Kansas Child Welfare Scholars Program

KU School of Social Welfare

Kansas Workforce Initiative
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KANSAS CHILD WELFARE SCHOLARS PROGRAM

The Kansas Child Welfare Scholars Program supports social work education for students committed to working in the child welfare system in Kansas. The Scholars Program is a collaborative effort between the Child Welfare Community-based Service (CWCBS) providers, Kansas tribal social service providers, the Kansas Council on Social Work Education and the University of Kansas School of Social Welfare – Kansas Workforce Initiative. The Scholars Program is intended to enhance child welfare recruitment and retention. A primary goal is to address workforce needs in rural and frontier areas as well as enhance the diversity of the child welfare workforce.

Program Eligibility

- Graduate or undergraduate social work student committed to child welfare employment
- Currently enrolled in an accredited Kansas social work program
- Attend full or part-time, regular track or advanced standing, clinical or administrative/advocacy track

Agency Scholars

- Within 4 full-time (or part-time equivalent) semesters or less of graduation
- Currently employed by a CWCBS provider or Kansas tribe
- Selected by employer to participate

Student Scholars

- Preparing to enter final year of BSW or MSW program
- Selected by Kansas Child Welfare Scholars Program to participate

Program Requirements

- Sign contract with the University of Kansas
- Complete required child welfare course work, seminars and other activities
- Complete field practicum related to working with children and families
- After graduation, seek or continue full-time employment in a child welfare position
- Maintain full-time child welfare-related employment for a minimum of 6 months per each semester of scholarship support
- Federal regulations require repayment of the scholarship if program requirements are not met

Program Benefits

- Educational opportunities in evidence-based child welfare practice, leadership and supervision
- Full-time Agency Scholars receive $5000 for each year of participation. Part-time Agency Scholars receive $2500 per year. Advanced standing MSW Agency Scholars receive $7500.
- Full-time Student Scholars receive $7500 during their final year of social work education
- Once selected, students are supported through graduation, as long as they maintain good academic standing (pending continuation of federal funding)

The Kansas Workforce Initiative, a cooperative agreement between KUSSW and the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Children and Families, Children’s Bureau sponsors this program. The Kansas Workforce Initiative was developed to build the capacity of child welfare professionals and the systems that recruit, train, supervise, manage and retain them.

For more information, contact Scholars Coordinator, Justin Thaw at justhaw@ku.edu or KWI Director, Michelle Levy at (785) 864-2291 or mlevy@ku.edu.
The **Kansas Child Welfare Scholars Program** is a component of the **Kansas Workforce Initiative**. The Kansas Workforce Initiative (KWI) is a five year cooperative agreement between the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Children’s Bureau and the University of Kansas School of Social Welfare. The purpose of the initiative is to create a stable, prepared and supported workforce to improve the safety, permanency, and well-being of children and families in Kansas. The initiative will focus efforts on strengthening the workforce of private and tribal child welfare agencies. "Value-added" educational traineeships will help increase the child welfare focus at university social work programs statewide.

Major components of the KWl include:

- Kansas Child Welfare Scholars Program (BSW/MSW traineeships)
- Comprehensive Workforce Profiles (agency-specific and statewide)
- Comprehensive Workforce Plans (agency-specific and statewide)
- Agency-based and Systems-level Workforce Initiatives

**Project Objectives**

1. To provide value-added educational traineeships
2. To enhance child welfare focus at the universities
3. To develop evidence-based, family-endorsed resources supporting staff recruitment and retention
4. To offer training and technical assistance to agencies and tribes
5. To build skills and capacity of supervisors to support workers in meeting child welfare outcomes
6. To increase participation in workforce efforts by a full array of stakeholders
7. To develop and disseminate knowledge about workforce development in privatized settings

The project includes a focus on enhancing the diversity of the child welfare workforce and increasing its capacity in frontier and rural areas of Kansas.

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PROGRAM PARTNERS

The Kansas Child Welfare Scholars Program is a collaborative effort between the Kansas Child Welfare Community-based Service (CWCBS) providers, Kansas tribal social service providers, the Kansas Council on Social Work Education and the University of Kansas School of Social Welfare - Kansas Workforce Initiative.

