

2018 – 2019 HEALS Scholars Directory



Melina Acosta, MSW Student

University of Texas at Austin

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Melina Acosta is a masters-level social work student from The University of Texas at Austin. Her professional interests include family mental health service provision and community-based prevention and outreach efforts with Latino and other minority clients.



Elizabeth Acree, MSW Student

Arizona State University

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Elizabeth Acree is a second year Master's student in the Arizona State University's School of Social Work. She has worked within the developmental disability's community, off and on, for the better part of a fifteen years. Her dedication, continuing interest & passion for this population comes from a more personal place than the average social worker. Elizabeth has a child with complex neurodevelopmental disabilities, with a complicated presentation of cognitive, medical and behavioral needs. This unique life experience has turned my focus, and all my energy, into becoming a knowledgeable and tenacious advocate for children and adults with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Her personal story has created an unexpected, but real passion for this area of service. Because of this, she is positive she will, in one way or another, spend her career working for this severely marginalized population.

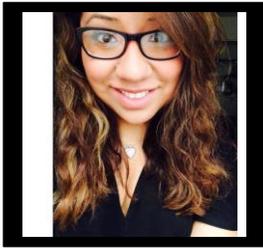


Jeanique Angelain, BSW Student

Southern University at New Orleans

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Jeanique is 30 year old undergrad studying Social Work at Southern University at New Orleans. She is Vice President of SUNO's Social Work club, member of the Epsilon Chi chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc, and member of the Natural Hair Club. After graduation, Jeanique plans to attend SUNO'S Social Work Grad program, following graduate school, she'll be striving for her doctorate.



Claudia Arruela, MSW Student

University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign
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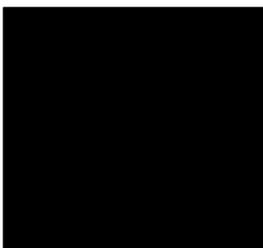
Claudia is completing her masters in Social Work at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Her HEALS field placement site is at the Champaign-Urbana Public Health District. She assists the adolescent case manager by completing depression and substance abuse screenings during the adolescent's wellness visits. She also manages the department's social media by educating teens on health and other community resources. Claudia plans to work with refugees and undocumented immigrants in Chicago upon the completion of her internship



Sydney Arsenault, BSW Student

University of South Carolina
sydneya@email.sc.edu

Sydney is a senior BSW student at the University of South Carolina. Her research and practice interests include women's health, HIV prevention and treatment, and empowerment. Sydney is currently an intern at Healthy Columbia, where she helps conduct health screenings, assists clients with finding insurance, and community organizing. Sydney is also a research assistant for a social innovation lab at UofSC.



Malisa Baca-Milton, BSW Student

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Kelsey Barnett, BSW Student

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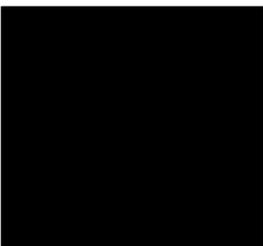
Kelsey Barnett's HEALS field practicum site is at the Champaign-Urbana Public Health District, where she is developing a campaign and agency training to promote and administer the HPV vaccination. She aspires to pursue a career in strategic planning and development of community programs within the sphere of social and public policy. Kelsey is a student at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.



Felicia Bender, BSW Student

University of Central Florida
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Felicia Bender is a Florida native and a current student at the University of Central Florida. She will graduate this spring with her Bachelors of Social Work and Certificate in Aging Studies. In high school Felicia enjoyed working at assisted living communities where she served meals to residents. Later Felicia began working full-time in multiple assisted livings over seven years while in college. Felicia is passionate about the aging population and hopes to utilize her degrees to alter the ways in which we provide care to those living with Alzheimer's disease or another type of dementia. She is also interested in providing valuable input in the creation of policies and influence the ways that we develop programs for those who are aging. She hopes to begin graduate school next Fall and pursue a Masters degree in either Social Work or Public Administration



Nichole Blanford, BSW Student

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Jessica Bonardelli, MSW Student

Michigan State University
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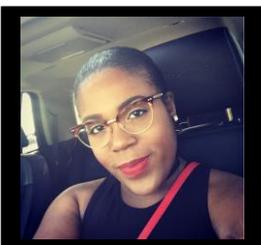
Jessica Bonardelli is an Advanced Standing MSW student at Michigan State University. She is from Flushing, Michigan, and obtained her BSW from the University of Michigan-Flint, along with a B.S. in Human Biology from Michigan State University. She is currently interning in a hospital setting, particularly in crisis intervention and emergency medicine psychiatric evaluations. Her long-term practice goals include working toward a healthcare system in which all patients feel empowered and comfortable to seek the best and most appropriate care for themselves, and to work hand-in-hand with their providers to reach their own personal healthcare goals.



