

Health Service Psychology Post-Doctoral Fellowship Program

The Harris County Juvenile Probation Department (HCJPD) is an APPIC-member postdoctoral program. HCJPD will accept three full-time post-doctoral fellows for a twelve-month fellowship, which begins on September 1st (or the first working day after September 1st) and ends on the last working day in August. Eligible applicants must have obtained a doctorate degree (Ph.D. or Psy.D.) from an APA-accredited program in psychology (clinical, counseling, or school psychology) and they must have completed one year of an APA-accredited internship program. During the course of the year, post-docs will be required to complete a minimum of 1850 clock hours to be used towards licensure as a psychologist. Post-docs are expected to work at least 40 hours per week, and at least 25 percent of the time will be devoted to direct services. This post-doctoral fellowship fulfills the requirements to become a licensed psychologist in the State of Texas, as well as most other states. However, applicants are strongly encouraged to review the specific requirements of the state from which he or she hopes to become licensed.

The fellowship is primarily assessment oriented; however, there are also opportunities to provide group counseling, crisis intervention, and consultation services. Upon completion of the fellowship year, post-docs will be granted a certificate of completion signifying that all requirements have been met.

STATEMENT REGARDING COVID-19 PANDEMIC: *Harris County Juvenile Probation Post-doctoral fellows are not considered to be essential personnel, and during the pandemic, they are not required to be in the office every day. To the extent possible, post-docs have engaged in providing services through a secure and HIPAA-complaint telehealth platform and have conducted other work activities, such as report writing, from home. However, it is important for post-docs to be aware that there are occasional circumstances that might require a post-doc to come into the office or to interact in-person with a youth. While an individual's personal comfort level will be respected, it is important for post-docs to understand that the breadth of experiences might be limited for individuals who do not feel comfortable interacting in-person with clients. At this time, it is unknown how long remote working and telehealth services will continue. It is expected that all HCJPD employees will be expected to return to working in the office once public health officials deem this to be safe. At this time, HCJPD is still evaluating the situation to determine if interviews for 2022-2023 postdoctoral applicants will occur virtually or in-person. Please do not hesitate to contact the Training Director, Dr. Uche Chibueze, regarding any questions.*

Our Mission and Training Philosophy

The mission of this program is to assist post-docs in developing competency in the provision of psychological services to at-risk youth in a manner that is consistent with APA Ethical Standards and to prepare you to practice as an independently licensed psychologist. HCJPD adheres to a Practitioner-Scholar training model, with the focus of training the post-doc from a developmental perspective. At this point in your career, you are expected to have a fairly broad set of clinical skills and you are likely comfortable working with a variety of clients and presenting concerns. The hope for your post-doc year is to be able to gain specialized experience with a challenging

adolescent population and to further develop your identity as a professional psychologist. The post-docs are expected to utilize evidenced-based practices in their assessments and interventions and to use scientific research to inform their professional practice. While most of the training gained during this year is through hands-on experience, post-docs also participate in group and individual supervision, as well as didactic seminars and other formal learning opportunities.

All training experiences within HCJPD are approached by utilizing a developmental model. We believe that this is best achieved by gradually placing the post-doc in a position of increased clinical responsibility and autonomy, while providing a wide array of training opportunities and intensive supervision. The training program encourages the continual accumulation of knowledge, refinement of clinical skills, and development of professional identity. While there are overall training goals and objectives, each individual post-doc might require or desire more experience and/or supervision in different areas. Post-docs are provided generous amounts supervision, especially at the beginning of the year, but are also expected to be functioning more autonomously than they did during their internship year.

Training Experiences

The Harris County Juvenile Probation Department (HCJPD) is located in Houston, TX. We provide services to a diverse group of youth (typically ages 10 to 17) who are involved with the Juvenile Justice System, or who are at risk to become involved with this system in Houston, TX. Offenses of youth who are involved with HCJPD range from very serious charges of Murder, Aggravated Robbery, or Sexual Assault, to minor offenses such as Theft or Trespassing. Many of the youth come from low socio-economic backgrounds and are gang-affiliated. Fifty to sixty percent of these youth have at least one psychiatric diagnosis, including Neurodevelopmental Disorders (Intellectual Disability, Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Autism Spectrum Disorder, and Specific Learning Disorders), Mood Disorders, Anxiety Disorders, Trauma- and Stressor-Related Disorders, Behavior Disorders, and Substance Use Disorders. Besides the daily clinical activities, crises with the youth or his/her parents often arise, such as emotional responses to a child's detainment, suicidal ideation and suicide attempts, self-harming behaviors, violence or conflict among juveniles in detention, and exacerbation of existing mental health problems.

