

MFP

COUNCIL ON SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION
MINORITY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

Doctoral and Master's Fellows 2021–2022

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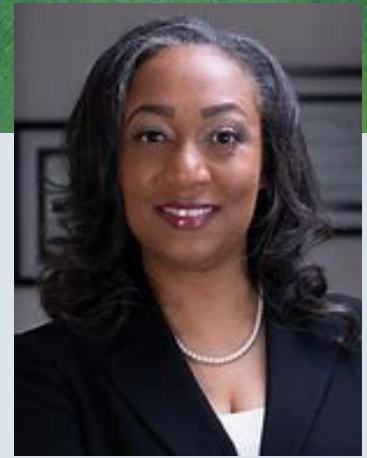
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Message From the Director



The Council on Social Work Education's (CSWE's) Minority Fellowship Program (MFP) is proud to continue providing support for master's and doctoral fellows. With funding from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, CSWE has been able to host training, create networking opportunities, provide financial assistance, and ensure professional mentoring and licensure preparation for our 2021-2022 MFP fellows. These activities have enhanced the fellows' preparedness to serve minoritized people in a variety of social work fields of practice as well as in the academy.

We are immensely proud of our fellows and want to introduce them to you via this year's combined MSW and doctoral CSWE MFP View Book, which highlights their experiences, expertise, career ambitions, and areas of practice or research specialization. Despite being in the midst of a global pandemic, our fellows have been tremendously successful, and many are currently on the job market.

It is our hope that you will view the individual bios of our fellows in the context of employment opportunities. Furthermore, I encourage you to consider how these practitioners and scholars with specialized training to address mental health and substance use issues in racial/ethnic minoritized communities could enhance your agency, organization, university, and community.

For employment opportunities, please contact fellows directly. To learn more about the CSWE MFP program, please contact me at kbradestennis@cswe.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kesslyn Brade Stennis".

Kesslyn Brade Stennis, PhD, MSW, MDiv



Vashti Adams, MSW

University of Maryland

Research interests

- Diet culture
- Disordered eating prevention in Black communities
- Health at Every Size aligned health promotion intervention
- Weight bias among mental health providers

Vashti Adams is a second-year doctoral student at the University of Maryland Baltimore School of Social Work. She received her MSW from Columbia University School of Social Work and her undergraduate degree in social welfare from the University of California, Berkeley. Through her research, Vashti seeks to better understand the harms associated with weight-centered conceptualizations of health and promote culturally informed weight-inclusive alternatives. In addition, Vashti is also involved in HIV prevention research and is currently working with her faculty mentor to develop a mobile health intervention to encourage sexual health promotion practices among Black emerging adults in Baltimore, Maryland.



Xochilt Alamillo (she/her/ella), LCSW

University of Denver

Research Interests

- Mental health, substance use, and suicide disparities among Latinx/e youths
- Latinx/e ethnic/cultural identity influence on mental health
- Community based participatory research

Xochilt's research aims to better understand the high rates of suicide among Latina youths. Her qualitative dissertation focuses on the lived experience of Chicanas who attempted suicide as teenagers. Using Gloria Anzaldúa's feminist borderlands theory, the study will explore the role of extreme cultural values on caregiver-adolescent conflict and the mental health of Latina youths.

Xochilt has served as a therapist to the Latinx community for 7 years and in other positions in the community before that. She works mainly with women and adolescents experiencing depression, anxiety, and family conflict. She has also worked in partnership with nonprofits and community organizations to provide mental health education to the organizations and the communities they serve. As an instructor, Xochilt has taught MSW students foundational and concentration courses that include clinical social work skills, leadership and supervision skills, and intersections of mental health, substance use and trauma.



Gabbie Aquino-Adriatico, MSW

University of Houston

Research Interests

- Mental health among minoritized communities
- Multilevel factors shaping mental health
- Well-being and healing among Filipina/o/x communities
- Gender-based violence
- Inclusive social work education

Gabbie Aquino-Adriatico, MSW, is currently a doctoral student at University of Houston's Graduate College of Social Work. Gabbie's dissertation topic focuses on the impact of COVID-19 on the mental health of Filipina mothers. Past research projects include domestic and international research on human trafficking, gender-based violence, minoritized populations, and multilevel factors that affect communities living with HIV/AIDS. Her research agenda is inspired by her family, her community, and her direct practice experiences in Los Angeles, Thailand, and the Philippines.

As a first-generation college and graduate student, Gabbie believes that she would not be here if it were not for her community's love and support. She seeks to give back to her community and meets with emerging social workers, supporting them in their graduate studies and endeavors. Gabbie also serves as a teaching assistant for several MSW courses, where she provides guest lectures on public impact scholarship, data dissemination, ethics, and research methodologies.



Autumn Asher BlackDeer

Washington University in St. Louis

Autumn Asher BlackDeer is a queer decolonial scholar from the Cheyenne and Arapaho Nation whose work seeks to illuminate the impact of structural violence on American Indian and Alaska Native communities. BlackDeer centers Indigenous voices throughout her research by using quantitative approaches and big data as tools for responsible storytelling. Her dissertation investigates manifestations of structural violence through Alaska Native mothers' experiences of interpersonal violence, including family, partner, and community levels of violence, in addition to mental health, substance use, and maternal-child health outcomes. Autumn is a strong proponent for American Indian higher education and survivors of sexual violence and is committed to decolonizing the academy and achieving equity across Indian Country.



Mohamad Adam Brooks LICSW

Columbia University

Research Interests

- Mental health
- Immigrants and forcibly displaced persons
- Intervention and implementation science
- Well-being of health-care professionals

Adam’s research focuses on reducing mental health disparities among marginalized and vulnerable populations. Prior to his doctoral studies, Adam worked in clinical and managerial roles in the behavioral health field and has been a licensed social worker for over a decade. As a patient-oriented clinician-researcher, Adam aims to adapt and implement efficacious and effective mental health interventions among vulnerable populations.

At Columbia, Adam’s current research has centered on the mental health of forcibly displaced populations. He has supported multiple interdisciplinary and cross-national research projects in Jordan and in Turkey. His current dissertation work examines mental health use among asylum-seekers in Malaysia, suicidal behaviors among Syrian refugees in Jordan, and vicarious posttraumatic growth among service providers working with Syrian refugees.



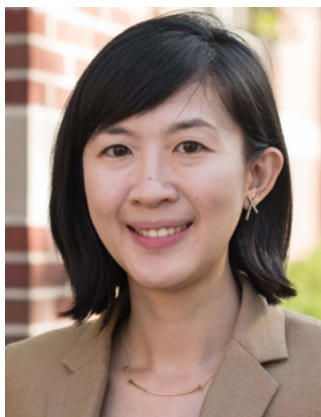
Nidia Hernández, LCSW, MSW, MPA

Arizona State University

Research Interests

- Culturally affirming and linguistically inclusive mental health and wellness interventions for Latinx communities
- Holistic interventions for substance use
- Culturally attuned birth-to-five developmental interventions and assessments
- Community organization
- Immigration policy

Nidia is a Chicana first-generation doctoral student at ASU. She has more than 20 years of experience serving historically marginalized communities. She has more than 10 years post-MSW experience working as a bilingual clinical social worker in community-based mental health nonprofit, public health, public school, home-based, and inpatient settings. She has trained and received certification in various evidence-based treatment modalities to be able to adapt culturally and meet the needs of diverse populations. Additionally, she is a field liaison and adjunct instructor for direct clinical practice and macro MSW graduate courses.



Wan-Jung Wendy Hsieh, MSW, LICSW

University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Research Interests

- Minority mental health and mental health disparity
- Posttraumatic growth
- Intervention and implementation of mental health treatment
- Culturally based strategies for healing and resistance
- Social work education

Wan-Jung Wendy Hsieh is a licensed clinical social worker with more than 7 years of community-based mental health experience. She is a fourth-year doctoral student at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. She received her MSW from Washington University in St. Louis. Wendy’s research has focused on resilience and posttraumatic growth (PTG) among racial minority women, with the goal of developing culturally driven and sustainable mental health interventions. Wendy is interested in client-centered community-based research that influences mental health policies and clinical practices with trauma-affected populations to promote well-being and build stronger families and more cohesive communities that can withstand the impact of trauma and violence. Across research projects, Wendy has set out to highlight the issue of racial/ethnic disparities in mental health. Her dissertation proposal aims to investigate both the PTG and posttraumatic stress disorder experiences among female sexual assault survivors with diverse backgrounds and understand how institutional betrayal experiences affect their trauma recoveries post assault.



Lester J. Kern, MSW

University of Chicago

Research Interests

- Mental health care policy
- Law enforcement and policing
- Alternatives to arrest and incarceration
- Organizational relationships
- Crisis intervention
- Gun culture

Lester J. Kern is a doctoral candidate at the University of Chicago Crown Family School of Social Work, Policy, and Practice. Lester’s research interests include mental health-care policy, alternatives to arrest and incarceration, and the organizational dynamics undergirding crisis intervention programs. Lester’s dissertation, “Between Two Worlds: Crisis Intervention in Milwaukee,” uses a 24-hour psychiatric emergency center and a faith-based mental health advocacy group to examine psychiatric crisis intervention efforts in Milwaukee. Using participant observation and in-depth interviews, Lester’s dissertation focuses on the impacts of organizational relationships, punitive logics, and place on the experiences of crisis intervention stakeholders.

