



Educational Stipends Promote Mental Health Practice: 60 Stipends Awarded to MFT Students Across the State

JOSÉ LUIS FLORES AND LISA WOLFE

Sixty educational stipends of \$18,500 each were awarded to MFT students this academic year, 2009-10. Recipients of the stipends have agreed to complete 12 months of employment or volunteer work at an agency affiliated with the mental health delivery system of a county in the State. Recipients were selected, in part, for their willingness to provide clinical services upon graduating in areas understaffed for mental health care and with populations requiring professionals with bilingual and multicultural capacities. For the names of the stipend recipients and their school affiliations, see pages 38 and 39.

The California Department of Mental Health initiated educational stipend programs for various disciplines including marriage and family therapists in an effort to address the need for mental health professionals in underserved communities. Funded through the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA), the stipend programs are part of a larger workforce plan to recruit, train, and retain professionals committed to a career in public mental health practice.

MFT Leadership Partnership

In order to implement a statewide recruitment of MFT students for these stipends, CAMFT, AAMFT-CA and administrators of MFT academic programs formed a partnership that included over 55 MFT schools. It was modeled after a partnership between the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health and the Southern California Consortium of MFT Educators that successfully delivered a recruitment of MFT students for the County's stipends. (See the 2006 May-June issue of

The Therapist for a report on the Los Angeles County's MFT stipend project.)

Administered by Phillips Graduate Institute on behalf of the MFT Consortium, 418 MFT students were selected in the past five academic years for the Los Angeles County's stipend program.

Likewise under the administrative leadership of Phillips Graduate Institute, the professional organizations and the MFT school administrators formed a network of regional consortia that reached 19 counties from Butte to Imperial counties. The regional consortia include the MFT Consortium of Greater Sacramento, hosted by the University of San Francisco-Sacramento, the MFT Consortium of the Bay Area, hosted by San Francisco State University, the MFT Consortium of Greater Los Angeles, hosted by Phillips Graduate Institute, the MFT Consortium of Orange County, hosted by Pepperdine University-Irvine, and the MFT Consortium of San Diego, hosted by Alliant International

University-San Diego. For a list of participating MFT schools in each regional consortia, see pages 40 and 41.

Objective of the State Stipend Programs

The California educational stipend programs promote the mission of the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA), which was enacted in 2005, to transform the State's public mental health delivery system. The guiding values of the MHSA mission are based on the 2003 vision statement of the President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health (www.MentalHealthCommission.gov). The commission envisioned "a future when everyone with a mental illness will recover, a future when mental illnesses are detected early, and a future when a person with mental illnesses at any stage of life has access to effective treatment and supports—essentials for living, working, learning, and participating fully in the community."

To realize a transformed mental health delivery system, MHSA funds were directed towards a statewide workforce plan of

JOSE GOMEZ, PHILLIPS GRADUATE INSTITUTE

Practicum: San Fernando Valley CMHC, Van Nuys



“ My life experiences have allowed me to implement standards of care within the community I live. Since completing my undergraduate studies, I have worked for the last four years as a mental health counselor, and I am certain that I possess the inner desire to make a difference in clients' lives. My overall work ethics are focused upon contributing to a positive social change by striving to make a difference in the public mental health system. I have learned through my work with the monolingual Spanish speaking population, how mental health is stigmatized and how education on mental illness promotes this population's ability to improve their mental health status. ”

professionals dedicated to community service and to the care of those living with mental illness. These professionals would be trained in promoting the recovery of those with mental illnesses by focusing on their personal strengths, respecting their cultural perspectives, and learning from their lived experiences as consumers of public mental health care. Through the MHSA funds for workforce development, stipend programs were established to recruit students pursuing graduate degrees in marriage and family therapy, social work, and clinical psychology.