Child Welfare Community-based Service (CWCBS) Providers

- DCCCA, Inc.
- KVC Behavioral HealthCare, Inc.
- St. Francis Community Services
- TFI Family Services
- Youthville

Tribal Social Service Providers

- Kickapoo Nation Social Services
- Native American Family Services (serving the Iowa Tribe)
- Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation
- Sac and Fox Nation of Missouri

Kansas Council on Social Work Education

- Bethany College Social Work Program
- Bethel College Social Work Program
- Fort Hays State University Social Work Program
- Kansas State University Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work
- Newman University School of Social Work
- Pittsburg State University Social Work Program
- University of Kansas School of Social Welfare
- Washburn University Department of Social Work
- Wichita State University School of Social Work

University of Kansas School of Social Welfare – Kansas Workforce Initiative  www.kwi.ku.edu
PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

The Kansas Workforce Initiative (KWI) administers the Kansas Child Welfare Scholars Program. The KWI’s responsibilities include establishing contractual agreements, issuing scholarships, monitoring student academic progress, developing and delivering child welfare-related curricula and facilitating collaboration with the Kansas Council on Social Work Education.

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Kansas Child Welfare Scholars Program Workgroup

The Kansas Child Welfare Scholars Program Workgroup, a subcommittee to the Kansas Workforce Advisory Board, includes representatives from the Child Welfare Community-based Service providers and tribal social service providers, the Children’s Alliance of Kansas and the Kansas Workforce Initiative. This workgroup was central to developing the structure and policies of the scholarship program. They will continue to assist in marketing the program to potential students, supporting the academic work of the recipients, overseeing the employment commitment of child welfare staff and evaluating student and program outcomes.
CHILD WELFARE SCHOLARS OBLIGATIONS

Child Welfare Scholars obligations include both academic requirements and employment commitments. These obligations are formalized through the Scholars Contract signed by the student and the Kansas Workforce Initiative prior to the beginning the program. Obligations are explained in further detail below.

Academic Requirements

Students follow the typical course enrollment for their respective social work programs. In addition, academic requirements of the Kansas Child Welfare Scholars are:

I. Completion of courses, field practicum, training and seminars designated by the social work program and the Kansas Child Welfare Scholars Program.

Students are encouraged to take advantage of child welfare-related course work offered by their respective universities. In addition, the Scholars Program will provide professional development opportunities designed to provide specialized knowledge and skill development in child welfare practice with an emphasis on supervision and leadership.

Likewise, students are encouraged to pursue child welfare-related field practicum opportunities. Field placements are arranged independently by each social work program’s practicum office. Agency Scholars may choose to seek practicum opportunities with their agency of employment. These placements must meet academic standards for employment-based practicum (EBP). Please note: EBP’s typically require special exception or approval by the social work program. Students are solely responsible for completing requisite practicum applications and exceptions.

II. Maintaining good academic standing (as defined by each social work program) and adhering to all policies and procedures of the social work program and the college/university.

Students must maintain good academic standing as defined by the school that they attend. The definition of “good academic standing” as well as the policies of each social work program may be requested from the social work program director. A list of contacts for each social work program is included in Appendix A. The Scholars Program Director will check with the social work programs at the end of each semester to ensure that students remain in good academic standing. Following each academic year, students are required to submit a copy of their grade reports to the Scholars Program Director. In addition, for continuing students, social work programs will be asked to complete an academic review at the end of each academic year in which the student receives support from the program. The End-of-Year Academic Review is included in Appendix B. A release of information signed along with the Scholars Contract authorizes the school to share information regarding academic performance, grade reports, and progress in the social work program to the Kansas Workforce Initiative. Copies of the release form are on file with KU and with the student’s social work program. Academic information may be requested at any time during the students’ participation in the program. Students not performing satisfactorily in the program may have the scholarship award suspended or terminated.
III. Meeting the academic requirements set forth in original academic plan in order to graduate as scheduled.

At the time of application to the program, students are asked to submit an anticipated graduation date and confirm their ability to graduate by time. Students who choose to drop, add or withdraw from a course during the semester must notify the Program Director immediately. Students who extend their programs beyond the original expected graduation date must seek approval from the Program Director for continued scholarship support.

EMPLOYMENT COMMITMENTS

Kansas Child Welfare Scholars commit to employment as social workers in child welfare with Kansas child welfare agencies or tribal social services. Employment commitments are:

I. Seek, continue or return to full-time employment in a child welfare position with the Kansas child welfare agency or tribal social service program.

All Child Welfare Scholars are required to sign an agreement stipulating that they will seek, continue or return to full-time employment (or part-time equivalent) in child welfare. For Agency Scholars, this will be the child welfare agency or tribal social service program where they were employed at the time they started the Scholars Program. The employment obligation begins after completion of the degree program.

II. Remain employed with a Kansas child welfare agency or tribal social service program for a minimum period of six months of continuous and satisfactory full-time employment (or part-time equivalent) for each semester of the award.

For example, if the student receives a scholarship for one academic year, from August through May, the employment commitment would total 12 months.

