



**J.W. Fanning Institute
for Leadership Development**
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

Embark Georgia

*Improving College Access
for Foster and Homeless Youth*

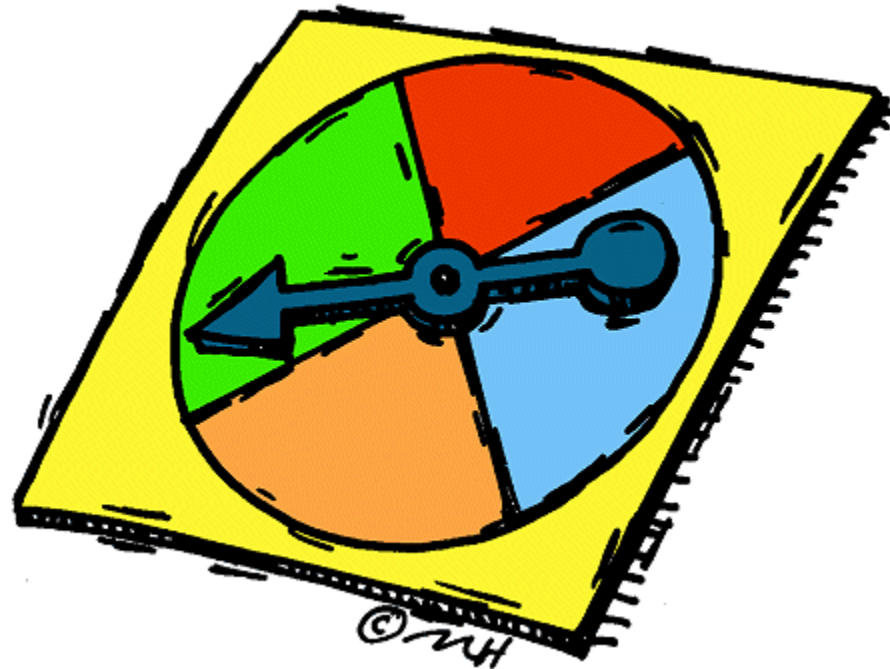


David Meyers

**Georgia Department of Education
Homeless Education Conference
September 18, 2018**



Collegology





What is Embark?

- **Local: Campus Based Program at UGA - Embark UGA**

Embark UGA will increase the opportunities for UGA students who have experienced foster care and/or homelessness through the organization of a resource and referral network on campus that supports and promotes success and well-being beyond an education.

- **Statewide: Embark Georgia Network**

The Embark Georgia statewide network serves public four and two year post-secondary professionals and institutions to ensure connectivity, share best practices, and provide information exchange among youth, community based stakeholders, and K-12 educators in support of youth who have experienced foster care and homelessness.

- **National:** *Embark Georgia is a founding state among the National Association for Student Affairs Professionals (NASPA) Socioeconomic and Class Issues in Higher Education (SCIHE) Knowledge Community, which seeks to support underrepresented students access supports across higher education campuses.*



Definition of Foster Care

Foster care means 24-hour substitute care for children placed away from their parents or guardians and for whom the State agency has placement and care responsibility. This includes, but is not limited to, placements in foster family homes, foster homes of relatives, group homes, emergency shelters, residential facilities, child care institutions, and preadoptive homes.



Definition of Homeless/Unaccompanied Youth

Individuals whose nighttime residence is NOT:

- Fixed: stationary, permanent, and not subject to change
- Regular: used on a predictable, routine, or consistent basis
- Adequate: sufficient for meeting both the physical and psychological needs typically met in the home

(42 U.S.C. §11434A(2)(B)(i))

Unaccompanied Homeless Youth (UHY):

- Homeless and not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian; in practical terms, this means the youth does not live with the parent or guardian.