Across research projects, Lester has set out to highlight the human story central to social problems, illustrating how diverse people in different domains interact with each other and

make sense of their experiences. Lester has provided research supports for numerous research projects, including qualitative and quantitative evaluations of county-level jail diversion programs, violence prevention programs, and workforce development programs, and he has worked with several research entities, including the Northwestern University Network and Neighborhood Initiative, the University of Chicago Urban Labs, the Wayne State University Center for Behavioral Health and Justice, and the Michigan Mental Health Diversion Council.

As an educator, Lester is interested in teaching courses that focus on social welfare policies and programs, research methods, social work practice in communities and organizations, and decarceration. Lester has taught Social Intervention: Policies and Programs I (CROWN 300), a graduate course that provides an overview of the contemporary social welfare policies affecting poor and lower-income people in the United States, while also examining their historical and philosophical foundations. This foundational course focuses on the core functions of the welfare state and the use of government interventions as a response to social welfare issues in the United States. Lester has also served as a teaching assistant for Social Intervention: Research and Evaluation (CROWN 302) and Global Development and Social Welfare (CROWN 629).



Jessica C. Kim, LCSW, CCTP

University of Pennsylvania

Research Interests

- Asian American youths and families
- Trauma epistemology
- Racial socialization
- Culturally reflexive mental health practice

Jessica is a licensed clinical social worker and certified clinical trauma professional with more than 15 years of practice experience in agency, governmental, and private practice settings working with children, adults, and families. Her dissertation proposal aims to expand the epistemology of trauma as it is differentiated in bicultural populations. To explore how Korean Americans make sense of trauma in the context of mental health counseling, her research will center the perspectives of Korean American mental health providers to inform the development of culturally conscious trauma-informed care. She hopes to continue her work toward bridging culturally reflexive mental health practice that departs from dominant discourse and the perpetuation of Eurocentric models of care.

Jessica taught qualitative research methods at the University of Pennsylvania in summer 2021 and has participated in the Center for Teaching and Learning certificate program, which she will complete in fall 2022. She looks forward to teaching clinical coursework in social work practice and mental health that draws from her wealth of experience as a practitioner.

Jessica is a community organizer and activist for racial justice for the AAPI community and serves on the Board of Make Us Visible NJ, which spearheaded the recent legislation in January 2022 making New Jersey the second state in the country to mandate the inclusion of AAPI curricula in K-12 education. She is a nationally sought after speaker on racialized trauma, and her powerful essay can be read [here](#).



Carol Ann Lee, MSW, LSW

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Research Interests

- Health inequity
- Social determinants of health
- Intervention implementation
- Community-based participatory research (CBPR)
- Substance use disorders (SUD)
- Oppression
- Young adults

Carol is a sixth-year doctoral candidate at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign in School of Social Work and a licensed social worker in Illinois with more than 2 years of clinical practice experience. She is currently associated with the Newark Community Collaborative Board as a research staff member managing data for a federally funded Rapid Acceleration of Diagnostics project (R01MD010629) using the CBPR approach to examine the application of evidence-based interventions to address COVID-19 testing among marginalized populations. Her dissertation research examines the acceptability and usability of a culturally tailored evidence-based SUD intervention for justice system-engaged young African American adults. Her other areas of current research include examination of COVID-19 related disruptions in the HIV continuum of care in Michigan, investigation of critical dialogue as a mechanism of change in oppressive thinking and behaviors, and a study exploring barriers for marginalized young adults recovering from SUD during COVID-19 in New Jersey. It is her plan to develop an additional line of research focusing on digital mental health and technology-based interventions using social media and technology to prevent and reduce SUD among marginalized young adults.



Em Loerzel, MSW

University of Washington

Em Loerzel is a White Earth *anishinaabekwe* who received her BA in sociology from Elmhurst College and her MSW from Aurora University. Prior to receiving her MSW, she worked as a case manager in the fields of chronic mental health management, homelessness, and domestic violence. She moved her focus to work within the Chicago American Indian community as a community organizer and eventual program director for a Department of Justice pilot grant (Project Beacon) oriented toward building up direct services and outreach for urban Native American survivors of human trafficking. As a fourth-year social welfare PhD candidate at the University of Washington, her work and research focus on intimate partner/sexual violence in the Native community and sex trafficking of Native women. She has been a research assistant with the ourCircle Project at Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing, which aimed to reduce intimate partner violence via a web-based application that is culturally tailored toward Native American women. Currently, she is a tribal research assistant on the PAIRS study at Arizona State University and Johns Hopkins University, which studies risk factors of people who have been killed by their intimate partner in select states.



Cynthia Mackey, MSW

Arizona State University

Research Interests

- Mental Health disparities/social determinants of mental health among racially underserved communities
- Community-based research, qualitative research, qualitative dominant mixed methods research
- Advocacy/mentorship for students of racially underserved communities
- Race and reentry

Cynthia Mackey is a first-generation social work doctoral student at Arizona State University (ASU). Ms. Mackey’s personal and professional experience led to her dissertation work, focusing on improving access to culturally appropriate mental health services for racially underserved communities. Specifically, Cynthia’s dissertation will use a qualitative dominant crossover mixed methods research design to understand mental well-being and preferred mental health treatment modalities among Black women post incarceration in Arizona. Her work aims to elevate the strengths and lived experiences of Black women to inform future mental health/reentry programming and policy. In addition to her dissertation, Cynthia engages in antiracist/anti-Blackness initiatives aimed at reducing barriers to academic success for future scholars from racially and ethnically underserved communities within her institution. Cynthia strongly believes researchers need to build bridges with community. As such, she maintains strong connections with community by serving on various local coalitions and committees within and outside of ASU.

As a mixed-race woman of color, of Black and East Indian Canadian heritage, Ms. Mackey has always had a desire to contribute to improving the circumstances of marginalized populations with a focus on communities of color. Prior to her dissertation, Ms. Mackey worked as a research analyst and program manager at ASU’S Southwest Interdisciplinary Research Center. During her time in these roles, Ms. Mackey focused on building trusting relationships with community partners and stakeholders and, while using community-based participatory research approaches, advocated on behalf of marginalized communities to address structural inequities that contribute to health disparities. Ms. Mackey has presented at conferences and written manuscripts highlighting the importance of including community in research initiatives to reduce perpetuating harms in our profession and make research more accessible to marginalized communities of color. She intentionally embeds herself in community work because that is where she draws strength. Ms. Mackey also recognizes the importance of active community engagement to maintain relationships and ensure research is relevant.



Laurenia Mangum

University of Pittsburgh

Laurenia Mangum is a fourth-year doctoral candidate in the School of Social Work at the University of Pittsburgh and is also earning her master of public health in the Department of Behavioral and Community Health Sciences in the School of Public Health.

Laurenia’s current research focuses on understanding the interplay of structural and social determinants of health on HIV health inequities among Black women and identifying pathways for health equity integration in established biomedical HIV prevention and treatment interventions (e.g., preexposure prophylaxis use among young Black women and antiretroviral therapy adherence and viral suppression among Black mothers living with HIV). She is also interested in the role of social networks for Black mothers living with HIV.

Laurenia’s dissertation study examines the impacts of psychosocial and structural factors and network-level factors on antiretroviral therapy treatment adherence among Black mothers living with HIV. Laurenia Mangum plans to join the Jane Addams College of Social Work at the University of Illinois Chicago as a tenure track assistant professor beginning August 2022.



T’Shana (Shana) McClain, MSW

University of Denver

[DU Portfolio](#)

Shana McClain, MSW, is a doctoral student and adjunct faculty member at the Graduate School of Social Work at the University of Denver. She has direct practice experience with survivors of intimate partner violence (IPV) and sexual assault and community organizing experience with LGBT folks across the South. As a research project manager, she co-managed a longitudinal mixed-methods project, which explored the prevalence and perceptions of IPV and sexual violence across 13 University of Texas system institutions at the Institute on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault at the University of Texas at Austin

Shana’s most recent research explored restorative justice implementation for juvenile diversion across four pilot sites following supportive state legislation. Her research focuses on potential conflicting bids of identity following Black women’s experiences of IPV and sexual assault and the extent of such violence by exploring data disaggregation and reexamining the current use of racial statistics. She is interested in exploring alternative justice approaches and their potential to mitigate racial/ethnic disparities in the context of IPV for survivors, offenders, and communities. As an educator she uses critical and transformative pedagogy, providing her students a place to foster critical thinking, honor honest dialogue, and always remember they are humans before students.



Shawna Murray-Browne, LCSW-C

Shawna Murray-Browne, LCSW-C is an award-winning community healer, national speaker, and Liberation-Focused, Mind-Body Medicine Practitioner. She is Principal Consultant at Kindred Wellness LLC. Trained as an integrative psychotherapist, Shawna has created life-changing, community-based sacred spaces, honoring culture, to equip Black women, youth, and change-makers with the tools to heal themselves.

A fierce advocate for racial equity in mental health care, Shawna guides professionals and organizations in nourishing a culture of mindfulness, anti-racism, and impact. Intuitive, authentic, and high energy, she is committed to helping community reclaim collective wisdom to triumph the effects of historic and present-day trauma. Shawna was named by The Huffington Post as one of the “Ten Black Female Therapists You Should Know,” featured on the PBS special *Mysteries of Mental Illness* and was a two-time guest on the popular, *Therapy for Black Girls* podcast.