Sierra Bridges, MSW Student

Southern University at New Orleans
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Sierra Bridges is a second year Grad Student at Southern University at New Orleans' School of Social Work. Concentrating on Health and Mental Health, Sierra has earned great deal of experience at Children's Hospital Child Advocacy Center and Access Health Louisiana. She also has a special love for individuals who are dealing with schizophrenia and various other chronic diseases. For fun, Sierra enjoys documentaries on Serial Killers and volunteering in her community.



Erica Carroll, MSW Student

University of Maryland
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Erica L. Carroll is an Advanced Standing MSW student at the University of Maryland School of Social Work. A Maryland native, she received her BSW from Morgan State University in 2018. She is currently interning at The University of Maryland Medical Center in the Women's and Children's Department. She works with families in Labor and Delivery, OB/GYN clinics as well as the NICU. Her primary goal upon graduation is to work as a harm reduction focused perinatal social worker. In her free time Erica enjoys reading, listening to spiritual and therapeutic podcasts and spending time with her husband and three daughters.



Jennifer Coria, MSW Student

Michigan State University

coriajen@msu.edu

Jennifer Coria received her BSW in Calvin College. She is currently an Advanced Standing MSW student in Michigan State University. She is on the clinical track and will be graduating in Spring 2019. Her current placement is in Ascension Providence Hospital located in Novi, MI as a medical social worker. As a privileged Latina, her career interest includes advocating for and providing quality health care for Hispanics, especially immigrants from Latin America. In her free time, Jennifer likes to spend time with her family and friends, read books, and exercise.



Ellen Curtin, MSW Student

University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign

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Ellen Curtin is a Master's in Social Work student with an Advanced Clinical focus in Healthcare at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She is currently an intern at Northwestern Memorial Hospital in Chicago, and she is in the Medical Intensive Care Unit and the Trauma Surgery floor. She plans on pursuing clinical work in a hospital setting upon graduation, however, she has strong interests in research and political advocacy and plans on always incorporating that into her future practice.



Maya Edwards, BSW Student

Southern University at New Orleans

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Dominique Fay, MSW Student

University of South Carolina
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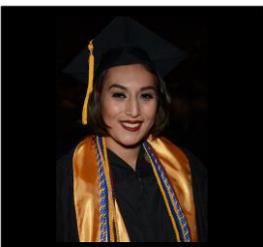
Dominique Fay is a recent graduate from the Bachelor of Social Work program at the University of South Carolina. She is originally from New Jersey but moved to Columbia for college. She is currently pursuing her Masters of Social Work at her alma matter. During her undergraduate experience, she interned with Richland County School District One in both the district office and with Hopkins Middle School. Currently, she is interning at Lexington Medical Center in Outpatient Oncology and on an Inpatient Generalist Floor. Dominique's interest in social work started very young when she started delivering meals for Meals On Wheels with her grandfather. In the future she would like to continue with her passion of Medical Social Work.



Gilarys Garcia, BSW Student

University of Central Florida
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Gilarys Garcia was born and raised in San Juan, Puerto Rico. She moved to Florida four years ago. She is currently pursuing a Bachelor of Social Work and a certificate in Children Services at the University of Central Florida. She is currently doing her internship at Grace Medical Home. This is a faith-based organization that serves low-income populations that do not have access to healthcare. She is interested in pursuing a Master of Social Work after she graduates with her bachelors, and later on to get licensed. Her ultimate goal is to work at the macro level making policy change.



Zyteldar Garzon, MSW Student

University of Central Florida
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Zyteldar Garzon is a student attending the University of Central Florida currently pursuing a masters degree in social work. Currently in the clinical year of her program, she is interning with the department of Patient and Family Counseling at Winnie Palmer Hospital for Women and Children. As the previous Director of a non-profit mental health clinic, mental health is a key social issue of interest to her. As she continues to grow as a clinician, Zyteldar hopes to develop her career with a focus on delivery accessible mental health services.