National Educational Attainment

	Foster Youth (n=593)		Comparison (n=890)	
Enrolled in College	237	39.9%	641	72.0%
2/4 Year Degree Attained	49	8.2%	410	46.0%

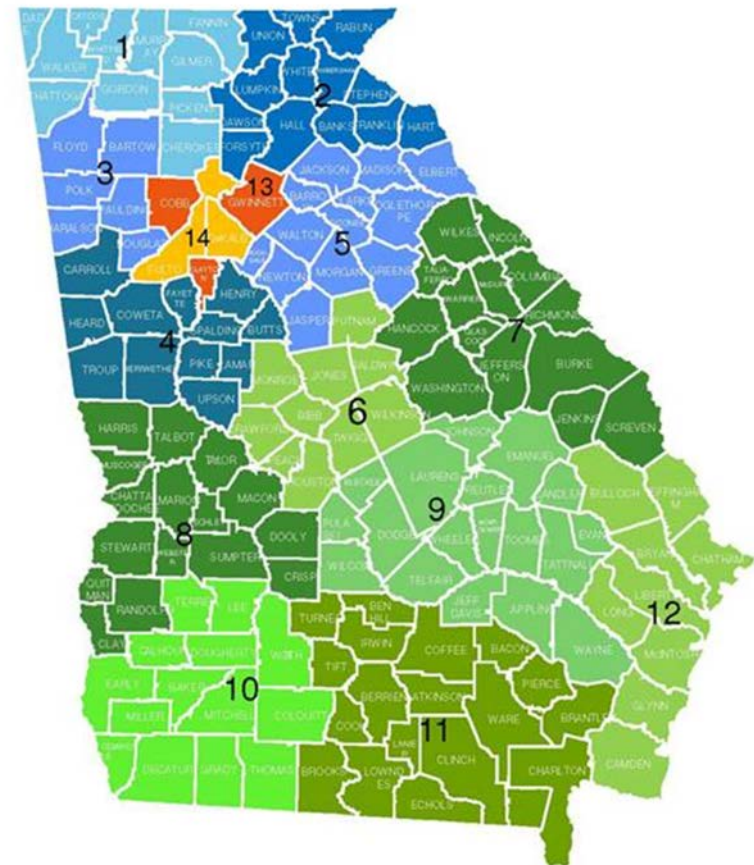
Mark Courtney, et al, Midwest Evaluation of the Adult Functioning of Former Foster Youth: Outcomes at Age 23 and 24, Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago, 2011.

Comparison group for this study: National Longitudinal Study Of Adolescent Health



Georgia Numbers

	All foster birth-18	All homeless PK-12 grade
Region 1	1096	2188
Region 2	521	1939
Region 3	1163	1833
Region 4	758	3102
Region 5	923	4129
Region 6	617	1930
Region 7	269	1356
Region 8	669	1571
Region 9	305	2010
Region 10	511	2305
Region 11	930	1680
Region 12	635	1820
Region 13	1139	6506
Region 14	1389	3670



AFCARS FY 14 data and DOE Fall 2015 data



Barriers to Accessing Higher Education

Lack of:

- Access to parental financial information and support
- Financial means to live independently and safely
- Financial self-sufficiency once enrolled in college
- Housing options, especially in small towns or rural areas
- Balance between school and other responsibilities
- Adult guidance and support
- Information about available support systems



Barriers to Retention

- *Uncertain how to ask for help*
- Study skills and other basic know-how not well developed
- Difficulty navigating college system
- Many (most?) are first-generation, low-income students
- Housing instability

California College Pathways: Higher Education training “Foster Youth: Supporting Educational Success”

Foster youth are three times more likely to persist in college if they participate in a campus support program for foster youth



Promising Practices

Campus Based Programs

- Based on Casey Family Programs: Supporting Success
 - Financial Support
 - Academic Support
 - Social/Emotional Support
 - Designated Points of Contact on Campuses

Statewide Networks of Support

- Promote connectivity and sharing of ideas among Technical and University campuses
 - Regional meetings and Statewide conferences
 - Web based communication and social networking
 - Technical assistance for program development and enhancement