Shawna is currently pursuing her PhD in Social Work at the University of Maryland, Baltimore where she earned her Master’s in Social Work. She gained her Bachelor of Science in Criminology and Family Science from the University of Maryland, College Park. She serves on the Advisory Board of Clctivly, serves on the Trauma Informed Care Task Force for the City of Baltimore and is a Minority Fellow for the Council on Social Work Education and SAMSHA.

Dedicated to continued growth, her practice in QiGong, African spiritual traditions and sitting at the feet of elders maintain. She lives in Baltimore with her husband and her four year old daughter.

Research Interests

- Decolonial and Anti-Oppressive frameworks in Social Work Education
- Oral history as a decolonial research methodology
- Contemplative/Mind-Body Medicine interventions to reduce stress and the effects of race-based trauma in Black Women and Girls
- The effectiveness of culturally affirming, healing circles as community-based anti-violence interventions
- Intergenerational trauma in the African Diaspora



Danica Nestor, LCSW

Third year doctoral student with a focus of interest on Black men and their mental well-being. Plans to conduct research that breaks stigmas and normalizes the use of mental health services for trauma-related illnesses.

Haitian-American licensed social worker with experience in foster care, case management, medical social work, psychiatry, and behavioral and mental health. Worked with diverse populations in private practice and health care. Proficiency in care coordination, counseling, crisis intervention, and casework. Many years of experience working in a variety of challenging and high-volume environments. Exhibits competency in communicating and interacting with interdisciplinary teams. Developed procedures for the Social Work Department to improve discharge planning for patients returning to the community. Comprehensive understanding of the skills needed to coordinate and implement care

programs and procedures for patients diagnosed with affective disorders and behavioral issues. Skilled in the ability to establish frameworks of support to encourage patient's right to self-determination with compassion and respect. Delivers outstanding results with the highest degree of service and professionalism.



Andrea G. Perez Portillo, LCSW

University of Washington

Research Interests

- Healing and identity in communities of color
- Mental health in immigrant communities
- Critical mixed methods and intersectional research
- Community and arts-based practice and advocacy

Andrea's research focuses on the physical and mental health well-being of diverse immigrants from Latin American in the United States. She is working to incorporate critical quantitative, qualitative, and visual methodologies to explore community, identity, and well-being among immigrants from the Central American diaspora. Her dissertation will use a creative mixed-methods approach to explore social connection among immigrants from Central American who immigrated during and after the Central American crisis. Andrea has experience co-developing graduate level courses and has worked as a teaching assistant for several MSW and BSW courses.

Andrea's experiences and identities as a queer, immigrant, and bilingual clinical social worker have affected her research goals and shaped her community commitments. As a licensed clinical social worker with more than 5 years post-MSW experience, she has extensive clinical experience in conducting clinical assessments, facilitating therapeutic sessions, and partnering with diverse immigrant and system-involved families to advocate for changes in child welfare processes.



Jessica Irene Ramirez, MSW, MPH

University of Washington

Research Interests

- Healing in communities of color
- Culturally sustaining mental health practices
- Abolition and transformative justice social work

Jessica Irene Ramirez is a mother and first-generation Chicana college student from Oxnard, CA, and is currently a doctoral candidate in the School of Social Work at the University of Washington. She completed her undergraduate studies in public health at California State University, Northridge, and received a dual master's degree in public health and social work from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

Growing up in Oxnard, a predominantly Latinx city, she personally experienced and witnessed her family, friends, and community be marginalized by myriad social injustices including hyper-policing, underresourced schools, and underfunded or nonexistent mental

health support services. Because of these experiences, Jessica became interested in how communities of color heal from trauma inflicted by systems of oppression like racism, white supremacy, and colonization that directly and indirectly affect their overall well-being. Jessica has many years of experience working with and alongside children, youths, and families of color in various settings—including community centers, public housing communities, and schools. Her goal is to return to her community or communities alike to help shed light on and address the many social injustices that negatively affect the well-being/health of historically underrepresented and underserved communities of color.



Jessica Saba, LLMSW

Michigan State University

Research Interests

- Participatory action research
- Humanizing qualitative methods
- Resistance
- Palestinian feminism and liberation

Jessica Saba (she/her) is a doctoral student at Michigan State University’s School of Social Work and a practicing couple and family therapist. Her primary research interests include Palestinian women and everyday acts of resistance. She is interested in exploring intersections of settler colonialism, resistance, and gender. This includes examining the gendered process of settler colonialism in the Palestinian context and the relationships between hyper militarism, settler colonialism, and gender-based violence. Through her research assistantship, Jessica currently supports a mixed methods research project examining the experiences and effects of coerced debt in abusive marriages.



Johara Suleiman, LICSW

University of Minnesota, Twin Cities

Research Interests

- Child welfare history and policy
- Family health and wellness
- Systemic racism and immigrant racialization
- African immigrant and Muslim community-based practice and research

Johara Suleiman plans to focus her dissertation research on the child welfare system as a site of racialization, specifically as it affects Muslim, Black, African immigrants. This work requires an intersectional approach to understanding race and racialization processes and interrogating the points at which immigration and child welfare policies meet. She plans to use her dissertation work to inform plans for future research, abolitionist advocacy work, and community-level programmatic work aimed at healing and supporting families who are affected by the child welfare system.

Johara is heading into her first experiences with teaching at the graduate level this spring (May 2022). She will be co-instructing a course on social work practice with immigrant

populations. She plans to continue building her teaching experience by instructing and co-instructing MSW courses on clinical practice, social welfare and child welfare policy, and social welfare history over the next 2 years. In preparation for these courses, Johara completed a doctoral course focused on accessible pedagogies/andragogy in the spring 2021.

After receiving her MSW from Salem State University in 2016, Johara worked as an intensive in-home family therapist until 2020, when she opened her private therapy practice. During her time as an in-home family therapist, she worked primarily toward family preservation and healing and noticed her work often resisting macro-level dangers and barriers to wellness. The lessons she learned, relationships she built, and work she did alongside those families are what motivated her to pursue her PhD. She hopes to continue providing support to those families, the clients she serves in her private practice, and the communities she's connected to more broadly through her future research.



Cortney R. VanHook, MS, MPH

University of Pittsburgh

Cortney R. VanHook is a PhD candidate at the University of Pittsburgh. VanHook is passionate about the mental health of young Black males in the adolescent and young adult cohorts. His professional interests center on developing and evaluating interventions tailored to young Black males. VanHook has received extensive training in community-oriented research, and his work relies on qualitative methodology and critical theories.

He successfully passed his comprehensive exam, titled *Premature Death Among Young Black Men* in the fall of 2021. In this exam he displayed his knowledge of public health solutions, policy mechanisms, and clinical interventions to reduce the incidence of premature death among young Black men. For his dissertation proposal, "Mental Health Care Utilization Among Young Black Men," he plans to use health equity and intersectional frameworks to identify facilitators and barriers young Black men encounter as mental health care consumers.

VanHook is a native of the South Side of Chicago. The experiences of residents in that community led him to his current clinical and research interests. He is a proud alumnus of Georgia State University, where he completed undergraduate coursework in psychology. He is a two-time graduate of Mercer University, where he obtained his MS in clinical mental health counseling and MPH degrees. VanHook earned his MSW from the University of Pittsburgh.



Jeremy Vu, MSW

University of Saint Thomas

Research Interests

- Indigenous judicial systems
- Mental health
- LGBTQ2S+

Jeremy’s dissertation used a cultural and postcolonial perspective to examine traditional Indigenous judicial practices, specifically focusing on the Lakota people. Using a thematic analysis historiographical methodology, the dissertation was exploratory in nature and sought to provide an in-depth look at traditional law practices of the Lakota people. The study was aimed at investigating how the Lakota people handled crime prior to colonization and how Lakota values informed current restorative justice values and practices. Jeremy’s research advocates for the modern revitalization of Indigenous judicial systems as a means of reforming the current Western judicial system.

In 2018 Jeremy served a 3-year term with the NASW - South Dakota chapter as the West Region representative. Jeremy was also named the recipient of the Barbara W. Shank Endowed Scholar in 2019 at the University of Saint Thomas. In 2022 Jeremy was appointed to a 2-year position as the CSWE co-chair for the Annual Program Meeting Indigenous and Tribal proposal tracks.

Jeremy is a social work educator at Oglala Lakota College, which is one of the only tribal college universities that offers a BSW degree. In his teaching Jeremy incorporates the Lakota perspective throughout the curriculum and received national recognition for his teaching methods as having one of Oglala Lakota College’s highest student retention and success rates by the Achieving the Dream organization. Additionally, Jeremy has served on several committees including academic affairs, institutional affairs, student services, the institutional review board, and recently was appointed to the faculty review committee in 2022. Jeremy was honored as faculty member of the year in 2020 for Oglala Lakota College.



Ashleigh Washington

City University of New York

Ashleigh Washington is a social worker dedicated to transformative justice for women of color. Since 2005 she has led practice in nonprofits, government, and academia, applying her talents as an educator, content creator, and strategist. She began her career in Texas as a counselor for women mandated to drug treatment. In New York City she served families affected by HIV, family violence, and adolescent pregnancy. In 2017 she joined Safe Horizon, the nation’s largest victim service organization, as senior director of learning for the organization’s 900+ advocates.

