

Foster Care Student Navigator

Colorado Department of Higher Education

POSTING DATE: July 21, 2022

COMPENSATION: \$45,000 - \$55,000/annually

DESCRIPTION OF JOB:

The Department's Outreach Team works to align and make connections through our middle and high schools with postsecondary institutions, workforce, and community and employer collaborations to build education and training pathways designed for what diverse learners need today to be prepared for a successful postsecondary experience and the jobs of tomorrow. The team works with school districts to support students in navigating the questions that come up while completing financial aid applications and works to create educational materials and state-level expertise – to turn to when they need help.

This position assists qualifying students in applying for and enrolling in institutions of higher education. This position works with school districts and the state charter school institute child welfare education liaisons to identify prospective qualifying students.

This position will assist students in completing an institution's application for admission, the Free Application for Federal Student Aid or FAFSA, and, if eligible, the application for a Chafee ETV (Educational and Training Voucher) grant.

This position maintains a strong working knowledge of the availability of resources for foster and homeless youth, along with the processes necessary to access them; college-going and financial aid information, career readiness resources, and how to build an Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP). The position also establishes and maintains a professional working relationship with partners in the field including travel throughout the state. This position assists in the preparation and administration of internal and external conferences and training including preparing presentations, agendas, handouts, and other materials as needed.

Essential Duties & Responsibilities

- Coordinate with CDHS contracted vendors and use a system to identify, contact and meet with students receiving Educational Training Voucher (ETV) at least once per semester, but as often as necessary to provide individualized academic advisement, support services, and referrals to local supports and resources.
 - Maintain expertise in Educational Training Voucher (ETV) procedures as well as recipient challenges in obtaining a higher education credential.
- Assist recipient in building an Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP) and monitor progress on this educational plan for designated youth. Help the student make periodic adjustments to the plan based on progress towards the goals identified by the youth.
 - Coordinate with outreach navigators to create and implement training opportunities on Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP) and support resources for professionals that serve

Educational Training Voucher (ETV) and other foster and homeless youth at the high school and higher education levels.

- Maintain updated client records with plans, notes, appropriate forms, or related information including the student's Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP).
- Develop relationships with on- and off-campus professionals who serve Educational Training Voucher (ETV) students, including conducting training and webinar opportunities.
 - Coordinate with and make referrals to county-based Chafee staff to best meet the specific needs of Educational Training Voucher (ETV) and foster care or unaccompanied students.
- Research, maintain, and provide students with up-to-date information on campus-based student support services, including specialized student support programs for foster care or unaccompanied students, refer students and coordinate with those programs to best meet the specific needs of each. Provide guidance on navigating the academic world including accessing supportive services and developing soft skills (e.g., time management, finances, etc.).
 - Convene informal meeting opportunities, such as coffee chats, for Educational Training Voucher (ETV) and other transitioning students on campus, to foster peer social connections and support.
 - Connect with youth using a variety of communication approaches to ensure their ongoing engagement. These communication strategies may include, but are not limited to; in person contact, phone (including texting), and use of other technology forms (email, skype, Zoom, Google Meet, etc.).
 - Collaborate with youth and their support team in securing necessary services and supports identified in their case plan through "warm hand-off" referrals and other active methods.
- Provide additional training and support to youth and professionals on the use of websites and related career, postsecondary and financial aid planning system on My Colorado Journey, and Enrich or successor websites as related to their individual plan.
 - Help maintain the content and resource information on My Colorado Journey website, ensuring that the information is kept relevant including identifying additional resources that can assist young people with their post-secondary education.
- Serve as point of contact for CDHE in interagency meetings and otherwise on issues related to foster youth; similarly, serve as spokesperson for Educational Training Voucher (ETV) students and programs with appropriate state partner agencies
 - Attend quarterly services meetings arranged by the Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS) to give updates on the program status as well as coordinate with adolescent and Chafee program caseworkers.
 - Attend and present to the annual State Workforce Conference. The presentation may be a joint effort with a staff member from outreach and attainment.
 - Serve as back-up point of contact for the Celebration of Educational Excellence committee for the annual CEEEX celebration.
- Participate as active member of the Outreach and Attainment division and Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE) staff in relevant meetings and activities
 - Attend all Outreach and Attainment division staff meetings, unless excused by supervisor.
 - Respond to all emails and phone calls in a timely manner.
 - Present a professional attitude toward the community-at-large and respectful behavior toward staff.
 - Partner with other Outreach and Attainment division staff to obtain training and event support.