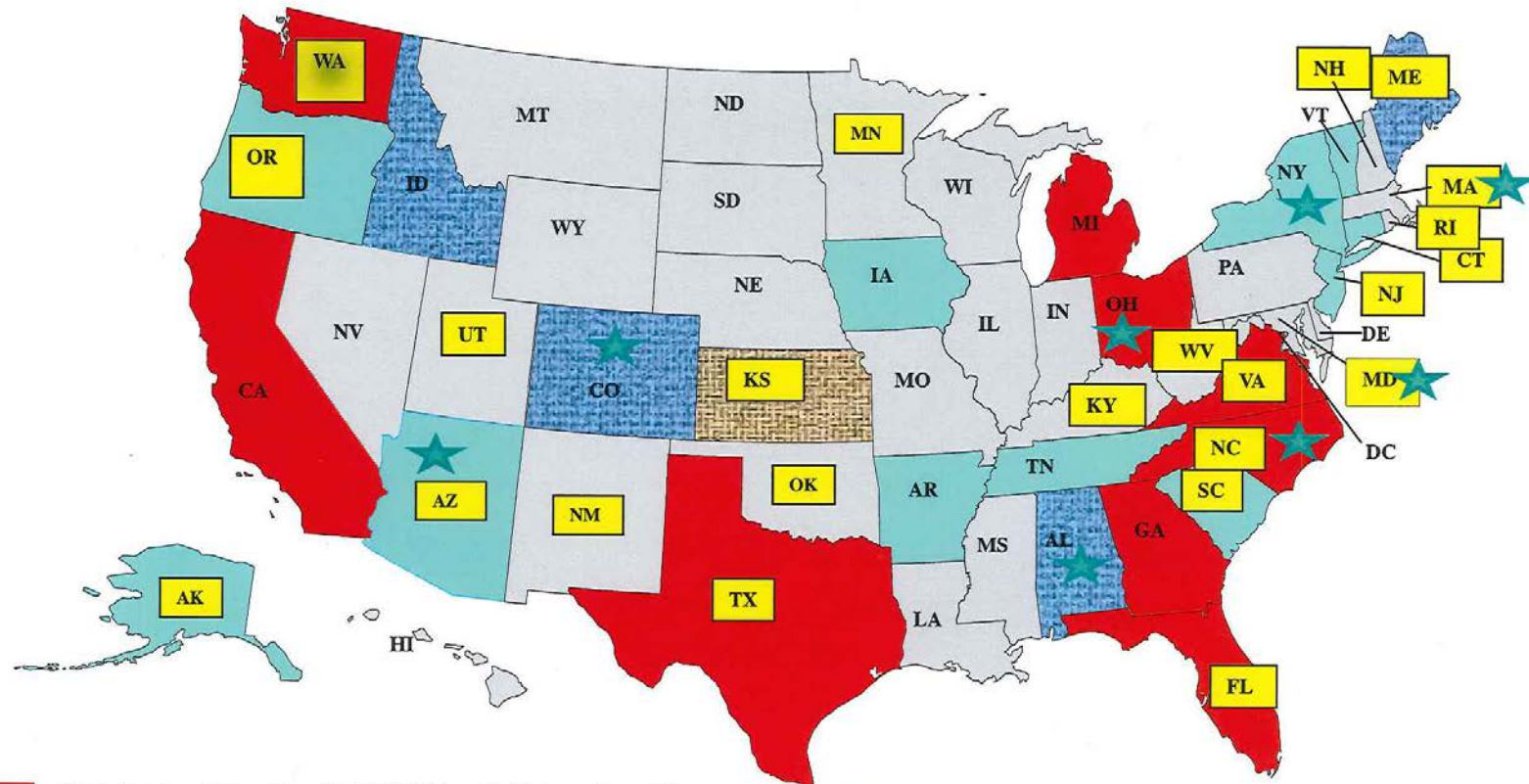
National Program Scan

- California: [Guardian Scholars](#) (campus based)
- Washington: [Passport and Governor's Scholarship](#) (statewide) and [Champions](#) (campus based)
- Michigan: [John Seita Scholars](#) (campus based) and [Fostering Success Michigan](#) (statewide)
- [Ohio/Texas/North Carolina/Alabama](#): Reach States (campus based/statewide)
- Virginia: [Great Expectations](#) (community college)



