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News

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Philadelphia University to launch new M.S. in Community and Trauma Counseling

Graduates will be prepared to counsel those affected by traumatic events.

PHILADELPHIA, Feb. 6, 2013 – In recent months, many watched in horror as a gunman shot and killed 26 people, including 20 children, at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Connecticut, not long after Hurricane Sandy wreaked havoc along the northeast coast, killing more than 100 people and decimating entire communities.

To help those impacted by traumatic events, either on a personal level or as part of a larger-scale disaster, Philadelphia University is offering a new M.S. in Community and Trauma Counseling, an innovative program designed to meet the growing demand for professionals prepared to provide trauma counseling to individuals and communities influenced by extreme stress and catastrophic incidents.

It is one of just a few master's level programs nationwide that focuses exclusively on trauma counseling. Graduates of the program will meet all requirements of accrediting and state agencies and will be eligible to receive the credential of licensed professional counselor (LPC).

“This program has a distinctive focus which is critically needed at a time when widespread acts of violence, natural and man-made disasters, domestic violence and challenges presented by the returning veteran population are prominent,” said Matt Baker, PA-C, DHSc., executive dean of Philadelphia University's College of Science, Health and the Liberal Arts.

Through an innovative curriculum that combines practical, on-site internships with multidisciplinary educational opportunities, the program will expose students to the societal impact of trauma and provide them with a valuable set of skills that will enable them to perform at top levels within the profession.

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“More than two decades of neuro-scientific research provides incontrovertible evidence that trauma and toxic stress are pervasive and devastating public health problems that have serious long-term negative effects on many individuals, families and communities,” said Leslie Lieberman, director, Multiplying Connections, Health Federation of Philadelphia. “Philadelphia University's M.S. in Community and Trauma Counseling is a timely and critically necessary program that will prepare a cadre of mental health practitioners who are equipped to provide the trauma-informed services that so many of our communities and the organizations that serve them desperately need.”

The program is offered in an executive-education format, with students on campus every other weekend for a period of two to three years, depending on how quickly they complete the required coursework. Undergraduates can enroll in a five-year dual-degree program in which they receive both a B.S. in psychology and M.S. in Community and Trauma Counseling.

The new program builds on expertise Philadelphia University offers through its M.S. in Disaster Medicine and Management program, Baker said, offering opportunities for shared site exercises, joint research projects and combined community outreach efforts.

Graduates of the program will be prepared to work as licensed professional counselors in hospitals, mental health clinics, Veterans Administration facilities, domestic violence centers, universities, private practice and other settings.

For more information on the M.S. in Community and Trauma Counseling, go to <http://www.philau.edu/MSTraumaCounseling/index.html>.

Philadelphia University, founded in 1884, is a private university with 3,600 students enrolled in more than 60 undergraduate and graduate programs. As a model for professional university education, the University prepares students to be leaders in their professions in an active, collaborative and real-world learning environment infused with the liberal arts. Philadelphia University includes the innovative Kanbar College of Design, Engineering and Commerce; the College of Architecture and the Built Environment; and the College of Science, Health and the Liberal Arts. For more information, go to www.PhilaU.edu.