



Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute 2010 Foster Youth Internship Program Application

The Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute's (CCAI) Foster Youth Internship (FYI) Program is a competitive, highly esteemed Congressional Internship for young adults who were in U.S. foster care at the time of their eighteenth birthday or who were adopted after their fourteenth birthday from the U.S. foster care system. All applicants must be enrolled in college and have completed 4 semesters by May 29, 2010. The 2010 program will place 16 academically successful college students in the Washington, D.C. offices of Members of Congress. The dates for the 2010 Congressional Foster Youth Internship are set as May 29 - July 31, 2010.

About the Program

The Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute, a nonpartisan, nonprofit created by Congress, started the FYI program in 2003 to raise awareness on Capitol Hill about the needs and unique perspectives of young adults in the United States aging out of foster care. Every year, Congressional Members partner with CCAI to "match" an eligible intern to an eight-week internship in their Washington, D.C. office. Every effort is made to place interns in the region of the country where they reside permanently. Interns are given a real-world experience in a Congressional office, complete with professional training, as well as a retreat coordinated by the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute.

The FYI Program is made possible through the generous support of the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, the Annie E. Casey Foundation and Casey Family Programs.

Typical substantive duties of a Congressional Foster Youth Intern:

- *Work directly with legislative correspondents and legislative assistants to research issues and compose correspondence.*
- *Attend committee hearings, sit in on meetings, attend press conferences, and take notes.*
- *Work on small legislative projects.*
- *Constituent services.*
- *Attend and serve at Congressional briefings and meetings, including events organized by CCAI for the members of the Congressional Coalition on Adoption (Congress' Adoption Caucus).*

Typical administrative duties of a Congressional Foster Youth Intern:

- *Open, sort, and deliver incoming mail.*
- *Answer phones, greet constituents, run errands, deliver priority letters, and acquire Congressional signatures.*
- *Copying, filing, faxing, and data entry.*

The nine-week internship is a full-time work experience. Interns are paid a small stipend that will cover daily expenses. The CCAI FYI program pays major expenses such as transportation to Washington, D.C., housing, and transportation to and from internship activities. Interns must live in Washington, D.C. for



the full duration of the program, including residing with the internship class at the provided Washington, D.C. university.

Eligibility

Applicants must meet the following eligibility criteria

- The applicant was in U.S. foster care system at the time of their eighteenth birthday or be adopted after their fourteenth birthday from the U.S. foster care system.
- (and)
- The applicant has completed at least two years of college in a four-year degree program.

Good writing and research skills accompanied by an interest in the legislative process are required, and students in every degree program are encouraged to apply.

College Credit

Many colleges and universities allow students to obtain academic credit for internships. Please check with your academic advisor to determine if you are eligible to receive academic credit for a Capitol Hill internship.

About the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute

Did you know that until 1975, most States discouraged or directly prohibited foster parents from being considered as potential adoptive parents to children they fostered? It's true. For the most part, these restrictions existed to protect against foster parents becoming too attached to children who may ultimately be returned to their biological families. Thanks to the educational efforts of advocates, policymakers soon learned that these well meaning laws and policies were, in effect, hindering children from finding a safe, loving and permanent home of their own. So, instead they put in place laws, policies and programs aimed at promoting foster adoption and today 67% of children adopted out of foster care are adopted by their foster parents.

This is just one of many examples of how law and policy can serve as a barrier to children realizing their basic right to a family. Realizing that federal policymakers had the power to overcome such barriers, in 2001, advocates for the world's orphaned and foster youth formed the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute (CCAI). In founding CCAI, these advocates sought to match Members of the Congressional Coalition on Adoption's commitment to finding a home for every child with the information and resources needed to make that dream a reality. Since that time, CCAI has strived to be an objective resource for information critical to advancing the efforts of federal policymakers on behalf of children. Through its five core programs, CCAI's goal is to **educate** federal policymakers about the need for reform; **coordinate** Congressional and community efforts to bring about change and **facilitate** opportunities for communication and awareness.

Mission Statement

The **Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute** is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to raising awareness about the millions of children around the world in need of permanent, safe, and loving homes and to eliminating the barriers that hinder these children from realizing their basic right of a family.



****APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS****

ALL APPLICATIONS MUST BE COMPLETED BY JANUARY 4, 2010.