Rachel Gonzalez, MSW Student

University of Maryland
RachelGonzalez@live.com

Rachel Gonzalez received her BSW from Salisbury in 2018, and she is currently enrolled in the MSW program at University of Maryland, Baltimore. She is on the clinical track, specializing in health care social work. She completed her undergrad field placement at Union Hospital of Cecil County in oncology. Her current placement is at the VA Maryland Health Care System in Baltimore City. She works with Post 9/11 Veterans and helps them with the complex transition from military service to civilian life. She was inspired to pursue a career in social work after the Baltimore Riots in April 2015. Rachel believes medical social work is an incredible way to impact vulnerable populations through the social determinants of health. In her free time, Rachel likes to spend time with her boyfriend, a fellow social worker, and their two cats. She has a passion for audiobooks, makeup artistry, and fortnite.



Kianna Goodwin, Lyons Scholar, MSW Student

University of Wisconsin – Madison
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Kianna Goodwin is in the accelerated MSW program at the University of Wisconsin-Madison focusing on mental health. She decided to pursue her degree after several years of working in crisis intervention as an advocate for victims of sexual assault and domestic violence in Madison. Before that, Goodwin lived abroad for three years in Vietnam, India, and China. One of her most memorable experiences was doing research on laws and protections for women and minorities experiencing violence and discrimination with a non-profit that focused on participatory media in Goa, India. Goodwin's second-year advanced placement will be at Anesis Center for Marriage and Family Therapy. Although she will be working largely with families, she looks forward to the opportunity to incorporate her victim services skills into her work with survivors of trauma in their teen and prisoner re-entry program groups. Goodwin is passionate about contemplative research and practice, harm-reduction, and social justice. She looks forward to integrating these passions into her clinical practice in the future.



Leigh Green, Lyons Scholar, MSSA Student

Case Western Reserve University
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Leigh Green is a candidate for a Masters in Social Service Administration degree at Case Western Reserve University. For 18 years, she was the Director of Social Services for an African American owned and operated Skilled Nursing Facility whose residents were predominantly African American. In 2014, Greene became the director of the Youngstown Office on Minority Health in Ohio. The office gives a considerable amount of time informing, educating and empowering the minority populations to take a more preventative role in their health. Recently she has focused on educating the community on the high rates of black infant mortality in the Greater Youngstown community. Greene is a core team member of the Mahoning Youngstown (MY) Baby 1st Coalition and sits on many of the coalitions sub-committees. She is the co-chair to the Greater Youngstown Community Dialogue on Racism and with members of MY Baby's 1st Coalition recently released the video "Dads Do Matter" that is targeted to fathers in the at-risk community. After graduation, Greene plans on continuing her work with the Youngstown Office on Minority Health bringing knowledge from course work and field study to enhance the work of the office with a concentrated effort to health equity.



Amy Jeffrey, BSW Student

St. Catherine University – University of St. Thomas
ajjeffrey@stkate.edu

Amy Jeffrey is a BSW student at St. Catherine University in St. Paul, Minnesota. She is currently interning at Our Lady of Peace Hospice in St. Paul. In her free time, she enjoys spending time with friends and family and exploring their beautiful state of Minnesota! After graduation she plans on pursuing to get her Masters Degree in Social Work in hopes to one day working with children and their families who have a life threatening illness.



Faith Kithome, MSW Student

University of South Carolina
faithskithome@gmail.com

Faith Kithome is an MSW/MPH Candidate in her last year at the University of South Carolina. Her main interests include health and social work policy, and she would also like to explore opportunities to work in different types of advocacy. During Faith's internship at the Richland library, a 2017 National Medal Winner of Museum and Library Service recipient, she learned about the transformative abilities of shared public spaces for library patrons and gained an interest in exploring other institutions with similar services. Inspired by this experience, Faith sought out currently as Policy and Advocacy Intern with AARP South Carolina analyzing policies which impact older adults. More importantly in a position to contribute each time AARP SC partners with another institutions within community. Faith aspires to pursue a career in health policy analysis and development.



