

Mann Child Policy Externship

SPOTLIGHT

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ON OUR STUDENTS



Experiential Learning with the Schubert Center for Child Studies, College of Arts and Sciences, Case Western Reserve University

Designed to provide hands-on experiential learning, the Mann Child Policy Externship gives selected undergraduate students a unique, practical opportunity to focus on child policy in the community context. The Schubert Center for Child Studies at Case Western Reserve University partners with Greater Cleveland public and non-profit community organizations to create a rigorous educational and civic experience. Working directly with professionals who design and implement policies that impact the lives of children and families, students engage in various planning, research, analysis and advocacy activities for policy related to children and childhood. *Spotlight on Our Students* features the students who were selected as Mann Externs and placed in community agencies from Fall 2011 to Fall 2012.

For more information about the Schubert Center for Child Studies, the Mann Child Policy Externship and how to become an extern or host agency, visit schubert.cwru.edu.



SCHUBERT CENTER
FOR CHILD STUDIES



“Working as a Mann Child Policy Extern was one of the most valuable experiences I have had as an undergraduate,” says Brittney. “This opportunity gave me insight into a non-profit agency that is determined to help children and families with special needs, and to inform policy. I grew so much as a student and a professional during this time and I will certainly carry these experiences with me as I continue to work with children with special needs.”

BRITTNEY IMHOLTE FALL 2011

Brittney graduated in May 2012 with majors in psychology and cognitive science and a childhood studies minor. She has a passion for working with children with special needs and is enthusiastic about learning how policy informs this field.

Brittney was placed at the **Achievement Centers for Children (ACC)** under the supervision of Darla Motil, Director of Community Relations. Brittney attended conferences and met with legislators, collected data for contacting legislators and policymakers, conducted research on possible effects of 2012 Ohio ballot issues, gained an understanding for how policy issues influence a budget and assisted with development activities. In addition, Brittney conducted research on pediatric Accountable Care Organizations (ACO) as part of health reform policy, and how implementing pediatric ACOs in Ohio may affect children and providers, and impact policy and practice. Her externship helped her understand how a social service organization collaborates with legislators and policy makers to better serve children and families.

ACHIEVEMENT CENTERS FOR CHILDREN IS A NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION THAT STRIVES TO ENABLE AND EMPOWER CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES AND THEIR FAMILIES TO EXCEL IN SOCIETY THROUGH LEARNING AND GROWING. ACC SERVES MORE THAN 4,000 CHILDREN AND FAMILIES ANNUALLY IN THE CLEVELAND AREA THROUGH PROGRAMS PROVIDING CHILDCARE OPTIONS, FAMILY SUPPORT, THERAPY AND RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS.

Brittney with supervisor Darla Motil of ACC.



“While Brittney made many contributions to the Achievement Centers for Children, the most valuable for me was her extensive research regarding impending legislation at the state and federal levels regarding pediatric Accountable Care Organizations,” Motil reflects. “Brittney saved countless hours that would have postponed our progress and perhaps we would have missed opportunities to participate in state-level discussions regarding health care changes that will impact the children and families we serve.”



“My work with the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant, in particular, helped me understand the impact of policy on the everyday lives of children and those who care for them, like early care providers,” says Emily. “I was inspired to continue working with children through my externship and look forward to professional experiences as a teacher in the future.”

EMILY LAWSON
SPRING 2012

Emily graduated in May 2012 with majors in psychology, sociology and theater. She applied for the Mann Child Policy Externship in hopes of expanding her understanding of early childhood policy, and plans to pursue a career in teaching.

Emily was placed with **Starting Point**, a child resource and referral agency in Cleveland, under the supervision of Michelle Bledsoe, Early Childhood Project Coordinator in the Special Needs Child Care department. Emily’s work centered around the Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA), the Social and Emotional Field Guide, and the U.S. Department of Education Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge. Through DECA, Emily learned the importance of standards and individual student assessment in the classroom for educators. She also assisted writing the federal grant application for Race to the Top. Finally, she gained hands-on experience in understanding the significance of exposing preschoolers to situations that will encourage their social and emotional development.

