

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK NEWSLETTER



HISTORY OF THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

The School of Social Work commemorated 40 years of the Bachelor of Social Work program's accreditation from the Council on Social Work Education. The school invited the public to its open house on Sept. 27, 2019, with guest speakers, student success stories and refreshments.

Since 1979, SFA has produced valuable social workers who influence their communities in a variety of ways. With partnerships across Texas, including Lone Star College and Tyler Junior College, SFA social workers are engaged in service activities at the local, state, national and international levels.

The School of Social Work at SFA developed from the Social and Rehabilitation



ONE VISION
ONE SCHOOL
ONE DREAM
ONE FAMILY

Message from the School of Social Work Leadership Team

Welcome to the Fall 2021 newsletter. This issue is a culmination of the past two years. The School of Social Work worked through the unprecedented challenges that faced everyone across the world, including the COVID-19 pandemic and social climate. These times emphasized the need for qualified and caring social workers who will be advocates for change. We have a responsibility to fulfill the needs in our changing society. In this issue, we focus on our alumni and spotlight some of their accomplishments. We are proud of each student who graduated from our program. In this newsletter, we want to introduce our current and newly graduated students to the options and paths that our alumni have followed. We hope you will be just as proud of them as we are.

As a school, we emphasize the importance of anti-racism, diversity, equity and inclusion in everything we do. Please take the time to read about events related to our history, teaching, partnerships, projects and service to the community and profession. With new diverse program options, including an online MSW program and DSW (which will start in fall 2022), we are excited about a new era for the school. We are also saddened by the retirements of two of our long-time faculty members, Dr. Sam Copeland and Dr. Peter Simbi. Their contributions have been immeasurable, and they truly will be missed. As we move forward into the future, we want to remind you of our motto: "One Dream, One School, One Vision, One Family."

Enjoy the newsletter, and thank you for your support.

School of Social Work Leadership Team

Dr. Freddie L. Avant, ACSW, LMSW-AP

Director, Professor and Associate Dean of the School of Social Work Interim Dean of Research and Graduate Studies

Dr. Emmerentie Oliphant

Professor, Interim Chair School of Social Work and DSW Planning Coordinator

Dr. H. Stephen Cooper, LCSW, LCCA

Professor and BSW Interim Program Coordinator

Wilma Córdova, MSW, LISW, LCSW

Professor and Interim MSW Program Coordinator

Linda Harris, MSW, LMSW

Director of Field Education and Clinical Instructor

Diane Sizemore, MSW, LMSW

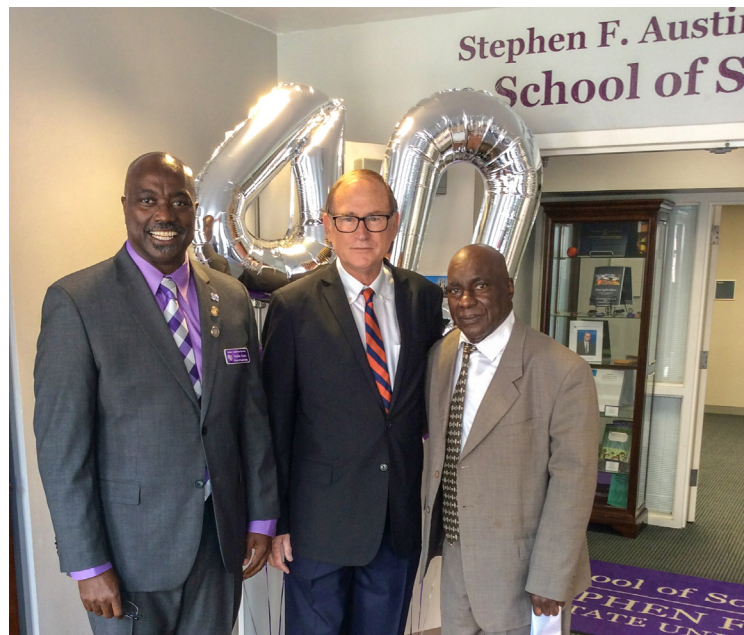
Instructor and Director Child Welfare Professional Development Project

Dr. Carrie Butler, LCSW

Clinical Instructor and Lone Star Offsite Program Liaison

Christy Collins, MSW, LCSW

Assistant Professor and TJC Offsite Program Liaison



Services Training Sequence in 1967 as part of the School of Education. It would once again transform in 1972 as the sequence expanded to have an emphasis on social welfare, which would specifically prepare students for that type of career. A needs assessment for the area was performed in 1975, and by 1978, a proposal for the BSW program was developed.

The BSW program as seen today was developed in 1979, and the new degree program was approved by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board for inclusion in the 1980 general catalog. Following the 1980 Council on Social Work Education site visit report, SFA's candidacy for accreditation was approved.

The first four graduates were awarded degrees in 1981; a course in protective services was added, and the social work minor was approved. The official accreditation was completed by CSWE in 1982. During the next two decades, we continued to grow our course lists and our impact on the local community.

Since the BSW accreditation, SFA has graduated more than 1,200 students with a Bachelor of Social Work degree. The MSW program was added in 1998, and more than 600 students have completed the program.

Each year the program seeks out new ways to increase recruitment, work with students to maintain enrollment, and celebrate accomplishments.

The program has operated under the leadership of five directors since the opening of the School of Social Work; Dr. Avant has been the director since 2007. The school has seen changes over the years, not just the number of graduates, but in opportunities for field instruction placement, the ways in which courses can be attended, the geographical areas that our students are from, and the overall backgrounds brought to the school to learn from and to celebrate.

The field of social work is constantly changing as needs are met and new shortages arise. The School of Social Work, now housing the Child Welfare Professional Development Project and the Center for Rural Social Work Research Development, has met this challenge by constantly evolving its classrooms, pedagogy and materials. By remaining current, the school prepares its students to meet the changing climates in their interactions with individuals, communities and policies. The Center for Rural Social Work Research collaborates with agencies and funders across Texas to build strong research partnerships. The commitment to providing prepared social workers for the world by SFA faculty means that we can expect to see growth continue within the School of Social Work. As a testament to this growth, SFA is preparing to offer a DSW beginning in fall 2022. This doctoral degree will focus on preparing for practice, teaching and leadership.



CELEBRATING SOCIAL WORK MONTHS DURING THE PANDEMIC

Each year in March, social workers across the nation celebrate Social Work Month. The 2020 theme was "Social Workers Generations Strong." As the BSW and MSW faculty were planning the celebration, little did they know that the COVID-19 pandemic would change their plans. Indeed, we learned how strong we are and how we can use our excellent problem-solving skills to adapt to a changing environment. Social workers address the tremendous need for services and the need is expected to increase within the next few years.



March 2020

Joe Ceasar gave a keynote to the social work students on economic justice and financial education, highlighting the importance of economic justice in social work and encouraging students to advocate for their clients. Nacogdoches County Judge Greg Sowell attend the School of Social Work proclamation ceremony and presented a proclamation of Social Work Month to Dr. Freddie L. Avant, associate dean and director of the school.

BSW and MSW students were fortunate to travel to Austin to attend Social Work Advocacy Day on March 6. Students learned more about how social factors influence health, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, and the National Alliance on Mental Illness.

March 2021

"Social Workers are Essential" was the theme for the March 2021 National Social Work Month. International Social Work Day is held on March 16 with the theme of Ubuntu – a word meaning Connectedness.