Blythe Kramer, BSW Student

St. Catherine University – University of St. Thomas
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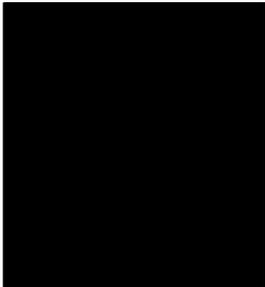
Blythe is a BSW student at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minnesota, where she also studies Spanish and Public Health. She is placed as a case-management intern at People's Center Clinics and Services in downtown Minneapolis. Blythe hopes to pursue a career increasing use of culturally-relevant care and improving access to health care for minority communities, especially those with immigrant or refugee status.



Change Kwesele, Lyons Scholar, Doctoral

University of Michigan
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Change (pronounced 'Chong-ay') is a third-year doctoral student in the Joint Social Work and Psychology program at the University of Michigan. She completed a White House Internship and U.S. Fulbright Program in Zambia before earning her Master of Public Health from Emory University. Change recently completed her Master of Social Work and her research focuses on youth holistic wellness, quality of life outcomes, and youth civic engagement in the United States and Sub-Saharan Africa. She approaches her work from a biopsychosocial perspective and community based participatory framework. When she is not in the classroom Change enjoys photography, writing, dancing, traveling and just being creative.



Lisa Lee, BSW Student
Arizona State University,
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Emily Mayer, BSW Student
Michigan State University
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Emily Mayer is senior at Michigan State. She will be graduating in May with a BASW, as well as with 2 minors, one in Health Promotion and another in Human Behavior and Social Services. She is planning on remaining at MSU next year to receive her Masters of Social Work with a concentration in Clinical Social Work, so she can work with children and families to help them become their happiest and healthiest selves. In her spare time she enjoys going to the MSU football and basketball games, spending time outdoors, camping, reading, and cooking.



Gretchan Menze, MSW Student
St. Catherine University – University of St. Thomas
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Gretchan Menze is a MSW student at University of St. Thomas/St. Catherine's University in St. Paul, Minnesota. Her clinical placement is at Children's Minnesota-St. Paul in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU). Gretchan will graduate in May 2019 and hopes to combine her passions for children and healthcare by doing social work in a medical setting. In her free time, Gretchan enjoys traveling. She plans to travel to New Zealand in March 2019.



Kayla Meyer, MSW Student

University of Central Florida

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Kayla plans to pair her current experience and abilities with an advanced degree in Social Work allowing her to continue to serve marginalized populations by being an advocate for equal access to social programs and mental health services. She is a Masters in Social Work Graduate Research Assistant and Clinical intern at Orlando Health. Throughout her time at UCF she has worked on NIH grants pertaining to risky behavior in men who sleep with men (MSM) and AIDS. In addition to other grants pertaining to Black Deaf Women and interpersonal and relationship violence. She is one of the 40 national NASW & CSWE HEALS Scholars. Her goal is pair research with fieldwork to serve marginalized populations as an advocate for equal access to social programs and mental health services.



Danielle Misterka, BSW Student

University of Maryland

dmist1@umbc.edu

Danielle Misterka is a senior at The University of Maryland Baltimore County Campus and a double major in the fields of Social Work and Psychology. Danielle is the Undergraduate Student Representative on the NASW board and the 2018/2019 President of Student Social Work Association at UMBC. Danielle's field placement is with The University of Maryland Medical Systems Midtown Campus on the Behavioral Health Inpatient Unit. For the past five years, Danielle has facilitated the role of Family Navigator on grant funded research with The University of Maryland Department of Child Psychology.



Casey Paschall, MSW Student

Arizona State University
capascha@asu.edu

Casey Paschall is a graduate student in his concentration year at Arizona State University (ASU). Prior to beginning his graduate program, he earned his associate degree from Mesa Community College. Upon graduating from the bachelor's in social work program at ASU in 2017, he was accepted into the advanced standing graduate program at ASU's School of Social Work. He is a non-traditional student who wanted a second career where he would be helping people in an interprofessional healthcare environment. During his bachelor's in social work program, he interned at the Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council. There he helped build a coalition of self-advocacy groups from across Arizona, representing groups with many types of disabilities. He has also volunteered at a court mandated, behavioral health hospital. Currently he is attending classes at ASU and interning at St. Joseph's Transitional Care Clinic. There he works with an interdisciplinary team of healthcare professionals to provide well-rounded medical care and case management to their patients. Casey Paschall lives in Phoenix, Arizona.



