The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration’s (SAMHSA) Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) established the Prevention Internship in 2011 as a partnership between the Tribes and Tribal organizations and SAMHSA/CSAP’s Prevention Fellowship/Intern Program (PFP).

The Prevention Internship, a component of SAMSHA/CSAP’s Prevention Fellowship/Intern Program, invites qualified individuals, with strong interest in substance abuse prevention and behavioral health, for a 5-month paid internship program in participating Tribes and Tribal Organizations throughout the United States. The PFP is a workforce development program that aims to develop and sustain a well-trained and knowledgeable cadre of prevention professionals who understand and exemplify the principles and best practices of substance abuse prevention. As a component of the PFP, the Prevention Internship prepares interns to provide capacity-building Technical Assistance (TA) to support integration of behavioral health prevention services within tribal organization systems. The interns will learn new techniques, master best practices in the field, and apply knowledge gained from their professional and cultural experiences.

The Prevention Internship also partnered with Tribal organizations that were Strategic Prevention Framework Tribal Incentive Grantees (SPF-TIG). A SPF-TIG is grant recipient of the Strategic Prevention Framework State Incentive Grant (SPF-SIG) program, one of SAMHSA’s infrastructure grant programs, which support an array of activities to help grantees build a foundation for delivering and sustaining effective substance abuse and/or mental health services.

Under the guidance of a mentor, Prevention Interns work to support efforts to implement SAMHSA’s Strategic Prevention Framework within tribal communities in order to:

- prevent the onset and reduce the progression of substance abuse, including childhood and underage drinking;
- reduce substance abuse-related problems in communities, and;
- build prevention capacity and infrastructure at the community levels.

Synergy Enterprises, Inc. (SEI) manages the SAMHSA/CSAP’s Prevention Fellowship/Intern Program and facilitates its overall success. SEI supports the development of the program and serves as the primary point of contact for interns and mentors. SEI is a resource that interns and mentors can turn to for information and guidance throughout the program.
Purposes

The Prevention Internship provides interns with hands-on training, opportunities to apply knowledge, skills, and best practices in integrating behavioral health prevention within tribal communities. Interns are assigned to mentors, within a tribal organization, that are behavioral health professionals with experience overseeing substance abuse prevention and behavioral health initiatives within tribal communities.

Working closely with mentors and other leading professionals in the prevention field, interns undertake projects that help them gain the skills and knowledge necessary to develop and implement state-of-the-art prevention practices. Together, the intern and mentor develop an Internship Accomplishment Plan (IAP) that identifies a core set of well-defined assignments and trainings with associated milestones, objectives, and outcomes throughout his or her 5-month internship. Hands-on experience is reinforced by intensive online and in-person training that focuses on the defined core competencies of the Prevention Internship.

Throughout the Internship, Interns may engage in (but not limited to) the following activities:

- identify community assets and available resources for prevention services
- develop the ability to identify a community’s capacity for data-driven decision making aimed at improving community public health and substance abuse prevention
- participate in community mobilization activities that address substance abuse issues.
- deliver technical assistance to tribal communities
- adapt prevention programs that are culturally appropriate for tribal communities
- conduct literature review and needs assessments
- develop media campaigns, fact sheets, and prevention education curricula

Training

Prevention Interns participate in trainings based on competency areas such as behavioral health prevention, the Strategic Prevention Framework, workforce development, and evaluation. Some of these trainings are delivered by a Native American trainer with SAMHSA’s Center for the Application of Prevention Technologies (CAPT).

Working with SPF-TIGS and Other Tribal Organizations

Since 2011, several Tribes and Tribal Organizations played a vital role in making the Prevention Internship a success. The Prevention Interns have worked and supported the following organizations:

- Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (Anchorage, Alaska)
- Cherokee Nation Of Oklahoma (Tahlequah, Oklahoma)
- Cook Inlet Tribal Leaders Council (Anchorage, Alaska)
- Native American Health Center (Oakland, California)
WHO CAN APPLY

Individuals seeking selection into the Internship program must meet the following criteria and provide associated documentation:

1. U.S. citizenship or U.S. Territories and Pacific Jurisdictions residency;
2. At least two (2) years of college (or 60 credit hours) from an accredited academic institution, with an emphasis in public health, behavioral health, clinical or social science areas. In addition, students currently enrolled at a community college and who will earn their Associate Degree in public health, behavioral health, clinical or social science areas by May 31, 2015, are also eligible to apply;
3. Two letters of recommendation from an academic and/or professional reference;
4. A detailed essay (of no more than two pages) on why the candidate should be selected for the internship, and how selection would support his or her career goals (to be completed through the online application); and
5. Experience in substance abuse prevention and/or behavioral health prevention/promotion.

*Preference will be given to American Indian or Alaskan Native applicants and graduates of Tribal Colleges and Universities.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Prevention Interns are accepted on a location basis pending the site of the Tribe/Tribal Organization. Interns will receive a stipend of $15-20 per hour and will be required to work 40 hours per week for April 13 – September 11, 2015. They will not be provided with insurance, travel, lodging, per diem allowances, or conference registration reimbursement.

CONTACT INFORMATION

SAMHSA/CSAP Prevention Fellowship/Intern Program
Synergy Enterprises, Inc.
8757 Georgia Avenue, Suite 1440
Silver Spring, MD 20910
Phone (240) 485-1700
Fax: (240) 485-1709
E-mail: preventionfellowship@seiservices.com