



Behavioral Health Career Day

Action Playbook

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	02
Thank You For Joining Us	03
About Us	04
Behavioral Health Career Navigation Resources	05
Student Financial Aid and Loan Repayment Opportunities	07
Understanding Behavioral Health Career Pathways	09
Resources from Speakers & Partners	12
Thank You	13



Thank You For Joining Us

On behalf of the Michigan Department of Education’s School Behavioral Health Unit and Michigan Health Council, thank you for attending our virtual 2026 Behavioral Health Career Day! Your time, curiosity, and engagement truly matter.

This event brought together Behavioral Health professionals from across Michigan to highlight the many career paths in counseling, psychology, and social work. We hope the sessions helped you see new possibilities, ask questions, and connect with real professionals and employers from around the state.

As many presenters shared, Behavioral Health professionals play a vital role in supporting the well-being of students, families, and communities. Over the next ten years, job openings in these fields are projected to grow—about 9% for Counselors, 6% for Psychologists, and 2% for Social Workers—meaning Michigan will need more skilled and passionate people like you to step into these roles.

This booklet is designed to help you take the next step. Inside, you will find curated career pathway resources, education and training information, and opportunities to explore whether a career in Behavioral Health is a good fit for your interests and strengths. We strongly encourage you, your class, or your school to reach out to the employers and presenters who shared their contact information and keep the conversation going.

Thank you again for joining us for the 2026 Behavioral Health Career Day. Your interest in Behavioral Health is a powerful first step toward a meaningful career.



Scott Hutchins,
School Behavioral Health Unit Supervisor,
Michigan Department of Education



Craig Donahue,
President & CEO,
Michigan Health Council

About Us



About the Michigan Department of Education School Behavioral Health Unit

The Michigan Department of Education’s School Behavioral Health Unit works to strengthen school-based Behavioral Health systems across the state. The unit supports districts by providing guidance, resources, and collaboration opportunities that expand access to high-quality Behavioral Health services and supports efforts to expand Michigan’s Behavioral Health workforce.



About Michigan Health Council

Michigan Health Council (MHC) is a solutions-oriented nonprofit organization on a mission to ensure the future of the healthcare workforce. We proactively address the needs of healthcare leaders, professionals, employers, educators, and students through various products and services spanning the education-to-practice continuum.

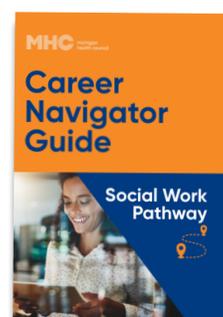
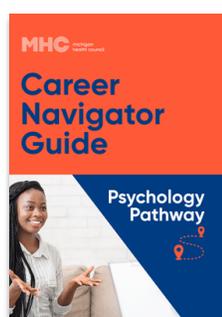
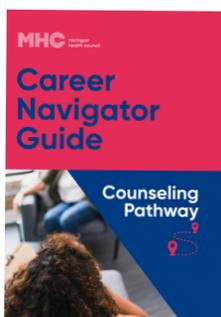
Contracted in 2023, MHC joined forces with the Michigan Department of Education’s School Behavioral Health Unit to boost the number of credentialed Behavioral Health professionals in Michigan. Hosting the virtual Behavioral Health Career Day is one way MHC advances this mission—by building awareness and inspiring future professionals to explore Behavioral Health career paths.

Behavioral Health Career Navigation Resources

MHC offers a variety of Behavioral Health career resources to help you build career awareness, explore your options, and prepare you to enter your career. Visit mhc.org/explore to access our career navigation suite!

Career Navigator Guides

In collaboration with the Michigan Department of Education School Behavioral Health Unit, MHC created three Career Navigator Guides focusing on careers in counseling, psychology, and social work. Full versions are available at mhc.org/career-guides.



mhc.org/career-guides



Career Pathway Tool

Explore [career pathways](#) within the healthcare sector and gain insight into possible career advancements and transitions based on real-world occupational data. www.mhc.org/pathways



Job Shadowing Map

Step into the world of healthcare by observing professionals in action. Using our [interactive map tool](#), you can find job shadowing opportunities near you and take the first step towards exploring your interests, building confidence, and finding a career path. www.mhc.org/shadowing



Healthcare Occupation Pages

Discover Michigan's healthcare careers through our [Healthcare Occupation Pages](#). Explore 35 key healthcare roles to learn about their responsibilities, wages, job titles, and more—all within the context of Michigan's growing healthcare industry. www.mhc.org/occupations



mhc.org/explore

Student Financial Aid and Loan Repayment Opportunities

Access financial aid and loan repayment programs to assist you in achieving your career and educational goals! Several state and federal scholarship and loan repayment programs are listed below.