Melissa Rapp, MSW Student

Metropolitan State University of Denver
mrapp5@msudenver.edu

Melissa Rapp, concentration year MSW student at Metropolitan State University of Denver. She interests and focuses in school have included healthcare and older adults. Melissa is currently interning as a Behavioral Health Intern at an integrated primary care clinic in Boulder, CO. She has a background working in homeless services as a Case Manager, in an emergency shelter, an eviction prevention program and a day shelter serving only older adults 55+. She is passionate about the intersections that effect older adults regarding their physical, mental and social health. It's through this work that She became interested in working in medical settings, given her exposure to clients who were hospitalized or needing extensive medical care. Melissa is seeking opportunities to continue her career in the healthcare system, specifically in the emerging field of integrated care.



Youstina Rezkalla, BSW Student

University of South Carolina
yar@email.sc.edu

Youstina Rezkalla is a senior BSW at the University of South Carolina Columbia. She was originally born in Egypt and immigrated to the states as an infant. After graduation She plans to continue school by hopefully getting a dual degree with a Juris Doctorate and Master's in Social work. She is passionate about relieving the school to prison pipeline in South Carolina and helping adolescents who have been victimized by it. This includes helping their mental instability, their cognitive ability, and the health disparity they may face from the harsh conditions they were exposed to.



Ayanna Robinson, MSW Student

New York University
arob31321@yahoo.com

Ayanna has 2 years of case management experience working for Equitas Health (formerly AIDS Resource Center). As of Fall 2018, Ayanna will begin the Advanced Standing MSW program at New York University. In addition to her studies, she will be completing field placement at NYU Langone Hospital in the department of Inpatient Medicine. Following graduation Ayanna would like to work in the Mental Health field and advocate in changing the perception of seeking mental health specifically in minority communities.



Amelia Schaefer, MSW Student

Michigan State University
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Amelia received her BSW from Michigan State University in 2017, and is currently an Advanced Standing student set to graduate in May, 2019. Her field placement is on the behavioral health team at Sparrow/MSU Family Medicine Residency Program Clinic. She strongly believes that multidisciplinary teamwork and increased accessibility are vital to ensuring the health of the nation. Her passion is to provide clients with equal respect, attention, and service in her placement and future career.



Caitlyn Schneeman, BSW Student

University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign
cschne7@illinois.edu

Caitlyn is a senior at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign majoring in social work and minoring in political science. After graduation, she is planning to attend graduate school somewhere in Illinois to work towards an MSW. She is still figuring out what field of social work she wants to go in after graduation, but right now she would like to work for a large nonprofit where she can do more macro-level advocacy work.



Amanda Schoeppe, MSW Student

Michigan State University
schoep2@msu.edu

Amanda Schoeppe is currently an MSW student at Michigan State University. She has a strong passion for working with people with disabilities, especially adolescents. Additionally, She has an interest in the medical field and how can better serve people with disabilities in the medical environment.



Sadie Shattuck, BSW Student

Michigan State University
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Sadie Shattuck is a senior at Michigan State University studying arts & humanities and social work. She is interested in learning how civic engagement, service learning, and community-based participatory research can build sustainable relationships and promote growth and health in communities. In her free time, she enjoys reading, running, painting, hiking, doing yoga, and practicing her Spanish.



Karlee Shave, MSW Student
Michigan State University
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Karlee Shave is a second-year Masters of Clinical Social Work student at Michigan State University graduating in May 2019. She obtained her undergraduate from Western Michigan University in Interdisciplinary Health Services. She has been privileged enough to work in multiple settings with children and would like to continue to do so in the future. She is currently completing her internship at a pediatric office assisting with Behavioral Health assessments and consulting through a specialized integrated health program with Community Mental Health.



Savannah Shifflet, BSW Student
University of Texas at Austin
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Savannah Shifflet is a senior BSW student at the University of Texas at Austin. She has been interested in healthcare her whole life. After her first year as a nursing student, she realized she wanted to focus on the social justice aspects of healthcare, which lead her to pursue social work. Along with her BSW, she is pursuing certificates in business foundations and social inequality, health, and policy with a focus on public health in order to supplement her social work learning. Her field placement is at the Seton Hospital in Austin, Texas.