Ashleigh holds a bachelor’s in social work from Prairie View A&M University in Texas, a master’s in social work from Columbia University, and is currently a PhD student in the social welfare program at the City University of New York. Her research is focused on the family policing system, pregnant and parenting people who use drugs, and Black Feminist theories.



Durrell Malik Washington Sr., MSW

University of Chicago

Research Interests

- Prison industrial complex abolition
- Juvenile Incarceration
- Social networks
- Families and other social contexts
- Mixed method research

Durrell Malik Washington Sr. is a doctoral candidate at the University of Chicago Crown Family School of Social Work, Policy and Practice. He takes an interdisciplinary approach to scholarship drawing from social work, sociological, criminological, life course, and family system theories and perspectives. Durrell has methodological training across several qualitative and quantitative methods. He has served as a research assistant and project manager during his time at Crown Family School and, prior to his doctoral training, at Columbia University. To date, he has published a combination of five co- and solo-authored peer-reviewed journal articles and two book chapters, and he currently has a number of other peer-reviewed articles under review. Because the work of social workers reaches not only academics but community and policy audiences as well, he has also published several other public-facing products, including research reports, op-eds, editorials, and news articles.

Durrell's approach to teaching as an educator is grounded in and informed by antiracist and abolitionist pedagogy and praxis. As a longtime social work micro and macro practitioner and as an educator, he uses real-world experiences to create, uphold, and establish an inclusive learning environment that draws from these ideologies and pushes students to think in the abstract and beyond. This form of learning environment pushes students to engage with course content beyond a mere surface-level understanding. This environment challenges them first to synthesize material and then question its relevance and apply it to real-world situations. His learning goals for his students are for them to develop the knowledge, analytical skills, and passion for combining theory, praxis, critical thinking, and humility to advocate and promote social justice and liberatory consciousness. Durrell has a long teaching history developing courses related to abolition, and the juvenile legal system, and he has taught other courses including the social meaning of race, and human behavior in the social environment. Durrell's reach and commitment to the field of social work extends beyond just his program. Besides being a CSWE Minority Fellow, he has served as a student volunteer coordinator for the last three annual Society for Social Work and Research (SSWR) conferences and is currently the student-director-at-large on the SSWR Board of Directors. Durrell is also an inaugural member of the Network to Advance Abolitionist Social Work.



Wynette Whitegoat, MSW

Washington University in St. Louis

Research Interests

- Child maltreatment prevention in Indigenous communities
- Education and development across the lifespan in Indigenous communities
- Mental health and health disparities in Indigenous communities
- Social work training for Indigenous students

Wynette Whitegoat is interested in the development and well-being of American Indian/Alaska Native/Indigenous families and children using prevention and intervention approaches. Wynette is an enrolled member of the Navajo Nation and is a first-year doctoral student. In partnership with her faculty mentor, Wynette is currently working on a project focused on caregiver characteristics and child well-being outcomes among American Indian/Alaska Native families using a national cohort study. As an advocate for Native higher education, Wynette also serves as a research assistant for a program supporting Master of Social Work Students interested in completing field education in Indian Country.

Wynette’s postgraduate work experience in early childhood and in higher education have shaped her research interests. As she continues through the Brown School’s doctoral program, Wynette hopes to build on her current understanding of research and teaching practices to develop her own approaches using Indigenous methodologies that will prepare her for the dissertation journey and beyond.



Cho Rong Claudia Won, LMSW

University of Alabama

Research Interests

- Immigrants and refugees
- Mental health
- Culturally informed practice
- Community-based participatory research
- Mixed methods research

Since earning her BSW, Cho Rong has accumulated diverse research experiences in the areas of gerontology, health disparities, mental health, behavioral health, and rurality among a minoritized population. She acquired international field experience for both BSW and MSW field placements in South Korea, where generalist practice is prevalent. From these opportunities, she acquired diverse practice experience from case management to program development and administration. Also, she worked with diverse populations, including children from low-income families, elders, multicultural families, children with intellectual disabilities, adults with schizophrenia, and North Korean defectors.

Applying her personal immigrant background and diverse research and practice experiences, her dissertation aims to understand immigrant-specific challenges, including cultural barriers and discrimination, that affect the mental health of Korean Americans residing in the rural Southern United States. Using a community-based participatory research approach and mixed methods research, she hopes to develop a community center that can support the diverse needs of Korean Americans.



Elizabeth Arco

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I am an advanced standing Master of Social Work student at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. My focus is on mental health, and my current field placement is at Mendota Mental Health Institute, a state psychiatric hospital which provides treatment to forensic patients. Also, during my MSW program, I interned with a community-based organization that supported the implementation of restorative justice skills and antiracist practices in the community. I consider my therapeutic approach to be person-centered and strengths-based and I highly value the person-in-environment perspective in my practice to ensure I am considering the full context of an individual's challenges. Additionally, I have had various experiences as a member of a multidisciplinary team and consider collaboration with colleagues to be an important skillset in my practice. My professional interests include working with individuals with severe mental illnesses, substance use disorders, and who have experienced homelessness. Upon graduation, I hope to work in a role that gives me the opportunity to work primarily with adults with severe mental illnesses providing crisis intervention.



Sol Alvarez-Taubin

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I am an MSW candidate at Columbia University School of Social Work, specializing in advanced clinical practice, with a concentration in contemporary social issues. I currently work as a research assistant at the School, supporting the development of a manuscript on international social work practice, and projects narrating post-flight migration experiences of children and adults in Western Asia and the Horn of Africa. In my field placement at Lenox Hill Hospital's Outpatient Center for Mental Health, I provide individual telehealth psychotherapy for adult clients, support new mothers in the perinatal mental health program, and co-facilitate a group for young adults experiencing first episode psychosis. Previously at the Liberation Institute, I also provided individual psychotherapy, to primarily queer, BIPOC women clients, and facilitated professional development for bilingual clinicians providing in-language, gender-affirming care.

As a first-generation Latina woman witnessing the effects of relational, structural, and intergenerational trauma in the communities I am part of, I am interested in how systems of violence filter down into the interpersonal, and the technologies of healing and community building that exist for repair. I look forward to continuing clinical work upon graduating, with a focus on BIPOC, immigrant, and queer women and young adults navigating experiences of interpersonal and structural trauma, as well as continuing to advocate for structural solutions to advance racial, environmental, and economic justice.

Prior to Columbia, I served as Teen Programs Director at the Boys & Girls Clubs of Providence, Director of the City of Providence's civil rights commission, and Director of Policy for Rhode Island's General Treasurer.



Karen Y. Bermudez

She/Her/Ella

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I am a master of science in social work student on the clinical track at the University of Texas at Austin. Additionally, I will be receiving a certification in health care social work and military social work practice. I am completing my final field placement with Integral Care's Terrace at Oak Springs outpatient treatment program. I am responsible for implementing a housing first and person-centered approach as a member of the Mobile, Medical, and Mental Health Care Team (M3 Team). As an M3 Team member, I work with individuals who experience mental illness, chronic medical conditions, alcohol/drug addiction, as well as chronic homelessness. To holistically address the needs of my clients, I collaborate with providers from the medical school at my university (Dell Medical School), a community health-care center (Community Care), and the local mental health authority (Integral Care). I also work in the Division of Community Engagement, where I advance communications for a variety of different projects while supporting the university's brand for internal and external audiences. I acquired experience working as a mental health assistant at a residential treatment center; a mental health provider for the Mobile Crisis Outreach Team in Houston, TX; and as a disability specialist for Health and Human Services in Texas. I hope to garner skills to reinvent systems of care to deliver effective services and eventually develop and implement a holistic wellness center for oppressed, historically ignored, and marginalized communities with an emphasis on older Latinos and veterans on all spectrums of practice.

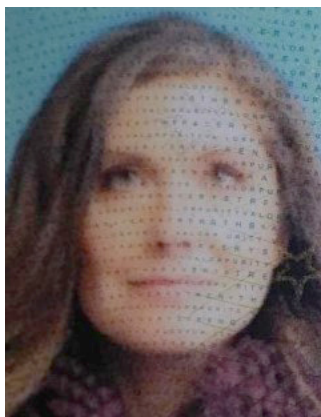


Denisse Bernal

She/Her/Hers

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I am a second-year graduate student in the master of social welfare program at the University of California, Los Angeles, with a concentration in child & family well-being. I am also fulfilling requirements for the Pupil Personnel Services Credential in school social work. I completed my first year of field work as a clinical intern providing English and Spanish psychotherapy services to clients in the Children's Mental Health program of a community-based organization serving South Los Angeles. This year I am a mental health intern in a K-12 school district in Pico Rivera, CA, where I provide individual and group therapy for middle and high school students. My previous professional experience is in animal-assisted violence prevention and social-emotional learning programs for underserved and trauma-impacted youths and families. I am a second-generation Mexican American Latina from Southeast Los Angeles, and I have a particular though not exclusive interest in working with Latinx populations affected by intimate partner/domestic violence. Following graduation, I aim to gain employment as a clinical therapist providing trauma-informed and bilingual mental health services for underserved and minoritized children, youths, and families in the Los Angeles area.



