

OUR MISSION

The **Shepherd Higher Education Consortium on Poverty** (SHECP) encourages the study of poverty as a complex social problem, by expanding and improving educational opportunities for college students in a wide range of disciplines and career trajectories. Through its programs, **SHECP** and its member institutions prepare students for a lifetime of professional and civic efforts to diminish poverty and enhance human capability while also supporting connections among students, faculty, staff and alumni engaged in the study of poverty.



SHECP is a collaboration among **22 colleges and universities** that integrates classroom study of poverty with summer internships and co-curricular activities.



In 2021, **SHECP** provided **155** students with summer internships, with **111** poverty-focused nonprofit and governmental agencies.



SHECP interns contributed **31,000 hours of service** in 2021.

“SHECP students provide long-term hope to change the reality of poverty in America because their academic understanding of systemic poverty is coupled with hands-on experiences in their internships.”

– Rev. Dr. Jason Coker
National Director, Together for Hope

THE NEED

An estimated **37.2 million Americans live in poverty (11.4 percent of the population)**, according to a September 2021 report issued by the United States Census Bureau.

Through classroom study and experiential learning opportunities, these future professionals learn how their work and civic activity will inevitably impinge on poverty. **We need your support to sustain and grow our program.**

OUR VISION: To equip college students to address the problem of poverty, as future professionals and citizens, by expanding and improving opportunities to study the meanings, causes, and consequences of poverty in a wide range of disciplines.

THE CONSORTIUM

The Shepherd Higher Education Consortium on Poverty (SHECP) was formally established as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization in July 2012; however, it began in 1998 as the "Shepherd Poverty Alliance," a poverty studies program founded by Washington and Lee University and allied with Berea College and Spelman College.

SHECP is currently comprised of:

Baylor University
Birmingham-Southern College
Bucknell University
Centre College
Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine
Elon University
Furman University
Hamilton College
John Carroll University
Juniata College
Manchester University
Marymount University
Middlebury College
Millsaps College
Missouri State University
Ohio University
University of Lynchburg
University of Notre Dame
University of Vermont
University of Wisconsin–Madison
Virginia Military Institute
Washington and Lee University

LEARNING BY DOING

SHECP seeks to transform the study of **poverty in the United States** by building a vibrant consortium of colleges and universities that lead the development of undergraduate poverty studies programs and the support of innovative work in poverty-related pedagogy.

The poverty studies curriculum begins with gateway coursework at the student's home institution, followed by community-focused learning opportunities through the **SHECP Summer Internship Program**.

This **eight-week program pairs students with nonprofit organizations** that work to strengthen impoverished communities, urban and rural. They focus on a variety of poverty-related areas, including: education, healthcare, legal services, housing, nutrition, social and economic needs, and community building.

Students are matched with agencies that fit their intellectual interests in order to **develop professional experience and skills for future civic involvement and employment**.

What's unique about our program is that the internships offer an **experiential learning opportunity** that encompasses more than work experience, as students live with fellow interns as a cohort within the communities they serve.

Our internship program is bookended by a preparatory opening conference and a closing conference where **SHECP interns share what they've learned from their experiences**. Many continue their studies through capstone projects when they return to their campuses. **To date, 1,811 interns have taken part in the program.**

We are committed to maintaining the highest standards of accountability and efficiency. SHECP is proud to be a GuideStar Platinum Nonprofit Profile participant.

