

Nathanael J. Okpych

University of Connecticut School of Social Work
38 Prospect Street | Hartford, CT 06103
nathanael.okpych@uconn.edu
www.nateokpych.com

EDUCATION

- Ph.D.** University of Chicago, Crown Family School of Social Work, Policy, and Practice, 2017
- M.S.** University of Chicago, Department of Public Health Science, Biostatistics and Epidemiology (Master of Science for Clinical Professionals), 2016
- M.S.W.** Rutgers University, Social Work, 2011
Concentration: Nonprofit and Public Management
- M.A.** Duquesne University, Clinical Psychology, 2005
- B.A.** Rutgers University–New Brunswick, 2002
Major: Psychology Minor: Philosophy

FACULTY APPOINTMENT

University of Connecticut School of Social Work

2023–present	Associate Professor
2017–2023	Assistant Professor

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Postsecondary education outcomes and interventions for youth with foster care histories
Social support and social networks
Mental health
Quantitative methods and survey research

TEACHING INTERESTS

Research methods and applied statistical analysis
Human behavior in the social environment
Risk and resilience
Psychosocial interventions with children, adolescents, and families

RESEARCH FUNDING

Walter S. Johnson Foundation. PI: Nathanael Okpych. Navigating the Transition: Research to Inform Policy and Practice for Foster Youth Entering Adulthood. Jan 2026 – Jun 2027. \$65,463

Hilton Foundation & the University of California-Berkeley Transition-Age Youth Research & Evaluation Hub (TAY-Hub). PI: Nathanael Okpych. Co-PI: Mayra Cazares Minero. Better Than Expected: Unpacking the Student and College Characteristics Behind Successful Outcomes for Youth with Foster Care Experience in Community Colleges. Jul 2025 – Mar 2027. \$39,793.

Spencer Foundation Research Grant (Small). PI: Nathanael Okpych. Co-PI: Jennifer Geiger. Crossing the Finish Line: Factors that Influence College Degree Completion for Students with Foster Care Backgrounds. Jun 2024 – Aug 2025. \$50,000.

University of Connecticut Scholarship Facilitation Fund. Training in Propensity Score Analysis. July 2023. \$1,990.

California College Pathways Funders Alliance. PI: Nathanael Okpych. Co-PI: Mark Courtney. TAY-Hub: Community College Outcomes for Students with Foster Care Backgrounds, Apr 2023– Mar 2024 \$60,000.

Connecticut Department of Children and Families. PI: Nathanael Okpych. Co-PI: Preston Britner. College Enrollment and Completion Outcomes for Older Youth in Foster Care, Jun 2022 – Dec 2023. \$50,000.

Walter S. Johnson Foundation. California Youth Transitions to Adulthood Study (CalYOUTH). PI: Mark Courtney. Co-PI and Project Director: Nathanael Okpych. Sep 2021 – Dec 2022. UConn portion: \$65,760.

Walter S. Johnson Foundation. California Youth Transitions to Adulthood Study (CalYOUTH). PI: Mark Courtney. Co-PI and Project Director: Nathanael Okpych. Jun 2021 – Aug 2021. UConn portion: \$5,000.

University of Connecticut Scholarship Facilitation Fund. How Campus Support Programs for Students with Foster Care Histories Adapt to the Covid-19 Pandemic. PI: Nathanael Okpych. Jun 2020 – December 2021. \$2,000.

California Wellness Foundation. California Youth Transitions to Adulthood Study (CalYOUTH). PI: Mark Courtney. Co-PI and Project Director: Nathanael Okpych. Jun 2020 – May 2021. UConn portion: \$26,000.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation & University of Wisconsin-Madison's Institute for Research on Poverty. Connected After Care: The Roles of Child Welfare Policy and Programs in Postsecondary Education and Employment among Youth Formerly in Foster Care. PI: Jennifer Geiger. Co-PI: Nathanael Okpych. Jan 2020 – Dec 2020. \$25,000, UConn portion: \$12,500.

Western Michigan University. The Social Network Connections Study of College Students with Foster Care Histories. PI: Lori Gray. Co-PI: Nathanael Okpych. Aug 2019 – Jul 2020. \$9,950, UConn portion: \$3,500.

Reissa Foundation and Walter S. Johnson Foundation. California Youth Transitions to Adulthood Study (CaYOUTH). PI: Mark Courtney. Co-PI and Project Director: Nathanael Okpych. Jul 2018 – Jun 2020. UConn portion: \$80,402.

University of Connecticut School of Social Work. Dean's Incentive Award. Seed funding for "Investigating Social Networks of Foster Care Youth Enrolled in College." PI: Nathanael Okpych. Jun 2018 – Jul 2019. \$3,961.

Walter S. Johnson Foundation. California Youth Transitions to Adulthood Study (CaYOUTH). PI: Mark Courtney. Co-PI and Project Director: Nathanael Okpych. Jul 2017 – Jun 2018. UConn portion: \$25,000.

Walter S. Johnson Foundation. Consultation on the California College Pathways Research Project. PI: Mark Courtney. Co-PI: Nathanael Okpych. 2016 – 2018. \$20,000.

Doris Duke Fellowship for the Promotion of Child Well-Being. Dissertation funding. \$60,000.

National Academy of Education/Spencer Foundation. Dissertation funding. \$27,500. Stipend deferred due to duplicative funding from the Doris Duke award.

National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect at Cornell University. Summer Institute funding for project "Receipt of independent living services among older youth in foster care: An analysis of national data." Principal Investigator: Nathanael Okpych. Summer 2014. Approx. \$2,000.

HONORS AND AWARDS

- 2025 Best Research Note in *Families in Society* in 2024: "The Transition-Age Youth Special Interest Group: The Establishment and Activities of a U.S.-Based Network of Child Welfare Researchers"
- 2024 Finalist for the Frank R. Breul Memorial Prize for best article published in *Social Service Review* in 2023: "Relationships that persist and protect: The role of enduring relationships on early-adult outcomes among youth transitioning out of foster care"
- 2022 David T. Ouimette Outstanding Mentor Award, UConn Connects program
- 2021 Article of the Year for best article published in *Journal of Public Child Welfare* in 2020: "The Relationship between Extended Foster Care and College Outcomes for Foster Care Alumni"
- 2017 Council on Social Work Education (CWSE) Transforming Child Welfare Dissertation Award
- 2016 Group for the Advancement of Doctoral Education in Social Work (GADE)'s Student Award for Social Work Research, for best article published by a doctoral student: "Does education pay for youth formerly in foster care? Comparison of employment outcomes with a national sample"
- 2015 Frank R. Breul Memorial Prize for best article published in *Social Service Review* in 2014: "A historical analysis of evidence-based practice in social work: The unfinished journey toward an empirically-grounded profession"
- 2011 Dean's Recognition Award, Outstanding Student in Nonprofit and Public Management, Rutgers University School of Social Work
- 2011 Phi Alpha Social Work Honors Society (inducted)
- 2002 Henry Rutgers Scholar, Rutgers University
- 2010 Rutgers University Hall Director of the Year

PEER-REVIEWED JOURNAL ARTICLES

Courtney, M. E., Musen, K., **Okpych, N. J.**, Park, S. (in preparation). Evaluation of the influence of campus support programs on college retention for young people transitioning to adulthood from foster care.

Villagrana, K., Park, K., **Okpych, N. J.**, Boyke, H., Tolchinsky, J. (under review). Who participates and why it matters: Understanding demographic and academic differences in a campus-support program for college students with foster care, homelessness, or other independent backgrounds.

Gray, L. A., **Okpych, N. J.**, Baar, J. S. (under review). Mending broken bridges: The role of avoidant attachment in college students with foster care backgrounds in the transition to a campus support program.

