

PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Griffin Leigh Nielson-Smith Awarded \$10,000 Counseling Fellowship From the NBCC Foundation



Portland, OR—The NBCC Foundation, an affiliate of the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC), recently selected Griffin Leigh Nielson-Smith of Portland, Oregon, for the NBCC Minority Fellowship Program-Mental Health Counseling-Master's (MFP-MHC-M). As an NBCC MFP-MHC-M Fellow, Nielson-Smith will receive funding and training to support her education and facilitate her service to underserved populations.

The NBCC MFP-MHC-M is made possible by a grant awarded to the NBCC Foundation by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). The NBCC Foundation administers the MFP-MHC-M, including training and collaboration activities, such as [webinars](#), that are open to all board certified counselors. 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 number of professional counselors providing effective, culturally competent services to underserved populations.

The NBCC Foundation will distribute \$10,000 to Nielson-Smith and the other 29 master's-level counseling students selected to receive the fellowship award. Nielson-Smith is both a graduate of and is currently enrolled at Portland State University, where she is pursuing a master's degree in the marriage, couple, and family counseling program. Upon graduation, Nielson-Smith intends to work with multiracial youth and mixed-race and multi-heritage families. She would also like to work with queer, trans, and gender nonconforming folks of color, as well as children and families with other marginalized identities. Earning this fellowship will allow Nielson-Smith to enhance her knowledge and professional development by attending counseling-related conferences, as well as bolster her knowledge by attending trainings on filial therapy, eye movement desensitization and reprocessing, and sand tray therapy in her endeavor to work with children who have experienced adverse events and QTPOC individuals who have experienced trauma. Earning this fellowship will also provide Nielson-Smith with opportunities for mentorship so she will better be able to serve underserved populations and ensure her continued advocacy for the counseling profession.

The NBCC Foundation has also awarded 20 \$20,000 [doctoral fellowships](#) through the MFP and 40 [master's-level fellowships](#) of \$15,000 through the MFP for Addictions Counselors (MFP-AC). The NBCC Foundation plans to open the next NBCC MFP-MHC-M application period in fall 2020. To learn more about the NBCC MFP and its fellows, please visit nbccf.org/Programs/Fellows.

*Biographical information provided by the awardee.

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 66,000 board certified counselors in the United States and over 50 countries. The NBCC Foundation's mission is to leverage the power of counseling by strategically focusing resources for positive change.

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