

Minority Fellowship Program



Fall 2009

MHSAS Postdoctoral Recommendation Instructions

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The applicant is applying for a competitive *American Psychological Association (APA) Minority Fellowship Program (MFP) Postdoctoral Fellowship in Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (MHSAS)*, and has identified you as his/her proposed *sponsor*. MFP's *Postdoctoral Fellowship in MHSAS* is open to African Americans/Blacks, American Indians and Alaskan Natives, Asians and Pacific Islanders, Latinos/Hispanics, and/or those who are committed to careers that primarily focus on ethnic minority mental health services. Trainees must be psychologists who are recent (5 year) degree-recipients. If selected, the applicant will be provided a stipend commensurate with his/her training level per current NRSA guidelines (visit the NIH web site at <http://grants.nih.gov/training/nrsa.htm> for more information), a small budget for travel and related expenses, an invitation to MFP's annual workshop for mentors and fellows, and opportunities for mentoring and networking with leading ethnic minority psychologists.

This fellowship is designed to support the training of practitioners, researchers, and policymakers in mental health or substance abuse services and prevention in the following areas:

- To promote culturally competent mental health or substance abuse service delivery, research, and policy related to ethnic minority populations;

- To increase the number of ethnic minority psychologists delivering mental health or substance abuse services to ethnic minority populations, and to provide them with clinical competencies and confidence through intensive experiences in advanced, professional specialty training;
- To enable ethnic minority investigators to undertake active, productive careers in research related to mental health; mental illness; and substance prevention, treatment, and abuse; to expose them to state-of-the-art research and cutting-edge science; and to strengthen their commitment to research in their chosen specialty area; and
- To increase the understanding of the social, economic and political forces affecting ethnic minority mental health or substance abuse prevention and treatment, and to further develop analytical skills in matters of public policy formulation, legislation and implementation related to ethnic minority populations.

Thank you for your interest in supporting this applicant.

Steps for Submitting Your Recommendation

Once you begin, you may click the help link at any time to get more instructions. You will receive email confirmation about the status of your recommendation (completed or not completed) once you log out.

1. Complete the Basic Information page
2. Complete the Applicant Information page
3. Upload your recommendation letter
4. Upload your CV/NIH Biosketch (Advisors only)
5. Make sure your recommendation is complete (Check Status)
6. Print your recommendation form
7. Logout

GENERAL INFORMATION

Please review the instructions carefully and thoroughly. As a precaution, and for your own future reference, please keep a photocopy of all original material that you send to us.

Please note that **individuals are not required to specialize in substance abuse** in order to receive this fellowship.

SUBMITTING YOUR RECOMMENDATION ONLINE

All applications and recommendations must be submitted via our online system, the MFP Fellowship Application System Tool (FAST). We do not accept emailed, faxed or mailed letters of recommendation*.

*** If you have extenuating circumstances, please contact the MFP Office and we will work with you to make sure your recommendation is submitted.**

Compatible Browsers - The FAST online application system has been tested with both PC and Apple systems on the following browsers: Internet Explorer 6.0 and above, Mozilla Firefox 1.0.1 and above, and Netscape 7.2 and above.

How to Use FAST

Instructions/Help

While navigating through FAST, you may access this HELP document with complete Application instructions by using the Need Help button on the FAST links menu bar.

Navigation

The menu bar to the left of the screen of the application form titled FAST Links contains links for all of the sections of the application. You may go to any section of the application using the corresponding link. You may select items by clicking on the item or by using tabs to move from field to field. Once you have completed the required items on any page you may also use the buttons at the bottom of the page to continue on to the next page.

Saving

You must save each screen using the Save button at the bottom of every page before moving. When you have completed entering the requested information. If you do not save and go to another screen using the side navigation bar the data you have already entered will be lost. Be sure to save regularly to prevent data loss. For each screen a message will appear at the top of the screen in green: *Recommendation data was retrieved successfully* once your data has been successfully saved.

Required Items

Items with **required** in bold parentheses are required items and you will not be able to progress directly to the next screen without completing the required items. If you try to save, you will be provided with a list of required items not completed.

Basic Information - On the menu, enter your first and last names as you would like them to appear on the recommendation form. Complete your contact information and then select Save at the bottom of the page. After you have saved your work, use the left hand menu bar to go to the next section.

Applicant Information - These items are required, however, you do have the option to select Unable to Judge. Complete the recommendation form and then select Save at the bottom of the page. After you have saved your work, use the left hand menu bar to go to the next section.

Upload Documents - You will be asked to submit your letter of recommendation to be attached with the application. Sponsors will also be asked to submit an NIH biosketch or CV. Please prepare your document(s) beforehand and save it on your computer. These documents must be in Microsoft Word or PDF format. Then select Upload Files to upload your files. You may replace a document by uploading another document in its place.

Check Status – You may check the status of your recommendation at any time by selecting the Check Status item on the left hand menu bar. This will allow you to see what items have been completed and which still need to be completed. You may also print out this screen for a confirmation of your recommendation completion.

Logging out and Returning to your Recommendation

Logout will log you out of the system. Once you log out, you will be sent a confirmation email that updates you on the status of your recommendation. You will be allowed to return to update your recommendation at a later time using the original link you received, your login and the last name of the applicant for which you are submitting a recommendation to return to your application. Remember to SAVE your work before logging out.

Submitting your Recommendation

Submit will send your recommendation form to MFP. Even after submitting your form, you will be able edit it if necessary until it is prepared for review.

Printing your Recommendation

Print will open a new browser window with your completed form. Click File and Print from the new window to print the form.

Guidelines for the Recommendation Letter

Please discuss your assessment of the applicant by carefully addressing each point listed below. If you are unable to address certain areas because you lack personal experience working with him/her, please disregard those areas in your letter.

- a. How long and in what capacity have you known the applicant?
- b. What are the applicant's major strengths and relevant weaknesses? Include examples of the applicant's academic and training experiences to illustrate your assessment. Examples which illuminate your responses to the above ratings and potential for **an independent career in research, services, or policy** would be most helpful.
- c. What attributes, skills, educational background, interest areas, etc. does the applicant possess that makes her/him a strong postdoctoral trainee candidate for your training program? What are the potential benefits of working with this applicant?
- d. What process of evaluation and evaluation criteria did you use in deciding to sponsor this applicant?

REMEMBER, THE APPLICATION DEADLINE IS JANUARY 15, 2010.