



YOUTH AND ADULT SERVICES VOLUNTEERS IN SERVICE TO AMERICA



Youth Empowerment Strategies for Success – Volunteers in Service to America (YESS–VISTA) was developed in 2007 to support the Foundation for California Community Colleges’ foster youth programs: YESS–Independent Living Program and YESS–Los Angeles. Each year, approximately 4,000 of California’s foster youth turn 18 and become independent, many without the necessary skills to support themselves. Studies have shown that youth who leave foster care at 18 are three times as likely as their peers to be out of work and school. The YESS programs help current and former foster youth transition successfully into adulthood.

YESS–LA and YESS–ILP bring together campus and community resources to help foster youth graduate from high school and get into college, and help former foster youth get on the path to gainful employment through higher education and living skills training. Located on Community College campuses throughout the state, the YESS programs serve youth from the time they enter at age 14 or older until they are 21.

Service to Society

YESS–VISTA recruits individuals from the community to serve as full-time operational and administrative capacity-building support on campuses that run a YESS program. The program is administered by the Foundation as a Corporation for National and Community Service Volunteers in Service to America program, through which participants receive a living allowance, medical benefits, a post-service scholarship, and child care. The VISTA program is dedicated to creating and expanding programs that help bring communities and individuals out of poverty.

YESS–VISTA volunteers commit to serving 40 hours per week for one year on participating Community College campuses. To be eligible, applicants cannot be concurrently employed or in school. Volunteers work closely with program and college staff for operational support and capacity- building purposes.

The Empowerment Message

The YESS Program’s 3Rs (Rigor, Relevancy, and Relationships) communicate a positive message that says: “YESS, together we can empower youth to better understand the impact of their choices, access post secondary education, build permanent relationships with caring adults, and obtain the skills, knowledge, and resources needed to succeed.”

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The YESS Program’s 3Rs

- **Rigor:** Challenging, confidence-building, interactive, outcome-oriented learning experiences that address the needs of youth.
- **Relevancy:** Multi-level training and experiential learning opportunities that correspond to real-life situations.
- **Relationships:** A continuum of service through which college and YESS program staff model and promote the development of permanent relationships with caring adults.

Partner Organizations

- AmeriCorps
- California Department of Social Services
- Corporation for National and Community Service
- Los Angeles Department of Children and Family Services
- Casey Foundation
- Foster & Kinship Care Education

The Foundation for California Community Colleges is the official foundation to the California Community Colleges’ Board of Governors and Chancellor’s Office. The Foundation’s mission is to benefit, support, and enhance the missions of the California Community College system, the largest higher education system in the nation. Incorporated in 1998, the Foundation works with Community Colleges and partner organizations to manage donations, grants, programs, and services that drive excellence in education while saving millions of dollars for colleges each year. The Foundation is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt nonprofit corporation and receives no direct state or public support. *For more information, visit www.foundationccc.org.*