Sixty educational stipends of $18,500 each were awarded to MFT students this academic year, 2009-10. Recipients of the stipends have agreed to complete 12 months of employment or volunteer work at an agency affiliated with the mental health delivery system of a county in the State. Recipients were selected, in part, for their willingness to provide clinical services upon graduating in areas understaffed for mental health care and with populations requiring professionals with bilingual and multicultural capacities. For the names of the stipend recipients and their school affiliations, see pages 38 and 39.

The California Department of Mental Health initiated educational stipend programs for various disciplines including marriage and family therapists in an effort to address the need for mental health professionals in underserved communities. Funded through the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA), the stipend programs are part of a larger workforce plan to recruit, train, and retain professionals committed to a career in public mental health practice.

MFT Leadership Partnership
In order to implement a statewide recruitment of MFT students for these stipends, CAMFT, AAMFT-CA and administrators of MFT academic programs formed a partnership that included over 55 MFT schools. It was modeled after a partnership between the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health and the Southern California Consortium of MFT Educators that successfully delivered a recruitment of MFT students for the County’s stipends. (See the 2006 May-June issue of The Therapist for a report on the Los Angeles County’s MFT stipend project.)

Administered by Phillips Graduate Institute on behalf of the MFT Consortium, 418 MFT students were selected in the past five academic years for the Los Angeles County’s stipend program.

Likewise under the administrative leadership of Phillips Graduate Institute, the professional organizations and the MFT school administrators formed a network of regional consortia that reached 19 counties from Butte to Imperial counties. The regional consortia include the MFT Consortium of Greater Sacramento, hosted by the University of San Francisco–Sacramento, the MFT Consortium of the Bay Area, hosted by San Francisco State University, the MFT Consortium of Greater Los Angeles, hosted by Phillips Graduate Institute, the MFT Consortium of Orange County, hosted by Pepperdine University–Irvine, and the MFT Consortium of San Diego, hosted by Alliant International University–San Diego. For a list of participating MFT schools in each regional consortia, see pages 40 and 41.

Objective of the State Stipend Programs
The California educational stipend programs promote the mission of the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA), which was enacted in 2005, to transform the State’s public mental health delivery system. The guiding values of the MHSA mission are based on the 2003 vision statement of the President’s New Freedom Commission on Mental Health (www.MentalHealthCommission.gov). The commission envisioned “a future when everyone with a mental illness will recover, a future when mental illnesses are detected early, and a future when a person with mental illnesses at any stage of life has access to effective treatment and support—essentials for living, working, learning, and participating fully in the community.”

To realize a transformed mental health delivery system, MHSA funds were directed towards a statewide workforce plan of
professionals dedicated to community service and to the care of those living with mental illness. These professionals would be trained in promoting the recovery of those with mental illnesses by focusing on their personal strengths, respecting their cultural perspectives, and learning from their lived experiences as consumers of public mental health care. Through the MHSA funds for workforce development, stipend programs were established to recruit students pursuing graduate degrees in marriage and family therapy, social work, and clinical psychology.

Goals of the MFT Stipend Program
The goals of the State’s stipend program for MFT students are to recruit MFT graduates with the capacity to serve the culturally diverse needs of persons in mental health care, to prepare recruited MFT graduates in the delivery of mental health services that promote wellness, recovery and resilience, and to recruit into MFT academic programs individuals who have experience in the mental health system as clients or family members of clients.

The ultimate objective of the State’s MFT stipend program is to advance public mental health as a career option for those entering the MFT profession. Towards that end, the stipend program promotes curriculum development in MFT graduate schools that best prepare their students for public mental health practice.

The State’s stipend program recruits MFT students who are able to serve client populations in diverse communities, have bilingual and/or multicultural capacity, have ongoing community service through volunteerism and employment in non-profit settings, education, and health service. Many demonstrated a commitment to serving as professionals, the disadvantaged communities where they grew up or still live. Some disclosed their family’s challenges of having a member with mental illness and with the struggles of inadequate care, limited resources, and the stigma they experienced. The stipend recipients expressed a desire to continue their dedication to community service as practitioners in the public mental health delivery system. See the profiles of some of these recipients throughout this article.