Okpych, N. J., Gómez, A., & Agarwal, A. (revise & resubmit). First-year and four-year community college outcomes for youth with experience in California foster care.

Okpych, N. J. (revise & resubmit). Essay: Run with endurance: Training principles from long-distance running to promote college completion for students with experience in foster care.

Okpych, N. J., & Geiger, J. M. (accepted). Crossing the finish line: Factors that influence college degree completion for students with foster care backgrounds. *Journal of the Society for Social Work and Research*.

Shpiegel, S., Zeitlin, W., Ludeke, R., **Okpych, N. J.** (2025). The socioeconomic outcomes of sexual minority youth who have aged-out of foster care in California. *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 169(2), 107684. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2025.107684>

Park, K., Eastman, A. L., Mikell Montgomery, D., **Okpych, N. J.**, Tolchinsky, J., & Sneed, L. (accepted). Role of juvenile incarceration in education: Understanding barriers and promoters of secondary and postsecondary attainment for transition-age youth in foster care. *Journal of the Society for Social Work and Research*

Park, S., **Okpych, N. J.**, & Courtney, M. E. (in press). Effectiveness of public-nonprofit collaboration: Providing transition housing placements for transition-age foster youth in California. *Journal of the Society for Social Work and Research*. <https://doi.org/10.1086/732822>

Katz, C.C., Jackson, S. Cheatham, L., Dworsky, A., Geiger, J., Harty, J., Johnson, R., Munson, M. **Okpych, N.**, Powers, J., Salazar, A., Shpiegel, S., Taussig, H. & Courtney, M. (2025). The Transition-Age Youth Special Interest Group (TAY-SIG): The establishment and activities of a US-based network of child welfare researchers. *Families in Society*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10443894251316394>

*Awarded the Best Research Note in *FIS* in 2024

- Park, S., **Okpych, N. J.**, Harty, J. & Courtney, M. E. (2025). Co-producing service experiences for transition-age youth in foster care: Exploring the connection between transitional independent living plan development and independent living service usage. *Children & Youth Services Review*, 178. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2025.108550>
- Okpych, N. J.**, Whitman, K., Lee, J., Neria-Piña, L., Jackson, L. A., Day, M. (2025). Secondary and postsecondary education outcomes of students with experience in foster care: Systematic review of the literature from 2000-2023. *AERA Open*, 11(1), 1-23. <https://doi.org/10.1177/23328584251331454>
- Lopez, K. M., Gamez, S. I., Montez, B., Contreras, K., & **Okpych, N. J.** (2025). The experiences of students with foster care histories attending Christian universities. *Christian Higher Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15363759.2024.2395297>
- Park, S., Nadon, M., **Okpych, N. J.**, Harty, J., & Courtney, M. E. (2025). Examining prevalence and predictors of food insecurity for transition-age youth transitioning out of foster care. *Journal of Public Child Welfare*, 19(3), 493-522. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15548732.2024.2332611>
- Katz, C. C., **Okpych, N. J.**, Wall, E., Shelton, J., & Courtney, M. (2024). Characteristics of transition-age youth engaging in suicidal behavior. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 75, 600-609. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2024.06.003>
- Okpych, N. J.**, Park, S., Powers, J., Harty, J. S., Courtney, M. E. (2023). Relationships that persist and protect: The role of enduring relationships on early-adult outcomes among youth transitioning out of foster care. *Social Service Review*, 97(4), 619-674. <https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/10.1086/724736>
- *Finalist for the Frank Breul Memorial Prize for best article published in *SSR* in 2023
- Okpych, N. J.**, Geiger, J. M., & Johnson, R. M. (2023). Postsecondary education experiences and attainment among youth with foster care backgrounds. In E. Mullen (Ed.) *Oxford Bibliographies in Social Work*. New York: Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/OBO/9780195389678-0326>
- Katz, C. C., **Okpych, N. J.**, Charles, P., Wall, E., & Courtney, M. E. (2023). Prevalence and predictors of intimate partner violence among youth with foster care histories. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 38(19-20), 10611–10639. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08862605231175910>
- Okpych, N. J.** (2023). Estimating a national college enrollment rate for youth with foster care histories using the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD): Limitations of NYTD and a call to revise and relaunch. *Journal of Public Child Welfare*, 18(1), 21-46. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15548732.2022.2153961>
- Park, S., **Okpych, N. J.**, Harty, J., & Courtney, M. E. (2023). County-level factors matter: The role of county-level factors in foster youths' extended foster care participation and human capital outcomes in young adulthood. *Child Maltreatment*, 28(2), 332-344. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10775595221088226>
- Lopez, K. M., Geiger, J. M., **Okpych, N. J.**, Gamez, S. I., & Larregui, D. (2022). The impact of COVID-19 on campus-based support programs serving students with foster care experience: Focus groups with administrators and students. *Children and Youth Services Review* (143), 106696. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2022.106696>

- Geiger, J. M. & **Okpych, N. J.** (2022). Connected after care: Youth characteristics, policy, and programs associated with postsecondary education and employment for youth with foster care histories. *Child Maltreatment*, 27(4), 658-670. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10775595211034763>
- Park, S., Powers, J., **Okpych, N. J.**, & Courtney, M. E. (2021). Co-production of care leavers' transition planning as young adults: An analysis of young people in California foster care. *British Journal of Social Work* 52(6), 3385–3405. <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bcab252>
- Okpych, N. J.** & Gray, L. (2021). Ties that bond and bridge: Exploring social capital among college students with foster care histories using a novel social network instrument (FC-Connects). *Innovative Higher Education*, 46(6), 683-705. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10755-021-09553-x>
- Okpych, N. J.** & Courtney, M. E. (2021). Barriers to degree completion for college students with foster care histories: Results from a 10-year longitudinal study. *Journal of College Student Retention*, 23(1), 28-54. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1521025118791776>
- Park, S., Powers, J., **Okpych, N. J.**, & Courtney, M. E. (2020). Predictors of youths' participation in their transitional independent living plan (TILP) development: Calling for collaborative case plan decision-making processes. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 115. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2020.105051>
- Munson, M., Katz, C. C., **Okpych, N. J.**, & Courtney, M. E. (2020). Mental health management among older youth with child welfare experiences: Service utilization and preparedness. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 67(2), 225-231. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2020.02.017>
- Okpych, N. J.**, Park, S., Sayed, S., & Courtney, M. E. (2020). The roles of campus-support programs (CSPs) and Education and Training Vouchers (ETVs) on college persistence for youth with foster care histories. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 111. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2020.104891>
- Okpych, N. J.** & Courtney, M. E. (2020). The relationship between extended foster care and college outcomes for foster care alumni. *Journal of Public Child Welfare*, 14(2), 254-276. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15548732.2019.1608888>
- *Awarded the 2020 *JPCW* article of the year
- Prince, D., Vidal, S., **Okpych, N. J.**, & Connell, C. M. (2019). Effects of individual risk and state housing factors on adverse outcomes in a national sample of youth transitioning out of foster care. *Journal of Adolescence*, 74, 33-44. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.adolescence.2019.05.004>
- Okpych, N. J.** & Courtney, M. E. (2019). Longitudinal analyses of educational outcomes for youth transitioning out of care in the U.S.: Trends and influential factors. *Oxford Review of Education*, 45(1), 461-480. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03054985.2019.1592747>
- Park, K., **Okpych, N. J.**, & Courtney, M. E. (2019). Psychotropic medication use and perceptions about medication effects among transition-age foster youth: Analysis of data from a longitudinal study in California. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*, 36, 583-597. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10560-019-00605-y>

