

PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 20, 2017

Aleesha Michelle Hughes 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 Aleesha Michelle Hughes, of Durham, North Carolina, for the NBCC Minority Fellowship Program-Addictions Counselors (MFP-AC). As an NBCC MFP-AC fellow, Hughes 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 Hughes and the 17 other master's-level addictions counseling students selected to receive the fellowship award. Hughes is a graduate of The University of North Carolina at Charlotte, and is currently a master's student in the clinical mental health counseling program at North Carolina Central University, in Durham. Hughes intends to work with underserved transition-age youth and young adults who struggle with addictions (chemical and process) and provide rehabilitation for crises, grief, and traumatic experiences. She would also like to do animal-assisted therapy. She plans to work with people who are often marginalized, such as ethnic minorities and people living in rural areas, where mental health services are typically lacking. Earning this fellowship will allow Hughes to attend counseling conferences to establish a stronger professional identity as a counselor, learn evidence-based practices to better serve underserved populations, and advocate for the counseling profession.

The NBCC Foundation has also awarded 23 \$20,000 [doctoral fellowships](#) through the Minority Fellowship Program, 30 \$8,000 master's-level fellowships through the [MFP-Youth](#) (MFP-Y) program, and 31 additional [MFP-AC](#) fellowships this year. The Foundation will 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.

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 63,000 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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