Elizabeth Brandenburg

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Elizabeth Brandenburg is in her master's of social work program at the University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley. Her field placement is at the Arthur Center (Behavioral Health Clinic) and Noble Health Audrain County Hospital. Elizabeth hopes to complete her MSW and continue working at her field placement, where she supports underprivileged rural youths and strives to increase engagement with ethnic and cultural minorities in her clinic's catchment area. Postgraduation, Elizabeth plans to pursue her LCSW licensure to better serve her local community.



Robin Dunn Bryant

She/Her/Hers

During my life, two things have been consistent focal points: my understanding of the importance of listening and my desire to give a voice to myself and others. In 2006, I received a breast cancer diagnosis. By the time I recovered from treatment, I realized I wanted to spend the rest of my professional life helping people heal from trauma. I enrolled in Florida State University in the fall of 2020 pursuing my second masters, a clinically focused MSW, and will graduate in April 2022. My long-term goal is to obtain my LCSW and to specialize in working with people healing from sexual abuse and assault, combining talk therapy and somatic techniques as part of their healing support. I would like to grow my clinical skills in a group, practice, or agency that uses a trauma-informed approach. While I enjoy the year-round sunniness of Florida, I am open to relocating to the East or West coast for the right opportunity.



Crystal Butler

She/Her/Hers

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Hello. My name is Crystal Butler, and I am in my final semester of the master of social work program at Kennesaw State University in the Atlanta, GA, area. My current field placement is at CaringWorks, Inc., where I provide individual therapy to homeless men living with substance use and mental health diagnoses. My previous field placement was at Positive Growth, Inc., where I provided case management and psychoeducation to low-income men and women in a community mental health setting. My interests focus on improving mental health outcomes for underserved and marginalized populations. I am skilled at cognitive behavioral therapy, dialectical behavior therapy, and motivational interviewing. I believe that each person is the author of their own story, and I therefore approach therapy from a person-centered perspective. In addition to my clinical practice experiences, I am a skilled researcher, having co-authored two peer-reviewed journal publications. My ultimate career goal is to become a licensed clinical social worker, working as a therapist in community mental health and in private practice. I also desire to work as a researcher, exploring, implementing, and evaluating interventions to end racial health disparities, particularly among African American women.



Tyesha S. Butler

She/Her/Hers

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I am currently a student at the University of Tennessee Knoxville, Nashville campus, pursuing my MSSW and trauma certificate. While in graduate school I firstly chose field placements where I could be intentional about serving marginalized groups. During my first placement I worked at Raphah Institute, which is a restorative justice diversion program, where I served youths affected by the justice system. The restorative justice work done here provides an opportunity to “confront the root causes of societal harm, take a uniquely crafted approach, and see transformative healing for all.” I helped youths reimagine a better future for themselves through home visits when youths were in crisis and circle facilitation. Currently, I am interning at a charter school and learning a lot about the needs of youths in an academic setting. Working in the school system I get the opportunity to meet students at all their intersections and am able to address specific relational, emotional, and academic needs that young people face. After graduating my plan is to obtain my LCSW while working in the African American community specifically, to help dispel the stigma of going to therapy and shape how we view mental health.



Tyrone L. Carter

He/Him/His

My name is Tyrone L. Carter and I am an MSW student at the UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs with an anticipated graduation date of June 2022. In my various professional experiences, I have served as an advocate for people experiencing homelessness and substance abuse, and mental health issues. I am deeply committed to working in a trauma-informed, anti-oppressive framework providing clinical services. Towards this goal, I have interned at the Union Station Homeless Services where I worked directly with individuals experiencing homelessness, providing clinical care and case management services for homeless residents in Pasadena, CA. In this role, I utilized motivational, tasked-centered, and strength-based strategies to support clients through the process of securing and maintaining housing. Currently, I am a David Bohnett Fellow in the Los Angeles Mayors’ Office City Homelessness Initiative/ Skid Row Strategies. As part of this role, I am responsible for community engagement, program development, and strategic planning to address one of the worst homelessness problems in the country. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, my role has included efforts related to safety, testing, and vaccinations for people experiencing homelessness. Moreover, I aim to improve the lives of the most vulnerable members of society and aid in structural societal change that will create a culture where everyone has an equal chance to thrive, ultimately changing the physical, economic, social, and political environment that determines homelessness, displacement, health, and risk. I am passionate about LGBTQ+ health and well-being. Previously I served as a program manager for a youth health service provider whose clientele was largely inner-city urban African American and Latinx GLBTQ+ youth. I engaged in program implementation, supervision, and direct care as part of an evidence-based HIV prevention program funded by the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention. My deep well of experience led to my dual selection as a member of both the Los Angeles County HIV Prevention Planning Committee and the County Crystal Meth Task Force. I am a proud alumnus of the Los Angeles

Community College and California State University Northridge systems. At CSU-Northridge I double majored in African Studies and Psychology and published my first research article, "Educating the Newly Enslaved: Empowering African American Males While and Following Incarceration with Access to Higher Education."



Gloria W. Chan

She/Her/Hers

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I am an MSW student at University of Southern California concentrating in adult mental health and wellness. I am currently providing mental health services in the adult outpatient program at Pacific Clinics - Asian Pacific Family Center. Although I started my social work career as a case manager, working at community-based organizations to collaborate with Asian immigrants and adults with co-occurring diagnoses, my focus now has shifted to clinical social work. Specifically, I am committed to providing mental health services to Asian and Asian American adults to begin reducing the gap in accessible and culturally relevant integrated behavioral health care in Asian communities. As a daughter of Hong Kong immigrants, I bring the strengths of my Asian and American identities together to form an intersectional lens through which I practice psychotherapy. I have the privilege of pursuing higher education and of working with historically underserved populations and will use these experiences to guide my work as I continue to grow and learn as a clinical social worker in Los Angeles. I also intend to continue investing in local initiatives to increase awareness of the diversity within the Asian diaspora and to reduce the stigma around mental health among Asian/Asian American communities.



Katherine De La Hoz

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As an MSW student at the Stony Brook University School of Social Welfare specializing in families, youth, and the transition to adulthood, I have grown passionate to support the needs of underserved communities. Prior to pursuing my MSW, I worked as a Case Aide, where I assisted predominately Spanish-speaking families with case management and behavioral health services. My first-year field placement was at the NYC Department of Veterans' Services followed by my current field placement at the CUNY Office of Veteran Affairs which has allowed me to advance my knowledge of the veteran population by working with student veterans where I serve as a student advocate and provide access to educational and non-educational (e.g., housing, employment) resources. Through these experiences, I have gained much knowledge and skills at both the macro and micro levels and have connected with community organizations that are well-versed in the unique needs of veterans to provide a better wrap-around service to student veterans. As a highly motivated bilingual Spanish speaker with several years of experience in working with underserved communities, I can provide culturally sensitive and trauma-informed care into practice. My post-graduation goal is to continue to work with underserved communities in a clinical setting in the New York metropolitan area where I can build upon my clinical skills and have access to professional development and leadership opportunities.



Gillian Dueñas

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My name is Gillian Dueñas and I am an MSW student at the University of Washington, Seattle, specializing in clinical social work. My practicum placement is at the Sound Health Belltown Clinic, where I provide case management and counseling services as well as facilitate an art therapy group. After graduation, my goal is to support Black and Indigenous communities of color in healing at a mental health clinic or outpatient hospital setting. Through my work at Sound, I have developed skills needed to serve vulnerable adult populations such as folks experiencing homelessness and/or severe mental illness. I collaborate with my clients to develop and carry out treatment plans, coordinate client care with other health-care providers, connect clients to social services, and develop and carry out curriculum for my art therapy group. I also have experience working with youths with developmental disabilities at the UW Fetal Alcohol Syndrome clinic and have conducted research on mental health in Pacific Islander and underrepresented groups at the UW. As a Pasifika woman I believe in practicing social work that is community-oriented and rooted in Indigenous values of reciprocity and respect. After working in direct practice for a few years I plan to pursue a PhD in social work to investigate and develop culturally relevant interventions for Black and Indigenous populations healing from and resisting colonialism.



Mariel Eaves

They/Them/Theirs

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I am completing my MSW at the University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill School of Social Work. My specialization is in direct practice, with an emphasis on community-accountable practice with Black, Indigenous, and people of color who also experience marginalization in terms of sexuality, orientation, gender, and disability. In addition, I am completing my specialization field practicum with Duke University Counseling and Psychological Services, providing in-person and teletherapy to individuals and groups under a brief treatment model. My previous experience includes more than 10 years in administrative and instructional support of marginalized youths and emerging adults through community-based arts and social support programming. As an emerging social work professional, I have actively worked toward the antiracist potential of social work education and practice by collaborating to develop anti-oppression workshops, advocating with school administration, and consulting with colleagues. I am interested in continuing to serve at the intersections of marginalized populations through direct-practice therapy, community-accountable research, and equity-centered program development. My goal is to provide clinical services in my home state of North Carolina while engaging in research and program development that address social determinants and environmental factors affecting the health of my communities at local, regional, and national scales.



Jillian Flemmig

She/They

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I am completing my master of clinical social work at Seattle University with a focus on trauma-informed and anti-oppressive practice. My internship at Seattle Counseling Service has given me opportunities to provide mental health services catered to the LGBTQI+ community. I have experience developing and implementing multicultural interventions in individual and group settings with youths and adult populations. I work with BIPOC and immigrant communities, employing a range of therapeutic modalities to best match individual goals and sociocultural contexts. I have strong skills in providing evidence-based treatments, support in trauma recovery, and parent education. My experience in school systems, community resource centers, outpatient mental health agencies, and integrative behavioral health clinics has furthered my ability to learn quickly and to continuously adjust care to align with the ever-changing needs of populations served.

