

Doris Duke Fellowships

for the Promotion of Child Well-Being

Seeking innovations to prevent child abuse and neglect



Happy Holidays from the Doris Duke Fellowship!

We'd like to wish you happy holidays and a happy new year! We were very excited to share this year at the fellowship with you. Thank you all for continuing to be involved in the fellowship and we'll keep you updated with our exciting new initiatives in the new year!



Fellow Interview: Leah Gjertson

The Doris Duke Fellowship emphasizes the intersection of academic research, policy, and practice. Current fellow [Leah Gjertson's](#) work examines issues of economic well-being, looking at young adults who were in foster care as children. She presented her work to the [Wisconsin Secretary's Advisory of Child Welfare](#) and works with her policy mentor, Ken Taylor, Executive Director of the [Wisconsin Council on Children and Families](#), to better understand how her work fits within the current policy landscape.



What is the main focus of your research?

My research examines young adults that have been in foster care as children, a group that often struggles to achieve financial security, among other challenges, in adulthood. My dissertation work focuses specifically on issues of economic well-being and intergenerational maltreatment.

How have you connected your academic work with policy?

This September I was able to present a chapter of my dissertation to the Wisconsin Secretary's Advisory Council on Child Welfare, a room full of state and county administrators as well as a group of youth that had aged

out of foster care in Wisconsin. It was powerful to hear from the foster care alumni how my research accurately reflected their own experiences aging out of foster care and their need for additional supports related to financial management and economic security.

How have you worked with your policy mentor over the course of the fellowship?

Throughout the fellowship my policy mentor, [Ken Taylor](#), has been a link to what is happening at the county and state level regarding the child welfare system and foster youth. Staying informed of the current landscape is crucial for positioning research findings to have a potential impact on practice or policy.

What advice would you give other fellows on having a policy impact?

Use your policy mentor to make connections. They have a great network and may have some insight into what is going on behind the scenes or what might be coming up in the future regarding your research topic. Your policy mentor can also be a key source of ideas for *where* and *when* the knowledge generated from your research will be of interest and perhaps have influence on decision-makers.



Cohort Six Applications Closed

Applications for Cohort Six closed on December 1st. Over the next few months we will have the opportunity to review the applications and select our new cohort of fellows. We are all very excited to welcome another cohort into the Doris Duke Fellowship network.



Doris Duke Fellowship Reception at SSWR

To celebrate the launch of [*Advances in Child Abuse Prevention Knowledge: The Perspective of New Leadership*](#), we are hosting a reception at the Carnegie Library, in Washington, DC on January 14th at 7:00 PM. This is a networking opportunity for policy makers, researchers, and fellows. If you are interested in attending the reception and did not receive an invitation, please email Sydney Birnbaum at sbirnbaum@chapinhall.org.



Upcoming Events

[Society for Social Work and Research](#)

January 13-17, 2016

Washington, DC

Doris Duke Fellowship Reception

January 14, 2016, 7:00 PM

Carnegie Library, Washington, DC

[San Diego International Conference
on Child and Family Maltreatment](#)

January 25-29, 2016

San Diego, CA

[Society for Research on Adolescence](#)

[Biennial Meeting](#)

March 31-April 2, 2016

Baltimore, MD

**Doris Duke Fellowship Mid-Year
Meeting**

April 4-6, 2016

UNC-Chapel Hill and Duke

[2016 APSAC Colloquium](#)

June 22-25, 2016

New Orleans, LA



Quick Links

- [Doris Duke Fellowships for the Promotion of Child Well-Being](#)
- [Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago](#)
- [Doris Duke Charitable Foundation](#)