

History of California's Support for Mental Health Provider Training

CAPIC and Advocacy—The Stipend Program for Clinical Psychologists

For the last 4 years CAPIC has very actively advocated for the inclusion of psychology interns in the Mental Health Trainee Stipend Program developed by the California Department of Mental Health (CA/DMH). CAPIC advocacy work was carried out by many faculty at our member programs and led by Dr. Melodie Schaefer, Vice Chair and now Chair of the CAPIC Board of Directors, and was coordinated with the strong efforts of the California Psychological Association—especially Division II, its Education committee.

CA/DMH funds for mental health trainee stipends were first made available several years ago to masters level social work and family therapy trainees, with psychology trainees explicitly excluded. After a great deal of effort on the part of many psychology organizations in California, the CA/DMH put out a Request for Proposals on June 29, 2008, with a deadline of August 12. CAPIC, along with other psychology education programs in California, applied for the stated total of \$ 6,000,000 over 3 years. CAPIC was awarded the largest of the three contracts approved for this program, and is responsible for reaching out to all professional psychology students not matriculated in one of the other two programs that also received funding.

These funds have multiple purposes. The CA/DMH wants to: identify psychology trainees who are particularly interested in working with the underserved in our state; provide them with additional educational experiences that will help them serve the underserved more effectively; and lastly to provide them with personal management skills that might help them avoid or minimize professional burnout, and hence be able to enjoy working in this challenging setting in future years.

As a result of this DMH contract students in the final year of training in a professional psychology program can apply for a direct stipend (not a payment for their work in an internship) of \$20,750 if they are training fulltime or \$10,375 if they are training halftime. Applicants for this stipend will be chosen by a broadly representative CAPIC Stipend Application Committee based upon a large number of criteria outlined by the state DMH in the RFP for this contract.

Each stipend recipient must work for 1 year (or 6 months if a halftime stipend was received) in a publicly funded mental health agency in California following receipt of their doctorate degree. CAPIC is obligated to help them locate a qualified agency to work in so they can complete their pay-back obligation.