The department has three post-doctoral positions in psychology.

1. **Forensic Unit** – This position is assessment-focused and involves conducting psychological evaluations for youth who are involved in the Juvenile Justice System. The purpose of these evaluations vary, but might involve diagnostic clarification, determining level of intellectual functioning, making appropriate placement or treatment recommendations, or evaluating youth who are being considered for a waiver of the juvenile jurisdiction and possibly transferred into the adult criminal court system. Post-docs also conduct Fitness to Proceed (Competency to Stand Trial) evaluations conjointly with a licensed psychologist. Some evaluations will be conducted with youth who are currently detained, while other evaluations will be conducted with youth who are residing

in the community, awaiting their court-date. The post-doc is also involved in multidisciplinary case staffings. This position will be located downtown Houston, at the Juvenile Justice Center.

2. **Specialty Court** – This position involves working with two of HCJPD’s specialty courts: Court 360°, for individuals with significant mental health needs, and CARE Court, for individuals involved in human sex trafficking. The post-doc is responsible for assessing youth in order to determine his/her appropriateness for the Specialty Court and works collaboratively with a licensed psychologist, judges, attorneys, and probation officers to monitor the youth’s progress in the program. The post-doc will also provide short-term treatment to some of these youth and communicate with the team regarding the youth’s treatment goals. The post-doc will interact with youth who are currently detained or residing in the community. This position will be located downtown Houston, at the Juvenile Justice Center.
3. **TRIAD Prevention Program** – TRIAD is a consortium of three county agencies (Harris County Protective Services for Children and Adults, Harris County Juvenile Probation and The Harris Center for Mental Health and IDD) working together to coordinate their resources to serve youth who are at-risk. TRIAD provides countywide prevention and early intervention services to youth and families who are presenting with issues such as runaway behavior, truancy, or family conflict. Many of these youth also have a history of underlying trauma and instability and exhibit emotional and behavioral concerns at home, school, and in the community. The primary responsibility for this post-doc is to conduct psychological evaluations on these youth. The post-doc writes a formal report of the findings and then presents the results of this evaluation to the caregiver and referral source. In addition, this post-doc participates in multidisciplinary case staffings and serves as a consultant to a variety of mental health providers. Occasionally there are opportunities for the post-doc to provide individual, group, or family therapy. This post-doc will primarily interact with youth who are residing in the community, but at times, they will work with youth who are residing in a temporary emergency shelter. This position will be located at the Youth Services Center, in Southwest Houston.

Each of the post-doctoral fellows participate in an orientation to the agency and their position. They receive at least two hours per week of individual supervision from a licensed psychologist, but at times, they work side-by-side with a licensed psychologist. They have the opportunity to provide trainings and/or supervision to practicum students and psychology interns. Post-docs have at least two hours of additional learning activities per week. One hour of this consists of group supervision with the Training Director, Dr. Uche Chibueze, and the three post-docs. The other hour involves at least one of the following: journal hour (a weekly discussion where interns, students, and post-docs rotate in presenting a relevant journal article), Community Resource Coordination Group (Houston-area resource providers meet to discuss the needs of a complex case within the community), a monthly discussion of Forensic case law, or participation in weekly didactic seminars. Journal hour and case law are primarily for the Forensic Unit and Specialty

Court post-docs, while the Community Resource Coordination Group is primarily be for the TRIAD post-doc. Post-docs are also invited to attend the weekly didactic seminars for the doctoral interns, which covers a wide range of relevant topics, such as multicultural issues, forensic assessment, trauma, sexual behavior problems, substance abuse, and evidenced-based treatments, to name a few. Finally, as Harris County Employees, Post-docs are welcome to attend a large number of free seminars presented by the county regarding a variety of topics. There are also a fair number of low cost or free community trainings that are available to the post-docs.

