

## **Opportunities for Working with Diverse Populations**

Amherst is located 30-45 minutes north of Holyoke and Springfield, Massachusetts, which are very ethnically and socioeconomically diverse communities. 41% of Holyoke residents and 27% of Springfield residents identify themselves as Latino/a (predominantly Puerto Rican), and 21% of Springfield residents identify themselves as black or African-American. Amherst also has a smaller but sizeable ethnic minority population, including but not limited to Asian-American (9% of the population), African-American (6%), and Latino/a (7%) communities. Community agencies have been very open to helping faculty and students recruit research participants through their sites, which have resulted in a number of research projects, dissertations, and theses that have diverse samples. Many of our clinical practica sites provide services to diverse populations.

Our students take part in therapy and assessment practica in the UMass Psychological Services Center beginning in their second year. The Psychological Services Center strives to increase access to mental health services to members of disadvantaged groups. By providing low-cost mental health services, the Psychological Services Center can be accessed by a wide range of community members. During the fourth year, students also engage in practica in the community. Our students have gained clinical experience in a variety of settings, including local college counseling centers, community mental health centers, and hospital settings. These placements serve adults, children, and families from a variety of backgrounds, and provide students with important experiences on conducting clinical work with clients from diverse backgrounds.