Goals of the MFT Stipend Program

The goals of the State's stipend program for MFT students are to recruit MFT graduates with the capacity to serve the culturally diverse needs of persons in mental health

VERONICA AVALOS, PHILLIPS GRADUATE INSTITUTE

Practicum: El Centro de Amistad, Canoga Park



“ My experience with public mental health started with a cousin who came to live with us; he falls on the autistic spectrum. It taught me the importance of creating unique and specific plans to fit a client's needs without losing focus of their strengths and resources. Volunteering at a group home and hospice gave me an experience with many different populations. Working with at-risk youth gave me a unique view of the needs of an entire family unit. What I learned not only satisfied my desire to work in public mental health, but also gave me the tools to treat each client with the dignity and respect they so deserve. ”

care, to prepare recruited MFT graduates in the delivery of mental health services that promote wellness, recovery and resilience, and to recruit into MFT academic programs individuals who have experience in the mental health system as clients or family members of clients.

The ultimate objective of the State's MFT stipend program is to advance public mental health as a career option for those entering the MFT profession. Towards that end, the stipend program promotes curriculum development in MFT graduate schools that best prepare their students for public mental health practice.

The State's stipend program recruits MFT students who are able to serve client populations in diverse communities, have bilingual and/or multicultural capacity, have

ESMERALDA HERNANDEZ, PACIFIC OAKS COLLEGE

Practicum: The Almansor Center, South Pasadena



“ While working in public mental health as a case manager and practicum student, I obtained experience to work in different settings, such as schools, homes and in a clinic. I chose to obtain a specialization in Latina Family Studies in order to further advocate and support Spanish-speaking families who are under-represented and who do not know of the services that are available to them because of language and cultural barriers. As a Mexican American, my professional interest and commitment to public mental health is that I see the need to serve impoverished and disenfranchised communities. ”

field placement training in mental health clinics, and have been exposed in their education to the MHSA values of recovery/wellness, consumer driven care, and the stigma of mental illness.

The 2009-2010 stipend recipients conveyed through submitted essays their past and

Graduate Institute (Encino) is administering the delivery of sixty stipends through its partnership with the five regional consortia. Portions of these sixty stipends have been allocated to each of these regions. California State University–Chico administers five stipends for its students, Butte, and neighboring counties. Loma Linda University also administers five stipends for its students in the Inland Empire. Information about these stipend programs for MFTs can be obtained through each administrator's school website. ☞



José Luis Flores, MA, is a faculty member of the MFT Program at Phillips Graduate Institute and has served as the administrator of Phillips' stipend contracts for both the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health and the California Department of Mental Health. Since 1995 he has been the host and leader of the Southern California Consortium of MFT Educators and Agency Directors, now known as the MFT Consortium of Greater Los Angeles.



Lisa Wolfe, MS, is the program coordinator of the MFT Stipend Program at Phillips Graduate Institute. She has worked as the Clinical Training Coordinator for the MFT Program at Phillips for eight years and provided administrative assistant services during that period to the MFT Consortium of Greater Los Angeles. Lisa received her degree from the University of La Verne in Marriage, Family and Child Therapy.

ongoing community service through volunteerism and employment in non-profit settings, education, and health service. Many demonstrated a commitment to serving as professionals, the disadvantaged communities where they grew up or still live. Some disclosed their family's challenges of having a member with mental illness and with the struggles of inadequate care, limited resources, and the stigma they experienced. The stipend recipients expressed a desire to continue their dedication to community service as practitioners in the public mental health delivery system. See the profiles of some of these recipients throughout this article.

Administrators of the State's Stipends

There are three academic institutions that are administering the California Department of Mental Health's stipends for MFTs. Phillips

