



BRIEFING SHEET

A new program trains OSU counseling students to assist children, adolescents and emerging adults in underserved communities throughout the state.

October 16, 2025

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

[Oregon State University's College of Education](#) has launched a new, federally funded initiative to train counseling students to prevent mental health and substance use disorders among children, adolescents and emerging adults. The **Oregon Integrated Behavioral Health Training Initiative** (OIBHTI) was made possible by grant funding from the Human Resource Services Administration with 79% of the funding going directly to support Oregon State counseling interns. The program will concentrate efforts on Oregon communities and populations where mental health services may be limited, hard to access, or nonexistent.

Oregon State students placed in community-based organizations will learn how to create integrated behavioral health systems via telehealth that can provide coordinated mental and physical healthcare to clients along with referrals to social services. The program will not only help fill the mental health workforce gaps which exist all over the state but will provide Oregon State students with required internship hours to obtain their degrees and prepare for professional counseling licensure. [Master's students in clinical mental health](#) will provide direct services to child clients, overseen by Oregon State doctorate students, faculty members and cooperating mental health professionals. Interns who are bilingual in English and Spanish were prioritized, as approximately 14% of Oregon's population and only [6% of licensed behavioral health providers](#) identify as Latine.

"Master's student in clinical mental health are required to complete internships in a clinical setting," said Dr. Arien Muzacz, Clinical Associate Professor with the College of Education and

the Project Director for the OIBHTI program. “But because these internships are usually unpaid, it creates a significant financial burden on our students and can often result in them either withdrawing from the program or incurring huge debt. This program provides a double-win by removing the financial barrier for Oregon State students while simultaneously addressing a significant mental health care need for Oregon’s children.”

The current phase of the program is funded through June 2026, with the possibility of renewal for up to four years, depending on federal allocations. The 2025-26 program will culminate in a free virtual healthcare career fair for undergraduate and graduate students to connect with agencies serving children, adolescents and emerging adults in rural and underserved areas. The fair will be held in June and additional information on it and updates on the OIBHTI program can be found on the College of Education’s website at <https://education.oregonstate.edu/OIBHTI>

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ABOUT OREGON STATE’S COLLEGE OF EDUCATION:

Mission: The College of Education at Oregon State University develops change agents in the form of researchers, learning leaders, teachers, higher education professionals and counselors.

Vision: The College of Education strives to be a leader in innovative and socially just research, teaching and engagement through responsive approaches for supporting current and future change agents in education, counseling and higher education in Oregon and beyond.

Values: Social justice, Innovation, Praxis, Reflection, Integrity.

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