



AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION Services, Inc.

Maintain Support for Critical Psychology Workforce Programs

THE GRADUATE PSYCHOLOGY EDUCATION PROGRAM

FY19 Funding: \$18 million | FY20 Request: \$18 million

Established in 2002, the Graduate Psychology Education (GPE) Program supports the education and training of doctoral level psychologists. Administered by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), GPE provides grants to accredited psychology doctoral, internship and postdoctoral training programs to support the interprofessional training of psychology graduate students while also providing mental and behavioral health services to underserved populations, such as older adults, children, those suffering from chronic illness, veterans, and victims of abuse and natural disasters. GPE funds may be used to cover costs for student, intern and postdoctoral stipends, curriculum development, model demonstration programs, faculty supervision and technical assistance. **In academic year 2016-2017, GPE grantees supported the training of more than 189 graduate students.**

Psychology students, interns and postdocs train with approximately thirty other health professionals, including: pediatricians, neurologists, oncologists, surgeons, psychiatrists, nurses, dentists, pharmacists, occupational therapists and social workers. This integrated health care approach has proven to be effective in decreasing misdiagnoses, increasing timely treatment, and reducing depressive symptoms.

In Academic Year 2016-2017, the majority of students who received a stipend through GPE were trained in underserved communities (96 percent) and/or a primary care setting (84 percent).

THE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH WORKFORCE EDUCATION & TRAINING PROGRAM

FY19 Funding: \$75 million | FY20 Request: \$75 million

Also administered by HRSA, the Behavioral Health Workforce Education & Training (BHWET) Program supports pre-degree clinical internships and field placements for doctoral-level psychologists students, master's-level social workers, school social workers, professional and school counselors, psychiatric-mental health nurse practitioners, occupational therapists, behavioral pediatrics, training programs in psychiatry, substance use disorder prevention, and marriage and family therapists. In 2017, the Health Resources and Services Administration released a new Funding Opportunity Announcement that expanded the program to include behavioral health workforce professionals serving populations across the lifespan, including in rural and medically underserved areas.



THE ROLE OF HEALTH SERVICE PSYCHOLOGISTS

Psychologists (clinical, counseling, and school) provide health care services, engage in evidence-based practice that is patient-centered, culturally competent, effective and informed by population-based data. They are skilled in collaboration with other health professionals, and demonstrate a commitment to lifelong learning and continuous quality improvement in their practice.

They are grounded in psychological science and integrate knowledge from other areas such as biology and sociology into their practice as appropriate. They are not only critical consumers of psychological research, but are able to conduct scientific research, especially practice-based outcomes research and program evaluation.

AT-RISK POPULATIONS SERVED BY GPE/BHWET

The GPE/BHWET Programs address the unmet mental and behavioral health needs of our nation's most vulnerable populations.

- Veterans
- Older Adults
- Victims of Abuse
- Ethnic Minorities
- Individuals with Disabilities
- Children and Adolescents
- Rural Populations
- Victims of Disasters
- Tribal Populations
- Individuals with Chronic Illness

For additional information, please contact: Karen Studwell, JD

Associate Executive Director | Education Government Relations Office | Phone: (202) 336-5585 | Email: kstudwell@apa.org



APA urges Congress to preserve the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program and demonstrate support for the program by becoming a member of the bipartisan PSLF Caucus in the U.S. House of Representatives.

THE PUBLIC SERVICE LOAN FORGIVENESS PROGRAM (PSLF)

The PSLF, first authorized in the College Cost Reduction and Access Act, passed with bipartisan support by a vote of 79 – 12 in the Senate, 292 – 97 in the House, and was signed into law by President George W. Bush in 2007. This legislation amended the Higher Education Act (HEA) of 1965, which was last reauthorized in 2008. Congress is currently reviewing that foundational law at the Committee level.

The PSLF Program supports students pursuing higher education by providing loan forgiveness to those who commit themselves to a career in public service (employed by a nonprofit or government). PSLF ensures that recent graduates can pursue higher education, including advanced degrees, and choose a career path that puts service to the public ahead of other factors. To participate in the PSLF Program and receive loan forgiveness, an individual must have a federal Direct Loan, make 120 monthly on-time payments (10 years), and be enrolled in an income-driven repayment plan while employed full-time in a qualified public-service job.