- Okpych, N. J.** & Courtney, M. E. (2018). The role of avoidant attachment on college persistence and college completion for older youth in foster care. *Children and Youth Services Review, 90*, 106-117. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2018.05.014>
- Okpych, N. J.**, Feng, H., Park, K., Courtney, M. E., & Torres-García, A. (2018). Living situations and social support in the era of extended foster care: A view from the U.S. *Longitudinal and Life Course Studies, 9*(1), 6-29. <http://dx.doi.org/10.14301/llcs.v9i1.449>
- Okpych, N. J.** & Courtney, M. E. (2017). Who goes to college? Social capital and other predictors of college entry for foster care youth. *Journal of the Society for Social Work and Research, 8*(4), 563-593. <https://doi.org/10.1086/694897>
- Okpych, N. J.** & Courtney, M. E. (2017). Characteristics of foster care history as risk factors for psychiatric disorders among youth in care. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 88*(3), 269-281. <https://doi.org/10.1037/ort0000259>
- Okpych, N. J.** (2016). A Historical perspective on the future of innovation in social work. *Research on Social Work Practice, 27*(2), 150-153. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049731516658355>
- Traube, D. E., Begun, S., **Okpych, N. J.**, Choy-Brown, M. (2016). Catalyzing innovation in social work research. *Research on Social Work Practice, 27*(2), 134-138. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049731516659140>
- Okpych, N. J.** (2015). Receipt of independent living services among older youth in foster care: An analysis of national data from the U.S. *Children and Youth Services Review, 51*, 74-86. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2015.01.021>
- Okpych, N. J.** & Courtney, M. E. (2014). Does education pay for youth formerly in foster care? Comparison of employment outcomes with a national sample. *Children and Youth Services Review, 43*, 18-28. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2014.04.013>
- Okpych, N. J.** & Yu, J. L. H. (2014). Rhyme and reason of practice paradigms: Authors' reply to Anne E. Fortune's 'How quickly we forget.'" *Social Service Review, 88*(2), 223-233. <https://doi.org/10.1086/677847>
- Okpych, N. J.** & Yu, J. L. H. (2014). A historical analysis of evidence-based practice in social work: The unfinished journey toward an empirically-grounded profession. *Social Service Review, 88*(1), 3-58. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/674969>
- *Awarded the Frank Breul Memorial Prize for the best article in published in SSR in 2014
- Okpych, N. J.** (2012). Policy framework supporting youth aging-out of foster care through college: Review and recommendations. *Children and Youth Services Review, 34*(7), 1390-1396. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2012.02.013>
- Longhofer, J., Floersch, J., & **Okpych, N. J.** (2011). Foster youth and psychotropic treatment: Where next? *Children and Youth Services Review, 33*(2), 395-404. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2010.10.006>

BOOK

Okpych, N. J. (2021). *Climbing a broken ladder: Contributors of college success for youth in foster care*. Rutgers University Press.

BOOK CHAPTERS

Park, K., Courtney, M. E., & **Okpych, N. J.** (2025). Trends in social support during the transition to adulthood for youths who spent time in residential care in California. In Attar-Schwartz, S. & Magalhães, E. (Eds), *Social support of young people in and after residential care. Is someone there for you?: An international perspective* (pp. 155-172). Routledge.

Okpych, N. J. & Feely, M. (2020). Evidence-based practice in child welfare. In M. Hanna, R. Fong, N. Rolock, & R. McRoy (Eds.) *Introduction to child welfare: Building a culturally responsive, multisystemic, evidence-based approach* (pp.51-80). Cognella Press.

Courtney, M. E. & **Okpych, N. J.** (2019). Postsecondary educational attainment of young people leaving care in the USA: Implications for policy and practice. In P. McNamara (Ed.) *Education in out-of-home care: International perspectives on policy, practice, and research* (pp. 239-253). Springer.

Okpych, N. J. & Courtney, M. E. (2014). Relationship between adult outcomes of young people making the transition to adulthood from out-of-home care and prior residential care. In J. K. Whittaker, J. Fernandez del Valle, & L. Holmes (Eds.) *Therapeutic residential care for children and youth: Exploring evidence-informed international practice* (pp. 173-188). Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Yu, J. L. H. and **Okpych, N. J.** (2013). A global perspective on the current state of abnormal psychology: Trends, influences, and tensions. In T. G. Plante (Ed.) *Abnormal psychology across the ages* (Vol. 3, pp. 243-261). Praeger.

RESEARCH REPORTS AND BRIEFS

Park, S., **Okpych, N. J.**, Harty, J. & Courtney, M. E. (2025). Co-producing service experiences for transition-age youth in foster care: Exploring the connection between transitional independent living plan development and independent living service usage. *Transition-Age Youth Research & Evaluation Hub (TAY-Hub)*

Okpych, N. J., Britner, P., & Berset, A. (2024). *Early look: Postsecondary education outcomes for youth in CT foster care*. Report delivered to the Connecticut Department of Social Services.

Gamez, S., Geiger, J., Lopez, K., & **Okpych, N. J.** (2022). Engaging and supporting students with a foster care background: Lessons learned from the Covid-19 pandemic. *National Research Collaborative for Foster Alumni and Higher Education*. https://www.nrc-fahe.org/_files/ugd/eaf33a_f4c40de1cce44955a702e9026dc17d0d.pdf

Okpych, N. J., Courtney, M. E., & Park, S. (2022). *Memo from CalYOUTH: Colleges that are most frequently attended by older youth in California foster care*. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.

- Okpych, N. J.**, Feely, M., Lester-Harriat, R., Berthold, S. M., & Urcinas, N. (2021). Triumphs and travails of building a fully online social work field evaluation system. *Field Educator*, 11(2), 1-22. <https://fielddeducator.simmons.edu/article/triumphs-and-travails-of-building-a-fully-online-social-work-field-evaluation-system/>
- Okpych, N. J.**, & Park, S. (Ethan), Courtney, M. E., & Powers, J. (2021). *Memo from CalYOUTH: An early look at predictors of college degree completion at age 23 for foster youth*. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.
- Courtney, M. E., **Okpych, N. J.**, & Park S. (Ethan). (2021). *Report from CalYOUTH: Findings on the relationships between extended foster care and youths' outcomes at age 23*. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.
- Courtney, M. E., **Okpych, N. J.**, Harty, J., Feng, H., Park, S., Powers, J., Nadon, M., Ditto, D. J., & Park, K. (2020). *Findings from the California Youth Transitions to Adulthood Study (CalYOUTH): Conditions of youth at age 23*. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.
- Powers, J., Park, S., **Okpych, N. J.**, & Courtney, M. E. (2020). *Memo from CalYOUTH: Foster youths' roles and satisfaction related to the planning of their transitions to independent adulthood*. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago.
- Park, K., Courtney, M. E., **Okpych, N. J.**, & Nadon, M. (2020). *Memo from CalYOUTH: Trends in justice system involvement from ages 17 to 21*. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.
- Feng, H., Courtney, M. E., & **Okpych, N. J.** (2020). *Memo from CalYOUTH: Youth characteristics and predominant placement type between age 18 and 21*. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.
- Feng, H., Harty, J., **Okpych, N. J.**, & Courtney, M. (2020). *Memo from CalYOUTH: Predictors of Homelessness at Age 21*. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.
- Okpych, N. J.**, Park, S., & Courtney, M. E. (2019). *Memo from CalYOUTH: Early findings on the impact of extended foster care on foster youths' postsecondary education enrollment and persistence*. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.
- Courtney, M. E., Park, S., & **Okpych, N. J.** (2019). *Memo from CalYOUTH: Associations between county-level factors and youths' extended foster care participation*. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.
- Torrés-García, A., **Okpych, N. J.**, & Courtney, M. E. (2019). *Memo from CalYOUTH: Youths' and child welfare workers' perceptions of youths' educational preparedness*. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.
- Courtney, M. E., **Okpych, N. J.**, Park, S. (2018). *Report from CalYOUTH: Findings on the relationship between extended foster care and youth's outcomes at age 21*. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.
- Okpych, N. J.**, Park, K., Feng, H., Torrés-García, A., & Courtney, M. E. (2018). *Memo from CalYOUTH: Differences in social support at age 19 by extended foster care status and placement type*. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.