As a biracial immigrant woman, I am highly passionate about working with marginalized folks to provide affirmative therapeutic interventions that bridge gaps in mental health disparities. I am committed to continuously develop and decolonize my clinical social work practices to harness a space in which people may restore their autonomy, authentically express themselves, and reclaim their stories. My goal is to obtain an LICSW and work in the Seattle area to provide affirmative therapeutic services to folks of diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds. I strive to work in mental health agencies driven to increase equity, advocacy, and accessibility for marginalized groups.



Julie Fiorenza

She/Her/Hers

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I am an MSW candidate at New York University Silver School of Social Work and expect to graduate in May 2022. I am currently interning at the federal public defender for the District of Connecticut in New Haven whose mission is to provide zealous client-centered legal representation and advocacy for people who cannot afford to pay for services. As an intern I assist with sentencing mitigation investigations by conducting interviews with clients and collateral contacts, analyzing records, and incorporating social science research to capture compelling life stories of individuals with complex trauma histories. I have worked clinically with first generation high school students and as a mentor to adolescent transracial adoptees. My supervisors describe me as diligent, creative, compassionate, mature, and self-reflective. As a career changer, I bring a unique arts background, along with a deep commitment to trauma-informed anti-oppressive practice and social justice to my role as a social worker. I plan to become trained in restorative justice facilitation and seek to provide healing interventions like restorative justice and mindfulness in an East Coast school setting or organization dedicated to serving people affected by incarceration. This work will help close the treatment gap for racial and ethnic minority populations.



Brittany Chenelle Green

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My name is Brittany Chenelle, and I am a MSW graduate student at California State University, Northridge. I am currently placed at the Veterans Affairs Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center as a social work trainee in the primary care mental health integration (PCMHI) and patient aligned care team (PACT) programs. Under PCMHI, I co-facilitate a Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Depression group and provide psychotherapy to veterans experiencing depression and anxiety. On the PACT side, I work with an interdisciplinary team to conduct assessments and provide resources and referrals to older adult veterans. One of my goals is to merge my storytelling skills from my previous career with my social work skills in clinical and international social work settings. The value I would bring to a potential employer is my antiracist and anti-oppressive approach to clinical practice. It is important to me to use an intersectionality lens and provide culturally competent and trauma-informed care to any clients I interact with. I am passionate about serving Black, Muslim, and immigrant communities in the United States and the Caribbean. In the future I hope to open a private practice to make therapy more accessible to people from underserved populations. After receiving my degree I would love to work in California or the U.S. Virgin Islands; however, I am always open to opportunities in other locations where I can add value.

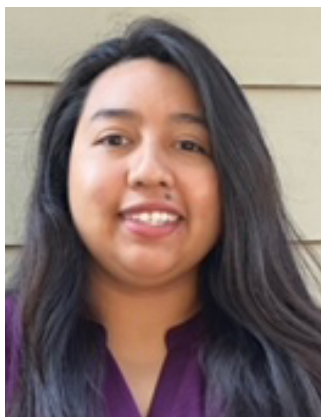


Kenya Harris

She/Her/Hers

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I am currently enrolled in the MSW program at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB). My concentration is women's health but, more specifically, Black women's health. My current field placement is with a women's inpatient substance abuse facility called Women's Hope Aletheia House at Birmingham. I love working with women and finding ways to improve their lives from a macro to a micro level. One of my most vital attributes is my ability to work seamlessly in diverse groups because of my creativity combined with my active listening. Therefore, I can provide new and unconventional ways of tackling long withstanding issues women must combat. I have a passion for maternal health for women, and I see myself working as an advocate for women's health. After graduation, I am looking to work with women in a medical setting. My goal is to open a wellness clinic that will cater to the holistic needs of Black women. I am excited to start my new journey as a full-time social worker.



Wendy Veronica Hernandez-De La Cruz

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I'm a bilingual (English and Spanish) graduate student at California State University Monterey Bay graduating with my master of social work (MSW) degree in May 2022. My clinical experience began at YWCA of Monterey County, where I served adults experiencing domestic violence or human trafficking and provided them with cognitive behavioral therapy, exposure therapy, and psychoeducation services. Currently, I intern at Youth Alliance, where I am involved in two programs: intense case management with youths on probation and curriculum development for support groups. I am also employed as a visitation specialist, where I supervise and facilitate healthy interactions between children in foster care and their parents as they work toward reunification. After graduation I want to obtain clinical licensure and provide mental health services to underserved communities in California. For the Latino communities specifically, the lack of bilingual clinicians available has greatly affected their ability to access mental health services, and I would like to aid in filling that gap. Thus, although I am well-rounded, my clinical expertise will focus on providing psychoeducation on trauma recovery, domestic violence, life skills, and coping skills to Latino communities. In addition, I hope to work with other diverse populations to further expand my clinical skill set.



Jasmine Flowers Hornbrook

She/Her/Hers

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Jasmine Hornbrook is a current MSW student at the University of Minnesota with an anticipated graduation date of May 2022. To receive experience in direct care, Hornbrook chose the Clinical Mental Health-Integrated Behavioral Health track in the MSW program. As a biracial woman, Hornbrook understands the value of representation, which is why she has undertaken a variety of roles serving BIPOC clientele. Hornbrook is completing her MSW internship at The Family Partnership's Diversity Social Work Advancement Program in Minneapolis, Minnesota, where she provides low/no cost outpatient therapy to BIPOC, new immigrants, refugees, and LGBTQ+ underrepresented communities. Her background includes work with underserved BIPOC youth with a history of trauma & mental illness as an intern with American Indian Family Center, Ramsey County Social Services, and volunteering with People Serving People (a family homeless shelter). For the past 6 years, Hornbrook has worked at Hennepin County Medical Center, a safety net hospital, in various roles. Her roles have entailed actively engaging her community and advocating for health equity. She desires to work in a setting that serves underserved communities of color, in both direct practice and in capacities that would allow her to effect systemic and broad policy changes as she brings skills of compassion, quick rapport building, adaptability and dedication.



Faith Itta

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I am an advanced-standing MSW student at Washington University in St. Louis. Here, I am concentrating on Indigenous populations. My current field placement is with the Office of Congressional, Legislative, Intergovernmental Affairs in the Office of Personnel Management. I have been tasked to work directly with tribal governments to increase engagement between the federal government and tribal governments. Our goal is to have the federal workforce reflect the population (diversity, equity, and inclusion) that it serves and address the disparities (mental health, substance use, poverty, etc.) that affect tribal communities. I am very passionate about serving Indigenous people and communities and collaborating with them to create a meaningful, positive, long-lasting change. I am open to all career opportunities, as well as geographical locations (close to an ocean would be a bonus!).



Maihnia Lee

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I am a final year student at Boston College and will be graduating with my MSW in May 2022. With a concentration in clinical mental health, I have also earned a certificate in neurobiology and have completed extensive training in trauma work. My current placement is at Dimock Center, a community health center situated in Roxbury, MA, serving a diverse population, many of whom identify as BIPOC and belong to immigrant communities. As a behavioral health intern, I provided psychotherapy for clients in the Adult Medicine Department as they navigated issues such as community violence, complex and intergenerational trauma, complicated grief, attachment wounds, and systemic injustices. Prior to obtaining my MSW, I worked in the social services field in specialty areas of reproductive health, community mental health, LGBTQ+ services, and career preparedness. These experiences have shaped me to become a critical social work clinician who centers the experiences of clients.

As an LGBTQ-identified, Hmong American, daughter of refugees, bilingual clinician, my work is grounded in intersectionality. Guided by a trauma-informed, anti-oppressive, and health liberation framework, I aim to center my career on working alongside and empowering clients who come from marginalized backgrounds. My long-term career aspiration is to establish a holistic community health center that decolonizes well-being and is an integral part of the community it serves. My plan is to work with the communities in the Chicago/Midwestern region, though I am amenable to Boston, Philly, Northern California, and other areas. I would love to be a part of an organization that is dedicated to values of equity, social justice, and advocacy while serving people of marginalized identities.

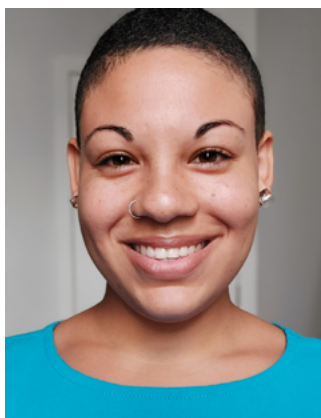


Eric R. Lorensen

He/Him/His

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I'm an MSW student at Stony Brook University located in my native Long Island, NY. My specialization is integrated health with a sub specialization in substance use disorders and treatment. I'm passionate about lifetime learning and assisting those in need, whether inside or out of the clinical setting. Currently as an intern at my field placement, I serve as clinical intake coordinator and counselor, providing assessment and psychotherapy services primarily to Spanish-speaking Latino adults who are criminal justice and child welfare involved as well as other disadvantaged clients at the outpatient clinic B.E.S.T PLLC. I've had the privilege to work with many talented clinicians and a plethora of clients from all walks of life. My skills include time management, documentation/progress note writing, diffusing tense situations, and various psychotherapy modalities. After having worked in different systems, I have come to greatly value integrity as well as respecting every person's inherent dignity and worth. I am interested in engaging in community-based mental health/chemical dependency services focused on Latino, LGBT, and underserved communities. I'm open to all clinical settings including hospitals, schools, correctional facilities, outpatient clinics, and skilled nursing facilities among others. I aspire to achieve clinical licensure as well as pursue doctoral level studies.