STARTING POINT IS NORTHEAST OHIO’S CHILDCARE AND EARLY EDUCATION RESOURCE AND REFERRAL AGENCY, SERVING FAMILIES, EARLY CHILDHOOD PROFESSIONALS AND THE BROADER COMMUNITY IN ASHTABULA, CUYAHOGA, GEAUGA AND LAKE COUNTIES. FORMED IN 1990, **STARTING POINT** WORKS TO LINK FAMILIES WITH CHILDCARE SERVICES, INCREASE THE AVAILABILITY OF CHILDCARE, IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF CHILDCARE, STIMULATE EARLY EDUCATION ALTERNATIVES, DEVELOP CHILDCARE AND EARLY EDUCATION INITIATIVES AND ADDRESS CHILDCARE AND EARLY EDUCATION ISSUES.

Emily with Michelle Bledsoe of Starting Point.



“Emily applied a great amount of effort in analyzing the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge grant and successfully pinpointed a specific area of the grant to focus on in order to understand how changes in the quality of early childhood programming would impact the capacity of our agency to meet consumer need,” Bledsoe remarks. “Her contribution in this area will be utilized as we solidify our planning process to implement new policy that originates from this grant.”



“Before this child policy externship, I did not understand how critical it is for policymakers to have research to back up any policy initiative at the local, state or national level,” Mai states. “Through analyzing several national trauma prevention policies such as the Defending Childhood Initiative, I realized how closely research is tied with funding streams and the value of service organizations to consider and pursue, if possible, appropriate evidence-based practices.”

MAI SEGAWA SPRING 2012

Mai is a senior studying psychology and medical anthropology with a minor in childhood studies. She plans to pursue a doctorate in psychology and was eager to gain first-hand policy experience through the Mann Child Policy Externship.

Mai was placed at **The Centers for Families and Children (CFC)**, under the supervision of Loren Anthes, Government and Community Relations Manager, and Alesha Washington, Director of Executive Administration and Government Relations. Mai researched the link between trauma and poverty in Cleveland, focusing on trauma-informed care and treatment methods of at-risk adolescents in the context of CFC’s integrated behavioral health care system. More specifically, she compared evidence-based practices for trauma-informed treatment such as Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and Dialectical Behavioral Therapy to inform recommendations to CFC concerning the most cost-efficient and effective therapy methods for vulnerable youth. Her research also included the impact of childhood trauma on early childhood development to better understand the critical importance of early intervention for childhood trauma. Mai prepared a brief summarizing her findings on the effects of trauma on early childhood development and presented to CFC administrators on potential opportunities to advance a trauma-informed approach.

THE CENTERS FOR FAMILIES AND CHILDREN IS ONE OF THE OLDEST AND LARGEST NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS IN NORTHEAST OHIO, AIMED AT BRIDGING THE OPPORTUNITY GAP BY CONNECTING INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES WITH EFFECTIVE HEALTH CARE, EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES. THE CFC SERVES 20,000 PEOPLE EACH YEAR WITH A WIDE VARIETY OF SERVICES FROM ITS 18 LOCATIONS AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH INITIATIVES ACROSS GREATER CLEVELAND. CFC’S AREAS OF FOCUS INCLUDE EARLY LEARNING, HEALTH AND WELLNESS, WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICES, FOOD CENTER DISTRIBUTION AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT.

“Mai worked hard to understand a complex business and made tremendous strides in achieving a greater understanding of the connections between politics, policy and organization programming,” her supervisor reflects. “This is an excellent program that provides a tremendous opportunity to students.”



Mai with other externs and her supervisor Loren Anthes and Alesha Washington.



“My work at the Cuyahoga County Juvenile Court gave me a new set of tools and skills that I can and have been using in many aspects of my life,” says Rekha. “Participating in the Mann Child Policy Externship experience greatly helped shape my career and goal aspirations. I can confidently say that without this experience, I would still be struggling with what it is I want to do in the future.”

REKHA IYER
SPRING 2012

Rekha graduated in 2012 with majors in psychology and Spanish and minors in childhood studies and sociology. When she learned about the Mann Child Policy Externship, she jumped at the chance to work directly with young people in the juvenile justice system.