DIVERSITY AT HCJPD

The youth who are seen by the Harris County Juvenile Probation Department represent an ethnically diverse population of youth. In addition, we provide services to youth who have come from a variety of places in the world, including Mexico, Central America, and Africa, and we frequently interact with youth and parents where English is not their native language. We have several staff members who speak various languages and we will utilize translators when necessary. We also see youth across the LGBTQ spectrum. HCJPD has worked hard in recent years to address cultural sensitivity with the staff and ongoing trainings are provided in order to promote equal treatment of all individuals.

Data from the agency's [2020 Annual Report](#) indicate that HCJPD serves primarily an ethnic minority population (47% African American, 44% Hispanic, 7% Caucasian), with 79% of these youth being male. Fifty to sixty percent of the youth involved with Juvenile Probation have at least one psychiatric disorder, and many of these youth are gang-involved and have experienced significant trauma in their lives. They have often experienced family instability, educational difficulties, and poverty.

POST-DOCTORAL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The overall goal of the Harris County Juvenile Probation post-doctoral program is to provide specialty training in working with youth involved in the juvenile justice system, or youth who are at risk to become involved with this system or the child welfare system. By the completion of this year, it is hoped that the post-doc will be well-prepared to be an independently functioning psychologist in a variety of settings, especially in a setting that provides services to youth or in a forensic setting.

In order to meet these goals, the HCJPD post-docs conduct assessments, provide interventions, work collaboratively with multidisciplinary teams, and provide consultation, training, and supervision. In addition, through didactic seminars and supervision, post-docs receive additional training to meet the goals and objectives. The post-doc competency evaluation is a direct measure of the program's goals and the post-doc's progress in meeting these goals.

The goals and objectives for the post-doctoral program are listed below:

A. Ethical and Legal Standards

- a. Is knowledgeable of and acts in accordance with each of the following: 1) Current version of the APA Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct; 2) Relevant laws, regulations, rules, and policies governing health service psychology at the organizational, local, state, regional, and federal levels; 3) Relevant professional standards and guidelines.
- b. Recognizes ethical dilemmas as they arise, and applies ethical decision-making processes in order to resolve the dilemmas.
- c. Conducts self in an ethical manner in all professional activities.

B. Individual and Cultural Diversity

- a. Exhibits an understanding of how their own personal/cultural history, attitudes, and biases may affect how they understand and interact with people different from themselves.
- b. Displays knowledge of the current theoretical and empirical knowledge base as it relates to addressing diversity in all professional activities including research, training, supervision/consultation, and service.
- c. Demonstrates the ability to integrate awareness and knowledge of individual and cultural differences in the conduct of professional roles. This includes the ability to work effectively with individuals whose group membership, demographic characteristics, or worldviews create conflict with their own.
- d. Demonstrates the ability to independently apply their knowledge and approach in working effectively with a range of diverse individuals and groups.

C. Integration of Science and Practice

- a. Demonstrates knowledge of evidenced-based practices that are effective with this clinical population.
- b. The post-doc utilizes research to guide his/her clinical practice. When appropriate, the clinician incorporates evidenced-based practices into his/her clinical work.
- c. If the opportunity arises, the post-doc participates in training opportunities regarding relevant evidenced-based practices.

D. Professional Values, Attitudes, and Behaviors

- a. Behaves in ways that reflect the values and attitudes of psychology, including integrity, deportment, professional identity, accountability, lifelong learning, and concern for the welfare of others.
- b. Engages in self-reflection regarding one's personal and professional functioning, engages in activities to maintain and improve performance, well-being, and professional effectiveness.

- c. Actively seeks and demonstrates openness and responsiveness to feedback and supervision.
- d. Responds professionally to increasingly complex situations with a greater degrees or independence as they progress through the year.
- e. Exhibits professionalism in regards to dependability, follow-through, timeliness and in meeting deadlines.