Marissa Lowe

They/Them

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I am an advanced-year graduate student at Columbia School of Social Work (CSSW) on the advanced clinical track with a concentration in health, mental health, and disabilities. I came to CSSW with significant experience in the field of public service, having worked with survivors of intimate partner violence and sexual violence, elders experiencing neglect and abuse, and incarcerated people. I am currently doing a field placement at The Institute for Human Identity in New York City, where I serve LGBTQIA+ individuals and couples. As a queer, Black, gender-fluid person recognizing the lack of diversity in the field of social work, I intend to serve people of color in the LGBTQIA+ community. Following graduation and licensure, I plan to pursue American Association of Sexuality Educators, Counselors, and Therapists (ASSET) certification for sex therapy. I am enthusiastic about both clinical work and community outreach efforts and dream of blending the two to reach LGBTQIA+ people of color, sex workers, kinky folks, and polyamorous people who have had limited access to affirming and nonjudgmental mental health services.



Emmanuel Martinez

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I am currently enrolled at the University of Denver, where I am working toward an MSW degree specializing in mental health. I earned a bachelor's degree in political science from UCLA and will also be finishing a master of public administration at the University of Colorado, Denver, in May 2022. In my current internship I provide outpatient psychotherapy to victims and survivors of domestic violence in the Denver area. Before going back to graduate school, I spent 8 years as a project manager with the International Organization for Migration, the United Nations migration agency, in various countries. Returning to the United States has given me a newfound appreciation for the potential impact that social workers can make to eradicate the inequities that persist in our society. I have learned it's not enough to seek equity or equality; we must accept nothing short of liberation—by any means necessary—if we are to live lives with dignity and meaning. I've developed a passion for combining liberatory and cognitive-based frameworks in my clinical social work practice to challenge the deeply damaging and traumatic effects of white settler colonialism on the people I work with. I intend to earn clinical licensure over the next 2 years in a community mental health setting, ideally working with persons of color and individuals of diverse sexual and gender identities. I'm also interested in engaging in macro practice in the anticarceral abolitionist movement, particularly where it intersects with mental health and racism.



Zack McClain

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My name is Zack McClain, and I am a Mobile, AL, native who is currently enrolled in the MSW program at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB). I majored in African American studies for my bachelor's degree, which I also received from UAB. My passion for social work stems from my lens of being a socially aware Black man with relatable cultural experiences to complement. I currently intern with a local nonprofit named Brother Let's Talk. Through my experience with the organization, I gained exposure to methods of cognitive behavioral therapy as well as a heightened awareness of cultural barriers that perpetuate a harmful stigma about mental health services. In addition, I have experience working and interning at a campus for children and adolescents with diagnoses of severe behavioral disorders. Therefore, I believe I would be interested in working in the following capacities: corporate social responsibility, school therapy, family therapy, policy, or any other role that has significance to Black people's and minority populations' struggles throughout the nation. I prefer to pursue my career in southern states such as Alabama or Texas, but I may be receptive to opportunities elsewhere as well.



Tywanda E. McDonald

She/Her/Hers

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My name is Tywanda McDonald, I am a master's of social work candidate attending the Jackson State University. My concentration is medical social work and palliative care. I will be graduating in April 2022 with my MSW. Currently, I'm completing my field placement at the G. V "Sonny" Montgomery Veterans Administration Medical Center (VAMC) in Jackson, MI. I am a full-time social work intern with the Med-Surg (Medical Surgery) Department. This experience at the VAMC hospital has given me the opportunity to learn various social work duties in different departments of the hospital. My duties include working closely with patients, family members, physicians, and other hospital social workers daily. I assist to provide patient advocacy and actively participate in patient discharge planning for patients scheduled to leave the hospital. After graduation I plan to obtain my LMSW license and work in a medical setting or hospice care facility offering clinical support. Once I earn my LMSW, I plan to start clinical supervision and work toward obtaining my LCSW in the future. I reside near the Gulf Coast and will be seeking employment as a social worker for full-time employment opportunities in the Mobile, AL, and Biloxi, MI, areas.



Maysa Mohmoud

She/Her/Hers

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Hello! My name is Maysa Mohmoud. I am a graduate student at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) obtaining a master's degree in clinical/medical social work. My field placement was at UAB Beacon Recovery, which provides comprehensive addiction treatment to individuals of lower socioeconomic statuses or those with legal involvement. Working in substance use and with marginalized populations is a passion of mine, and I aim to continue working with these populations after graduating with my MSW. To enhance my cultural competency outside of a traditional academic space, I have participated in several community-based outreach programs. By being a certified crisis counselor at the Birmingham Crisis Center, I worked with callers to create safety plans and find resources in their areas and provided crisis intervention through the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. As a national fellow for the Association of Recovery in Higher Education, I worked on outreach to various national and international colleges and universities to gauge the needs of various students in recovery and collegiate recovery communities and aimed to create resources and seminars to target identified areas. This included hosting several weekly panels with experts regarding various aspects of addiction recovery and analyzing the intersections of one's identities with access to comprehensive mental health and substance use treatment options. Currently, I work at a residential eating disorder treatment center as a direct care counselor. Through this position I document clients' daily progress and ensure that documentation accurately reflects all changes in their condition as well as leading and co-facilitating group sessions. Following graduation I aim to dedicate my career goals to providing addiction and mental health services to underserved and marginalized populations, with a focus on people of color and those of lower socioeconomic statuses.



Brijuan Phillips

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I am obtaining my master's in social work degree at New York University Silver School of Social Work. My current field placement is in the mental health department of a foster care agency called Little Flower Children & Family Services in Brooklyn, NY. With my clinical experience as a therapist at this agency, I have given individual and collateral family therapy to a total of seven clients. I have facilitated my own sessions and created treatment plans for each client. The modalities I have used are Trauma Focused-Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, play therapy, and narrative therapy. My career interests lie in bridging the gap between mental health care and the Black community, particularly with the population of children, adolescents, and their families. My goal is to get more Black individuals informed about the importance of mental health care and to encourage them to seek it. After obtaining my MSW in May 2022, I will be licensed with my LMSW, later obtaining my LCSW and DSW to eventually have my own private practice for Black children and families.



Ariana C. Pickett

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With a concentration in school and clinical social work, I will graduate from St. Ambrose University with my MSW degree in May 2022. I came into the MSW program with unique clinical experiences working with youth and adult clients due to my degree in recreational therapy. I've worked in adaptive sport, long-term care, in-home behavioral health, residential treatment, and homeless shelters. Currently, I'm a substance abuse counselor and case manager. In addition, I also intern as a counseling and student services professional providing students with support and linkages to community services. My diverse experiences have led me to become certified as an International Alcohol & Drug Counselor and Therapeutic Recreation Specialist. I'm also trained in SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery, and applied suicide intervention skills. After graduation, my goal is to obtain clinical licensure (LCSW) and continue working within school settings as well as with persons who have substance use disorders. I'm also excited for new opportunities to expand my skillset and work in alternative settings. In the future, I plan to pursue a Ph.D. in social work or public health. My research interests include alternative treatment modalities, use of technology in treatment, harm reduction, and minority youth mental health.



Maria Fernanda Quezada

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I will be graduating from Florida Atlantic University (FAU) in May 2022 with an MSW degree and child welfare certificate. I am part of FAU's Child Welfare Institute Research Lab. I am currently an intern with the Collaborative Internship for All, a Broward County Public schools initiative that provides mental health services in K-12 schools. I have experience providing mental health support to K-12 students including triage mental health services, clinical groups, and individual therapy. I have also supported families and caretakers through crisis intervention services. I have years of experience working with multidisciplinary teams through current and past work experiences. Currently, I work as a dependency case manager for SOS Children's Villages. In this position, I provide case management services for children under state care and collaborate with families and the court to ensure permanency. Additionally, I work collaboratively with a range of individuals, including the school social worker, district psychologist, and school staff, to create treatment plans. I am bilingual and serve as the Spanish liaison, which allows me to build a stronger alliance with clients and families. I am very passionate about working with minority families that have historically been underserved in medical and behavioral settings. I enjoy working with children, adolescents, and families to provide preventive care and early interventions. My academic preparation and experience in the CSWE Minority Fellowship Program have allowed me to acquire skills to inform my ability to provide effective evidence-based mental health services. My professional goals include obtaining employment in the metro Atlanta area, becoming a licensed clinical social worker, and pursuing research opportunities that improve the health and well-being of marginalized populations.



Hector Ramirez, Jr.

