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## Recommendations for Higher Educational Supports for Students Experiencing Homelessness in the Southeastern United States

Marcy Stidum

Carrie Olsen

Jillian Sitjar

Lori Tiller

Jessica McDaniel

*See next page for additional authors*

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**Authors**

Marcy Stidum, Carrie Olsen, Jillian Sitjar, Lori Tiller, Jessica McDaniel, Evelyn Mangin, and Lisi Desai

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# Recommendations for Higher Educational Supports for Students Experiencing Homelessness in the Southeastern United States

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## INTRODUCTION

Homelessness creates tall barriers for many college students pursuing postsecondary education. It can also come along with many secondary difficulties, such as lack of family support, histories of abuse, trauma, neglect, and systemic poverty, all of which are added challenges when pursuing higher education. These barriers can limit access to higher education, making it difficult to remain enrolled, let alone graduate, and creating long-term negative effects such as long-term economic instability and a lack of self-sufficiency.

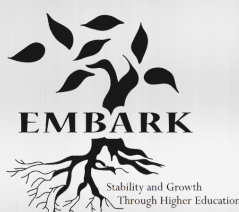
The recent COVID-19 pandemic has only exacerbated many of these existing barriers, including low enrollment [1] and a decrease in financial aid completion [2]. New research from the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center found that of the “2.6 million students who entered college as first-time freshmen in the fall of 2019, only 74 percent returned for their second year — an unprecedented two percentage point drop, the lowest level since 2012”. However, the situation is more dire for low-income and minority students, and they have seen the most dramatic enrollment and persistence drops [3].

Historically, very few states have offered higher education policies that support homeless college students; however, states are beginning to respond because of the recent increase in student homelessness. The most recent example of new legislation supporting these students is Georgia Senate Bill 107, passed in May 2021, which amended Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated relating to the postsecondary education of homeless and foster youth. Specifically, this bill provides:

- Tuition and room and board waivers at two-year colleges for foster care students
- In-state tuition at two- and four-year colleges for students under the age of 24 and experiencing homelessness
- Provisions for university staff to determine homelessness status, like the McKinney-Vento Act [4].

Considering the increase in the number of homeless students, states should focus on policies to support these students' successful completion of a college degree. Such policies would be good for students, institutions, and state governments, as college graduates "contribute more in taxes and are less reliant on government services [5]." This paper will examine policies and practices in seven southeastern states, draw conclusions, and make recommendations for higher education institutions, policymakers, and philanthropy.

Collaboration between:



## COLLEGE HOMELESSNESS DEFINED

Federal agencies and programs use different criteria to determine who is considered “homeless;” for the purpose of this discussion, the U.S. Department of Education definition will be used. Homeless children and youth are defined “as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. The term also includes youth who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason (sometimes referred to as “doubled-up”); living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations; living in emergency or transitional shelters; or abandoned in hospitals” [6]. Homeless youth are typically categorized into two groups: accompanied homeless youth (AY) under the age of 24 who are with a parent or guardian, and unaccompanied homeless youth (UHY) under the age of 24 who are not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

The K-12 public school system has estimated data on homeless youth enrolled in the southeast states. For the 2018-2019 school year, the total population was 220,018, which includes Alabama (16,118), Florida (91,068), Georgia (38,891), Mississippi (6,928), North Carolina (34,721), Tennessee (19,747), and South Carolina (12,545) [7]. Unlike the public school system, higher education is not required to collect data on unaccompanied homeless youth. The U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Federal Student Aid collects data on applicants who indicate they are UHY on their Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) [8]. For instance, in the state of Georgia in the 2019-2020 school year, an estimated 1,237 applicants in Georgia indicated their status as UHY on the FAFSA, a 52% increase from 2013 [9]. While these numbers can give us a glimpse of the problem, it is important to note that these data points are not representative of the entire population of FAFSA applicants experiencing homelessness and should not be construed as a representation of the total number of homeless students in college. The FAFSA form does not collect homelessness information for the purpose of determining the population of homeless students attending postsecondary institutions. Rather, homelessness questions on the FAFSA form are for the sole purpose of determining an applicant's dependency status for federal student aid and are presented only to a subset of the applicant population [10].



"My name is Carrie Lyn, and this is my story. I came to Kennesaw State University in Fall 2017 as a non-traditional student at age 40 to pursue a bachelor's degree, and when the unexpected happened, my car became my home.