Rekha was placed with the Probation Department of the **Cuyahoga County Juvenile Court**, supervised by Tim McDevitt, placement manager. In addition to shadowing key players in the juvenile court system and meeting with youth in detention, Rekha researched children considered “crossover youth,” children who are involved in both the juvenile justice and child welfare systems. Rekha conducted a detailed case review of a sample of juvenile delinquents that were considered crossover youth. Based on this review and analysis, she developed a set of recommendations both agencies could implement to collaborate and share resources and best practices. Cuyahoga County Juvenile Court is currently working with the Cuyahoga County Department of Children and Family Services to better serve crossover youth and has taken this research into consideration.

THE MISSION OF THE CUYAHOGA COUNTY JUVENILE COURT IS TO ADMINISTER JUSTICE, REHABILITATE JUVENILES, SUPPORT AND STRENGTHEN FAMILIES AND PROMOTE PUBLIC SAFETY. THE COURT STRIVES TO ACHIEVE ITS MISSION IN PART BY CONNECTING YOUTH AND FAMILIES INVOLVED IN THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM TO COMMUNITY AND RESIDENTIAL SERVICES DESIGNED TO HELP THEM LEARN HOW TO LIVE SUCCESSFULLY AND SAFELY IN SOCIETY.

Rekha with Tim McDevitt and colleague of the Cuyahoga County Juvenile Court.



“Rekha was a pleasure and provided a valuable service to the juvenile court,” says McDevitt. “Rekha researched youth involved in both juvenile justice and child welfare and really had to drill down on cases and analyze why custody decisions were made in order to help inform future planning efforts by the probation department and the court.”



"I feel incredibly lucky that I had a placement opportunity that met my goals of being exposed to direct practice experience and working in policy programs and administration," says Ana Maria. "I was able to get very meaningful perspectives on how agencies can come together to form initiatives, and the challenges in conducting effective research while keeping ethical and practical clinical practice. Firsthand experience with professionals is an opportunity that could have never been replicated in a classroom."

ANA MARIA MARTINEZ SUMMER 2012

THE MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES CHILDREN WHO WITNESS VIOLENCE PROGRAM PROVIDES CRISIS AND SHORT-TERM SERVICES TO CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IMPACTED BY VIOLENCE. THE PROJECT COORDINATES A CRISIS RESPONSE TEAM PROVIDING A COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT OF CHILDREN EXPOSED TO VIOLENCE, FOLLOWED BY COORDINATION OF TRAUMA AND SUPPORT SERVICES. IN ADDITION, TRAINING PROFESSIONALS WHO ENCOUNTER CHILDREN WHO WITNESS VIOLENCE, A COMMUNITY AWARENESS CAMPAIGN AND AN EVALUATION ARE INCLUDED IN THE PROGRAM. CUYAHOGA COUNTY'S DEFENDING CHILDHOOD INITIATIVE IS PART OF A FEDERAL U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE INITIATIVE WHICH AIMS TO PREVENT AND REDUCE THE IMPACT OF CHILDREN'S EXPOSURE TO VIOLENCE IN THEIR HOMES, SCHOOLS, AND COMMUNITIES BREAKING THE CYCLE OF CRIME, VIOLENCE, AND ABUSE IN THE COMMUNITY.

Ana Maria graduated in May 2012 with majors in cognitive science and psychology. She applied for the Mann Child Policy Externship to gain experience in policies and practices addressing trauma intervention with children and families, after having previously volunteered at the Domestic Violence & Child Advocacy Shelter and at UH Rainbow Babies and Children's Hospital. Ana Maria hopes to become a social worker, and is pursuing her MSW at the CWRU Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences.

Ana Maria served in a dual placement with **Mental Health Services (MHS) Children Who Witness Violence** program and **Cuyahoga County's Defending Childhood Initiative**, primarily under the supervision of Rosemary Creeden, Associate Director of Trauma Treatment Services at MHS. Ana attended clinical meetings and case reviews with MHS staff and shadowed case-workers for Children Who Witness Violence. She helped organize an all-day meeting of the Defending Childhood Initiative, which included scheduling speakers and developing an agenda to present child trauma-related research and train workers on a violence exposure-screening tool. She also assisted with training child welfare staff on Trauma Informed Child Welfare.

Ana Maria revised and redesigned an informational booklet for children entering foster care or adoption that is being reviewed by a teen advisory group for further input and a final revision. Ana Maria also produced a policy brief and presented to MHS and the county's Division of Children and Family Services staff on the relationship between poverty and trauma and teen pregnancy.

