

# REACH 2.0 Scholar Program

## Frequently Asked Question

Updated: February 4, 2025

We are currently developing the mentorship application and will share it as soon as it's ready. **Please check back regularly, as this FAQ will be updated weekly** with more information about the application process. To be added to our mailing list, please send an email to [REACH2.0@acaam.org](mailto:REACH2.0@acaam.org)

For more information about the SAMHSA Minority Fellowship Program (MFP) please visit the [SAMHSA website](#).

### **Tip of the Week:**

We know you are super excited to get started in preparing your materials to submit for the REACH 2.0 Program! This week, we encourage you to start compiling your two Letters of Recommendation and Statement of Purpose.

Check back next week for the next **Tip of the Week!**

### **Q: What is the REACH 2.0 Program?**

**A:** REACH 2.0 is an immersive training experience for medical students, fellows, and residents from backgrounds that represent the various patients they serve and are interested in becoming leaders in addiction medicine and addiction psychiatry. The year-long program provides education in evidenced-based culturally informed addiction health care practices. Funded through the [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration \(SAMHSA\) Minority Fellowship Program \(MFP\) for a total of 5 years](#), REACH 2.0 provides training and mentorship to **20 Scholars and 20 Near Peers every year. Each year is known as a separate cohort.**

Scholars in yearly cohorts are paired with both a traditional REACH 2.0 mentor and a Near Peer Mentor. The traditional mentor, with many years of experience in Addiction Medicine (AM) or Addiction Psychiatry (AP), plays a conventional mentorship role. The Near Peer Mentor is a physician who has previously participated in the REACH Program or a similar mentorship program and is slightly further along in their academic or professional journey than the more nascent REACH 2.0 Scholar.

Both the Near Peer and traditional mentor provide guidance, support, coaching, sponsorship, and mentorship, each bringing their unique experiences. Near Peer mentors offer a relatable perspective, having more recently navigated similar challenges and experiences. This dynamic triad fosters collaboration, shared learning, and mutual encouragement creating an environment that is both accessible and inspiring for the scholar.

**Q: What are Near Peers?**

**A:** The Near Peer mentor is a physician who has previously participated in the REACH Program or a similar mentorship program and is further along in their academic or professional journey than the scholar themselves.

In conjunction with the traditional REACH 2.0 mentor, the Near Peer will provide guidance, support, and mentorship to Scholars more nascent in their addiction career. Near Peer mentors offer a relatable perspective, having more recently navigated similar challenges and experiences. This dynamic triad fosters collaboration, shared learning, and mutual encouragement creating an environment that is both accessible and inspiring for the scholar.

**Program Information:**

**Q: What does the Program learning consist of?**

**A:** REACH 2.0 programming builds off the successes of the original [REACH program](#) with some exciting adaptations and innovations. The program is a comprehensive 12-month experience that begins with intensive training during the mandatory 3-day Welcome Workshop. Scholars participate in sessions that use various teaching and learning formats, including workshops, panel discussions, lectures, professional development, and community engagement activities. To support ongoing development, REACH 2.0 also offers monthly webinars for continued learning. Additionally, scholars are required to attend health and liberation sessions that model the importance of self-preservation in order to engage in such important work. Stipends and travel expenses are provided for approved activities.

**Q: Are Mentorship and Resources available to Scholars?**

**A:** Each Scholar is matched with a Near Peer mentor and a professional mentor for career guidance. The Scholar, Near Peer, and professional mentor will meet at least four times over the year.

**Q: When does the Welcome Workshop Occur?**

**A:** Annually, the Welcome Workshop occurs in July. The location and date are to be determined. Details will be posted as soon as the plans are finalized. Travel stipends are provided for the Scholars to attend the Welcome Workshop.

**Q: How many slots are dedicated to support trainees versus Fellows this year?**

**A:** We will accept 20 Scholars and 20 Near Peers for 2025-2026 cohort.

**Q: Is a Scholarly Project required during the Program?**

**A:** All Scholars in the program are required to complete a year-long project. **Applicants must submit a Scholarly Project Proposal as part of the application process.** Scholarly projects can be educational innovations, quality improvement projects, or research projects. Projects must be able to be completed in a year and must focus on the REACH 2.0 mission.

**Q: How can Fellowship funding from Reach 2.0 be used?**

**A:** The REACH 2.0 program has allocated up to a maximum of \$40,000 per Scholar to support their participation in the REACH 2.0 program, related training opportunities, and the other activities related to the program. The Near Peers will be eligible for a \$17,000 stipend.

