A Creative Response to a Growing Need: The Support for Future Hispanic Professionals Initiative

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Resumen

El rápido crecimiento de la población hispana en los Estados Unidos ha producido una enorme demanda por profesionales biculturales capaces de detectar las necesidades de este grupo social. La ciudad de Nashville, Tennessee, y los distritos circunvecinos han aceptado este reto. Las estrategias tradicionales diseñadas en el pasado para reclutar profesionales médicos y especialistas de salud mental de otras comunidades culturales han tenido un éxito muy limitado. A diferencia, la estrategia más reciente intitulada 'Apoyo para Futuros Profesionales Hispanos' (AFPH) resulta particularmente prometedora ya que ofrece apoyo financiero a aquellos integrantes de la comunidad latina local que desean obtener una maestría en ciencia en el área del trabajo social. De esta forma se atraen estudiantes potenciales y se asegura que aquellos que alcancen este grado académico permanecerán en la comunidad donde laborarán como profesionales.

Abstract

The rapid growth of the Hispanic population in the United States has resulted in a tremendous demand for bicultural professionals who can help to meet the needs of that burgeoning population. The city of Nashville, Tennessee and the surrounding counties have faced this challenge. Previous strategies, most designed to recruit mental health and medical professionals from other communities, have met with only limited success. The latest strategy, *Support for Future Hispanic Professionals* (SFHP) is particularly promising because it provides financial support to local Latinos who wish to obtain a Master of Science in Social Work. This helps to attract potential students and to assure that those who receive their degrees will remain in the community to practice as professionals.

Introduction

The Hispanic population of the United States is growing at an astounding rate. Patterns of immigration and migration once confined to a few large cities or border communities have now spread into other parts of the country. Cities and communities that were once principally Caucasian or African American are experiencing an influx of persons of Latino descent, presenting new opportunities and challenges to both the new residents and the members of the

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preexisting community (Atkinson, Morten, & Wing Sue, 1998; Kataoka, Stein, Jaycox, Wong, Escudero, Tu, Zaragoza, & Fink, 2003; PR Newswire, 2002, August 8). Among the challenges is the need to provide effective services to those who have lived in another culture and who speak a language other than English.

Nashville, Tennessee (Metropolitan Davidson County) is a community that has experienced these kinds of growing pains. Official estimates place the approximate number of Hispanics the Davidson County area at 30,462. Surrounding counties such as Rutherford and Williamson, also have large Latino populations. If the six counties adjoining Davidson are also considered, this figure rises by nearly 15,000 (US Bureau of the Census, 2002). Local experts with access to information about those who may have been missed by the census or who may have arrived since it was conducted estimate the population of the Middle Tennessee area to be in excess of 80,000 to 100,000. Although these figures may seem small when compared to major metropolitan areas such as New York or Miami, they represent a significant and rapidly growing portion of the population.

Just as those who have lived in this country for generations sometimes experience the need for social services, so do immigrant populations. In fact, the additional pressures generated by relocation to an unfamiliar environment may heighten that need for some. This need is compounded by the barriers to effective service presented by language and culture. Many communities have found themselves at a loss to effectively meet the needs of their newest residents. This paper describes an initiative in the Middle Tennessee area (metropolitan Davidson County and surrounding counties) designed to help meet this need. The initiative involves the identification, recruitment, and support of local Hispanics to receive an MSSW education and be prepared for professional practice. There is some debate as to the correct term in referring to the group of persons whose ancestors originated in Spain. Some prefer the word "Latino". Others prefer "Hispanic". In this paper the words will be used interchangeably.

Attempts to Recruit Hispanic Professionals

The social service community in Middle Tennessee has recognized the need for bilingual, bicultural professionals for a number of years. Accordingly, its leaders have attempted several initiatives designed to attract Hispanic social workers, psychologists, and psychiatrists. They have, unfortunately, been frustrated in their efforts. These leaders have identified barriers that make Hispanic professionals from other areas unlikely to relocate. These barriers include:

1) the ability to include the presence of blood relatives and extended family in the professional's home area, 2) the extreme need for bicultural professionals in their present home community, and 3) difficulty in paying wages that are sufficient to overcome the other two barriers. Inability to overcome the barriers has left the Middle Tennessee community with a strong need for bilingual, bicultural practitioners.