Scholars contracts will be sent to the agencies or tribes in order to track the work obligation. Agency/tribal staff will notify the Scholars Program Coordinator if a Scholar terminates employment prior to the completion of the employment obligation. Scholars can choose to transfer to another child welfare position, agency or tribe to complete their employment commitment. Scholars are not provided notification when the employment obligation is complete. While Scholars commit to a minimum time of service, the hope is that they will find the work rewarding and remain in child welfare for an extended period.

III. For Scholars seeking a position in child welfare, including those whose employment may be discontinued at any time during the employment commitment, the Scholar (Agency or Student) will conduct a “good faith” statewide search for any qualifying position. In the case of Agency Scholars, should the current child welfare employer be unable to offer continued employment upon graduation, the Scholar will conduct a “good faith” statewide search.

A “good faith effort” is defined as completion of the licensure process including documentation of
steps taken to pass the licensure exam; application for the majority (75%) of social work vacancies available with Kansas child welfare agencies; scoring well in interviews; taking steps to improve interview performance, if appropriate; and documenting all job search efforts. At the end of a four month period, the Kansas Child Welfare Scholars Program will consider the job search efforts of the student on an individual basis and make a determination based on documentation of the good faith job search. Should a Scholar not be offered a position after 4 months of a good faith search, the Scholar may be released from his or her employment commitment, upon approval of the Kansas Workforce Initiative. If it is determined that the student failed to pursue employment in good faith, the student will be required to refund the amount of the scholarship. For additional information regarding repayment of the scholarship, see the Repayment Conditions section of this manual (page 11). The four month good faith job search begins upon graduation or on the day of release from a post-graduation child welfare position.

IV. Repayment of the scholarship should the recipient fail to complete the agreed upon course of study; if the recipient resigns from current child welfare employment during the period in which the contractual agreement remains in effect and/or if the recipient fails to conduct a good faith job search or accept appropriate child welfare-related employment.

The Scholars Contract details the conditions under which a scholarship recipient must repay the scholarship award. For more information on these conditions and repayment requirements see the Scholars Contract and Repayment section of this manual (page 11).

ADDITIONAL OBLIGATIONS

Communication

Students are responsible for informing the Scholars Program of any changes in name, address, phone number, or e-mail for up to three years following graduation. Changes in address during the academic program require completion of a new W-9 form. Students should also notify the program if they change employers. The program reserves the right to periodically check with employers to ensure employment status. Students are highly encouraged to regularly check their e-mail as this is a primary source of communication utilized by the program.

Orientation

A mandatory program orientation is held in May for newly selected Scholars. Information regarding academic requirements, employment obligation, and scholarship awards is presented. Students are provided with copies of their Scholars Contract and given an opportunity to formally accept or decline the scholarship.

Licensure

To be employed as a Social Worker in Kansas, graduates must pass a licensing examination administered by the Behavioral Sciences Regulatory Board (BSRB). Students should apply to take
the examination before completing degree requirements. To apply for a license, contact the BSRB at http://www.ksbsrb.org/socialworkers.htm. Students are responsible for all application and testing fees. Employment in a nonprofessional child welfare position may be accepted as meeting the terms of the contract when a student is unable to attain licensure as a social worker. A student will be identified as unable to attain licensure only after failing to pass the licensure examination at least three times.

Program Evaluation

Students will be asked to participate in program evaluation activities during their academic program and through their employment obligation. Students will be contacted by the Program for up to three years following graduation to fulfill federal tracking requirements. Participation in this follow-up is required.

Training and Support

Social work education alone cannot adequately prepare students for employment in child welfare. Continuing on-the-job training is essential to adequately prepare social workers to meet the demands of child welfare work. We encourage all graduates to take advantage of opportunities for continued education and development.

SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

Current scholarship payments are as follows.

Agency Scholars:
  Full-time $5000/year
  Part-time $2500/year
  Advanced standing $7500/one-time payment

Student Scholars:
  Full-time $7500/one-time payment

Full- and part-time are based on the social work program’s definition of each status. Scholarships may be used for tuition, books, travel, living expenses or other necessities required to complete the social work program. No additional funding is available from this program for living, travel or moving expenses.

Scholarship payments will be in a lump sum at the beginning of the academic year. Payments are mailed by U.S. mail.

Names of the scholarship recipients are forwarded to each school's registrar or student financial aid office. Receipt of this award does not preclude you from applying for other financial aid though acceptance of this scholarship may affect student eligibility for other financial assistance so students
are strongly encouraged to discuss the financial implications of this award with their financial aid
officers prior to acceptance.