Michigan Financial Aid Programs

- [Michigan Achievement Scholarship](#)
 - [Community College Guarantee](#) (2-year)
 - [Michigan Achievement Scholarship](#) (4-year)
 - [Michigan Achievement Skills Scholarship](#) (certificate)
- [Michigan Reconnect](#)
- [Children of Veterans Tuition Grant](#)
- [Fostering Futures Scholarship](#)
- [MI GEAR UP Scholarship](#)
- [Michigan Indian Tuition Waiver](#)
- [Police Officer's and Firefighter's Survivor Tuition Grant](#)
- [Tuition Incentive Program](#)
- [Social Worker/Child Welfare Worker Stipend](#)
- [Student Mental Health and Retention Training \(SMART\) Program](#)
- [Michigan Behavioral Health Internship Stipend Program \(MI-BHISP\)](#)

Michigan Behavioral Health Loan Repayment Programs

- [Michigan State Loan Repayment Program](#)
- [Behavioral Health Loan Repayment Program](#)
- [Michigan Opioid Treatment Access Loan Repayment Program](#)

Federal Postsecondary Financial Aid

After completing and submitting your [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA\)](#), you may be eligible for the following federal financial aid or loan repayment programs:

- [American Opportunity Tax Credit](#)
- [Public Service Loan Repayment](#)
- [National Health Service Corps Loan Repayment Program](#)

Student Financial Aid and Loan Repayment Opportunities

Other Funding Sources

You may also consider looking for funding through local and community sources, such as:

- Local Michigan Works! Associations
- CTE scholarships
- Local community foundation scholarships

There are also many funding opportunities for specific behavioral health disciplines from state and national associations. You may be eligible for scholarships or funding provided by:

- [National Association of Social Workers- Michigan Chapter](#)
- [National Association of School Psychologists](#)
- [American Psychological Association](#)
- [Michigan School Counselor Association](#)
- [National Board of Certified Counselors](#)

**Please note, this is not a complete list of all state and national associations*

You may also want to explore funding and career support offered by employers. Many organizations provide "earn-and-learn" programs, where they cover some or all of your tuition in exchange for a work or service commitment after graduation. Others may allow you to complete your practicum or clinical placement while earning your regular wage.

It's a good idea to check with your current or prospective employer to see what education or training benefits they offer. These opportunities can make pursuing your education more affordable and flexible.

Understanding Behavioral Health Career Pathways



Career Highlight: Psychologist

Psychologists play a vital role in enhancing mental health and supporting personal growth and wellness. Clinically, Psychologists use their training to understand and change human behavior and mental processes through non-pharmaceutical interventions. In school settings, School Psychologists support students' mental health and academic success. Beyond clinical and school settings, Psychologists work in government, nonprofits, private industry, and community. Their work in multiple facets of life is essential for promoting healthier individuals and communities.

Psychology Career Pathway



Decision Point

The bachelor's degree level marks a decision point where students will need to choose from several diverging career trajectories. After earning a bachelor's, students may choose to:

- Enter the workforce
- Apply to a master's-level psychology or school psychology specialist program

- Apply to a master's-level psychology program as a stepping stone to earning a doctorate or entering the workforce
- Apply to a doctoral-level psychology program
- Apply to medical school