- Courtney, M. E., **Okpych, N. J.**, Park, K., Harty, J., Feng, H., & Torr s-Garcia, A. (2018). *Findings from the California Youth Transitions to Adulthood Study (CalYOUTH): Conditions of youth at age 21*. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.
- Courtney, M. E., Pergamit, M., McDaniel, M., McDonald, E., Giesen, L., **Okpych, N. J.**, & Zinn, A. (2017). *Planning a next-generation evaluation agenda for the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program. OPRE report #2017-96*. Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
- Park, K., **Okpych, N. J.**, & Courtney, M. E. (2017). *Memo from CalYOUTH: The use of psychotropic medications over time among foster youth transitioning to adulthood*. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.
- Okpych, N. J.**, Courtney, M. E., & Dennis, K. (2017). *Memo from CalYOUTH: Predictors of high school completion and college entry at ages 19/20*. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.
- Courtney, M. E., Harty, J., Kindle, B., Dennis, K., **Okpych, N. J.**, & Torres Garcia, A. (2017). *Findings from the California Youth Transitions to Adulthood Study (CalYOUTH): Conditions of youth at age 19: Los Angeles County report*. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.
- Courtney, M. E., Park, S., & **Okpych, N. J.** (2017). *Memo from CalYOUTH: Factors associated with youth remaining in foster care as young adults*. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.
- Courtney, M. E. & **Okpych, N. J.** (2017). *Memo from CalYOUTH: Early findings on the relationship between extended foster care and youths' outcomes at age 19*. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.
- Courtney, M. E., **Okpych, N. J.**, Charles, P., Mikell, D., Stevenson, B., Park., K., Kindle, B., Harty, J., & Feng, H. (2016). *Findings from the California Youth Transitions to Adulthood Study (CalYOUTH): Conditions of youth at age 19*. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.
- Courtney, M. E., **Okpych, N. J.**, Mikell, D., Stevenson, B., Park., K., Harty, J., Feng, H., & Kindle, B. (2016). *CalYOUTH survey of young adults' child welfare workers*. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.
- Courtney, M. E. & **Okpych, N. J.** (2015). *Memo from CalYOUTH: Early findings on extended foster care and legal permanency*. Chicago: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.
- Okpych, N. J.** and Courtney, M. E. (2015). *Youth and caseworker perspectives on older adolescents in California foster care: Youths' education status and services*. Chicago: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.
- Courtney, M. E., Charles, P., **Okpych, N. J.**, Napolitano, L., & Halsted, K. (2014). *Findings from the California Youth Transitions to Adulthood Study (CalYOUTH): Conditions of foster youth at age 17*. Chicago: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.
- Courtney, M. E., Charles, P., **Okpych, N. J.**, and Halsted, K. (2014). *Findings from the California Youth Transitions to Adulthood Study (CalYOUTH): Caseworker survey*. Chicago: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.

PEER-REVIEWED PRESENTATIONS

- Okpych, N. J.,** & Geiger, J. M. *Predictors of College Degree Completion among Students with Foster Care Experience in California.* American Education Research Association (AERA) Annual Meeting. Virtual poster.
- Park, K., Eastman, A. E., Mikell Montgomery, D., & **Okpych, N. J.** (2026, February 27). *Role of Juvenile Incarceration in Education: Understanding Barriers and Promoters of Secondary and Postsecondary Attainment for Transition-age Youth in Foster Care.* National Conference for Hidden Student Populations, Athens, GA.
- Park, S., Liu-Raphael, S., Harty, J., **Okpych, N. J.,** Eastman, A., & Courtney, M. (2026, January 18). *County-Level Variation in Transition Housing Placements for Transition-Age Foster Youth in California.* Society for Social Work and Research 28th Annual Conference, Washington, DC.
- Okpych, N. J.,** Gómez, A., & Agarwal, A. (2026, January 16). *The Short Game and Long Game: First-Year and Four-Year Community College Outcomes for Youth with Experience in Foster Care.* Society for Social Work and Research 28th Annual Conference, Washington, DC.
- Park, K., Eastman, A., Montgomery, D., **Okpych, N. J.,** & Courtney, M. (2026, January 16). *Challenging the "School-to-Prison" Pipeline: Pathways from Incarceration to College Among Youth in Foster Care.* Society for Social Work and Research 28th Annual Conference, Washington, DC.
- Okpych, N. J.,** & Gray, L. (2026, January 15). *Mending Broken Bridges: How College Students with Foster Care Backgrounds Transition to a Campus Support Program: The Role of Attachment Styles.* Flash Talk. Society for Social Work and Research 28th Annual Conference, Washington, DC.
- Okpych, N. J.,** Whitman, K., Jackson, L. A., Day, M. (2025, February 20). *A systematic review of education outcomes of young people with experience in foster care.* National Conference for Engaged Scholarship on Hidden Student Populations (NCHP), virtual conference.
- Okpych, N. J.,** Whitman, K., Lee, J., Neria-Piña, L., Jackson, L. A., Day, M. (2025, January 17). *Dispelling the 3% storyline: Systematic review of secondary and postsecondary education outcomes of young people with foster care backgrounds.* Flash Talk. Society for Social Work and Research 28th Annual Conference, Seattle, WA.
- Okpych, N. J.,** Geiger, J. M. (2025, January 16). *Crossing the finish line: Factors that influence college degree completion for students with foster care backgrounds.* Society for Social Work and Research 28th Annual Conference, Seattle, WA.
- Hammond, I., Park, S., **Okpych, N. J.,** Harty, J., & Courtney, M. (2025, January 16). *Differences in satisfaction and perceived benefit of foster care: Insights from CalYOUTH Study participants.* Society for Social Work and Research 28th Annual Conference, Seattle, WA.

