

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this grant-funded project is to increase the number and improve the educational preparation of a diverse group of MSW-level social workers to provide behavioral health services in medically under-served communities and/or with medically under-served populations. The focus is on mental health and substance abuse care across the lifespan in integrated and inter-disciplinary settings. Student trainees will be better prepared to work individually and on the community level to improve services, access, and outcomes. This project has created several different educational enhancements, which focus on culturally- and linguistically-sensitive interventions in integrated primary care settings with the target population.

## **Enhancements**

The grant-supported enhancements include an annual workshop series; an annual day-long conference for the professional and educational communities, including all trainees; and trainees' production of a community action project to be carried out in connection with students' fieldwork placements and presented at the annual conference. In addition, Spanish-English bilingual trainees may participate in the dual-language section of the Advanced Social Work Practice course.

### **Interdisciplinary Workshop Series**

All trainees attend four workshops per year. In addition, our efforts extended to addressing the behavioral health care of medically underserved communities and populations with the Fieldwork Instructors, Educational Coordinators, and staff in area agencies plus college faculty, staff, and students. Licensed social workers earn Continuing Education Credits for attendance at the workshops. To date, workshops have addressed working with formerly incarcerated adults, parents who identify as LGBTQ, and older adults, among others. For the 2018-2019 academic year, the theme of the workshops is trauma-informed care with topics such as working with veterans, children, and the LGBTQ community.

Fall 2018 workshop dates:

Thursday, September 27<sup>th</sup> 2:30-4:30 Carman Hall, room B39

Thursday, October 25<sup>th</sup> 2:30-4:30 Carman Hall, room B39

Thursday, November 29<sup>th</sup> 2:30-4:30 Carman Hall, room B39

### **Annual Interdisciplinary Conferences**

In the spring of each grant year, the Social Work Department and grant staff host an interdisciplinary conference attended by all trainees plus professionals serving the target population. The first conference in spring 2018 addressed homelessness and housing insecurity with presentations from formerly homeless individuals, social workers, and others. Topics included people without homes who are children, veterans, older adults, LGBTQ young adults, have physical disabilities, are street homeless, and others. The spring 2019 conference (to be held on Friday, March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2019) will focus on creative therapies and approaches to working with trauma, including art therapy, pet therapy, and other creative treatment modalities that may be unfamiliar to many social workers.

### Community Action Projects

All trainees complete a community action project related to needs at their field placement during the year and exhibit this at the annual conference. These projects are designed and carried out with the support of one of the Lehman social work faculty mentors who meets with the trainees in groups and individually. The projects are designed to create a sustainable improvement to the agencies, communities, and/or target population to meet behavior health care needs. During the first year of the grant, students designed better systems for intakes and discharge processes, developed curricula for therapeutic groups, improved vocational preparation, developed community resources referrals, and designed psychoeducational outreach initiatives. These projects will continue to help the target population even after the students have left their fieldwork sites.

### Dual-Language Section of Advanced Practice

Students who are bi-lingual in Spanish and English have the opportunity to participate in a dual-language section of the Advanced Social Work Practice course. Delivering effective services in Spanish is a critical need, but not all bi-lingual social workers are actually prepared to do so. This course addresses the practice issues that commonly arise but, importantly, moves beyond translation to more complex issues, such as how language, culture, and other factors affect the professional helping relationship.

Together, these enhancements are designed to improve the trainees' knowledge and skills to provide culturally- and linguistically- sensitive services to medically under-served communities and populations in a behavioral health capacity as well as improving the competencies of other professionals serving the target population.

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