The MSW students and faculty were invited to participate in a Voice Collage: Social Workers are Essential by sending in a picture or short video expressing why social workers are essential. The completed video was shared on the School of Social Work Facebook page.

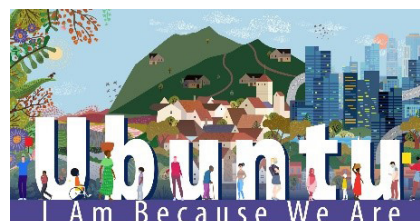
Katherine Kozar provided information about Burke mental health and intellectual disability services, as well as the increase in services due to the pandemic.

The first week ended with presentations regarding self-care for essential workers by Lenola Wyatt and Sha'Terra Johnson- Fairley, as well as information regarding preparing for graduate school or the job market by Dr. Christine Bishop.

International Social Work Day was celebrated with a presentation by Drs. Peter Simbi and Emmerentie Oliphant on Ubuntu: Connectedness from an African Perspective. It was a powerful presentation that reminded us that social work is a global effort. Wyatt rounded out the week with a presentation with some of her SOCW 5300 students on how social workers are committed to serving.

The final activities began with Kristin Bailey-Wallace and Shanta Scott hosting a presentation regarding the SFA Career Center. Dr. Jose Carbajal hosted a roundtable discussion on technology,

social work ethics and COVID-19. The final event was an online movie event, "Waking Dream," hosted by Diane Sizemore with the Child Welfare Professional Development Project.





INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES

Ubuntu is a very powerful concept derived from African groups. The concept was described during a presentation by Dr. Peter Simbi during Social Work 2021, and by Drs. Freddie Avant, Emmerentie Oliphant and Simbi during a presentation at the 22nd Annual International Consortium for Social Development, as including kindness, compassion, honesty, caring, authenticity, self-discipline, fairness and many other things.

We, as social workers, attempt to embody this term as it drives multiple theories in social work, such as empowerment, social and political justice, systems and symbolic interactions. We use this term to provide a framework for the activities we are doing through the SFA program.

Since 2017, social work students in both the undergraduate and graduate programs have participated in a study-abroad program to Ghana, a country located in the subregion of Western Africa along the Gulf of Guinea and the Atlantic Ocean. Students from departments including nursing, geology, biology, education, government and communications also have participated in the Maymester program.

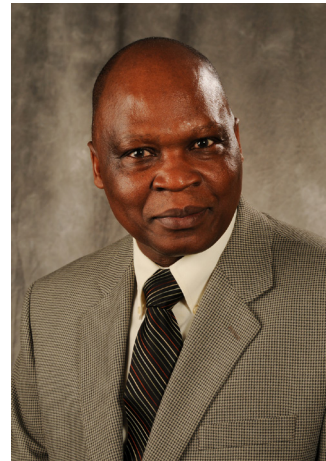
The program offers a structured-learning component in which students participate in lectures from knowledgeable professors from the University of Ghana and the University of Cape Coast. Recently, India was added to the program as well. Students attend two full days of lectures in government, policy and social work, then participate in travel along the coast to learn about the culture. These lessons are then integrated into the program by a professional tour guide and the students' professors.

Social work education was established in India at the Tata School of Social Work in 1936. The National Association of Professional Social Workers in India was founded in 2005, and it is one of the largest member-based organizations in India.

To expand international opportunities and allow students to experience the rich social work history India has to offer, SFA is working with Chandra Atholi, Father Clarence Paliath, St. Joseph's University and SFA's Office of International Programs.



THANKS TO OUR RETIREES



Dr. Peter Simbi started his SFA career in 2001 after teaching at universities in the U.S. and Uganda. He taught in both the BSW and MSW programs and served as the MSW director from 2003 – 2008, directing

graduate students in research practicums, policy development and capstone projects. His expertise in research and policy development enabled students to understand the complexities of research plan development and implementation, and the analysis of national and international policies.

As the MSW director, he led the program through the CSWE accreditation processes. Simbi was a CSWE site visitor since 1994. Simbi was active in practice in the U.S. and Uganda and created the North American Masaba Cultural Association, which develops collaborations between Uganda and the U.S.



Dr. Sam Copeland joined SFA in fall 1999 and retired in July 2021. He was director of the BSW program from 2007 until retirement in 2021 and led the program through several accreditation processes.

Copeland's expertise in clinical social work enhanced the knowledge base of the School of Social Work. He received the Association of Social Workers Baccalaureate Program Directors Leadership Award and serves as a commissioner on the CSWE and the Association on Community Organization and Social Administration's Special Commission to Advance Macro-Practice, where he contributed to the enhancement of community and organizational practice in social work. In 2016, he served as the president of the association.

STUDENT NEWS

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK PARTNERS WITH TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES TO AWARD STUDENT STIPENDS



Kelsey Stewart



Tiana Rachal Centers



Gardenia Escobar



Reanisha Woods



Joby Fahey



Shelby Ramirez



Elsa Noble

The Child Welfare Professional Development Project partners with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services to provide stipends each semester to students who are committed to working with children in the foster care system. The stipend process involves a lengthy and competitive application procedure, and as part of the agreement, these students commit to an employment position upon graduation.

The stipend for the fall 2019 semester was awarded to BSW student Jack Goodman. The stipends for the Spring 2020 semester were awarded to BSW student Amber Phillips and MSW students Kelsey Stewart and Lakendra Teal. They were great assets to Child Protective Services during their field placement.

Bethany Sherling and Emmalee Tomaszewski were the stipend recipients for the Fall 2020 semester, and spring 2021 stipends were awarded to BSW student Tiana Rachal Centers and MSW recipients Gardenia Escobar and Reanisha Woods.

The stipend recipients for the Fall 2021 semester are Joby Fahey and Shelby Ramirez.

The Child Welfare Professional Development Project had our first employee stipend student graduate this year – the first in many years. Elsa Noble maintained her employment with CPS while pursuing her MSW. She is passionate about child welfare and wants to make a difference in the lives of children and families.

IN MEMORIAL

The School of Social Work was saddened by the loss of two of our students in 2021 – Shantrell Goodnight and Leila Thompson.

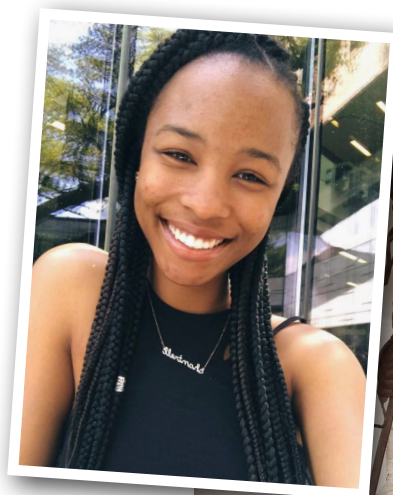
Shantrell Nicole Goodnight was born Jan. 14, 1997, in Huntsville to Winford A. Goodnight and Tiffany Nicole Long and departed this life on Jan. 9, 2021. A BSW student at SFA, Shantrell was passionate about social work and serving her community. Her goal was to go on to receive her MSW and start a non-profit agency for at-risk youth.

Leila Ann Thompson was a student in our MSW program. Leila, most affectionately known as Queen, was born in Kilgore on June 3, 1972, to James and Elaine Thompson, and she departed this life on Feb. 1, 2021, in Longview. Leila also was passionate about social work and serving her community.

Both Shantrell and Leila would have been great social workers and will genuinely be missed throughout the School of Social Work, the university and the social work profession. The School of Social Work donated bricks inscribed with their names and placed in SFA's Walk of Recognition plaza in the middle of campus.

