



# Fostering Futures NY

## InTouch



Supporting foster families in building better futures for children and youth

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ISSUE 4: WINTER 2017

### **Policy Research Associates (PRA): FFNY's First Workplace Team**

While each of FFNY's 15 volunteer teams is special in its own way, one group stands out for a unique reason. The team from Policy Research Associates (PRA) is made up of colleagues at a workplace.

"We're hoping to sign on more teams from companies and service organizations," said FFNY program director Meredith Osta, "but, thus far, PRA is the only team in that category."

For the employees at PRA, forming an FFNY team was a natural outgrowth of their professional commitment to improving people's lives through evaluation, training, and technical assistance in the area of behavioral health.



Nicole(r) and fellow volunteer, Olivia Allen

"We have more than a professional interest," said Nicole Vincent-Roller, team member and PRA communications specialist. "All of us want to have a positive influence on people's lives in a less abstract way. It's built into the fabric of the company."

***"We are all just blown away by this family."***

Nicole and her colleagues became aware of FFNY through a co-worker who had heard a presentation at her church. The company sponsored an orientation session, and the group felt an immediate connection with FFNY's hands-on, practical approach to supporting foster families. "It became clear early on that this was something we wanted to do," she said. Eight employees signed the year-long commitment to the program. The team was matched with a family of two foster parents and five children in November 2016. They have spent their first few visits getting acquainted.

"We've been helping with homework and practicing multiplication tables," Nicole said. "One of my co-workers got to play "Memory" with the kids. The family is very much a family already, and they've made all of us feel at ease making paper snowflakes together and just getting to know each other."

Some PRA employees who are not able to devote the time to home visits are helping out by making meals and other treats, such as gluten-free cookies, for their co-workers to deliver.

During these first few months, the PRA team has become more aware of the challenges faced by foster parents. Several of the children have special behavioral needs, which is not uncommon among children coming into foster care. Whenever PRA team members are in the home, they free up time for the foster parents to focus their energy and attention on each child. The foster parents do this incredible work with grace, humor, and kindness," Nicole said. "We are all just blown away by this family."



Fostering Futures NY (FFNY) recruits and trains small teams of volunteers from the community that give practical support to foster families and serve as 'extended families' for foster parents and children.



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**Fostering Futures NY**  
invites you to  
**Star Light,  
Star Bright**

A Benefit in Support of Children in Foster Care

*Thursday, June 1, 2017*  
*5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.*

Shaker Ridge Country Club | 802 Albany Shaker Rd. | Albany, NY

**Please Save the Date**  
*Invitation to Follow*



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- Delanson United Methodist
- First Reformed of Schenectady
- First Reformed of Wynantskill
- Greenbush Reformed Church
- Loudonville Community Church
- Lynnwood Reformed Church
- Macedonia Baptist Church
- Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
- Policy Research Associates
- St. Edward the Confessor Roman Catholic Church
- St. Henry's Church
- St. Timothy's Lutheran Church

**Team Coordinator Fostering Futures NY**

Fostering Futures NY is a program of Welfare Research, Inc. that recruits and trains volunteer teams to provide practical supports to foster parents and families in the Capital Region. Due to the growth in the program, we are seeking an additional part-time Team Coordinator (up to 15 hours/week). Must be flexible with schedule, with primarily evenings and occasional weekend hours required. Requires local travel and must supply own transportation.

The Team Coordinator recruits volunteer teams sponsored by faith- and community-based service organizations, and manages the training and ongoing oversight of the volunteer teams, with supervision and support from the FFNY Program Director.

**Qualifications:** Bachelor's degree and experience in child welfare; ideal candidate will have experience with the NYS foster care system and working with volunteers.

**Compensation:** Commensurate with experience.

Please email resume and cover letter to [info@welfareresearch.org](mailto:info@welfareresearch.org) or mail to WRI, 14 Columbia Circle Dr., Suite 104, Albany, NY 12203.

**Interested in sponsoring a team or volunteering?**

Contact Meredith Osta at 518-713-4726, ext. 210  
or [MOsta@welfareresearch.org](mailto:MOsta@welfareresearch.org)

**Welfare Research, Inc.**

Fostering Futures NY is a program of Welfare Research, Inc. (WRI), a nonprofit agency that provides technical assistance to both public and private human services agencies. FFNY is funded by private donations, a grant from the NYS Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) and is funded in part by the Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, under a Cooperative Agreement, Grant # 90CO-1109. The contents of this publication are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Further support and guidance are provided by [WRI's staff](#) and [Board of Directors](#).

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**FFNY STAFF**

- Meredith Osta, *Program Director*
- Debbie Favro, *Team Coordinator*

**Thank you to our supporters**

The following charitable organizations have provided generous support for Fostering Futures NY. We also thank our many individual donors for responding to the need to expand the program to more foster families in the Capital Region.

- The Community Foundation of the Greater Capital Region
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