Administrators of the State’s Stipends
There are three academic institutions that are administering the California Department of Mental Health’s stipends for MFTs. Phillips Graduate Institute (Encino) is administering the delivery of sixty stipends through its partnership with the five regional consortia. Portions of these sixty stipends have been allocated to each of these regions. California State University–Chico administers five stipends for its students, Butte, and neighboring counties. Loma Linda University also administers five stipends for its students in the Inland Empire. Information about these stipend programs for MFTs can be obtained through each administrator’s school website.

VERONICA AVALOS, PHILLIPS GRADUATE INSTITUTE
Practicum: El Centro de Amistad, Canoga Park
My experience with public mental health started with a cousin who came to live with us; he falls on the autistic spectrum. It taught me the importance of creating unique and specific plans to fit a client’s needs without losing focus of their strengths and resources. Volunteering at a group home and hospice gave me an experience with many different populations. Working with at-risk youth gave me a unique view of the needs of an entire family unit. What I learned not only satisfied my desire to work in public mental health, but also gave me the tools to treat each client with the dignity and respect they so deserve.

ESMERALDA HERNANDEZ, PACIFIC OAKS COLLEGE
Practicum: The Almansor Center, South Pasadena
While working in public mental health as a case manager and practicum student, I obtained experience to work in different settings, such as schools, homes and in a clinic. I chose to obtain a specialization in Latina Family Studies in order to further advocate and support Spanish-speaking families who are under-represented and who do not know of the services that are available to them because of language and cultural barriers. As a Mexican American, my professional interest and commitment to public mental health is that I see the need to serve impoverished and disenfranchised communities.

José Luis Flores, MA, is a faculty member of the MFT Program at Phillips Graduate Institute and has served as the administrator of Phillips’ stipend contracts for both the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health and the California Department of Mental Health. Since 1995 he has been the host and leader of the Southern California Consortium of MFT Educators and Agency Directors, now known as the MFT Consortium of Greater Los Angeles.

Lisa Wolfe, MS, is the program coordinator of the MFT Stipend Program at Phillips Graduate Institute. She has worked as the Clinical Training Coordinator for the MFT Program at Phillips for eight years and provided administrative assistant services during that period to the MFT Consortium of Greater Los Angeles. Lisa received her degree from the University of La Verne in Marriage, Family and Child Therapy.
### MFT Consortium of Greater Sacramento

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Institution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alicia Aida Iniguez</td>
<td>University of San Francisco, Sacramento</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lien Pham</td>
<td>Alliant University, Sacramento</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thanh Nuong-Kathy Nguyen</td>
<td>California State University, Sacramento</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer Racine</td>
<td>California State University, Sacramento</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sierra Sparks</td>
<td>Brandman University</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### MFT Consortium of the Bay Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Institution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lilian Alfaro</td>
<td>Santa Clara University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joy Amao</td>
<td>California Institute of Integral Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michelle Mireya Baca</td>
<td>California State University, Sonoma</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### MFT Students Awarded State Stipends

- Ana Bandjak: The Institute of Transpersonal Psychology
- María Luisa Buckallew: Santa Clara University
- Alyssa Girón: Argosy University, Alameda
- Jimmy K. Ho: San Francisco State University, SF
- Jennifer Hu: University of San Francisco, San Francisco
- Maya Johansson: California Institute of Integral Studies
- Janet López: Santa Clara University
- Jamie Luck: University of San Francisco
- Ana McParland-Gonzalez: The Institute of Transpersonal Psychology
- Jennifer Parr: California Institute of Integral Studies
- Sharon Piwowarski: California Institute of Integral Studies
- Ariana Sanchez: Argosy University, Alameda
- Rosa Serpas: San Francisco State University
- Esin Tanya Zamora: California State University, Sonoma
- Veronica Avalos: Phillips Graduate Institute
- Keturah Baker: Pepperdine University, W. LA
- Gerard Bautista: Pepperdine University, W. LA
- Pauline Castellanos: Pepperdine University, Malibu
- Martha Castillo: Pacific Oaks College

---

### NAIRI MATHEWSIAN, UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Practicum: Glen Roberts Child Study Center, Glendale

"I am from an Armenian family who has dealt with bilingual accommodating in Southern California. My professional endeavor to work as a therapist to providing services to the community in which I was raised. My experience so far in a variety of clinical counseling positions and with various populations, has greatly influenced my desire to serve individuals who are underrepresented in the community in order to make a meaningful difference. By treating each individual as a part of his or her family and community, the work that is completed in counseling will translate to the interactions the individual has with his or her community." 

