

UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON

GRADUATE COLLEGE of SOCIAL WORK

CELEBRATING **50** YEARS

NOTEWORTHY

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FALL 2018

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MISSION STATEMENT

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, local to global, through exceptional education, innovative research, and meaningful community engagement.

NOTEWORTHY



We have prepared a special edition of *Noteworthy* to not only acknowledge the achievements and successes of the 2017-2018 academic year but also to celebrate our 50th anniversary. This year we began the fall semester by welcoming our largest-ever incoming class of MSW students, a fitting distinction as we enter our 50th year of social work education.

I am honored to serve as Dean at the helm of this program, which, through its students, faculty, and alumni, has had an indelible impact on the Greater Houston area for 50 years. Through our work, we have consistently and successfully championed social work values in communities in Houston and beyond. We have been leaders as the city has navigated tremendous growth and the accompanying growing pains. We have helped shape the heart and soul of this community with a steady and sure strengths-based social work perspective.

During this year we are honoring our past while also looking **FORWARD**. We are proud of our legacy, and the solid foundation GCSW leadership, faculty, alumni, and community partners have prepared for our current faculty, students, and staff in support of our College's vision — **to achieve social, racial, economic, and political justice, local to global**. We are poised and ready to continue this work and achieve our vision, which represents the highest hopes and ideals of our distinguished profession.

Please join me in celebrating this monumental 50th year along with the examples herein of outstanding scholarship, leadership, and advocacy in the GCSW community during the 2017–2018 academic year. Later this academic year, we will recognize the “50 for 50” GCSW alumni in a special celebratory event to honor 50 alumni who have best represented our vision throughout their lives. Simultaneously, we are casting our gaze ever **FORWARD** as we continue in our tradition of advocacy, activism, and responsiveness to the most current issues, which require both our leadership and unique social work perspective.

And finally, a note on our cover. It was designed to acknowledge our 50th year and to honor social justice trailblazers both past and present whose determined pursuit of justice inspire our work. We take tremendous pride in knowing that among our very own, this work will continue for another 50 years, or longer until we achieve justice — for all.

Warmest regards,

Alan Dettlaff, PhD, MSW
Dean and Maconda Brown O'Connor Endowed Dean's Chair

FACULTY HONORS

These selected awards and honors reflect our faculty's exceptional contributions to social work scholarship and leadership. We congratulate them on the following accomplishments that exemplify the strides made by all in our profession to move ever forward.



NICOLE BROMFIELD
Associate Dean of Academic Affairs

Awarded a competitive leadership scholarship from CSWE and selected to participate in the in-residence 2018 Harvard Management Development Program focused on developing forward-thinking leadership in academia. She is also a member of the Commission on Education Policy and the CSWE Joint Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards 2022 Committee.

JODI BERGER CARDOSO
Associate Professor

Honored with the UH Distinguished Service to Women Award (Pre-Tenure Faculty). The award recognizes research and mentorship that promotes success in women.



PATRICK LEUNG
Professor
Director, Office of International Social Work Education

Honored with the UH Global Faculty Award. The award is given to tenured or tenure-track faculty who have demonstrated excellence in the promotion of globalization of teaching, research, and service.

GINGER LUCAS
Clinical Assistant Professor
Director, Online MSW Program

Honored as a Phi Alpha Honor Society Faculty Inductee for outstanding support and achievement in helping MSW students gain access to quality educational experiences.



SARAH NARENDORF
Associate Professor

Honored with the UH Distinguished Faculty Scholar (Tenure-Track Faculty). The Women and Gender Resource Center granted the honor in recognition of commitments and contributions in the advancement and support of gender equity and service to women.

SUZANNE PRITZKER
Associate Professor
Director, Austin Legislative Internship Program

Honored with the 2018 Social Work Day on the Hill Outstanding Individual in Academia Award by the Congressional Research Institute on Social Work and Policy. The award recognizes a demonstrated commitment to promoting the principles and values of the social work profession in the pursuit of social and economic justice through their work with Congress or government.



LIVING THE VISION

WITH LAVERNE COX



“SOCIAL WORKERS ARE NEEDED LIKE NEVER BEFORE. THE GREATNESS OF OUR CITY WILL NOT BE MEASURED BY THE NUMBER OF TALL BUILDINGS, BUT **HOW WE TREAT OUR NEIGHBORS.**”
 –MAYOR SYLVESTER TURNER



Our largest annual fundraiser now reflects the bold vision adopted by the GCSW: **to achieve social, racial, economic, and political justice, local to global.** The Living the Vision Scholarship Luncheon highlights our commitment to social justice and emphasis on human rights while raising funds for



scholarships to prepare the next generation of social workers to bring about real and lasting change.

