

**Equitable Care Collaborative:
Behavioral Health Internship Pipeline Program (BHIPP)
Program Overview**

The Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers (MassLeague) is administering the Equitable Care Collaborative's Behavioral Health Internship Pipeline Program (BHIPP) in partnership with MassGeneral Brigham (MGB) and the Scarlet Feather Fund through the Dayton Foundation. The goal of this program is to expand the provider pipeline to attract diverse, qualified, and culturally competent Social Workers, Mental Health Counselors, Marriage and Family Therapists, and Psychologists in their final year of their graduate program by providing paid field placements in community health centers (CHC). Each awarded intern will receive a stipend for accepting placement within a CHC and will participate in learning community sessions, inclusive of a final project presentation focused on equitable care. Funding will be provided to each health center to support supervision and a student loan repayment incentive will be provided to each intern who accepts a position at a community health center within six months of graduation.

Summary

The Behavioral Health Internship Pipeline Program (BHIPP) aims to create a pipeline focusing on a diverse population of behavioral health providers who are completing their graduate degrees in preparation for becoming a licensed social worker, licensed mental health counselor, licensed marriage and family therapist, or psychologist. This program intends to root behavioral health program graduates in community health center (CHC) settings early in their careers. As a part of this program, the MassLeague will partner with CHCs to support students prior to graduation via a \$25,000 internship stipend, learning community participation, final project presentation, and \$40,000 in student loan repayment in exchange for four years of full-time obligated service in a community health center post-graduation and commitment to becoming a licensed provider. Interns must accept a full-time position at a health center within six-months of graduation to be eligible for this loan repayment. This funding will be paid out directly to the awardee's student loan organization in four equal disbursements of \$10,000 after the completion of each year of obligated service.

We are excited to report because of the success of the first two years of the BHIPP program, we received additional funding from the Scarlet Feather Fund. As we continue to experience the urgent need to support CHC's in creating a diverse BH workforce capacity, this additional funding will support 16 interns. This is double the amount from year one. Each awarded intern will receive \$25,000 for their internship and demonstrated commitment to community health. Students eligible to be selected for this program will be entering their final year of their graduate program with the intention to become licensed in social work, mental health counseling, marriage and family therapy, or psychology. **Underrepresented students representing a diverse population, including but not limited to, racial/ethnic minorities (e.g., Black or African American, Hispanic/Latinx, Asian American and Pacific Islander, Native American), individuals from rural communities, and students who are linguistically diverse are encouraged to apply.**

Under this third application cycle, the MassLeague is inviting CHCs with available preceptors to nominate selected interns to apply for these funds that will support the students to complete their internship, participate in six learning community sessions, and complete a final project presentation. CHCs should show intent to hire participating interns, when possible, post completion of their internship.

Key Program Changes

- Increase in funding availability – an increase to 16 interns supported
- Increase in awarded interns per CHC – increased maximum of three awarded interns per CHC
- Increase in internship stipend – \$25,000 stipend per intern
- CHC funding to support administrative and supervision responsibilities – \$10,000 per intern to CHC
- Student loan repayment incentive – \$40,000 per awarded intern post-graduation and acceptance of a full-time position in a CHC within six months of graduation, in exchange for four years of obligated service and commitment to becoming a licensed provider

Application guidelines are provided within this document.

Eligibility

Eligible Organizations

BHIPP is available to all MassLeague CHC members with available supervisors and interns who will be in their final year of their Master's or Doctoral program for an eligible licensure type and will begin their internship at the CHC in September 2024 (or sooner). CHCs should show intent to hire participating interns, when possible, post completion of their internship.

Eligible Student Types

Social Work
Mental Health Counseling
Marriage and Family Therapist
Doctoral Psychology Students

Administrative Requirements

For the interns selected, funds will be paid directly to the CHC to be disbursed to the student. The MassLeague will provide TA to CHCs to assist in the mechanism of distributing funds to the interns. This payment will include \$25,000 per intern to support the completion of their internship. The MassLeague does not provide specific tax advice and the Participant should anticipate the need to seek independent tax advice to determine the tax status of the stipend. No penalties will be applied if the intern leaves their internship. An amount of \$10,000 will be provided to the CHC per participating intern to cover any administrative and supervision costs.

Learning Community

A total of six learning community sessions will take place over the course of their internship. Topics covered in four of the sessions will include health equity, behavioral health integration, leadership

development, and the community health center movement. These learning community sessions will be an interactive experience composed of all sixteen BHIPP awardees. There will be one meet and greet session at the beginning of the program and the final session will consist of a team-based final project presentation. The team will work to identify a problem seen within their community health center and/or general healthcare and work together to provide a solution and rationale to the problem identified utilizing at least one tool taken away from a Learning Community Session. The MassLeague will provide direct project guidance. **Please note that the CHC must agree to release their intern to attend these sessions. Each session is a total of three hours.**

Instructions

CHCs will complete a Cover Sheet providing information about the eligible interns they wish to have considered for this funding. Following the identification of the intern(s), the CHC will need to provide the name, contact information, and a summary of the selected intern's strengths and how they will support behavioral health care delivery for diverse and/or rural population of patients at their health center and/or help create a more diverse behavioral health workforce. CHCs will be asked to include any intentions to hire the identified intern post the completion of their internship. CHCs may nominate as many interns as they would like; however, the ECC will award a maximum of three applicants per CHC. A total of sixteen interns will be awarded in the third year of this program. Completed Cover Sheets must be received by **May 24, 2024, 5:00PM EST**.

Following receipt of the completed Cover Sheet(s), the MassLeague will contact the nominated interns and provide them with their formal Application.

Applications will be reviewed by a diverse and multidisciplinary external review committee that will assist in making final award decisions. Application review criteria will include demonstrated interest and commitment to community health, understanding and vision of equitable care, qualifications of the selected intern, and strength of CHCs Cover Sheet. Funding decisions will be based on review rankings as well as on the need to ensure that awards represent a diverse demographic, including geographic distribution within Massachusetts. Applications must be complete and submitted by the deadline in order to be reviewed.

Application Submission

CHC Cover Sheets must be submitted by email in PDF format to eprice@massleague.org by **May 24, 2024, 5:00PM EST**. The organization's CEO/Executive Director or equivalent and Behavioral Health Director must sign the Cover Sheet for the submission to be considered complete.

Applications must be submitted by email from selected interns in PDF format to eprice@massleague.org by **June 21, 2024, 5:00PM EST**. The MassLeague will work directly with the intern during this phase of the application process.