SAN JOSE JOB CORPS PRACTICUM

**What is Job Corps?**

The San Jose Job Corps offers a third or fourth year clinical practicum placement for five or six students. Job Corps is a governmentally-funded job training program for l6-24 year-old individuals who show a significant lack of resources to further their education and vocational training and who might otherwise be unemployed or in extreme cases, on the streets. The program provides housing, academic classes and vocational training as well as a full range of medical services, including counseling and psychotherapy. There are currently 124 Job Corps sites in the US, at least one in each state. The San Jose Job Corps is are in a campus built on a neighborhood grade school site in the eastside of San Jose. There are about 465 Job Corps students, 350 of which live in provided dormitory housing. (However, this is not a residential “treatment” program.)

**Who are the clientele at Job Corps?**

The Job Corps trainees are a diverse and often challenging crew. Many come from chaotic home lives or life on the streets. They are all participating voluntarily in the program, however, and represent young people who are trying to better their lives. The Job Corps setting has much cultural and racial diversity, with no ethnic group in the majority. The sixteen and seventeen year-old clients present with typical adolescent issues, however, the majority of clients are in the older age range and are dealing with young adult and life transition concerns. There is a wide range of presenting problems, including depression, anxiety, first psychotic breaks and age-appropriate interpersonal crises. There are some opportunities for doing couple or family therapy and each PGSP student, in rotation, will co-lead one of our four groups. Interns also participate in presenting one staff training during the year. The practicum requires flexibility, independence, an ability to get along with all kinds of people and a sense of humor.

**How does the program work?**

Students enter the Job Corps program each week in a rolling enrollment. All students enter a CPP (Career Preparation Period) for five weeks in which they study wellness, diversity issues, on the job communication and job readiness skills. After this initial period, students are placed in academic classes and soon thereafter, a vocation training program. Students can stay for two years in the program, many are reach their goals in much less time.

**What are the duties of a practicum student?**

The practicum placement is a rich training ground for learning psychotherapists. After an initial orientation period, practicum interns carry a substantial caseload (ten)

of individual clients and co-lead two groups. Required responsibilities take two days per week and one partial day. Everyone must come on Fridays. Supervision consists of weekly one-to-one supervision with Dr. Janet Negley and weekly group meetings with other interns for group supervision, case consultations, planning sessions and didactic presentations on special issues. Periodic participation in in-service workshops and collaboration with collateral staff enrich the training. There is minimal assessment testing required at this site, however, practicum students sometimes choose to assess a few students to augment their class work in assessment. We do give the Woodcock Johnson Cognitive Abilities test to help our academic department when a trainee has suspected learning disabilities. Interns are free to bring in other assessment tools as a part of a treatment plan. Most interns complete 2-3 integrated batteries during the year.

**What can I expect to learn at Job Corps?**

Most interns report that the they learn the most from their clients--who are quite a diverse and interesting group with amazing life stories and much resilience. It is a “learn by doing” experience as the majority of your time is spent in the clinic seeing clients. However, we do cover a large amount of didactic material including dealing with issues of safety, processing of trauma in therapy, couples therapy tools, how to identify and work with individuals with learning disabilities, anger management techniques within an individual therapy, working with gang identified youth and using cultural awareness to enhance case conceptualization. Dr. Negley will emphasize narrative therapy in group supervision in the winter quarter—no prior training in narrative is needed. Multi-modal case conceptualization is explored in the spring term.

**What are you looking for in an intern?**

Not any one profile. I do value the willingness to “jump in”, an open mind, proactivity and a sense of humor. Prior experience with adolescents is nice, but not at all required. I am available 24/7 for all emergencies and urgent questions and expect interns to call when they need to. However, it is not a good placement if you extremely tentative about seeing clients.

How do I apply?

The San Jose Job Corps is a member of BAPIC (Bay Area Practicum Consortium) and we adhere to the deadlines on the BAPIC website. Send Dr. Negley a cover letter describing your interest in this site and how your skills and experiences will be a good match for Job Corps, a recent CV and two letters of recommendation.