

### *For Immediate Release*

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## **Simmons College Receives \$1.8 Million Grant to Prepare Social Workers for Professional Placements in Rural and Urban Medically Underserved Areas**

BOSTON (September 27, 2017) – Simmons College today announced that its renowned School of Social Work (SSSW) was awarded an \$1.8 million federal grant that will help students training to be social workers prepare for inter-professional placements with vulnerable populations in urban and rural medically underserved areas.

The grant was awarded by the Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA), which is part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The funds will enable Simmons to further expand its Behavioral Health Workforce Initiative and elevate its work in the field of behavioral health and primary care by providing project support and stipends over four years for 116 advanced Master of Social Work students.

“This generous grant allows the Simmons School of Social Work to train highly qualified clinicians who can work across professions,” said Associate Dean Suzanne Sankar. “Our students will be helping some of the most vulnerable and medically under-served populations of all ages. This is essentially a workforce development grant that will benefit behavioral health patients with the greatest need and limited access to care.”

Each year’s cohort will include students representing racial and ethnic diversity and/or bilingual skills. The grant will fund two additional rural partners for a total of 40 new placements in North Central Massachusetts and outer Cape Cod. Simmons’ Metro-Boston partners include the Codman Square Community Health Center in Dorchester, the South End Community Health Center, the Chelsea Health Center and Stanley Street Treatment and Resources in Fall River.

This is the second grant of its kind awarded to SSSW by the HRSA. In 2014, Simmons received a nearly \$974,000 grant that supported 73 advanced MSW students to complete field placements in integrated care settings. The first cohort worked in community health centers, mental health clinics, and public schools with children, youth and families.

“We’re honored that the work of the Simmons School of Social Work has been recognized and validated with this new HRSA funding,” said Associate Professor Kim Harriman, who serves as the SSSW’s Director of Field Education and Student Affairs. “I believe that Simmons was chosen for this highly competitive grant because of the success of our first training program. In fact, many of those students are now working in the field.”

# News



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