- Shpiegel, S., Zeitlin, W., Ludeke, R., **Okpych, N. J.** (2025, January 16). *Socioeconomic outcomes of non-heterosexual youth who have aged-out of foster care in California*. Society for Social Work and Research 28th Annual Conference, Seattle, WA.
- Okpych, N. J.**, Courtney, M. E., Park, S., Harty, J., & Park, K. (2024, January 11). *Distinct subgroups of care-experienced youth and their outcomes in early adulthood: Results from a latent class analysis*. Society for Social Work and Research 27th Annual Conference, Washington, D.C.
- Park, S., **Okpych, N. J.**, Harty, J., & Courtney, M. E. (2024, January 11). *Does transition planning increase service use among older adolescents in foster care?* Society for Social Work and Research 27th Annual Conference, Washington, D.C.
- Harty, J., **Okpych, N. J.**, Park, S., & Courtney, M. E. (2024, January 11). *Examining parenting foster youth status and outcomes at different ages: Implications for tailored interventions and support for parents in state care*. Society for Social Work and Research 27th Annual Conference, Washington, D.C.
- Park, K., Courtney, M., Eastman, A., & **Okpych, N. J.** (2024, January 11). *Risks of incarceration: Impact of social support networks in the transition to adulthood*. Society for Social Work and Research 27th Annual Conference, Washington, D.C.
- Courtney, M. E., Park, S., **Okpych, N. J.**, & Harty, J. (2023, January 14). *The relationship between legal permanency among older foster youth and their outcomes*. Society for Social Work and Research 26th Annual Conference, Washington, D.C.
- Okpych, N. J.**, Park, S., Powers, J. Harty, J., & Courtney, M. E. (2023, January 13). *The role of enduring relationships in early-adult outcomes among youth transitioning out of foster care*. Society for Social Work and Research 26th Annual Conference, Washington, D.C.
- Harty, J., Park, S., **Okpych, N. J.**, & Courtney, M. E. (2023, January 13). *Emerging into parenthood while in foster care: Correlates of active parenting behaviors at ages 21 and 23*. Society for Social Work and Research 26th Annual Conference, Washington, D.C.
- Nadon, M., Park, S., **Okpych, N. J.**, Harty, J., & Courtney, M. E. (2023, January 13). *More than just a parent: Examining prevalence and predictors of food insecurity for transition-age foster youth*. Society for Social Work and Research 26th Annual Conference, Washington, D.C.
- Park, K., **Okpych, N. J.**, & Courtney, M. E. (2023, January 13). *Changes in social support over time and attention to congregate care placement among older youth transitioning from foster care: Ages 17-24*. Society for Social Work and Research 26th Annual Conference, Washington, D.C.
- Okpych, N. J.**, Park, S., Powers, J., & Courtney, M. E. (2022, January 14). *Predictors of college degree completion at age 23/24 for youth with foster care backgrounds*. Society for Social Work and Research 26th Annual Conference, Washington, D.C.
- Harty, J., **Okpych, N. J.**, Park, S., & Courtney, M. E. (2022, January 14). *More than just a parent: Examining parental subgroup differences for foster care alumni*. Society for Social Work and Research 26th Annual Conference, Washington, D.C.

- Katz, C., **Okpych, N. J.**, Charles, P., Wall, E., & Courtney, M. E. (2022, January 14). *Prevalence and predictors of intimate partner violence among youth with foster care histories*. Social Work and Research 26th Annual Conference, Washington, D.C.
- Feng, H., **Okpych, N. J.**, Park, S., & Courtney, M. E. (2022, January 14). *Does placement type matter for older youth in foster care? Differences in youth outcomes by extended foster care placement type*. Social Work and Research 26th Annual Conference, Washington, D.C.
- Powers, J., Park, S., **Okpych, N. J.**, & Courtney, M. E. (2022, January 14). *Associations between foster youths' co-production in transition plan development and their service utilization*. [poster presentation]. Social Work and Research 26th Annual Conference, Washington, D.C.
- Okpych, N. J.** (2021, September 16). *Ties that bond and bridge: Exploring social capital among college students with foster care histories*. National Conference for Engaged Scholarship on Hidden Student Populations (NCHP), virtual conference.
- Okpych, N. J.**, Park, S., & Courtney, M. E. (2021, September 1). *Policies and programs that support persistence in postsecondary education*. European Scientific Association on Residential & Family Care for Children and Adolescents (EUSARF), virtual international conference.
- Munson, M., Cary Katz, C., **Okpych, N. J.**, Courtney, M. E. (2021, September 1). *Predictors of mental health service use and preparedness to manage one's mental health*. European Scientific Association on Residential & Family Care for Children and Adolescents (EUSARF), virtual international conference.
- Courtney, M. E., Park, S., Powers, J., & **Okpych, N. J.** (2021, September 1). *Examining predictors of care leavers' participation in their case-level decision-making*. European Scientific Association on Residential & Family Care for Children and Adolescents (EUSARF), virtual international conference.
- Geiger, J. & **Okpych, N.J.** (2021, January 21). *Connected after care: The role of youth characteristics, policy, and programs in postsecondary education and employment among youth with foster care histories*. Society for Social Work and Research 25th Annual Conference, virtual conference.
- Okpych, N. J.**, Courtney, M. E., & Park, S. (2021, January 20). *Effectiveness of campus-based support programs (CSPs) on college persistence for transition-age youth in California foster care*. Society for Social Work and Research 25th Annual Conference, virtual conference.
- Feng, H., **Okpych, N. J.**, & Courtney, M. E. (2021, January 20). *Youth characteristics and predominant placement type between ages 18 and 21*. Society for Social Work and Research 25th Annual Conference, virtual conference.
- Powers, J., Park, S., **Okpych, N. J.**, & Courtney, M. E. (2021, January 20). *Correlates of youth-worker co-production of Transitional Independent Living Plans in extended foster care at age 19*. Society for Social Work and Research 25th Annual Conference, virtual conference.

- Okpych, N.J., & Geiger, J.** (2021, January 14). *Youth employment: Connecting research and policy*. U.S. Assistant Secretary for Planning & Evaluation and University of Wisconsin-Madison's Institute for Research on Poverty, virtual event.
- Powers, J., Park, S., **Okpych, N. J.**, & Courtney, M. E. (2020, November 13). *Predictors of young adults' roles in co-producing their Transitional Independent Living Plans at age 19*. Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA), virtual conference.
- Okpych, N. J.**, & Courtney, M. E. (2020, October 8). *Relationships between extended foster care and youths' outcomes at age 23*.
- Courtney, M. E., & **Okpych, N. J.** (2020, October 8). *CalYOUTH: Trends in outcomes over time*. California Child Welfare Director's Association Conference, virtual conference.
- Park, S., Harty, J. S., **Okpych, N. J.**, & Courtney, M. E. (2020, October 8). *Variation between counties in their practice and services context*. California Child Welfare Director's Association Conference, virtual conference.
- Powers, J., Park, S., **Okpych, N. J.**, & Courtney, M. E. (2020, March 19-21). *Policy and practice implications of transition-age foster youths' participation in decisions made about their care and futures*. Society for Research on Adolescence, San Diego, CA. [presentation accepted, conference cancelled due to Covid-19 pandemic]
- Okpych, N. J.**, Park, S., Sayed, S., & Courtney, M. E. (2020, January 17). *The roles of Education and Training Vouchers (ETVs) and campus-support programs (CPSs) on postsecondary education persistence for foster youth*. Society for Social Work and Research 24th Annual Conference, Washington, D.C.
- Powers, J., Park, S., **Okpych, N. J.**, & Courtney, M. E. (2020, January 17). *Examining transition-age foster youths participation in case-level decision-making: Predictors of youth roles in their independent living plan development*. Society for Social Work and Research 24th Annual Conference, Washington, D.C.
- Okpych, N. J.**, Kappie, L., & Granillo, L. (2019, October 28). *CalYOUTH Study: The roles that extended foster care, Chafee grants, and campus support programs play in college persistence*. California College Pathways Blueprints for Success Conference, Los Angeles, CA.
- Feely, M., **Okpych, N. J.**, & Urcinas, N. (2019, October 27). *Triumphs and travails of building a fully online field evaluation system*. Council on Social Work Education's (CSWE) Annual Program Meeting, Denver, CO.
- Okpych, N. J.** & Courtney, M. E. (2019, January 17). *Crossing the finish line: Predictors of college completion by age 30 among foster care youth*. Society for Social Work and Research 23rd Annual Conference, San Francisco, CA.
- Okpych, N. J.**, Sayed, S., & Courtney, M. E. (2019, January 19). *College outcomes and experiences at age 21 for young people in foster care*. Society for Social Work and Research 23rd Annual Conference, San Francisco, CA.
- Feng, H., Harty, J., **Okpych, N. J.**, & Courtney, M. E. (2019, January 19). *Predictors of homelessness for older foster youth at age 19*. Society for Social Work and Research 23rd Annual Conference, San Francisco, CA.

