



Purpose

Request for funds to expand a student training program that serves older adults to Washington County

Introduction

University of Utah College of Social Work students receive training and education that extends well beyond the classroom walls, due in large part to their practicum experiences. Through their practica, our students contribute nearly 200,000 hours of community service each year to over 350 agencies – including schools, hospitals, substance abuse treatment centers, non-profits, and correctional facilities. This service occurs in the Salt Lake Valley, in rural communities, on reservations across the state, and in outreach locations such as Washington, D.C. One particular program serves a special citizen population—students in the College’s Neighbors Helping Neighbors (NHN) program help older adults remain independent in their homes, retain their quality of life, and avoid pre-mature institutionalization in nursing homes. We seek support to expand this program to Washington County.

The College of Social Work’s NHN program utilizes applied social work education to fill the gap between public and private services for older adults. Graduate and undergraduate social work, nursing, and gerontology student interns develop and practice their skills for preventative, rehabilitative, and support services for older adults through this service-learning opportunity. By providing assistance to older adults who do not qualify for public services, yet cannot afford to pay for private services, NHN and their community partners help older adults remain independent in their homes and in the community.

Program Description

NHN is dedicated to providing services to low-income older adults living in Salt Lake County and to preparing social work students to meet the needs of an aging population. Below is a brief summary of this innovative and collaborative program:

- Numbers—Over 2,700 individuals have been served by our students and community partners in the 20 years this program has existed. Last year 255 older adults—including 70 couples—received direct care and benefited from home repair assistance; an additional 157 utilized our referral services.
- Services to clients—College of Social Work students, supervised by faculty and staff, provide direct care services to clients that include health and mental health assessments, assistance navigating applications for public programs such as Medicare, Medicaid, and H.E.A.T, group work in senior citizen centers, care management, and attention to personal matters that include everything from transportation to prescription pick-up to pet walking.
- Services to Families—Our NHN social work students also assist families/caregivers with care plans for older participants—a task that can be overwhelming, particularly for adult children coping with full-time jobs, child-rearing, geographic distance, and disparate plans among family members for aging parents.
- Community Collaborations—Clients receive additional support through NHN’s coordinated service with and referrals to agencies that can assist with crisis situations or long-term needs. These agencies include the Inner City Mission of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the Utah State Division of Aging and Adult Services, the Community Action Program, and more.

Request

The University of Utah College of Social Work requests \$21,500 to support our NHN program in 2018-19. These one-time funds would be used as follows:

- To provide stipends for two College of Social Work students at \$4,000/each for the 2018-19 academic year (\$8,000 total)—these students would be located for the first time ever in St. George, UT.
- To provide critical provisions and services to 10-14 new NHN clients in the St. George area (additional client-care costs are estimated at \$6,000 total).
- Startup administrative costs that will develop a lasting infrastructure. This would include: identifying sites and clients, identifying and contracting with local home repair and maintenance services, oversight of organizations, educational materials for clients, etc. (\$5,000 total).
- Ongoing administration for the year would include: student supervision, 3-4 visits during the year, etc. (\$2,500 total).

Budget and Funding Sources

The U of U College of Social Work directly supports the staff and faculty costs associate with the NHN program (40% of the total program cost). Additional support for student stipends and client service costs come from community collaborations and private contributions. The latter include nine-years of steady funding from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Foundation, a recent renewal of a three-year grant from the George S. and Dolores Doré Eccles Foundation, and a small grant from the Castle Foundation to assist with NHN programs locally or in the St. George area.

Performance/Outcome Measures

The College would measure performance in three categories:

- Successful establishment of the program through student involvement, client recruitment, and connections formed in the community
- Engagement with older adults through services—reflecting immediate savings to the community as these clients remain safely in their homes, rather than possibly entering care facilities
- Creating a competent geriatric work force through the education of social work students—an accomplishment that has a ripple effect within the community in terms of long-term service

Follow-up

The U of U College of Social Work NHN program faculty and students will be pleased to provide a closing report at the end of the funding year.

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