



Celebrating **Donjai Calhoun**

Donjai Calhoun, a 2022 Georgia State University graduate, has worked in child welfare for seven and a half years. He started his career in early head start and worked there for 11 years before taking the opportunity to work for the Georgia Division of Family & Children Services (DFCS) in their After School Care Program. Donjai was quickly promoted to Early Childhood Services Director, and then again to the Wellbeing Services Program Director. He now oversees the Early Childhood Services Director, the Childcare Services Director, and the Georgia CREW Director as the Wellbeing Services Program Director. Although he considers himself an "introverted social worker," Donjai has shown tremendous resourcefulness, creativity, and drive, proving himself to be a transformational leader as he grew into each role.

Making connections, peer support, and mentorship over the years from people within NCWWI and Georgia DFCS has been impactful to Donjai's career and has made him feel empowered to be a social worker. The accomplishment that he is most proud of is the creation and development of the Early Childhood Department within Georgia DFCS. He wrote the proposal to get the funding for the program, created positions and scopes of work, and built relationships with other state agencies that could provide services to children ages 0-5. He also takes pride in the work he is doing in diversity, equity, and inclusion as an Intercultural Development Inventory Administrator. As he continues his career, he plans to become more involved in the development and monitoring of social work practice at the national level as well as helping to create a more equitable child welfare system.

Donjai urges new child welfare workers to never limit themselves, "Child welfare is expansive and there's a job for everyone. Gain experience and explore your options." He has learned that in each role, there is always a time and space for everyone, "I learned to be who I am, and who I am is probably what's needed at that time because I'm in this role. This role must need me and what I bring. When someone else takes this role, we then need them and what they bring. There's a season for every type of leader."

"Be great in who you truly are!"