- Munson, M., Cary-Katz, C., **Okpych, N. J.**, & Courtney, M. E. (2019, January 19). *Mental health management among 17-year-olds in the child welfare system in California*. Society for Social Work and Research 23rd Annual Conference, San Francisco, CA.
- Okpych, N. J.** (2018, November 10). *How avoidant attachment affects foster care youths' college success*. Council on Social Work Education's (CSWE) Annual Program Meeting, Orlando, FL.
- Okpych, N. J.**, Courtney, M. E., & Torres-Garcia, A. (2018, October 5). *Predictors of college entry and academic preparedness among young people in California foster care*. European Scientific Association on Residential & Family Care for Children and Adolescents (EUSARF), Porto, Portugal.
- Okpych, N. J.** (2018, April 13). *Succeeding alone: Avoidant attachment decreases persistence and completion for college students with foster care histories*. American Education Research Association Annual Conference, New York City, NY.
- Okpych, N. J.**, Torres-Garcia, A., & Courtney, M. E. (2018, January 13). *Predictors of college entry and academic preparedness among young people in California foster care*. Society for Social Work and Research 22nd Annual Conference, Washington, D.C.
- Harty, Justin, **Okpych, N. J.**, & Courtney, M. E. (2018, January 13). *Influences of extended foster care on early adult outcomes*. Society for Social Work and Research 22nd Annual Conference, Washington, D.C.
- Okpych, N. J.**, Torres-Garcia, A., Kappe, L., & Granillo, L. (2017, October 17). *CalYOUTH Survey: Findings to improve higher education access and outcomes*. California College Pathways Blueprints for Success Conference, Los Angeles, CA.
- Kindle, B., **Okpych, N. J.**, & Courtney, M. E. (2017, January 13). *Are youth connected?: Engagement in education and employment among foster youth*. Society for Social Work and Research 21st Annual Conference, New Orleans, LA.
- Okpych, N. J.** & Courtney, M. E. (2017, January 13). *Factors associated with youth remaining in foster care as young adults*. Society for Social Work and Research 21st Annual Conference, New Orleans, LA.
- Prince, D., Connell, C., Vidal, S., & **Okpych, N. J.** (2017, January 14). *Factors influencing homelessness among youth aging out of foster care, and the relationship of homelessness to other wellbeing outcomes: Findings from the National Youth in Transitions Database*. Society for Social Work and Research 21st Annual Conference, New Orleans, LA.
- Okpych, N. J.** & Courtney, M. E. (2016, January 15). *Looking back and forward; Identifying foster care placement history classes and assessing later mental health*. Society for Social Work and Research 20th Annual Conference, Washington, DC.
- Okpych, N. J.** & Courtney, M. E. (2016, January 15). *The role of social support in promoting access to college for older youth in foster care*. Society for Social Work and Research 20th Annual Conference, Washington, DC.

- Courtney, M. E. & **Okpych, N. J.** (2016, January 15). *Early evidence of the influence of extending foster care to young adults on exits to legal permanency*. Society for Social Work and Research 20th Annual Conference, Washington, DC.
- Charles, P., Courtney, M. E., & **Okpych, N. J.** (2016, January 15). *Getting locked up: The correlates of incarceration among transition-age youth in foster care*. Society for Social Work and Research 20th Annual Conference, Washington, DC.
- Okpych, N. J.**, Kappe, L., & Nash, N. (2015, October 28). *CalYOUTH in the Loop: Survey findings to improve policy and programs for extended foster care*. California College Pathways Blueprints for Success Conference, Los Angeles, CA.
- Okpych, N. J.**, & Courtney, M. E. (2015, January 17). *The ties that bind: Support and strain in social networks of older adolescents in foster care*. Society for Social Work and Research 19th Annual Conference, New Orleans, LA.
- Courtney, M. E., Charles, P., & **Okpych, N. J.** (2015, January 17). *Caseworker perceptions of challenges to implementing extended foster care*. Society for Social Work and Research 19th Annual Conference, New Orleans, LA.
- Okpych, N. J.**, & Courtney, M. E. (2014, January 19). *Does education pay for older youth in foster care? Results from Waves 4 and 5 of the Midwest Study*. Society for Social Work and Research 18th Annual Conference, San Antonio, TX.
- Okpych, N. J.**, Courtney, M. E., & Hook, J. L. (2013, January 18). *Educational attainment during the transition to adulthood for foster youth*. Society for Social Work and Research 17th Annual Conference, San Diego, CA.
- Okpych, N. J.** (2011, May). *Next steps in developing relevant psychotropic prescription parameters for the foster care population*. New Jersey National Association of Social Work Annual Conference, Atlantic City, NJ.

STATISTICAL WORKSHOP

- Choi, Y. & **Okpych, N. J.** (2020, January 16). *Research methods workshop: Handling missing data*. Society for Social Work and Research 24th Annual Conference, Washington, D.C.

PUBLIC TESTINOMY

- Okpych, N. J.** (2022, March 8). *Support for H.B. 5299: Increasing the age limit for the Postsecondary Education Funding Program offered by the Department of Children and Families*. Testimony to the Connecticut Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee, Hartford, CT (virtual).
- Okpych, N. J.** (2016, May). *Research findings from the CalYOUTH Project*. Testimony to the California Assembly Select Committee on Foster Care on Meeting the Needs of Older Foster Youth, Sacramento, CA.

PUBLIC SCHOLARSHIP AND INVITED PRESENTATIONS

- Okpych, N. J.** & Eastman, A. L. (2026, February 23). *Community college outcomes for students with foster care backgrounds*. California College Pathways Funder's Alliance, virtual presentation.
- Okpych, N. J.**, Gómez, A., & Agarwal, A. (2026, January 28). *First-year and four-year community college outcomes for youth with experience in foster care*. California Child Welfare Directors' Association (CWDA) Transition-Age Youth Subcommittee, virtual presentation.
- Okpych, N. J.**, Whitman, K., & Lee, J., Jackson, L. A., Neria-Pina, L., & Day, M. (2025, May 19). *Challenging the myth of 3%: A systematic review of educational outcomes of students with experience in foster care*. Fostering Academic Achievement Nationwide (FAAN), virtual conference.
- Okpych, N. J.**, Cheung, J., Burciaga, J., & Bridson, L. (2025, May 14). *Bridging the Gaps: Foster Youth on the Path to Postsecondary Education*. National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth.
- Okpych, N. J.** (2025, March 7). *Fostering progress: The role of enduring relationships for youth impacted by foster care*. Silver Lining Mentoring Program (virtual).
- Geiger, J., Johnson, R., & **Okpych, N. J.** (2024, April 26). *Promoting equity in postsecondary education: A focus on young adults with foster care backgrounds*. Webinar for the Society for the Study of Emerging Adulthood.
- Okpych, N. J.** (2024, April 5). *Overview of research collaborations with CT DCF*. University of Connecticut and CT Department of Children and Families Child Welfare Symposium. Hartford, CT.
- Okpych, N. J.** (2024, February 29). *Estimating a national college enrollment rate with NYTD: Shortfalls and potential fixes*. National Conference for Hidden Student Populations. San Antonio, TX.
- Okpych, N. J.** (2024, February 23). *EP 6: Foster youth in higher education. Among Us: Exploring the Invisible Experiences Impacting Youth* podcast. UCLA Center for the Transformation of Schools.
- Okpych, N. J.** (2023, January 25). *Associations between relational permanence and care leavers' outcomes in early adulthood*. Integrating Theoretical and Methodological Aspects in Longitudinal Studies of Care Leavers. Jerusalem, Israel.
- Okpych, N. J.** (2023, January 23). *Social capital and relational permanence as theoretical concepts for longitudinal studies of care leavers*. Integrating Theoretical and Methodological Aspects in Longitudinal Studies of Care Leavers. Jerusalem, Israel.
- Gamez, S. I., **Okpych, N. J.**, & Lopez, K., M. (2022, June 14). *Findings from Spring 2021 focus groups on the impact of Covid-10 on CSPs: Implications for practice*. Southern California Higher Education Foster Youth Consortium [virtual presentation].
- Lopez, K., M., Geiger, J. M., **Okpych, N. J.**, & Gamez, S. I. (2022, June 2). *The impact of COVID-19 on campus-based support programs serving students with foster care experience: Findings from focus groups with administrators and students*. Florida's Positive Pathways workshop [virtual presentation].