A certificate for each of the families states:

This certificate verifies your participation in the SFA Walk of Recognition. The name, carved in the brick below, will forever be a part of SFASU's beautiful campus. In addition, proceeds from the purchase of your brick will build an endowment to support leadership programs and scholarships within the SFA Alumni Association.



SOCIAL WORK ADVOCACY DAY

Social Work Advocacy Day allows students to experience a day of advocacy at our state capitol in conjunction with sessions of the Texas Legislature, which meets every other year. The event illuminates the vital functions of social work in the area of “policy practice,” which is one of the core competencies established by the Council on Social Work Education.

The School of Social Work generously provides a large charter bus for the trip to Austin, and more and more students step onto that bus every year. Seventy social work students from our growing program locations registered for March 6, 2020, event – just before Spring Break and all the unforeseen changes that were about to occur as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

NASW Texas hosted and coordinated the 2020 event; students in social work programs from all over Texas joined together for a day of engagement, advocacy, and exposure to the legislative process and a wider view of social work and opportunities in the policy arena. The morning program featured a series of policy speakers at the University of Texas campus, and some of the highlights included social work champions for social justice and social work’s commitment to broader society. Students learned more about how social factors influence health, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, also known as DACA, and the National Alliance on Mental Illness.

In the afternoon, students had opportunities to “amplify their voices” on the south steps of the Capitol building. Hundreds of social work students rallied together and spoke out regarding a wide variety of topics. NASW Texas coordinated afternoon panels on policy and advocacy that covered implications of redistricting, social determinants of health, and social work advocacy – from grassroots activism to legislative staffing.

Kristin Wallace and Diane Sizemore have coordinated and chaperoned this event for several years. Wallace is an assistant professor in the BSW program, and Sizemore is director of the Child Welfare Professional Development Project.

STUDENT AWARDS

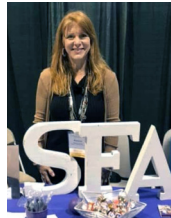
Leadership awards

The leadership awards honor students who show dedication to the social work profession and who are dedicated to serving the School of Social Work and their fellow students.



BSW Leadership Award

Ellexia Martinez of Dallas received the BSW Leadership Award. Ellexia is continuing her education at SFA in the MSW program. Upon completion, she plans to return to the Dallas area and use her degree to assist children and young adults in the mental health field.



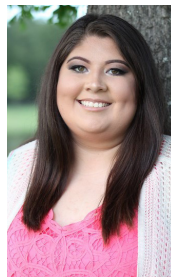
MSW Leadership Award

Kimberley Kirchner received the MSW Leadership Award. Kim was dedicated to lead the Association of Graduation Students of Social Work in The Woodlands/Lone Star in serving others during Thanksgiving and Christmas 2019. One of the faculty said Kim is the “epitome of resilience and has the tenacity necessary for leadership and longevity in the field of social work.”



NASW BSW Leadership Award

Santa Cruz was the recipient of the NASW BSW Leadership Award. Upon graduation, Santa became a case manager at the Brown Family Health Center in Nacogdoches. She hopes to one day receive her clinical license through the State of Texas and work in the mental health field. She is a current student in the MSW program at SFA.



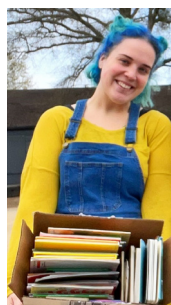
NASW MSW Leadership Award

Reyna Sanchez received the NASW MSW Student of the Year 2020 (Deep East Texas Branch) award. Reyna is passionate about creating a safe environment for homeless children and families in East Texas. Her graduate research identified the barriers and challenges experienced by homeless families in Lufkin. Reyna completed her final field internship at Impact Lufkin. She worked with community leaders and agency partners to revitalize North Lufkin. Reyna specifically developed a youth empowerment program for the agency.



MSW Leadership Award

Kasey Golden received the MSW leadership award for her dedication to the School, SFA and the community. She represented the SFA graduate students on the SFA Graduate Student Council. Stacey completed internships at San Augustine County Judge’s office and HOPE Community Medicine Medical Clinic in Center. Kasey is interested in pursuing a career in mental health.



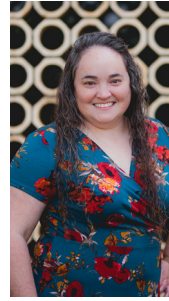
BSW Leadership Award Fall 2021

Brenna Curbow of Houston is a student in the MSW program. She obtained her BSW from SFA in December 2020, graduating summa cum laude as a University Scholar with a women’s and gender studies certification. She has been a member of Phi Alpha Honor Society since her induction in 2018 and served as president since fall 2019. Brenna and her wife, Michelle, live on a 60-acre farm near Nacogdoches and run a miniature pig sanctuary and small tumbler business. She said she would like to mentor at a non-profit, learn grant writing, and use that knowledge to turn her farm into a 501(c)(3) non-profit rescue and sanctuary.



BSW Leadership Award Spring 2021

Robin Branch served as president and vice president of the NAACP, the president of Campus L.I.F.E., the social service chair for the SASW, and as a contributing writer for Her Campus while working toward her BSW at SFA. She is passionate about eradicating barriers to professional help-seeking among Black people and advocates for mental health in the Black community. Robin is a current MSW student at SFA and plans to become an LCSW.



Hogg Foundation for Mental Health Scholarship 2021

The scholarship for 2021 was received by Ruth "Shay" Palmer. She has worked in healthcare for more than 20 years and has developed a deep interest in working with mental health during her time working in nursing facilities and physical therapy departments.

GRADUATE NEWS

HOGG FOUNDATION FOR MENTAL HEALTH AWARDS SCHOLARSHIP TO GRADUATE STUDENTS

Scholarships for students pursuing a graduate degree in social work are a part of the strategy of The Hogg Foundation for Mental Health to strengthen the knowledge base regarding mental health promotion and prevention. Kasey Golden, a recent graduate of SFA's MSW program received the 2020 scholarship, and Ruth "Shay" Palmer is the 2021 recipient of the scholarship.

Golden felt a calling to help people at a young age and believes that law, policy and advocacy are the best ways to ensure change within communities and individuals. Her secondary education aligned with this goal. She graduated from the University of Texas at Austin with a bachelor's degree in government in 2011 and earned a law degree from Florida Coastal School of Law in Jacksonville in 2015. With an interest in immigration law, Golden served as an intern for an immigration non-profit and as a student clinician in the law school's immigration law clinic. She also studied Spanish abroad after graduation.

After earning her juris doctorate, she began work in a law office in her hometown of Center, Texas. She quickly noticed many client issues were not resolved even after their legal cases were closed. She saw families suffering after division and discord and found that often the family or client would not seek mental health services or counseling. She realized she lacked the knowledge and tools needed to help clients on a deeper level. She determined that to gain the necessary knowledge and skills, she should pursue a master's degree in social work from SFA.

Golden settled well into graduate school and was inducted into the Theta Omega Chapter of the Phi Alpha Honor Society after her first semester. Golden served as a graduate assistant at SFA's School of Social Work, and due to her experience in law, government and policy, she was assigned to the San Augustine county judge's office for her field placement. There she gained knowledge of community development and human behavior and was able to evaluate and implement several programs that helped further economic, social and environmental justice within the community. She was able to connect with San Augustine leaders and community members to broaden the connection with SFA.

Now that she has earned her MSW, Golden hopes to provide mental health services to the East Texas community and intends to continue to advocate for fair immigration policy and better access to mental health services.

