

CSSP Announces Recipients of the 2017 Accelerating Change Award

WASHINGTON, D.C. (September 26, 2017)—The Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP, [@CtrSocialPolicy](#)) is excited to announce the three winners of our 2017 [Accelerating Change Award](#). The awardees have each demonstrated a commitment to reaching and serving diverse populations of young women and girls of color involved in public systems and creating opportunities for their well-being and success.

The 2017 cohort for the Accelerating Change Award are:

- [Gwen’s Girls](#), a Pittsburgh-based organization that empowers girls and young women to have productive lives through holistic, gender-specific programs, education and experiences.
- [Pathways PA](#), a residential program, headquartered in Holmes, Pa., that guides homeless and runaway young women and girls by providing programming and services.
- [Delores Barr Weaver Policy Center](#), a research-based organization in Jacksonville, Fl. that provides an advocacy platform to address the policies, processes and practices that result in the disparate treatment of young women and girls.

Young women and girls of color, especially those involved in public systems like child welfare and juvenile justice, face a unique and alarming trajectory that puts them at risk of poor outcomes in life. To spotlight organizations, programs and practices that interrupt that trajectory, CSSP celebrates these three awardees for their compelling and creative interventions in making a difference in young women and girls’ everyday lives.

“These organizations are changing the narrative about young women and girls of color,” said Tashira Halyard, CSSP senior associate and lead for our [Alliance for Racial Equity in Child Welfare](#). “Too many of our girls and young women of color are placed on a path toward negative outcomes like homelessness and criminal justice involvement after experiences with public systems that are meant to protect them and support them. Rather than perpetuating what is often an ‘abuse-to-prison pipeline,’ CSSP’s Accelerating Change Award recipients are providing a space for our young women to heal and thrive.”

Through this award and our [Fight for Our Girls](#) series, CSSP is promoting a paradigm shift in the way public systems address the needs of girls and young women of color. In the [most recent Fight for Our Girls’ report](#), the brief examines the historical biases that exist within our child-

serving systems and explores how the intersection of race and gender continue to negatively define outcomes for girls of color. The intersections of race, ethnicity, gender and other marginalized identities like sexual orientation and gender identity should not reduce girls' chances for positive life outcomes. Public agencies must shift their focus on deficits and risks to recognizing the trauma, including system involvement, girls of color too often face.

The Accelerating Change awardees are each pioneering work to counter the effects of structural racism and trauma to support young women's well-being. They offer promising approaches that support and advocate for our young women and girls to heal.

“We are delighted to recognize these organizations for their innovation, perseverance and outstanding commitment to accelerate positive change and promising futures for women and girls of color nationally,” said Judith Meltzer, executive vice president at CSSP. “They will fuel and power a network that drives the changes our nation must realize for young women and girls of color.”

The Center for the Study of Social Policy is a national organization recognized for its leadership in shaping policy, reforming public systems and building the capacity of communities. We support elected officials, public administrators, families and neighborhood residents to take the actions they need. Our goal is to make sure children can learn, develop and thrive with the support of strong families, in safe and healthy communities. Visit us online at www.cssp.org and join our conversations on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#).

Tweetables

- [@CtrSocialPolicy](#) selects three organizations to receive the 2017 Accelerating Change Award. <http://bit.ly/csspACA17>
- [@GwenGirlsPgh](#) [@PathWaysPA](#) [@see_the_girl](#) win [@CtrSocialPolicy](#) 2017 Accelerating Change Award. <http://bit.ly/csspACA17>
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