

# The Scholar-Practitioner

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A publication of R is for Thursday

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## National Conference for Engaged Scholarship on Hidden Student Populations

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<https://nchp.okstate.edu>

### Current Hidden College Student Populations

May include those who have foster care or justice-involved experiences, who are survivors of sexual violence, who are recovering drug or alcohol addicts, who face housing insecurity, or who are considered Third Culture Kids

### NCHP Conference Fellows

*Dr. Jennifer Geiger, University of Illinois, Chicago*

*Dr. Royel Johnson, University of Southern California*

*Dr. Kerri Kearney, Oklahoma State University*

*Dr. Megan Piel, University of Texas, San Antonio*

*Dr. Lori Tiller, University of Georgia*

*Dr. Lisa Will, Oklahoma State University*



**The Scholar-Practitioner** is a monthly publication of invited research summaries that target the research-to-practice gap for U.S. scholar and practitioner advocates for college students with experiences in foster care and other hidden college student populations.

This publication reinforces the work of the **National Conference for Engaged Scholarship on Hidden Student Populations (NCHP)** by providing a space to share research applications for practice. NCHP was the first research conference dedicated to this multidisciplinary area of study. The NCHP 4th conference will be held in 2024.

In the upcoming issues, from January to April, **The Scholar-Practitioner** will share the research progress that four NCHP Research Teams presented during the 2022 NCHP.

## Understanding the Knowledge and Confidence of Postsecondary Education Leaders and Staff to Serve Students with a Foster Care Background

Team members:

Jennifer Geiger, University of Illinois Chicago

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Justine Cheung, Arizona State University

Brenda Sweeten, University of North Texas

Paige Muehlenkamp-McHorse, University of Texas Austin

Molly Sarubbi, Education Commission of the States

### Research in Progress

#### Background/problem

Research shows that students with a foster care background experience a number of challenges while enrolled in postsecondary education that contribute to college disengagement, including untreated mental health conditions, emotional and behavioral problems, and difficulty accessing health care. College campuses are often equipped with a variety of on and off-campus supports to meet student needs. Campus-based professionals have a unique opportunity to intervene and offer support for students who have experienced challenges associated with foster care. However, little is known about how campus-based professionals interact with students who have experienced foster care. This study sought to better understand what

knowledge and experiences campus-based professionals have with students who have been in foster care and what resources they have to serve these students.

### Methodology

We recruited participants from select 2-year and 4-year institutions in Texas, Arizona, and Illinois who served in various capacities (e.g., student affairs, counseling, leadership) to complete an online survey. The questions were informed by the Casey Family Programs *"It's My Life" 7 Life Domain Framework* to better understand participants' knowledge of programming and supports related to students' needs (academic, physical and mental health, financial aid and employment, housing, life skills, cultural and personal identity, and spiritual). We also inquired about participants' confidence in referring students with a foster care background to services related to the seven domains.

### Results and Implications

Sixty-five individuals completed the survey. Analysis is currently underway. Findings from this study will increase our knowledge about how campus-based professionals provide support for former foster youth and will identify gaps in service and support provision for former foster youth in postsecondary education settings. Findings can provide insight into developing a framework for training and supporting campus-based professionals to better serve young people with foster care histories, and ultimately improve postsecondary education enrollment and success and promote economic stability into adulthood.



To sign up for ongoing email updates about the 2024 national conference and/or for archives of The Scholar-Practitioner, go to: <https://risforthursday.okstate.edu>