The scholarship for 2021 was received by Ruth "Shay" Palmer. She has worked in healthcare for more than 20 years and has developed a deep interest in working with mental health during her time working in nursing facilities and physical therapy departments. Working with patients in these environments helped her discover her interest in mental health.



Kasey Golden



Shay Palmer

The dynamic of starting graduate school online during a pandemic has proven to be a very challenging yet valuable part of her future work and training opportunities with those in a virtual dynamic. Working as an SFA School of Social Work graduate student, Palmer has gained valuable experience working on the HRSA-funded research project, a community initiative to address opioid and methamphetamine use in rural East Texas. Attending community meetings has exposed her to other mental healthcare needs in the area.

Palmer looks forward to completing her MSW and incorporating her new level of education with previous healthcare experience to continue working with rural residents and improve the whole-person objectives of each individual.

Both Palmer and Golden's hard work and determination have paid off as they earned the Ima Hogg Scholarship. The Hogg Foundation awards scholarships to graduate social work students who have committed to joining the mental health workforce after graduation. One student from each social work master's program across the state of Texas is chosen for his or her potential to bring renewed energy to the Texas mental health workforce.



School of Social Work graduate assistants, Rachel Duffina and Nicola Street, recruiting at a career and professional development event.

RECRUITMENT

The School of Social Work recently participated in a recruitment event hosted by SFA's Center for Career and Professional Development. Faculty and graduate assistants spoke with more than 30 people seeking information about the MSW program during the two-day event in April, which prioritized social distancing and COVID-19 safety guidelines. The School of Social Work encourages students interested in making a difference or continuing their education to pursue more information about a career in social work. Pictured are graduate assistants Nicola Street and Rachel Duffina.

SOCIAL WORK STUDENT RESEARCH DURING THE PANDEMIC

SFA faculty and students proved their research skills during the 2020 and 2021 graduate and undergraduate research conferences, which were held virtually due to the COVID-19.

2020 Conferences:

- MSW student, now graduate, Erin Carson, presented the "Strengths and Barriers of Rural Deep East Texas: Findings from the Needs Assessment of the Deep East Texas Opioid Crisis," based on research she gathered in conjunction with Drs. José Carbajal and Emmerentie Oliphant. After receiving input from participants, recommendations formed to minimize the opioid crisis included educating the community, providing drug disposal programs, and collaborating with federally qualified health centers and local mental health authorities to reduce barriers for treatment and increasing resources within the recovery community.
- Kelsey Stewart's (now MSW graduate) project was titled "College Students Perceptions Towards the LGBTQ Community." The purpose of this study was to test the comfort level of students attending a rural college campus with different members of the LGBTQ community. To collect her data, Stewart used a Bogardus Social Distance Scale, which she modified to include questions about different members of the LGBTQ community. She recommended colleges make the safety of LGBTQ+ students who choose to attend college on their campus a high priority.
- Cynthia Palomino was recognized as an Undergraduate Research Conference finalist. She put forward a policy analysis paper on LGBTQ discrimination and is using her research to advocate for social justice. She is now an MSW student at SFA.

2021 Conferences:

- Kasey R. Golden presented "The Effects of Environmental Disasters on the Quality of Life of People Living in Shelby County," Oliphant was the research supervisor, and Golden graduated with her MSW.
- MSW student Javannie Jacobs presented "Social, Economic and Environmental Justice Policy: Mass Incarceration of Black Men" and was supervised by Wilma Cordova.
- MSW graduate Makenzie Banks presented "Evaluation of Health Resource Centers in Rural East Texas Communities," supervised by Oliphant.
- Jasmine Dilworth, MSW graduate, presented "The Impact of Alcohol Addiction on Rural Families" and was supervised by Oliphant.
- As a finalist participant in the Undergraduate Research Conference, Nicole Hale presented "A Program Review of Trauma-informed Mindfulness: An Alternative Treatment Program for Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence" and was sponsored by Carrie Butler. Hale is now an MSW student.

All students focused on social justice, human rights and advocacy in their research studies and are interested in changing individuals, families, and organizations through their research.

GRADUATE SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS WORK WITH A NACOGDOCHES COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

In the MSW program, students are preparing to become leaders of the profession. One of the focus areas of social work is community practice to empower people and fight for social justice. The best way to learn about community practice is to integrate service learning projects and assignments with course work.

During Spring 2020, 12 students worked with instructor Lenola Wyatt to support a new community project in Nacogdoches. The 21/7 Community Coalition Group and Community Improvement Program comprise concerned citizens working to bring services and programs to residents on the southeast side of Nacogdoches.

Collaborating with the 21/7 Community Coalition Group provided opportunity for students to design and develop community programs by identifying needs, partnering with agencies, developing priorities and designing creative programs. The collaboration resulted in the design of youth development programs, considered an urgent priority.

By incorporating research, community practice models and frameworks for assessing communities, the students used their community practice knowledge to develop four youth development training programs. The class presented each training program to the community and the 21/7 project team. The research and programs were distributed to 21/7 and CIP. These organizations will be the facilitators of the youth development training programs and will introduce these programs to the community in the following months.

Nancy Niehaus, 21/7 project coordinator, said it was a tremendous learning opportunity for the students.

"The youth development programs were much needed in our community," she said. "Many organizations in Nacogdoches County will use this program for their youth."

Kasey Golden, an MSW student, said that students took advantage of technology, such as Google docs to create modules and accompanying articles.

"We also used communicative technology to interact with each other and Ms. Wyatt," she said. "I think the community leaders of 21/7 were very happy with what we presented and prepared for them."

From top to bottom and left to right are Stephanie Roselle, Shirley Dixon, Professor Lenola Wyatt, Jasmine Dilworth, Anointe Marshall, Delisa Smith, Kasey Golden, Denetria Mims, Leila Thompson and Delisa Smith, Candice Ivory, Gabrielle Polk and Jada McIntyre.

PRACTICE INFORMED RESEARCH AND RESEARCH INFORMED PRACTICE:

The Class of 2020 at Woodlands/Lone Star Represents the Next Generation of Strong Social Workers

As we near graduation amid the COVID-19 pandemic, students in the Social Work 530 course completed research projects through systematic reviews of current literature. Dr. Stephanie Washington, the research instructor, worked with 23 graduate students to complete research projects on social work issues. In-depth reviews, informed by their internships, life experiences and desires to create a just society for everyone, will shape social work practice in multiple settings. Some examples of research include:

Adriana Flores and Angelica Garza partnered to develop an analysis titled: A Systematic Review of the Academic Educational Services for Released Unaccompanied Minors with Language Barriers. Flores and Garza evaluated the literature on academic programs and services provided to Latino unaccompanied minors entering the educational system in the United States. The researchers used the practicum to weave together understandings of the role of culture and immigration trauma on adolescents migrating from Central America. They concluded that many rural schools in the U.S. are ill-equipped to provide the resources needed to help immigrant youth successfully transition, and without proper legislation, there

will continue to be learning gaps for this population creating a cycle of dropouts and continued poverty. These researchers recommended that public policy address this issue to provide services and programs that would lead to viable opportunities for advancement and success.

Candis Jackson used her research to examine advocacy work for an underserved population – LGBTQ+ individuals. Jackson explored the perspectives of healthcare providers and the impacts of training programs on their comfort level and willingness to care for this population. After a thoroughly examining the literature, Candis found that "...healthcare providers' perceived their education and training in LGBTQ+ healthcare was lacking and as a result, they felt less confident and comfortable when working with LGBTQ+ patients." Candis Jackson's research goes on to conclude, "...although healthcare providers do perceive their training as lacking in LGBTQ+ care, this can be improved with the implementation of culturally competent training programs," (Jackson, 2020, unpublished research).