It all started in 2014 when I donated a kidney to my husband. Complications and expenses from the disease and resulting treatments cost us our house, and we lived in our car for a year and a half. My KSU 1101 professor recommended I seek help, and I was introduced to Marcy Stidum, director of Campus Awareness, Resource and Empowerment (CARE) Services at KSU.

In addition to helping us with food and other necessities, the CARE team worked diligently for a year and a half to find us housing other than our car.

I had to remain at school late each day to use the wi-fi for homework and research, so I worried constantly about my husband being left alone living in our car.

According to a 2019 national study by Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago, 4.2 million youth and young adults experienced homelessness on their own every year in the United States. This number includes approximately 700,000 youth between the ages of 13-17 and 3.5 million young adults between the ages of 18-25 [11].

According to research by Chapin Hall, Hispanic and African American young adults aged 18-25 are more likely to experience homelessness than white youth, with Hispanic young adults facing a 33% higher risk and African American young adults an 83% higher risk than white youth, underscoring inequities across systems. Similarly, LGBTQ youth have a 120% higher risk of homelessness [12] because of prevailing structural critical conditions including societal stigma and discrimination [13].

For over five years, the Hope Center at Temple University has released numerous reports based on various college campuses' information regarding basic student needs, such as securing safe and stable housing. Most recently, the Hope Center found that approximately 14% of college students experienced homelessness on an annual basis [14]. However, the number of students and families experiencing homelessness is expected to increase due to the COVID-19 pandemic and related financial strain.

## CURRENT FEDERAL POLICY ON HOMELESSNESS AND HIGHER EDUCATION

Current federal legislation directed at mitigating homelessness through the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 1987 (PL 100-77), enacted by the U.S. Congress and reauthorized in 2015, supports homeless children and youth in public schools, grades preK-12, and requires statewide plans for how schools will provide them access to counselors and prepare and improve their readiness for college. Also, every school district must designate a homeless liaison, whose duties include ensuring that UHY are informed of their status as independent students for college financial aid and receive assistance to obtain verification for the FAFSA [15]. The following infographic reviews the historical progression of federal policies addressing homelessness and higher education.

We texted often, so that I knew he was safe. You see, when you are homeless and living out of your car, you must move the car day and night to keep from being ticketed, towed, or harassed.

In my junior year, thanks to the generous donors to CARE Services, we were given an apartment and furniture. After moving to the apartment, my biggest comfort was knowing my husband was in a safe place.

That peace of mind allowed me to focus more on my studies and the research I am conducting as a cellular, molecular and developmental biology major and KSU Journey Honors College student, working in the lab of my mentor, professor of biochemistry Dr. Jonathan McMurry.

Three years later, I am proud to say that I am preparing to graduate from KSU in Spring 2021. I am applying to some amazing Ph.D. programs such as the Mayo Clinic, Yale University and Sheffield University (with the Fulbright scholarship attached)."



# HOMELESSNESS AND HIGHER EDUCATION

## HISTORY OF FEDERAL POLICIES

2007

### COLLEGE COST REDUCTION AND ACCESS ACT

- Made attending colleges and universities more affordable and created a sustainable path out of poverty [16].
- UHY status must be determined each year statutorily by specified federal program designees as the student is filling out FAFSA.
- UHY are considered independent students and do not need to include parental information [17].

2020

### FAFSA SIMPLIFICATION ACT

- Includes significant new financial aid policies, including revisions to FAFSA for unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness and former foster care youth [18].

## CURRENT POLICIES AND PRACTICES IN SOUTHEAST STATES

For the focus states (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee), this research examines state legislation and postsecondary programs addressing homeless college students, highlighting formal policies, informal policies, and programs that have been developed to provide services, deliver resources, and meet the needs of students. Unfortunately, not all focus states have legislation or statewide networks; however, all the states reviewed here have campus-based support programs. Such programs play a vital role in filling the gaps to serve the student population by providing case management, housing, food, and other basic levels of support for students who either became homeless while in college, matriculated to their campus already having experienced homelessness, or are currently experiencing homelessness. The following infographic highlights the existing networks, policies, and programs in the seven southeast states:





## ALABAMA

The University of Alabama **Reaching Educational Achievement Can Happen** (REACH) is a threefold program: 1) REACH Back (future students), 2) REACH Up (current students), and 3) REACH Out (community members), bridging high school to postsecondary to community. Their services include the needed services on campus and cultivating meaningful relationships off campus [19].



