

ANNOUNCING:
FAMILY SERVICES OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA
GRADUATE FELLOWSHIP IN COMMUNITY AND
CITIZEN CAPACITY BUILDING

General Information

Family Services of Western Pennsylvania, celebrating its 125th year of providing social services to citizens of the Greater Pittsburgh region, announces the establishment of a competitive nine month fellowship for a graduate student who is attending a Masters or Doctoral level program in one of the universities in the agency's service area. The stipend for this fellowship will be \$10,000, to be paid in equal monthly increments during the time frame of the fellowship. The successful applicant will commence his or her project in September 2010 with a completion date by May 1, 2011. The fellowship will require field placement at Family Services of Western Pennsylvania facilities and the agency will contribute significant resources of its own to support the fellow. This will include the assignment of a senior staff member to serve as a fellowship mentor, assignment of agency staff to provide administrative support, and assistance of the agency Director of Research and Evaluation for developing an evaluation design for the project. Family Services of Western Pennsylvania is especially interested in supporting fellowship projects that the agency can continue beyond the term of the fellowship; therefore, the agency's Director of Development will also engage with the fellow to identify potential long term funding and solicit outside financial support, if appropriate. The agency will incorporate the fellow's project into its fiscal year 2011 operations plan, so that it receives endorsement of the board of trustees as one of the annual initiatives of the agency. Family Services of Western Pennsylvania will require that the fellow provide appropriate recognition of the agency in any publications the fellow develops from this project and that the fellow grant the agency the right to continue to operate any programs developed through the project. While a university partnership is not required for this fellowship, Family Services will consider proposals that link to university field credit for this project and is willing to collaborate with universities where a joint credited venture is suggested. Negotiation with universities for course credit for this fellowship, if desired, will be the responsibility of the applicant, not Family Services of Western Pennsylvania.

Family Services of Western Pennsylvania, with a budget of approximately \$25 million, provides a wide range of behavioral health and social services, employs 480 staff, and serves approximately 7500 people per year in more than 30 facilities in western Pennsylvania communities. The main service areas lie in Westmoreland and Allegheny Counties, but the agency also has a service presence in Washington, Fayette, Greene, Armstrong, Butler, and Beaver counties. Graduate students attending university programs in any of these counties may apply. A full description of the agency can be found on its web site, www.fswp.org.

Intended Focus of the Fellowship

The fellowship should focus on a project that will make a significant contribution to the building of citizen and community capacity consistent with the mission and strategic plan of Family Services of Western Pennsylvania. That mission is ***to foster the capacities and skills in families and individuals to direct their own lives, promote recovery and resiliency, and create a productive, caring community.*** The agency's 2009-2012 Strategic Plan has four objectives as noted below.

- Objective 1: ***Intensify the measured impact of service interventions.***
Examples of related initiatives might include transitional employment opportunities, implementation of evidence-based children's services, refinement of mobile service models.
- Objective 2: ***Nurture supportive resources in communities.***
Examples of related initiatives might include expanded volunteer and employment opportunities for older adults, assisting youth transition from service systems, improved community housing resources, community empowerment interventions.
- Objective 3: ***Elevate staff capacity to conduct the agency mission.***
Examples of initiatives might include recruitment and retention strategies, progressive pay models, integrated teams and innovative staffing models, resolution of employee health insurance challenges.
- Objective 4: ***Activate progressive logistical supports for service delivery.***
Examples of initiatives might include creative utilization of information technology, distance bridging communication technologies, innovative configuration of facilities, and mobility strategies for delivering social services.

These examples are not intended to limit applicants but to provide some guidance. Creative proposals for other initiatives that address any of the four objectives are encouraged.

How to Apply

Narrative Proposal Stage

One fellowship will be granted for the period starting in September 2010. If the agency review panel does not identify a fundable application, a fellowship will not be awarded. Interested applicants should submit a preliminary **narrative proposal of no more than five single spaced pages** in length clearly describing the project they intend to conduct and how it will support and nourish the agency's strategic objectives. **Include project**

objectives, action steps and time lines for a nine month period of operations. Describe the applicant's relevant experience that qualifies him or her to succeed in the proposed endeavor and identify three individuals who will be familiar with the proposal and can provide references that verify these capabilities. **Applicants who move to the second stage of review will be asked to secure reference letters.** Indicate whether the proposed project has been coordinated with a university program of study or whether it is being proposed as an independent project. **Applicants must submit a brief resume' or vita with the narrative application.** Other attachments or appendices necessary to clarify the project, may be submitted with, and in addition to, the five page narrative. **Applicants will submit proposals electronically to fswp@fswp.org, Attn: Family Services Fellowship, by the deadline date of 5 PM, February 19, 2010.** A panel assembled by the agency will review initial submissions and, from them, will select several applications that will be forwarded for a second stage review.

Questionnaire Stage

The second stage of the review process will consist of a questionnaire that addresses specific aspects of the applicant's proposal. The agency will contact each finalist during the week of March 8, 2010 to provide questionnaires that will be used to narrow the number of applicants who will be invited to participate in interviews. **Finalists will be asked to submit responses to the questionnaires within one week.** Following agency review of written responses to the questionnaire, some applicants will be selected to participate in interviews.

Interview Stage

The agency will schedule at least two interviews with a limited number of finalists. These interviews, with senior agency staff and members of an expert panel convened by Family Services, will be scheduled between mid March and mid April. Finalists in this phase will also participate in negotiation of various aspects of operating their project within the agency structure; and feasibility of implementing proposed projects within Family Services will be an important consideration in final selection of the fellow. **It is expected that the successful applicant will be identified and announced by May, 2010** and that individual will be invited to join in a contract with the agency at that time.

Frequently Asked Questions

Applicants will be expected to conduct their own background research about the agency and the areas in which the agency wishes the fellowship to focus. Nonetheless, between the time this announcement is issued and 5 PM January 22, potential applicants may submit questions electronically to the web site listed above. Subsequent to January 22, the agency will develop responses to the more frequently asked questions and questions of common interest and send this information to all applicants.