These two abstracts are examples of the research that continued when classes resumed completely online.

ALUMNI NEWS

SPOTLIGHT ON RICKA MAMMAH MSW Alumni, 2012 Graduate

My name is Ricka Olga Mammah, and I am a proud Lumberjack with two degrees from SFA. In 2012, I completed a Master of Social Work degree, and in 2015 I completed a Master of Business Administration. I have taught online as an adjunct faculty member at the University of Texas in Arlington. I was accepted to complete my doctoral studies at UTA and joined the fall 2020 cohort.

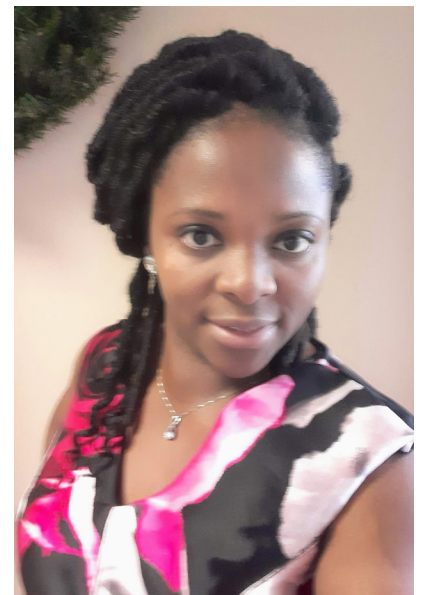
I am a licensed social worker and am interested in researching social issues in the following areas: mental health, violence against women, multicultural issues in social work, sustainable community development, and international social development and policies.

During the Spring 2020 semester, I completed an independent study research course with UTA faculty and worked on a systematic review assessing literature-supported indicators of culturally competent mental health services for survivors of domestic violence.

I am currently working on two projects: one with the director of the MSW program on assessing the effectiveness of graduate student leaders in the MSW program in response to COVID-19, and the second project titled "Best practices for brief interventions

for domestic violence by nurses and social workers in a health care setting."

I believe that change happens when people are given the guidance they need to draw on their own strength and realize their full potential. I am passionate about advocating for the rights of women and promoting culturally competent practices among service providers. Doctoral education will enhance my future career by equipping me with the advanced and specialized education needed to perform research and influence policy implementation and amendments for social justice.



SPOTLIGHT ON SABRINA TURNEY, LMSW

SFA MSW Alumni, Gradate 2019

I was born and raised in Lufkin. I graduated from Lufkin High school and received my Bachelor's in Social Work from Harding University in Searcy, Arkansas. I moved back home after undergrad to complete my MSW at SFA. In May 2019, within the span of a week, I graduated from SFA with my MSW, passed my LCSW Texas State Licensing exam and got married. We are currently living in Abilene while my husband, Jordan, is in graduate school at Abilene Christian University.

I am currently working as a Licensed Medical Social Worker at Hendrick Medical Center in Abilene; I have been working for over a year in the Case Management Department on the Telemetry/Cardiac floor and am responsible for approximately 21 patients on the floor. Each hospital floor is assigned a social worker and a RN case manager. The Case Management Department is responsible for identifying and arranging patients' needs, including providing resources, securing rehabilitation placements and medical equipment, and composing a safe discharge plan for each patient.

As a medical social worker, the physicians and nurses consult us to address any social needs the patient may have including homelessness, drug/alcohol abuse, mental health issues, domestic violence or child/adult abuse suspicion, medical insurance, bariatric consults, etc. Assisting in arrangements involves considerable communication with the patient and their family. Being a medical social worker largely includes interdisciplinary communication. As a social worker in the hospital, I work closely with nurses, physicians, pharmacists, and respiratory, physical, occupational and speech therapists to plan and arrange safe discharge plans for the patients.

Working in the hospital has been interesting and stressful amid all the adjustments to the COVID-19 pandemic. Working in the medical field, especially during the pandemic, has provided me an enlightened appreciation for the hard work medical professionals provide to patients in our hospitals.



One of the biggest issues I've seen so far as a medical social worker is the disproportional care and resources that unfunded (uninsured) patients receive compared to patients who have medical insurance. When unfunded patients come into the hospital and require additional services at discharge (for example, physical rehabilitation or an oxygen concentrator), the Case Management Department is at a severe disadvantage in arranging these needs. Some medical suppliers expect payment upfront, and rehabilitation is only available through charity-funded beds or if a home health agency is willing to provide charity visits. Usually, the uninsured patient leaves with little to none of the services needed to safely return home. I believe medical insurance should not be linked to jobs and that health care should be a human right available to all.

SPOTLIGHT ON RYAN HERNANDEZ, LMSW

SFA MSW Alumni, Graduate 2018

My name is Ryan Hernandez and I was an MSW graduate in 2018. After graduation, I received my LMSW license and began my social worker career at Memorial Hermann Hospital in Houston. While there, I gained the skills and tools to be a successful social worker in an urban city. Working at a major hospital, I encountered many diverse groups of patients. From cultural diversity to ethnic diversity, I learned how to work with all populations. With that experience, it made me realize that I wanted to work specifically with children.

Since 2019, I have worked as a social worker at Shriners Hospital for Children in Galveston. We specialize in working with children with burn injuries. I am the social worker for the Reconstructive Surgery Unit working with the children who return to have plastic reconstructive surgery. This includes plastic surgery to help children gain more physical functioning with their bodies and/or cosmetic surgery to reduce the burn scars on their body. My main duties include performing psychosocial

assessments with the patients, helping patients/families navigate the healthcare system, and providing supportive counseling with the patients/families.



At Shriners, 90% of our patients are international, which can be challenging because of language barriers, cultural/ethnic diversity and socioeconomic differences. However, those challenges have helped me become a better social worker and made positive relationships with my patients. I was selected to be in a Clinical Advancement Program, allowing me to become an advanced provider in burn care. In addition, I am completing my LCSW supervision, scheduled to be completed this year.

I enjoy working with children and hope to continue to grow my social worker career in the children's healthcare field. It brings me joy seeing my patients not letting their burn injuries hinder their growth. These patients have gone through so much, and I hope to provide a little positivity in their life!

SPOTLIGHT ON DANESHIA PENDLETON, MSW

SFA MSW Alumni, Graduate 2019

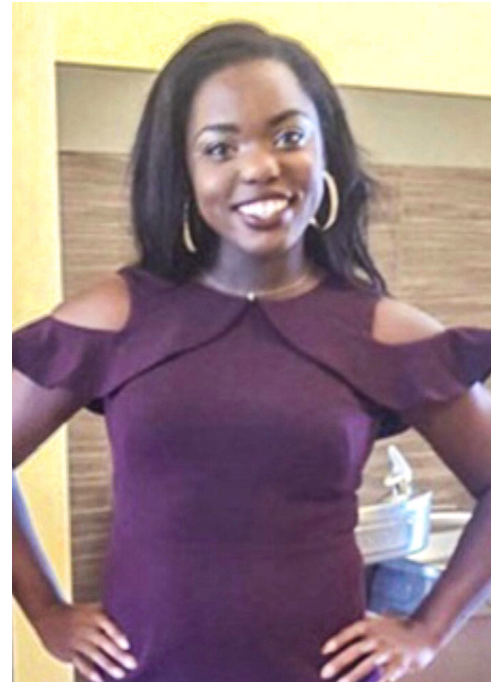
I reside in Houston, Texas, and since graduation of May 2019, I have had the opportunity to experience two supervisory job positions. In these supervisor roles, I have been given the opportunity to grow as an individual and professional. I am currently employed at The Houston Area Women's Center. HAWC provides services to survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault, works to end domestic and sexual violence, and supports all in building safe and healthy lives through advocacy, counseling, education, shelter and support services.

