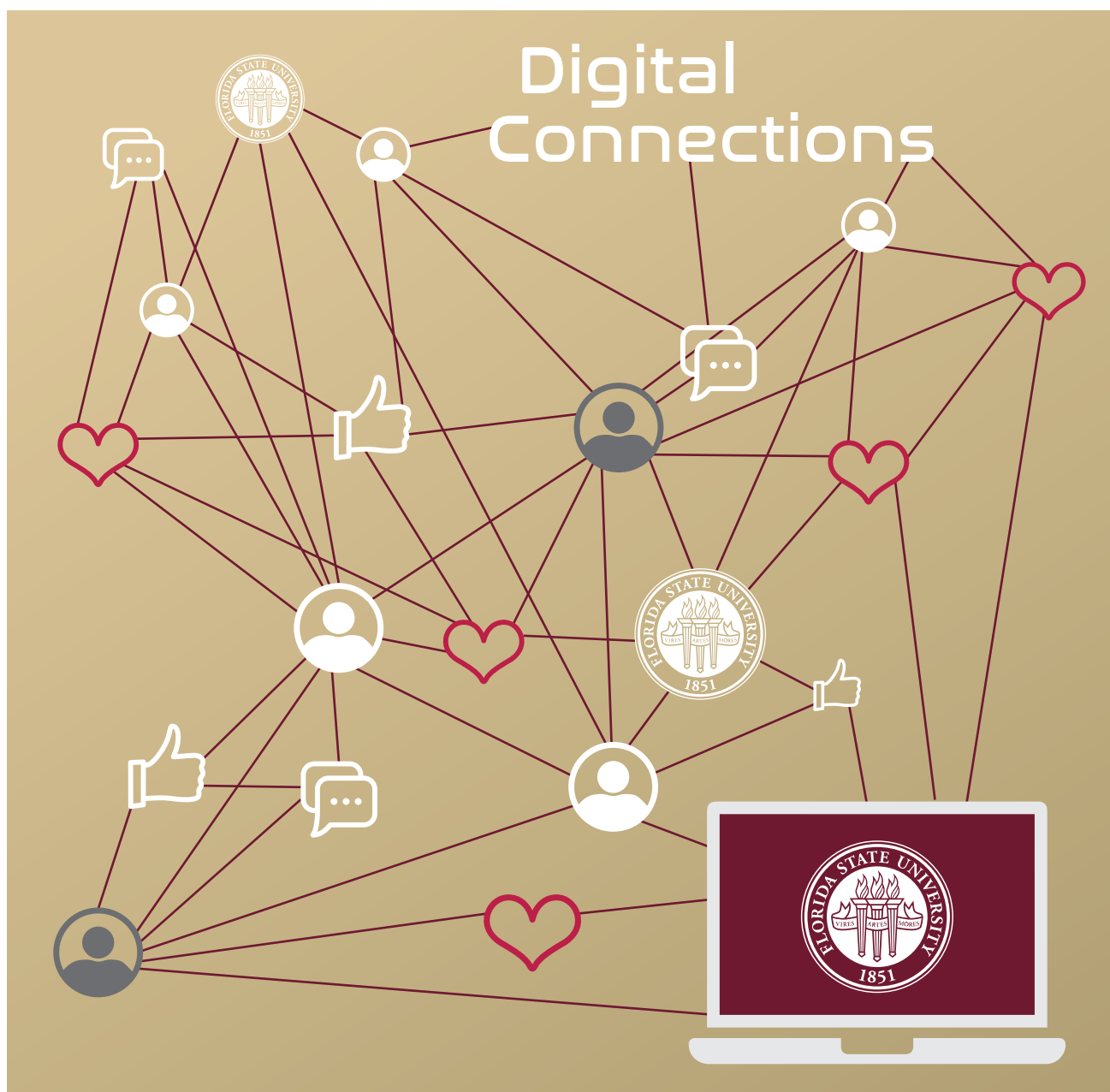


COMMUNITAS

Florida State University College of Social Work

2020-2021



FEATURE

- 04 Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
- 12 BSW Director

RESEARCH

- 08 COVID-19 Research
- 10 Telehealth Research

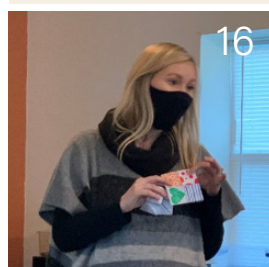
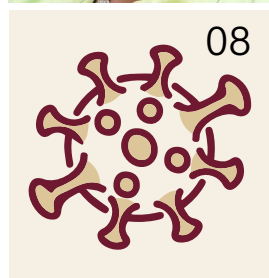
STUDENTS

- 18 2020 Graduates
- 20 Student Highlights

ALUMNI

- 22 Scholarship & Awards
- 25 Alumni Updates

2020-2021 COMMUNITAS CONTENTS



- 03** A Message from the Dean
- 04** Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Dialogue
- 07** Banner Years for Resilience
Institute for Family Violence Studies
- 08** COVID-19 Research
- 10** Telehealth Treatments to Florida Families
Multidisciplinary Evaluation and Counseling Center
- 11** A New Path for the Florida Institute for Child Welfare
- 12** BSW Director Discourse
- 14** Infusing Well-Being Throughout the Criminal Justice System
Institute for Justice Research and Development
- 16** Forging a Path to Understanding Substance Use Disorders
Center for the Study and Promotion of Communities, Families and Children
- 18** Celebrating Our 2020 Social Work Graduates!
- 20** Student Highlights
BSW: Margarita Amado-Blanco
MSW: Sara Hargis
Ph.D: Jessica Bagneris
- 22** Scholarship and Awards Event Goes Digital
- 24** #FSUCSW by the Numbers
- 25** Alumni Updates
- 26** In Memoriam
- 27** Friends of the College of Social Work



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A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

What a year 2020 has proved to be! The coronavirus pandemic posed a tremendous challenge worldwide, but I am in awe of the adaptiveness, resilience and compassion of our social work community. I have seen time and again social workers, and other essential professionals, rise to new challenges in order to serve and connect with clients and communities.

As we progress into 2021 and beyond, we face new challenges and seek new opportunities to connect. What remains fundamental to this endeavor are the virtual spaces we embraced throughout the pandemic to keep the world moving forward, even when it felt like we were standing still.

In this issue of *Communitas*, we highlight the progress made in social work education, scholarship and the profession whose positive momentum continued thanks to those digital channels that allowed us to continually connect even in an unprecedented period of isolation.

At the college and university level we are renewing our efforts to address equity and inclusion and to implement anti-racism efforts, which we discuss in the dialogue on page 4 with key members of our College of Social Work faculty. Meanwhile, other CSW faculty members addressed the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on vulnerable populations and explored ways to mitigate those effects (p. 8). And working alongside our faculty have been the tireless efforts and innovations of our institutes and centers to continuously impact the populations they serve through policy change, research, services and outreach.

Enjoy reading about the efforts of the Center for the Study and Promotion of Communities, Families and Children (p. 16) to improve substance use education in social work and reduce its impact on communities, improve the lives of children, and to bring hope to social workers and other helping professionals. The Institute for Family Violence Studies (p. 7) has made tremendous strides to lead the way in resilience efforts on a national level.

The Institute for Justice Research and Development (p. 14) has worked unflaggingly on behalf of those impacted by the criminal justice system and to provide better training for law enforcement. Our Multidisciplinary Evaluation and Consulting Center (p. 10) has found new virtual means to connect clients with providers and services. And the Florida Institute for Child Welfare has been making great strides through research and policy to advocate for the children of Florida (p. 11).

Adapting to these digital spaces has also meant finding new ways to connect with our students, donors, alumni and other members of the FSU CSW family. Our students showed remarkable strength as they pivoted to creatively engage their classroom, internship and graduation experiences. We highlight some of our gifted students (p. 20) and celebrate our extraordinary Class of 2020 (p. 18) that commemorated their scholastic accomplishments despite a global pandemic. Our alumni award and scholarship winners also enjoyed a virtual celebration (p. 22) of their accomplishments.

As a college, we place a lot of importance in our ability to come



together to celebrate major milestones, particularly the departure of valued colleagues. On page 9, we say farewell to Pam Graham MacDill, long-time director of the BSW Program and Professional Development at the college through a unique discussion with her successor, faculty member Carol Campbell Edwards.

Already we are on the cusp of a post-pandemic world in which our interactions have changed and we find ourselves perpetually challenged. Through it all, we have been sustained by the bonds and relationships we have with one another. I encourage you to continue connecting with the FSU College of Social Work through our digital channels and in-person opportunities as they become available. It is through such connections that we find the strength, hope and love to change the world.

Jim Clark, Ph.D., LCSW
Dean and Professor

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION DIALOGUE

The FSU College of Social Work gathered several faculty members serving in active roles within the college and social work professional organizations to discuss the influence of the field of social work on the conversations and efforts surrounding anti-racism, equity, equality, diversity and inclusion.

Katrina Boone: Field Education Director, FSU CSW; Task Force to Advance Anti-Racism Work Group Member and Council of Field Education Member for the Council on Social Work Education; Field Committee Chair for the Association of Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors

Jim Clark: Dean and Professor, FSU College of Social Work

Carol Edwards: BSW Program and Professional Development Director and Assistant Teaching Professor, FSU CSW; Anti-Racism Task Force Member and Past President of National Association of Social Work Florida Chapter (NASW-FL)

Fran Gomory: MSW Program Director, Teaching Professor, FSU CSW

Shalay Jackson: Assistant Teaching Professor, Diversity Committee Chair, FSU CSW; Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Committee Member, FSU CSW

Jim Clark: I'm thrilled to be conversing with colleagues who all have extensive experience in the profession of social work as practitioners, teachers, and in direct practice, policy and programming throughout their careers. Today I'm interested in your thoughts about the role of social work on efforts focused on equality, equity, diversity, and promoting anti-racism. All of us have seen renewed efforts to address diversity, anti-racism, and inclusion as a part of the social work profession's commitment to the uniqueness of each person and to the macro agenda of social justice and civil rights. As social workers we observe contemporary events from a different framework than many of our fellow citizens.

Carol, what has your year been like, watching what has been unfolding? What has been most exciting for you? One of the roles you were in when all this started was president of the National Association of

Social Workers, Florida Chapter. Over the last two years, you worked on national efforts to address anti-racism. Could you talk a little bit about your experiences?

Carol Edwards: The first thing that came to mind was my mom serving as keynote speaker at the NASW conference a couple of years ago. My mom was a school social worker for 34 years. What was interesting about her experiences was that she was one of the first Black professional social workers hired in Pinellas County, Florida.

I grew up the daughter of a social worker who worked in the community, yet her work team was segregated. They could not meet as a team on school grounds. It was against the law to meet as mixed-raced groups even though they worked for the same organization. They had to meet in community centers in predominantly Black neighborhoods, where it would be safe. Even files were segregated. Files of Black children could not be in the same file cabinet as the files of white children. My mom got me involved in political activism early on.