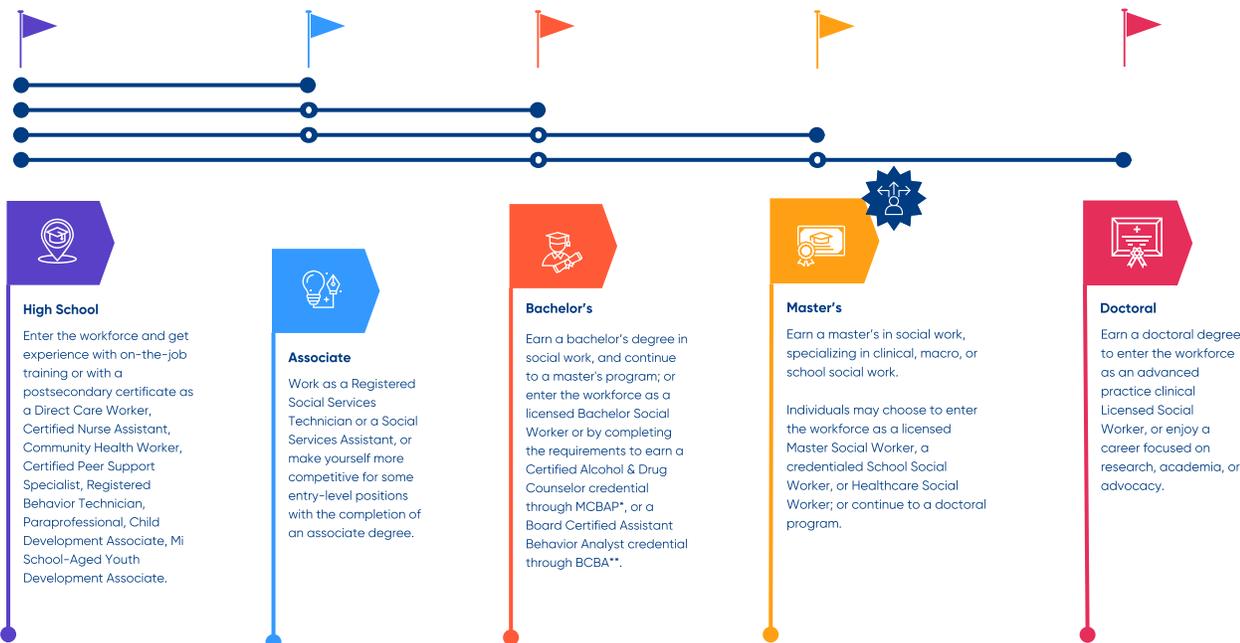
Career Highlight: Social Worker

Social Workers (SWs) play an important role in society, acting as advocates, therapists, and supporters for individuals, families, and communities in need. They are dedicated to promoting social justice, empowering vulnerable populations, and facilitating access to resources and services that improve quality of life. Beyond their work in the community, SWs also provide crucial



mental health and healthcare support by advocating and reducing barriers to healthcare access. They also help develop care support plans with a patient's healthcare team. Michigan SWs can hold a bachelor's or master's degree in social work; however, master's-prepared SWs have a larger scope of practice than bachelor-prepared SWs. A master's degree in social work opens up many opportunities for individuals, including specializing in school, clinical, healthcare social work, or careers focusing on small groups, communities, and states. SWs work in a variety of places, from schools to hospitals and mental health clinics, and may also enjoy careers in non-profit agencies, universities, and think tanks. As SWs' work is guided by empathy, respect, and ethical principles, they are essential agents of change and well-being in any community.

Social Work Career Pathway



Decision Point

The master's degree level marks a decision point where students will decide which social work specialty they would like to pursue. The social work specialty students choose will determine whether they need a license or credential and will determine the settings/environments they qualify to work in.

Students who pursue a master's in school social work must apply for a school social work credential from the Michigan Department of Education to be eligible to work in schools. Students who pursue a master's in the remaining social work specialties must hold a license through the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs.

*Michigan Certification Board for Addiction Professionals (MCBAP)

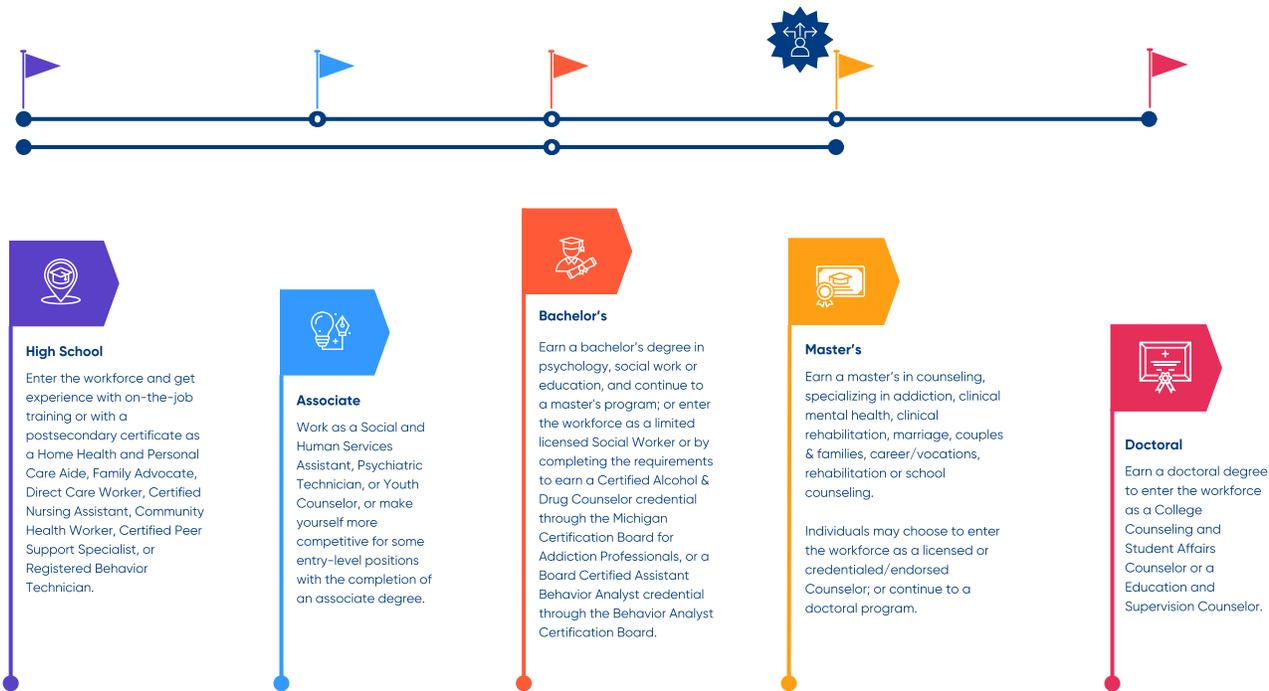
**Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BCBA)