I am the hospital and crisis intervention coordinator; I supervise a team of 10 advocates who respond to hospital calls from Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners. We provide crisis intervention and emotional support to survivors of domestic and sexual violence through our 24-hour Hospital Accompaniment Program. In addition, I provide leadership and training to my team and coordinate on-going client cases and hospital accompaniment coverage.

I never thought that working with survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault is something I would have a huge passion for, but I love what I do every day - ensuring clients are safe and their needs are met.

I volunteer at two agencies in Houston. I am a grief/loss group facilitator at Bo's Place, where I lead grief support groups for children, families and adults. Additionally, I volunteer at Texas Children's Hospital. My long-term goal is to become a medical social worker within the hospital and/or nursing home setting.

To all the current and future students in the program, believe in yourself and know that you can - DO IT. The possibilities are endless, and you are capable of obtaining all the desires you choose. On my short journey since graduation, I have heard more NOs than YESes - but it's a part of the journey and will only set me up for success.



SPOTLIGHT ON REGINA GUINN-CRAIN

BSW & MSW Alumni, Graduate 1988 & 2008

Regina Guinn-Crain is a service coordinator case manager with Texas Children's Health Plan, a Medicaid STAR Kids managed care plan. This plan helps children and young adults under age 21 with special health care needs. As a service coordinator, Regina's role is to provide a holistic evaluation of individual dynamics, needs and preferences to identify any physical, behavioral, functional and psychosocial needs.

Regina is a licensed professional social worker with a BSW and MSW from SFA. She also has a master's degree in psychology from Letourneau University, and incorporating knowledge from these two professions together enhances Regina's skills.

Before joining Texas Children's Health Plan in 2014, Regina worked for a diverse range of organizations, including Cigna Healthspring, Texas Department of State Health Services, SFA, Rehab Care Group and Lufkin Memorial Hospital. Regina worked as a contractor for various home health agencies for 10 years.



Regina specializes in case management, crisis intervention, advocacy, active listening, and critical thinking and has successfully served a range of clients, including those with mental, emotional and physical needs. Other areas of expertise include networking with community agencies, serving on various agency boards, social work field liaison, training staff members on special programs, conducting staff meetings and supervision.

Regina is passionate about Texas Parent to Parent and its goal to provide services that help parents learn how to deal with the unique issues and challenges they face on a daily basis in caring for their special-needs child.

Regina is a believer that change materializes when people are given the support they need to draw on their own strengths and realize their ability to live rewarding, happy lives. Regina

supports disability rights for children. Children with disabilities are just like any other child; they all have the same needs, hopes, and dreams and should be treated equally.

SPOTLIGHT ON SEAN HORSLEY, LCSW BSW & MSW Alumni 1996 & 1998



Sean Horsley's social work career began in 1991 when he was working as a social work assistant at an intermediate care facility for individuals with intellectual disabilities. He began a social work program at Weber State University in Ogden, Utah, and in 1993 moved to Lufkin. He enrolled at SFA and completed his BSW in 1996 and his MSW in 1998, while working for the University of Texas Medical Branch in

Nacogdoches as a case manager for high-risk pregnancies and low-income children.

Horsley moved to Waco in January 2000, where he worked for Hillcrest Community Hospice as lead social worker. In 2003, he moved

back to Utah to work for Intermountain Health Care in Layton, where he is lead licensed clinical social worker in the Chronic Pain Management Program. He has worked in this department for the past four years. During his time with Intermountain Health Care, he has worked in hospice, hospital case management, Emergency Department trauma and crisis, and behavioral health therapy. Horsley is also coordinator for a Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute study with Stanford University.

In his private practice, Horsley offers counseling to rural communities in northern Utah and to the domestic violence shelter in Box Elder County. He helped develop the Northern Utah Suicide Prevention Coalition in 2008 and has been an active member of the Medical Reserve Corps since 2008.

Horsley said the passion of the licensed clinical social workers who supervised him as a social work assistant inspired his career. He emphasized that during the past 30 years, his knowledge and expertise in the field have grown immensely, but his overall goal has been the same – to provide quality care and compassion to everyone he serves daily.

SPOTLIGHT ON HOLLY RANDALL BSW and MSW Alumna, 1999 & 2000

Holly Randall received her BSW and MSW at SFA and completed her clinical supervision with Bruce McNellie, Ph.D., LCSW. Her journey since graduation started in hospice care that evolved to oncology social work. As life detoured during 20 years, she worked in various settings, including home health and nursing homes, prisons and community health settings, caring for those with mental illness. In 2020, she completed training and was approved as a board-approved supervisor for Texas, and she will complete her Sports Social Work certification in fall 2021.

The change into sports social work was founded while she dealt with life challenges, including losing her mother, a child going to college, and a pandemic. Through this time of self-reflection, she confidently discovered that she wanted to combine her knowledge and skills as a clinical social worker with sports. She located the Alliance of Social Workers in Sports and learned of its certification program that trained social workers to competently serve athletes.

Randall is currently working at the Burke Center in Nacogdoches and completing an internship with SFA's Department of Athletics

to finish her Sports Social Work certification. In addition to her "day" job, she is working on the software development of an application that will conduct mental health screenings and referrals for high school, collegiate and professional athletes.

Randall said she believes social workers tend to forget, through day-to-day routine, that feeling of being passionate and their ability to problem solve in achieving their own goals and dreams.

"Furthermore, for those that may have lost their spirit or forgotten their passion – find it," she said. "Embrace it and enjoy the new journey."



SPOTLIGHT BY CATHY PAVLIC MSW Alumni, 2011 Graduate

I have defined my life's journey as a social worker by chapters.

My most recent chapter was serving as the district-wide social worker of Diboll Independent School District. This position required my skill set from all the previous positions I have held in the field of child welfare. After working for the state, serving as a director of both an adoption

center and an advocacy center for sexually and physically abused children, I had the tools to address foster care, adoption and homelessness.

Working in the field of mental health prior to school social work gave me additional skills to address the needs of special-education students, providing therapy and linking them to needed resources.

Being a “seasoned” social worker, I have seen so much progress addressing our child population. Restorative practices has been a recent addition to schools throughout Texas, embracing a holistic approach to meeting the emotional needs of students. With the increasing suicides among our adolescent population, I recently obtained my clinical social work license.

Children are my passion. With the COVID-19 pandemic, quarantine closures, the economic anxiety, and the recent

massive civil unrest rising everywhere, I hope to walk children and their families through this tumultuous time. I recently revisited the Code of Ethics preparing for the clinical exam, and the mission of social work rang truer for me than ever before. Service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, integrity and competence are what social workers embody, and our world needs us more than ever before!

