently an adoptive mom and resource caregiver (foster parent). In her free time, she enjoys swimming, playing tennis, and volunteering at her church.

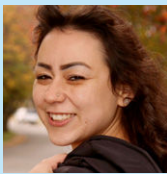


Kayla Powell | URBANDALE, IA

Kayla Powell (she/her) is the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) and Youth Development Coordinator for the Iowa Department of Human Rights. In this position, Kayla primarily focuses on overseeing the NYTD data collection on older youth in and transitioning from foster care, advancing authentic youth engagement and positive youth development within state agencies, and contributing to juvenile and criminal justice research activities using participatory models. She is the staff support to Iowa's Youth Justice Council, leads a data team of young adults with lived child welfare experience, coordinates Iowa's Family and

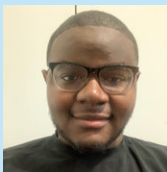
▶ **Youth Advisory Board** from previous page

Youth Engagement Summit and serves on Iowa's Children's Justice Advisory Council. Outside of this role, Kayla is a Young Adult Consultant with the Capacity Building Center for States, a Jim Casey Fellow with the Annie E. Casey Foundation, and a Court-Appointed Special Advocate (CASA). Kayla is a national public speaker, having presented at places like Harvard University, the National CASA Conference, the Coalition for Juvenile Justice Conference, and multiple Annie E. Casey convenings. She also has a degree in Occupational Therapy and is a licensed and board-certified Occupational Therapy Assistant. Kayla has over 9 years of lived child welfare experience and 9 years of professional child welfare experience. She is a proud mom to Kniko Ky and enjoys travelling and practicing yoga.



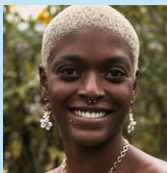
Kristen Powell | WICHITA, KS

Kristen Nicole Powell is a 24-year-old Mexican American woman from San Antonio, Texas. She is the mother of 3 beautiful children Zachery, Gabriella, and Nicholas and they live in Wichita, KS. Kristen started her career at 18 working with her mentor and friend Dr. Karen Irene Countryman Roswurm as a Prosperity Coach at the Institute for Transformative Emancipation, Center for Combating Human Trafficking. While at ITE-CCHT, Kristen worked to create survivor-informed, survivor-led services and was integral in developing programming that focused on holistic healing for victims and survivors of human trafficking. Kristen currently works as a journalism intern and researcher for author and journalist Nell Bernstein where she researches youth advocacy and the movement to close youth prisons.



Duane Price | PHILADELPHIA, PA

Duane Price is a 20-year-old from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He is a Community College of Philadelphia student and a National Youth Advisory Board member with the National Association for the Counsel of Children. Price also serves as a youth advocate for the group Advocates Transforming Youth Systems in the Youth Advocacy Program at Juvenile Law Center.



Jas Snell | CHATTANOOGA, TN

Jas Snell is a graduate of the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga with a Bachelor of Science in Accounting and minor in Criminal Justice. Jas is currently working on her Certified Public Accountancy license while serving in roles as a Certified Peer Support Specialist, Young Adult Consultant, Jim Casey Initiative Young Fellow, and a community volunteer. Jas is passionate about improving the outcomes for those who touch child- and family-serving systems and uses her expertise gained through surviving them to influence holistic practices and policy reformation. Her ultimate goal is to start a primary school that offers two-generational services for youth 3-20 years old.



Jordan Sosa | SACRAMENTO, CA

Jordan Sosa serves as the Legislative Manager for California Youth Connection (CYC), a youth-led advocacy organization that empowers young leaders to transform systems impacting current and former foster youth through legislative, policy, and practice change. His passion for youth voice in child welfare comes from his motivation to increase equity and dismantle the structural oppression that exists within the systems that impact children and youth. He supported the passage of Assembly Bill 46 (California Youth Empowerment Act), Senate Bill 512 (Supporting Foster Youth in California Community Colleges), Assembly Bill 1061 (Placement Stability for Probation-Supervised Youth Placed in Foster Care), and Assembly Bill 175 (Modernizing the Foster Youth Bill of Rights). In 2018, Jordan interned with the U.S. House

► **Youth Advisory Board** from previous page

of Representatives Committee on Ways and Means working on the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) policies impacting states' child welfare systems. He published a policy report with the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute (CCAI) to present a briefing to Congress and the White House on how the federal government can improve the U.S. child welfare system. Jordan obtained a Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration with a Minor in Human Services at California State University, Fullerton with the support of the Guardian Scholars Program. He is a father of an amazing boy and a caregiver of two very powerful and independent girls. He loves camping and traveling with his wife.

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Ariella Stafanson | ANN ARBOR, MI

Ariella H. Stafanson is entering her last year of graduate school, pursuing a JD/MPP at the University of Michigan. In law school she gives back to the local community by representing youth in school disciplinary proceedings and representing clients through clinical settings. Within the child welfare sphere, she has helped develop new guidelines for social workers to understand the cultural identity of the youth they serve and in turn strengthen and protect that identity through advocacy and data collection. These guidelines are currently being piloted in 4 states. Prior to law school, she worked for a consulting firm that used data and survey methodology to inform nonprofits and government agencies how to better serve their constituents. Previously, she was the Public Policy Fellow for California CASA where she assisted in drafting bills, attended stakeholder meetings, edited All County Letters, and worked with the state Ombudsman's office. She additionally has trained county social workers and CDSS on how to make environments youth-friendly and led individual living skills classes for local foster youth. When not studying she enjoys taking friends backpacking, trying new recipes, riding her bike, and is constantly looking for the best breakfast burrito.



Nicole Wong, JD, MST | QUEENS, NY

Nicole Wong grew up in the New York City foster care system, living with several diverse families. She holds a BA in Political Science from Queens College, a Master of Science in Teaching from Fordham University, and a Juris Doctorate from Maurice A. Deane School of Law at Hofstra University. During her legal academic career, Nicole represented indigent clients in the Hofstra Law Criminal Justice Clinic, worked as a Research Assistant to Professor James J. Sample, and was a member of Hofstra Law Review, Moot Court Board, and the Christian Legal Society. As a 2022 Pro Bono Scholar, Nicole spent her last semester of law school taking the bar exam early and doing full-time pro bono work with a national non-profit organization that advocated for prisoners' rights. Nicole was selected as a LatinoJustice CLASP intern, providing her legal internships with Goldman Sachs in 2020 and Paul Hastings, LLP in 2021. Nicole will begin working at Paul Hastings, LLP full-time in Fall 2022. Upon graduation, Nicole was selected by her esteemed law school faculty to receive the Christopher G. Gegwich Outstanding Law Student Award.

NACC thanks Shéar Avory, Courtney Canova, LilCrystal Dernier, Tram (Jen) Ha, Tisha Ortiz, Alexandra Talsky, Aliyah Zeien for their service during the first cohort of the NACCLR! ■