---

### LAURA GUANILL, ANTIOCH UNIVERSITY

Practicum: Salvation Army, Santa Barbara

"Training in dual diagnosis in an alcohol/drug program, collaborating with mental health, striving for success of clients through recovery and stability, has motivated my ambition to serve as an MFT. Being bilingual, bicultural, and demographically diverse has inspired me, and has given me a keen awareness of the stigma and cultural barriers that exist in seeking public mental health services. I feel I can be an outlet for those in our community who are torn and stressed on a daily basis with the simplest of decisions. In the Latino community assimilating into the dominant culture is a strain on the morals and values of their culture. I am a product of both of these societies, and I understand."
Bring Diversity, Multicultural Capacity and Bilingual Skills to Public Mental Health Care

EDUCATIONAL STIPENDS

ILEN FIELDS, PACIFIC OAKS COLLEGE
Practicum: Shandin Hills Behavioral Therapy Care, San Bernadino

My career began as a middle school counselor for at-risk youth in Compton. Following this position, I worked with severely emotionally disturbed adolescents in a residential setting. Later, as a child and family specialist providing rehabilitation and case management services to underserved children and families throughout Los Angeles County. Growing up watching my mentally disabled sister ridiculed on a regular basis, gave me the reason for wanting to help change the stigma applied to mental illness. My history of advocating for my sister along with the passion I hold for the study of mind and human behavior, keeps me intrigued and committed to working in public mental health.

KETURAH BAKER, PEPPERDINE-WEST LOS ANGELES CAMPUS
Practicum: Homes for Life Foundation, Los Angeles

I spent my adolescent years in foster homes. This experience led to my decision ten years ago to become a foster parent. As an undergraduate, I volunteered at the David and Margaret Home for girls in La Verne, and I worked with at-risk adolescents at the Institute of Black Parenting. These experiences helped to solidify my goal to work with families with at-risk children, a population that I feel has not been adequately served by the clinical profession. My professional goal would be to use my experiences to encourage families to build strong value systems that are in line with MFT practices and are based on the principles of social justice.
Regional Consortia of MFT Schools Advance a Statewide Stipend Program

José Luis Flores and Lisa Wolfe

Close to sixty MFT academic institutions in California participated in the recruitment of their students for an inaugural statewide stipend program. Sponsored by the California Department of Mental Health and funded through the Mental Health Services Act, these educational stipends promote the preparation, training and practice of public mental health to MFT graduates.

Listed below are the educators or administrators that attended an orientation on this new stipend program and took on the task as the stipend representative for their MFT programs. As such, they informed qualifying students on the stipend program, advised them on public practice as a career option, and assisted them in the application process.

The participating schools and their stipend representatives are listed below by the five regional MFT Consortia in the State. The host school and leaders of each regional consortium are included along with the regional coordinator hired to assist the consortium with this State stipend program. Through their efforts, close to three hundred applications were submitted for the sixty stipends of $18,500 each. The five regional consortia also formed a Stipend Awards Council to review and score the applications. The councils consisted of members from State entities, such as the BBS, county entities, such as behavioral health departments, mental health treatment agencies, consumer groups, and professional organizations, such as CAMFT and AAMFT-CA. The dedication of these educators contributed to the success of the statewide stipend program, and their efforts are herein acknowledged and appreciated.

MFT students completing their degree in the 2010-2011 academic year are eligible for next year’s stipends.

Application forms will be available September 7, 2010.

See www.pgi.edu under MFT Consortium for more information.
Counties: Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, Santa Clara, Sonoma
Host School: San Francisco State University
Consortium Leaders: Lesley Zwilling, Ph.D. and Steven Tierney, Ed.D.
Regional Coordinator: Steven Tierney, Ed.D.