SPOTLIGHT ON SALVADOR LUNA

MSW Alumni, 2011 Graduate

Salvador Luna began his education at Angelina College and then transferred to SFA, where he received a bachelor’s degree in public administration in 2003. He had the privilege of receiving a bilingual scholarship from the Hogg Foundation in 2008, allowing him to pursue his MSW with SFA. Since graduating with his MSW in 2011, he continued his employment with Angelina County Juvenile Services providing intensive mental health services to juvenile offenders. In 2015 he worked with Diboll ISD to provide behavior modification and counseling services to elementary students in special education and in 2016, he started a part-time private practice. The private practice started to grow, and he made the difficult decision to go full-time with his private practice, Luna Counseling Services, in Lufkin in 2019.

The practice has specializations in behavior modification and trauma-focused cognitive behavior therapy in children. He participates with Texas Systems of Care with Burke. His office provides advanced clinical skills to assess, diagnose, and treat

mental, emotional, and behavioral disorders and conditions in adults, children, adolescents and couples. These services are also available in Spanish. His office contracts with Angelina County Juvenile Services and Pineywoods Community Academy.

Salvador said he was inspired to provide social work by growing up as a first-generation Mexican American helping his parents navigate a new country. “It was inspiring witnessing my parents adapt to new cultural norms while celebrating their own,” he said. “This experience is what drives me to provide mental health services in a linguistically appropriate way to the local Spanish-speaking community.”



SFA MSW STUDENT NAMED NASW’S STUDENT OF THE YEAR

Mary Williams-Broom was recognized for her leadership and commitment to social justice with the fall 2020 Deep East Texas Social Work Student of the Year Award from the National Association of Social Workers. This award honors a member of NASW/Texas who has made an outstanding contribution to the goals and mission of the profession and is enrolled at least part-time in a graduate or undergraduate program

Williams-Broom graduated in 2019 and was working at Nacogdoches Memorial Hospital during the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic. “My work at Nacogdoches Memorial Hospital in social services is extremely rewarding and I am filled with gratitude to be of service to the patients that enter these doors, especially at this time during the coronavirus pandemic,” she said. “The issue that is most important to me is ensuring the patients on my caseload receive all the resources available to help in their recovery from this deadly virus. This also includes the health of all the staff, because we are all on the frontline – from plant operations, environmental services, techs, chaplain, and all medical staff.”

Williams-Broom said the shortage of personal protective



equipment was a threat to those on the frontline. She located a medical supply company in Los Angeles and ordered KN95 masks for her unit. “Clinical Outcome and Social Services are in direct contact with patients,” she said. “Our unit is vital to move patients to the next level of care.”

With responsibility for dealing with the intensive care and intermediate care units, Williams Broom did not feel comfortable also entering the nursery, labor and delivery, and obstetric units. “I will not risk carrying this virus to these units,” she said. “If I have any symptoms similar to the virus, I will report it, and see my doctor before entering the hospital. This is part of a social worker’s responsibility to ‘do no harm,’ I believe it is important for me to adhere to this...It is also important for me to advocate for others to protect those who are vulnerable.”

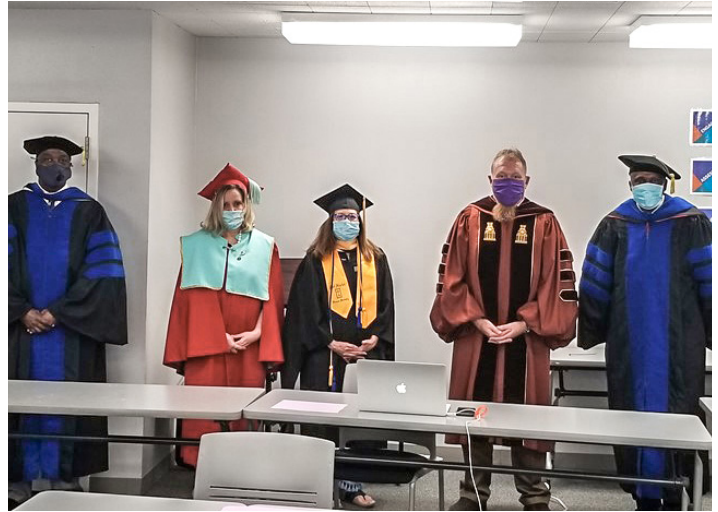
Williams-Broom is a Credentialed Alcohol and Substance Abuse Counselor for New York State, and a Texas Alcohol and Drug Counselor, and she holds an International Certification & Reciprocity Consortium credential, which allows her to practice in several countries. She is currently working on getting her social work license.

FACULTY NEWS

COVID-19 PANDEMIC TRANSFORMS THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

The School of Social Work, along with the rest of the university, found itself transitioning in March 2020 from a face-to-face teaching environment to a fully online format. These changes, while necessary, were challenging for faculty, staff and students; at the same time, the changes promoted opportunity and a chance to overcome and endure – much like our students are taught when advocating for their clients.

To assist our students with the transition, the leadership team at the School of Social Work held townhall meetings. These meetings were to assist students with advising, course offerings for the summer and fall, field education, licensing, self-care, and dealing with emotional stress, but most importantly, to assure students that they still had the support of the staff and faculty. As one of our MSW graduates, Kasey Golden, J.D., said, “The amount of confusion and discord resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic has been overwhelming, especially for students in the middle of the semester.” These meetings helped to address concerns and reassure the students.



Pictured from left are Drs. Freddie L. Avant and Emmerentie Oliphant, Diane Sizemore, and Drs. H. Steven Cooper and Sam Copeland.



Our students had unique experiences making the transitions from face-to-face field experience to virtual. As described by Ivan Ramirez, MSW graduate:

Although many of my field assignments had no real change, the way we managed the human aspect of our business changed; however, work and service had to continue. I conducted presentations via Zoom and crisis intervention through a digitized agency platform, but the physical face-to-face contact with anyone was eliminated. The ecological change negatively affected my mood and perception of life. Through the motivation I had left, along with my peers and academic leadership inspiring me to keep pushing, I marched forward. I sought this career in social work because I enjoy helping people, but without the face-to-face, it feels different. I do not know the long-term effects of the pandemic, but I do expect innovation and evolution in our society. I am anxious to see how we as a society accomplish this new chapter in all our lives, and I will strive to be a part of positive change for future generations beyond this pandemic.

Another example of our students' abilities to adapt to the changing environment that the pandemic created was Lizette Rojas, as related by Professor Wilma Córdova:

Lizette, a student from Fort Worth, had been the first practicum student placed at Nacogdoches HOPE, a local food pantry that saw an 88% increase within a month following the closure of businesses and stay-at-home orders. Lizette continued to work from her home to deliver services and perform duties to ensure that the people of Nacogdoches county did not go hungry. She spent most of the time on the phone calling clients to ensure they had food to tide them over. She called local grocers to organize the pick-up of cardboard boxes, which are packed with dry foods for distribution.

As the changes continued due to the pandemic as well as the need for social distancing, the decision was made to hold the convocation ceremony for Spring 2020 virtually. The convocation included a pinning ceremony, which is always a highlight for students who are graduating. By receiving the pin, students agree that they will adhere to the code of ethics of the social work profession. Graduates promise to apply social work values, principles and techniques in serving others. In total, 103 social workers graduated: 50 receiving BSW and 53 receiving MSW; most participated in the event. The convocation was livestreamed on Facebook, where family and friends were able to “attend” the ceremony.

The pandemic continued and classes remained virtual, livestream and online through Spring 2021. During the course of the pandemic, it required change, adaptation and perseverance by staff, faculty and students. The School of Social Work returned to face-to-face courses for fall 2021, and enjoyed seeing students and returning to the feeling of normalcy that so many of us missed during the preceding 15 months.