He/Him/His

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My name is Hector Ramirez, Jr., and I am a master of social welfare student at the University of California, Los Angeles, with a concentration in health and mental health across the lifespan. I am currently a clinical social work intern at Providence St. John's Child and Family Development Center, where I provide culturally sensitive and linguistically responsive mental health and developmental services to children ranging from preschool age to adolescents and their families. Working with an interdisciplinary team consisting of psychologists, social workers, and other care providers, along with evidence-based practices such as managing and adapting practices, I strive to provide child-centered and family-focused services to meet the needs of the children and families with whom I work. Being bilingual has allowed me to connect and work with Spanish-speaking families in need of support. After graduating, I plan to obtain an LCSW and provide accessible and culturally relevant services to diverse communities in Los Angeles or Northern California (e.g., Sacramento, San Jose, or Monterey Bay). My goal is to continue working with individuals in need and to destigmatize mental health services for communities of color.



Jesse Ramirez

He/Him/His (EI)

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I am an MSW candidate from California State University, Long Beach. My concentration is integrated health, and I expect to graduate in May 2022. My current field placement is with Victory Starts Now, a community-based restoration program for people found incompetent to stand trial due to persistent and severe mental health illnesses. In this setting and in my previous practicum at SHIELDS For Families, Inc., I have facilitated individual and group counseling sessions in English and Spanish that incorporate mindfulness-based practices, motivational interviewing, cognitive-behavioral techniques, and psychoeducation with issues related to complex trauma, adverse childhood experiences, substance use, homelessness, incarceration, and immigration enforcement. My MSW thesis is a qualitative phenomenological study that explores the unique needs and experiences of Latino/a/x immigrants who have been convicted of a DUI in Southern California. I have contributed as a research assistant with exploratory studies that examined how COVID-19 affected the provision of social services for Latinx immigrants and their respective community practitioners in the United States. I plan to become a licensed clinical social worker in Southern California and will pursue a doctorate in social welfare with the purpose of providing quality-based behavioral health services for men, immigrants, refugees, and the Chicano/a/x and Latino/a/x communities.



Angel Ramos

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I am an MSW candidate at California State University, Long Beach with an expected graduation of May, 2022. I am concentrating in Integrated Health. I am currently placed at the Los Angeles Centers for Alcohol and Drug Abuse. As an evidence-based practitioner, I have co-authored "Alcohol and Condomless Insertive Anal Intercourse Among Black/Latino Sexual-Minority Male Non-PrEP Users" which was published in Urban Social Work. My post-graduate goal is to become a psychotherapist working with individuals and families experiencing challenges related to mental health and/or substance use disorders. I also have a strong professional interest in supporting the development and implementation of tailored behavioral health interventions centered on protecting the health of Black and Latinx sexual minorities. As a result of my educational and professional experiences, which include community-based participatory research, psychotherapy, and culturally sensitive community outreach and engagement, my thesis seeks to understand what is needed for the development of interventions to promote the uptake of biomedical interventions to prevent HIV prevalence among Afrolatinx sexual minorities. My plans are to obtain advanced training to meet my goals.



Cristal Ramos

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My name is Cristal; I am pursuing a Master's in Clinical Social Work at Washington University in St. Louis. I am currently a Racial Equity Fellow interning with Alive and Well Communities (AWC). There, I am integrating a racial equity framework and utilizing change management concepts to promote anti-racist practices within the organization and the broader St. Louis community. In addition to my work at AWC, I am working under the Rural Communities Opioid Response Program (RCORP) as a subcontractor providing evaluation, implementation, and clinical support to Macoupin County Public Health Department in Illinois. I will also be interning with the Transition Center in St. Louis providing life-skill support to returning citizens. My prior experience includes providing wrap-around services to unhoused individuals struggling with co-occurring disorders. I also served as social services manager for an immigration legal services non-profit where I helped develop the agency's social services unit. My career goal is to obtain clinical licensure to provide mental health and substance use treatment services to currently or formally incarcerated adults. There I worked with both detained and non-detained clients. My passion is based on restorative justice and is rooted in compassion and empathy for all persons. I am committed to creating solutions that increase access to services and promote social and economic development in my community and with families impacted by the criminal legal system. I am primarily looking to work in Washington State, but I am open to other west coast states and southern states.



Andrewnette Reed

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My name is Andrewnette Reed. I am currently enrolled in my final year of the MSW program at the University of Washington in Tacoma, WA. My current practicum placement is in the Office of Student Advocacy & Support at my university where I support students in identifying and finding resources to overcome barriers that threaten their academic success. This position has also allowed me the opportunity to work on program development, proposal/grant writing, and community organizing. My background in social services ranges from working with adult victims/survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking to working with local early learning programs and child services. Through these experiences my interest has evolved into African American/Black perinatal mental health. I am a certified birth doula, trained postpartum doula, and trained breast/chest-feeding peer counselor. After graduation I will immediately begin working toward my licensure and provide wraparound services to pregnant and postpartum people.



Terrell Richardson

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My name is Terrell Richardson, and I am a student in the Joint Master of Social Work program between North Carolina A&T State University and the University of North Carolina (UNC) Greensboro. My MSW program is a clinical program that prepares us to work with populations from diverse backgrounds, emphasizing multiculturalism. My current field placement is with Counseling Services at North Carolina A&T State University. My research interests are first-generation, high-achieving Black males in college, especially historically Black colleges and universities. Postgraduation, I hope to engage in implementation and assessment that is culturally grounded. I am incredibly passionate about merging social work and higher education. I earned a master of education in student affairs from UNC Greensboro and hope to use my education to serve students in college better. I have 4+ years serving minority college students. I desire to increase retention and persistence rates among Black males in college.



Emma Rust

they/them/theirs and ey/em/eirs

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My name is Emma Rust. I am a 2nd year clinical social work student at the University of Chicago. Currently I am placed at the Chicago Women's Health Center where I provide anti-oppressive, trauma-informed, client-centered counseling to predominantly queer and trans, Black, Indigenous, people of color (QTBIPOC). As a person who experiences compounding oppression through the intersection of my race, gender, and sexual orientation, I know it is crucial to provide services that don't force clients to compromise who they are, and that can anticipate the unique challenges QTBIPOC experience. Because of this, it is my goal to obtain my LCSW to open an affirming and radical private practice specifically for QTBIPOC individuals, couples, and families. While the focus of my current placement is individual therapy, I also conduct intakes and psycho-social assessments, provide gender affirming letters and disability documentation, and actively engage in the process of values-driven organizational visioning and procedure design. Outside of clinical social work, I have a large breadth of skills from my experience as an abolitionist community organizer, facilitator, mediator, trainer, and equity/conflict consultant. Currently I am interested in seeking employment in Minneapolis or St. Paul. I am open to variety of workplaces, including private practices and non-profits that serve LGTQBIA2S+ folks, BIPOC community members, criminalized populations, and survivors of interpersonal violence. I am also interested in working at DBT clinics or other 3rd wave CBT focused services that will allow me to grow my training and skills.



Alexa Fe Skandar

She/Her/Ella

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I am an MSW student in my final semester at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, with a focus on direct practice/clinical social work. I hold a B.A. in Conflict Analysis and Resolution, with a concentration in interpersonal conflict and identity studies. I am currently the bilingual (Spanish/English) clinical intern at AHB Center for Behavioral Health and Wellness, where most of my clients are mothers and families navigating significant life changes. Prior to beginning my graduate studies, I spent seven years conducting research with the Duke University Center for Child and Family Policy. I also have experience working with families and individuals affected by domestic violence, as well as advocacy work in immigration and labor rights. As an adolescent, I was immersed in cross-cultural experiences, sharing time between the US and Bolivia in addition to completing high school in the Czech Republic. As a result of these experiences, cultural humility is an indispensable part of my clinical focus. I hope to incorporate my understanding of conflict as a potential catalyst for change and healing in my work with families, particularly within Latinx communities. After graduation, I plan to seek employment in the triangle area of North Carolina.



Deniale Urbina

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My name is Deniale Urbina (den-yell ur-bee-nuh). I am an Army veteran pursuing my MSW degree at Simmons University with an emphasis on clinical practice. I completed my internship at a community mental health center in Augusta, GA, where I was subsequently hired as the lead counselor for the local Mental Health Court program. As lead counselor, I assist participants experiencing severe and persistent mental illness and co-occurring substance use disorders navigate the intersection between mental health and the criminal justice system. In addition to managing a clinical caseload, I am responsible for educating the court on evidence-based practice and advocating for the ethical treatment of program participants. I have experience using cognitive and body-based approaches in individual and group therapy, as well as conducting biopsychosocial assessments, case management, and community networking. Following my graduation in May 2022, I will be relocating to Los Angeles, CA, where I hope to work with the American Indian and Alaska Native population. As an enrolled member of the Pueblo of Acoma, I am passionate about healing intergenerational trauma, decolonizing social work practice, and improving mental health services for indigenous and other marginalized communities. I envision joining a team that leverages my military leadership skills and counseling experience to pursue similar goals and increase BIPOC representation in mental health care.



Catherine Yang

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I am Catherine Yang, a master of social work candidate with a concentration in mental health at Boston College. I am working to become a licensed clinical social worker, working in behavioral health in outpatient counseling settings. My previous experience includes working with children in school psychology research and working with children on the autism spectrum in applied behavioral analysis and behavioral therapy. As a speaker of English, Spanish, and Mandarin, I hope to provide culturally sensitive care to Latinx and other immigrant populations and to reduce stigma surrounding mental health services in community settings. I am currently placed at NEW Health Charlestown, a federally qualified health center, working in integrated behavioral health by collaborating with the medical staff for behavioral health evaluations and an individual counseling caseload.