



PRESS RELEASE

NBCC Foundation

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Jason Branch Awarded \$20,000 Counseling Fellowship From NBCC and Affiliates

Auburn, AL—The NBCC Foundation, an affiliate of the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC), recently selected Jason Branch, of Auburn, Alabama, for the National Board for Certified Counselors Minority Fellowship Program (NBCC MFP). As an NBCC MFP Fellow, Branch will receive funding and training to support his education and facilitate his 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 Branch and the 22 other doctoral counseling students selected to receive the fellowship award. Branch is a graduate of The University of West Alabama, in Livingston, and of the University of Alabama at Birmingham, and is currently a doctoral student in the counselor education program at Auburn University, in Alabama. Branch has over 10 years of experience in the counseling profession working in community agency and mental health centers, in city government, in addiction treatment facilities, and in academia. Branch has also established and maintained a private practice since 2010. His experience in those areas increased his interest and passion for serving his community. Branch's research interests include understanding disparities for African-American clients and the importance of advocacy and overcoming the negative stigma and myths that have been associated with counseling and mental health in the African-American community. Branch developed the Brothers Outreach to Underprivileged and Needy Children Everywhere (BOUNCE) mentoring program, in which adult African-American males from the community and students from local colleges and universities provide a positive male presence to adolescents. For over a decade, this program has helped produce successful African-American men in Alabama. With the assistance of this fellowship, Branch will expand his mentoring program, continue to develop innovative ways to increase participation in counseling services for African-American males, and continue his current research and educational pursuits. Branch has a strong desire to influence change through mentorship and advocacy.

The Foundation plans to open the next NBCC MFP application period in September 2016. 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 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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