National Workforce Expansion
Scholarships for Disadvantaged Students:
The Primary Care Project (PCP)

Overview

This one-year year scholarship of $30,000 is available annually to 22 campus-based and Virtual Academic Center (VAC) students who will graduate in the spring or summer semesters of the last year of their MSW program. This scholarship is funded by a federal grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) through its Scholarships for Disadvantaged Students (SDS) program.

The scholarship will be awarded to students who are committed to providing primary care services in medically underserved communities (MUCs) in Southern California and throughout the United States. Recipients of this scholarship must complete qualified field placements and be from either the Adult Mental Health and Wellness (AMHW) or the Children, Youth and Families (CYF) department. They must meet the federal definition of a student from a disadvantaged background, which includes under-represented minorities (URMs), first-generation students, and those considered educationally, environmentally, or economically disadvantaged. Students selected for the PCP will receive trainings in primary care/integrated behavioral health internships and will commit to seeking employment in primary care settings with a focus on MUCs upon graduation. Please keep in mind that this program relies on external federal funding every year.

A qualified field placement is defined as follows:

• Qualified field placements may include various health and mental health settings. Primary Care as defined by the Institute of Medicine: the provision of integrated, accessible health care services by clinicians who are accountable for addressing a large majority of personal health care needs, developing a sustained partnership with patients, and practicing in the context of family and community. (IOM. 1996. Primary care: America’s health in a new era. Washington, DC: National Academy Press). The focus of primary care should be reflected in the delivery of community-based, integrated behavioral, and outpatient health care services through interprofessional/interdisciplinary collaboration as behavioral and mental health primary care practitioners. Examples of qualified placements include hospitals, community health centers, school district wellness centers, psychiatric treatment facilities, dental clinics, community-based mental health agencies with integrated behavioral health care services, multidisciplinary projects such as contact tracing and testing centers that include social services, and patient navigation programs, among others.

The goals of the PCP are:
(1) Recruiting, increasing, and retaining MSW students from disadvantaged backgrounds who are committed to working in primary care/integrated behavioral health settings;
(2) Improving education and preparation of MSW interns from disadvantaged
backgrounds to work in primary care/integrated behavioral health settings;
(3) Increasing the number and capacity of primary care/integrated behavioral health agencies offering MSW internships; and
(4) Supporting participants to gain employment in primary care/integrated behavioral health settings.

Qualifications and Requirements
To qualify and remain eligible for the 2021-2022 PCP scholarship, recipients must do the following:

• Graduate in spring or summer 2022. December graduates are not eligible.
• Intern in a primary care/integrated behavioral health setting approved for this project.
• Attend a mandatory virtual orientation during the summer in mid-August 2021 to review scholarship requirements.
• Be in their final internship experience of the MSW program and be from the Department of Adult Mental Health and Wellness (AMHW) or the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (CYF).
• Maintain satisfactory academic progress (3.0 or better GPA) and performance in courses, and complete trainings sessions, field placement, and any other scholarship program requirement within one (1) academic year.
• Attend and adequately participate in virtual training sessions offered once per semester to interact with HRSA BHWET and OWEP-funded stipend students.
• Attend and adequately participate in cohort support meetings offered once per semester.
• Participate in MSW program training in at least two (2) of the following three (3) treatment modalities: Motivational Interviewing (MI); Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT); Problem Solving Therapy (PST).
• Attend and participate in at least one job fair to pursue employment at agencies providing primary care/integrated behavioral treatment and intervention services.
• Register for the HRSA Health Workforce Connector.
• Obtain a National Provider Identifier (NPI) number for the purpose of collecting post-graduation employment demographics.
• Be a citizen or national of the U.S., or a lawful permanent resident, or a foreign national having in their possession a visa permitting permanent residency, or a non-citizen national.
  ○ Individuals on temporary or student visas are not eligible to participate.
• Sign the PCP Student Commitment Form confirming understanding of all program qualification and requirements.

The PCP application will remain open through May 31, 2021.

• For initial scholarship inquiry, please contact Ms. Mallory Ilizaliturri, Scholarships Advisor of Scholarship Programs Office, at https://www.tfaforms.com/290674.
• Campus-based students: for more information, please contact Prof. Jenebah Lewis at jenebahl@usc.edu.
• VAC students: for more information, please contact Prof. Melissa Singh at singhmi@usc.edu.