Lauren Sobotta, MSW Student
University of St. Thomas and St. Catherine University
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Lauren Sobotta is a Masters of Social Work student in the dual program with the University of St. Thomas and St. Catherine University in St. Paul, MN. Interning at the Veteran's Affairs Medical Center, she has become involved in a research project regarding women's completion rates of substance abuse treatment programs. Her interest in research stems from an undergraduate group research project, which was later presented at the Undergraduate Research Symposium and published in the Journal of Undergraduate Research. Currently residing in Minneapolis, MN, Lauren hopes to work as a clinician while continuing to grow her interest in research upon graduating in the spring.



Madison Straw, BSW Student

University of Maryland
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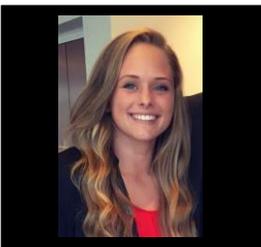
Madison Straw is a BSW HEALS recipient. She attends the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. Her field practicum is at Saint Agnes Hospital Population Health Program. She works with a wide range of individuals from ages 18-90's years old and most have chronic health problems. She helps provide patients with access to resources in their community and give emotional support to patients. After graduating she hopes to go on to graduate school to obtain her masters degree in social work.



Landon Talbott, MSW Student

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Landon Talbott is an advanced standing graduate students at Metropolitan State University of Denver, where he is pursuing a graduate degree in social work. Landon comes from a healthcare family and is very excited that he is continuing the family legacy and even more pleased to be providing social work services to a wide and diverse range of people. Landon hopes to work in a hospital or skilled nursing facility following graduation; where he intends on going back for his doctorate in Healthcare Administration.



Danielle Tenney, MSW Student

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University of Texas at Austin

Danielle Tenney is a masters-level social work student from The University of Texas at Austin. Her professional interests include children and families, specifically with pediatric oncology. Danielle is a former division 1 softball player and enjoys using her education to better the experience of young student-athletes as a current softball coach in her free time.

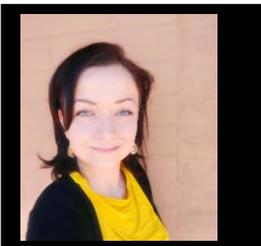


Luan (Lu) Tran, BSW Student

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University of Texas at Austin

Luan Tran (Lu) is a fourth year student in the BSW program at the Steve Hicks School of Social Work at the University of Texas at Austin. Lu is originally from the Dallas-Fort Worth area and is currently finishing up courses for the semester, before entering his field placement at Front Steps/ARCH Recuperative Program in Spring of 2019, working with homeless clients in nursing care. He is also a founder of a student-founded and student-run 501(c)3 nonprofit, *Socks for the Sole*. After graduation this upcoming May, Lu hopes to attend medical school and utilize his social work background into medical practice.



Gerri Wilder, BSW Student

Arizona State University

GWilder@asu.edu

Gerri is presently a senior in the Bachelor of Social Work program. She spent her early childhood in Los Angeles, California, where she witnessed people living in poverty and struggling with mental and physical illnesses. This sparked her interest in helping others. She has worked as a House Manager for women in recovery from substance abuse. She has also interned at a resource center that provided emergency temporary housing, rapid rehousing, employment services, restoring civil rights, empowerment classes, as well as mental and physical health referrals. As opposed to medical models, social work uses biopsychosocial models which allows clients to feel a sense of competence and empowerment. For this reason she decided to pursue medical social work as a career so she could provide individualized, evidence-based patient care.



Sierra Williams, MSW Student

Michigan State University
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Sierra Williams is a Michigan State University alumna from Rockford, MI with a background in psychology. She is finishing her 3rd and final year of the MSU School of Social Work Part-Time Master's Program. Sierra's recent experience includes working with dementia clients and children with a wide range of disabilities including autism. She has also worked to provide crisis intervention at the MSU Veterinary Medical Center. She is passionate about making a difference and helping others and hopes to one day work with children and families in a hospital setting. Sierra is currently interning at the Lemmen-Holton Cancer Pavilion in Grand Rapids, MI where she provides psychotherapy to cancer patients and families.



Cara Zajac, MSW Student

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Cara Zajac is a progressive policy analyst focused on community equity. She specializes in data analysis, research design, and project management. She organizes wellness workshops and teaches resiliency-building art classes. As a social work professional, she has received multiple grants for business and non-profit development consulting projects. Creatively, she directs local theater productions and serves as a storyteller and balloon entertainer.