The Importance of Bicultural Professionals

The need for practitioners who are competent to practice with persons from other cultures is clearly documented in the scientific literature. This need has prompted a significant effort among the social services to prepare professionals who can engage in such practice (Atkinson, Morten, & Wing Sue, 1998; Ellis, Klepper, & Sowers, 2000; Jackson, 2002, March-April; Van Soest & Garcia, 2003). Considerable work has been devoted to identifying the relevant characteristics of various cultural groups and to helping practitioners already in training or practice achieve competence. The result has been practitioners trained at an assortment of levels that can be identified along a continuum of knowledge and skill. Ellis, Dulmus, and Wodarski (2003) have categorized this phenomenon as 'stages of cultural effectiveness' (p. 214).

The stages of cultural effectiveness include: 1) cultural insensitivity, 2) cultural indifference, 3) cultural sensitivity, 4) cultural relevance, and 5) cultural competence. Cultural insensitivity refer to the earliest stage of development. Practitioners who are *culturally insensitive* have prejudicial attitudes and exhibit discriminatory behaviors toward members of other cultures. A culturally insensitive practitioner might terminate a client from another culture at an inappropriate time or insist that the children in the home be forced to speak English at all

times.

Cultural indifference categorizes those practitioners who are not deliberately discriminatory, but who are unaware of and unconcerned about the issues that cultural diversity can generate. An example of cultural indifference might occur if a practitioner pressured a woman from a Hispanic family to demand that her husband allow her teenage daughter a greater role in family decision making.

Practitioners who are *culturally sensitive* can relate comfortably to those of another culture and are able to build a relationship characterized by trust and rapport with those persons. These practitioners might be able to relate to a family well enough to provide case management or provide some sort of direct service. They would be likely, however, to be unable to deal with in-depth individual or family issues, or to provide psychotherapy to persons from other cultures.

A practitioner who has developed sufficient knowledge and skill to relate successfully to members of another culture can be said to be *culturally relevant* (Sandau-Beckler, personal communication, August 13, 2001), that is, able to relate in a relevant manner to such persons. At this level of cultural effectiveness the practitioner would be able to provide a greater number of more advanced services, but might lack the skills to provide all of the needed services. For example, a culturally relevant practitioner might be able to be a mentor to a Southeast Asian youth, but lack the knowledge and skills to be able to provide therapy to his family.

A *culturally competent* practitioner is able to relate to clients of a given culture sufficiently that their differences do not constitute a barrier to successful intervention. Competence is difficult to achieve for those whose culture differs substantially from that of the client. Barriers such as language and the subtle gestures and nuances of communication are often challenging to master. The difficulty involved in achieving competence suggests that agencies or communities seeking to provide culturally competent practitioners to a specific population will be most successful if they are able to recruit culturally similar professionals. For example, a

social worker from one Hispanic country such as Mexico is likely to achieve competence in working with individuals and families from Cuba much more quickly than a professional raised in the United States.

Culturally competent practitioners are much more likely to be effective than are those who function at any other level of effectiveness. Even when a culturally sensitive practitioner speaks the language of a client, the gestures and nuances of communication that differ between the two are likely to present barriers.

SFHP: A Strategy for Preparing Professionals from Local Residents

Given the need for culturally competent practitioners and the difficulties experienced in attempting to recruit them from other areas, alternative strategies were developed. Conversations between The University of Tennessee College of Social Work (UTCSW) and the Self-Reliance Foundation (SRF) (a Washington, DC-based group that supports and encourages education and personal development among Hispanics) lead the development of the Support for Future Hispanic Professionals (SFHP) initiative. SFHP is based on a model developed by SFR and two other University partners, The University of New Mexico (UNM) and Pepperdine University (PU). The model initiatives share two goals with the Nashville initiative: 1) to provide educational opportunities for Hispanic students and 2) to compile and enlarge a database of bicultural service providers across the country. Students receive a combination of foundation support, federal work study money and academic credit in return for their services. In addition to these goals, SFHP has two others: 1) to prepare Hispanic professionals to practice in the Middle Tennessee area and 2) to further diversify the student body of the College. At this time the UNM and PU initiative focus on undergraduates while the UTCSW effort includes MSSW students.

Sources of student support
SFHP contains three potential sources of funding for participating students. The first, known as

the Support for Professional Education (SPE) provides a combination of federal work study money, university graduate assistant money, tuition waiver, and academic credit for participants. Each student must apply for and be approved to receive work study or graduate assistant funds. Depending on need and funding availability they may also receive a waiver of part of their tuition cost or receive classroom credit for their work as an independent study. As more students enter the program an Advisory Committee consisting of faculty and members of the community will determine eligibility.

