



## Indian Health Service Press Release

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **IHS Partners with Top Universities to Train Pharmacy Students**

*Program part of ongoing effort to recruit and train highly qualified health care professionals*

Today, the Indian Health Service (IHS) announced new Collaborative Agreements between the agency and three top American universities: Howard University, Purdue University and the University of Southern California, to participate in the IHS Advanced Pharmacy Practice Experience Program. This Program provides opportunities for pharmacy students to gain clinical experience at IHS facilities and it also serves to recruit future health care professionals to work in rural areas, specifically in Indian Country.

“Through the IHS Advanced Pharmacy Practice Experience Program, we develop meaningful partnerships with top universities that train the next generation of health care professionals, while providing opportunities for students to gain practical hands-on experience,” said Mary L. Smith, IHS Principal Deputy Director. “Upon completion, many return to start their career in providing quality health care to the American Indian and Alaska Native community.”

“My experience with IHS as a student inspired me to apply to work here when I graduated,” Fengyee Zhou, a recent IHS externship participant, now a pharmacist at the IHS Whiteriver Indian Hospital. “The level of teamwork among all health care disciplines and the extent to which pharmacists engage in patient care activities brought me back to Whiteriver.”

Under these agreements, Doctor of Pharmacy candidates at partner universities will join [students from more than 80 universities in 39 states](#) to complete rotations at IHS direct service facilities.

“We are delighted to partner with the Indian Health Service to give important clinical experience opportunities for our students and to contribute to the IHS mission of providing excellent patient care,” said Dr. Craig K. Svensson, Dean of the Purdue College of Pharmacy.

In addition to the Advanced Pharmacy Practice Experience Program, IHS [offers internships, externships, rotations and residencies](#) to pharmacy, behavioral health, dentistry, optometry, nursing and medical students. Earlier this month, IHS announced an [estimated \\$13.7 million will be available for scholarships and \\$30 million will be available for loan repayments this year](#).

“This program provides valuable experience for potential IHS health care employees,” said Erik Chosa, a program participant before he joined IHS as a pharmacist at Crow/Northern Cheyenne Hospital for 14

years. He now serves as the IHS Billings Area Pharmacy Consultant. “It allows future health care professionals to experience how rewarding it can be to work at IHS.”

IHS works to continually improve recruitment and retention of health care professions by offering competitive programs, scholarships and incentives. In the past year, IHS expanded pay scales, increased the availability of relocation incentives to recruit qualified staff and expanded its scholarship and loan repayment programs. Additionally, IHS streamlined the recruitment process with the introduction of the [Global Recruitment Initiative](#) to make it simpler for health professionals to find and apply for jobs; and [increased the number of facilities eligible for National Health Service Corps opportunities](#).

The IHS, an agency in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, provides a comprehensive health service delivery system for approximately 2.2 million American Indians and Alaska Natives. For more information, visit <http://www.ihs.gov>. Follow IHS on Facebook.

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