## FLORIDA

Florida State University's **Unconquered Scholar Program**. Services include one-on-one advising, a summer bridge program, college life coaching, academic advising, financial aid assistance and advocacy, tutoring services, state of the art computer lab and study suites, mental health counseling services, academic and skills workshops, and volunteer opportunities [21].

Florida's Title XLVIII, K-20 Education Code, Chapter 1009, Educational Scholarships, Fees, and Financial Assistance, 1009.25 passed in 2002 and amended thereafter, provides tuition and fee exemptions for foster, adopted, homeless, and students who are or were at the time they reached 18 years of age in the custody of a relative or non-relative student up to the age of 28 [20].



## GEORGIA

**Embark Georgia**, a statewide initiative housed within the University of Georgia's J.W. Fanning Institute for Leadership Development focuses on increased access to postsecondary opportunities for students experiencing homelessness or foster care [23].

Kennesaw State University's Campus Awareness, Resource & Empowerment (**CARE Services**) provides emergency temporary housing, food pantries, one-to-one case management support, and scholarships [24]. In January 2020, CARE established the **ASCEND Impact Model** that focuses "on shared values, community-wide engagement and evidence-based practices [25]."

Senate Bill 107, passed in May 2021 amended Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the postsecondary education of homeless and foster youth [22].



## MISSISSIPPI

Mississippi State University **Food Security Network** (FSN) includes:

1. *Bully's Closet and Pantry*, which provides food, professional clothing, and toiletries
2. *Maroon Meals*, a campus food alert program that notifies students about availability of food, and also it connects students in need to food resources within the community [27].

The 2018 Mississippi Family First Initiative (Order) aims to prevent child abuse and neglect and prevent children from entering the foster care system.[26].



## NORTH CAROLINA

North Carolina State University conducted research and found that about 10% of students experienced homelessness [28]. As a result, the NC State University established the **Pack Essentials** program for students' food, housing, financial, and educational security [29].



## SOUTH CAROLINA

The College of Charleston offers assistance through its Office of the Dean of Students **Student Food and Temporary Housing Assistance** program. The services include temporary assistance in meals/dining dollars for use in campus dining facilities and temporary housing in a residence hall for up to 10 days based on availability [30].



## TENNESSEE

The Homeless Student Liaison Plan, Code § 49-7-171, enacted in 2019, requires postsecondary institutions to designate a Homeless Student Liaison to assist students experiencing homelessness [31]. The legislation was informed and inspired by Middle Tennessee State University's (MTSU) **Next Step** program, which was established in 2008 by the Department of Children Services, and the Tennessee Youth Advisory Council. The services include integration with on campus and community resources, including peer mentors, to best suit students' needs [32].



My name is Paul. I came from the Philippines to the U.S 6-7 years ago. Everything was great at the beginning until little by little, the quality of living at home became worse and worse; until everyone had to work for themselves.

Because of all the problems in the house, I left home or ran away to live with the [another family]. Being with them was great but I knew that it's not permanent, so I looked into going to college - not only because of education, but mostly so I could have a place to stay, even though I'm relying on student loans.

I stumbled upon the ASCEND Program at CARE Services when I was looking for a dorm or a place to stay at Kennesaw.

Especially with the ASCEND workshops and activities, I can learn to be on my own and be independent. Also, I have gone through a lot this year, it is also nice to meet new people that have been through the same position as I am and be comfortably able to normally talk about problems. I am a hard-working student with lots of potentials. This program will push me and give me great motivation to do well at school and in my future.

As we see in the infographic, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, and Tennessee have some state laws addressing homelessness and higher education, yet there is no uniformity across these states' policies or guidelines. Additionally, there are currently no robust efforts to implement these laws and ensure that they are fully carried out. In these states and the other southeastern states, campus-based programs and/or state networks are trying to meet the needs of homeless students, but resources and services are inadequate to meet the growing number of students — especially due to the pandemic. Also, these campus-based resources are few and vary significantly, ranging from general support services (food, housing, clothing) to more extensive activities, like one-on-one case management support and scholarships programs, all of which are provided by Kennesaw State University (KSU) in Georgia. However, a campus-based program like KSU's that provides general services like food, temporary housing, or toiletries might help students temporarily and to some extent, but to ensure successful completion of education, priority also must be given to educational support services, such as financial aid, tutoring, mentoring services, and guidance for career development. Only through a broad array of comprehensive services will students be able to get a better job, financial solvency, and ultimately a stable life.

