

ADVANCING NATIONAL SERVICE

IN COLLEGE, FORMER FOSTER KIDS PAY IT FORWARD

April 11, 2018

by NationSwell Team

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



Oscar Collazos, Sean Ryon, Thomas Shomaker

THIS MENTORING PROGRAM IS RUN BY AND FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS WHO ARE AGING OUT OF THE FOSTER SYSTEM.

Bria Davis didn't have the easiest time growing up. Her mother suffered from schizophrenia and her father wasn't around. As a result, she was placed into the foster-care system, which meant changing schools every year.

“Coming out of high school, I never was in a stable place,” Davis says.

Davis’ freshman year at Miami Dade College in Florida was challenging, and she eventually sought help. Now a well-acclimated sophomore, Davis decided she was in a unique position to give back. So she joined the Changemaker Corps, a peer-to-peer mentoring program by and for students who are aging out of foster care. The service-year program launched at Miami Dade in 2015 with support from Service Year Alliance and the nonprofit Educate Tomorrow.

The idea behind Changemaker Corps is to encourage former foster-care students who have gotten help navigating college life to pass on that wisdom to struggling students from similar backgrounds. After all, no one is more qualified to understand the difficulties facing a student emerging from the foster system than a young person who has already lived through them.

“The service-year model is a way for college students to serve, actually mentoring and helping others succeed,” says Brett McNaught, CEO of Educate Tomorrow.

The commitment to helping this student population succeed extends to Miami Dade College’s upper leadership.

“More and more universities are understanding the importance of giving their students the opportunity to get involved in this work,” says Eduardo Padron, president of Miami Dade College. “A service year should be part of every institution, where students have opportunities to help their school, their communities, and our nation.”

NationSwell asks you to join our partnership with Service Year Alliance. Watch the video above and [ask Congress](#) to support federal funding for national service. Together, we can lead a national movement to give young Americans the opportunity to help bridge the divides in our country.

SHARE



[Foster Care](#)

[Higher Education](#)

[Mentoring](#)

[National Service](#)

[Service Year](#)

SHOW COMMENTS