



ADLER UNIVERSITY

# Equity & Impact Scholarship

Creating educational opportunities for students from underrepresented communities.

Supporting experiential learning to promote community health and advance social justice.



# Why does Adler University need a new Equity Scholarship?

**Mental illness does not discriminate.** It occurs in all racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups and is the leading cause of disability in the United States and Canada. However, two-thirds of individuals with a diagnosable mental health disorder do not seek treatment, and BIPOC communities have a higher proportion of unmet mental healthcare needs than majority populations in the same geographic areas.

Some of these barriers can be attributed to a variety of factors such as cultural stigma around mental illness, systemic racism and discrimination, mistrust of the health care system, and a lack of cultural competency on the part of mental health care providers.

Adler University is working to address these barriers by promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout our programs and curricula. The new Equity & Impact Scholarship will provide students from BIPOC and other underrepresented communities with the financial and academic support they need to obtain graduate degrees and advance their work in communities through the Social Justice Practicum.



# What is the Social Justice Practicum, and why is it unique to Adler University?

Adler University is defined by its commitment to socially responsible practice. The Social Justice Practicum (SJP) embodies this unique mission to advance social justice.

Each year, Adler University students provide thousands of service hours to the community through the SJP experience. This unique hands-on practicum focuses on providing support to non-profit organizations to advance social justice. Our socially responsible student-practitioners are embedded in the community, where they can provide sites with their unique skillsets while learning and deepening their cultural competence and social justice skills.

## What is the Equity & Impact Scholarship?

A new diversity-focused scholarship fund was established in Spring 2021 through generous gifts from individual donors in Vancouver, including a leadership gift from the Executive Dean; and the Fifth Third Chicagoland Foundation. The Equity & Impact Scholarship will promote the academic achievement of students from underrepresented populations while supporting their work in high-need communities through the Social Justice Practicum (SJP).

This new fund is the first donor-funded scholarship in Adler's history to be offered to students on all campuses. Each student recipient will receive a significant award of \$5,000 (in local currency), supporting retention and celebrating the students' impact in the community during their SJP placement.

The Equity & Impact Scholarship will support students from underrepresented populations who have completed their SJP placements.

**Established in 2021,**  
this gift will recognize  
the significant impact  
of Adler students in  
the community.



# Benefits of the Social Justice Practicum (SJP)

Students learn about the systems and structures that create inequity in the communities they serve during their practicum experience. While participating in the SJP, students receive on-the-ground experience, working alongside other nonprofit organizations to support equity, policy transformation, and community health.

Because of the foundational experience that students receive during their practicum, some students are inspired to take on positions at a board/decision-making level or create their own organizations dedicated to social justice work. As a result, these Adler alumni are now our community partners, passing along their passion and insights as they mentor current students.

## Who are our Community Partners?

The SJP is proud to partner with more than 100 organizations each year, including:



- Woman Economic Council
- Access Pro Bono Society of BC
- United Way Lower Mainland
- Child's Organ Transplant Society
- Elijah Place Art & Development Centre
- Career Transitions Center of Chicago
- Chicago Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression
- CivicLab, Inc.
- Rainbows for All Children
- Women Employed



# What kind of work are our students doing during their SJP?

Since 2014, Adler University students have actively assisted our community partners in advancing their mission of fighting injustice. **Every year, one hundred forty students are placed in local organizations, resulting in 28,000 - 32,000 hours contributed annually.**

Students' day-to-day work include grant-writing, advocacy, community outreach, program and resource development, and policy. Many students are hired by their community partner sites after completing their practicum or stay on to provide critical volunteer work.

## Examples of this work include:

[Creating safe and empowering spaces for youth](#) experiencing homelessness and other barriers.

[Providing individual and group coaching to temporary migrant workers](#) and helping them advocate for their rights.

[Promoting inclusivity and diversity in the mental health field](#) by showcasing diverse voices and experiences.



140  
STUDENTS

FROM  
2014

28,000 +  
HOURS



# Testimonials and Impact

We believe the impact of Adler University's SJP program is best articulated by our students and by our community partners:

“Time and time again, we have been astonished at the compassion, capability, depth, and integrity these students bring to their positions.

At the Children's Organ Transplant Society, we strive to support the physical, mental, emotional, and medical well-being of BC's transplant children and their families. It has truly been a gift to see Adler volunteers flourish and provide new support to our charity as they reach new career heights. The skills and commitment that Adler University students bring to their internships are unmatched.”

-Children's Organ Transplant Society

“At Adler University, our mission is to prepare future mental health practitioners and graduate social justice leaders while creating an equitable and inclusive community.

I am so proud to lead this new donor-funded scholarship which not only gives priority to students from under-represented populations but also recognizes the incredible work they do every day in our unique Social Justice Practicum program. It is a pleasure to see our students in action, and I'm so grateful to our community for supporting them in their journey.”

-Brad O'Hara  
Executive Dean, Vancouver Campus



“As a recipient of a donor-funded scholarship, I am so thankful to our donors and feel privileged to continue to be at Adler University.

I don't know what this year will bring, but I believe that we are all being prepared to help change the world.”

- Adler University Doctor of Psychology Student

## **Make a gift now.**

Or contact the Office of Institutional Advancement at [giving@adler.edu](mailto:giving@adler.edu).



Learn more: [adler.edu](http://adler.edu)