The second form of support comes from local agencies who provide stipends for students who complete their internships at their agencies. This program is known as Stipends for Professional Development (SPD). The amount of support varies between agencies, with some providing the equivalent of a bachelor's-level salary and others paying up to several hundred dollars per semester. Eligibility for the stipends is determined by agency personnel.

The third form of support is in the form of donations from various sources in the community. Churches, businesses, and individuals donate smaller amounts of money to help students purchase books and supplies or to pay for their living expenses. Distribution of these funds will be determined by either the donors or the Advisory Committee.

Responsibilities of Student Participants

Student participants have a variety of responsibilities depending on the type of support they receive. Students in SPE may engage in one or more of several activities. One of those will be to participate in identifying and documenting the presence of agencies in various parts of the country that provide services to Hispanics. Students will have administrative access to a computerized database created and maintained by the Self-Reliance Foundation. Information entered in the database will be available to Hispanics seeking services anywhere across the country. They may also conduct in-service training or seminars for agencies and their fellow students on topics related to their own culture or provide written translation services for the university and other organizations.

The second activity that some of the students participating in SPE will engage in is representing the College at activities in the Latino community. This will include volunteering at school and community events, speaking at local high schools and colleges, and working in community-based committees and task forces designed to benefit Hispanics. In some cases the students may also serve as translators for university personnel who make public appearances in the Hispanic community.

A third function of students participating in SPE will be to support research efforts in Latino community. As the need for services grows and programs proliferate, needs assessments and program evaluations will be needed to determine the degree to which the need is being met. The students, working with university faculty and community practitioners, will be able to conduct the research that will help to answer that question.

Students receiving stipends (SPD) will need to successfully complete the activities required by the agencies in which they work as stipulated in the learning contract. These activities will be developed in a collaborative effort between the student, their field supervisor and College field consultants. The activities will be consistent with the College's requirements for both first and second year practicums. Students who complete their first internship there will remain for their second, ideally continuing as employees after graduation.

The requirements of local donors vary, and are likely to vary even more as additional donors are identified. Most want some form of reporting by the student. In many cases this is an informal requirement, to be conducted over a cup of coffee or lunch. Others require a written summary or report of the student's activities and accomplishments. It is apparent, however, that many donors will want to receive at least some kind of communication from the students they support, reminding them of the good they are doing for the student and their community.

Challenges and solutions in program development

The program has been described by experts as 'robust and healthy'. Although both of these claims may be true, its development has been fraught with changes, redirections, and delays. The challenges have been many, and the solutions at times elusive. They have included the need for 1) creativity and flexibility, 2) aggressive recruiting activities, 3) an assortment of funding opportunities, 4) the need for strategies to overcome language barriers, and 5) the absence of role models for Hispanic students.

One of the greatest challenges has been identifying willing, stable sources of funding. The sources identified for the Davidson County initiative have included federal work study money, university contributions, agency stipends, and personal or organizational donations. Some of these are more likely to be available in future years than are others. For example, federal support and agency stipends appear to be relatively stable. University contributions are dependent on the funding provided by the state budget and personal or organizational donations depend on the ability and willingness of the funder. One question prospective students have asked is what guarantee they might have that funding available in the first year of their program would continue to be available in the second. It is important that they understand that some sources of support may become unstable.

Creativity and flexibility have been required to establish the sources of funding. Additional sources may also be available, including other reservoirs of federal dollars, philanthropic foundations, or partnerships with state and local government agencies. One of the keys to the successful development of this program has been a willingness to search for additional funding alternatives when one or more failed to be available as was anticipated.

Interestingly, recruiting potential students has been almost as difficult as obtaining funding for them. As this article was being prepared one of the two students who had planned to begin her education in the Fall semester elected not to attend, citing personal circumstances. The second, a recent immigrant from Cuba (a former attorney) who was already working in the local social service network, began classes in mid-August. Response to both local and national

advertising efforts has been limited. Plans are in place to recruit for next year's class through appearances at local colleges and universities, appearances at churches and social service agencies, and continued advertising through local media outlets. Although it is likely that attracting students will become easier as the program grows, in the initial year, no students would have been recruited without substantial personal contact with schools and agencies.