Diversity in Workforce Recruitment

MFT Students Awarded State Stipends

MFT Consortium of Greater Sacramento

Alicia Aida Iniguez
University of San Francisco, Sacramento

Lien Pham
Alliant University, Sacramento

Thanh Nuong-Kathy Nguyen
California State University, Sacramento

Jennifer Racine
California State University, Sacramento

Sierra Sparks
Brandman University

MFT Consortium of the Bay Area

Lilian Alfaro
Santa Clara University

Joy Amao
California Institute of Integral Studies

Michelle Mireya Baca
California State University, Sonoma

Ana Bandjak
The Institute of Transpersonal Psychology

María Luisa Buckallew
Santa Clara University

Alyssa Girón
Argosy University, Alameda

Jimmy K. Ho
San Francisco State University, SF

Jennifer Hu
University of San Francisco, San Francisco

Maya Johansson
California Institute of Integral Studies

Janet López
Santa Clara University

Jamie Luck
University of San Francisco

Ana McParland-Gonzalez
The Institute of Transpersonal Psychology

Jennifer Parr
California Institute of Integral Studies

Sharon Piwowarski
California Institute of Integral Studies

Ariana Sanchez
Argosy University, Alameda

Rosa Serpas
San Francisco State University

Esin Tanya Zamora
California State University, Sonoma

MFT Consortium of Greater Los Angeles

Veronica Avalos
Phillips Graduate Institute

Keturah Baker
Pepperdine University, W. LA

Gerard Bautista
Pepperdine University, W. LA

Pauline Castellanos
Pepperdine University, Malibu

Martha Castillo
Pacific Oaks College

NAIRI MATHEWSIAN, UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Practicum: Glen Roberts Child Study Center, Glendale



“ I am from an Armenian family who has dealt with bi-lingual accommodating in Southern California. My professional endeavor to work as a therapist to providing services to the community in which I was raised. My experience so far in a variety of clinical counseling positions and with various populations, has greatly influenced my desire to serve individuals who are underrepresented in the community in order to make a meaningful difference. By treating each individual as a part of his or her family and community, the work that is completed in counseling will translate to the interactions the individual has within his or her community.



LAURA GUANILL, ANTIOCH UNIVERSITY

Practicum: Salvation Army, Santa Barbara



“ Training in dual diagnosis in an alcohol/drug program, collaborating with mental health, striving for success of clients through recovery and stability, has motivated my ambition to serve as an MFT. Being bilingual, bicultural, and demographically diverse has inspired me, and has given me a keen awareness of the stigma and cultural barriers that exist in seeking public mental health services. I feel I can be an outlet for those in our community who are torn and stressed on a daily basis with the simplest of decisions. In the Latino community assimilating into the dominant culture is a strain on the morals and values of their culture. I am a product of both of these societies, and I understand.



Bring Diversity, Multicultural Capacity and Bilingual Skills to Public Mental Health Care

Liliana Chavez
Phillips Graduate Institute

Ileen Fields
Pacific Oaks College

Maritza Garza
Antioch University, Santa Barbara

Jose Gomez
Phillips Graduate Institute

Laura Guanill
Antioch University, Santa Barbara

Esmeralda Hernandez
Pacific Oaks College

Elizabeth Iribe
California State University, Long Beach

Celina Jacques
Phillips Graduate Institute

Nairi Mathewsian
University of Southern California

Deborah Svidler
Phillips Graduate Institute

Yanira Torrez
California State University, Long Beach

MFT Consortium of Orange County

Erika Beltran
California State University, Fullerton

William Funes
California State University, Fullerton

Leticia Gonzalez
Chapman University

Annahita Mahdavi
Pepperdine University, Irvine

Jose Ramirez
California State University, Fullerton

Ada Reveles
California State University, Fullerton

Marsinah Trujillo
Pepperdine University, Irvine

Katherine Womack
Vanguard University

Karen Weaver
Chapman University

Noushin Zarini
Alliant International University, Irvine

MFT Consortium of San Diego

Elisa Helm
Brandman University

Sylvia Iribe
University of Phoenix, San Diego

Melissa Martinez
University of Phoenix, Imperial

Tri Nguyen
San Diego State University

Jessica Ovando
University of Phoenix, Imperial

Mary Lou Perez
Bethel Seminary

Note: six students elected not to have their names included in this list.