- Monitor and recommend changes/updates to MyColoradojourney.com or successor website based upon stakeholder input.
- Contribute to the development of Outreach and Attainment and My Colorado Journey materials, webinars, Power Point presentations and other collateral materials.

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS:

Competencies

- Excellent oral and written communication skills, and exemplary customer relations skills
- Cross-cultural sensitivity
- Solid knowledge of standard office software, such as Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Outlook
- Ability to handle objects up to 50 (fifty) pounds
- A valid Colorado driver's license, good driving record and an insured functioning vehicle.

EDUCATION:

A Bachelor's degree is required.

EXPERIENCE:

- Experience in higher education, college admissions or financial aid
- Experience in the foster youth field

Substitutions

- Additional appropriate experience will substitute for the degree requirement on a year-for-year basis.
- Additional appropriate education will substitute for the required experience on a year-for-year basis.

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS:

- Fluent bilingual skills in English and Spanish a plus.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Work in normal office environment. Does not require physical activity other than that typically utilized in such a setting, working with standard office equipment such as phone, and personal computers. The normal working hours are 8 am to 5 pm, Monday through Friday, though this position may require evening and weekend hours, including extensive travel within Colorado and the ability to complete any travel requirement independently.

Note:

The above statements are intended to describe the general nature and level of work being performed by people assigned to this role. They are not to be construed as an exhaustive list of all responsibilities, duties, and skills required of personnel in this role. . All personnel may be required to perform duties outside of their normal responsibilities from time to time, as needed.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES:

To be considered for this position, candidates must possess the minimum qualifications listed above and submit the following: Cover letter and resume. Submit your completed application materials to:

HR@dhe.state.co.us

Or:

Colorado Department of Higher Education
Attention: Human Resources
1600 Broadway, Suite 2200
Denver, Colorado 80202

This position is not governed by the selection process of the classified personnel system and is not part of the classified state personnel system.

Consistent with the State's Universal Policy on Flexible Work Arrangements, CDHE permits Flexible Work Arrangements (FWA) and this role qualifies for FWA participation. However, FWA is evaluated and granted by the appointing authority at their discretion based on business need, the nature and function of the work performed, and employee performance.

Employees of the State of Colorado must be authorized to work in the United States and be residents of Colorado. The Department of Higher Education does not assist with relocation expenses

Effective September 20, 2021, employees will be required to attest to and verify whether or not they are fully vaccinated for COVID-19. Employees who have not been fully vaccinated may be required to submit to serial testing in the future. Upon hire, new employees will have three (3) business days to provide attestation to their status with proof of vaccination. Vaccinated employees must provide proof of vaccination.

Note: Fully Vaccinated means two (2) weeks after a second dose in a two-dose series of the COVID-19 vaccine, such as the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine, or two (2) weeks after the single-dose vaccine, such as Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine, as defined by the most recent State of Colorado's Public Health Order and current guidance issued by the Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment.

Application Deadline: Position will remain open until filled. Application review begins immediately and position start is immediate.

Employment is contingent on successful completion of a criminal background check.

The Colorado Department of Higher Education offers benefits for this position which include medical, dental, vision, and life insurance available to the employee and eligible dependents on a cost share basis between employee and the Department. Disability insurance is provided at no cost to the employee. Paid leave time is accrued at 14 hours per month for vacation leave and 10 hours per month for sick leave. There are 11 paid holidays in a calendar year. Employees of the State of Colorado do not contribute to Social Security, but contribute to Colorado Public Employee Retirement Association (PERA)

The State of Colorado believes that equity, diversity, and inclusion drive our success, and we encourage candidates from all identities, backgrounds, and abilities to apply. The State of Colorado is an equal opportunity employer committed to building inclusive, innovative work environments with employees who reflect our communities and enthusiastically serve them. Therefore, in all aspects of the employment process, we provide employment opportunities to all qualified applicants without regard to race, color, religion, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, pregnancy, medical condition related to pregnancy, creed, ancestry, national origin, marital status, genetic information, or military status (with preference given to military veterans), or any other protected status in accordance with applicable law.

The Colorado Department of Higher Education is committed to the full inclusion of all qualified individuals. As part of this commitment, our agency will assist individuals who have a disability with any reasonable accommodation requests related to employment, including completing the application process, interviewing, completing any pre-employment testing, participating in the employee selection process, and/or to perform essential job functions where the requested accommodation does not impose an undue hardship. If you have a disability and require reasonable accommodation to ensure you have a positive experience applying or interviewing for this position, please direct your inquiries to our Human Resource Director, Cindy Langan, at HR@dhe.state.co.us or call 720.264.8575.