In the last couple of years, things really started coming to the forefront with the **Black Lives Matter** movement along with more open conversations about racism, anti-racism and equality. With NASW Florida I was finishing up my time as president as things began heating up. We realized the importance of speaking up as a professional organization. We put out a statement centered around racism and justice, challenging social workers to step up to what we perceived our profession's origins. It was all about advocacy, social justice and rights of everyone. It was a call for action.

We established the Race and Justice Task Force that I co-chair with Dr. Jacquelyn McMillan from Florida A&M University. NASW Florida already has a diversity committee, so there has been a lot of activism.

One thing that impressed me was the conversations I saw between colleagues of all races, ethnicities and backgrounds.



Carol Edwards



Jim Clark

These efforts have brought about open forums and Zoom calls around anti-racism and how to take action. These conversations were not always led by people that were experiencing racism. The most exciting thing for me is that this has provided an opportunity for social workers to step up and take on the issue that is an issue for all people.

Jim: That distinction is an important one. These are conversations being shared widely, and widely relevant. NASW's and your efforts as a leader have been important for pulling people into these conversations. We all benefit from hearing different voices. Shalay, I was wondering about your thoughts and experiences over the last year. What has struck you most about the responses to inclusion and diversity concerns?

Shalay Jackson: I am most impressed with our students. They are speaking up and speaking out against racial injustice more regularly in the classroom, despite the discomfort. Student organizations including the **Macro Social Work Student Network** and **Student Association of Social Workers** have recently raised awareness about racial injustice on their social media platforms and through interactive events. I am proud of how classroom content has translated into student-led action.

Jim: I've noticed on many social media platforms, including our college's, students are embracing these conversations and



Katrina Boone



Shalay Jackson



Fran Gomory

encouraging dialogue and discussion. Katrina, what have you noticed?

Katrina Boone: I have also been impressed by our students and their ability to embrace the challenges before us. Their willingness, though hesitant at times, to talk about their concerns and the impact of these challenges on our communities. They have been willing to have courageous conversations about injustice. They have been really upfront and honest. More than anything, we need to have open, honest conversations and are willing to do that. They are learning that the more they speak up, the more they are being heard and the more willing they are to take the steps needed to address injustice.

Fran Gormory: Like Katrina said, having student conversations is really important! I've been thinking a lot about how to create a safe space for them to do that. It has been a challenge. My first class this spring started on January 6. I had to figure out a way to make space to discuss the violent events of that day. They showed a lot of bravery to both speak up as well as to listen. That has been especially important, modeling when and how to listen to someone else's experiences and validate and value them.

Jim: That question emerges a lot. How do we best create the psychological safety for these conversations? What are some approaches that you as educators use with students to create an atmosphere where people can begin to have these challenging conversations?

Carol: Well, I can tell you what I try to do. I realized it requires a certain amount of vulnerability for students to have those kinds of conversations. I include myself in the conversation. I try to create an atmosphere where I am also learning and growing. To me, it establishes clear expectations and ensures my intention to create an atmosphere conducive to encouraging students to express their genuine perspectives. At the same time, we have to keep in mind as social workers that we have a responsibility to each other, to practice mutual respect, to value each other and to bring a non-judgmental attitude.

One of the organizations on FSU's campus I fell in love with a few years ago was the **Power of WE**. They do not create *safe* spaces, they create *shared* spaces. The spaces they create are challenging while still protecting the people who are a part of the conversation. Power of WE was started and is run by students. I learned a lot from these students participating not as a faculty member but as a member of the FSU community. I sought some diverse contexts, and that is where I found it.

Jim: There is so much to explore in that answer Carol. An important point you raised is how psychological safety can be used to avoid talking about anything potentially troubling or offensive. Social work education requires we work with students to develop the skills to have these conversations. But like you said, to also talk about difficult things with intention. I wondered what you all thought about balancing social work values and respecting the individual voice of every person while bringing attention to difficult topics.

Fran: I try to model these behaviors for students. For my groups class, we don't just examine the content and what they are saying, but what is behind it. It is not just what people are saying, but how it made them feel. By having a non-judgmental conversation, we have a shared sense of getting through it together.

Katrina: Helping students to work within their own space and intentions. If they can be honest with themselves, they are better at being honest with the people around them. Setting those ground rules about the intention that Carol talked about. The techniques and skills we teach in the classroom will impact how they approach and serve clients. We have to pass on to them the idea that some work happens within ourselves first. To me, this means trying to get them more centered and familiar with who they are.

If they start feeling more comfortable with who they are, they feel better about having conversations in the spaces we create. It's crucial for us to encourage them to understand that everyone is entitled to their opinions, to be respectful of those opinions

and to learn how to express opinions.

Shalay: I also talk about the importance of civility and try to relate these conversations to professional practice. I share with students how nearly 70 percent of those in the community where I served as a school social worker did not share my political views and how I had to navigate this professionally to ensure political differences did not interfere with obtaining resources for my students.

As for creating classrooms where all students feel seen, it takes time and intentionality, but begins and ends with respect. Students respond to how we engage during consensus, our reaction to dissension, and approach to addressing tension or conflict in the classroom. If all are handled respectfully, students are more comfortable speaking.

Jim: These are essential reflections that we address as social work educators and professionals. The impact of what we say and do and how we interact in a highly-charged political space impacts our clients. Shalay, can you touch on that distinction? We not only struggle with ourselves, but we also serve as role models in the classroom.

Shalay: It was challenging both personally and professionally. But I needed to have strong, positive relationships with a wide variety of stakeholders to effectively advocate for students.

Jim: Thanks for sharing that personal perspective. I think these internal struggles for social workers never quite go away. That is part of the social work profession. We live with a lot of ambiguity and internal conflict at times around these issues. What do others think about this problem?

Katrina: I think we need to continue training ourselves and hone our skills to address complex topics. Sometimes we shy away from challenging conversations in the classroom because we are unsure how they will play out. This is a shared experience. How do we support not just ourselves but our colleagues in this process? We start these conversations and continue them with our students. Continuing these efforts

will allow us to open dialogue in other contexts and situations and help us arrive at potential solutions.

Carol: I love what you were saying about knowing yourself and getting centered. We have to know what we know, what we are uncomfortable with, and how we can overcome our challenges through personal and professional growth and development. How do we take action as social workers and as advocates? It comes in different forms. I have students in class embarrassed to say that they do not like participating in protests or marches. But they still have strong opinions, feelings and want to be active. Having hard conversations brings about ways we can more deeply engage in advocacy. We can challenge ourselves while still being true to our strengths and who we are. Like Katrina said, knowing who we are and using that as part of our advocacy.

Jim: Fran, as the director of the MSW program, you work with students across the United States, how are these issues impacting the way you lead the MSW program? I was struck by what Carol said. People approach difficult times and conversations with different gifts. As educators, it is our privilege to help students understand their strengths and abilities and how they contribute to our profession. Being an educator is an excellent opportunity to help make that happen, but not everyone will do that in the same way. How do you approach this?

Fran: I was thinking about what a politically charged environment we are in and how we navigate it. How do we help students navigate this? Our online program, in particular, is made of students from different areas and populations with different beliefs, all in the same classroom. It goes back to creating that open and caring space. For online MSW students, that space is the discussion boards. We all walk that line between expressing ourselves authentically while potentially projecting how we feel onto other people. By recognizing this in myself and trying to create that space, I lead by example.

Carol: Jim, I was thinking about your leadership role as dean. I'm curious about your response to the same question. Before the pandemic, you traveled nationally, internationally representing the college. We have no idea what it is like for you during this time. How do you convey who we are as a college regarding the issues we are discussing today?

Jim: It's true that I feel a huge responsibility as dean of this Top 20 college. I am so proud of the teamwork and generosity I see. I have the unique opportunity to broadly perceive

the hard work and passion our faculty bring to the classroom, their research and service. I am very humbled by this. Many times, I have also found it challenging to keep going. I've seen a lot of setbacks in the area of social justice. I have learned, and try to convey, that this college and its faculty, staff, students, alumni, donors, friends and supporters all have a deep commitment toward community.

For me, there are a couple of ways of looking at what we are going through. One is that it is a horrible time of recrimination, punishment and revenge. The other way, taught to me by our social work community, is that by working together we have an incredible opportunity right now to learn from the experiences of others, to be vulnerable and to share our own. But we have to commit to that community.

What I want to convey is a sense of hope and optimism. If we work together, we can build a society where it is natural to embrace and be excited about diversity. I have come to learn in the six years I've been a Dean at Florida State that these things are within our reach. We have to seize the day with intentionality and work hard to make it happen.

Carol: Thank you for allowing me to turn the conversation in your direction, I appreciate that opportunity.

Jim: I appreciate being able to share my thoughts as a leader. Does anyone have some concluding thoughts about where we go from here?

Shalay: As social workers, we can always refer back to our code of ethics and values to frame our arguments to work toward a more equitable, inclusive society. It is also imperative that our actions are relational and sincere rather than performative and transactional. When we develop strong relationships, we can work together to tackle complex issues. It's like Brené Brown said, 'People are hard to hate close up. So move in.'

Jim: It's tough to do when you are under stress, but it is critical to go back to our values and to enact those values in relationships.

Fran: I love that, Shalay. That idea that it's harder to hate someone up close is terrific, especially concerning these conversations. What I have learned this year is to listen more and be curious. We need to listen to people's stories, validate them and not approach them with preconceived notions. Being more open has been helpful when teaching students to do the same.

Katrina: As Jim said, we are at a pivotal point. We should not let this be a missed opportunity to make a difference, to make

changes. It is a time to go back to the foundation of social work and our values for guidance.

Carol: Listening to what everyone is saying about relationships has made me think again about how my mom and her team worked together during segregation. There was so much hatred, so I asked her how they were able to form a work team. She responded that they did it through relationships. They invested in each other. They met at each other's homes. They all had to step out of their neighborhoods and into someone else's. If they can do that, so can we! We have so many more resources now! They taught me that even in the face of all kinds of challenges and forces seeking to separate people, we look for good and for hope at the core. Those early insights and experiences gave me a lot of hope. And the students right now give us a lot of hope. We are in better hands because of who our students are.

Katrina: I agree. Hearing your mom's stories made me think about that time. I was ten years old before I entered an integrated school system. That first year of integration was chaos at our schools. But from that experience, I learned the importance of developing relationships. Maybe social work was in my blood even then. We were all there so I thought, why not engage? It goes back to building relationships. Integration was not going to go away. I felt like I needed to respond to the changes around me and figure out how to make it work.

Carol: Katrina, you bring up so many memories for me! All those relationships and opportunities to build community.