However, even the most comprehensive campus-based programs cannot affect the structural changes that may be needed to provide access and increase persistence for homeless students, such as fee waivers, higher education liaisons, and priority enrollment. Therefore, adopting and/or adjusting statewide policies is crucial to statewide symmetry in both the implementation and/or expansion of policies and services. Legal provisions for standard and comprehensive programs in higher education would both obligate and encourage all parties to design and implement programs accordingly.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Colleges and universities providing direct services to students experiencing homelessness are positioned to inform researchers and policymakers about this invisible population of students to ensure that policy designs provide appropriate services and resources [33]. Considering the present situation, the following recommendations are offered for higher education institutions, policymakers, and philanthropy to systematically support homeless youth.



This bill helps children in the foster care system in need to receive a post secondary education whereas without the bill the children would not have the ability or support necessary to receive a similar education. This bill provided the necessities needed for these children to receive this education with less fear of how they will have to pay in the future.

One thing I think could be included in the bill is some type of medical safety net for students so that if an emergency was to happen they would be covered or at least get help with their expenses.

Another addition that could be added to the bill could be a section that makes it mandatory for the students to take a financial literacy and life skills class to prepare them for the world specifically in terms of personal economics. Homeless children don't necessarily have much experience with dealing with personal finances in terms of paying bills, budgeting, loans, or bank accounts.

## Role of Higher Education Institutions

### *Identify and Measure Homeless College Student Populations*

- **Concern(s):** Correctly identifying students experiencing homelessness is often difficult because they themselves might be unaware of the definition of homelessness or realize they are homeless. Others might feel stigmatized or embarrassed. However, if these students are not identified, they could be missing out on potential support to succeed in school.
- **Recommendation(s):**
  - Create systems to accurately identify and count homeless youth. Identifying and measuring students experiencing homelessness also provides institutions with a more accurate number outside of FAFSA UHY data. Recognizing the number of UHY students can help the institution understand the prevalence of homelessness on campus and the kinds of support these students need.
  - Allocate specific resources and services to identify this population. Examples of identification practices include incorporating a question about homelessness on college applications so that students can self-identify voluntarily; partnering with financial aid to identify students who identify as independent; reaching out to students under the age of 24 who have claimed dependents on their FAFSA; and hosting trainings and workshops about potential signs of homelessness to librarians, campus police, and other faculty/staff members [34].

### *Transition from High School to College*

- **Concern(s):** There is a need for a seamless method for incoming students who were homeless in high school to be identified or to self-identify so help with the transition from high school to college can be provided.
- **Recommendation(s):**
  - Develop and facilitate targeted recruitment strategies for UHY students as they enter their campuses, including utilizing formal partnerships with the federal McKinney-Vento program and designated K-12 homeless liaisons.
  - Create an early alert system via the admissions application and/or campus orientation. This system ensures students can begin receiving support prior to the first day of classes by opening communication about campus resources and available financial support.





### *Transition from High School to College (continued)*

- Campuses also may provide a service map or guideline that suggests things to consider and available campus resources benefiting incoming college students. For example, Kennesaw State's CARE Services guides each incoming homeless or foster youth through their Homeless and Foster Youth College Roadmap (2020) to ensure a successful transition onto the campus [35].

### *Homeless College Student Financial Support*

- **Concern(s):** Students experiencing homelessness do not have the same financial support as their peers.
- **Recommendation(s):**
  - Prioritize UHY students for year-round housing and class enrollment, as well as for other supports such as access to food, transportation, childcare, and more.
  - Develop a collaborative plan among Campus Housing, Campus Dining, Auxiliary Services, Student Affairs, and/or area community resources, such as host home programs, to assist this population of students with access to housing and other resources during and between academic terms.
  - Remove burdensome financial rules and streamline the process, such as implementing state policies regarding tuition/fee waivers or in-state tuition and federal aid for students experiencing homelessness.

### *Collaborative Policy and Barrier Study*

- **Concern(s):** Four and two-year college systems, higher education boards, higher education commissions, and state legislatures need a clearer understanding of current campus-based resources and the gaps in serving those experiencing homelessness.
- **Recommendation(s):**
  - Collectively analyze current policies that support students coming out of foster care and/or those experiencing homelessness.
  - Survey affected students to learn about barriers they face as they transition into postsecondary education.
  - Work collaboratively with higher education institutions and campus practitioners towards creating an appropriate advocacy plan, policies and implementation strategy so to ensure new practices will be adhered to and enforced.