Ana Maria with supervisor Rosemary Creeden of MHS.



"Ana was an excellent addition to our Trauma Services and Defending Childhood staff," Creeden remarks. "She almost singlehandedly put together a critical all-day meeting of The Defending Childhood Initiative, helping to ensure that this public policy initiative be implemented in a meaningful and effective manner."



"The Mann Child Policy externship has been a great opportunity that allowed me to gain professional experiences in the local education sector," notes Cecilia. "Among other things it was the first time I had a chance to see a school levy campaign up close."

SIQI (CECILIA) LI
FALL 2012

Cecilia is a senior studying cultural anthropology and psychology. She will graduate in May with her master's degree in medical anthropology. Cecilia has a strong interest in education and education reform and hopes to pursue a career in cultural studies of education.

Cecilia was placed at **Friends of Breakthrough Charter Schools**, supervised by Jessica Cohen, Director of Grants and Foundation Relations. Cecilia conducted research on the role and impact of charter schools, the funding deficit in public education, the Cleveland education system and recent education reforms, including the proposed school funding formula. This research helped to inform Friends of Breakthrough Schools about potential school funding opportunities. Cecilia was also involved in the November 2012 school levy campaign, helping to promote Issue 107, a four-year levy that helps finance public and charter schools in the Cleveland Metropolitan School District. She worked closely with the Director of Advocacy at Friends to organize campaign-related research, attend strategy meetings and participate in major events. The levy was passed by voters and will provide essential financial support to improve overall school quality and children's educational outcomes. Her final presentation focused on the 2012 Cleveland Plan, a set of education strategies which she believes offers a promising solution for transforming school systems in Cleveland.

THE FRIENDS OF BREAKTHROUGH CHARTER SCHOOLS IS A NON-PROFIT DEVELOPMENT AND ADVOCACY ORGANIZATION OF BREAKTHROUGH CHARTER SCHOOLS, A HIGH-PERFORMING NETWORK OF FREE, PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS IN CLEVELAND, OHIO THAT AIMS TO PROVIDE QUALITY AND COLLEGE-PREPARATORY EDUCATION IN CLEVELAND'S UNDERSERVED NEIGHBORHOODS. FRIENDS WORKS WITH COMMUNITY, BUSINESS AND POLITICAL LEADERS TO BUILD CITY-WIDE SUPPORT FOR HIGH-QUALITY PUBLIC SCHOOL OPTIONS FOR ALL CHILDREN IN CLEVELAND.

Cecilia with President John Zitner, Jessica Cohen and Director of Advocacy Robert Kilo, of Friends of Breakthrough Charter Schools.



The SCHUBERT CENTER FOR CHILD STUDIES in the College of Arts and Sciences at Case Western Reserve University bridges research, practice, policy and education for the well-being of children and adolescents. Our focus is on children from infancy through adolescence in local, national, international and global settings. The Schubert Center is generously supported by the Schubert, Bondy, Brisky, Hamilton and Mann Endowments, in addition to support from The George Gund Foundation.

To learn more about the Mann Child Policy Externship program, please visit schubert.case.edu or contact Director of Child Policy Gabriella Celeste at gabriella.celeste@case.edu. Applications are accepted throughout the academic year but preference is given to applications received in October for subsequent Spring and Summer placements and April for subsequent Fall placements.

Support the Schubert Center for Child Studies

Please consider supporting the Schubert Center for Child Studies. Your gift of any size will help ensure the sustainability of the many programs, academic courses and experiential opportunities we offer students, which has a lasting impact on policy, research and practice related to children and families. You can make your gift online at giving.cwru.edu (*note Schubert Center Friends in the special instructions box*) or by calling 216.368.0540.



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Director: Jill Korbin, PhD **Director, Child Policy:** Gabriella Celeste, JD **Assistant Director:** Sarah Robinson
Graduate Assistants: Sarah Honig and Sarah Miller-Fellows

Schubert Center for Child Studies 615 CRAWFORD HALL 10900 EUCLID AVENUE CLEVELAND, OHIO 44106-7179
p: 216.368.0540 | f: 216.368.1196 | e: schubertcenter@cwru.edu | w: schubert.cwru.edu

