



# Youth and Young Adult Engagement

## **Leah Nguyen**

Leah Nguyen is the Youth Development Manager with The Mockingbird Society. In this role, she supports and manages our team of Network Representatives, and develops curriculum for all Youth Programs. Previously, she managed an evidence-based wellness program at Washington University in St. Louis and conducted state legislative research. Leah is a practicing artist who works in collaboration with a spiritual team. Prior to earning an MSW she worked as a landscaper and floral designer.

## **Farid Rasuli**

Farid Rasuli is an individual from back of the mountains in Ghazni Province of Afghanistan, Farid entered federal foster care in June 2017 through URM program. A year later, he joined the Mockingbird Society as a network representative. And now he serves there as the Senior Network Representative, where he develops community training curriculum for individuals working with young people; he also writes for the Mockingbird Times, a quarterly published newspaper distributed for about 22,000 audience. Farid is currently a student at Bellevue College in pursuit of a Business Management transfer degree.

## **Heaven Calvert**

Heaven Calvert is a Chapter Leader for Yakima. She has been involved with The Mockingbird Society since February 2014. Heaven got connected to Mockingbird through the Independent Living Services. After experiencing homelessness, Foster Care, Kinship Care, and Third Party Placement, Heaven was adopted on May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015. In her free time she enjoys drawing, painting, and watching vines. She also works at her local library and is pursuing higher education at Yakima Valley College.

## **Jade Tillequots**

Jade Tillequots was placed in Tribal foster care under the Yakama Nation, a tribe whose reservation is in Washington State. She entered foster care at 4 years old and exited at age 18. Luckily, she only had 2 placements her entire time in care. She was also placed with 2 of her biological younger siblings. She graduated from high school on time in 2013. She went to college right away, but it was short lived, and now works for 2 non-profit organizations at Sacred Road Ministries and The Mockingbird Society. She has been employed at Sacred Road Ministries for a little under a year but has been volunteering with them since she was 13 years old. Sacred Road



Ministries is a church planting ministry that has successfully planted a church on the Yakama Indian Reservation which aims to help the Yakama people. She has worked with The Mockingbird Society for 4 years now as a Chapter Leader. The Mockingbird Society is an advocacy organization that trains youth and young adults directly affected by the system to be their own best advocates, and advocates to change laws policies and perceptions to ensure every youth and child has safe and stable housing in Washington State. In May 2018, she traveled to Washington DC on behalf of The Center of Native American Youth – Aspen’s Institute to speak on the Family First Act and the importance of staying connected to family. Jade currently serves as a member of the National Foster Youth and Alumni Policy Council. Her plans for the future are to go back to college this fall to get a Bachelors of Social Work. In the future, she would like to continue work at The Mockingbird Society or become a social worker for the Yakama Nation and help youth just like herself.