“Through bold activist and philanthropic efforts, Laverne Cox has shined a light on social justice issues, especially within the transgender community. Her fearless advocacy and life’s work embody the GCSW’s vision. She was the perfect choice to give the keynote at our inaugural luncheon,” said Dean Alan Dettlaff.

Two hometown superstars received the luncheon’s highest honors for their leadership modeling strength and compassion during Hurricane Harvey.

GCSW alumnae Karen Winston, LCSW, a social work clinician in Houston for 20 years, was the Social Work Excellence honoree for her work at the George R. Brown Convention Center during the storm. Mayor Sylvester Turner received the Bobbi & Vic Samuels Spirit of Social Work Award, which honors community members who exemplify the values of social work.



“Thank you Laverne Cox for your amazing talk on intersectional justice today. And thank you for supporting the GCSW and using your voice to make the world a braver place!”

–Dr. Brené Brown, Endowed Chair

“I think the trans movement and the LGBT movement in general really has to be a social justice movement where we look at issues of race and class and xenophobia in general.”

–Laverne Cox, Advocate and Activist



RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS



Mental Health of Adolescents in Latinx Immigrant Families during a Period of Heightened Immigration Enforcement

Associate Professor **Jodi Berger Cardoso's** Robert Wood Johnson Foundation funded grant addresses critical social justice issues by focusing on the effects of the sociopolitical climate on youth growing up in Latinx families.

"Working within school systems is essential to meet the social and academic needs of youth in immigrant families. My goal is to partner with community organizations and health and human services to provide the most welcoming and evidence-based practice approach to addressing their complex needs," said Dr. Berger Cardoso.

Recent waves of immigrants present with unprecedented exposure to violence and psychological trauma in their home country, during the migration journey, and even in the U.S. Even youth born in the U.S. to immigrant families often experience significant disadvantage, including pervasive poverty, poor access to education, and limited resources through social programs.

"Addressing disparities in mental health for this population is critical to prevent relegating them to long-term second-class citizenship," said Dr. Berger Cardoso.

Project HYPE 2.0 and The Healthy Marriage and Relationship Education Program

Dr. Sheara Jennings, Associate Professor and Associate Dean of Doctoral Education, is the Co-Lead Evaluator of two federally funded, multi-million dollar grants with the Administration for Children and Families.

Project HYPE 2.0, a teen pregnancy prevention program, delivers an evidence-based, comprehensive sex education curriculum. It targets African American and Hispanic youth, two groups disproportionately impacted by teen pregnancy and HIV.

The Healthy Marriage & Relationship Education Program is delivered in Houston communities to low-income and disadvantaged youth and adults, with a primary focus on Hispanic and African American individuals and families. Among these groups, more than half are living below the poverty level. The project seeks to improve overall well-being and empowerment. A randomized controlled trial is a critical component of the impact evaluation.

"These partnerships with two well-established community-based agencies allow opportunities to address injustices while directly improving the overall well-being of minority children and families," said Dr. Jennings.

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS



Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) Compensation Study

Professor **Patrick Leung's** study, funded by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS), examined ways to improve DFPS application of employee financial incentives and compensations. The final analysis and report included a recommendation to provide a raise to all workers based on the industry data and DFPS survey. Dr. Leung's study was one of the key factors that influenced salary increases (on average by 33%) at DFPS.

"Prior to this study DFPS salaries were way below the market. In 2016, the average salary was about \$40,000. After our study, we recommended the salary be increased by \$12,000 which occurred at the end of 2016, making the average salary comparable to the market at \$52,000. The issue was a matter of economic justice," said Dr. Leung.

Since the salary increase, turnover at the agency has dropped by about 7%, from 25% to 18% in 2017. The success of this study resulted in funding for a follow-up study that targets the impact on Child Protective Services (CPS), Adult Protective Services (APS), and Statewide Intake (SWI) staff turnover and retention since the 2016/2017 emergency appropriations for CPS salary increases.

Harris County Civic Engagement Policy Audit

Associate Professor **Suzanne Pritzker**, along with faculty at Rice and Texas Southern Universities, is conducting an audit of explicit and implicit policy barriers to civic engagement faced by residents of Harris County. Funded by the Houston Endowment, the project examines policy, issues of implementation and oversight, and other formal and informal structural barriers and opportunities.

"When we talk about civic engagement, often we focus on the individual reasons people don't get involved in their communities or the political process. However, there are real systemic barriers in place that prevent people from engaging," said Dr. Pritzker.

The team will deliver a cohesive catalog of structural barriers and possible policy alternatives to help over 40 organizations and non-profits shape a vision for how civic engagement could be more inclusive of underrepresented communities in Harris County and in Texas.

"Those working in communities know the barriers for their particular populations. As a group, we are working to figure out how to focus efforts and provide a sense of what is in the way and what can be changed to make policy more accessible to vulnerable communities."

ACTIVISM & ADVOCACY

DERAY MCKESSON | SOCIAL JUSTICE SOLUTIONS

Civil rights activist **DeRay Mckesson, a leading voice in the Black Lives Matter movement**, headlined Social Justice Solutions, GCSW's annual event that invites thought leaders and the community to explore action-oriented strategies to affect social change. The goal of the series is to inspire informed community activism as a tool to achieve social, racial, economic, and political justice. The event continued the conversation that began during the inaugural 2016 Social Justice Solutions series inspired by then GCSW student, Maranda Harris (MSW '17), who proposed a community forum in response to the issues of deadly force and fatal police shootings of African Americans.

Moderated by GCSW Professor Aabha Brown, recipient of awards for Outstanding Faculty and Community Organization and Change for Social Justice Faculty, the discussion explored the history and successes of the Black Lives Matter movement, issues of inequity, and strategies for activism.

Following the discussion and audience Q&A, the event closed with a focus on solutions, with DeRay Mckesson offering three suggestions for what participants could do to create change:

- 1. **HOPE** IS WORK. 2. **START** WHERE YOU ARE. NOTHING CAN REPLACE PROXIMITY.
- 3. MAKE SURE YOU ARE MORE IN **LOVE** WITH THE **WORK** ITSELF THAN THE IDEA OF IT.

"I think about the difference between 'hope is magic' and 'hope is work.' In moments like this people are losing hope, and they start to think about hope as magic. But we know that isn't true. Hope is a manifestation of work. You believe the world can be better, so you fight for the world to get better. The arc of justice doesn't just bend because it bends, it bends because people bend it. I'm always mindful of that."



ACTIVISM & ADVOCACY

GO AMPLIFY YOUR VOICE | 2018 MIDTERM ELECTIONS



In the lunchtime keynote address for the second annual **Amplify Your Voice**, Texas Senator Sylvia Garcia reminded participants of social work's role in creating change.

"Social workers have always been at the forefront of every major social

movement in this country. They helped craft the New Deal, the war on poverty, and were architects of the civil rights movement. Now it's your turn to rise up and make sure you meet the challenges ahead."

The 2018 midterm elections served as the topic for this year's event, a community forum offering information, skill building, and informed analysis of key issues from leading social workers, activists, and community leaders.

"As social work leaders, we are committed to being responsive to the needs of our students and surrounding community. This event was designed to offer ways to effectively amplify our voices, challenge injustice, and fight for a society where all people – not just a privileged few – can not only survive but also thrive," said Dean Alan Dettlaff.

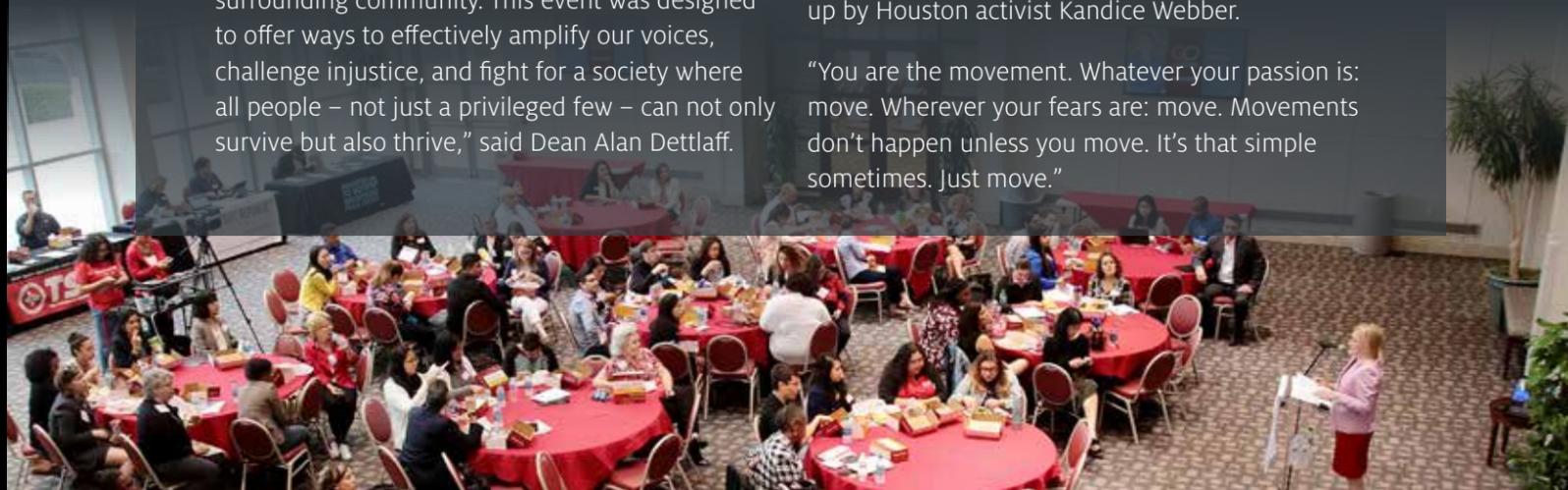


Participants chose from a range of topical sessions: Immigration; Modern Movements (#MeToo, Black Lives Matter, LGBTQ); Education; Gun Control; Increasing Access to Voting for Young People; How to Influence Elections/All Politics are Local; Lessons Learned: How to Run for Office; and Putting Partnership Into Practice: How to Leverage Coalitions.

Speakers included community notables, including former Houston Mayor Annise Parker, Astrid Dominguez, Chloe Walker, Deborah Chen, Devan Ford-McCartney, Mike Webb, Shay Everitt, MSW, Elizabeth Santos, Anna Eastman, Aimee Mobley Turney, Steven Garza, Madie Lake, Carlos Duarte, Daniel Ybarra, Delilah Agho-Otoghile, Sharon Watkins Jones, Abbie Kamin, Daniel Cohen, Mike Floyd, Shannon Baldwin, Penny Shaw, Nisha Randle, and Katharine Ligon, MSW.

Perhaps the goals of the day were best summed up by Houston activist Kandice Webber.

"You are the movement. Whatever your passion is: move. Wherever your fears are: move. Movements don't happen unless you move. It's that simple sometimes. Just move."



A recording of this event is available on our website.



“HIV IS A **SOCIAL JUSTICE** ISSUE – PEOPLE WHO ARE IMPACTED BY IT OFTEN HAVE FACED A HISTORY OF TRAUMA AND MARGINALIZATION, EITHER FINANCIALLY OR SOCIALLY, AND SYSTEMATIC OPPRESSION. THROUGH COMPASS, WITH THE **COMMUNITY**, WE CAN DEVELOP APPROACHES TOGETHER TO BRING **HEALING AND WELLNESS** AT THE FOREFRONT OF CARE.”

– DR. **SAMIRA ALI**



GCSW **COMMUNITY RESEARCH**

A \$5 million grant from Gilead Sciences Inc. established the newest COMPASS Coordinating Center at the GCSW. SUSTAIN (**S**upporting **U.S.** Southern States to Incorporate **T**rauma-Informed **HIV/AIDS** **I**nitiatives) Wellbeing enhances HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment efforts in nine states with some of the highest HIV rates in the US south – Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee.

“We’re grateful for this opportunity to fight such an important yet challenging fight. As part of the Gilead COMPASS Initiative, we are committed to addressing HIV/AIDS disparities. By using a community-centered approach, we’ll mobilize people to be part of the solution,” said Dr. Ali.

The grant is part of a new \$100 million, 10-year program COMPASS Initiative that Gilead introduced to address HIV/AIDS in the Southern United States. As part of the program, three coordinating centers will build organizational capacity in multiple content areas by providing training, consultation, and grants. Specifically The SUSTAIN Center will boost HIV/AIDS prevention efforts by focusing on wellness, trauma, mental health, and substance use, especially harm reduction and opioid use.

Assistant Professor Samira Ali, director of the SUSTAIN Center, also serves as the principal investigator of SMART Cougars Plus, a SAMHSA-funded HIV/Hepatitis C/mental health, substance use prevention and intervention program for young minorities in underserved communities. Through the SMART Cougars Plus program and its National Institute of Drug Abuse-funded Center for Drug and Social Policy Research, the GCSW has worked for almost a decade on the front lines of community-based HIV research and intervention.

“Community health is essential, because communities need to decide what they need,” said Dr. Ali. “We are now on the forefront of preventing the disease but also getting people into much needed HIV care and keeping them there by building southern organizations’ capacity to provide care centered around healing and wellness.”

**Photos are from a community event that served as the official launch of SUSTAIN at the University of Houston. Those working on the front lines of the epidemic in Houston, including Dr. Ali; Venita Ray, public policy manager with Legacy Community Health; Dr. Charlene Flash, assistant professor of medicine, infectious diseases section at Baylor College of Medicine; and Steven Vargas, case manager with the Association for the Advancement of Mexican-Americans participated in a panel discussion moderated by Douglass Brooks, senior director of community engagement with Gilead Sciences.*

50TH ANNIVERSARY

THE YEAR THAT SHATTERED AMERICA - THE SMITHSONIAN
 1968: THE YEAR THAT CHANGED HISTORY - THE GUARDIAN
 THE YEAR AMERICA UNRAVELED - THE WASHINGTON POST

1968: The year 26 students began classes at the newly established Graduate School of Social Work* at the University of Houston.

In a year widely noted for significant touchpoints signaling a changing world, the GSSW's inaugural class began their journey against a backdrop of awakening and upheaval. By the time they began their MSW degree plans, Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert F. Kennedy had been assassinated, and the Civil Rights Act of 1968 had been signed. The Poor People's March for economic justice took place in Washington and in Mexico City, two black athletes staged a silent demonstration against racial discrimination in the United States at the Summer Olympics. The Vietnam War was raging and, in a turning point, Americans began withdrawing support.

50 years later, we look back and are reminded of how much social, racial, economic, and political injustice influenced the zeitgeist of the day, not unlike today.

50 years later, we look **FORWARD**, believing the way to best honor those who have come before us is to continue the work. Knowing that today, we are grappling with many of the same issues which defined 1968 as one of the most turbulent and definitive years in history. Knowing that today, we must be vigilant about identifying injustice and leading the way as social workers and advocates for social justice local to global.

This year, we celebrate the legacy of 5251 GCSW graduates and counting. We will recognize the "50 for 50" GCSW alumni in a special celebratory event honoring 50 alumni who have best represented our vision throughout their lives.

We begin this year in the same way the year 1968 ended. When the Apollo 8 Mission marked the first time humans orbited the Moon, there was a feeling of hope and achievement.

And so we begin our 50th anniversary year on a similar note. With hope in our profession as we celebrate our largest incoming MSW class to date, with pride in our legacy and the accomplishments of 5251 GCSW alumni. With optimism in the strength and value of social work leadership, we move **FORWARD** to achieve social, racial, economic, and political justice, local to global.

**In 2006 the Graduate School of Social Work became the Graduate College of Social Work.*



GCSW INAUGURAL GRADUATING CLASS:

Linda Joyce Braunig, Ann Chastang, Sallie Coleman Creuzot, Carolyn Crow, Jackie Delaney, Pat Dolan, Miriam Edelman, Stella Edmondson, Vesta Eidman, Mary Fowler, Leila Freeman, Angie Grindon, Doris Gurd, Trischa Hanisch, Jim Hodge, Barbara Houston, Claire Larsen, Earl Martin, Gloria Marek, Grace Stuart, Paul Ulrich, Goldie Rappaport Wetcher



CELEBRATING **50** YEARS

SPEAKING OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

MACONDA BROWN O'CONNOR DISTINGUISHED LECTURE SERIES

For the second annual Maconda Brown O'Connor

Distinguished Lecture, the GCSW welcomed Jeff Hobbs, New York Times Best Selling author of *The Short and Tragic Life of Robert Peace: A Brilliant Young Man Who Left Newark for the Ivy League*.

In what has become a GCSW tradition, the author of the book selected for the Dean's Summer Social Justice Reading Series visited the University of Houston campus.



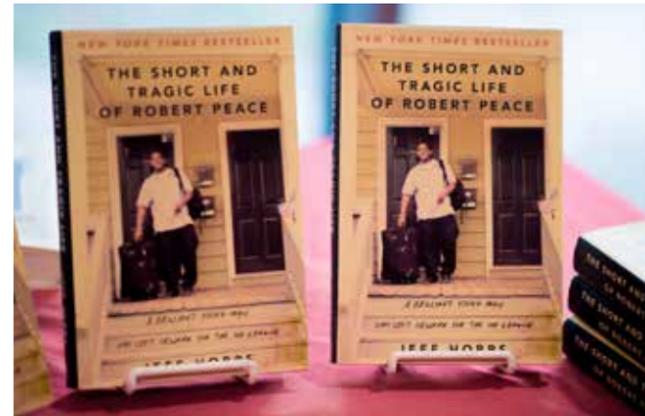
"Each summer we choose a book through which our community explores social justice issues in keeping with our vision. Our goal is to heighten awareness and spark the conversations necessary to achieve real and lasting change," said Dean Alan Dettlaff.

Before the lecture, Jeff Hobbs spent the afternoon with a small group of

GCSW students and faculty. Over lunch, they explored issues from the book they'd been discussing and writing about in class. That evening, in his opening remarks, he told the crowd of GCSW students, "I'm actually humbled to be here speaking to people who not just want to but can do the hard work, the good work, the work that I just write about. Humbling indeed."

Hobbs' lecture touched issues of social justice, and he shared how injustice was threaded throughout Robert Peace's life. However, he seemed hesitant to offer a conclusive answer as to what readers should take away from the book. In a zone reflective and nostalgic he leaned on his memories. "There is something about Rob and his story that compels young people to share their own stories. His gift as a teacher and a friend was to improve the experiences of everyone around him."

of SOCIAL JUSTICE



BLACK LIKE US

During Black History month, the GCSW hosted Black Like Us,

A Candid Conversation About the LGBTQ Experience in the Black Community cosponsored by NAACP Houston, Human Rights Campaign, and the Houston GBLT Political Caucus. The event featured a screening of the film – *creating space* – and panel discussion featuring leaders in Houston's LGBTQ community (pictured right). Activist, writer, and author of *No Ashes in the Fire*, Darnell L. Moore gave a keynote address followed by a Q&A.

Harrison Guy, co-chair of Mayor Turner's LGBTQ Advisory Board and event curator, opened the event with a reading of Assata Shakur's poem, *The Tradition*, and provided context for why he'd approached the GCSW with the idea. "Black history month is a month where we feel proud and are very open to growing and celebrating. We need to have more conversations face to face."

The evening's conversation touched on issues of identity, homophobia, anti-blackness, and oppression. Panelist Crimson Jordan's response to one question from the audience provided a sage bookend and an invitation for the work that must continue. "Change is slow, and change is hard. But it starts with us opening our mouths and manifesting it. It starts here, and it starts when you leave just saying it, talking about it. That's a part of the solution."



PANELISTS (L to R):

Lovie Olivia, Mike Webb, Dean Alan Dettlaff, Atlantis Narcisse, Crimson Jordan, Darnell L. Moore, and Harrison Guy

"Right now, we know in this moment of black lives "mattering" we've got to fight like hell to make sure all of us, all of us, are alive and free and present in each other's freedom dreams in the future."

–Darnell L. Moore



ACTIVISM & ADVOCACY

TAKE A KNEE, STAND FOR JUSTICE



GCSW students who were enrolled in Social Work Issues in Global Justice organized Take a Knee, Stand for Justice for the University of Houston community. Participants were invited to kneel for five minutes in an act of solidarity to inspire conversations for justice against racism, band together to demand change against all abuses of power, and exercise their first amendment right to freedom of speech.

“Kneeling has been a hot issue. Originally about police brutality, it’s now being conveyed as disrespecting the anthem or military. Even though it is being portrayed as un-American, protesting is protected under the First Amendment. Kneeling has become an issue of free speech, and people in power are trying to take that freedom away,” said GCSW student Michelle Fernandez.

Since 2003 the GCSW has offered Social Work Issues in Global Justice to provide students with a global perspective of social work and expose students to the range of activism. According to Professor Aabha Brown, who teaches the course alongside Nobel Laureate Jody Williams, “This course teaches activism as a strategic discipline that involves targeted change making, alliance

building, consensus building, networking, and a multitude of other facets that are extremely important for social workers.”

Jody Williams, the GCSW Sam and Cele Keeper Endowed Professor in Peace and Social Justice, won the Nobel Prize in 1997 for her work to ban landmines, came to the College in 2003 to understand social work as activism and to introduce the real perspective of a lifelong activist.