Foster Care and Postsecondary Education Policy, Practice and Collaboration Scan

5/9/14



State Higher Education/Child Welfare Collaborations (8)

Potential for systems collaboration (5)

Some college based support program(s) (11)

Statewide Gear Up Program (KS)

State Tuition Waiver Legislation (23)

Passport to College Promise (WA)

Foster Care to Success ETV Administered States
AL, AZ, CO, MA, MD, NC, NY, OH (8)

Unknown (26)



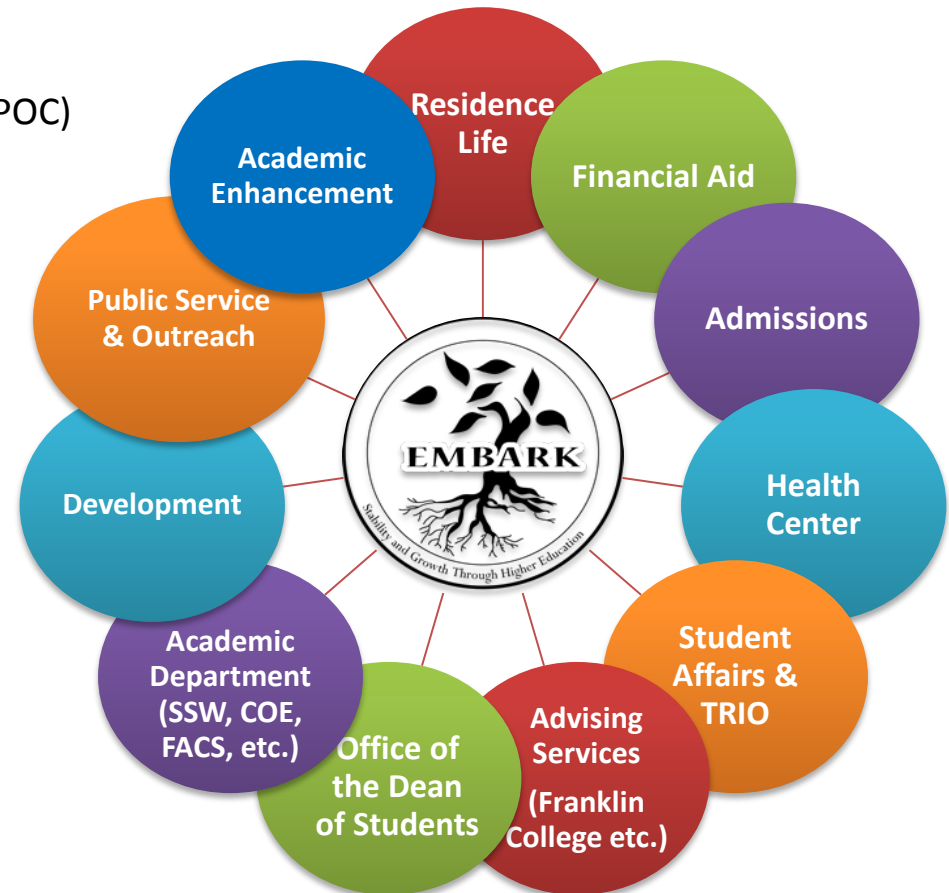
Current Campus Programming in GA

- Kennesaw State University: [CARE](#) (Homeless Specific)
- Savannah State University: [STAR](#)
- Embark Albany
 - Albany Technical College
 - Albany State University: Foster 2 College (F2C)
 - Darton State College
- Columbus State University: Embark on Education at CSU
- South Georgia State College: R.I.S.E. (Retention Involves Empowering Students)
- Georgia Gwinnett College: Grizzlies Serving Grizzlies
- Georgia State University: Embark Network at Georgia State University
- East Georgia State College: EGSC - Embark
- Southeastern Technical College (Swainsboro campus)
- Fort Valley State University: “The Vault”
- Georgia Institute of Technology: Embark
- Bainbridge College: Embark at Bainbridge
- The University of Georgia: [Embark](#)