**Q: What are the program expectations?**

**A:** Scholars are expected to attend monthly activities, events, and meetings to complete the program. In addition, completion of a Scholarly Project and Program Evaluation Surveys are required. Details are as follows:

- Monthly Activities that include participation in monthly webinars (training, networking, and panel discussions).
- Attendance to the Welcome Workshop (travel stipends are provided) is required
- Health and Liberation Sessions
- Scholarly Project completion
- Program Evaluation Surveys

**Eligibility & Requirements:**

**Q: Who Should apply to the REACH 2.0 Scholars Program?**

**A:** Medical students, residents, and fellows who are from a variety of backgrounds and represent the patients they serve. Applicants must want to specialize in Addiction

Medicine, Addiction Psychiatry, or have declared interest in training and treating individuals with substance use disorder.

**Q: What are the Eligibility Requirements and Criteria?**

**A:** To be eligible for the REACH Program, applicants must be:

- Individuals from diverse backgrounds, especially those who have faced historical challenges or underrepresentation
- In training residency training as of July 1, 2025 and enrolled through June 2026.
- A U.S. Citizen or Permanent Resident

**Application Information** (Attachment as example)

**Q: What are the required materials to attach to the application?**

**A:** The following **materials are required:**

- CV
- A Statement of Participation from the Program Director
- Two Letters of Recommendation

**Q: What is a Statement of Participation?**

**A:** Statement of Participation must be from your Program Director, Dean of Students, or Dean of Training. The SOP provides permission for the applicant to participate fully in all aspects of the program (i.e., Welcome Workshop, check-in meetings, monthly wellness sessions, health and liberation sessions, and monthly webinars and evaluations).

**Q: Are Letters of Recommendations required by applicants?**

**A: Two** Letters of Recommendation are **required** upon submission of the application. LORs must include a recommender to speak to the applicant's clinical skills, commitment to serving vulnerable groups, and/or experience providing substance use disorder (SUD) services.

**Q: When must all Letters of Recommendation and Statement of Participation be submitted?**

**A:** All Letters of Recommendation and Statement of Participation must be submitted at the same time as the application.

**Q: How will letter writers know where to submit their letters?**

**A:** Letters of Recommendation must be saved as a PDF and emailed to [reach2.0@acaam.org](mailto:reach2.0@acaam.org) from the letter writer. All emails must be received with the letter writer's institutional email address. Letters must have an official letterhead and a signature. Please ensure the applicant's name is in the subject line to match the application appropriately.

**Q: How can I share or demonstrate my experience and commitment working with people from vulnerable backgrounds and communities with Substance Use Disorders (SUDs)?**

**A:** The following are examples on how you can demonstrate your commitment:

- In your essay include (one or more of the following):
  - Volunteer experience, community and/or work experience.
  - Lived experience with SUDs.
  - Clearly, articulated understanding of the experiences of vulnerable patients with SUDs.
  - Clinical involvement.
- Letters of recommendation can speak to an applicant's interest, skills, and commitment to serving vulnerable populations with SUDs.
- On your CV, include any additional accolades, relevant academic/course work/areas of study, publications, or clinical involvement.

**Q: Are Scholarly Projects required for the application? What should I prepare to include in the proposal?**

- **A:** Yes. A proposal for your Scholarly Project is **required** upon submission of your application. In your proposal, please describe a scholarly project focused on vulnerable populations with substance use disorder (SUD) that you plan to undertake during your fellowship. The proposal should include:
  - A brief problem statement that outlines the issue or challenge related to SUD in the population you are targeting.
  - Specify the vulnerable group(s) that will be the focus of your project.
  - Define the aims of your project—what do you hope to achieve over the course of your year as a REACH scholar?
  - Identify the key problem you are aiming to address or specific areas of inquiry you intend to explore, and explain the methodology you plan to use, including any data collection and analysis techniques. Your project may be research, education, or quality improvement (QI) focused.

- Describe the potential implications of your project: How will it contribute to advancing knowledge or interventions in SUD, particularly for vulnerable populations? What are the broader implications for the field?

Projects should be completed within one year, from July 2025 to June 2026, and your proposal should be limited to **one page**. We strongly recommend that you have a mentor or a professor review your proposal before submission to ensure its clarity and alignment with your goals.

**Q: Who should I contact if I have additional questions?**

**A:** For further information, please contact Denisha Brown, Program Manager, at [reach2.0@acaam.org](mailto:reach2.0@acaam.org).