Jim: That is one of the social work approaches we use, exploring our histories and our communities' histories. We look for the courage and hope that people like Carol's mother demonstrated every day. I think there are insights, even answers, in those stories. One thing I get asked now is what guys like me can do? And one thing I see is that we dominate the conversation. Now we have an opportunity to listen. When we truly listen, we can't help but be moved by the experiences of others. That hope previous generations have given us, that we can continue by building up communities and relationships. We do this by sharing these stories with our students, so they continue to be courageous and vulnerable at the same time when seeking those relationships. For me, this has been a valuable conversation. I've learned a lot and I'm leaving with a renewed commitment to the values of our profession. We must continue to respond as a college and as individuals to the challenges and opportunities in front of us. ■



INSTITUTE FOR FAMILY VIOLENCE STUDIES BANNER YEARS FOR RESILIENCE

The Institute for Family Violence Studies has been making noticeable strides in the effort to improve resilience across populations and the United States. Starting with the FSU Student Resilience Project in 2018, the institute has become a leader in the area of resilience.

In 2020, the institute released the next level of its highly successful **Professional Certification in Trauma and Resilience** online curriculum series, developed through the institute's Clearinghouse on Trauma and Resilience.

The curriculum introduces a variety of professions to a trauma-informed approach to human services with the goal of making human services providers better able to serve clients who have experienced significant trauma. Level One of the series was launched in 2019 and introduced the science of Adverse Childhood Experiences and its long-term negative impact.

The second installment of the series expands on participants' knowledge and skills, exploring community trauma and common types of individual trauma. A public health approach addresses the root causes of trauma while highlighting evidence-based approaches to resilience building.

The FSU Student Resilience Project has also become a national model for resilience building toolkits for university students. In 2021, Florida State University signed an

agreement with StreamlinedU to make the FSU Resilience Project program model available to more universities. Already Northern Arizona University and Berea College in Kentucky are among the first to use the toolkit.

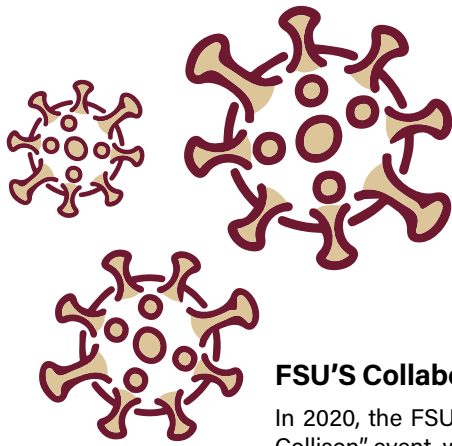
The program has been critical over the past few years and become invaluable for students to learn healthy ways of combatting the struggles that come with societal and educational pressures, skills that have become essential with the impetus of a global pandemic. "The COVID-19 Pandemic has been a tremendous challenge for institutions of higher learning," said Karen Oehme, the institute's director. "We were proud to create a project that can be used to respond to the disruption and offer this research and evidence-based content at an affordable rate to other universities."

The institute's director Karen Oehme was chosen as a leader for resilience building on a national and global scale. Oehme was selected as chair of the Academic Resilience Consortium, an international organization leading and shaping student resiliency efforts. She will lead a newly-elected, 15-member leadership team in efforts to further develop resilience programming and tools that cultivate resilience in students as soon as they start their academic career, skills that they can carry with them when they enter the professional world. ■



**KAREN
OEHME**
DIRECTOR

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COVID-19 RESEARCH

FSU'S Collaborative Collision Encourages Examining the Impact of COVID-19

In 2020, the FSU Office of Research Development (ORD) organized its eleventh "Collaborative Collision" event, which brings faculty together from across the university and disciplines. This year, the event focused on the impact of the coronavirus pandemic. Typically, "Collaborative Collision" provides one or two projects with seed money. But, because of the unprecedented nature of the crisis, ORD funded projects up to \$20,000 each related to the health, social or economic impact of the ongoing pandemic.

Three FSU College of Social Work faculty received support for their projects, including **Dr. Michael Killian**, **Dr. Melissa Radey** and **Dr. Dina Wilke**.



The Impact on Health and Human Service Workers
Dr. Dina Wilke, Professor

"Frontline health and human service workers engage with clients who faced heightened vulnerability during the COVID-19 pandemic," said Dr. Dina Wilke. Many human service workers needed to shift to online provision of services with clients who may or may not have been able to navigate the changes. Other workers continued to provide services in environments that put themselves at risk for COVID-19 exposure.

Dr. Wilke's project analyzed qualitative data collected from surveys of health and human service workers to explore the pandemic's impact on their professional responsibilities as well as their physical, emotional and financial well-being (n=328). Her project included a team of researchers, including Dr. Melissa Radey (co-principal investigator), Dr. Lisa Magruder and Dr. Anna Yelick research fellows with the Florida Institute for Child Welfare.

The study showed a majority of the workers surveyed (66%) reported at least one personal impact from COVID-19. This included 17.1% (n=37), reporting a physical impact, 31.3% (n=68) describing a financial impact, and 80.2% (n=174) identifying some type of an emotional impact due to the pandemic. The pandemic also described significant changes to agency policy and protocol posing significant challenges to service provision, including client engagement. Workers tended to understand and adapt to challenges faced by agencies due to COVID-19 shutdowns. However, this required workers to make quick decisions due to continuously changing guidelines and protocols and they reported several interacting impacts that caused stress and worry.

"I'm grateful FSU chose to support a project focusing on the experiences of human service workers, who are often on the frontlines of responding to acute client situations," stated Wilke. "We need to understand how workers managed the needs for personal safety while providing effective client services." The study's findings have been submitted for publication. **More About Project Results.**



The Impact on Vulnerable Mothers and Their Children
Dr. Melissa Radey, Professor

The project, conducted by Dr. Radey and her co-principal investigator Dr. Joedrecka Brown Speights, a professor with the FSU College of Medicine and graduate research assistants, examined the economic, social, and health impacts of the pandemic on vulnerable single mother families. These families often exist in extreme poverty characterized by struggles with employment, education and health.

With a focus on single-mother families in the Tallahassee/Big Bend region of Florida, the project yielded 67 semi-structured interviews with 34 mothers over Summer 2020. Radey and her team talked to mothers about how COVID-19 impacted daily interactions; relationships with their children, family and friends; employment; income; public benefits; and health.

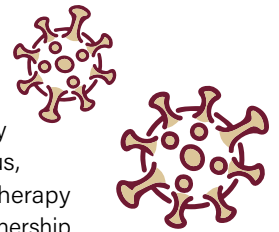
"Single mothers commonly face long days navigating transportation, child care and employment. They delicately balance responsibilities as mothers and providers. COVID-19 undoubtedly disrupts that balance," explained Radey. "Determining how mothers are most affected can inform service delivery efforts to target and serve mothers effectively."

Initial findings suggest that mothers made outside contact and child care decisions primarily out of need rather than choice. In order of importance, they tended to prioritize child safety, employment, and child development. As such, mothers felt that outside care threatened their children's safety, lost jobs, work hours, and income to care for their children at home. An article on the study's results was accepted for publication in the research journal *Family Relations*.



Exploring Telehealth Interventions for Immunosuppressed Patients

Dr. Michael Killian, Assistant Professor



Dr. Killian is leading an interdisciplinary team of researchers to develop a telehealth intervention in partnership with the University of Florida Health Congenital Heart Center for adolescents who have received heart transplants. "The current pandemic creates challenges for these adolescents and parents," said Killian. "We want to work to promote their medication adherence, add additional support for these patients, and all while working with them remotely and safely."

The project examines the feasibility of implementing an asynchronous, mobile video directly observed therapy (mDOT). The project includes a partnership with eMocha Mobile Health, Inc., a startup telehealth company, which developed the mDOT telehealth application. The application enables healthcare staff to track dose-by-dose medication adherence for each participating patient.

The research team includes Dr. Dipankar Gupta, an assistant professor and cardiologist at the UF Health Congenital Heart Center and Dr. Zhe He of the FSU College of Communication and Information. The study recently concluded its 10-patient pilot program in April 2021.

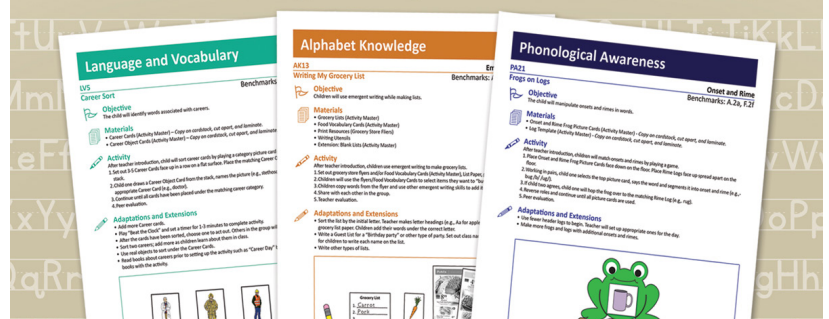


Social Work Professor Leads Project to Mitigate COVID-19's Impact on At-Home Learning: Improving Reading Skills and Child Literacy

Over the years, the Florida Center for Reading Research (FCRR) has created and made available hundreds of free Student Center Activities (SCA) for teachers to enrich early literacy development in children aged PreK through Grade 5. The center has also made accessible other resources materials for teachers and training professionals.

With the onset of the global coronavirus pandemic, nearly one billion children worldwide have been affected by school closures. Parents, caregivers and their families, are now faced with the challenge of facilitating effective home-based learning. The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) published a series of resources aimed at identifying global challenges to parents, caregivers and teachers due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

An interdisciplinary team of FCRR and FSU researchers lead by FSU College of Social Work Professor Yaacov Petscher, Nadine Gaab and Kaja Jasinska (FCRR) along with Lakeisha Johnson (FSU College of Communication and Information), Beth



Phillips (FSU College of Education), and Chris Lonigan (FSU College of Arts & Sciences) set about to respond to UNESCO's recommendations. The research team proposed to adapt current FCRR resources as well as create additional resources and videos for parents and caregivers worldwide to use in the context of at-home learning.

The project, "Mitigating the Global Impact of COVID-19 School Closures on Early English and French Reading Skills Through At-Home, Caregiver-Child Literacy Activities" aims to:

1. Adapt existing teacher-student games for early literacy into paper and digital formats to meet the educational needs of parents/caregivers for successful at-home learning.
2. Equip parents/caregivers to build self-confidence and self-efficacy when engaging in their child's/

children's reading development.

3. Work with local and international partners to better adapt these materials for more localized and international contexts and languages.

The targeted outcome will be free, research-informed literacy activities to support early literacy skills at home starting with English and French, and working toward making them more accessible in a variety of international settings and languages. The project will also focus on research questions regarding the utility and feasibility of the reading activities and materials in homes in the multiple international settings including the United States, Côte d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast), India, Panama and the Caribbean Islands.