Embark UGA Partners

- Office of Vice President for Public Service and Outreach
- Student Affairs
 - Student Support Services (Alan Campbell DPOC)
 - Health Center/Counseling and Psychiatric Services (CAPS)
 - Student Government Association
 - University Housing
 - Center for Leadership and Service
- Office of Institutional Diversity
- Family and Consumer Sciences
 - ASPIRE Clinic
- Franklin College of Arts and Sciences
- Office Vice President for Instruction
 - Office of Student Financial Aid
 - Undergraduate Admissions
 - Division of Academic Enhancement
- School of Social Work





What's Happening On Campus at UGA?

- First Look
- Comprehensive Student Supports
- Emergency Housing Support
- Food Pantry: Open Monday – Friday 10am - 2pm
- Financial Hardships Page: Student Affairs
 - <http://financialhardship.uga.edu/>
- Hygiene Closet out of Dawson Hall/FACS
- CAPS and ASPIRE services
- Office of Student Financial Aid
 - Scholarships
 - Independent Student Identification
 - Book Scholarships (CTL)
- Thanksgiving Meal hosted by Housing
- Mentoring program
- Student Government Association welcome bags/Welcome Gift Baskets



Student Stories

Anastasia Roberts, mother of two young children, had just transferred to the University of Georgia when she was hit with a series of life-changing events that could have easily devastated her college career. She lost one of her jobs, drastically reducing her ability to support her family, then totaled her car and was forced to move out of her apartment. Thanks to connections provided through Embark UGA, Roberts was able to get her back on her feet, provide for her family, and concentrate on her education. “If more at-risk youth knew about Embark, they would come to UGA knowing that there would be a full force of support behind them,” said Roberts.



Student Stories

Campus jobs are desired by many students, but none more so than students living on a tight budget with no support from home. Embark UGA was connected to a student who had just lost a position on campus because of her inability to work evenings and weekends...which was due to not having personal transportation options (not because she wanted to have fun) during those times. Her only available hours to be on campus had to be when her ride was able to be here. Through contacts among the network she was connected to a job that met the necessary times and she is still employed there 18 months later.