Language has formed a minor barrier to the development of the initiative. The presence of willing persons to serve as translators has been very beneficial. In the case of media advertising, bicultural professionals at the Self-Reliance Foundation, the Hispanic Radio Network, or in the community have carefully translated advertising on behalf of the College. In several cases they have recommended that the phrasing of the ads be revised to avoid content that might have been unintentionally culturally insensitive. Non-Spanish speaking administrative staff at the campus have been trained to receive incoming calls from Spanish-speaking persons, assuring that those calls are forwarded to someone who can converse with them fluently. Recruitment visits by unilingual staff always include a translator who is fluent in Spanish.

The absence of culturally-similar role models among university personnel has also presented a barrier to program development. Efforts to recruit Latino faculty to permanent lines have not as yet been successful. As an alternative, College alumni who live in the community have been recruited. For example, one of the authors of this article, a professional from a local hospital, is currently serving as adjunct faculty, and is heavily involved in the development of the initiative.

Other cultural and non-cultural issues

Other issues, particularly those related to cultural factors, have also created barriers to the project's success. Potential students have been discouraged from entering the program by family members, citing a tradition requiring young people (particularly women) to remain in close physical proximity to their families. The resistance has been sufficient to cause at least one recruit to withdraw from the program after initially having been anxious to enter it.

The potential for resistence underscores the importance of involving the family in the recruitment process. In the experience of this program parents, particularly fathers, who know members of the faculty, who understand social work, and who feel that they have played a key role in the decision are much more likely to support their child's enrollment. Those who do not perceive themselves as a part of the process may not feel respected and may oppose their child's enrollment in the program.

It is important in interacting with Latino families that factors other than and in addition to culture be considered. Important issues include a rural versus urban background, socioeconomic status, and educational background. Diverse factors in the experiences of persons from culturally-similar backgrounds can result in significant diversity. Silva (1983) has identified five life dimensions that generate diversity: 1) inherited endowment, 2) learned values and culture, 3) developmental histories, 4) specified patterns of problems, and 5) personalized styles of coping. Notably, Silva has listed culture as only one of the five. Inherited endowment refers to genetically-created conditions in individuals that may predispose individuals to a variety of characteristics. These characteristics may include capacities or deficits in the ability to learn, capacities or deficits in the ability to relate to others socially, capacities or deficits in the ability to function physically, and others. Developmental histories are the individual experiences experienced by persons as they move through the life cycle. Personalized styles of coping refers to the manner in which individuals choose to deal with the opportunities and challenges life presents.

One of the dimensions identified by Silva (1983) is particularly relevant. The behavior of individuals and families is greatly affected by "specified patterns of problems". These problems include oppression, socioeconomic status, income, acculturation, racial/ethnic identity, national origin, education, immigration status, age, and gender (Atkinson, et al., 1998; Lum, 2000). For example, as described by Ellis, Klepper, and Sowers (2000), families who have experienced high differential levels of oppression are likely to react to any governmental agency (such as a state

university) differently. Those who have experienced high levels of oppression are likely to be skeptical and resistant. Those who have experienced little oppression may be more open to approach. Similarly, although the cultures of various countries may be very much alike, they are never identical. Prospective students and families from Cuba will share language and some cultural similarities with those from Colombia, but may differ in very important ways.

Yet another important consideration for families has to do with the Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow, 1954). This is closely related to the effect of socioeconomic status. Families that find it difficult to meet their daily expenses may be reluctant to allow a member who might help pay those expenses in a low-paying job to spend valuable time pursuing a degree promising future income and prestige. This may be particularly true in a profession such as social work where the benefits are unlikely to ever be lucrative. In such cases it may be that maximizing the financial benefit the prospective student will receive could help ease the concerns of the family.

An additional concern for some families is unfamiliarity with post-secondary education. For some, the prospective student will be the first to attend an institution of higher education. This lack of familiarity can engender anxiety that might result in the loss of the support of the family. For this reason and the other reasons described above it is important to include the family in discussions between the academic institution and the student.

A second barrier program developers have encountered is a lack of understanding of the social work profession. This results in a number of different problems. One is born of the distrust for authority that many immigrants feel. Among Hispanics, the distrust may result from concerns about illegal residence or from problematic encounters with a government agency such as a child welfare organization. Other prospective program participants have viewed social work with scepticism, not understanding its role and place as a profession. At times this is compounded by the differences between social work in their native countries and the profession in this country. These problems illustrate the importance of an educational component in the recruitment of future Hispanic professionals.

