



## national foster care coalition

### BIOGRAPHIES

#### **Ashleigh Davenport, Age 22**

##### **Interning for Senator Boozman**

*Foster Care: Adams and Douglas Counties, CO*

*College: Undergrad-Colorado State University;*

*Graduate-Regent University: Virginia Beach, VA*

*Currently Resides: Virginia Beach, VA*

Ashleigh is currently enrolled at the Regent University School of Law in Virginia Beach, VA with plans of becoming a child advocacy lawyer after graduation. Ashleigh chose this career path while in high school after discovering, after she had been adopted, that she had an 8 year old biological sister who was still in the foster care system. She hopes to help children find the love and support she was lucky enough to be given through her adoption. Ashleigh's work experience includes an internship at the Colorado Department of Human Services, Division of Child Welfare where she was involved in the Colorado foster care identity theft prevention initiative.

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**Eddy Vanderkwaak** entered foster care at the age of 14. She remained in care until her 21<sup>st</sup> birthday. While in foster care, Eddy was placed in five different homes. This lack of a stable home environment made focusing on studies and finishing high school difficult. Eddy received her emergency medical technician license from Mercy Medical College and is currently a senior at Des Moines Area Community College working toward her associate's degree in liberal arts. She plans earn a bachelor's degree in medicinal anthropology. While a full-time student, Eddy is a part-time certified nursing assistant, helping elderly residents with daily living activities.

Eddy is currently the president of her local youth leadership board, InSight, in Des Moines, Iowa, and serves on her local self-evaluation team. She is the recipient of Iowa's 2012 Governor's Volunteer Award for service activities in her community.

Eddy is passionate about giving back and hopes to one day work with orphans and widows affected by AIDS in Africa. Eddy is a self-taught artist, who enjoys using this medium to contribute meaningfully to her local community.

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**Marion Simmons** spent most of her life in the New Jersey child welfare system. During her time in the foster care system, Marion spent time in foster homes, therapeutic homes, and independent living programs. Marion feels strongly about working with youth in the foster care system and is currently serving as a consultant for the Union County youth advisory board in New Jersey. Marion is recent graduate from Lincoln University, PA where she received a bachelors of science in human services and sociology. Marion is now pursuing her masters degree in social work at West Chester University in Pennsylvania. Eventually Marion aspires to attain her PhD and become a licensed clinical social worker and motivational speaker for at risk youth. She currently is interning with the office of adolescent services under NJ department of children and families in Trenton NJ. Her ultimate goal is to start a non profit organization that will be International.

**Anthony L. Stover** is a 28 year old native of Atlanta, Georgia. He entered the State of Georgia's Foster Care System at the age of eleven because his grandmother was no longer able to care for him, and his mother could not be found. While in foster care, he lived in more than five different foster homes and shelters before finally receiving permanent placement with Families First. His social worker, Grady Jenkins, provided fatherly guidance and continues to be a paternal role model. With the help of Families First, Grady Jenkins, and his inherited maternal figure/mentor, Angela Stover, Anthony's foundation grew strong. Anthony earned an Associates Degree in Electronic Computer Technology from the DeVry Institute. Currently, Anthony works at Families First as a Relief Parent and is the Assistant Project Coordinator with Georgia EmpowerMENT, an organization of current and former foster youth who advocate for change in the foster care system. Previously, Anthony served as an Intern with the Georgia Supreme Court Committee on Justice for Children. In 2006, he was selected as a FosterClub All-Star and also began working alongside the First Lady of Georgia, Mrs. Perdue. In 2008, Anthony was appointed by Gov. Sonny Perdue to serve on the Georgia Commission for Service and Volunteerism.

**Both Marion and Anthony serve on the Young Adult Training and Technical Assistance (YATTA) Network:** The YATTA Network is a partnership between FosterClub and the National Resource Center for Youth Development to improve State and Tribal child welfare services for youth. YATTA is a national network comprised of young people, ages 18-24, who have had varying experiences as consumers of child welfare services. For the Children's Bureau, the YATTA Network provides a new way to effectively respond to the needs of the approximately 500,000 children and youth in the nation's child welfare system. The YATTA Network is of value to the National Resource Center for Youth Development and its consultants as well as the U.S.

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