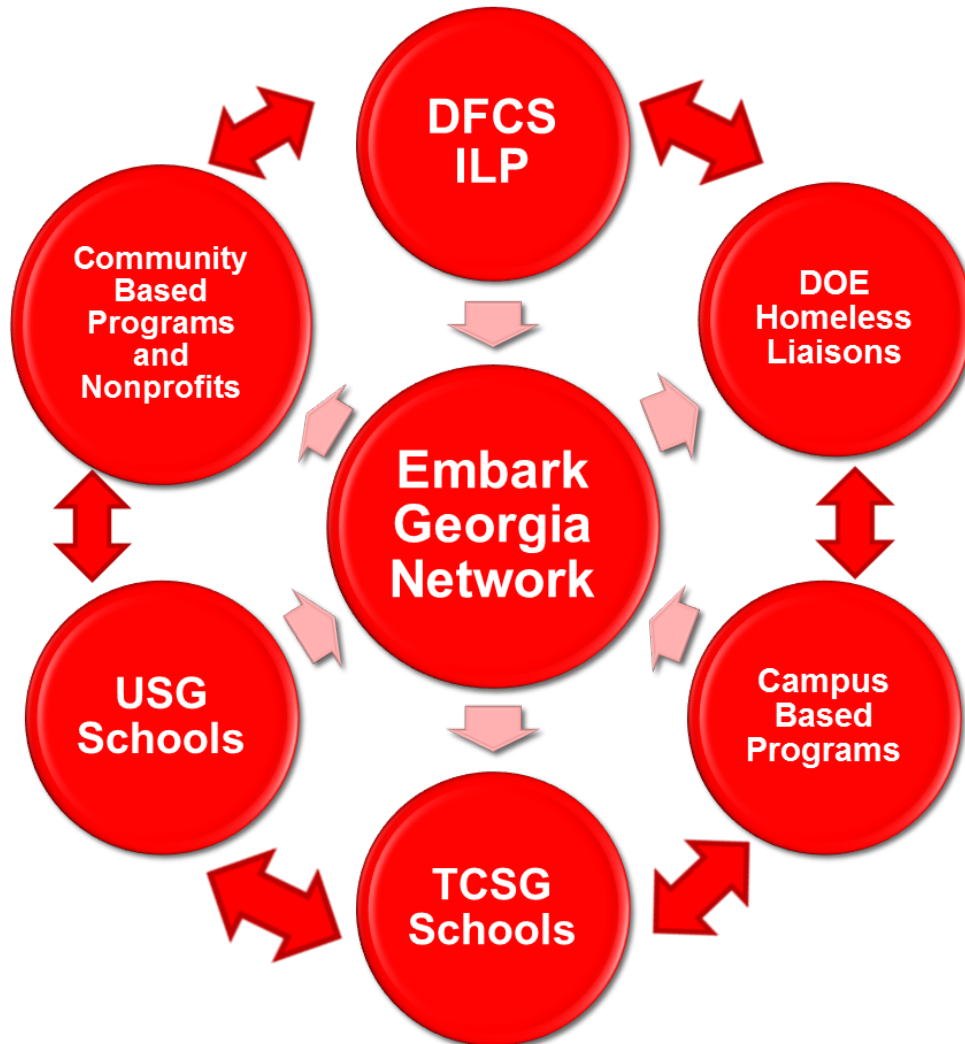


Student Stories

Some students on campus make it to UGA despite all of the odds against them, but encounter additional unexpected barriers once they are enrolled in classes. One such student needed a particular brand and model of calculator to stay enrolled in her Freshman class, she did not have anything left in her student account and had not found an on campus job yet. Through the network contacts she was able to borrow the correct calculator and stay enrolled to complete her course.



Embark Georgia: Statewide Network



The Embark Georgia statewide network serves post-secondary professionals and institutions to ensure connectivity, share best practices, and provide information exchange among youth, community based stakeholders, and K-12 educators in support of former foster and homeless youth.



What's Happening With Embark Network?

- First Look
- Embark Conference
- Information Sharing
 - Newsletter
 - Website
 - Peer to Peer
- Designated Points of Contact
 - Your person on campus!
 - Annual DPOC meeting
- Research and Data Collection
- Leadership Development and Technical Assistance for Stakeholders
- Boosting Public Awareness



Embark Georgia Website

www.embarkgeorgia.org

University of Georgia Public Service and Outreach J.W. FANNING INSTITUTE
for Leadership Development

EMBARK HOME ABOUT NEWS STATEWIDE NETWORK STUDENTS CONTACT US

EMBARK Georgia is a statewide network of support for youth who have experienced foster care and/or homelessness and are enrolled or interested in attending any postsecondary educational institution in Georgia.

[LEARN MORE](#)

The J.W. Fanning Institute for Leadership Development – a public service and outreach unit of the University of Georgia – is dedicated to strengthening communities, organizations, and individuals through leadership development, training, and education. The mission of EMBARK is to increase college access and retention for youth who have experienced foster care or homelessness. By creating a network of support on campus and across the state, EMBARK aims to improve the chances for every student to complete a degree or certificate program at one of the over 50 USG or TCSG institutions in Georgia.



Embark Georgia Website

<https://embarkgeorgia.org/statewide-network/campuses>

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[STATEWIDE NETWORK](#)
[STUDENTS](#)
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MAIN MENU

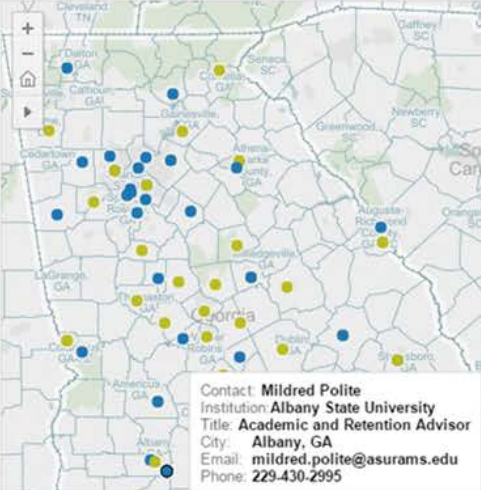
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- [About](#) ▾
- [News](#)
- [Statewide Network](#) ▾
- [Students](#) ▾
- [Contact Us](#) ▾