The project is ongoing and plans are being made to present its findings in the near future. The project also received a Jacobson Award. ■

MULTIDISCIPLINARY EVALUATION & COUNSELING CENTER OFFERS TELEHEALTH TREATMENTS TO FLORIDA FAMILIES



DR. SHANNON BENNETT



DR. LAUREN HUTTO



DR. AMBER FARRINGTON

FSU MDC Providers Offer Telehealth and In-Person Parent-Child Interaction Therapy

The FSU Multidisciplinary Center (FSU MDC) expanded the services they offer to include Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT), evidence-based treatment for children 2 to 7 years of age with challenging behaviors. The therapy has documented success across a wide variety of emotional and behavioral disorders. It is also a widely accepted treatment by the American Psychological Association (APA).

PCIT sessions are conducted through “coaching” sessions at which a caregiver and their child are in a playroom together while the therapist observes the interaction through either a one-way mirror and/or live video feed (e.g. telehealth). The caregiver wears a “bug-in-the-ear” device (e.g. a wireless earbud) through which the therapist provides in-the-moment coaching on skills for managing child behavior. The coaching nature of PCIT has allowed sessions to continue over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic with few adaptations needed to deliver treatment virtually. The flexible delivery system of PCIT also removes obstacles to families, such as driving distance or time for families.

In 2021, three psychologists on staff at FSU MDC began the process of becoming certified PCIT providers. Dr. Lauren Hutto, Dr. Shannon Bennett, and Dr. Amber Farrington completed a 40-hour foundational training. Currently, FSU MDC is piloting treatment and each psychologist is in the process of completing their first PCIT case, in-person or via telehealth. To complete the certification process, each psychologist will be observed by their trainers and will review recorded therapy sessions to ensure treatment fidelity throughout the entire course of treatment for each PCIT family they work with.

Once certified, FSU MDC will be one of the few providers in the Panhandle offering this service in the Big Bend region, with the closest other PCIT providers in Jacksonville, Gainesville, and Fort Walton Beach, Florida.



ANNE SELVEY
DIRECTOR

FSU Faculty Evaluate Telehealth Services

Two Florida State University faculty members, Dr. Michele Parker (College of Human Sciences) and Dr. Michael Killian (College of Social Work) were awarded a \$16,000 grant in 2020 by the Medical Research Institute to assess Behavioral Health Services at the FSU Multidisciplinary Center.

Dr. Parker worked with FSU MDC to establish the Behavioral Health Services program so the center could offer family therapy for children exhibiting challenging behaviors who received, or were waiting to receive, an assessment for Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

Recent reports indicate the prevalence of ASD is 1 in 54 children under the age of eight years old, a ten percent increase since a report in 2018. “As the prevalence of ASD in the United States continues to rise, there is a growing need for autism spectrum and therapeutic services,” stressed Dr. Parker, an assistant professor at the FSU College of Human Sciences.

A 2020 study indicated eighty percent of parents reporting disruption of their children's autism services, particularly due to school and clinic closures. Providers worldwide have been forced to innovate and adapt to virtual means to connect with clients. Dr. Parker and Dr. Killian's study will examine the effectiveness of telehealth compared to in-person family therapy for children with ASD offered at FSU MDC. The center is a vital source for ASD assessment and evaluation for twenty school districts and community agencies along with rural communities, racial and ethnic minorities and low-income families in the Florida Panhandle.



DR. MICHELE PARKER



DR. MICHAEL KILLIAN

MDC.FSU.EDU

A NEW PATH FOR THE FLORIDA INSTITUTE FOR CHILD WELFARE

Since the Florida Institute for Child Welfare was established in 2014, it has focused on interdisciplinary research, policy analysis, and program evaluation to fulfill its mission to promote safety, permanency, and well-being for the children and families of Florida, particularly those in the child welfare system. The institute has achieved this by developing effective relationships and collaborations with government and community-based organizations and through the development of its statewide Affiliate Network, comprised of faculty and research stakeholders.

Director Jessica Pryce has led the institute for the past four years to establish a body of evidence-based research that ensures accountability and assurance that services provided to Florida families are relevant and effective. She has also supported longitudinal child welfare workforce research, creating a trajectory of systematic change in Florida.

In 2020, the Florida Legislature passed Senate Bill 1326 outlining the institute's responsibility to execute three strategies to create change within the child welfare workforce. The overall goal was to transform the pathway into child welfare so every professional working with children is prepared with the highest standard of knowledge, skills, and compassion. Senate Bill 1326 has created the opportunity to make career opportunities in child welfare prestigious and highly desirable to the best and brightest minds in the profession. To this end, an appropriation of \$10 million was given to the institute to prioritize this professional development.

"The 2021 appropriation will significantly expand the institute's scope and mission with opportunities for interdisciplinary education, specialized professional certification, and targeted consulting to improve well-being for child welfare organizations," said Dr. Pryce.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION STRATEGIES FOR CHILD WELFARE

The first strategy entails redesigning curriculum at the Florida State University College of Social Work to more effectively educate students on child welfare, incorporating child welfare as an essential component of all courses. Problem-Based Learning (PBL) pedagogy, an empirically-established teaching approach, will be used to contextualize child welfare within highly complex systems of care that includes health care, law, business, and other areas.

Under the second strategy, the appropriation funding will provide resources for the institute to develop and implement a statewide professional development network, which will



DR. JESSICA PRYCE

"Our institute is looking forward to enhancing the workforce so our child welfare professionals are equipped and supported as they work to strengthen vulnerable families."

provide ongoing, accessible support and resources to child welfare professionals. "This professionalization of the child welfare workforce will create an overarching mission for the perpetuation of excellence in child welfare professional development, practice and service outcomes," explained Pryce.

The final strategy, the Alliance for Workforce Enhancement (AWE) initiative, entails the institute consulting with organizations by providing specialized capacity-building technical assistance. Each AWE site will work with a team of institute consultants to work on their specific workforce challenges.

The institute will implement these three new strategies while concurrently increasing its examination of child welfare issues such as the validation of a Human Trafficking Screening Tool and the evaluation of Florida's Early Childhood Courts and Kinship Care services. Other institute resources will be ongoing, including its popular podcast series, webinars and trainings, the development of an interactive library, and expansion of its annual research symposium.

"The institute has a unique opportunity to initiate systematic change throughout Florida," emphasized Dr. Pryce. "We are committed to addressing longstanding issues within our workforce so that child welfare professionals have the support and resources they need to strengthen vulnerable families throughout our state." ■

BSW DIRECTOR DISCOURSE

Pam Graham MacDill served the College of Social Work as director of the BSW Program and Professional Development for more than eight years and has been affiliated with the college for more than twenty-five years.

In 2020, she retired and welcomed colleague and friend Carol Campbell Edwards into the role. During this discourse, Pam and Carol reminisce about their interconnected professional journeys and their observations on the changes and connections with the FSU College of Social Work.



Carol: I thought I'd kick it off by talking about how we connected. I knew about your reputation in social work and heard what an advocate you were, especially for youth. That was something I was also passionate about. I thought, "That is somebody that I want to meet." I think we started with that joint passion for child welfare. You seemed like a kindred spirit in social work for me.

Pam: I'm trying to remember when we first met. When you were at the Professional Development Center at TCC. I worked with them on some grant-related projects.

Carol: I was there from 1988 until 2003. But, I know that we met earlier than that.

Pam: When did I hire you as an adjunct?

Carol: 2005.

Pam: Yes, I was the Assistant Dean from 2000 until 2009.

Carol: I remember we were both at a joint meeting at the Community Based Care agency (CBC). We were talking about kids' experiences with foster care, and how they make it through college, and why the numbers are so low. I wanted to figure out what we could do about it. I think I reached out to you and asked you to come. You joined our committee and started coming to these meetings. The next thing I know, FSU has the Unconquered Scholars Program.

Pam: That's right.

Carol: Unconquered Scholars was so awesome for those students. They want to be at FSU, but how do you graduate, do well and form relationships? When I heard about Unconquered and learned your role in getting that program going, it made me even more excited to be a part of FSU! What do you remember about your experiences at FSU?

Pam: It was an interesting journey how I

came back to FSU. As you know, I'm a graduate. I graduated from the Master's program in 1977.

Carol: And I graduated in 1985.

Pam: I tell people this story to show how you never know what is going to happen in your life. I had a good experience as a student with my fellow students, but I did not have the greatest experience with the administration. It was a weird time in social work education back then. The Advanced Standing MSW program had just started. It had only been a year or two that they had an advanced standing program.

I received my BSW at Florida International University. At the time, my only options for graduate school were FSU or Barry University in Miami. There were four of us—me, my roommate, and two other people from FIU who applied to FSU into the advanced standing program.

Now that I'm on the other side as an administrator, there was probably a lot of concern about advanced standing, the condensed program and whether it could be as good as a traditional program, and whether BSW students could handle a fast-paced one-year master's program.

But we were all admitted and came up here. Back then, it wasn't semesters. It was quarters—and it was horrible for me. It was one quarter face-to-face, two quarters at an internship I did back in Miami, and then I had to move back for the last quarter. I moved four times in one year and didn't have a lot of resources. Financially it was pretty stressful having to move that many times and find a short-term lease.

The administration questioned our qualifications for being in the master's program. This is after we were admitted. They made us retake the GRE.

Carol: What prompted them to come up with that?

Pam: Back then, students didn't ask a lot

of questions or advocate for themselves. We had already moved and we had already started our first classes.

I don't know what prompted it but we were the only ones who came from a different program. All the other advanced standing students, only about thirty of us, were BSW graduates from FSU. I guess they questioned whether or not we could handle the advanced standing program. So, we all had to retake the GRE with all of this pressure, knowing we might have to complete 61 credit hours instead of 39 credit hours. I felt like we were singled out. When I left FSU, I thought I was never coming back.

After starting my career and doing all kinds of things, I applied for the director of field education at FSU posted on the NASW national website. I wanted to come back to the East Coast. I was living in Colorado at the time. I had been a field instructor and a field educator for 5 or 6 different programs. Field education was something for which I had a passion. I applied and wound up being hired for it.

But my experience as a student influenced my thinking and what kind of administrator I wanted to be. I was determined to be more supportive and transparent.

Carol: It's interesting how you were able to use that. Since I've been at the college, we've talked a lot about how we engage students. There are definitely some commonalities between our experiences.

Pam: Were there many Black students in the program when you were there?

Carol: Not many, we were a very small group. When I was there, Katrina Boone and Sharon Ross-Donaldson were in the program as well. But I was just thinking about how much our different experiences affect our perspective.

I was an FSU cheerleader, and I was the only Black cheerleader. I naively didn't anticipate that as being a problem. I came

from a high school that was very integrated. No one else seemed to be aware or sensitive to how it might have affected me in that role. After those experiences, I never thought I'd move back to Tallahassee. I don't remember my experiences fondly. I moved back to work in the child welfare system. So, in 2005 when you hired me at FSU, we had that common feeling of having to prove ourselves.