Career Highlight: Counselor

Counselors play a vital role in the healthcare system by providing a broad array of essential services, including mental health therapy, addiction recovery, career guidance, and job-adaptivity support to individuals and families facing emotional, psychological, and social issues. Counselors specialize in techniques that emphasize problem-solving and equip patients with the tools and strategies to overcome challenges and meet their goals. To practice as a Counselor in Michigan, individuals must hold a Professional Counselor License (LPC) or a Marriage & Family Therapy (LMFT) license through the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA). To be eligible for an LPC, individuals must complete a master-level counseling program accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling-Related Educational Programs (CACREP), accrue 3,000 hours of post-degree supervised work, and pass one of three national exams accepted by LARA. Individuals seeking an LMFT license must complete a state-approved master's or doctoral-level marriage, couple, and family counseling program or an accredited program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Education (COAMFTE). Then, master-trained individuals must accrue 1,000 post-degree supervised hours, and doctoral and master's licensure applicants must pass the National Marital and Family Therapy exam. Once licensed as an LPC or LMFT, Counselors work in clinics, private practice, community mental health agencies, rehabilitation and substance use recovery facilities, government agencies, and employment agencies, among many others.

Counseling Career Pathway



Decision Point

The master's degree level marks a decision point where students will decide which counseling specialty they would like to pursue. The counseling specialty students choose will determine whether they need a license or credential/endorsement and will determine the settings/environments they qualify to work in.

Resources from Speakers & Partners

Wayne State University School of Social Work

- Application requirements (includes Personal Interest Statement and resume guidelines): socialwork.wayne.edu/bsw/requirements
- Curriculum: socialwork.wayne.edu/bsw/curriculum
- Program options: socialwork.wayne.edu/bsw/degreeoptions
- Where Online Works (WOW) program: socialwork.wayne.edu/bsw/online
- General education requirements: provost.wayne.edu/general-education-curriculum
- Informational meetings: socialwork.wayne.edu/bsw/info-sessions
- Video on social work programs: www.youtube.com/watch?v=bw4mWenVB24
- Apply now: socialwork.wayne.edu
- Questions can be directed to Admissions advisor Andre Iadipaolo at eu6337@wayne.edu

Pine Rest

- [APP Psychiatry Training Program](#)
- [Master's Level Internship Program](#)
- [Pine Rest Academy](#)
- [Psychological Consultation Center Psychometry Internship](#)
- Interested individuals can contact Pine Rest at TalentAcquisition@PineRest.org

Michigan Health & Hospital Association (MHA)

- mihospitalcareers.com

National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) / Central Michigan University (CMU)

- [Who are School Psychologists?](#)



From the Behavioral Health
Career Day Team

Thank you for exploring a career in Behavioral Health

Thank you for participating in Michigan Health Council's Behavioral Health Career Day. We appreciate you taking the time to explore the many opportunities within Behavioral Health and to learn from professionals working in the field.

Behavioral Health professionals are urgently needed across Michigan and the nation. Your interest in these careers is meaningful, and it represents an important step toward strengthening the future healthcare workforce. Whether you are considering a career as a Counselor, Social Worker, Psychologist, Psychiatrist, or another Behavioral Health professional, your curiosity and engagement matter.

We are grateful to the students and educators who joined us and helped make the day a success. We hope the conversations, insights, and experiences shared during the event helped you better understand the impact a career in Behavioral Health can have on individuals, families, and communities.

Thank you again for being part of this important event.

– **Michigan Health Council & Michigan Department of
Education School Behavioral Health Unit**