E. Assessment

- a. Selects and applies the most appropriate and empirically sound assessment methods available to address the referral question.
- b. Collects thorough and relevant data using multiple sources and methods appropriate to the identified goals and questions of the assessment as well as relevant diversity characteristics of the service recipient.
- c. Accurately scores and interprets assessment results, following current research and professional standards and guidelines to inform case conceptualization, classification, and recommendations. This should be done while guarding against decision-making biases and distinguishing the aspects of assessment that are subjective from those that are objective.
- d. Utilizes clinical data and the DSM-5, while taking into consideration cultural and developmental factors, in order to determine appropriate diagnoses of the service recipient.
- e. Communicates orally and in written documents the findings and implications of the assessment in an accurate and effective manner that is sensitive to a range of audiences.
- f. Submits evaluations to supervisor in a timely manner. Supervisor should have sufficient time (at least 24 hours) prior to the due date to review report and to communicate with post-doc regarding any necessary revisions.

F. Intervention

- a. Establishes and maintains effective relationships with the recipients of psychological services
- b. Develops evidence-based intervention plans specific to the service delivery goals.
- c. Implements interventions informed by the current scientific literature, assessment findings, diversity characteristics, and contextual variables.
- d. Modifies and adapts evidence-based approaches effectively when a clear evidence-base is lacking.
- e. Evaluates intervention effectiveness, and adapts intervention goals and methods consistent with ongoing evaluation.

G. Communication and Interpersonal Skills

- a. Develops and maintains effective relationships with a wide range of individuals, including colleagues, communities, organization, supervisors, supervisees, and those receiving professional services.
- b. Produces and comprehends oral, nonverbal, and written communications that are informative and well-integrated; demonstrates of thorough grasp of professional language and concepts.
- c. Demonstrates effective interpersonal skills and the ability to manage difficult communication well.

H. Consultation and Interprofessional/Interdisciplinary Skills

- a. Applies knowledge of consultation models and practices in direct consultation with individuals and their families, other health care professionals, interprofessional groups, or systems related to health and behavior. Some examples of where this might occur is through interactions with attorneys, juvenile probation officers, juvenile security officers, case managers, case workers, and at multidisciplinary case staffing meetings.
- b. Is able to convey to non-mental health professionals (such as Juvenile Security Officers Juvenile Probation Officers) a basic understanding of mental health issues affecting youth.

I. Supervision

- a. Applies knowledge of supervision models and practices through either informal or formal supervision with interns and practicum students.
- b. Is able to identify areas of strength and areas of growth as a supervisor.
- c. Can be relied upon to provide doctoral level guidance to interns and practicum students when a licensed psychologist is not immediately available.

J. Juvenile Justice and/or Child Welfare

- a. Exhibits an understanding of the role of the psychologist in a juvenile justice setting or in working with child welfare professionals.
- b. If applicable, the post-doc utilizes the knowledge and skills of conducting psychological evaluations to apply this in conducting forensic evaluations such as certification evaluations and/or competency evaluations.
- c. If applicable, the post-doc demonstrates an ability to accurately and professionally convey the results of forensic evaluations in a formal court setting.

POST-DOCTORAL COMPETENCY EVALUATIONS

Post-doctoral fellows receive a formal competency evaluation at the mid-point of the year (around March 1) and at the end of your post-doctoral year. The evaluations are based on the goals and objectives addressed in the previous section.

Ideally, the competency evaluations can be used to assist the post-doc and his/her supervisor to focus the training and supervision on the areas that are still in need of being developed. The expectation for the post-doc is that the skill level will improve over the course of the year. The post-doc is not expected to have a full grasp of all of the concepts at the beginning of the training year, but the hope is that he or she will have demonstrated a greater proficiency of these skills by the end of the year. However, there are situations that might arise where a post-doc is not developing proficiency at the rate that would be expected. In such situations, it is expected that the clinical supervisor will raise any concerns during the course of their individual supervision meetings. However, additional measures might be utilized that include, but are not limited to increased level of supervision, modification of job duties, and/or participation in additional training.