For information on reporting the scholarship award for tax purposes, students are encouraged to
speak with their accountants or tax advisors. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) also offers a
publication that covers the rules for scholarships, fellowships and tuition reductions. Publication
970 Tax Benefits for Education is available on the IRS web site at

SCHOLARS CONTRACT AND REPAYMENT

Scholars Contract

Requirements of the Scholars Program are summarized in the formal Scholars Contract between the
participant and the Kansas Workforce Initiative. Individualized contracts are written to reflect each
student’s unique academic status. Signature of the contract signifies students’ acceptance of a
Scholarship and agreement with the terms and obligations. All signed Scholars contracts will be
subject to approval by and signature of an authorized official with the Kansas Workforce Initiative.

Repayment Conditions

Under the terms of the Scholars Contract, repayment of the scholarship will be initiated in the
following circumstances:

- Conviction of a felony, crime against a person, subject of a confirmation of child abuse, or in
  any way become unqualified for child welfare employment;
- Failure to complete the social work program, including expulsion for either academic or
disciplinary reasons;
- Failure to maintain good academic standing;
- Resignation from current child welfare employment during the period in which the
  contractual agreement remains in effect; or
- Failure to conduct a good faith job search or accept appropriate child welfare employment.

Students who make a “good faith” effort to compete for child welfare positions and are not offered
a position within 4 months from graduation or date of employment change may be released from
repayment.

If the Scholar is discharged or terminated from child welfare employment for cause during the
contractual agreement, the recipient agrees to repay a pro-rated portion of the total sum of money
expended for the scholarship. The portion of repayment is based upon the ratio of uncompleted
employment commitment to the total employment commitment.

Should the Scholars contract be breached or not be fulfilled, the students owes and agrees to immediately pay back the total amount of the granted scholarship plus interest and reasonable collection fees, in accordance with applicable federal law and regulations.

Repayment will be waived in the event of permanent disability or death. Repayment requirements may be postponed, at the discretion of the program, due to personal or health reasons. At the end of a postponement, the recipient will return to complete the program or repay the scholarship. Requests for waivers of repayment or postponement will be reviewed by the program and approved/disapproved based on specific individual circumstances. With written approval, the program may release the Scholar from further obligation to the program.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information about the Kansas Child Welfare Scholars Program, go to www.kwi.ku.edu, or contact Justin Thaw, Scholars Program Coordinator at justhaw@ku.edu, (661) 309-7048 or Michelle Levy at mlevy@ku.edu, (785) 864-2291.
APPENDIX A: KANSAS COUNCIL ON SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION CONTACTS

Bethel College Social Work Program
300 East 27th Street
North Newton, KS  67117
http://www.bethelks.edu/academics/majors/social_work/index.php

Fort Hays State University Social Work Program
331 Rarick Hall, 600 Park
Hays, KS  67601
http://www.fhsu.edu/sociology/index.shtml

Kansas State University Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work
204 Waters
Manhattan, KS 66506-4003
http://www.k-state.edu/sasw/

Newman University School of Social Work
3100 McCormick Avenue
Wichita, KS 67213

Pittsburg State University Social Work Program
412 Russ Hall
1701 South Broadway
Pittsburg, KS  66762
http://cas.pittstate.edu/SocialSciences/socialWork.asp

University of Kansas School of Social Welfare
Twente Hall
1545 Lilac Lane
Lawrence, KS 66044-3184
http://www.socwel.ku.edu/index.shtml

Washburn University Department of Social Work
1700 College
Topeka, KS  66621
http://www.washburn.edu/sas/social-work/

Wichita State University School of Social Work
1845 Fairmount
Wichita, KS  67260
http://webs.wichita.edu/?u=socialwork
APPENDIX B: END-OF-YEAR ACADEMIC REVIEW

Kansas Child Welfare Scholars Program
End-of-Year Academic Review

Student_________________________ Semester __________________

The student named above is participating in the Kansas Child Welfare Scholars Program. This program requires that students meet particular academic standards in order to fulfill their contractual obligations to the Kansas Workforce Initiative. Your comments will assist us to review this student’s progress in the program. Please return this form to:

Justin Thaw
KU School of Social Welfare
1545 Lilac Lane
Lawrence, KS 66044

Thank you for your assistance.

This student is currently meeting the academic _____Yes _____No requirements set forth in their original plan of study.

This student is maintaining good academic standing _____Yes_____No (as defined by your program) and is adhering to all the policies and procedures of the social work program and the college/university.

The student’s plan of study has been reviewed by the _____Yes _____No faculty and revised as appropriate so that this student is on course to graduate in ______________.

If the answers to any of these questions are no, please explain:

I recommend_____ do not recommend _____ this student for continued support through the Kansas Child Welfare Scholars Program.

_________________________________________ ______________________________
Signature Date