

foster
advocates

Annual Report



Agency • Bold • Balance • Solidarity • Trust



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As we pass another anniversary for Foster Advocates, it feels nearly impossible to recap everything that's happened over the past year. It's cliché but true that time's gone by fast. It's incredible what we've accomplished by working alongside our Foster community. **Together we've been able to reimagine what is possible to create change in the Minnesota child welfare system.** We're no longer negotiating the bare minimum; instead, we are asking Fosters to imagine what justice looks like- and joining in demanding action.

With that in mind, **we've turned four and just passed our fourth law!** This year we led the creation of an Office of the Ombudsperson for Foster Youth. We also passed Maya's Law, deepening our services and connections with Fosters across the state. However, **I'm proudest of our continued movement building that ensures Fosters' genius and fundamental human rights are at the center of all systems change.** As the E.D. of Foster Advocates, I am honored for my small part as Fosters lead this work.

-Hoang, Executive Director & Founder



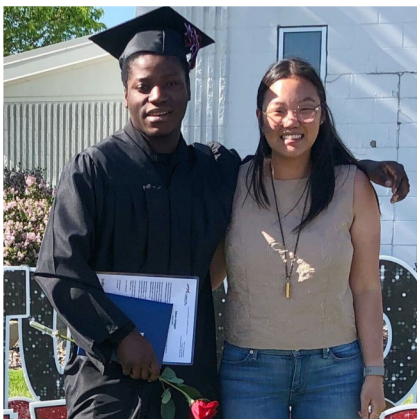
Fostering Education Act passes!



Launch of Fostering Education Leadership Program



Launch of College Ambassadors



While the past few years have been rough for everyone, our team is celebrating Fosters, who are enjoying big and small successes. We launched the Fostering Education Leadership Program in Ramsey County and launched College Ambassadors, intending to make the pathway from high school to and through college smoother for Fosters. **We are proud that all of our program's high-schoolers plan to continue their education after high school graduation.**

-Hannah, Director of Education

"Working with Foster Advocates has made me realize that there are people out there who actually care about Fosters such as myself. This program and the people in it show that they care by helping out and doing what they can to make sure that everyone is where they need to be in order to succeed in their lives."

-Edson, 2022 Fostering Education Graduate



My first year working at Foster Advocates has been a roller coaster of emotions. **If you had told me a year ago that I would meet so many other amazing Fosters from all over MN, and celebrate the passing of major bills with them at the Capitol,** I would have never believed you.

Being in community like this has been so powerful, and I can't wait to see what we do together in the coming years!

-Ariana, Policy & Advocacy Manager

48 hour's notice



17 Fosters holding power at the Capitol



1 Ombuds office created



Launch of Community Board



LGBTQ2S+ Leaders design program



Second Fellowship cohort



Passage of two laws in 2022 Legislative session



As a non-Foster brought on to build out our leadership programs, it has been an honor to create spaces where Fosters can develop the skills and strategy to match their passion and expertise. Across my career, I've often had to fight for space to truly center youth voices and visions; that's not the case with our team. It is powerful to live out my values through this work and in relationships with Fosters. **It is important our Foster leaders feel agency in how they engage with us along their leadership journey, and that they are able to bring their full self to this community.** I'm proud to be part of the village doing the work that meets Fosters' visions for justice.

-Elena, Associate Director



We've had a great first year of the Community Board. It's been a big step and learning process for all of us. Still, it's been easy because of the growth and support from Foster Advocates, and our aligned goal of wanting to make things better for Fosters in the future. Being chairs has made us more comfortable advocating not just for ourselves but for others. We use our lived expertise as a guide, but make decisions based on what we learn and gather from other Fosters.

Through the Community Board, Fosters finally have the opportunity we've been asking for, for so long. We're not just at the table for discussion; Foster Advocates has put us at the head of the table. **We're leading the work without having to do it all, and it's powerful to know that Foster Advocates is getting that work done.** Through this healthy leadership platform, making collective decisions for Fosters, we're leading by example for Minnesota (and other states). We are excited for the next year of Community Board and continuing to connect with Foster Advocates growing network of Fosters!

-Ace and Ryn, Community Board co-chairs



At the front

of the
Minnesota

Foster
rights
movement

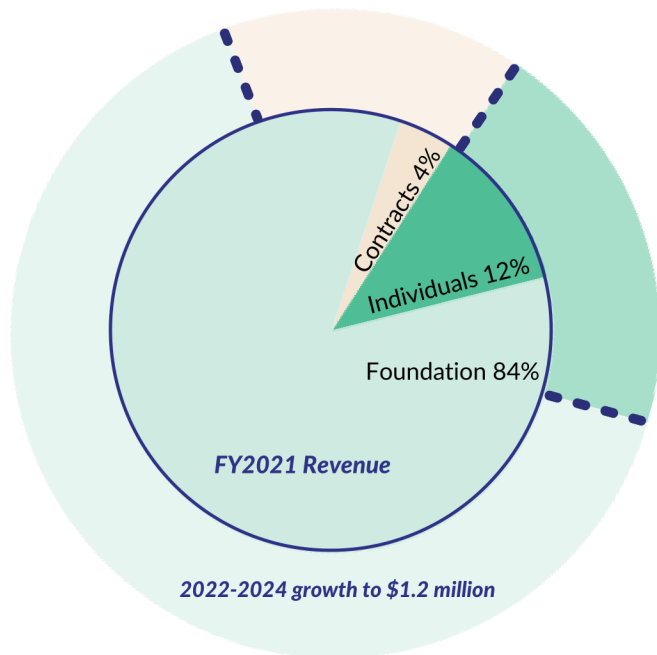
Learn more about our growing movement and how you can get connected:
Join us for a monthly Village Gathering! Sign up at fosteradvocates.org/events



Foster Advocates has much to be thankful for and proud of. On the national level, the organization is recognized as a leader in the field, adept in achieving the passing of bills, and locally for being inclusive and supportive in its work. **We would not be able to have such an incredible story to tell if it were not for your support.** We deeply appreciate you. Thank you for joining us as we see each Foster rising and on the path to lifelong success.

-Bob-e Simpson Epps, Board Chair

Each year, we rely on the community—you, our village of support—to deliver on Foster rights and advance our movement. 2021 was no exception. You gave hours of your time supporting our legislative agenda, you showed up to share your stories, and you gave money generously.



Donors contributed over \$460,000 in 2021 to make our programs possible. Individuals and families fund the bulk of our advocacy efforts with their trust-based, "unrestricted" gifts. Free college for Fosters is a direct result of this flexible support. Voices of Foster leaders paired with community donations creates powerful change!

The truth is that while our wins were significant, we have a long way to go to ensure Fosters can fully access all of their rights. For FY2022, we've already scaled to \$600,000. Foster Advocates plans to grow our budget by 50% by 2024 to meet the true needs of our community.

It will take approximately \$1.2 million each year from community members to fully fund this Foster-driven work. We can't wait to share more about our plans to build our capacity for Fosters and we're grateful that you've brought us this far with your support.

We would like to recognize the following donors for their FY2021 contributions:

