

THE INAUGURAL SPRING PUBLICATION FROM
THE GRADUATE COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK



INSIGHT

SPRING **2024**



Graduate College of Social Work
UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON

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About

INsight serves as a captivating showcase, spotlighting the remarkable achievements and contributions of our students, esteemed alumni and dedicated faculty members. Join us as we celebrate the diverse talents and impactful endeavors that define the vibrant community within the University of Houston's Graduate College of Social Work.

Mission

The University of Houston Graduate College of Social Work (GCSW) prepares diverse leaders in practice and research to address complex challenges and achieve sustainable social, racial, economic and political justice, locally and globally, through exceptional education, innovative research and meaningful community engagement.

Vision

Our vision is to achieve social, racial, economic and political justice, local to global.

Contributors

Renia s. Butler | Communications Director
Norma Salcedo | Communications Manager
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uh.edu/socialwork

Editor's note: As we strive for excellence in our publication, we recognize the importance of maintaining accuracy and clarity in all our content. However, we understand that despite our best efforts, typos and errors may occasionally slip through the cracks. If you come across any typos, errors, or inconsistencies within our publication, we encourage you to report them to us promptly via gcswnews@uh.edu.

SPRING 2024

Message from the Interim Dean,



As the Interim Dean of the Graduate College of Social Work, I am delighted to welcome you to the Spring 2024 edition of **INsight**, a new publication for the college, which showcases the exceptional work, research and achievements of the Graduate College of Social Work faculty, staff, students and alumni. Entering the Social Work building each day, I am welcomed by the reimagined mosaic in the main lobby created by public artist Reginald Adams and am reminded of the social work values that underpin the education, research and

community outreach in the college. As my time as Interim Dean approaches the one-year mark, I am consistently amazed by the breadth of work in the college and the impact that the faculty, staff, students and alumni are making on our local, national and global communities.

As you continue reading, you will discover insightful content that celebrates the accomplishments of our faculty and students, while also highlighting the contributions of our alumni over the past two years. From innovative research projects to impactful community partnerships, each story demonstrates an unwavering commitment to excellence in social work research and education.

Looking ahead, I am pleased to announce that the University of Houston is launching the search for a permanent Dean for the GCSW. This is an exciting opportunity for the identification of a visionary leader who will help shape the future of the GCSW. I encourage the GCSW community to actively participate in the search process and to contribute your insights and perspectives.

A special note of appreciation to all who contributed to this publication, whether through writing, editing or sharing their experiences. Your passion and dedication are commendable and reflect the strength and resilience of the GCSW community.

Thank you for your continued support of the Graduate College of Social Work. Happy reading!

Best regards,

Sarah C. Larsen, Ph.D.
Interim Dean, Graduate College of Social Work
University of Houston



increasing Equitable Access

Enhancing Accessibility. Broadening Affordability.

SPRING 2024

Revisions have been made across our curriculum to better align course design and student learning with the college's Racial Justice Principles. Intentional strides have been made to help address the financial burdens and nationwide racial and ethnic disparities associated with student loan debt from pursuing an MSW degree, along with inequities associated with the costs of practicum education.

Last summer, the Office of the Provost and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) approved the GCSW's proposal to reduce the semester credit hours required for the college's MSW program, which greatly enhances the accessibility and affordability of our program.

The implementation of this proposal not only drastically decreases course completion hours for both full and advanced-standing students but, depending on enrollment and residency status, increases student savings for the overall program.

Student Savings **\$19,000**  **\$12,800**

* depending on enrollment and residency status

Moreover, the GCSW has shifted all four required practicum courses from either 2 or 3 credit hours to 1 credit hour, reducing the cost of each practicum course without changing the practicum clock hour requirements set by the social work education accreditation agency.

Open Access Materials  The college has also increased the number of courses that use only open access materials, including our entire generalist curriculum, limiting the need to purchase textbooks. Students who follow the face-to-face enrollment model are now required to attend no more than two days on campus each week, drastically reducing the time students have to commute to school and their transportation costs.

Number of Days on Campus 

Increased Access to Student Resources 

Shine Rewear Closet 

Other initiatives the GCSW has incorporated **include student access to:**

- **SHINE REwear Closet & Shared Regalia Program**
Mutual aid resources for students in any enrollment model at the GCSW to acquire casual and professional clothing, or regalia eliminating the rental fee which can cost around \$100.
- **Student Lounge Snack Pantry**
Students can pick up snacks and small meals, reducing students' need to purchase food while on campus. The pantry also has some items that can be taken home as needed.
- **Second Servings Donations**
Students have access to free sandwiches from Antone's every Tuesday afternoon.
- **Free meals for our UH-SL Hybrid MSW Students**
Meals have always been a part of the hybrid MSW program at the UH Sugar Land campus, with both breakfast and lunch provided at every class day. The meals have provided students not only food during the day, but also a chance to build community within and across cohorts.

 **Student Lounge Snack Pantry**

 **Second Servings Donations**

Decrease in Course Completion Hours



Practicum Course Cost Reduction



*Required Courses Credit Hours

Faculty in Focus

Spring 2024 Faculty

 **33 Full-time Faculty**

 **11 Adjunct Faculty**

SPRING 2024

Promotions

Celebrate. Recognize.

Recognizing and taking pride in the commendable accomplishments of our faculty and staff brings immense joy to the entire GCSW community. We are delighted to spotlight the earned promotions of Renia s. Butler as the director of communications, Jamie Parker as the newly appointed clinical associate professor, and Dr. Suzanne Pritzker, who has been promoted to the position of full professor.



RENIA s. BUTLER
Director of Communications



JAMIE PARKER
Clinical Associate Professor



DR. SUZANNE PRITZKER
Professor of Social Work

Faculty in Focus

Who. We. Are.

TRAUMA EDUCATION PROGRAM CELEBRATES 13TH ANNIVERSARY

Celebrating its 13th year, the Trauma Education Program (TEP) continues to be a leader in trauma education with a local and national impact. Led by Faculty Advisor Donna Amtsberg, the TEP is dedicated to preparing diverse leaders in trauma-informed practice through education, research and collaborations with community organizations.

With a focus on social justice, the program aims to develop trauma-informed clinical social work practitioners, guiding them from initial assessment to treatment planning. Donna expressed pride in the program's growth, both in student interest

(currently 64 students) and its overall expansion in impact and influence, saying it is not uncommon for GCSW students to state that they chose our master's program due in large part to the Trauma Education Program. Many students are willing to relocate to Houston in order to achieve their personal goals of trauma education.



Faculty in Focus

Who. We. Are

DR. CHIARA ACQUATI NAMED 2023 RESEARCH SEED GRANT RECIPIENT

Dr. Chiara Acquati was awarded a High Priority Area Research Seed Grant to assess the feasibility and acceptability of eCARE (Ellipsis Caregiver Assessment Enhancement), a mobile Artificial Intelligence (AI)-enabled tool for monitoring depression and anxiety among racial and ethnic minority cancer caregivers.

The Seed Funding Grant Program, overseen by the vice president for research and the Office of the Provost, is instrumental in driving the University’s research efforts. It strategically distributes seed research funds to high-priority areas, empowering research labs and groups to submit competitive proposals. Aligned with the University’s institutional thrusts—Cyber and Physical Security, Drug Discovery and Development, Sustainable Communities and Infrastructure, Accessible Health Care and Energy Security and Transition—the program dynamically invests in key research initiatives.

“This project strongly aligns with the mission of the Graduate College of Social Work and is centered on achieving social justice. By addressing health disparities and enhancing access to care for cancer caregivers from minoritized communities, the project exemplifies the college’s commitment to creating more equitable healthcare environments,” said Dr. Acquati.

The collaboration between researchers from the Graduate College of Social Work, Ellipsis Health and the Kelsey Research Foundation made this project possible. Serving as the principal investigator (PI), Dr. Acquati led a multidisciplinary team with expertise in psycho-oncology, AI-enabled mental health assessment and community engagement. Dr. Michael Aratow, chief medical officer and co-founder of Ellipsis Health, contributed expertise in AI technology and app development, while Ms. Ashley Alexander, president and CEO of the Kelsey Research Foundation, facilitated



collaborations with healthcare providers, oncology social workers and community programs for cancer caregivers, enhancing the project’s capacity to develop and implement effective interventions tailored to their needs.

The impact of this study extends beyond academic advancements, offering tangible contributions to policy, practice and community well-being. By addressing health disparities, leveraging technology and fostering interdisciplinary collaboration, the project has the potential to create lasting positive changes in psychosocial care delivery in oncology.



Research *in* Action

Fast Facts

4 Active Research Centers

23 Active Research Projects
(externally funded)

\$6.49M Research Expenditures
(based on FY 22-23)

UH Healthy Start

REDUCING RACIAL DISPARITIES IN MATERNAL AND PERINATAL HEALTH OUTCOMES

UH Healthy Start is a national initiative dedicated to enhancing the well-being of mothers, infants and families throughout the entire pregnancy journey and beyond. Utilizing community-based recruitment, coordinated care case management, home visits and outreach, along with educational efforts, Healthy Start aims to diminish infant and maternal mortality rates, enhance access to prenatal care and eliminate service-related barriers.

In Houston, maternal mortality is disproportionately high, particularly among Black women, with rates three times the national average. Recognizing the multifaceted factors influencing negative maternal and prenatal health outcomes, UH Healthy Start directs its focus towards addressing the fundamental issues involving individuals, systems and communities.

During a recent Gramercy meeting, UH Healthy Start team members came together to elevate the program’s success and the positive progression of its mothers. Here, program director La Sondra Noil, MSW, emphasized the program’s commitment to the people served and the primary objective of the caseworkers, doulas and nurses in equipping program participants with the necessary tools and treatment plans to regain control over their lives, empowering them to advocate for themselves and their infants.

Dr. McClain Sampson, associate professor and principal investigator for UH Healthy Start, underscores the significance of acknowledging and prioritizing the mother’s experience and creating customized treatment plans that align with the individual’s needs. “Providing voice and meaning to the lives of the mothers and



(From left to right: McClain Sampson, Ph.D, Cal Joubert, Naytrisha Orr, Louretta R. Nickerson, MSW, LaSondra N. Keys, MSW, Kimberly Taylor-Branch, RN, BSN, LaTasha Perry, MSW, Shaquaya Frank, and Skylar King)

fathers within the program and ensuring everyone has essential access to resources is a key step towards social justice,” Dr. Sampson affirms.

Community-Based Recruitment

There are five Healthy Start programs in Texas. Each of these programs has a Community Action Network (CAN) consisting of neighborhood residents, community leaders, consumers, medical and social service providers, faith-based leaders and business representatives who provide an infrastructure for comprehensive and collaborative planning. In addition to their fully community-based recruitment approaches, UH Healthy Start also offers flexible enrollment and partners with local community organizations to provide integrated care, further improving the quality of and access to health care and other supports (i.e., mental health and telehealth services, in-home nurse care, access to doula care).

Maternal care clinical practitioner Kimberly Taylor-Branch, RN, BSN, shared how her partnership with UH Healthy Start allows her to be an active participant in her community. “Removing barriers by

“Providing voice and meaning to the lives of the mothers and fathers within the program and ensuring everyone has essential access to resources is a key step towards social justice.”
— Dr. McClain Sampson

building rapport and personally extending my hand in educating and ensuring the health and safety of our high-risk clients within my community is my true passion point,” Kim shared.

UH Healthy Start caseworkers are an essential part of the program’s community outreach. They serve as the liaisons who bridge the gap between clients and services, educating the clients and providing that extra layer of support from the earliest phases of pregnancy to postpartum. Doula liaison and coordinated care case manager Shaquaya Frank encourages her clients to lean on their support and never feel ashamed to ask for help. “There is nothing more impactful than watching a mother thrive and grow into their new role,” Shaquaya says.

Serving Fathers

UH Healthy Start helps the full family unit, including the fathers. Fatherhood involvement coordinator Cal Joubert recruits dads with young babies and assists them with enrolling in educational programs and obtaining the support they need for both their families and themselves. As a native Houstonian, Cal is invested in being a part of his community and helping fathers build a solid foundation within their families. “If I can impart what I’ve learned as a father and from my father, it is my duty to reach back and give back,” he says. Cal tells us that he encourages his fathers to be patient and really value the importance of reading to their children, encouraging their partners to breastfeed, and male self-care.

Measuring Success

The goal of UH Healthy Start is to reduce maternal and perinatal racial disparities and remove barriers to equitable care. There are several ways that the program’s performance and success are measured. For UH Healthy Start team members, success is defined by the mother’s ability to utilize the resources provided and complete the program, starting with enrollment during the first trimester, carrying to full term, birthing a baby that meets the pre-term birth rate and participating in regular pre- and postpartum clinical

visits until the baby is 18 months old. “Healthy Start’s pre-term birth rate is lower than the pre-term birth rate in Houston. We are very proud of that,” Dr. Sampson shared.

Over the last five years, UH Healthy Start has graduated more than 800 mothers, fathers and babies from their program. Nearly 70% of Healthy Start participants are Black and half of those graduates enrolled during pregnancy. Through its comprehensive approach and dedicated team, UH Healthy Start strives to improve maternal and infant health outcomes in the Houston community and beyond. By doing so, the program contributes to the research on a hard-to-reach population that is often overlooked and underserved with the ultimate goal of healthy families.



(Cal Joubert, Father Involvement Coordinator)

RESEARCH

SUSTAIN Wellbeing COMPASS Coordinating Center

The SUSTAIN Wellbeing COMPASS Coordinating Center of the University of Houston Graduate College of Social Work has made a lasting impact in the fight against the HIV epidemic in the Southern U.S. over the past five years, particularly for Black and Latinx-led organizations. The SUSTAIN Center is one of four across the South funded by the Gilead COMPASS Initiative®, an unprecedented 10-year, more than \$100 million effort to address the Southern HIV epidemic. Under director and social work Associate Professor and Associate Dean of Doctoral Education Samira Ali, the center is focused on mental health, trauma-informed care, substance use (especially harm reduction and the opioid epidemic), telehealth and wellness in the context of HIV/AIDS.

The center provides justice-and community-centered grants, training, coaching, and conducts evaluation and research. The SUSTAIN Center has regranted approximately 60% of its \$10 million award to community-based organizations which otherwise might not have had the funding to strengthen their services.

Effectively combating HIV will require Southern HIV service organizations to support Black staff while they navigate traumas related to structural racism driving the epidemic. The UH teams highlights the power of defining and valuing Black-centered spaces to address trauma; reframing self-care from an individualistic responsibility to an institutionally supported, communal means of healing; and the role of the intervention in spurring organizational changes related to dismantling white supremacy work culture in southern HIV service organizations.



(From left to right Marcus Stanley, MPH, MCHES, Samira Ali, Ph.D., Bec Sokha Keo, Ph.D.)

SUSTAIN Wellbeing COMPASS Coordinating Center at UH

commemorates five years of combating AIDS/HIV epidemic in southern U.S. and receives substantial grant from Elton John Aids Foundation.



(UH Sustain Staff)

SPRING 2024

The H.E.A.R. Lab

The H.E.A.R. Lab stands committed to a profound mission that underscores the imperative role of scholars in advancing collaborative, accessible and anti-racist research that places communities at the forefront, igniting transformative social change. Fostering a collective capacity for scholars is essential to creating research that transcends traditional boundaries and resonates with diverse audiences.



(Pedro Ortiz and Associate Professor Sarah Carter Narendorf, LCSW, Ph.D.)

The H.E.A.R. Lab orchestrates a range of activities, trainings and events designed to raise awareness of anti-racist methodologies. Understanding that the foundation of anti-racist research lies in the commitment of scholars to embody anti-racist principles. Through intentional stimulating reflection and conversations scholars are encouraged to critically examine both themselves and their work. With the goal of creating a dynamic and introspective environment where the seeds of anti-racist research can germinate and flourish at its core.

In pursuit of impact, the H.E.A.R. Lab amplifies the reach of research findings. The Action Research Podcast is just one of the many tools used to generate and disseminate information that transcends traditional academic boundaries, ensuring that our research is accessible, influential, and connects practice to policy.



Student Success



Spring 2024 Enrollment

512 MSW Students



33 Ph.D. Students



ALBERTO CABRERA

There's a need for people who believe every life is significant. If we can understand and feel for each other, we can learn to overcome our differences and help one another. Empathy is the ultimate equalizer."

Doctoral student Alberto Cabrera selected as a fellow for the American Psychological Association's Interdisciplinary Minority Fellowship Program (IMFP). Cabrera's research within the Latinx community focuses on advocacy, improving access to mental health services, and empirically supported treatment of obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD).



MONICA MARTINEZ

"I want to explore ways to reduce and eradicate harm to Indigenous communities practicing psychedelic medicine."

MSW student Monica Martinez received the "Best Overall" poster award at the 2023 NASW Conference for her research on decolonizing psychedelic therapy. Which validates the increasing importance of social work in psychedelic treatment, as the field of psychedelic medicine continues to expand.



FRANCES FISHER

"It is the role of every social work practitioner to advocate for accessible and culturally competent mental health services for those communities who have been most impacted and affected by systemic oppression and lack of access to mental health services."

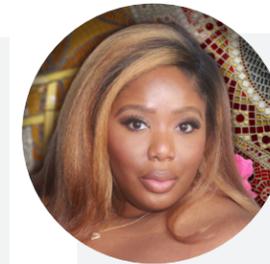
MSW student Frances Fisher selected as a 2023 Ima Hogg Scholarship recipient by The Hogg Foundation for Mental Health based on her commitment to strengthening the well-being of communities as professionals in the Texas mental health workforce.



GABY MOHR-AVITIA

"I always knew I wanted to do something that would bring me back to my community with tools for healing."

Doctoral student Gabby Mohr appointed to the newly constituted Student Advisory Board (SAB) charged with formalizing social work doctoral students' engagement with the Group for the Advancement of Doctoral Education in Social Work (GADE). The 10-member board comprises Ph.D. and DSW students from member institutions. The SAB will advance GADE's mission by joining the board of directors in developing initiatives that are responsive to student interests and concerns.



CHRISTIAN OHONBA

"I aim to empower overlooked women of color by sharing my personal mental health journey and victories."

MSW student Christian Ohonba selected as the Verne LaMarr Lyons Memorial Scholarship recipient by the NASW Foundation based on her experience with health/mental health practice and commit to working in African American communities.



LORENZO SALINAS

"I want to be someone who fights for the common person, someone who inspires people to do things that seem impossible."

Dual degree candidate for a Master of Social Work/Master of Public Policy Lorenzo Salinas was recently confirmed to serve on the City of Houston's Food Insecurity Board. Lorenzo's stellar academic performance, passion for public policy, advanced research skills and social work background to help the board guide city leaders' efforts to provide Houstonians with increased access to healthy food.

RECENT DOCTORAL GRADUATES

A special congratulatory tribute to those earning their Ph.D.'s from the GCSW during the Spring 2022 – Spring 2024. Your dedication, hard work, and scholarly achievements have not only earned you a well deserved doctoral degree but have also contributed significantly to the academic excellence of the GCSW.



GABRIELLE AQUINO



CHINYERE EIGEGE



BEC SOKHA KEO



LINDAMARIE OLSEN



GABY MOHR-AVITIA



YU JU HUANG



CAITLYN MYTELKA



NATALIA SANTIAGO



ARLENE BJUGSTAD



PRISCILLA KENNEDY



WEN XU

Advocacy IN Action



GCSW students participated in Social Work Advocacy Day (SWAD) in Austin to amplify the voices of mental health care professionals and social work students. The focus was on addressing pay disparities for all mental health professionals offering psychotherapy and ensuring financial support for social work practicum placements. This support is championed by Pay For Placements (P4P), a national movement dedicated to providing payments or stipends for social work practicum placements, with a specific emphasis on assisting students with financial need.



Alumni Illumination

The alumni of the Graduate College of Social Work (GCSW) play a pivotal role in shaping the future of social work and making a meaningful impact on communities. With a shared commitment to social justice, advocacy, and community engagement, GCSW alumni bring their expertise and passion to diverse fields within the realm of social work. As advocates for positive change, these dedicated professionals

contribute to the well-being of individuals and communities, addressing social challenges, and advancing the values instilled by their alma mater.

Alumni Illumination aims to elevate the voices, work, and collective achievements of those alumni who drive transformative change in society.



(Photo Caption: Erica Solis, MSW at the unveiling of the new Ph.D. Student Lounge)

Intentional. Interiors.

GCSW Alumna, Erica Solis has transformed the experiences of GCSW MSW and Ph.D. students by closing the gap between what the GCSW promotes in its mission and values and the actual physical spaces students are expected to learn in through intentional interior design. Erica's intentional application of decolonization design throughout the GCSW has created shared spaces for meaningful and authentic engagement among students, where all are equally represented.

"It really is more than just picking a color or buying a new sofa chair. It must be intentional spatial design for social justice."
— Erica Solis, MSW

Educate. Honor. Heal.

GCSW Alumni Ursela Knox leverages her knowledge gained as a GLOBE student and her passion for her native Fort Bend County to ensure the elevation and honoring of the lives and stories of the Sugar Land 95. Serving as a super volunteer for the Society of Justice & Equality for the People of Sugar Land (S.O.J.E.S.), an independent nonprofit organization dedicated to historic preservation and community education about African American contributions to Sugar Land and Fort Bend County, Texas, Ursela collaborates with legislative officials, appointed officers, community organizers and volunteers to address our history of racial injustice.



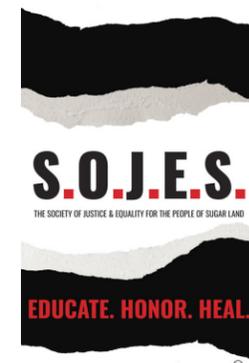
development of one of the most diverse and affluent counties in Texas," Ursela emphasized.

The term "Sugar Land 95" refers to the remains of 95 men—and one woman—unearthed by a heavy machine operator on Feb. 19, 2018, at the site of the James Reese Career and Technical Center in the Fort Bend Independent School District. Today, the Sugar Land 95 symbolize the dehumanizing system of modern-day slavery known as convict leasing, which was long overlooked and unimaginable.

S.O.J.E.S. is actively engaged in developing "The Sugar Land 95 Experience," a national traveling convict leasing museum and educational center, as part of its ongoing commitment to fostering awareness and understanding. This collaborative endeavor aims to facilitate education, memorialization, healing and reconciliation, bridging the gap between past injustices and present-day realities. Complementing this initiative, the organization amplifies its message through the grassroots podcast Black Sugar Not So Sweet, which is accessible in four countries, thereby extending the Society of Justice & Equality for the People of Sugar Land's influence on a global scale.

"My commitment to educate, honor, and heal through community building and advocacy is social justice."
— Ursela Knox, MSW

"As a native of Fort Bend County, I've always been intrigued by its rich history," Ursela explained. Following the discovery of the Sugar Land 95, Ursela began volunteering with S.O.J.E.S. to educate the world about the atrocities of convict leasing and related historical racial and social injustices that perpetuated racial oppression and exploitation of people of color across the South. "These individuals weren't just convicts; they were chemists and botanists trained in cultivating sugar cane. It's my obligation to honor their contributions to the



Learn more about the Society of Justice & Equality for the People of Sugar Land by visiting <https://www.sojesjustice.org>.

Art IN focus

Portraits and Murals

Over the past five years, the Graduate College of Social Work has enhanced the student experience through the incorporation of art, seamlessly weaving it into the fabric of our institution to serve as a source of inspiration for our graduates. This carefully selected art not only captivates the eye but also serves as a profound testament to the integral role that social work plays in our society. Each piece, thoughtfully designed, not only enhances our physical spaces but also serves as a platform to showcase and celebrate the incredible talent of local Houston artists.

As their work adorns our walls, these artists illuminate the profound impact of social work, creating a powerful narrative that transcends traditional boundaries. This artistic initiative not only fosters a visually stimulating environment but also reinforces the commitment of GCSW to blend creativity and compassion, reinforcing the transformative nature of social work through the lens of captivating and evocative art.

PULLING TOGETHER: Mural Reimagined

Public Artist Reginald C. Adams shared his vision behind the reimagining of the Pulling Together mural on the first floor of the college. Our new mural not only honors GCSW's legacy but also documents our evolution as a college. The alluring centerpiece is a point of pride reflecting the college's memories and determined vision to achieve social, racial, economic and political justice in every detail. This artistic expression of our social work values serves as both inspiration and reminder of our commitment to standing up, speaking out and taking action on behalf of marginalized communities with the distinct goal of liberation for all.

At its core, a singular stone symbolizes the unifying essence, binding together all elements within the mural. When the two majestic golden doors at the mural's heart swing open, they unveil a dazzling burst of light and color, encased by glass portraits of the artists responsible for its creation. As visitors step into the college, gazing upon their reflections, they seamlessly integrate into the artwork—true reflections of light and color.

Art IN Focus Portraits and Murals

ONWARD: A Continuation

ONWARD | The Next 50 Years is a series of twelve striking portraits by artist Anat Ronen and Sanah Brown-Bowers that began in 2019. Each portrait highlights GCSW students, alumni, and community activists alongside their social justice inspirations.

The portraits are proof that positive social justice work, throughout its history, is carried forth by ordinary citizens who dream of better lives for us all and then fight for it. The final portraits of the series were installed Fall 2022.



TOWARD: Liberation and Freedom

The mural, **'Toward: Liberation and Freedom'** by artist Tierney L. Malone was commissioned in August of 2021. Inspired by the Graduate College of Social Work's dynamic mission to encourage future social workers to return to being activists and abolitionists in the areas and issues that affect the communities they will serve. Each panel of the mural represents a book featured in the GCSW recommended reading list, which includes the works of activists and scholars advocating for a more moral, just and equitable society.

"This mural is a reflection of the GCSW's revolutionary vision for the future of the field of social work. Listening and learning from the past as you write and record towards a new future."
— Tierney L. Malone





Graduate College of Social Work
UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON



SAVE THE DATE

Commencement 2024

Wednesday, May 8, 2024

Ceremony Time: 7:00 p.m. CST

Fertitta Center 3422 Cullen Blvd, Houston, TX 77204

Reception immediately following in the Graduate College of Social Work building.