

PRESS RELEASE

NBCC Foundation
3 Terrace Way
Greensboro, NC 27403-3660
Phone: 336-232-0376
www.nbccf.org



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Kristen M. Sims Awarded \$20,000 Counseling Fellowship From NBCC and Affiliates



Biloxi, MS—The NBCC Foundation, an affiliate of the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC), recently selected Kristen M. Sims, of Biloxi, Mississippi, for the National Board for Certified Counselors Minority Fellowship Program (NBCC MFP). As an NBCC MFP Fellow, Sims will receive funding and training to support her education and facilitate her service to underserved minority populations.

The NBCC MFP is made possible by a grant first awarded to NBCC by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) in August 2012. The Foundation is contracted by NBCC to administer the NBCC MFP, as well as training and collaboration activities, such as [webinars](#), that are open to all National Certified Counselors (NCCs). The goal of the program is to strengthen the infrastructure that engages diverse individuals in counseling and increases the number of professional counselors providing effective, culturally competent services to underserved populations.

The NBCC MFP will distribute \$20,000 to Sims and the 22 other doctoral counseling students selected to receive the fellowship award. Sims is both a graduate and student of Mississippi State University, in Starkville, where she is currently pursuing a doctoral degree in the counselor education program. Sims is interested in researching the roles mental health clinicians can play in working within school systems to better serve the emotional needs of students from underserved minority populations. Sims wishes to specifically research the use of mindfulness-based interventions with minority students receiving special education services in her home state of Mississippi. The goal of her research will be to determine if therapeutic interventions can decrease the incidence of out-of-school suspensions (OSS) for students who have been historically disproportionately affected by the negative outcomes of OSS. Sims is currently a full-time employee of the Pascagoula-Gautier School District as a positive behavior specialist in addition to attending Mississippi State University. Sims is also a Licensed Professional Counselor in Mississippi and a National Certified Counselor. Additionally, Sims is interested in researching depression and suicidality in children and adolescents from minority populations and LGBTQ issues in counseling. This fellowship will help Sims research her areas of interest and develop school- and community-based programs to serve the needs of the underserved minority populations with whom she works. This fellowship will also provide Sims with educational opportunities and training to improve her skills as a culturally competent clinician.

The NBCC Foundation has also awarded 30 \$8,000 master's-level fellowships through the [MFP-Youth](#) (MFP-Y) and 34 master's-level fellowships of up to \$11,000 through the [MFP-Addictions Counselors](#) (MFP-AC). The Foundation plans to open the next NBCC MFP application period in fall 2018. To learn more about the NBCC MFP and its fellows, please visit www.nbccf.org/Programs/Fellows.

ABOUT THE NBCC FOUNDATION

The NBCC Foundation is the nonprofit affiliate of the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC), based in Greensboro, North Carolina. NBCC is the nation's premier professional certification board devoted to credentialing

counselors who meet standards for the general and specialty practices of professional counseling. Currently, there are more than 64,000 board-certified counselors in the United States and more than 50 countries. The Foundation's mission is to leverage the power of counseling by strategically focusing resources for positive change.

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