TRAINING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Four full-time licensed psychologists provide supervision for interns:

Uche F. Chibueze, Psy.D., ABPP (Training Director/Chief Psychologist, Juvenile Forensic Unit) is a board certified clinical psychologist who received her doctoral degree in Clinical Psychology from Texas School of Professional Psychology in 2009. She also has a Master's Degree in Community Counseling from Baylor University. Dr. Chibueze completed her pre-doctoral and post-doctoral internships with the Harris County Juvenile Forensic Unit. Dr. Chibueze also conducts the forensic evaluations for the juvenile court that include Waiver to Adult Court, Fitness to Proceed, and Lack of Responsibility evaluations. In addition, she provides expert witness testimony on a continuous basis for the juvenile court. Dr. Chibueze has conducted research that explored the impact of the acculturation process on African immigrant families and also created one of the first clinical measures geared specifically for the African immigrant population. In addition, she has provided presentations on mental health issues affecting the Black population for the American Psychological Association and Texas Psychological Association annual conferences. She also provides trainings on projective testing. Dr. Chibueze is presently working on researching mitigating factors associated with waiver to adult court evaluations.

Florencia Iturri, Ph.D. (Staff Psychologist, Juvenile Forensic Unit) received her Ph.D. in clinical psychology with an emphasis in forensics from Palo Alto University. Dr. Iturri was a previous intern and forensic post-doc at the Harris County Juvenile Probation Department. She has experience completing forensic evaluations with juveniles, providing treatment to detained youth and post-release sex offenders, as well as working within the court system. Dr. Iturri is originally from Bolivia and provides all services in both English and Spanish. Dr. Iturri is currently

helping to develop an outpatient competency restoration program for juveniles. She has extensive training in forensic psychology and assessment. She has published in peer-reviewed journals, presented at conferences, and received research awards for her dissertation work including the Diversity Research Award from the Minority Affairs Committee of the American Psychology-Law Society (AP-LS).

Connie F. Nelke, Ph.D. (Specialty Court Psychologist, CARE Court and Court 360°) received her doctoral degree from Utah State University and completed her internship at the Baylor College of Medicine. She has an extensive clinical background, including both treatment and evaluation in the areas of trauma and abuse, with research interests involving parent-child relationships in the context of an abusive history and the trauma associated with human trafficking. Previously, she worked as the clinical director of a sexual abuse treatment program, an assistant professor at Baylor College of Medicine overseeing the clinical operations of a trauma treatment program, in private practice conducting forensic evaluations and treating children and families with CPS and abuse histories, and more recently, with the HCJPD in her current role.

Alexandra Tellez, Ph.D. (Assistant Training Director, Staff Psychologist, Juvenile Forensic Unit) acquired her Clinical Psychology doctoral degree from Sam Houston State University in 2014. She also has a Master's degree in Forensic Psychology from John Jay College of Criminal Justice earned in 2008. She completed her pre-doctoral internship at the Federal Medical Center in Devens, MA, with the Bureau of Prisons, and her post-doctoral training at our Juvenile Forensic Unit. Dr. Tellez also serves as adjunct faculty at Prairie View A&M University and has publications in the areas of trauma, mental health, and evidenced-based treatments. Her research interests include childhood trauma and cultural and linguistic diversity issues in forensic psychology. She is a native Spanish speaker and conducts (and is available to supervise) psychological and forensic evaluations in Spanish at the Forensic Unit.

LIFE AS POST-DOC AT HCJPD

Post-docs can expect to be busy during their fellowship year at the HCJPD; however, there is also an appreciation for quality of life. This fellowship seeks to provide an excellent training environment while still allowing time for the post-doc to explore their other personal endeavors. Estimates from post-docs regarding the number of hours they spend per week on clinical activities can vary, but it typically falls between 40 to 45 hours per week. Of course, some weeks are busier than others and might require additional work, such as report writing, to be done after hours. It is also important to note that some of the clinical work provided by the post-docs might occur in the early evenings or at various locations and having personal transportation is necessary. We are flexible, however, in regards to a post-doc's time and we understand that it might occasionally be necessary to arrive late or leave early due to personal obligations. There is also the possibility to flex one's work hours, for example, if a post-doc works late one evening, he or she might be able leave early the next day. As long as work obligations are being met and this is discussed with the supervisor, this request can usually be accommodated.