- Lopez, K., M., Geiger, J. M., **Okpych, N. J.**, & Gamez, S. I. (2022, April 12). *The impact of COVID-19 on campus-based support programs serving students with foster care experience: Findings from focus groups with administrators and students*. Fresno Pacific University Diversity Seminar [virtual presentation].
- Lopez, K., M., Geiger, J. M., **Okpych, N. J.**, & Gamez, S. I. (2022, March 8). *The impact of COVID-19 on campus-based support programs serving students with foster care experience: Findings from focus groups with administrators and students*. National Research Collaborative for Foster Alumni and Higher Education [virtual presentation].
- Lopez, K., M., Geiger, J. M., **Okpych, N. J.**, & Gamez, S. I. (2021, September 14). *The impact of COVID-19 on campus-based support programs serving students with foster care experience: Findings from focus groups with administrators and students*. Southern California Higher Education Foster Youth Consortium [virtual presentation].
- Okpych, N. J.** & Geiger, J. (2021, May 20). *Promoting college persistence for students with foster care backgrounds: The role of campus support programs*. Embark Georgia Leadership Conference [virtual workshop].
- Okpych, N. J.** (2021, May 18). *Research findings on policies and programs that support college students with foster care histories*. Florida Positive Pathways Annual Conference, Keynote speaker [virtual].
- Geiger, J. & **Okpych, N. J.** (2021, April 21). *Connected after care: The role of youth characteristics, policies, and programs in postsecondary education and employment outcomes for youth with foster care histories*. National Research Collaborative for Foster Alumni and Higher Education [virtual webinar].
- Okpych, N. J.** (2020, January 27). *Programs to support college persistence for students with foster care histories: The roles of Education and Training Vouchers (ETVs) and campus-support programs (CPSs)*. University of Connecticut School of Social Work Research Brown Bag, Hartford, CT.
- Okpych, N. J.** & Park, S. (2019, November 13). *Early evidence from CalYOUTH: The roles of EFC, ETVs, and CSPs on postsecondary education outcomes for foster youth*. National Research Collaborative for Foster Alumni and Higher Education [virtual].
- Okpych, N. J.** & Park, E. (2019, August 17). *The California Youth Transitions to Adulthood Study (CalYOUTH): Extended foster care, college support programs, and educational training voucher's impact on post-secondary education outcomes*. University of Southern California's Children's Data Network Research Brownbag [virtual].
- Okpych, N. J.** (2018, March 8). *The role of attachment style in college persistence and completion for foster care youth*. Fostering Success Michigan's Best Practices Best Fit webinar series [virtual].
- Okpych, N. J.** (2017, October 19). *Summary of dissertation findings from "Make or break: College-going and college-leaving among youth in foster care."* Council on Social Work Education Annual Program Meeting, Child Welfare Track, Dallas, TX.
- Okpych, N. J.** (2017, July). Roundtable on Doctoral Education in Social Work. One of three doctoral students selected to participate in a three-day event. Participated in panel on fulfilling the need for the social work scientific workforce. Bainbridge Island, Seattle, WA.

- Okpych, N. J. & Kindle, B.** (2016, May). *Fostering Futures: A Forum on the CalYOUTH Study Findings. "Connected or not? Youths' connections to positive social institutions."* Los Angeles, CA.
- Okpych, N. J.** (2016, March). *College persistence and completion among foster care youth.* National Academy of Education Dissertation Fellow's convening, Washington, D.C.
- Okpych, N. J.** (2016, March). *Promoting access to college for older youth in foster care: Receipt of education independent living services and the role of social support.* Fostering Success Michigan's Best Practices Best Fit webinar series [virtual].
- Okpych, N. J.** (2015, October). *Make or break: Predictors of college persistence among foster care youth.* National Academy of Education Dissertation Fellow's convening, Washington, D.C.
- Okpych, N. J.** (2015, September). *CalYOUTH: Early findings from the youth survey, child welfare worker survey, and administrative data analysis.* California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC), Evidence-Informed Webinar Series [virtual].
- Okpych, N. J.** (2015, July). Roundtable on Innovation in Social Work Research. One of 12 doctoral students/junior faculty selected to participate in a three-day roundtable convened by University of Southern California. Presented short paper on innovation in social work practice. Bainbridge Island, Seattle, WA.

RESEARCH AND EVALUATION EXPERIENCE

- PI.** Better Than Expected: Unpacking the Student and College Characteristics Behind Successful Outcomes for Youth with Foster Care Experience in Community Colleges. Co-PI: M. Cazares Minero. Jul 2025 – Mar 2027.
- PI.** College Enrollment and Completion Outcomes for Older Youth in Foster Care in Connecticut DCF. Co-PI: P. Britner. Jun 2022 – Dec 2024.
- PI.** How Campus Support Programs for Students with Foster Care Histories Adapt to the Covid-19 Pandemic. Co-PIs: S. Gamez, J. Geiger, and K. Lopez. Jun 2020 – Dec 2021.
- Co-PI.** Connected After Care: The Roles of Child Welfare Policy and Programs in Postsecondary Education and Employment among Youth Formerly in Foster Care. PI: Jennifer Geiger, Ph.D. Jan 2020 – Dec 2021.
- Co-PI.** The Social Network Connections Study of College Students with Foster Care Histories. PI: Lori Gray, Ph.D. July 2019 – July 2021.
- Co-PI and Project Director.** California Youth Transitions to Adulthood Study (CalYOUTH). School of Social Service Administration, University of Chicago. PI: M. E. Courtney. Aug 2015 – 2023.
- Pro-bono Evaluator.** Rising Scholars (formerly First Star) for foster youth, University of Connecticut, Apr 2018– Jun 2020.

Consultant. California College Pathways Research Project, John Burton Advocates for Youth and Educational Results Partnership. Sep 2016 – Dec 2018.

Doctoral Research Assistant. CalYOUTH Study. School of Social Service Administration, University of Chicago. PI: M. E. Courtney. Sep 2012 – Jul 2015.

Subcontract Evaluator. Catholic Big Sisters Big Brothers. New York City. PI: P. Charles. Nov 2013 – Mar 2014.

Doctoral Research Assistant. Midwest Evaluation on the Adult Functioning of Former Foster Youth Transitioning from Care. School of Social Service Administration, University of Chicago. PI: M. E. Courtney. Jan 2012 – May 2013.

Doctoral Research Assistant. Planning a Next Generation Evaluation Agenda for the John H. Chafee Care Independence Program. Collaboration between the Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning, Research & Evaluation; Urban Institute; Chapin Hall; and the University of Chicago. Sep 2011 – Mar 2012.

MSW Research Assistant. Next Steps in Foster Youth and Psychotropic Treatment. Department of Social Work, Rutgers University. PIs: J. Floresch & J. Longhofer. Sep 2009 – Aug 2010.

Undergraduate Research Assistant. My Multiple Selves (MMS) self-concept inventory. Department of Psychology, Rutgers University. PI: R. Ashmore. Sep 2002 – May 2003.