## Role of Policymakers

### *State Policies Support Homeless College Students Across Categories*

- **Concern(s):** Establishing higher education counterparts to the McKinney-Vento liaisons in the K-12 system would ease the transition from high school to college and help ensure student success.
- **Recommendation(s):** Through the creation or amendment of current state policy(ies), best practices can be implemented on college campuses directly by establishing a designated higher education homeless liaison on campus. The homeless liaisons would be responsible for:
  - identifying students experiencing homelessness,
  - offering resources both on and off campus,
  - providing financial assistance and other critical support services

### *Combined Support for Homeless and Foster Youth*

- **Concern(s):** Students with experience in foster care and students who experience homelessness share many similar characteristics and vulnerabilities. However, higher education services and policies tend to be directed largely towards foster youth.
- **Recommendation(s):**
  - Broaden eligibility for supports that are currently for former foster youth to include homeless youth.
  - Bring together those who are already serving students (K-12 liaisons, higher education practitioners, and stakeholders) to discuss how the resources and supports could be combined as a first step towards streamlining and enhancing support.

## Role of Philanthropic Organizations

State funding and student tuition only cover approximately two-thirds of the costs involved in operating a university [36]. Moreover, decreases in state support and a high focus on keeping “tuition and fee increases to a minimum” [37] make the process of starting a new campus-based program daunting. However, private foundations, individual donors, and public-private partnerships can play an important role in helping address the unmet needs of college students who are experiencing homelessness.

Campuses must be clear in their programmatic priorities, the level of student impact, and transformative opportunities where a donor can invest in their students. Additionally, identifying synergistic cross-functional opportunities with other campus departments and academic units is important. These efforts will ensure campus-based programs have clearly identified where and how private donors and foundations can intercede and support the work being done at the campus level.



While ultimately federal and state investment is necessary to provide true equity and opportunity, philanthropic investments in students experiencing homelessness can help close the gap between the cost and affordability of education. Donors have the option of scholarships as a method to defray the cost of tuition; however, these often only address the academic side of being a student. For students experiencing homelessness, an endowed planned gift provides essential operational funding to establish and sustain services for target programs. Endowed planned gifts allow donors to leave a legacy and can also be used to recognize a family or friend. Establishing or supporting an established operational and programmatic fund will provide a permanent and self-sustaining revenue stream in addition to or in the absence of governmental funding. Additionally, programmatic funds will amplify the campus-based program's capacity to holistically serve an ever-growing population of students at risk of homelessness. To the benefit of the donor, such funds can work with the campus program to design where and how the funds can be awarded to ensure students are the direct beneficiaries.

## **CONCLUSION**

Georgia's recent legislation, SB 107, may not include all the recommendations addressed in this paper. However, this bill does signify new attention on student homelessness and lays the foundation for dialogue among responsible parties in other states to outline similar or even better policies and provisions to address and meet the needs of homeless college students. Following the past eighteen months of the pandemic, campus programs and students who utilize them are navigating a fall semester that looks very different from last year and different from any other year. Questions surround who will persist and come back to campuses, which supports that became available over the past eighteen months will stay available, and how practice will change moving forward. By creating and implementing some or all of the recommendations in this paper, campuses will be better able to serve and track this at-risk population in the future. Designing and implementing both legislative and administrative policies that support homeless college students are important strategies for the eradication of poverty.

Additionally, making required amendments and/or changes to existing legislation and programs to accommodate the needs of homeless college students adequately and holistically is equally important. Therefore, to adopt, amend, and implement policies and programs effectively, input from higher education practitioners and students experiencing homelessness is of paramount importance, since they work directly in providing services and resources to homeless college student populations and understand the distinct challenges the students face. They are well positioned to inform policymakers of changes needed to remove barriers and ensure success. Institutions that have built strong programs and policies to support students experiencing homelessness are perfectly situated to assist other colleges and universities that are beginning new programs. Furthermore, state or national organizations with experience in best practices can provide support, tools, and strategies to help institutions implement new policies addressing homeless college students. Challenges remain, but if we have learned anything over the past eighteen months, it is that we can innovate and flex to solve these challenges if we work together.

## AUTHORS

**Marcy Stidum, LCSW, MPA, CARE Services Director, Kennesaw State University**, as the Founding Director of Kennesaw State University's (KSU) Campus Awareness, Resource and Empowerment (CARE) Services, which provides four programs to support KSU students and the community. Her efforts in supporting students at KSU has earned Marcy numerous state and regional awards for KSU's CARE Services, most recently, 2017 Cobb Community Collaborative Policy Council on Homelessness William E. (Bill) Hanson Collaboration Award and the 2021 KSU Positive Impact/Service to the Community Staff Award. Currently she is the 2020-2021 Chairperson for the Marietta/Cobb Housing and Urban Development Continuum of Care (HUD CoC).

