

## PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Donnisha Marie Lavigne Awarded \$11,000 Counseling Fellowship From NBCC and Affiliates



Riverdale, GA—The NBCC Foundation, an affiliate of the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC), recently selected Donnisha Marie Lavigne, of Riverdale, Georgia, for the NBCC Minority Fellowship Program-Addictions Counselors (MFP-AC). As an NBCC MFP-AC fellow, Lavigne will receive funding and training to support her education and facilitate her addictions counseling service to underserved minority transition-age youth (ages 16–25).

The NBCC MFP-AC is made possible by a grant awarded to NBCC by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) in September 2014. The Foundation is contracted by NBCC to administer the NBCC MFP-AC, 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 reduce health disparities and improve behavioral health care outcomes for racially and ethnically diverse populations by

increasing the available number of culturally competent behavioral health professionals.

The NBCC MFP will distribute up to \$11,000 to Lavigne and the 30 other master's-level addictions counseling students selected to receive the fellowship award. Lavigne is a graduate of Georgia Gwinnett College, in Lawrenceville, and is currently a master's student in the clinical mental health counseling program at Mercer University, in Atlanta, Georgia. Upon graduation, Lavigne intends to work with underserved transition-age youth minorities, particularly those who have mental disorders co-occurring with substance use disorders, and those who have been or are currently in state custody. She intends to become a licensed professional counselor and certified alcohol and drug counselor in the state of Georgia. Lavigne plans to advocate for the reduction of stigma surrounding mental health in minority communities by developing a non-profit organization and community outreach program that will offer a variety of services and trainings to youth and their families while promoting mental health awareness. This fellowship will allow her to focus on completing her degree without financial hardship, attend counseling conferences and trainings needed to develop a strong professional identity, and begin the process of developing her non-profit organization and community outreach program.

The NBCC Foundation has also awarded 23 \$20,000 [doctoral fellowships](#) through the Minority Fellowship Program and 30 \$8,000 master's-level fellowships through the [MFP-Youth](#) (MFP-Y). The Foundation plans to open the next NBCC Minority Fellowship Program application period in September 2017. To learn more about the NBCC MFP and its fellows, please visit [www.nbccf.org/programs/scholarships](http://www.nbccf.org/programs/scholarships).

#### 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 60,000 National 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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