

NJLEND: AN INTERDISCIPLINARY LEADERSHIP EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS, ADVOCATES, AND FAMILY MEMBERS

NJLEND is The Boggs Center's Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities program, and is part of a national network of LEND programs. NJLEND provides graduate-level interdisciplinary leadership training to prepare the next generation of health leaders, family members, and advocates to address the needs of children and young adults with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), related developmental disabilities, and other maternal and child health populations. LEND programs also focus on developing future health care professionals who are culturally competent and provide family-centered care to diverse patients.

All fellows are paired with a Faculty Mentor from their discipline. Mentors work with fellows to integrate NJLEND requirements with the requirements of their academic program and leadership goals, as help to guide individual leadership development throughout the year.

The program can be utilized by students to fulfill a practicum or fieldwork requirement of their academic program and provides advocates and family members with a range of opportunities to inform future advocacy efforts.



WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION?

- An opportunity to learn with and from other fellows and experts in the field
- Support and mentoring by faculty
- Fellows may receive a stipend (International students are welcome to apply to the NJLEND program, but given restrictions around federal funding, we are unable to offer stipends to non-residents.)
- Students may receive course credit based on the requirements of their academic program
- Participation in a LEND program is recognized beyond New Jersey, and in the pursuit of job opportunities

WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS OF PARTICIPATION?

The NJLEND training program is delivered across a 9-month academic calendar. Fellows are required to commit at least 300 hours to participation in the program between September and May. Curricular components that make up the 300 hours of the NJLEND training program include:

DIDACTIC SEMINAR SERIES

The NJLEND didactic seminar series meets each Friday from September to May. Length of the seminars varies, but often are scheduled from 9 AM - 3 PM. In 2024-2025, the Didactic Seminar Series will operate in a hybrid format. At least 10 sessions will be held in-person at The Boggs Center in New Brunswick. The remainder of the didactic sessions will be held virtually, using Zoom.

The series is comprised of presentations in 3 broad topic areas delivered across the year, including: *Caring for Children with ASD and other Complex Neurodevelopmental Disabilities Across the Lifespan; Policy & Advocacy; and Research: From Bench to Bedside to Community.*

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Leadership development, based on Maternal and Child Health Leadership Competencies, is integrated into the curriculum and supported by Faculty Mentors. Fellows will be required to complete a leadership project, culminating in a poster presentation or publication.

CLINICAL TRAINING

Clinical training equips fellows with the skills and knowledge to provide quality care to children and youth with autism and other developmental disabilities and their families. Students will be matched with their practicum or field site through their academic department, field office, or practicum coordinator, but should request a placement that offers interaction with children and young adults with disabilities and their families, if possible.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

A rich range of experiential learning opportunities will be offered virtually and/or in locations across the state, including family homes, at sites within Rutgers, Children's Specialized Hospital (CSH), and other community sites.

WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE?

For more information on the NJLEND program, including how to apply, visit the [LEND page](#) on The Boggs Center's website. The application process begins early each Spring and continues until the program has reached capacity.



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