

# IFF Fellows Program

## Did you know?

Nationally, 400,000 youth are in foster care at any given time. About half will finish high school and less than 5% will graduate from college.

Over 70% of IFF Fellows achieve a college degree, and 18% finish graduate school



## WHAT ARE WE ABOUT?

The odds for children in foster care are stacked against them. High school dropout rates are three times higher than other low-income peers. About half will have no stable income within their first four years of "aging out." And still, those who successfully reach a college campus experience overwhelming barriers. Many lack the benefit of consistent adult guidance for the decision-making and safety nets required to navigate the college experience. Basic needs like housing, food security, and funds to purchase textbooks can become a daily worry. Youth of color are disproportionately represented.

The IFF Fellows Program paves the path toward a brighter future for these remarkable young people. Managed through the Institute for Families (IFF) at the School of Social Work, the program is committed to helping these students complete undergraduate degrees at Rutgers, while preparing them for success in adulthood.



## WHAT WE DO

The IFF Fellows Program has guided Rutgers New Brunswick students toward successful graduation since 2014, and students on the Camden campus since 2020. Many Fellows experience Rutgers as their primary home, offering some the first consistent community of support they have experienced. The campus may offer some their only option for secure and accessible housing, especially during semester and summer breaks. All of these remarkable young adults benefit from a network of supportive services that include:

- Individualized academic and personal coaching
- Inclusion in a peer-to-peer learning environment shared with peers who have similar life histories
- Financial literacy, job readiness, emotional resiliency, and related life skills workshops
- Options for textbook, living supplies, and emergency assistance funding
- Assistance for accessing grants and scholarship opportunities
- Access to campus housing options during breaks and holidays
- Invitations to recreational outings and events targeted at their unique needs
- Professional development through leadership activities, internships, and community service events
- Specialized navigation to broader campus connections, including tutoring, food assistance, disability and health services, and career development
- Transitional planning, including coaching toward career planning, graduate school, and independent living



**RUTGERS**  
School of Social Work  
INSTITUTE FOR FAMILIES

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## BECOME A PART OF THE IFF FELLOWS COMMUNITY!



### WHO ARE THE IFF FELLOWS?

Undergraduates aged 18 through 24

- Current or former foster care experiences
- Homeless (or would otherwise be if not living on campus, independent living program, or group home)
- Registered full-time on the Rutgers New Brunswick campus



### HOW ARE WE SUCCESSFUL?

- Mentored Fellows through life-changing experiences:
  - Guided more than 50 students to successful graduation
  - Guided 15 students to graduate programs
  - Conducted more than 100 lifeskills and professional development sessions
  - Coordinated 25+ internships
- Served as an exemplar for Rutgers' prestigious Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement
- Honored with a Rutgers Beloved Community Award for efforts that ensure all persons are working together and are heard, respected, and valued



### HOW CAN YOU HELP?

We are currently seeking funding to continue to provide much needed support to students on the Rutgers New Brunswick and Camden campuses.

Your generous donation can provide:

- Paid internships to help our Fellows gain professional experience in their areas of study
- Funds for textbooks and school supplies
- Emergency funding to assist our Fellows with meeting their basic needs
- Starter funds to assist our graduates as they transition from students to young professionals
- On-campus housing for those in need during winter and summer breaks
- Professional clothing
- Food security
- Access to recreational and cultural trips, study abroad opportunities, and much more



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