To apply, submit the following materials to CCAI:

1. Application form (please fax **immediately** to (202) 544-8501, attention: Chelsea Cathcart, to begin the application process).
2. Email resume to Chelsea@ccainstitute.org. Your resume should include previous work experience, full educational background, and relevant extracurricular activities.
3. Write Two Essays: Each must be **double spaced**, written in **12 point Times New Roman font**, and follow the page restrictions. Please email your essays to Chelsea Cathcart at Chelsea@ccainstitute.org.
 - a. An essay on where you see yourself in 5 years. What types of activities do you currently participate in that would stay the same? What would be different about your life? **Please do not write beyond three pages.**
 - b. An essay explaining why you are interested in a Congressional Foster Youth Internship. Discuss the foster care system as you have experienced it and how you have seen it working or not working for those under its care. Discuss changes you would undertake if you were able to write legislation to help foster youth. Essay must have an introduction, supporting evidence and a conclusion. References should be cited in MLA style. **Please do not write beyond four pages.**
4. Two letters of recommendation mailed to Chelsea Cathcart at 311 Massachusetts Avenue, NE Washington, DC 20002. Your recommendation letters must be submitted by mail from a professor and/or employer and be signed along the seal. Mailed letters must be postmarked by January 4, 2010 to be accepted. Emailed letters will not be accepted.

Mail completed application to:

**Chelsea Cathcart
Director of Programs
311 Massachusetts Avenue, NE
Washington, DC 20002**

**CCAI will review all COMPLETED applications.
You will be notified by February 12, 2010.**

Questions: Please call Chelsea Cathcart, Director of Programs, at (202) 544-8500
or Chelsea@ccainstitute.org.



2010 CCAI Congressional FYI Program Application Form

THE APPLICATION DEADLINE IS JANUARY 4, 2010.

ALL APPLICATIONS MUST BE POSTMARKED BY THIS DATE FOR CONSIDERATION. THIS IS A COMPETITIVE APPLICATION PROCESS AND APPLYING DOES NOT GUARANTEE ACCEPTANCE.

The CCAI Congressional Foster Youth Internship Program is a program of the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute (CCAI). **Please write legibly.**

TODAY'S DATE: _____

Legal Name: _____ Preferred Name: _____

Marital Status: _____ Spouse's Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Social Security Number: ____-____-____

Name(s) and Age(s) of Children: _____

Cell Phone: _____ Phone (alternate): _____

Email: _____ Email 2: _____

Address to send **all correspondence**: _____

City

State

Zip

List all states and counties in which you have lived: _____



Where are you pursuing your education (list name of college and city/state)?

Is this a four-year institution? _____ Yes _____ No

STATUS IN SPRING 2010 SEMESTER: FR SOPH JR SR

ANTICIPATED COLLEGE GRADUATION DATE (month/year): _____

MAJOR: _____

MINOR: _____

Cumulative GPA: _____

ACADEMIC AREAS/ ISSUES OF INTEREST:

How did you find out about the Congressional Foster Youth Internship Program or the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute (CCAI)?

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN CONVICTED OF OR PLEAD GUILTY OR NO CONTEST TO ANY FELONY? IF YES, PLEASE EXPLAIN (If the explanation requires additional space, please attach the extra page to faxed application): **Note: A conviction will not disqualify an application. We will consider the type and seriousness of the crime, the frequency of violations, your age at the time of conviction or time elapse since the conviction or completion of any jail sentence.**



PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY:

- I am available and will to come to Washington D.C. from May 29 - July 31, 2010.
- I was in U.S. foster care at the time of my eighteenth birthday.
- I was adopted after my fourteenth birthday from the U.S. foster care system.
- I will have completed at least two years of college by Spring 2010.
- I am a registered voter.
- I am a citizen of the United States. If no, what type of visa do you hold? From what country?

I understand that my application will not be considered complete until I have submitted all the required documentation, including essays, recommendation letters, and resume.

If selected, I will give CCAI and the participating Congressional Office permission to use my name and photograph in web and print materials about the Congressional Foster Youth Internship Program.

Optional Section: (Questions 1 and 2 do not have an influence on your eligibility. If selected, this information will be used to place you in an environment that complements the Congressional office's needs and best suits your strengths.)

1. What do you consider to be your political persuasion? Democrat Republican Independent
Undecided

2. Are you able to work in a Congressional office that does not have the same political philosophies as yourself? Please elaborate.

I certify by my signature below that all information presented in this application is accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Signature

Date