DESIGNATED POINTS OF CONTACT

What is a Designated Point of Contact (DPOC)? As of July 1, 2014 both the University System of Georgia (USG) and the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) made it a policy to have a person on all public institutions who is designated to answering questions for youth experiencing foster care or homelessness. This list is published on this website in addition to USG and TCSG pages. According to both Casey Family Programs and National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth (NAEHYC) a best practice to ensure these youth are receiving all the information they need is to have one person on campus dedicated to this work.

While all campuses have a DPOC, not all campuses currently have programming for these young people. The list below serves as a way to publicize the DPOC, but also to highlight those schools who are currently offering programming in the way of scholarships, non-academic support services and on campus peer activities. Please take a moment to search the interactive map and listing of programs.

EMBARK Georgia Designated Points of Contact



Contact: **Mildred Polite**
 Institution: **Albany State University**
 Title: **Academic and Retention Advisor**
 City: **Albany, GA**
 Email: **mildred.polite@asurams.edu**
 Phone: **229.430.2995**

Info

Institution	Contact	Email
Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College	Maggie Martin	mmartin@abac.edu
Albany State University	Mildred Polite	mildred.polite@asuram.edu
Albany Technical College	Carla Jester	cjester@albanytech.edu
Armstrong Atlantic State University	Yvette Upton	yvette.upton@armstrong.edu
Athens Technical College	Katie Kandalec Kell Fewox	kkandalec@athenstech.edu kfewox@athenstech.edu
Atlanta Metropolitan State College	Dorothy Williams	dwilliams@adm.edu
Atlanta Technical College	Sylvie Moses	smoses@atlantatech.edu
Augusta Technical College	Karissa Davis Kristie J Gregory	kdavis@augustatech.edu kgregory@augustatech.edu
Bainbridge State College	Rodney Carr	Rodney.carr@Bainbridg.edu
Bainbridge Technical College	Beverly Thompson	bthompso@bainbridg.edu
Central GA Technical College	Donna Dutcher Sabrina Coneway	ddutcher@centralgatech.edu sconeway@centralgatech.edu
Chattahoochee Technical College	Gregory Wooten	gregory.wooten@chattech.edu



Embark Georgia Leadership Conference

Year 1: May 2017 (Athens)

Year 2: May 2018 (Athens)

Year 3: October 2019 (Location tbd)





College is Expensive....

Financial Aid - awards based on your financial need

Types of financial aid

Grants

Merit-based scholarships

Need-based scholarships

Loans

Work study

Pell Grant

You are automatically eligible for the Pell Grant as a former foster youth

In some cases, Pell Grant will cover up to \$5000 a year in Tuition and Housing costs

Use the FAFSA4caster to guesstimate the aid you can receive to go to school

<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa/estimate>

**AND THEN THERE IS ETV
(for foster youth)**



ETV Funds

Criteria:

- Up to (not including) age 21
- Have completed high school or its equivalent
- Presently in care or spent six months in care after age 14
- Aged out of the foster care system at/after the age of 18
- Entered kinship guardianship after age 16
- Adopted after age 14

Depending on these factors youth could receive up to:

- \$12,500 per year up to age 21
- \$10,000 per year up to age 23
- \$5,000 per year up to age 25
**Based on state and federal fund availability

Contact Information



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Embark UGA will increase the opportunities for UGA students who have experienced foster care or homelessness by providing supports that promote success and well-being beyond an education.



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Sources:

Georgia College Access Toolkit (Fanning website)

NAEHCY Toolkit

Supporting Success

Fostering Success in Education: National Factsheet on the Educational Outcomes of Children in Foster Care