ILEEN FIELDS, PACIFIC OAKS COLLEGE

Practicum: Shandin Hills Behavioral Therapy Care, San Bernardino



“ I spent my adolescent years in foster homes. This experience led to my decision ten years ago to become a foster parent. As an undergraduate, I volunteered at the David and Margaret Home for girls in La Verne, and I worked with at-risk adolescents at the Institute of Black Parenting. These experiences helped to solidify my goal to work with families with at-risk children, a population that I feel has not been adequately served by the clinical profession. My professional goal would be to use my experiences to encourage families to build strong value systems that are in line with MFT practices and are based on the principles of social justice. ”

KETURAH BAKER, PEPPERDINE-WEST LOS ANGELES CAMPUS

Practicum: Homes for Life Foundation, Los Angeles



“ My career began as a middle school counselor for at-risk youth in Compton. Following this position, I worked with severely emotionally disturbed adolescents in a residential setting. Later, as a child and family specialist providing rehabilitation and case management services to underserved children and families throughout Los Angeles County. Growing up watching my mentally disabled sister ridiculed on a regular basis, gave me the reason for wanting to help change the stigma applied to mental illness. My history of advocating for my sister along with the passion I hold for the study of mind and human behavior, keeps me intrigued and committed to working in public mental health. ”

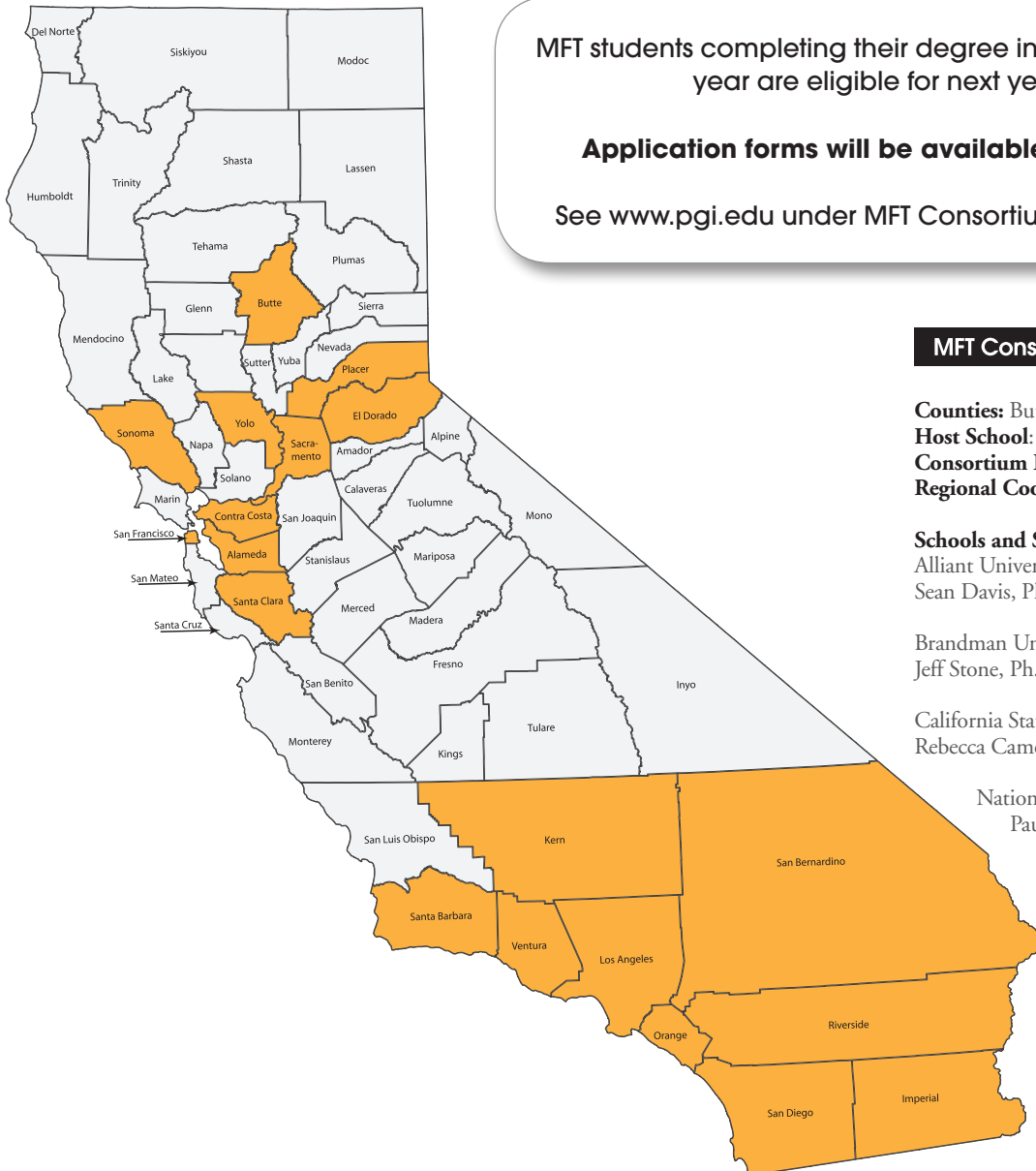
Regional Consortia of MFT Schools Advance a Statewide Stipend Program

