

## PRESS RELEASE

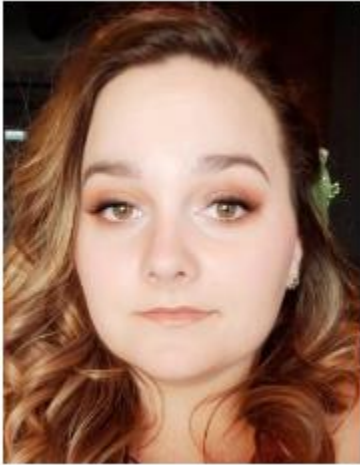
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Leah Riddell Receives Rural Scholarship From the NBCC Foundation**



Bailey, NC—The NBCC Foundation, an affiliate of the National Board for Certified Counselors, Inc. (NBCC), recently awarded an \$8,000 2019 NBCC Foundation rural scholarship to Leah Riddell, of Bailey, North Carolina. The rural scholarship is awarded to counseling students who are from rural communities and commit to practicing in rural areas upon graduation.

The mission of the NBCC Foundation is to leverage the power of counseling by strategically focusing resources for positive change. The Foundation created the rural scholarship in 2009 to improve access to counseling services in rural communities, which suffer disproportionately from a lack of mental health care. More than 85 students from across the country applied for the seven 2019 rural scholarships.

As a rural scholarship recipient, Riddell will receive up to \$8,000 to support her counseling education and recognize her commitment to the underserved. Riddell is both a student and graduate of East Carolina University, in Greenville, North Carolina, where she is currently pursuing a master's degree in the clinical mental health and addictions counseling program. Upon graduation, Riddell intends to provide substance use and mental health counseling services to Eastern North Carolinians. Riddell has a particular passion to serve those who are often marginalized, including ethnic minorities and people living in rural and underserved areas, where mental health services—and access to them—are typically lacking. Having grown up in a rural part of North Carolina, she has seen firsthand how drugs and boredom can impact a small community. Riddell intends to implement virtual counseling practices in order to reach those who cannot afford to make the trek to their nearest counseling facility or do not have one within a reasonable distance. She would also like to work with couples and new parents, focusing on growth and reconnection. Earning this scholarship will allow her to attend counseling conferences to establish a stronger professional identity as a mental health counselor, learn evidence-based practices to better meet the needs of underserved populations, and advocate for the counseling profession.

The NBCC Foundation has also awarded six \$8,000 [military scholarships](#) to increase the number of counselors serving fellow military personnel, veterans, and their families. The Foundation plans to continue offering scholarships to increase the number of counselors in the areas where they are needed most and will open the next application period in spring 2020. For more information or to make a gift in support of scholars like these, please visit [www.nbccf.org](http://www.nbccf.org).

#### 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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