Foster America fellows leverage their diverse professional backgrounds as they assume leadership roles at child welfare agencies, improving outcomes for our nation’s most vulnerable children and families. In partnership with the Santa Clara County Social Services Agency, we seek an experienced researcher in the use of qualitative, quantitative and mixed research methodologies. The researcher must also be experienced in the design and implementation of research and evaluation projects that can provide the Santa Clara County Social Services Agency with insights that inform and shape strategies and policies that help the agency to meet its mandates. Specifically, the fellow will discover insights and shape strategies that help the agency support and retain caseworkers, provide effective services to keep children safely out of foster care, reduce reliance on psychotropic medications in caring for children, and improve outcomes specifically for children of color. This fellowship includes the opportunity to work closely with child welfare division and across Santa Clara’s other public social service programs, developing approaches to collect and learn from consumer feedback, conducting statistical analysis of administrative data, and using findings to develop and test improvement strategies.

About this Role:
The fellow will be a skilled applied researcher, able to approach challenging problems in real-time using varied research and evaluation methodologies. The fellow is well versed in statistical analysis, including multivariate regression on administrative data, and able to pair those skills with qualitative strategies such as interviews, focus groups, and surveys. Curious and motivated to partner with the Agency to develop her/his own research agenda and approaches, the right candidate is focused on actionable insights and possesses a passion for engaging practitioners and end-users in the research process. Over the course of 18 months, the fellow will:

- Engage with child welfare and other social service leaders to discover what prevention services are most effective in helping vulnerable families keep their children safely at home and out of foster care placement.
- Examine the agency’s caseworker turnover rate, developing new approaches to analyze staff exits and discovering opportunities to strengthen their training and support.
- Pursue improved outcomes for children and families of color, and specifically immigrant and non-English speaking families, setting an equity-focused research agenda.
- Review the use of psychotropic medication for children in foster care to develop strategies to reduce over-prescription.
- Discover and define additional research questions in response to initial insights and emergent agency needs.
About the Fellowship:
The Foster America Fellowship is an opportunity to radically improve the lives of our nation’s most vulnerable children by designing and implementing innovative solutions to some of the foster care system’s most complex problems. Fellows apply the skills they have cultivated in other sectors as they transition to full-time, 18-month positions at child welfare and human service agencies. In their roles, fellows focus on high-impact reform projects to create better and more equitable outcomes for children, families, and communities affected by child abuse, neglect, trauma, and poverty. Each role is designed to have an immediate and lasting local impact while also informing solutions that can be scaled nationally. Foster America fellows receive extensive training and professional development with a cohort of peers, positioning them to thrive and grow as social change leaders during the fellowship and beyond. This support includes:

- Cutting-edge training focusing on results-driven leadership, human-centered design, child welfare context, racial equity, innovation, and more.
- An influential network of purpose-driven, like-minded professionals including fellows, Foster America staff, and the child welfare field’s most innovative leaders.
- Individualized coaching, mentoring, and support.
- Career development for alumni who pursue leadership positions in child welfare and related sectors.

About Santa Clara County Social Services:
The fellow will be placed at the Santa Clara County Social Services Agency in San Jose, California. Also referred to as "Silicon Valley," Santa Clara County is a major employment center for the region, providing more than a quarter of all jobs in the Bay Area. It has one of the highest median family incomes in the country, and is home to families of diverse cultures and backgrounds.

Position Highlights:
- The fellow will work collaboratively to set and pursue an important and varied research agenda, using multiple approaches and engaging with many different stakeholders.
- The Social Services Agency has sufficient resources to invest in robust research and analysis, with the opportunity to translate findings into tangible practice, system and organizational implications, and possibly to other jurisdictions.
- Fellow will work closely with Dr. Sandhya Hermon, Deputy Director for Program Support, Research & Evaluation at SSA, with mentorship and support from the SSA and child welfare leadership teams.
- Fellow will be employed by Foster America, with an expected salary of $90,000 and full benefits.
- This role is an expansion of Foster America and Santa Clara County’s existing partnership, offering the opportunity to work closely with a Foster America fellow already serving in the agency.
Eligibility Requirements:

- Fellows must have U.S. work authorization.
- Fellows must be able to work full-time for at least 18 months starting in January 2019.
- Fellows must work on-site at their host agency.
- Fellows must travel quarterly to attend training sessions that last from three to five days and occasionally include weekend flights.
- Fellows must pass all host agency and employer requirements, which may include criminal background checks, drug screening, and civil service examinations.

Compelling Candidates Are:

- Committed to our mission of improving the lives of our nation’s most vulnerable children, families, and communities
- Experienced professionals, with at least seven years of progressive leadership roles and an advanced degree (preferred)
- Results-oriented, with a successful track record of leading change
- Able to engage stakeholders from diverse backgrounds and build effective coalitions.
- Creative in developing unique solutions to complex problems
- Flexible, adaptable, proactive, and persistent
- Exceptional writers and verbal communicators
- Strong project managers
- Curious and eager learners
- Humble and self-reflective leaders

How to Apply:

- Applications are accepted online via [www.foster-america.org/apply](http://www.foster-america.org/apply). Applications for the Foster America fellowship will be accepted on a rolling basis. We are in the final stages of our recruiting season; if you remain interested for January 2019, we encourage you to complete our simple initial application process today. We also continue to seek talent for fellowship opportunities in later 2019.

- Information about our application process, selection timeline, and other open fellowship opportunities is available on our website at [https://www.foster-america.org/application-process/](https://www.foster-america.org/application-process/).

- To learn more about the fellowship, join a webinar! You will learn more about Foster America, hear from a current fellow about their experience, and be able to ask questions. To see the schedule of webinars, see [www.foster-america.org/webinars](http://www.foster-america.org/webinars).

- Please direct any additional questions by email to [recruit@foster-america.org](mailto:recruit@foster-america.org).