Some Latino families may be reluctant to accept aid from outside sources. The "machismo" that is a characteristic of many Hispanic men (Queralt, 1996) may demand that they provide for their own. If this is the case, they may be reluctant to allow someone from outside the family, particularly a governmental source, to provide financial assistance. The following recommendations for dealing with these issues are untested, but are consistent with the recommendations for dealing with other barriers. Involving the family (including extended family) in recruitment may be critical. Additionally, educating family members about both the social work profession and the kinds of educational support that are typically provided in this country may be very helpful.

An additional and surprising barrier to the success of SFHP has been the perception of some in the social service community that competence can only exist when professionals of one country are matched with clients from the same country. These providers have been actively seeking a process by which those who have been educated as professionals in other countries can become reciprocally licensed in this country. Their efforts have met seemly insurmountable barriers. One very significant barrier is constituted by the genuine differences in training that exist between countries. In some countries, for example, one may practice as a psychologist or an attorney with only a bachelor's degree. In this country a master's degree or doctorate plus additional training and testing are required. Even when background and training requirements are similar, accepting the professional status of a practitioner from another country would require significant changes in the legislation and governmental procedures governing licensure. Perhaps most importantly, the scientific literature regarding cultural competence does not indicate that the cultures of professional and client be identical. In fact, studies have indicated that the differences produced by socioeconomic class, education, immigration experience, and the other factors discussed above mean that no two persons can be considered culturally identical. Rather, the literature indicates that cultural similarity, coupled with adequate knowledge and skill, is the essential requirement.

Results

Although the initiative is in its first year, the results have already been very encouraging. Two students had planned to enroll for the coming year. One did not enter the program due to personal circumstances, but hopes to enter the program next year. The second has started classes and has begun her internship. Three others have been identified for future years. The processes for matching these students with the potential roles and resources in the program have been developed. Mechanisms have been developed that should promote increased funding and recruitment in the future.

Participating students

Both the participating student and the one who elected not to enter this year have shown great enthusiasm about the program and have expressed a commitment to support its future development. Both have enthusiastically proclaimed that SFHP presents an incredible opportunity for their future. One, a recently immigrant who had been an attorney in Cuba, has expressed excitement that she has the opportunity to return to the ranks of the professionals. The other, a young, second generation mother from a traditional home, speaks enthusiastically about the changes she believes this program can bring in the Latino community.

Several local practitioners holding BSSWs have expressed interest in participating in SFHP. Most of them have become aware of the program through visits to agencies and other community groups by the authors of this article. One has begun the process of application to enter the Advanced Standing program next Summer. A second has initiated discussions with her current employer, trying to negotiate a schedule that would allow her to enter the Extended Study (part time) program.

Community response

The response from local providers has been very positive. With the exception of the few who

hope to arrange reciprocal licensure, providers have expressed enthusiasm in the face of past frustration. Even those who would prefer alternative solutions see SFHP as a very positive and helpful step. Several agency leaders and government officials have expressed an interest in serving in an advisory capacity to the program. Three agencies have agreed to provide stipends at varying levels and others have asked to discuss that possibility with College personnel. Many are becoming involved in the process of recruiting prospective students. Three larger agencies have indicated their willingness to partner in seeking funding to expand the program and to conduct research related to its activities.

The community outside social services has been more difficult to access. Several factors, including the need to educate many potential students and their families about the social work profession, make conventional advertising challenging. Personal contact and conversation has been the most effective approach to this point. A vast reservoir of potential students and families remains untapped. One natural point of contact that remains to be explored is local high schools. These may prove more fertile when a BSSW component is added to the program.

Future Steps

SFHP is in its infancy, but is growing rapidly. Its youth also makes it very pliable. Several new developments, such as the acquisition of new sources of funding, have forced revisions of this article even during the time of its writing. Plans are being made to stabilize and expand the program in the coming years.

Stabilization of funding sources
One particularly important future step will be the stabilization of sources of funding. A major advance occurred recently when the College committed fellowship dollars to support one student per year. Work study money will also be available on an ongoing basis. More formal arrangements with more agencies need to be made and additional agencies that will provide

stipends must be identified. Several community groups have indicated an interest in providing financial support. These possibilities must be explored and working relationships developed.

Philanthropic foundations or federal programs may also provide funding. Two local agencies have offered to provide support from their development departments to seek potential supporters and write grant proposals. Two agencies from state and local government have expressed an interest in providing support to employees and potential employees that might participate.