Pam: Isn't that funny that we both had that kind of experience?

Carol: Yes, people may not realize we have that in common. It's great being back to create a different experience for students, an experience they will be so proud of!

You have been a great mentor and have been very inclusive. You've reaffirmed that you can be supportive, warm and yet also make tough decisions. One of the things I've appreciated about you is that you can be direct and give feedback that might be challenging for the person to hear. It is a part of your leadership style that I've learned a lot from.

Pam: I've always felt it was unfair when people weren't honest. I have always thought that it was a disservice.

Carol: It is not easy, but students appreciate honesty and learn from it.

Pam: It is hard!

Carol: I'm wondering, how would you describe your leadership style?

Pam: My approach is about being fair and transparent, honest, setting standards, and giving people the resources to meet those standards and support them in their success. What about you?

Carol: Mine is similar. Mine would be supportive, honest, and fair. One of the joys I find in leadership is discovering what a person's passion and goals are and trying to support them in making those things happen. I am also committed to embracing and celebrating diversity and inclusion by making room for that in leadership and being a model for mutual respect.

Pam: One of the greatest joys is seeing things in students that they don't see in themselves. It is so fun to see that little light bulb in students turn on. Sometimes that requires a push in the right direction. Encouraging students to do things that they're uncomfortable with is essential for growth.

Carol: That's a good point. How many years were you the director of the BSW program?

Pam: Almost nine!

Carol: When thinking about where the BSW program is now and how you were a part

of its growth, what do you think are the program's most significant attributes or qualities that make it unique or different and make you proud?

Pam: As you know, I served in many administrative roles at FSU, including director of field education, assistant dean, and directed the master's program for a while. These roles gave me a different perspective on the BSW program. It bothered me that the BSW program once had a reputation on campus for being an easy program. It was a disservice to the program. One of the accomplishments I'm most proud of is establishing the program as limited access. We set an admission standard and raised the bar and within three years, it elevated our student body.

We went from one of the largest BSW programs with more than 450 students with a 2.0–3.0 Grade Point Average (GPA) to 200–250 students with a GPA of 3.0 or higher. Our student body became more diverse and had an average GPA of 3.5. We still need more men in the profession, though! But within a few years, perceptions on campus changed. We gained a reputation for being a rigorous program.

To people who don't know anything about a BSW, it is a degree that offers so many opportunities in social work! It prepares you with foundational skills. Even someone who decides to not go into social work receives foundational knowledge about human interaction, diversity and social justice.

We also created a minor in social welfare because so many related majors on campus needed a minor, including psychology and family child sciences. The minor is a way to inform students about the social work profession.

I'm especially proud when students minoring in social welfare realize they want to major in social work! I just got an email from a senior in my last social work professions class in Fall 2020, who was admitted into the MSW program.

Carol: It's great to see the caliber of students we have, and I am so impressed by them! Their writing and critical thinking skills and this growing emphasis on social justice. I like that we are more balanced. Social work education was becoming so focused on clinical social work. It's great to see social workers leading and addressing global and community organizational challenges. We need people well equipped to address larger systemic issues—racism, injustice, all kinds of discrimination—

Pam: Health and wealth inequities.

Carol: Definitely! BSWs are in such a great position to build an infrastructure for the profession. Now, leadership is a growing

area of importance. As we move forward on our respective paths, what are some of your hopes and plans?

Pam: As you said, I have seen students become more engaged. There is a need in many professions for a holistic approach, a person-in-environment approach, which we already teach and use in our profession. It's great having a solid student body getting their graduate degrees taking on non-traditional positions.

I am encouraged to see more students interested in macro social work. When I was in school, there was a big focus on community organization and therapy. Seeing that pendulum swing back means a better balance. We need to target core systemic issues, like poverty, rather than just attempting to stem the symptoms.

One thing Unconquered Scholars taught me was what helped their students succeed against all odds. Every single Unconquered Scholar told me the same thing—one person believing in them made all the difference.

When talking to our students, it's essential they know that they can be that one person to make a difference in someone's life and it's crucial to focus on their strengths and resilience. It's about continuing this message with our student body, providing a broader perspective on social work to understand how their impact is not just on individual lives but on the community.

Carol: We're in a good place and moving in that direction. As we move forward, one of my goals is to continue building upon the great things you have established.

We are grateful for your contributions. We all know there's a lot of work to do. I'm thankful to know that our collaboration and partnership will continue even though our roles have changed. The future is bright for social work and our students. You know we always hear, "I want to change the world!" and our job is to tell them that they really can! I look forward to our continued collaboration.

Pam: I look forward to it as well. I know I am leaving the program in good hands; your loving and fair and honest and supportive hands. I am excited to see what our student body will do.

Carol: Even though you are retired, I appreciate that we have access to you as a resource.

Pam: Happy to do it! Keep in contact.

Carol: I'll certainly be in touch! Happy retirement! ■

Infusing Well-Being Throughout the Criminal Justice System: Testing Innovations & Developing Professional Trainings

The Institute for Justice Research and Development (IJRD) uses science to improve lives, communities, and institutions by developing and researching innovations that reduce unnecessary reliance on the criminal justice system. IJRD's innovative research offers solutions that produce equity and prosperity across race, socioeconomic class, and behavioral health status, infusing well-being throughout the criminal justice system. They define well-being as a state of satisfying and productive engagement with one's life and the realization of one's full psychological, social, and occupational potential.

IJRD recently released early findings from their flagship project, the 5-Key Model for Reentry, a well-being-based program that connects individuals leaving incarceration with IJRD practitioners who work collaboratively to help individuals develop along with the 5-Key Facilitators of Well-Being Development: Healthy Thinking Patterns, Meaningful Work Trajectories, Effective Coping Strategies, Positive Social Engagement, and Positive Interpersonal Relationships. Each of the 5-Keys helps individuals envision and achieve their full potential after they return home from prison.



"The 5-Key Model for Reentry program has helped me find myself as a man. It has taught me the tools I need to make it in everyday life and how to deal and cope with everything that comes with it."



CARRIE PETTUS
FOUNDING
EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR

The well-being orientation of the 5-Key Model stands in stark contrast to decades of existing correctional practices, which focus on individual deficits and have not been associated with decreased return to incarceration after release.

Key preliminary findings from the 5-Key Model for Reentry show:

- Participants who received the 5-Key Model report fewer reincarceration events than those in the comparison group who were eligible to receive standard available services in their communities.
- Participants who received the 5-Key Model also reported higher levels of overall well-being, which was associated with a reduced likelihood of reincarceration.

These results suggest that IJRD's signature well-being orientation, upon which the 5-Key Model was developed, helps individuals to not only avoid reincarceration but to thrive after they leave incarceration and return home.

Corrections officials from four states reflected on the early success of the 5-Key Model to help individuals thrive after leaving incarceration and returning home to their families and communities.

"What the 5-Key Model has taught us, is that well-being is fundamental to reducing the likelihood of reincarceration," said Pennsylvania Department of Corrections Executive Deputy Secretary George M. Little.

"Data-backed research like the 5-Key Model is crucial to developing innovations that ultimately reduce unnecessary reliance on the criminal justice system and produce equity and prosperity across race, socioeconomic class and behavioral health status," said Carrie Pettus, PhD, MSW, founder and executive director of IJRD. "IJRD is an exciting new force making meaningful change in our Florida communities," said Mark Inch, secretary of the Florida Department of Corrections.

Learn more about the 5-Key Model study and the experiences of study participants through our **quarterly research reports!** ■

IJRD.CSW.FSU.EDU

SUPPORT IJRD **IJRD.CSW.FSU.EDU/DONATE**



AMBERLY PRYKHODKO

The Institute for Justice Research and Development (IJRD) recently launched a professional development platform with Amberly Prykhodko, LCSW, leading as Director of Clinical and Professional Services. IJRD works with health professionals, case managers, corrections staff, attorneys, law enforcement, non-profits and other employers to deliver the latest in customized professional training, clinical services and continuing education. Additionally, IJRD consultants provide personalized consulting services, tailored to help organizations meet their goals and amplify their work. Organizations can also request program evaluation services with IJRD's trained professional evaluators.

PROFESSIONAL TRAININGS

IJRD recently developed an innovative, interactive, evidence-backed online training entitled **Resiliency Behind the Badge: How to Understand and Manage the Impact of Exposure to Violence and Suffering While on Duty**. This training is appropriate for law enforcement nationwide, to better understand symptoms of post-traumatic stress. It was developed by Prykhodko with input from law enforcement officers to fill a gap in law enforcement mental health training.

This summer, early investigators, such as early-career professors, postdoctoral fellows, and doctoral students in Social Work, Psychology, Behavioral Medicine, Behavioral Sciences and Social Medicine, Marriage and Family, and Criminology disciplines, as well as therapists, Licensed Professional Counselors, and Licensed Mental Health Counselors can participate in IJRD's inaugural summer institute, **Conducting Intervention Research in Criminal Justice Settings**, led by Dr. Carrie Pettus, founding executive director of IJRD. At the workshop, attendees will learn how to design and research behavioral or policy interventions that address needs,

problems, and conditions related to criminal justice involvement and the criminal justice system.

On the horizon are trainings on managing symptoms of stress and trauma tailored to professionals working in the criminal justice field and correctional officers and staff; customized training for employers who participate in second chance hiring to help with promotion and retention; as well as a specialized training series focused on race, class, and health equity in the criminal justice system.

In the forthcoming trainings, professionals working in the US criminal justice system who want to gain a more in-depth understanding can participate in an overview training before moving into more specialized population trainings. Administrators, support staff, social workers, case managers, mental health professionals, and anyone else looking to increase their knowledge and skills for working with diverse populations in this context will benefit from this training series.

HOW TO BUILD FUNDING, EVALUATION, & AN EVIDENCE BASE FOR NONPROFITS



Also live now is a video-based training series, **How to Build Funding, Evaluation and an Evidence Base**, created by five faculty and staff to strengthen and scale nonprofits, while demystifying research. The series includes five trainings where trainees learn about the basics of identifying funding sources, preparing grant applications, developing new programs, conducting program evaluations, collecting high-quality data, and building an evidence base for programs. It is tailored to nonprofit administrators, their staff and board members and is accessible to those with no prior research experience.

ijrd.csw.fsu.edu/training-catalog

Forging a Path to Understanding Substance Use Disorders: **Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery**

FLORIDA HIGHER EDUCATION CONSORTIUM ON SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER INITIATIVE

Over the last year, the Center for the Study and Promotion of Communities, Families and Children (CFC Center) at the College of Social Work implemented two Substance Abuse and Mental Administration grant-funded initiatives.

In 2019, the first project focused on developing substance use disorder (SUD) curriculum for BSW and MSW students at eleven Florida universities' social work programs. As part of the grant initiative to develop substance use disorder content, the CFC Center formed the Florida Higher Education Consortium on Substance Use Disorder comprised of 11 Florida university social work programs that aim to facilitate the integration of SUD content into the BSW and MSW curricula of the Florida Consortium members.