JOSÉ LUIS FLORES AND LISA WOLFE

Close to sixty MFT academic institutions in California participated in the recruitment of their students for an inaugural statewide stipend program. Sponsored by the California Department of Mental Health and funded through the Mental Health Services Act, these educational stipends promote the preparation, training and practice of public mental health to MFT graduates.

Listed below are the educators or administrators that attended an orientation on this new stipend program and took on the task as the stipend representative for their MFT programs. As such, they informed qualifying students on the stipend program, advised them on public practice as a career option, and assisted them in the application process.

The participating schools and their stipend representatives are listed below by the five regional MFT Consortia in the State. The host school and leaders of each regional consortium are included along with the regional coordinator hired to assist the consortium with this State stipend program. Through their efforts, close to three hundred applications were submitted for the sixty stipends of \$18,500 each. The five regional consortia also formed a Stipend Awards Council to review and score the applications. The councils consisted of members from State entities, such as the BBS, county entities, such as behavioral health departments, mental health treatment agencies, consumer groups, and professional organizations, such as CAMFT and AAMFT-CA. The dedication of these educators contributed to the success of the statewide stipend program, and their efforts are herein acknowledged and appreciated.



MFT students completing their degree in the 2010-2011 academic year are eligible for next year's stipends.

Application forms will be available September 7, 2010.

See www.pgi.edu under MFT Consortium for more information.

MFT Consortium of Greater Sacramento

Counties: Butte, El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento, Yolo
Host School: University of San Francisco, Sacramento
Consortium Leader: Steven Pomerantz, Ed.D.
Regional Coordinator: Darlene Davis, MA

Schools and School Representatives:
 Alliant University, Sacramento
 Sean Davis, Ph.D.

Brandman University, Roseville
 Jeff Stone, Ph.D.

California State University, Sacramento
 Rebecca Cameron, Ph.D. and Marya Endriga, Ph.D.

National University, Sacramento
 Paul Jenkins, Ph.D.

University of Phoenix, Sacramento
 Carlos Flores, MS

University of San Francisco, Sacramento
 Steven Pomerantz, Ed.D.

MFT Consortium of the Bay Area

Counties: Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, Santa Clara, Sonoma
Host School: San Francisco State University
Consortium Leaders: Lesley Zwillinger, Ph.D. and Steven Tierney, Ed.D.
Regional Coordinator: Steven Tierney, Ed.D.

Schools and School Representatives:

Argosy University, Alameda
 Bonnie Macbride, Ed.D.

California Institute of Integral Studies, San Francisco
 Steven Tierney, Ed.D.

California State University, East Bay
 Randi S. Cowdery, Ph.D.

California State University, Sonoma
 Carolyn Saarni, Ph.D.

Golden Gate University, San Francisco
 Kit Yarrow, Ph.D.

John F. Kennedy University, Pleasant Hill
 Gail Kingsley Dame, MA

San Francisco State University, San Francisco
 Lesley Zwillinger, Ph.D.

Santa Clara University, Santa Clara
 Lucila Ramos-Sanchez, Ph.D.

Saybrook Graduate School, San Francisco
 Ann Bernhardt, Ph.D.

St. Mary's College of California, Moraga
 Laura Heid, Ph.D.