TEACHING THE IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL WORK VALUES AT HOME

by Barbara Rivas, Adjunct faculty

Addressing social skills and helping others is a primary goal of all social workers. The overwhelming need of vulnerable communities amid the COVID-19 pandemic requires social workers to be creative, while maintaining social distancing, to answer the call to their communities. Quarantined in their home, Barbara Rivas, an adjunct faculty member who teaches at the SFA Woodlands campus, took the opportunity to teach her teenage daughter, Alicia, the importance of giving back. She shared this with her students in class.

As active members of the National Charity League-Champions Chapter, a national non-profit organization designed to encourage community service and volunteering opportunities for mothers and their daughters, they made fleece blankets to donate to Texas Children's Hospital. They also put together snack bags for Kids' Meals, a local non-profit organization that provides free meals to preschool children under age 6.

Teaching the importance of service to our younger generation can plant a seed that nurtures a foundation for beginning social workers and prepares them to answer the call to action in any disaster.



NAVIGATING FIELD INTERNSHIP AMID GLOBAL PANDEMIC

by Stephanie Washington, Assistant Professor

This year's National Association of Social Work theme, Social Workers: Generations Strong, exemplifies the graduating class of 2020 perfectly. As the next generation of social workers entering the field, they faced the "normal" rigors of internships with the added challenge of a global pandemic, strengthening their resolve to be the next generation in an evolving profession.

Master of Social Work student Tasha Crockett said preparing for internship was one of the greatest challenges to face in graduate school.

"Navigating school, life, children and routines that would change dramatically was exciting and daunting," she said. "Going through the process of applications, interviews, and résumé writing prepared me for internship as well as future job searching."

In spite of the pandemic, entering an internship in Spring 2020 felt completely right to Crockett.

"Although schedule shifts had to be made to keep a balanced life, it was all workable as well as worth the change in routine," she said. "Working closely with the field supervisor, professors and liaisons helped me to enter the field placement prepared and ready to do social work."

COVID-19 impacted all aspects of students' lives and left them with experiences that they will use as they move into the next phase of their careers.

"When COVID-19 took over the entire world, causing the economy to shut down, it also caused many students doing internships to be removed from physical agency locations," Crockett said. "Unfortunately, I was one of those students."

As an intern in Aldine Independent School District unable to

physically return to campus, Crockett found herself at home creating flyers, researching resources, zooming, attending webinars and attending conference calls as part of her field work.

"This new experience helped me advocate, prepare resources, and develop information that helped the Aldine students and families to cope," she said. "Going through these challenging times has prepared me for any crisis that I should face in the future as social worker."

THE FIELD EXPERIENCE STRENGTHENS OUR SOCIETAL SAFETY NET

by Linda Harris, LMSW, Field Director Clinical Instructor School of Social Work

The curriculum of the social work program provides students a unique experience in a professional setting prior to graduation. This experience is called "field education" and is where students are immersed in internships and (depending on their specific level) are introduced to professional social work behaviors or have an opportunity to demonstrate social work behaviors as they are supervised by social work practitioners. There is great value as students are able to integrate classroom content with opportunities afforded them in the agency setting to be involved in supervised practice.

The Council on Social Work Education describes field education as "signature pedagogy." Signature pedagogy represents the central form of instruction and learning in which a profession socializes its students to perform the role of practitioner. Students, in any given semester in the undergraduate social work program, are engaged in a junior field placement or senior field practicum, while students in the graduate program are engaged in a generalist (first-year field placement) or a specialized practice field placement (second year).

Each field experience is designed to either introduce students to professional social work behaviors, reinforce professional

social work behaviors or demonstrate competency of professional social work behaviors as social workers (field instructors) supervise the students in more than 200-community agencies in Texas and Louisiana.

Under the supervision of social workers, students learn to practice with a diverse client population and are instrumental in finding solutions to complex social problems. The field instructors volunteer their time to train future social work practitioners. This is a "win-win" situation as both parties are enriched by this field experience. Social workers have been referred to as the "safety net" of our society, and this net is strengthened each semester by the field experience.



CÓRDOVA NAMED TEXAS SOCIAL WORKER OF THE YEAR

Wilma Córdova was named Texas' Social Worker of the Year by the National Association for Social Workers in fall 2019.

A professor in SFA's School of Social Work, Córdova teaches in the graduate program and chairs the MSW program's admissions committee. She was nominated for the award by Dr. Sharon Templeman of the NASW Deep East Texas Branch.

Córdova is a board member of the Nacogdoches Helping Other People Eat (HOPE), which provides supplemental food to residents in need, and she has worked closely with the non-profit to bring services to Nacogdoches County.

Córdova has conducted research in the area of displaced families following disaster, immigration issues, working with the elderly and HIV/AIDS in the rural context. She holds a Bachelor of Social Work from New Mexico State University and a Master of Social Work from Michigan State University. She is a CASA board member, an American Red Cross mental health provider and has been involved with recovery efforts following natural disasters.

Córdova's practice experience includes working as a licensed clinical social worker, training child protection workers to work with indigenous children and families, and supervising social work students. Her private practice focused on services to Navajo children in New Mexico, and she served as the president of NASW in New Mexico.



ADVISORY BOARD

The School of Social Work Advisory Council Committee includes, front row, from left, Dr. Kwame Badu Antwi-Boasiako, Robert Shankle of Lufkin, Buddy Zeagler of Lufkin, Royce Garret, Demetrius Harrell, Megan Langford-Blue and Angela Kirk. Pictured on the back row, from left, are Dr. Freddie Avant, Barbara Davis and James Montoya.

FACULTY AND STAFF

Leadership

Dr. Freddie L. Avant, Associate Dean and Director of the School of Social Work , Interim Dean, Research and Studies and Graduate Studies

Dr. Emmerentie Oliphant, Interim Chair School of Social Work, and Buddy Zeagler Endowed Professor

Dr. H.Stephen Cooper, Interim BSW Coordinator

Wilma Córdova, Interim MSW Coordinator

Linda Harris, Field Director

Diane Sizemore, Child Welfare Professional Development Project Coordinator

Dr. Carrie Butler, Liaison Lone Star College, Woodlands

Christy Collins, Liaison Tyler Junior College, Tyler

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Judy Montgomery

Mary Newton

Professor Emeritus

Dr. Kathleen Belanger

Assistant Professors

Kristin Bailey-Wallace

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Dr. José Carbajal

Christy Collins

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Dr. Ronald Rush

Dr. Stephanie Washington

Adjunct Faculty

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Cheronda Brown

Nettrel Brown

Aleida Chavez

Kim Culbreath

Regan Davis

LaKeshia Harris

Almarie Henderson

Eugene Hickman

Sha'Terra Johnson-Fairley

Megan Langford

Dr. Juan Lebron

Dr. Bruce McNellie

Barbara Rivas

Charlotte Sanders

Teresa Tarver

Lenola Wyatt

Regina Crain

Clinical Instructors

Shanta Scott

Visiting Instructors

Alicia Moss

MISSION OF THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

The mission of the School of Social Work at Stephen F. Austin State University is to prepare competent and effective professional social workers committed to generalist and advanced generalist practice and able to respond to the needs of rural communities and to the challenges faced by people with rural lifestyles. The school is committed to providing leadership for the region, particularly in

identifying and addressing community needs and issues, including those related to the alleviation of poverty and oppression within the context of rurality, cultural diversity and social and economic justice. In support of its educational endeavors, the school is dedicated to excellence in teaching, research, scholarship, lifelong learning and community service.



STEPHEN F. AUSTIN
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School of Social Work

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