

## PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Charles F. Shepard Awarded \$20,000 Counseling Fellowship From NBCC and Affiliates**



Staunton, VA—The NBCC Foundation, an affiliate of the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC), recently selected Charles F. Shepard, of Staunton, Virginia, for the National Board for Certified Counselors Minority Fellowship Program (NBCC MFP). As an NBCC MFP Fellow, Shepard 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 awarded to the NBCC Foundation by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). The Foundation administers the MFP, including 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 Foundation will distribute \$20,000 to Shepard and the other 19 doctoral counseling students selected to receive the fellowship award. Shepard is a graduate of Reformed Theological Seminary, in Jackson, Mississippi, and of The University of Georgia, in Athens, and is currently a doctoral student in the counseling and supervision program at James Madison University, in Harrisonburg, Virginia. Shepard is currently interested in researching the necessary conditions for developing allies for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, and intersex (LGBTQ+) persons, especially among conservative communities of religious faith. He has particular interest in the prevention of LGBTQ+ suicide and LGBTQ+ youth homelessness. He is the clinical director of the Augusta Resources for Resilience, Opportunity, and Wellness (ARROW) Project, a not-for-profit organization whose mission is to provide unique and proactive mental health programming that fosters resilience in the Staunton, Augusta, Waynesboro (SAW) region of Virginia. Shepard has worked in the SAW region and other parts of the Shenandoah Valley since 2009, applying his knowledge in attachment and family-systems theory to assisting families that have a child at risk of an out-of-home placement (e.g., foster care, acute hospitalization, and juvenile detention). He has also worked in home- and clinic-based settings. This fellowship will fund Shepard's doctoral studies and assist him with dissertation research.

The NBCC Foundation has also awarded 30 \$10,000 [master's-level fellowships](#) through the MFP-Mental Health Counseling-Master's (MFP-MHC-M) and 40 [master's-level fellowships](#) of \$15,000 through the MFP-Addictions Counselors (MFP-AC). The Foundation plans to open the next NBCC MFP application period in fall 2019. To learn more about the NBCC MFP and its fellows, please visit [www.nbccf.org/Programs/Fellows](http://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 66,000 board certified counselors in the United States and over 50 countries. The Foundation's mission is to leverage the power of counseling by strategically focusing resources for positive change.

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