

Financial Aid Resources for Social Work Education

Developed by the National Association of Social Work – California Chapter

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Financial Aid Resources for Social Work Education and Training

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A *Report on Sources of Financial Aid for Social Work Students in Mental Health*, published by the Center for Social Service Research, School of Social Welfare, University of California Berkeley

Financial Aid Resources for Social Work Education and Training

The purpose of this document is to provide general information and resources for those looking for financial aid for social work education and training. This information is likely to change with time as will the program requirements and amounts of stipends. The reader has the responsibility to thoroughly research and understand all requirements prior to accepting any financial aid.

California Social Work Training and Stipend Programs

Funded through a variety of sources, stipend programs work to increase the number of professionally trained social workers in specific arenas such as child welfare and mental health. Stipends are educational awards that assist with educational costs such as tuition, books, and living expenses. In return, students agree to certain conditions, which include working in the chosen field for a specific time frame after graduation.

The California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC) Programs

Title IV-E MSW Program

The Title IV-E Child Welfare Training Project features a MSW program, which is offered by California's 18 accredited graduate schools of social work and social welfare. The Title IV-E MSW Program provides two years of financial support to full-time graduate social work students preparing for public child welfare careers. Since fall 2000, that amount has been \$18,500 per student per year. To be considered for a stipend students must be admitted to an accredited California graduate school of social work.

For more about the program, visit http://calswec.berkeley.edu/CalSWEC/IV-E_FAQs.html.

Title IV-E BSW Program

The Title IV-E stipends provides one year of support for full-time students who complete the BSW program with appropriate specialization in preparation for careers in public child welfare. Effective fall 2004, the stipend amount was designated \$15,000 for the final year of study in the BSW program. Part-time students, limited to current employees of a county or the state Department of Social Services, receive full tuition and fees, costs for required books, and a travel allowance for each day of class or fieldwork for either two or three years, depending on the program.

For more about this program, visit http://calswec.berkeley.edu/CalSWEC/BSW_FAQs.html.

The Mental Health Training and Stipend Program

The primary mission of the Mental Health Initiative is the development of a professionally trained, culturally competent social work workforce that will meet the needs of the public mental health system in California. This workforce initiative provides a training stipend, which as of December 2007 was \$18,500 per year for second year graduate level social work students selected into the Mental Health Stipend Program (MHSP). The MHSP is currently funded as a year-to-year contract with California Department of Mental Health. Funding levels and programmatic specifications may vary as contractual obligations are negotiated from year to year.

For more about this program, visit http://calswec.berkeley.edu/CalSWEC/MH_Schools.html.

National Stipend Programs

AmeriCorps – Students in Service Program

Part of the federal Corporation for National Service, the AmeriCorps program is a federally funded service program that provides volunteers with educational vouchers in return for periods of community service. The Students in Service (SIS) program is operated by the California Campus Compact (CACC) at participating schools and universities nationwide.

Program Goal and Purpose

The goal of Student in Service (SIS) Program is to foster civic engagement among higher education students, promote the national service movement, and encourage positive relationships between campuses and communities. The purpose of the Students in Service (SIS) program is to meet critical community needs by engaging higher education students in service and fostering within them an ethic of civic responsibility. Through the program, students are introduced to local, regional, and national service-learning opportunities, resulting in a regional network of student leaders committed to serving and strengthening their local communities.

Terms of Service and Education Awards (Scholarship)

The Students in Service (SIS) Program offers students the opportunity to choose one of three terms of service (essentially, the number of hours he or she agrees to complete). Upon successful completion of a term of service, students are eligible for an Education Award, which can be applied towards outstanding student loans or the cost of attendance at a college or university. The resulting education award amount varies, depending on the selected term of service.

For more about this program, visit http://www.cacampuscompact.org/cacc_programs/sis/index.html.

Health Profession Education Foundation – The Allied Healthcare Scholarship

The Allied Healthcare Scholarship Program is offered to students enrolled or accepted in an allied healthcare education program. Students who attend a university program are eligible for a scholarship up to \$2,500 and would have a service obligation of 1 year or 100-150 hours of volunteer service. Scholarships funded under this program are intended to pay or repay tuition, required fees, books, supplies, and educational equipment costs related to the student's allied healthcare education.

The purposes of the Allied Healthcare Scholarship are: 1) to encourage allied healthcare professionals to practice direct patient care in a medically underserved area of California; 2) to increase the number of appropriately trained allied healthcare professionals; and 3) to encourage underrepresented groups to pursue the allied healthcare profession. This program is funded by a contribution from Kaiser Permanente.

For more about this program, visit <http://www.healthprofessions.ca.gov/progfacts.htm>.

More information regarding financial aid resources is presented in the attached report titled ***A Report on Sources of Financial Aid for Social Work Students in Mental Health.***

Loan Reimbursement Programs

Loan reimbursement or loan forgiveness programs allow graduates to repay educational loans by working in a designated field or area of service for a specified timeframe. While the service requirements, amount of repayment, and eligibility standards vary, existing programs often require the applicant to have a clinical social work license.

As mentioned previously, generally speaking, most states require a minimum of a MSW degree with 2-3 years of post-graduation experience and the passage of at least one licensing exam. However, each state develops its own law and regulations, which can change with time and should be researched long before entering the licensing process.

More information about Loan Reimbursement Programs is detailed in the report described on the next page.

University of California Berkeley Report on Financial Aid Resources

A Report on Sources of Financial Aid for Social Work Students in Mental Health

This 8-page report on financial resources for social work students was produced by the Center for Social Service Research, University of California Berkeley School of Social Welfare in September 2007. It incorporates very valuable information regarding financial aid resources; therefore, it was scanned into this document.

The reader may visit the Center for Social Search Research's website at http://cssr.berkeley.edu/about_cssr/mhworkforce.html to view the entire document titled "*A Strategic Plan to Increase the Flow of Minority, Bilingual and Culturally Competent Professional Social Workers into California's Mental Health System.*"

The reader must carefully read the requirements and guidelines for any financial aid program to ensure that they meet the eligibility requirements. For example, the National Health Service Corps Loan Repayment Program requires the applicant has passed the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) Clinical Level Exam. As of January 2008, this exam is utilized in every state but California.

Resource Websites

The report does not provide website information for the resources mentioned; consequently, the website addresses for programs in existence at the time this article was written are listed below:

The National Health Service Corps Loan Repayment Program

Website: http://nhsc.bhpr.hrsa.gov/join_us/lrp.asp

The California Healthcare Work Force and Community Development State Loan Repayment Program

Website: www.healthprofessions.ca.gov

Perkins Financial Aid Resources

Website: <http://studentaid.ed.gov/PORTALSWebApp/students/english/index.jsp>

FinAid: The Smart Student Guide to Financial Aid

Website: www.finaid.org/loans/forgiveness.phtml