To date, a fully developed 15-module course has been developed by consortium members and taught at member institutions. Additionally, three on-demand webinars were developed and are accessible on the CSW website at csw.fsu.edu/cfc.

Florida Substance Use Disorder Symposium

In Spring 2020, the CFC Center hosted a symposium with more than 100 stakeholders from the medical and social work fields to discuss current development in SUD assessment, treatment, and prevention. Planning is in progress for a Fall 2021 symposium highlighting the consortium's work and emerging trends in SUD, including an evaluation on the rate of SUDs in Florida.



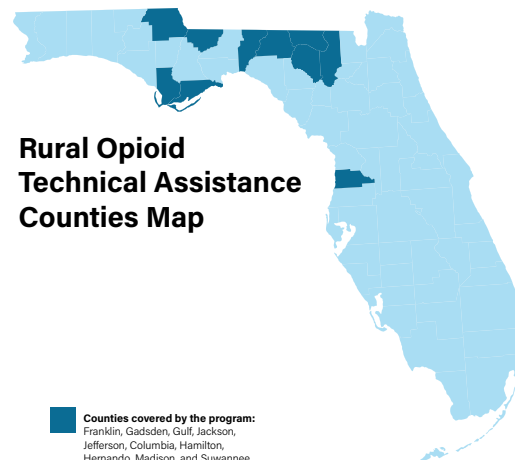
Rural Opioid Technical Assistance Program

A Collaboration with Florida A&M University's Cooperative Extension Program

In Florida, the rate of opioid overdoses has increased yearly since 2013 and is one of the top causes of death within the state. These alarming statistics led Florida Governor Ron DeSantis to declare a state of emergency in response to the opioid epidemic. The CFC Center partnered with Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University's (FAMU) Cooperative Extension Program to deliver evidence-based training on opioid use disorders (OUD) prevention. Training includes reduction strategies for use and overdose, recovery resources, and promotion of resiliency factors. The initiative will target ten counties in North Florida: Franklin, Gadsden, Gulf, Jackson, Jefferson, Columbia, Hamilton, Hernando, Madison and Suwannee.

Residents in these counties are at a higher risk for SUD than residents in more urban regions of Florida. Factors contributing to a higher rate of opioid use in rural counties include "increased levels of poverty, fewer local resources, lower graduation rates, higher disability rates, and co-morbidities" (Lenardson, Gale, & Ziller, 2016).

The lack of SUD prevention, assessment, overdose prevention and treatment in rural Florida has contributed to the spike in drug overdose death rates in Florida over



Rural Opioid Technical Assistance Counties Map

Counties covered by the program:
Franklin, Gadsden, Gulf, Jackson,
Jefferson, Columbia, Hamilton,
Hernando, Madison, and Suwannee



Savannah Collier providing disaster and recovery training.

the last four years. The project seeks to address the crisis through collaborations with local healthcare professionals, pastors, teachers, parents, students, nonprofits and law enforcement. The project also utilizes the FAMU Cooperative Extension Program, which is already established in these communities to target impacted communities and their residents from a community strength perspective.

Training and materials will be evidence-based from sources including Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, the National Institutes of Drug Abuse, the Center for Disease Control and the Rural Health Hub Rural Prevention and Treatment of Substance Use Disorders Toolkit. These tools are infused with a resilience approach stressing social connectedness and improving everyday health, wellness, and community systems.

DISASTER REBOUND & RECOVERY: A TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH PROJECT

The CFC Center obtained a Clinical and Translational Science Award (CTSA) in spring 2020 for the Disaster Rebound & Recovery Project. Lead by FSU social work professor Dr. Tanya Renn, the project provides an evidence-based program of Cognitive Behavioral Interventions for Trauma in Schools (CBITS) to youth who have experienced trauma or stress. The experience of trauma or stress at an early age can lead to maladaptive outcomes including substance use, mental health and behavioral problems.

The CBITS intervention is implemented at two sites for 50 youths, Jefferson County K-12 – A Somerset Academy Charter School in Monticello, Florida, and at The Shadetree afterschool program in Gretna, Florida. This research aims to demonstrate the evidence-based utility of CBITS. The

project evaluates change over time in participating youths to understand the interactive process of how stress affects and is affected by, emotion regulation, parent-child relationship, and how these factors affect family functioning.

NOURISH TO FLOURISH PROJECT: SELF-CARE AND RECOGNITION FOR SOCIAL WORKERS

Teaming up with the FSU College of Social Work and the National Association of Social Workers' Florida Chapter (NASW-FL), the CFC Center developed the Nourish to Flourish Project in 2021 to provide support and recognition to social workers. The project provided a self-care program during a time social workers were working on the frontlines ensuring community health and well-being needs were met during a global pandemic.

The Nourish to Flourish Project consists of a series of 11 videos verbalizing self-care themes, including emotional, psychological, spiritual, physical, professional, personal, environmental, every day, social and relationship self-care in social work. The videos are presented by social work professionals and can be accessed on the **College of Social Work's YouTube (@FSU_SocialWork)** channel.

A worksheet template accompanies the videos, which allows individuals following along with the videos to create a personalized self-care plan. At the end of the videos, a self-care wheel summarizes self-care tips relevant to social isolation constructs discussed under the eight types of self-care. Although the Nourish to Flourish Project was created to support the social work profession, the self-care tools and tips apply to all helping professionals. ■



**ELLEN
PIEKALKIEWICZ
DIRECTOR**

CSW.FSU.EDU/CFC

Celebrating Our **2020 Social Work Graduates!**

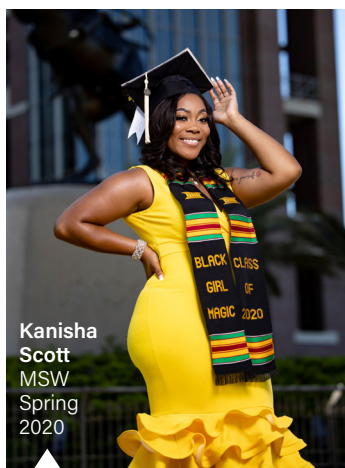
For the first time in FSU's history, all three of its 2020 commencement exercises for the spring, summer and fall semesters were held virtually. For each ceremony, President John Thrasher addressed an empty auditorium as graduates, families and friends tuned in and celebrated remotely. Check out some of the great photos our 2020 graduates took as they made the best of a pandemic graduation!



Mary Green
MSW Fall 2020



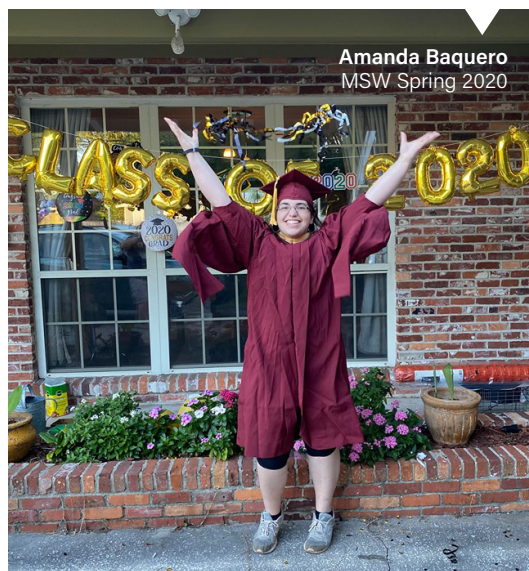
Haley Feener
MSW
Spring 2020



Kanisha Scott
MSW
Spring 2020



Amber Arce
MSW Spring 2020



Amanda Baquero
MSW Spring 2020



Danielle Foster
MSW Spring 2020



Samantha Farrara
BSW Spring 2020



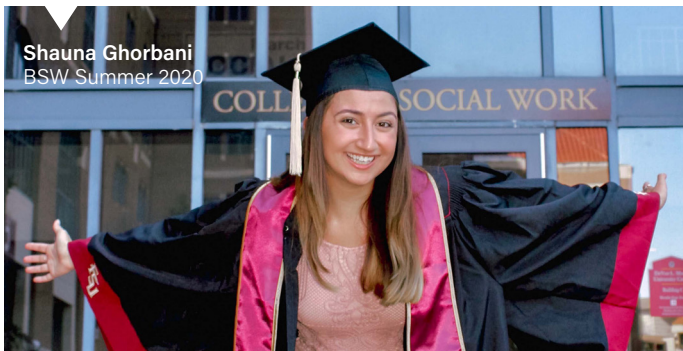
Alexis Smith
BSW Summer 2020



Camille Turner-Bragdon
MSW Summer 2020



Chella Sykes
BSW
Summer 2020



Shauna Ghorbani
BSW Summer 2020



Shirika Davis
MSW Summer 2020



Debbi Duplessy
MSW
Summer 2020



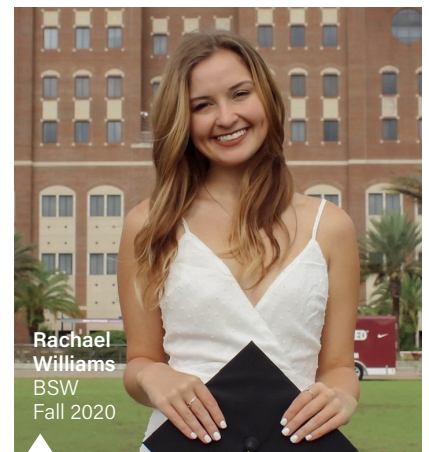
Za'Nae Drummer
MSW
Fall 2020



Kenneth Rodriguez
BSW
Fall 2020



Alexis Patel
MSW
Fall 2020



Rachael Williams
BSW
Fall 2020



STUDENT HIGHLIGHTS

BSW STUDENT Margarita Amado-Blanco



Margarita Amado-Blanco was looking for a beautiful university campus with a supportive community where she could explore her career options. After a tour of Florida State University and feedback from her older brother, who was already an FSU student, she decided it was where she wanted to be.

Starting as an undecided major, Margarita was interested in women's issues and working with children with disabilities. Although drawn to social work, she heard a lot of misconceptions about the profession. "I spent so much time worrying about what

others wanted for me that I took a long time to make that final decision to major in social work," she confessed. "As I researched injustice and inequality, my passion grew and I became an advocate."

Her proudest moment at FSU was when she declared her major as social work. "The decision gave me a lot of confidence in myself and my future. My friends and family learned more about the beauty of social work. They saw my passion and are now my biggest supporters."

As she became more involved in her social work program, Margarita found ways to combine her interest in social work, traveling and languages. Already bilingual in Spanish and English, she minored in French to expand her ability to communicate with more clients and communities. She spent a month volunteering in Southeast Asia in 2018 and spent the summer of 2019 exploring international social work and social justice through the FSU study abroad program to Prague, Czech Republic.

