

## PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Laura S. Toptine Awarded \$11,000 Counseling Fellowship From NBCC and Affiliates



Durham, NC—The NBCC Foundation, an affiliate of the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC), recently selected Laura S. Toptine, of Durham, North Carolina, for the NBCC Minority Fellowship Program-Addictions Counselors (MFP-AC). As an NBCC MFP-AC fellow, Toptine 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 Toptine and the 30 other master's-level addictions counseling students selected to receive the fellowship award. Toptine is a graduate of North Carolina State University, in Raleigh, and is currently a master's student in the clinical mental health counseling program at North Carolina Central University, in Durham. Upon graduation, Toptine intends to work with transition-age minority youth, particularly those who identify as LGBT+. Her overall goal is to establish a community mental health center that provides creative-based interventions for LGBT+ foster youth. This fellowship will allow Toptine to attend mental health conferences that focus primarily on the needs of LGBT+ individuals. This fellowship will also allow her to explore workshops that strengthen her competency in creative-based therapy.

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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