

## New AHP program offers community mental health training

January 26, 2018 - 1:35pm

*By Suzy Brady*



Thanks to a grant from the California Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development, UC San Francisco's Alliance Health Project (AHP) [1] is introducing a new program to highlight public mental health careers to those traditionally underrepresented in the field of mental health. AHP's Training Program for Community Mental Health is aimed towards people of color, those who identify as LGBTQ, and people who are or have immediate family members who are consumers of mental health services. The program will also seek out individuals who speak English as a second language, people living with a disability, and those of lower income.

The program is open to Bay Area residents ages 18 and older, and does not require a high school diploma or GED. The first cohort is anticipated to finish the program this April.

As one of the six divisions in the Department of Psychiatry at Zuckerberg San Francisco

General Hospital and Trauma Center, AHP offers integrated HIV prevention and behavioral health services to LGBTQ- and HIV-affected communities. Their mission is to support the mental health and wellness of the LGBTQ- and HIV-affected communities in constructing health and meaningful lives.

AHP's Training Program for Community Mental Health aims to offer a supportive learning environment in which participants can work together to explore topics such as trauma-informed care, recovery, harm reduction, and mental health treatment. The collaborative training experience will also incorporate students' knowledge and experience.

Trainees will receive regular supervision from longtime AHP clinician and program coordinator Claudia Figallo, MPH [2], as well as guidance on various opportunities in the field. Participants will also receive support and mentoring from AHP clinical trainees.

For nearly 25 years, postgraduate students preparing for clinical careers in mental health have joined AHP's staff as clinical interns. AHP's Training Program for Community Mental Health will build on this rich history of training and development expertise to provide culturally competent care to members of San Francisco's LGTBQ- and HIV-affected communities.

Recruiting potential mental health professionals from the communities they will serve and nurturing them with guidance, mentorship, and knowledge will increase the likelihood of the field being responsive to the broad diversity of clients who utilize community mental health services. It will reduce stigma, ensure high-quality care, and increase wellness for LGBTQ- and HIV-affected consumers of mental health services.

For more information about the program, contact Claudia Figallo at (415) 502-4098 or [claudia.figallo@ucsf.edu](mailto:claudia.figallo@ucsf.edu) [3].

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## **About UCSF Psychiatry**

The UCSF Department of Psychiatry [4] and the Langley Porter Psychiatric Institute are among the nation's foremost resources in the fields of child, adolescent, adult, and geriatric mental health. Together they constitute one of the largest departments in the UCSF School of Medicine and the UCSF Weill Institute for Neurosciences, with a mission focused on research (basic, translational, clinical), teaching, patient care and public service.

UCSF Psychiatry conducts its clinical, educational and research efforts at a variety of locations in Northern California, including UCSF campuses at Parnassus Heights, Mission Bay and Laurel Heights, UCSF Medical Center, UCSF Benioff Children's Hospitals, Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital and Trauma Center, the San Francisco VA Health Care System and UCSF Fresno.

## **About the UCSF Weill Institute for Neurosciences**

The UCSF Weill Institute for Neurosciences [5], established by the extraordinary generosity of Joan and Sanford I. "Sandy" Weill, brings together world-class researchers with top-ranked physicians to solve some of the most complex challenges in the human brain.

The UCSF Weill Institute leverages UCSF's unrivaled bench-to-bedside excellence in the neurosciences. It unites three UCSF departments—Neurology, Psychiatry, and Neurological

Surgery?that are highly esteemed for both patient care and research, as well as the Neuroscience Graduate Program, a cross-disciplinary alliance of nearly 100 UCSF faculty members from 15 basic-science departments, as well as the UCSF Institute for Neurodegenerative Diseases, a multidisciplinary research center focused on finding effective treatments for Alzheimer?s disease, frontotemporal dementia, Parkinson?s disease, and other neurodegenerative disorders.

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**Source URL (modified on 02/05/2018 - 1:43pm):** <https://psychiatry.ucsf.edu/news/new-ahp-program-offers-community-mental-health-training>

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