DEBT LIMITS THE ABILITY OF PSYCHOLOGY GRADUATE STUDENTS TO PURSUE CAREERS IN SERVICE

Health service psychologists graduate with an average debt load between \$95,000 and \$138,500.¹ Studies demonstrate that debt impacts career choice, reducing the probability that graduates will pursue careers in the public interest.² Debt also delays marriage, home ownership and entrepreneurial undertakings, decelerating the sustained growth and competitiveness of the American economy. Data shows that the need for licensed mental and behavioral health professionals remains great across the United States, with every state having documented mental health professions shortage areas.³ While the need for mental health professionals grows, there has been a steady paring back of federal student financial aid available for graduate education.

PRESERVE AND PROTECT THE PUBLIC SERVICE LOAN FORGIVENESS PROGRAM

The PSLF program offers a solution. As Congress considers changes to the HEA, APA asks policymakers to preserve and protect the PSLF program.

- PSLF has a two-fold benefit to our nation – it allows students with financial need to pursue higher education and makes service to others an affordable career choice after completing their degree.
- Our country has documented needs for a highly-skilled domestic workforce. Between 2010 and 2020, there are projected to be approximately 1.7 million jobs requiring a doctorate or professional degree.⁴ Without PSLF, advanced degrees are further out of reach for students with financial need who rely more heavily on loans.
- Psychologists and other highly trained mental health providers are needed to fill our nation’s critical mental health workforce shortages. The need for psychologists is expected to grow faster than average from 2014-24 with increased demand for services in schools, hospitals, mental health centers and social service agencies.⁵
- Nearly 50% of PhD-level psychologists rely on loans or their own funds to pay for graduate school, which takes on average 5-6 years to complete, and most states require an advanced degree to provide mental health services.⁶

For additional information, please contact Jennifer Beard Smulson

Senior Legislative & Federal Affairs Officer | APA Education Government Relations Office | (202) 336-5945 | jmulson@apa.org

1 Doran, J., Kraha, A., Marks, L., Amen, E. and El-Ghoroury, N., (2016). Graduate Debt in Psychology: A Quantitative Analysis. Training and Education in Professional Psychology, 2016, Vol. 10, No. 1, 3-13.
2 Choi, Y. (2014). Debt and college students' life transitions: The effect of educational debt on career choice in America. Journal of Student Financial Aid, 44(1), 3. Retrieved from <http://publications.nasfaa.org/jsfa/vol44/iss1/3/>
3 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, Bureau of Health Workforce. (2017). Designated Health Professional Shortage Area Statistics as of August 14, 2017. Retrieved from <https://datawarehouse.hrsa.gov/topics/shortageAreas.aspx>
4 Sommers, D., & Franklin, J. C. (2012). Overview of projections to 2020. Monthly Labor Review Online, 135(1), 3–20. Retrieved from <http://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2012/01/>
5 U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2017). 2016-2017 Occupational Outlook Handbook, Psychologists. Retrieved from <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/life-physical-and-social-science/psychologists.htm#tab-6>
6 Doran, J., Kraha, A., Marks, L., Amen, E. and El-Ghoroury, N., (2016). Graduate Debt in Psychology: A Quantitative Analysis. Training and Education in Professional Psychology, 2016, Vol.10, No. 1, 3-13.



2019 House Calendar

= House in Session (Washington, DC)

= House in District

January

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
		1 New Year's Day	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21 MLK Day	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

February

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18 Presidents Day	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28		

March

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17 St. Patrick's Day	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

April

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19 Good Fri. Passover (begins)	20
21 Easter Sunday	22	23	24	25	26	27
28 Orthodox Easter	29	30				

May

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
			1	2	3	4
5	6 Ramadan (begins)	7	8	9	10	11
12 Mother's Day	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27 Memorial Day	28	29	30	31	

June

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16 Father's Day	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

July

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
	1	2	3	4 Independence Day	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

August

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11 Eid al-Adha	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

September

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
1	2 Labor Day	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29 Rosh Hashana (begins)	30					

October

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
		1 FY '20 (begins)	2	3	4	5
6	7	8 Yom Kippur (begins)	9 Yom Kippur (begins)	10	11	12
13	14 Columbus Day	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27 Diwali	28	29	30	31		

November

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11 Veterans' Day	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28 Thanks-giving Day	29	30

December

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22 Hanukkah (begins)	23	24	25 Christmas Day	26 Kwanzaa	27	28
29	30 Hanukkah (ends)	31				

Sample Email Invite to Member of Congress

Meeting to Discuss Support for the Psychology Workforce - Message - Mail

— □ ×

Format

Insert

Draw

Options

🗑 Discard ➤ Send

B

I

U



A

▼

☰

☰

☰

▼

Heading 1

↶

Undo

↷

Redo

From: aginsberg@apa.org

To: sample@mail.house.gov;