While in Prague, she bonded with other social work students and learned more about the FSU Student Association of Social Workers (SASW). Applying first as treasurer, Margarita soon found herself in the role of SASW president. In this new role, she found her next challenge, acting as a leader and organizer for her peers.

She is now in her third year as SASW

president and has never regretted the extra time and effort it takes to connect with students and to advocate for social work. "The best part of my role is working with my team, the SASW executive board!" she said.

With the added challenges and stressors of the COVID-19 pandemic and virtual learning, Margarita and her board have innovatively connected with students online and through social distanced events. She also augmented her efforts at the College of Social Work, working as the marketing and events assistant for two semesters.

Margarita graduated in Spring 2021, completing her field placement with the FSU Early Head Start Program working to promote healthy outcomes and services for pregnant women, child development and services for healthy family functioning. She is learning how to conduct home visits targeting pregnant and parenting families with children under age three, completing developmental and sensory assessments and documenting observations and interventions.

She will continue at FSU, pursuing dual master's degrees in social work and public administration after graduation. "I have learned during my time at FSU to advocate at all levels of the spectrum," she stated. "Students should not be afraid to enter this field. The world needs more advocates and more caring people." ■

MSW STUDENT Sara Hargis



Growing up in California, Sara Hargis learned early about the power of words and having a voice. The first day of fourth grade, she received a history book with Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech printed in it. "I read that speech for the first time and it was transformative. Those words were like magic. It was a message about hope," she declared. "That was the moment that started my love for social history, social movements, and civil rights." She felt an early need to make people feel seen and heard.

As an FSU undergraduate, Sara's interest in community development and history led her to major in Interdisciplinary Social Sciences with a focus on history and urban and regional planning. Sara's decision to pursue an MSW came from her friend and social worker, Marie Vandenburg, who exemplified the values of social work. Sara couldn't help but emulate her.

Sarah immersed herself in social work before she began her MSW, serving as an employee of the Big Bend Homeless Coalition (BBHC). She started as their volunteer and donations coordinator and was promoted to their development manager, handling fundraising and project planning, program development, community outreach and volunteer management. As with most nonprofits, she wears many hats and worked on multiple objectives to assist people experiencing homelessness.

Sara balances these responsibilities with the demands of her program thanks to the camaraderie of other working students. "We were tired, but we were in it together," she recalls. "Working full-time and going to graduate school is not for the faint of heart!" Despite the effort required, Sara found a lot of value in balancing of full-time work and classes. "I valued the practical application of

drawing from my professional experiences in ways that applied to my classes, and my social work classes made me a better professional.

Sara wrapped up her MSW with an internship at Capital Regional Medical Center's Behavioral Health Unit during the COVID-19 pandemic, a fast-paced environment similar to the one she experienced at BBHC. "Apart from additional safety precautions, the unit ran normally during the pandemic," she explained. Sara appreciated the opportunity to be part of a tight-knit group of front-line workers—an experience many helping

professionals shared throughout the pandemic.

After more than ten years in Tallahassee and at Florida State, Sara and her fiancé plan to move to Tampa, Florida, to start the next chapter in their lives. "Tallahassee was such a warm, safe city to become a young professional and I am so grateful for that," she articulated. "The most important thing I learned in my program was about boundaries, self-care and how to avoid burn-out, so you can focus on your clients and provide them the best, most empowering experience." ■



Sarah Hargis with fellow interns and social workers of the Behavior Health Unit at Capital Regional.

Ph.D. CANDIDATE Jessica Bagneris



At 11-years-old, Jessica Bagneris experienced first-hand the devastating impact of Hurricane Katrina on New Orleans, her home town. Most of her family never returned. Even at such a young age, she noticed the significant disparities New Orleanians experienced due to race and socioeconomic status (SES) during recovery efforts. "Based on these experiences, I am committed to studying how trauma affects children and families of color," remarked Jessica, "as well as developing interventions to mitigate the effects of trauma."

She earned her bachelor's degree in psychology and a minor in child and family studies at Baylor University. During that time, she worked as a research assistant at the Orleans Parish Juvenile Court House. Here, she again noticed the impact of trauma on the lives of youths before they even entered the courtroom. A trusted mentor advised her to pursue her MSW degree.

Back in Louisiana at Tulane University, she thrived in her MSW program, serving as president of her cohort and Student Government Association, joining Phi Alpha Honor Society, developing and chairing the Race Relations Committee, and earning a

certificate in Child and Family Practice. She interned with the Plaquemine's Community CARE Center, conducting therapy sessions and needs assessments. As a research assistant for the Tulane Innovations in Positive Parenting Study, she managed data at the Women, Infants and Children Center and worked on research on intimate partner violence.

After graduation, she worked at the Institute of Women and Ethnic Studies, an organization dedicated to improving the mental, emotional and physical health of women of color, their families and communities. After presenting at the Council on Social Work Education 2017 Annual Program Meeting, she moved forward pursuing her doctoral degree.

ADDRESSING RACIAL EQUITY AND INCLUSION IN EDUCATION

Now as a doctoral candidate, Jessica's preliminary exams are behind her and she is focused on her dissertation. Her dissertation focuses on the Sociocultural SEL Efficacy Intervention (SSEI). The intervention aids teachers in developing the skills to promote positive social-emotional outcomes for all students.

"Not every student experiences social-emotional learning equitably," explained Jessica. "Research suggests that SEL may miss a vital component, sociocultural context, which is necessary for personal development, particularly for marginalized populations. Sociocultural contexts refer to a person's cultural and societal experiences that are closely linked to the idea of personal growth and development. It is a necessary component of socio-emotional and identity development."

Jessica's research focuses on transformative SEL that fosters more equitable and inclusive outcomes for each student. "Teachers need to be equipped with the knowledge and skills to examine their biases, to replace inequitable practices and create inclusive learning

environments," she expounded.

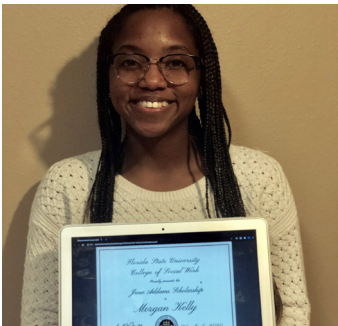
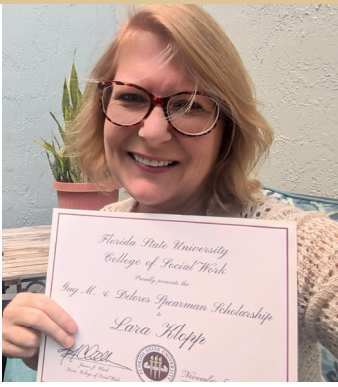
INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH IMPACTS MARGINALIZED POPULATIONS

Throughout her doctoral program, Jessica has been an active participant in research studies across disciplines at FSU and across the country. As a research participant for her major professor Dr. LaTonya Noël, a College of Social Work professor, she is currently working on several studies targeting the mental, emotional and behavioral health of young children. She is also a research assistant for FSU College of Nursing professors Dr. Frankie Wong, Dr. Eugenia Millender, Dr. Jon Mills and professors from universities across the country, researching health disparities impacted by discrimination and demographically-related experiences.

Within the FSU College of Education, she has supported Dr. S. Kathleen Kroch with technology-based research interventions supporting children of color in school settings. Jessica has also begun recently working with the Florida Center for Reading Research at FSU on research concentrating on school readiness for minority youth. Lastly, she is working with a research team at the University of Las Vegas on the use of technology to improve socio-emotional outcomes.

Throughout her research, Jessica is addressing the trauma of SUS and minority populations by developing and identifying and implementing interventions to build the resiliency and to reduce the health disparities of these communities.

She has learned the importance of building a support network of mentors, colleagues and friends in academia for all students, but particularly for students of color. "Imposter syndrome will creep in and make a student think they don't belong," she stressed, "But, if you love your work and get up every day with the intention of doing better than the day before, you can do this! I want all students to know that they belong here!" ■



SCHOLARSHIP AND AWARDS EVENT GOES DIGITAL

DISTINGUISHED GRADUATES

Five exemplary FSU College of Social Work alumni were acknowledged for their notable contributions to the social work education and profession. These recipients include:



RICHARD KING DISTINGUISHED EMERITUS ALUMNI AWARD

Richard M. King (MSW, 1969) is a search executive and Chief Executive Officer of Kittleman. Before leading Kittleman, he served as CEO of three charities, including a network of primary care facilities, a statewide association for youth and a comprehensive youth agency. He is a founding member of the National Network of Nonprofit Search Consultants. He established the Richard M. King Scholarship in social work and business administration supporting students interested in and studying social work and business.



JUSTIN MCCLAIN DISTINGUISHED YOUNG ALUMNI AWARD

Justin McClain (MSW, 2012) is a licensed clinical social worker and qualified supervisor in St. Petersburg, Florida. After graduation, he worked at Capital City Youth Services, Camelot Community Based Care's therapeutic foster care program and Pinellas County Schools as a school social worker. He established his private practice, Home Again Counseling, to fill the need for services for adopted children leaving the foster care system. He specializes in treating adolescents and families who have experienced violence and trauma. He serves on the board of directors of Community Action Stops Abuse, is a mentor and coach with 5,000 Role Models of Excellence Program and is a committee member of the Pinellas County Fatherhood Collaborative.

The College of Social Work's 2020 Scholarship and Awards event was held virtually for the first time with a Zoom event honoring the college's Distinguished Graduate Award recipients and social work scholarship recipients. Award recipients, donors, students were honored during a brief ceremony followed by breakout sessions allowing them to connect in a virtual space.

The breakout sessions also included college faculty and staff, engaging everyone in conversations about the significance of college and student support, philanthropy, gratitude and connection. This year, more than 80 social work students received scholarships from more than 30 scholarship funds supported by generous College of Social Work donors, including alumni and other supporters. Scholarship recipients shared photos of themselves (selections displayed here) with their scholarship certificates to show their appreciation. ■



DIANNA DINITTO DISTINGUISHED SOCIAL WORK EDUCATOR ALUMNI AWARD

Diana DiNitto is a two-time FSU graduate, including her MSW (1975) and doctoral degree in political science (1980). She is a distinguished teaching professor and Cullen Trust Centennial Professor in Alcohol Studies and Education at the University of Texas at Austin. Her research and teaching focus on social welfare policies, substance use and violence against women. She has published several books on social work, social welfare and chemical dependency.



MARY FREEMAN DISTINGUISHED SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE ALUMNI AWARD

Mary Freeman is a two-time FSU graduate, which includes a bachelor's degree in education (1969) and MSW (1985) and is a licensed clinical social worker. She retired in 2020 from a position at Shands Medical Center as a hospital social worker where she worked with pediatric heart transplant patients and their families. She wrote a children's book, Red's True Heart, which addresses the challenges families face during a heart transplant, emphasizing the emotional aspect while providing a launching point for family discussions on feelings and coping during a complex process.



