LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH STIPEND PROGRAM DESCRIPTION 2016-2017

The Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH) Stipend Project was designed in response to the shortage of MSW level mental health professionals in California. The Mental Health Services Act (MHSA, formerly Proposition 63), which was passed by the California electorate in 2004 and became effective January 2005, is the source of funding. This exciting stipend project was one of the first initiatives of the MHSA.

LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH (LACDMH) STIPEND RECIPIENTS – Student Selection

The LACDMH stipend is for graduate students who are in their second year of field placement, who will graduate in May 2017, and who are interested in pursuing a social work career in the mental health field. Recipients must be willing to make a commitment to work full-time in a Los Angeles county mental health agency or a county-contracted agency after they have received their MSW degrees. Preference for this stipend will be given to qualified applicants of ethno-cultural minority groups who are served in increasing numbers by LA county DMH agencies. Fluency in a second language as needed by mental health agencies in Los Angeles County is also a plus. Other selection criteria will be established and will be stated on the application.

Students who are accepted into this program agree to complete the entire MSW program at CSULB and to participate in the required mental health elective course (SW 677) and any additional specialized workshops that are scheduled. Students must continue to perform satisfactorily in the program and in field practicum, social work practice courses, meet all thesis/applied project course deadlines and remain in good academic standing (graduate with a GPA of 3.0 or better), receive a security clearance to work within LA County mental health services, and uphold the NASW Code of Ethics.

EDUCATION SUPPORT/STUDENT STIPEND

The LACDMH Stipend Program provides $18,500 per academic year.

STUDENT COMMITMENT

Students who are accepted into this program will sign a contract with LA County DMH, which is a legal document outlining their responsibilities and commitment to the LACDMH Stipend Program. These agreements are for the students' tenure while in the MSW program and for a period of 5 years following graduation from the MSW program.

Responsibilities and Commitment While a Graduate Student

The Student:

- Agrees to complete and graduate from the MSW program at CSULB within the required timelines established for each program model.
- Agrees to take all of the required classes, including mental health field internship placements, the approved mental health elective, and participation in selected workshops or annual seminars on issues related to mental health recovery.
- Agree that their Thesis/Applied Projects must have a focus on a mental health topic in the area of integrated health.
- Must continue to perform satisfactorily in the program and remain in good academic standing (graduate GPA of 3.0 or better).
- Receives a security clearance/Life Scan to work in LA County mental health services.
- Informs the LACDMH Project Coordinator of any changes which will interrupt studies and/or delay graduation.
- Upholds the NASW Code of Ethics.

**Responsibilities and Commitment after Graduation**
The following employment requirements **MUST** be met.

1. The student agrees to render at least one calendar year of continuous and satisfactory full-time employment at a Los Angeles County mental health agency, or at an agency that contracts with Los Angeles County DMH, for each year of educational reimbursement/graduate study.

2. The student agrees to secure employment within six (6) months of graduation in a Los Angeles County or county-funded agency.

3. If the student is unable to obtain employment and has made a "good faith" effort, a request to postpone payback can be made. The request must be submitted in writing to the LACDMH Project Coordinator, with documentation attached of all efforts made to secure employment (using the LACDMH standardized job search log).

**Payback Agreement**
In addition, students are responsible for payback of stipend/educational reimbursement and any costs of collection under any of the following conditions:

1. Failure to maintain satisfactory academic standing, which is defined as upholding a GPA of 3.0 or better every semester, receiving a grade of Credit (CR) in field practicum, and completing thesis/applied project within all required deadlines.

2. Failure to complete the MSW program within the normative period

3. Failure to accept appropriate employment following graduation

4. Failure to qualify for employment as a result of failing an interview, medical, or psychological exam, or criminal background clearance

5. The student is convicted of any crime that disqualifies employment in a LAC public mental health agency or contracted agency which would then render the student ineligible for, or cause termination from the LACDMH Stipend Program

6. Voluntary termination of employment before completion of the work requirement

7. Termination of employment before completion of the work requirement due to poor work or misconduct

8. Violation of the NASW Code of Ethics

**Additional Information or Questions**
For more information about this program, please feel free to contact Nancy Meyer-Adams, PhD: 562-985-7774, or: Nancy.Meyer-adams@csulb.edu

The application will be posted on the School of Social Work webpage under the Stipends, Grants and other programs link as soon as it is available. The deadline to submit applications will be announced once the applications are posted. Students interested in applying should note this on their field placement applications.

*Revised 11/16/2015*