“A fundamental part of this course is actual activism with our students. The theoretical is important, but if they don’t get up and together work on projects to raise the awareness of fellow students and the campus community on issues facing us, they can’t walk the talk,” said Jody Williams.

Both Professors Brown and Williams praised the students’ choice to amplify the protest started by Colin Kaepernick as well as the strategy and skills they used to organize a campus-wide effort where students, professors, and others in the UH community gathered in the center of campus to take a knee and stand for justice.



ACTIVISM & ADVOCACY

GCSW TEACH-IN | FAMILY SEPARATION

In response to recent dramatic changes to immigration policies, the GCSW organized a ‘teach-in’ to provide information, context, and actionable steps from a social work perspective. Led by faculty members Clinical Assistant Professor Donna Amsberg, Associate Professor Jodi Berger Cardoso, and guest speaker Miriam Camero, JD, MSW from the Refugee and Immigrant Center for Education and Legal Services (RAICES) and moderated by GCSW student Amanda Rocha, the event featured presentations from each panelist highlighting their respective areas of expertise and a Q&A session.



Before an audience of students, alumni, and members of the community, Dr. Jodi Berger Cardoso said, “I’m going to talk to you about my research, but I’m also going to talk to you about what you can do and how to get involved, because I don’t think we are powerless. We can use our voices, our knowledge, and our collective good to make a difference.”

Each panelist shared specific information on the implications of immigration policies from social work, a legal, trauma, and mental health perspectives as well as action items for social workers. The list included: 1) Volunteer to conduct mental health evaluations; 2) Assist with documenting credible fear in collaboration attorneys; 3) Provide Pro-bono/lo-bono clinical work for families in the community; 4) Provide Pro-bono/lo-bono clinical work with attorneys demonstrating secondary trauma; 5) Donate money for families to assist in making parole; 6) Volunteer to translate documents.

Dr. Berger Cardoso offered mentorship for those volunteering to do mental health evaluations, and Professor Donna Amsberg encouraged participants to practice self-care, “All your passion, energy and expertise is what we need but be sure to take care of yourself.”

The final suggestion was a single word voiced by Dr. Jodi Berger Cardoso and applauded by the other panelists and the audience. “Vote.”



A recording of this event is available on our website.

When Hurricane Harvey, a historically destructive storm, devastated the city of Houston, GCSW students, alumni, faculty, and staff provided a foundation of support for each other and the Houston community.

“I’ve never been more proud of social workers and specifically the Graduate College of Social Work than I was during Hurricane Harvey,” said Dean Dettlaff.

In a story captured by CNN’s Michaela Pereira, GCSW student Ali Lozano, upon learning Dr. Suzanne Pritzker’s house had flooded during the storm, put out a call to action to members of her cohort. Their response was immediate, and they quickly organized shifts to provide assistance (and pizza!) to their professor and her family.

“I was absolutely floored that students I had just met the week before wanted to come and help,” said Dr. Pritzker.



After watching nonstop footage of her fellow Houstonians displaced by the storm, GCSW alumna Karen Winston, LCSW said she could not sit by and watch. “I got in my car and went to the George R. Brown Convention Center. I simply asked, ‘What can I do?’”

Honored with the Social Work Excellence Award for her efforts during Harvey (see story on page 17) she is but one of many from the GCSW community who provided critical assistance. Many responded to a direct ask from Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner, who specifically called for social workers to assist with recovery efforts.

In a special edition of Perspectives on Social Work, a publication of GCSW doctoral students, dedicated to the storm, editor Kenya R. Minott, writes:

“The devastation of Hurricane Harvey and its impact on the community is something from which many Houston residents are still trying to recover. Moving toward any resemblance of “normalcy” requires strength and determination at the individual, family, and community level. At the Graduate College of Social Work, that strength and determination was felt immediately as faculty and students began working together to build a network of support among each other and a rapid response to the greater community. As a result, our editorial board felt it important to document the experiences of some of our doctoral students and faculty directly involved.”

The storm itself and its aftermath had an indelible impact on the GCSW community and the city at large. For years to come, it will serve as a reminder for our GCSW community, in keeping with the values of the social work profession, that we are committed to showing up whenever needed for those most in need.



AFTER THE STORM

RECOVERY EFFORTS IN HOUSTON AND PUERTO RICO

As Hurricanes Irma and Maria devastated Puerto Rico weeks after Hurricane Harvey, there were clear signs the trajectory of recovery efforts and assistance would be significantly different from that of Houston. While the GCSW community was deeply engaged in Harvey recovery efforts, many were keeping an eye on our neighbors to the southeast in Puerto Rico.