We hope that post-docs take advantage of exploring all that Houston, the fourth largest city in the United States, has to offer. Houston has a population of more than two million people and is considered to be the country's most diverse city in terms of ethnic and religious backgrounds, and also includes a large international community. Houston tends to have a strong and diversified economy, as one of the country's leaders in the oil and gas industry, aeronautics, health care, transportation, and education, just to name a few. There are plenty of opportunities to enjoy the performing arts, various museums, professional sports teams, an exciting night life, and a wide variety of restaurants. Houston is also within a short drive to other Texas cities such as Austin, San Antonio, and Galveston.

SALARY AND BENEFITS

Compensation for the one year, full-time internship is at least \$45,968. As full-time Harris County employees, post-docs and their dependents are eligible to receive health insurance after 60 days of employment. This health insurance includes medical, dental, and vision coverage. A basic level health insurance plan is provided at no cost to the intern, but there is the option to contribute to a plan with a lower deductible and greater coverage. There is an additional cost for dependent health insurance coverage. All county employees, including interns, also contribute to a retirement plan and have the option to enroll in supplemental retirement plans. Employees can also choose to purchase optional life insurance and long-term disability insurance. Interns accrue three hours of vacation time and three hours of sick time during each two-week pay period and are provided nine holidays and one floating holiday (to be used at the intern's discretion) throughout the year. Any hours worked beyond 40 hours per week are converted to compensatory time and can be used in the future. Interns are also invited to participate in various Juvenile Probation Department activities including the annual Christmas party, luncheons, and volunteer opportunities.

HCJPD post-docs have access to numerous resources. Psychological testing materials and other training resources are provided, as well as access to a library of professional manuals and books. Interns are provided with office space, designated computers, and related equipment. Each post-doc also has access to administrative and Information Technology support.

APPLICANT QUALIFICATIONS

Potential applicants must anticipate completing an APA-accredited doctoral program in psychology (clinical, counseling, or school) by September 1, 2022. This includes completion of all doctoral coursework, a year of formal internship from APA-accredited site, and successful defense and submission of the dissertation or doctoral project. Preferred applicants will have significant experience in working with at-risk youth, experience in writing comprehensive and integrative psychological evaluations, exposure to trauma-informed interventions, and experience in working with diverse populations. It is recommended that the Forensic Unit and Specialty Court applicants also have experience working in a forensic setting.

Application Process

Additional information regarding the HCJPD post-doctoral program is in the Universal Psychology Postdoctoral Directory.

Applicants should send a cover letter, a Curriculum Vitae, and one de-identified psychological evaluation report to Dr. Uche Chibueze: Uche.Chibueze@hcjpd.hctx.net. You may apply to multiple post-doctoral positions within the Harris County Juvenile Probation Department. Please indicate in your cover letter which position(s) you are applying to. This is a preliminary application and the top applicants will be asked to submit a formal application through the Harris County Human Resources Department. At that point, interviews will be scheduled. It is unknown if all interviews will be conducted virtually, but virtual interviews will be an option for all applicants.

<https://hrrm.harriscountytexas.gov/Pages/CareerOpportunities.aspx>

APPLICATION DEADLINE: January 10, 2022

For questions or additional information, please contact Dr. Uche Chibueze, Uche.Chibueze@hcjpd.hctx.net, 713-222-4303

HCJPD is an equal opportunity employer and encourages minorities and persons of diverse backgrounds of all types to apply to the psychology post-doctoral program. Harris County does not discriminate against employees with disabilities and will provide appropriate reasonable accommodation(s) when requested. **Accepted fellows will be subject to a criminal background check and a check through the Department of Family and Protective Services. The fellow must pass each of these in order to be employed by Harris County. Harris County does not employ individuals who have had a felony within the past 10 years or a misdemeanor within the past 5 years. In addition, Harris County is committed to providing a workplace free of drugs and alcohol. Therefore, fellows must pass a drug and alcohol screening prior to their employment. Please be aware that cannabis use, including the use of “medical marijuana”, is illegal in the State of Texas.**

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The policies and procedures for Harris County employees are applicable to HCJPD post-doctoral fellows. Please see <https://hrrm.harriscountytexas.gov/Pages/default.aspx> for additional information. Post-docs will also be provided with a detailed manual that provides policies and procedures specific to the fellowship program. This includes information regarding post-doctoral grievances, due process, and intern evaluations.