

PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Heather Paige Thomas Awarded \$15,000 Counseling Fellowship From NBCC and Affiliates



Casper, WY—The NBCC Foundation, an affiliate of the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC), recently selected Heather Paige Thomas, of Casper, Wyoming, for the NBCC Minority Fellowship Program-Addictions Counselors (MFP-AC). As an NBCC MFP-AC Fellow, Thomas will receive funding and training to support her education and facilitate her addictions counseling service to underserved minority populations.

The NBCC MFP-AC is made possible by a grant awarded to the NBCC Foundation in collaboration with the Association for Addiction Professionals (NAADAC) by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). The Foundation administers the MFP-AC, including 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 Foundation MFP will distribute up to \$15,000 to Thomas and the other 39 master's-level addictions counseling students selected to receive the fellowship award. Thomas is a graduate of the University of Wyoming at Casper, and is currently a master's student in the clinical mental health counseling program at Antioch University New England, in Keene, New Hampshire. Thomas has a wide variety of experience with the substance abuse population, including currently working as the case manager for a medication assisted treatment program at a community mental health center in Wyoming. Thomas understands and sees the need for more substance abuse counselors in her community with the rising opioid crisis happening in the United States. She has seen the devastation addiction can bring onto the individual and those surrounding them; she has also witnessed the life changing sequences that can develop from an individual in recovery. Thomas intends to help individuals struggling with addiction and aid them in their recovery to live healthy lives. Additionally, Thomas plans on working to break down the barriers of underserved individuals affected with addiction, homelessness, incarceration, mental health disorders, and trauma. Thomas takes a special interest in trauma and its connection to substance abuse, and she plans on pursuing this interest as a counselor with her clients. Thomas' goal is to obtain her LPC and become a National Certified Counselor. Once Thomas has completed this goal, she will begin working in the field and helping her community.

The NBCC Foundation has also awarded 20 \$20,000 [doctoral fellowships](#) through the Minority Fellowship Program and 30 \$10,000 [master's-level fellowships](#) through the MFP-Mental Health Counseling-Master's (MFP-MHC-M). The Foundation plans to open the next NBCC MFP-AC application period in fall 2019. To learn more about the NBCC MFP and its fellows, please visit <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 65,000 board 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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