GCSW Associate Dean of Research and Strategic Partnerships Dr. Luis R. Torres, a native of the island, began organizing efforts even as he waited to hear from relatives he had not been able to contact for weeks after the storm.

He began refining plans for the upcoming Learning Abroad Program to focus on social work’s role in disaster recovery and public health. The program, part of the GCSW Latin America Initiative and a collaboration with the Boston University Graduate School of Social Work and the University of Puerto Rico Beatrice LaSalle Graduate School of Social Work, offered students the opportunity to engage in a comparative study of policies, practices, and research between the U.S. and Puerto Rico. The elective course included lectures, seminars, and a service learning component – site visits to programs in Puerto Rico working on mental health, substance use, HIV/AIDS, disaster recovery, and ecological issues post-storm.

“Using a social justice lens, students examined government, community, and NGO responses that allowed them to analyze the different recovery paths. Our work in Puerto Rico is a direct reflection of GCSW’s mission 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,” said Dr. Torres.



ART FOR SOCIAL WORK

John Palmer Art, helmed by the internationally acclaimed artist John Ross Palmer named GCSW its 2018 Nonprofit of the Year. The Houston based artist's career is distinguished for both its impact on the art world and dedicated philanthropy. To date, more than \$5,000 has been donated to GCSW.



"Working with John this year has been a fantastic experience. Not only have his patrons learned more about the GCSW and our vision, but our faculty, staff, students and donors have been exposed to his beautiful artwork. It's been a win-win," said Januari Leo, GCSW Director of Advancement.

Throughout the year John Palmer Art has released several works inspired by the College and its vision. In February, the *Justice* series, a group of eleven paintings inspired by our social justice vision, was unveiled at a community event in his studio.

From the description of the series: "When you look at the *Justice* series, think of the color red as representing justice and integrity. As you proceed from *Justice No. 1* to *Justice No. 11* the percentage of red per painting increases. Prior to creating the series, Palmer was incredibly influenced by a quote from Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. 'The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice.'

Palmer's use of color throughout the spectrum of *Justice* magnifies Dr. King's message. Why red? Well, at first, the artist thought, 'Justice... ok... the color white.' Moments later, that idea was dismissed. It was problematic and symbolic of our society's ingrained racism to think justice = white = good. Going deeper, Palmer selected red. Justice is fortified through passion and love. However, justice is not easy. Justice is a fight. And justice sometimes begins with violence. Red not only represents passionate love, but it is also paying homage to the men and women who have laid down their lives in the fight for justice."

CSWE 2018 GIFT

Visitors to GCSW's booth #411 at APM 2018 will receive our gift of a set of coasters featuring original works by John Ross Palmer created for GCSW and inspired by social work: *Houston Activist* (pictured below) and *Fifty* (pictured on the back cover).



SALLIE COLEMAN CREUZOT

When the Creuzot family was looking for ways to honor their family matriarch for a milestone birthday, they reflected on her life and legacy. As part of that legacy, Mrs. Sallie Coleman Creuzot holds distinctions as both a member of the GCSW's first cohort (see story on page 15) and the College's first African American graduate. Her family decided on a gift that would honor her achievements and support her alma mater.

"Our family matriarch exemplifies the word excellence. Sallie Coleman Creuzot is strong, courageous, resilient, and goal oriented as well as compassionate, joyful, and full of grace. These qualities made her an impactful social worker. Though she has positively impacted many lives, she is not one who seeks or is comfortable with accolades. Our family wanted to give her "her flowers" while this gem of a woman is still with us," said Cheryl Creuzot on behalf of the Creuzot family.



The GCSW had the privilege of helping the family pull off a surprise on Mrs. Creuzot's 90th birthday – a luncheon at the University of Houston attended by family, friends, Dean Alan Dettlaff, and UH President Renu Khator. Dean Dettlaff called Mrs. Creuzot to the stage and shared the reason she had been invited to UH to celebrate. He announced that the largest first floor classroom had been named in her honor and would henceforth be known as the Sallie Coleman Creuzot Classroom.

Visibly moved by the news, Mrs. Creuzot shared that she has carried the lessons she learned at the GCSW throughout her life. "I never expected anything like this. I thank you all so much for coming. As long as I am able, I shall continue to work and use the skills that I developed at the Graduate School of Social work. I thank you."



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Artist Credit: John Palmer *Fifty* 2018

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