Schools and School Representatives:
Argosy University, Alameda
Bonnie Macbride, Ed.D.
California Institute of Integral Studies, San Francisco
Steven Tierney, Ed.D.
California State University, East Bay
Randi S. Cowdery, Ph.D.
California State University, Sonoma
Carolyn Saarni, Ph.D.
Golden Gate University, San Francisco
Kit Yarrow, Ph.D.
John F. Kennedy University, Pleasant Hill
Gail Kingsley Dame, MA
San Francisco State University, San Francisco
Lesley Zwillinger, Ph.D.
Santa Clara University, Santa Clara
Lucila Ramos-Sanchez, Ph.D.
Saybrook Graduate School, San Francisco
Ann Bernhardt, Ph.D.
St. Mary’s College of California, Moraga
Laura Heid, Ph.D.
The Institute of Transpersonal Psychology, Palo Alto
Kate Wolf-Pizor, MA
University of San Francisco, San Francisco
Cori Bussolari, Psy.D.

Counties: Kern, Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino, Santa Barbara, Ventura
Host School: Phillips Graduate Institute
Consortium Leaders: José Luis Flores, MA and Michele Shepherd, MA
Regional Coordinator: Dominique Eugene, MA

Schools and School Representatives:
Alliant International University, Los Angeles
Caryl Bloom, Ph.D.
Azusa Pacific University, Azusa
Vicki Ewing, MA
California Lutheran University, Thousand Oaks
Christopher Christian, Ph.D.
California State Polytechnic, Pomona
Jeff Mio, Ph.D.
California State University, Bakersfield
Ken Ishida, Ph.D.
California State University, Dominguez Hills
Michele Linden, Ed.D.
California State University, Long Beach
William Saltzman, Ph.D.
California State University, Northridge
Stan Charnofsky, Ed.D.
California State University, San Bernardino
David Chavez, Ph.D.
Fuller Graduate School of Psychology, Pasadena
Kenichi Yoshida, MA
HIS University, Riverside
Eun Soon Yang, Ph.D.
Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles
Kathleen Fogel-Richmond, MA
Mount St. Mary’s College, Los Angeles
Darla Dunlop, Ph.D.
Pacific Oaks College, Pasadena
Dino Koutsolioutsos, MA
Pepperdine University, Los Angeles
(Kalbi, Encino, and West Los Angeles campuses)
Karie White, MA
Phillips Graduate Institute, Encino
Kathy Wesley, MA
University of La Verne, La Verne
Trish Long, Ph.D.
University of Phoenix, Los Angeles
(Gardenia, Ontario, Murrieta, Palmdale, Pasadena, and Woodland Hills campuses)
Kim Keating, MA
University of Southern California, Los Angeles
Mary Andres, Psy.D.

Counties: San Diego, Imperial
Host School: Alliant International University
Consortium Leader: Linna Wang, Ph.D.
Regional Coordinator: Peter McKimmin, Ph.D.

Schools and School Representatives:
Alliant International University, San Diego
Linna Wang, Ph.D.
Bethel Seminary, San Diego
Ben K Lim, Ph.D.
Brandman University, San Diego
Marnie Elam, Ph.D.
National University, San Diego
Valerie Alexander, Ph.D.
San Diego State University, San Diego
Soh-Leong Lim, Ph.D.
University of Phoenix, San Diego
Barbara Burt, Psy.D.
University of San Diego, San Diego
Gina Bongiorno, MA

EDUCATIONAL STIPENDS

Alliant International University, Irvine
Barbara Filipponi, MA
Argosy University, Orange
Melody Bacon, Ph.D.
Brandman University, Orange
Sheryl Ralph, MA
California State University, Fullerton,
Department of Counseling
Mary Read, Ph.D.
California State University, Fullerton,
Department of Psychology
Nancy Ryba, Ph.D.
California Southern University, Santa Ana
Christine Tanimura, Psy.D.
Hope International University, Fullerton
Susan Hastings, MS
National University, Costa Mesa
Mason Fries, Ph.D.
Pepperdine University, Irvine
Karie White, MA
University of Phoenix, Orange
Michelle Crawford, MA
Vanguard University, Costa Mesa
Lisa Hann

Counties: Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, Santa Clara, Sonoma
Host School: San Francisco State University
Consortium Leaders: Lesley Zwilling, Ph.D. and Steven Tierney, Ed.D.
Regional Coordinator: Steven Tierney, Ed.D.