

YOUTH connect

Building youth success

Youth Connect AmeriCorps (YCA) links youth who have lived or learned foster care experience with organizations that provide support and resources to youth who are preparing to leave, or who have recently left, an out-of-home placement.

Building on this peer connection, YCA fosters a unique opportunity for personal and professional growth for our members, and a positive relationship for youth who may otherwise be on their own.



"YCA has taught me how to connect with and learn from the community I work with, and because of that I've grown a lot throughout my term. I'm incredibly grateful for the experience, for the skills I've gained, and for the opportunity to give back."

— Grace, YCA member 2024



THE CHALLENGE

Successfully navigating the transition to adulthood can be overwhelming for youth who have experienced an out-of-home placement. Connecting these vulnerable young people to supportive services is vital to their success.

THE SOLUTION

YCA provides members with career readiness skills and professional development training, preparing them to offer support and mentorship to former foster youth. This partnership extends the organization's capacity to serve these youth.

THE BENEFITS

- **YCA members** receive a bi-monthly living stipend, and an education award at the completion of their term.
- **Foster youth** are given additional support on their journey to self-sufficiency.
- **Host Site organizations** gain a skilled worker who can provide supplemental assistance to current staff.
- **Communities** receive well-prepared young people, ready to pursue postsecondary education or enter the workforce.



Interested in becoming a Youth Connect AmeriCorps member or Host Site?
Connect with YCA Program Director Grady Fox: gfox@iastate.edu



YCA is a program of Iowa State University's
Child Welfare Research and Training Project (CW RTP)