Undergraduate Student Researcher. Finding Abilities Project. Department of Psychology, Rutgers University. Advisor: M. Elias. Sep 2001 – Apr 2002.

Henry Rutgers Scholar. The Ultimate Truth(s). Department of Psychology, Rutgers University. Advisor: G. Atwood. Sep 2001 – Apr 2002.

TEACHING

University of Connecticut School of Social Work

Courses Developed

Advanced Research: Collecting and Analyzing Data in Social Work Programs (MSW)

Summer Statistics Camp (4-week self-guided course) (PhD)

Multivariate Statistics II (PhD)

Multivariate Statistics I & II Labs (PhD)

Research Methods for Social Work Practice (asynchronous) (MSW)

Courses Taught in MSW program

Human Behavior in the Social Environment

- F'17, F'22, F'23

Research Methods for Social Work Practice

- Sp'18, F'19, F'20, F'24

Advanced Research: Program Evaluation

- S'19

Advanced Research: Collecting and Analyzing Data in Social Work Programs

- S'21, Sp'22, Sp'23, S'24, F'24

Courses Taught in PhD program

Multivariate Statistics II

- Sp'20, Sp'22, Sp'23, Sp'24, Sp'25, Sp'26

Multivariate Statistics I & II Labs

- F'19-Sp'20, F'21-Sp'22, F'23-Sp'24, F'24-Sp'25, F'25-Sp'26

Summer Statistics Camp

- Su'23, Su'24, Su'25

Smith College School of Social Work

Adjunct Instructor for MSW Thesis projects (F'14-Sp'15, F'15-Sp'16)

University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration

Teaching Assistant for doctoral statistics sequence:

Statistical Research Methods I (F'13, F'14)

Statistical Research Methods II (S'14, S'15)

Duquesne University Department of Psychology

Introduction to Psychology (F'05, Sp'06)

UNIVERSITY SERVICE

University-Level Committees

Senator, UConn Faculty Senate	2024-present
SSW Representative, UConn Provost Library Advisory Committee	2020-2024

School/Department-Level Committees

Member, Individuals, Groups, & Families Curriculum Committee	2017-present
Member, Research Curriculum Committee	2017-present
Member, Promotion, Tenure, & Reappointment Committee	2023-present
Member, Practicum Education Committee	2017-2024
Member, Faculty/Administration Advisory Committee	2020-2022

School/Department-Level Search Committees

Co-Chair, Faculty Search Committee (2 positions)	2023
Member, MSW Program Director	2022
Member, Practicum Coordinator	2021
Member, Faculty Search Committee (1 position)	2018

MENTORSHIP & ADVISING

Undergraduate Mentor

UConn Connects Mentor (students on academic probation)	2020–present
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Master of Social Work Faculty Advisor

Faculty Academic/Practicum Advisor to 4 MSW students per year	2020–present
Faculty Academic/Practicum Advisor to 8 MSW students per year	2017–2020

PhD Graduate Assistant Research Supervisor

Jane Lee, UConn SSW	2023–2025
Jenna Powers, UConn SSW	2019–2023

<u>PhD Student Faculty Advisor</u>	
Farid Shekh, UConn SSW	2023–2025
Elizabeth Jurczak Goldsborough, UConn SSW	2019–2020
<u>PhD Dissertation Committees</u>	
Jane Lee, UConn SSW, Chair	2025–present
Farid Shekh, UConn SSW, Committee Member	2025–present
Astha Agarwal, UC-Berkeley School Psych., Committee Member	2025–present
Solomon Achulo, UNC SSW, Committee Member	2025–present
Marcia Anderson, UConn NAEG School of Ed., Committee Member	2023–2024
Ciara Collins, UConn HDFS, Committee Member	2019–2023
Susana Ulloa, UConn NAEG School of Ed., Committee Member	2020–2022
Maritiza Vasquez, UConn SSW, Dissertation Proposal Examiner	2022
Jenna Powers, UConn SSW, Dissertation Proposal Examiner	2018
<u>SSWR Coffee with a Scholar (PhD student mentor)</u>	2022–present
<u>Faculty Research Mentor to Assistant Professor</u>	
Alex Forte	2025–present
<u>Faculty Teaching Mentor to Assistant Professor</u>	
Rupal Parekh	2023–2025

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

Co-Chair of the Planning Committee. Transition-age Foster Youth Special Interest Group (TAY SIG). 2019–2020 & 2025–2026.

Faculty Affiliate. UConn Collaboratory on School and Child Health (CSCH), 2023–present.

Research Affiliate, California Child Welfare Indicators Project, School of Social Welfare, University of California, Berkeley. 2022–present.

Faculty Affiliate. UConn Institute for Collaboration on Health, Intervention, and Policy (InCHIP), 2018–present.

Board Member. SUN Scholars, Hartford, CT. 2020–present.

Steering Committee Member. National Research Collaborative for Foster Alumni and Higher Education (NRC-FAHE), 2022–present.

Member. *International Research Network on Transition to Adulthood from Care (INTRAC)*. 2014–present.

Member. *Society for Social Work and Research (SSWR)*. 2012–present.

AD HOC REVIEWS

External Review Board Member, *Social Service Review*. 2025–present.

- Included reviewing proposals and manuscripts for the centennial special issue: *The Next 100 Years: Reflections on the Centennial of Social Service Review*

Ad Hoc Reviewer. *Children and Youth Services Review, Journal of Public Child Welfare, Social Service Review, Journal of the Society for Social Work and Research, International Journal of Social Work, Educational Researcher, British Educational Research Journal, Psychiatric Services, Journal of Adolescence, Families in Society, Children and Adolescent Social Work Journal*

Reviewer. *Society for Social Work and Research Outstanding Dissertation Award Committee.* 2017-2018.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Building Director, Rutgers Department of Residence Life, Rutgers University, Piscataway, NJ. Aug 2008–May 2011.

SAT and HSPA Instructor, Upward Bound, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ. Jun 2009–Jul 2009.

Care Coordinator, Starlight Community Services, Full Service Partnership Program, San Jose, CA. Feb 2007–Jul 2008.

SAT Instructor, Elite Education Institute, Cupertino, CA. Mar 2007–Jun 2008.

Middle School Teacher, Teach For America, Ocala Middle School, San Jose, CA. Jun 2006–Jan 2007.

M.A.-Level Clinician, Trinitas Hospital, Youth Enrichment Services Program at Elizabeth Public High School, Elizabeth, NJ. Nov 2005–Jun 2006.

Residential Counselor, East Mountain Youth Lodge, Carrier Clinic, Belle Mead, NJ. May 2001–Aug 2001, June 2002–Aug 2003.

Resident Assistant, Rutgers College Residence Life, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ. Sep 2000–May 2002.

INTERNSHIP AND PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE

Masters Social Work Intern, Transitions For Youth, Center for Non-Profit Management and Governance, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ. Supervisors: Ronald Quincy, Ph.D. and Maria Paradiso, L.S.W. Sep 2010–Apr 2011.

Masters Social Work Intern, Office of the Senior Dean of Students, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ. Supervisors: Mark Schuster, Ph.D., and Michael Tolbert, L.S.W. Sep 2009–May 2010.

Doctoral Student Intern Group Therapist, Hill House Center. University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, Pittsburgh, PA. Supervisor: Jessie Goicoichea, Ph.D. Jan 2005–Apr 2005.

Doctoral Student Intern Psychotherapist, Hill House Satellite Center, University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, Pittsburgh, PA. Supervisor: Marcus Flurnoy, M.S.W. Aug 2004–May 2005.

Doctoral Student Psychotherapist, Psychology Clinic, Duquesne University, Pittsburgh PA. Supervisor: Jessie Goicoichea, Ph.D. Jan 2004–May 2005.