The Institute of Transpersonal Psychology, Palo Alto
 Kate Wolf-Pizor, MA

University of San Francisco, San Francisco
 Cori Bussolari, Psy.D.

MFT Consortium of Greater Los Angeles

Counties: Kern, Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino, Santa Barbara, Ventura
Host School: Phillips Graduate Institute
Consortium Leaders: José Luis Flores, MA and Michele Shepherd, MA
Regional Coordinator: Dominique Eugene, MA

Schools and School Representatives:

Alliant International University, Los Angeles
 Ben Caldwell, Ph.D.

Antioch University, Los Angeles
 Claudia Shields, Ph.D.

Antioch University, Santa Barbara
 Kristine Schwarz, MA

Argosy University, Los Angeles
 Caryl Bloom, Ph.D.

Azusa Pacific University, Azusa
 Vicki Ewing, MA

California Lutheran University, Thousand Oaks
 Christopher Christian, Ph.D.

California State Polytechnic, Pomona
 Jeff Mio, Ph.D.

California State University, Bakersfield
 Ken Ishida, Ph.D.

California State University, Dominguez Hills
 Michele Linden, Ed.D.

California State University, Long Beach
 William Saltzman, Ph.D.

California State University, Northridge
 Stan Charnofsky, Ed.D.

California State University, San Bernardino
 David Chavez, Ph.D.

Fuller Graduate School of Psychology, Pasadena
 Kenichi Yoshida, MA

HIS University, Riverside
 Eun Soon Yang, Ph.D.

Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles
 Kathleen Fogel-Richmond, MA

Mount St. Mary's College, Los Angeles
 Darla Dunlop, Ph.D.

Pacific Oaks College, Pasadena
 Dino Koutsolioutsos, MA

Pepperdine University, Los Angeles
 (Malibu, Encino, and West Los Angeles campuses)
 Karie White, MA

Phillips Graduate Institute, Encino
 Kathy Wexler, MA

University of La Verne, La Verne
 Trish Long, Ph.D.

University of Phoenix, Los Angeles
 (Gardena, Ontario, Murietta, Palmdale, Pasadena, and Woodland Hills campuses)
 Kim Keating, MA

University of Southern California, Los Angeles
 Mary Andres, Psy.D.

MFT Consortium of Orange County

County: Orange
Host School: Pepperdine University, Irvine
Consortium Leaders: Kathleen Wenger, MA, Mary Read, Ph.D. and Susan Read-Weil, MA
Regional Coordinator: Susan Read-Weil, MA
Schools and School Representatives:

Alliant International University, Irvine
 Barbara Filippone, MA

Argosy University, Orange
 Melody Bacon, Ph.D.

Brandman University, Orange
 Sheryl Ralph, MA

California State University, Fullerton,
 Department of Counseling
 Mary Read, Ph.D.

California State University, Fullerton,
 Department of Psychology
 Nancy Ryba, Ph.D.

California Southern University, Santa Ana
 Christine Tanimura, Psy.D.

Hope International University, Fullerton
 Susan Hastings, MS

National University, Costa Mesa
 Mason Fries, Ph.D.

Pepperdine University, Irvine
 Karie White, MA

University of Phoenix, Orange
 Michelle Crawford, MA

Vanguard University, Costa Mesa
 Lisa Hann

MFT Consortium of San Diego

Counties: San Diego, Imperial
Host School: Alliant International University
Consortium Leader: Linna Wang, Ph.D.
Regional Coordinator: Peter McKimmin, Ph.D.

Schools and School Representatives:

Alliant International University, San Diego
 Linna Wang, Ph.D.

Bethel Seminary, San Diego
 Ben K Lim, Ph.D.

Brandman University, San Diego
 Marnie Elam, Ph.D.

National University, San Diego
 Valerie Alexander, Ph.D.

San Diego State University, San Diego
 Soh-Leong Lim, Ph.D.

University of Phoenix, San Diego and Imperial campuses
 Barbara Burt, Psy.D.

University of San Diego, San Diego
 Gina Bongiorno, MA