

# Children and Youth Studies Student Alumni Spotlight

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## Keisha Keith '16 and Rosalia Raccuglia '16



Photo credit: DYCD

(Left to right) New York City Department of Youth and Community Development team members Indhira Ramirez, Resource Specialist; Ebonie Kirkland, Field Supervisor; June Faulk, Resource Specialist; Keisha Keith, Senior Field Supervisor; Andre Joseph, Special Advisor; Rosalia Raccuglia, Senior Field Supervisor; and Danessa Rodriguez, Director

## Teaming up for Success: From Children & Youth Studies Internships to Full-Time Careers Working with Children, Youth and Families

By Loretta Chin June 22, 2017

Today's job market can be a challenge for students, but it is now common knowledge that internships often help pave the road to success by leading to full-time employment upon graduation. Combined with proper advisement and guidance, students not only succeed in gaining career-related experience, but can also exceed beyond their expectations.

This is the success story of two Children and Youth Studies students with similar paths enrolled in the *Internships in Applied Children's Studies* course taught by Elise Goldberg. To get the proper grounding for this internship, students must prepare early by taking courses in the Children and Youth Studies program. They are required to have a cover letter, resume and be interviewed by the site prior to placement.

In Spring 2016, Keisha Keith (Children & Youth Studies major) and Rosalia Raccuglia (Psychology major and Children & Youth Studies minor) were interviewed and placed at the New York City Department of Youth & Community Development (DYCD), a government agency that supports youth and community services by providing funding to many non-profit organizations throughout the city. Both students started their internships with Youth Connect, DYCD's information and referral hotline to youth-related programs and services.

They helped coordinate events and assisted with communications, often speaking to children, youth, parents, caseworkers, guidance counselors and others about resources and information that they might not know about otherwise. They were also invited to listen in to discussions about how to keep youth out of detention centers and establish a healthy environment for all of New York City's children and youth. Raccuglia helped create flyers, agendas, and promotional materials. She was most proud of developing a youth resource guide for youth coming out of detention called "Coming Home: Transitioning Back into the Community."

Keith helped gather resource information, and edit or update annual publications. She especially enjoyed working on a "Raise the Age" event with major stakeholders, child representatives, lawyers, and key members of the community. She realized that she liked to help people find information and community resources, which helped influence her decision to become a social worker. She wants to attend CUNY Hunter College Silberman School of Social Work in order to major in Clinical Practice with Individuals, Families and Groups, and obtain a Master of Social Work degree in the near future.

"What I really like about this internship is that they said that this group of interns was hard working and one of the best internship group cohorts they ever had," Keith said. She liked the way the people she worked with were personable, and made her and Raccuglia feel appreciated.

After graduating in June 2016, they were both offered full-time summer positions as field supervisors and later hired as seasonal full-time senior field supervisors in October. As field supervisors, they visited summer/fall youth programs and inspected sites to ensure that they were following procedures, were safe, and had the supplies they needed.

Keith and Raccuglia are passionate about connecting people to programs and services such as job placement, literacy, and mentoring programs; housing advocacy; financial planning workshops; and more.

"I feel like I'm truly accomplishing my dreams," Raccuglia said. "There's so much to learn and so many people to meet. I know that soon enough I will be in a position to make an even greater difference!"