**Jillian Sitjar, Senior Higher Education Program Manager, SchoolHouse Connection**, hails from the Midwest where she attended Culver Academies, a small boarding school in Indiana. From there she continued her schooling at Butler University with a Bachelor's degree in Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies. Jillian pursued a Master's of Education in Higher Education and Student Affairs at the University of South Carolina working as a graduate assistant in the Office of Multicultural Student Affairs supporting students of marginalized communities through various programs and events. This role first introduced her into social justice and advocacy work, which has been a guiding principle in her career. After graduation, she was a Community Director at Georgetown University where she oversaw an apartment complex of about 450 students. As the Senior Higher Education Program Manager at SchoolHouse Connection she works to successfully transition students to and through higher education by sharing best practices and removing barriers for students on the state and federal level.

**Lori Tiller, Public Service Faculty, J.W. Fanning Institute for Leadership Development, University of Georgia**, is a public service faculty member at the J.W. Fanning Institute for Leadership Development, with a focus on nonprofit organizations, college access for underrepresented populations, and skills in program evaluation and group facilitation. Lori is currently working on a statewide and campus based initiative called Embark Georgia which aims to support youth who have experience with foster care or homelessness access and attain their post-secondary goals. In addition to Embark, Lori is working to complete a feasibility study to bring an inclusive post-secondary program for youth with intellectual disabilities to campus, she is the self-evaluation coach for the Georgia Youth Opportunities Initiative, and she works with a variety of nonprofit and community based organizations building their leadership capacity, group dynamics, and volunteer management skills.

**Carrie Olsen, LCSW, CARE Services Program Manager, Kennesaw State University**, where she oversees programs dedicated to serving students who have been identified as homeless, food insecure, and/or connected with the foster care system. A graduate of Auburn University and Kennesaw State University, Carrie's professional experiences and interests have focused on issues of educational equity from the K-12 to higher education environments. Carrie developed her passion for addressing educational inequity while serving as a Teach for America Corps Member, which gave her a deep appreciation for the injustices experienced by vulnerable populations.

Jessica M. McDaniel, Center for Young Adult Addiction and Recovery Research Coordinator, Kennesaw State University, is a founding member of the Recovery Science Research Collaborative and has helped coordinate research projects at the Center with graduate and undergraduate research assistants, as well as with other researchers from across the nation since 2016. Jessica is focused on innovative, impactful, and interdisciplinary research that enriches human lives.

Dr. Evelyn J. Mangin, CARE Research AmeriCorps VISTA, Kennesaw State University, a retired U.S. Army Officer and received the Bronze Star Medal for combat operations. Applying her life experiences as a teen-mother growing-up in poverty, she engaged higher education as a sustainable path out of poverty and mentors college students with similar backgrounds and experiences. Evelyn earned her Ph.D. in Public Policy and Administration with a focus on Policy Analysis in 2021 from Walden University. Her research interest include social policy analysis, policy formulation, policy theory, and intersectionality. Her publications include, A Narrative Policy Framework and Feminist Critical Policy Analysis of the Welfare Reform Acts and the Higher Education of Single Welfare Mothers (2021).

Lisi Desai, Center for Young Adult Addiction and Recovery AmeriCorps VISTA Summer Associate, Kennesaw State University, graduated with honors in Master of Public Administration at Kennesaw State University. She completed a certificate online course on U.S. Public Policy: Social, Economic, and Foreign Policies from Harvard and also pursued her master's in Applied Linguistics and English Language Teaching at University of Dhaka, Bangladesh. She has experiences working in nonprofits both in the US and Bangladesh including the Carter Center and CARE Services.

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Thank you for taking the time to read and reflect on this policy brief.

For more information regarding this policy, please contact SchoolHouse Connection:

<https://schoolhouseconnection.org>

[info@schoolhouseconnection.org](mailto:info@schoolhouseconnection.org)

(202) 364-7392

For more information about CARE Services at Kennesaw State University, please contact:

[care.kennesaw.edu](http://care.kennesaw.edu)

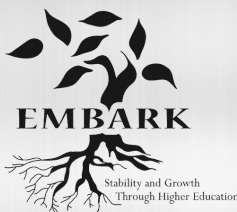
[careservices@kennesaw.edu](mailto:careservices@kennesaw.edu)

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