👤 Cc & Bcc

Good Afternoon [Name of Person message is addressed to]:

I am writing to request a meeting with the Representative [LAST NAME] for myself and my graduate psychology students from Institution's program to discuss several key federal programs that are providing critical support to the future psychology workforce. I understand Representative [LAST NAME] will be in the district the week of [DATE]. **Would [HE/SHE] be available to meet with my graduate trainees and me at 10:00 AM in [DISTRICT OFFICE LOCATION]?**

As a psychologist and constituent, I am deeply concerned about the unmet mental and behavioral health needs in our district, especially the need for additional qualified behavioral health providers to meet those growing needs. In particular, we would like to discuss the Fiscal Year 2020 appropriations for the Graduate Psychology Education (GPE) Program and the Behavioral Health Workforce Education and Training (BHWET) Program, as well as our support for the Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) Program.

If the requested time does not work, please suggest a time that works better for Representative [LAST NAME]'s schedule.

Thank you in advance for your assistance. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

[NAME, INSTITUTION]



BACKGROUND RESEARCH & POTENTIAL OPPOSITION:

MEMBER'S PRIORITIES

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____
- 5 _____

Do any of these overlap with my goals?

AREAS OF OVERLAPPING PRIORITIES

- What issues do we agree on?
- Where are there potential areas of collaboration?

“HOT TOPICS TO AVOID”

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____

What might be some potential opposition to my issue?

POTENTIAL PUSHBACKS

- What might be some potential pushbacks from the Member and how might you respond to support your ask?



Congressional Visit Talking Points:
Strengthen Federal Support for the Psychology Workforce

INTRODUCTION/PURPOSE



Introduce yourself as a constituent and a psychologist here on behalf of the American Psychological Association. Remember to include your title/position/institution. Tell him/her that you are here to discuss federal support for the psychology workforce — both students and early career psychologists— to expand access to mental and behavioral health services.

In particular, you are asking the Member to support level funding in FY20 appropriations for HRSA’s Graduate Psychology Education (GPE) Program and Behavioral Health Workforce Education & Training (BHWET) Program, in addition to protecting the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program (PSLF) during the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act.

PERSONALIZE THE ISSUE



Provide information about the unmet mental and behavioral health needs of underserved populations in your community (e.g. older adults, children, those suffering from chronic illness, substance use disorders, veterans, victims of abuse, and ethnic minority populations).

Share examples of the impact of debt on students that would like to pursue advanced degrees and subsequently pursue career paths in public service, often for lower pay, in challenging environments and with long hours.

EXPLAIN THE IMPORTANCE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES TO YOUR COMMUNITY



Using anecdotes, underscore the contributions that psychology trainees, or psychologists, can/do make in communities or training programs. Describe the impact on various settings including work in integrated primary care settings, Community Health Centers, education and social services.



Congressional Visit Talking Points:
Strengthen Federal Support for the Psychology Workforce



EXPLAIN THE IMPACT OF THESE PROGRAMS TO YOU, YOUR INSTITUTION, AND/OR YOUR STUDENTS

Explain how you use/would use the increased funding for GPE/BHWET grants (e.g., expand training opportunities, develop an interprofessional program to provide services to underserved population(s)—specify which one/ones). Explain how PSLF would make it easier for you or your graduate trainees to provide services to underserved communities.

As a reminder, the GPE Program provides mental and behavioral health services to underserved individuals in rural and urban communities nationwide, while also, supporting the training of the next generation of psychologists to work in integrated primary care settings. The BHWET Program seeks to develop and expand the broader behavioral health workforce serving populations across the lifespan, including in rural and medically underserved areas. The PSLF Program increases access and affordability to higher education while, at the same time, providing a pathway to meaningful work in non-profit or government sectors, including mental and behavioral healthcare, education and public safety, for graduates with loan debt.

THE “ASK”



Urge your Members of Congress to support level funding in FY20 for HRSA’s GPE and BHWET programs and support the Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) Program by joining the bipartisan PSLF Caucus.

EXPRESS APPRECIATION FOR THE VISIT



Thank the Senator/Representative/staff for giving you the opportunity to meet with him/her and for their continued support of the psychology workforce. Ask if there is any further information that you (or APA) can provide. If you are a GPE/BHWET grantee, ask the staff if they would be interested in visiting the program and your students back in the district or state.