Expansion of avenues for recruitment

Recruitment remains a challenge. Barriers such as language and a lack of understanding of the social work profession render conventional advertising ineffective. The current plan is to expand the advisory committee to include at least one influential member of the various constituencies from the community. Each constituency will be a group that either has access to potential students (such as churches and schools), has a vested interest in the success of SFHP (such as social service agencies and advocacy groups), or has the potential to provide financial support (such as local foundations or business persons). Advisory committee members will then become points of access and advertising to the various constituencies.

Current advisory committee members are developing a list of constituencies as this article is being written. Once the constituencies have been identified, a list of potential committee members from each constituency will be identified. Strategies will then be developed for approaching each, maximizing the probability of a positive response.

One of the functions of advisory committee members will be to promote SFHP through visits and speaking engagements with community groups. They will be trained in the details of program operation, equipped with brochures that describe the sources of support, and given points of contact for those who need additional information. Committee members will also visit undergraduate programs in local universities (not just in social work, but also in other related

disciplines) to recruit from the students there.

As the initial visits have been made to community groups the importance considering language and culture in those visits has become increasingly clear. The authors of this paper have made several visits together. The presence of both a bicultural, bilingual professional and a university administrator of European/American Indian descent working together has enhanced communication. Although all the meetings to date have been conducted in English, occasional Spanish words and phrases have been included and some intensive conversations in "Spanglish" have occurred following each of the meetings. It is anticipated that some future meetings will be conducted with individuals and groups where Spanish will be the dominant language. In such cases a Spanish-speaking member of the advisory committee will either be the speaker or provide translation for an English speaker.

Whenever possible the speakers should be either bicultural or culturally relevant to the group being addressed. In the meetings conducted to date issues have arisen that have required some understanding of the attendee's culture. The most recent example occurred when, after approximately ten minutes of his speech a Hispanic professional from the audience asked, "Could you please explain this? I have no idea what you are talking about." The issue was that the educational system was vastly different in her home country. The speaker had to revise his remarks to include a discussion of BSSW, MSSW, and PhD programs and explain how SFHP fits into that structure.

Inclusion of a BSSW program
Another future step for SFHP is the inclusion of a BSSW program. The Nashville campus of UTCSW offers only an MSSW. A neighboring school, Tennessee State University (TSU), offers a BSSW. Plans are being made to expand SFHP to include that program by next year. This would allow recruitment to occur in public and private high schools, opening the doors for additional groups of potential students.

The inclusion of a BSSW program is expected to present new challenges. Residency status, for example, is not usually an issue at the graduate level because those issues have been resolved when the student entered a bacculaurate program. Similarly, eligibility for government or university funding may be affected by citizenship status and the ability to recruit from out-of-state may be hindered by the cost of out-of-state tuition. These and other issues will need to be addressed as the program is developed.

Replication for other professions

Yet another possibility for the SFHP program is that it may be replicated among other professions. An example can be provided by recounting a conversation between an author of the paper and a Dean of a College of Education at one of Tennessee's regional universities. The community in which that university is located has a growing need for bilingual tutors for Latino children in the public school system. During the conversation the two administrators identified several ways the College of Education might provide support or academic credit to students who work with Spanish-speaking children and families in the community. Similar arrangements might be made for other professions, such as psychology, business, nursing, medicine, law, or law enforcement education.

Inclusion of other immigrant and refugee groups

A final possible area that is currently recognized as a potential area of growth is providing support for other immigrant and refugee groups in addition to the Hispanic community. Nashville is a federal relocation center for several refugee groups including Croatians and Laotians. It also boasts growing populations of Asians, other Southeast Asians, Africans, and other Eastern Europeans. Issues related to culture and effective service exist for each of these groups. Issues related to language exist for many. SFHP could be expanded to include each of these groups. The effort would require additional funding for those students and the creation of additional advisory committees or the expansion of the current committee. Possibilities for this sort of expansion are currently being explored with local leaders and members of the state legislature.

In summary, SFHP is a growing program that promises to meet a critical need in the Middle Tennessee area. Participating students receive a variety of support including tuition waiver, fellowship dollars, internship stipends, and funds to purchase books and supplies. In return they do public relations work for the College, serve agencies as interns, and perform beneficial work in the Hispanic community. Plans for the future of the program include stabilization and expansion of funding and recruiting efforts, the development of a program for BSSW students, and the possibility of developing support for students in other professions.

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