



NATIONAL FOSTER YOUTH INSTITUTE

Meet the 2021 Los Angeles Organizing Interns

Charity Lingan **Los Angeles Organizing Intern**



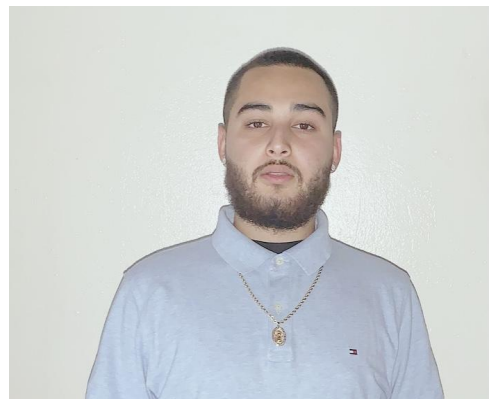
Charity Lingan is excited to start her journey as an intern with NFYI. She has the confidence that her direct experience in foster care has given her the skills and passion to mobilize, organize, and empower peers to spark change in the child welfare system.

Charity is 23 years old and is working on her marketing degree at California State University, Los Angeles. She believes that the time she spent as a foster youth has shaped her into the person she is today and is excited to spread that message to current/former foster youth. She is most looking forward to starting her outreach and bringing about social change to her community.

Having a five-year-old son of her own gives her a personal love and motivation for serving youth. Being an independent mother and student is a dream she's had since she was a child. She is thrilled to spread the message that a foster child's dream is possible, valid, and within reach. She is looking forward to assisting in creating systemic change that will give foster children the tools necessary to achieve their own dreams.

Joseph Mariscal **Los Angeles Organizing Intern**

Joseph Mariscal is a Mexican-American student attending Citrus College and majoring in political science, with aspirations to become a lawyer. He is also a peer partner at Eggleston Youth Center. Joseph has been dedicated to helping and guiding youth on their journeys of becoming young adults. He has also spent time working with DCFS as a youth worker.



He's very ardent and devoted to helping youth but also making a positive influence in each youth's life. Spending time growing up in our child welfare system and working with our youth placement population, he understands the most important thing is trying to understand our youth for who they are and who they wish to become in life. He understands the challenges and hardships foster youth go through. He puts his real life situations into perspective to help advocate and support foster youth.

Joseph has been very involved with the foster care system from his time at DCFS, to working at Eggleston Youth Center as a peer partner. He has tutored, guided, encouraged and challenged our youth to always strive for more. "A situation doesn't define you, it's about how you go about the situation that does."

Growing up in East Los Angeles and throughout LA County in poverty and not having strong role models, Joseph never thought going to college was ever a possibility for him. He hopes to be a strong role model to whoever he comes across. He wants to start the idea and pave a path in our deprived youth to go to college, to show them it's possible, and to set them up with meaningful life skills. His dream is to make a positive impact on as many people as he can and see more foster youth attend college.



Alexis Obinna
Los Angeles Organizing Intern

Alexis Obinna has been volunteering and giving back to various communities since age eight. She started with helping her foster mom watch daycare children, trash removal at her school, painting her school, planting community gardens, and so much more. In 2019, she graduated with her double associate's degree in sociology and child development. She now currently attends California State University Los Angeles, where she continues to fight and give back to various communities as a social work major.

Alexis is a huge social and racial justice advocate and has fought for the rights of many people of color. She has collaborated with many nonprofits such as California Youth Connection (CYC), Los Angeles Reproductive Health Equity Program, the Department of Children and Family Services, Independent City, Youth-led Participatory Action Research board, and so many more. She has been with CYC since 2014, and is honored to do great work to improve the child welfare system.

In her free time, she enjoys practicing yoga and meditation, roller skating, collecting crystals, visiting new places, and making art. She plans to work with DCFS to provide youth with equitable resources and fair chances that she was denied. She wants to spread hope and positivity, and values working on herself to do so. Thank you for reading her bio and ask her anything — she has many resources having experienced the child welfare system for over 16 years.