ROBERT KEVIN GRIGSBY DISTINGUISHED SOCIAL POLICY & ADMINISTRATION ALUMNI AWARD

Robert Kevin Grigsby (MSW, 1981) has served in several faculty and administrative roles at the university level. His roles in higher education includes serving as a faculty member at the University of Georgia, Vice Dean of Administration and Research at the Medical College of Georgie, and ten years as Vice Dean for Faculty and Administration for the Pennsylvania State University College of Medicine. For more than a decade, he has most recently served as a senior administrator for the Association of America Medical Colleges.



#FSUCSW BY THE NUMBERS

2020-2021



TOTAL STUDENTS
ENROLLED **3,130**

BSW **193** MSW **909** PhD **24**

JOINT DEGREE STUDENTS **MSW &**

MPA **20** MBA **3** JD **1** Crim **12**



793 STUDENTS
IN THE FIELD



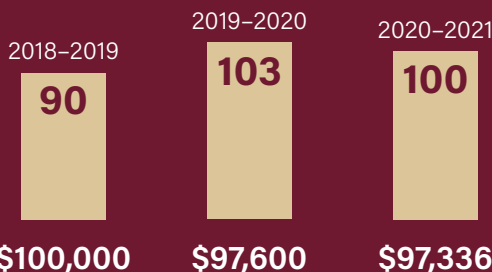
614 AFFILIATED
FIELD AGENCIES

SUPPORT FOR THE **CSW** **345** UNIQUE
DONORS
TOTALING 2020-21 DONATIONS **\$719,914**



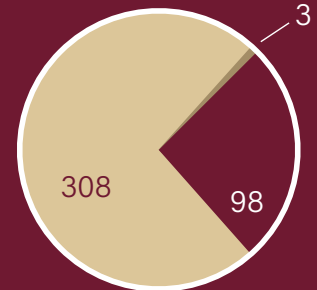
STUDENT
SCHOLARSHIPS

● # of Students Who Received Scholarships



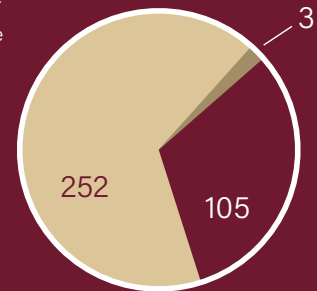
NUMBER OF
DEGREES
AWARDED

2020-2021
183



○ Bachelor's Degree
● Master's Degree
● Doctoral Degree

2019-2020
360



36
FULL-TIME
FACULTY

36
FULL-TIME
STAFF



TENURE-TRACK **20**
SPECIALIZED **16**

NEW ENDOWMENTS

- ▶ Grace Ann Graduate Assistantship
- ▶ Pam MacDill Unconquered Social Work Scholarship
- ▶ Center for the Study & Promotion of Communities, Families, & Children



ALUMNI UPDATES

Send your updates to
alumni@csu.fsu.edu.

2020s

Anthony Freed (BSW, 2020) joined AmeriCorps after graduating in summer 2020. He and other AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps members recently improved the C.A. Vines Arkansas 4-H Center. "I hope to one day work on policy drafting, but I thought AmeriCorps would be a good opportunity to see communities with need and how they are being served," Freed said.

Kathleen McKinnon (MSW, 2020) is a social worker with Johnston Health in Sims, North Carolina and is pursuing licensure.



Jordan Reed (MSW/MPA) served as a field organizer/political organizer for the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Political Action for Candidate Election. The organizers were employed in five key states—Arizona, Georgia, North Carolina, Wisconsin and Florida to promote the election of NASW endorsed candidates to the US Senate, House and Presidential elections. He indicated that the, "position allowed him to, "focus and hone essential and necessary skills" to a social worker, specifically advocacy and collaboration.

Brittany Gagnon (MSW, 2020) is self-employed as a psychotherapist in Winter Garden, Florida.

Jalaycia Lewis (BSW) is a macro social worker and is currently a Florida A&M University MSW Student. Her passion is community development for underserved populations. In February 2020, she conducted



a Black History Month Community Book Drive gathering Black-authored books for Leon County Schools in Promise Zones, schools in underserved areas. Jalaycia also created an Instagram account, The Social Recipe (@thesocialrecipe), where she encourages Black communities to thrive.

2010s

Ciara Matthews (MSW, 2019) is a licensed masters social worker at the James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital (JAHVH) Inpatient Psychiatric Unit in Tampa, Florida. She is also halfway through her supervision to become a licensed clinical social worker.

2000s



Brandy Stinson (MSW, 2007; BS, 2005) an Atlanta-based licensed clinical social worker, has seen a rise in demand for mental health counseling and response from mental health professionals in Atlanta, due to the combined factors of the COVID-19 pandemic and in the aftermath of political upheaval in 2020.

Stinson is also a re-entry specialist with Atlanta Veterans Administration Health System, educating incarcerated veterans about housing, employment and mental health resources.

The environment at Florida State provided a solid foundation for working in Georgia's urban and rural settings. Earning her MSW was pivotal to her goal of working in clinical practice and the criminal justice system. "FSU taught me how to be open and accepting of dialogue with individuals who come from different backgrounds," she explained. "Having an understanding of how those backgrounds shape beliefs and views are important."

Shevaun Harris (MSW, 2004; BA, 2002) was appointed by Florida's Governor as



Secretary of the Department of Children and Families (DCF) in January 2021. Harris was also appointed in October 2020 as acting secretary of the Florida Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA). She served for more than a decade with AHCA, including as assistant deputy secretary for Medicaid Policy and Quality (2017-2020).

"Early on in my career, I pursued my master's degree in social work because I wanted to make a difference," Harris said. "I look forward to applying these experiences at DCF in support of the Governor and First Lady's initiatives to serve our most vulnerable, particularly in the areas of mental health and fighting against substance abuse."

1990s

Joy Foley Coker (MSW, 1999; BSW, 1998) is a self-employed yoga instructor and clinical counselor living and practicing in Panama City, Florida.

Dr. Juan C. Lebron (MSW, 1998; BSW, 1997) earned a Doctorate of Education in educational leadership from San Houston State University. He is currently a supervisor, faculty counselor and professor at Lone Star College – Montgomery and Stephen F. Austin State University, School of Social Work.

Jenny Lind McCorkle (MSW, 1998) is currently a supervisory social worker for the US Public Health Service and resides in Goldsboro, North Carolina.

1980s

Kimberly (Kim) Boswell (MSW, 1984) was appointed commissioner for the Alabama Department of Mental Health (ADMH) by Alabama Governor Kay Ivey in December 2020. "She has spent the entirety of her professional career devoted to helping



Kim Boswell

struggling individuals and I appreciate her willingness to serve in this new capacity," said Governor Ivey. "Her background as a mental health provider as well as administrator makes her uniquely qualified."

She served as Chief of Staff for the previous commissioner Lynn Beshear and also served ADMH Associate Commissioner for Administration and Director of Human Resources. Boswell has more than 36 years of experience working in the field. "My social work education has served me well in understanding human and organizational

interactions and how they work together to serve people," she said.

Dr. Diane B. Byington (PhD, 1982; MSW, 1977) is an author living in Boulder, Colorado. She recently published her third book, a collection of short stories entitled, "Near the Edge." She published her first novel in 2018, titled "Who She Is," and her second novel in 2020, "If She Had Stayed." Learn more at dianebyington.com.

Dr. Helen Levine (MSW, 1981; BSW, 1979), a three-time graduate of Florida State, including a doctoral degree in educational leadership (1987), retired from her role as regional vice chancellor of external affairs for the University of South Florida – St. Petersburg on September 4, 2020. "My career in the public sector includes state, regional, local government, and higher education," Levine said. "I am fortunate that my work has always resonated with my passions and my interests. I look forward to having more time to learn new skills. I have apprenticed



Dr. Helen Levine

myself to a master gardener and look forward to dirty hands and fresh veggies."

1970s

Sheryl Gilbert (MSW, 1975) and her husband Fred Gilbert (MS, 1974 - Criminology) are retired from working for New York State and have moved to Fort Myers, Florida.

Ramon Antoni Ramos (MSW, 1975) is retired from social work and residing in Miami, Florida. ■

IN MEMORIAM



Frederick William (Bill) Chapman (1935–2020) passed away June 9, 2020. After becoming a minister, he earned his bachelor's degree in social work from FSU in 1956. He also met his wife Peggy Chapman at Florida State. He served as a Baptist minister for more than 60 years.



Charles Richard Jones (1938–2020) passed away December 24, 2020. He served in the US Navy for four years on the USS Charles P. Cecil, and eight years in the Navy Reserves. He earned his BSW (1980). He served as a pastor of the Florida Conference United Methodist Church for 44 years.



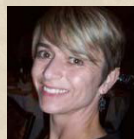
Barbara Anne Dusek Nelson (1937–2020) passed away August 15, 2020 in northwest Arkansas. She earned her Master's in Social Work at FSU in 1965. She worked as a psychological social worker for several years in Miami and for more than 30 years in Knoxville, Tennessee. She received several awards for her efforts in social work, chaired numerous

professional committees and served as field director for the University of Tennessee Graduate School of Social Work.



Diane Kay Pile (1952–2020) passed away from cancer on November 12, 2020 in Bethesda, Maryland. She completed her MSW at FSU in 1976. She was known for her unwavering dedication to her clients. "She was wonderful," said Cari Guthrie Cho, CEO of Cornerstone Montgomery, a Maryland behavioral health provider, where Ms. Pile worked up until surgery for cancer.

Joanne R. Snair (1950–2018) passed away on January 14, 2018 in Tallahassee, Florida. She was a two-time graduate of FSU with an undergraduate degree in psychology (1980) and a Master of Social Work degree (1982). In the final years of her career, she served as a senior court operations consultant for the Florida Supreme Court for more than ten years.



Pernille Urban (1974–2020) passed away in Tallahassee, Florida on August 17, 2020 from complications with mus-

cular dystrophy (MD). She was born in Esbjerg, Denmark. Pernille moved to the United States in 1999 and fell in love with Florida. In 2007 after being diagnosed with MD, Pernille joined organizations to help people with disabilities. She earned her MSW from FSU (2015), taught for several years, and worked at the Apalachee Center.

Katharine Stubb Ward (1943–2020) passed away in Key West Florida of congestive heart failure. A lifelong Floridian, Kathy earned a bachelor's in fashion merchandising at FSU (1965) and had a brief career in retail before returning for her MSW (1974). She was a social worker for 15 years. Katherine maintained a strong interest in textile art and became a full-time, award-winning quilter and instructor.



Dr. Janice Elaine Gross Wells (1945–2020) passed away in Pittsboro, North Carolina on December 30, 2020. She earned her doctoral degree in social work at FSU (1992). She taught at several universities, and concluded her career at North Carolina State as the Graduate Program in Social Work Director.

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