

UTA School of Social Work

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON

APRIL 2025 NEWSLETTER

Thrive Here, Thrive Forever!



APRIL



MONTHLY NEWS UPDATE 2025



Watch the April 2025 Monthly News Video Update and read the stories below.

Video edited and produced by Douglas Gutierrez

[CLICK TO WATCH APRIL 2025 NEWS VIDEO UPDATE](#)



School of Social Work and Smart Hospital

SSW Announces Faculty Promotions and Welcomes New Hires

By Jaelon Jackson

The University of Texas at Arlington School of Social Work is celebrating a series of faculty promotions and preparing to welcome new scholars to its academic community this fall.

Dr. Anne Nordberg has been promoted to Full Professor.

Effective Sept. 1, 2025, several additional faculty members have also earned promotions. Dr. Saltanat Childress, Dr. Sophia Fantus, Dr. Genevieve Graaf and Dr. Rebecca Mauldin have been promoted to Associate Professor with tenure. LaShaunn Bold, Kiva Harper and Pamela Johnson have been promoted to Professor of Practice.

[CLICK TO READ MORE ABOUT THE NEW SSW PROMOTIONS AND NEW HIRES](#)

Dean's April Pep Talk to Students





Kelli Rogers, Assistant Professor of Practice and Antong Lucky, President & CEO of Urban Specialists

SSW Professor Hosts Community Dialogue on Urban Leadership

By Jaelon Jackson

The path to lasting community change doesn't start with a policy. It starts with the people.

That's the belief driving the work of Antong Lucky, president and CEO of Urban Specialists, a Dallas-based nonprofit focused on disrupting cycles of poverty and violence in urban communities. In a recent conversation with Dr. Kelli Rogers, assistant professor of practice at the University of Texas at Arlington School of Social Work, Lucky emphasized the power of lived experience, collaboration and empathy in driving social impact.

"A lot of organizations parachute in with answers. We begin by asking questions and listening," Lucky said. "The community is the solution. We just help catalyze it."

[CLICK TO READ MORE ABOUT THE INTERVIEW](#)



Faculty, Staff, and Students doing Puppy Yoga

SSW Hosts Puppy Yoga to Promote Wellness and Self-Care

By Jaelon Jackson

In recognition of Mental Health Awareness Month and the conclusion of the spring semester, the University of Texas at Arlington's School of Social Work hosted a Puppy Yoga event on May 5. The event provided students, faculty and staff an opportunity to participate in guided yoga alongside puppies available for adoption.

Organized in partnership with Cowtown Friends of Fort Worth Animal Care & Control, the event aimed to promote wellness, encourage community involvement, and raise awareness about the needs of shelter animals and the importance of self-care.

[CLICK TO READ MORE ABOUT THE EVENT](#)



MSW Student, Melody Mesmer

SSW graduate student receives Ima Hogg 2025 Scholarship

By Jaelon Jackson

A Master of Social Work student at the University of Texas at Arlington has been awarded the 2025 Ima Hogg Scholarship, a competitive honor recognizing top graduate students committed to expanding mental health services in Texas.

The Ima Hogg Scholarship, established in 1956 by philanthropist Ima Hogg, addresses the critical shortage of mental health professionals across the state. Each year, the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health awards one scholarship to a student nominated by each accredited Texas graduate school of social work. Recipients are selected based on academic achievement and a demonstrated commitment to serving communities after graduation.

Melody Mesmer, a firefighter paramedic with nearly three decades of service in the fire and EMS industry, brings extensive frontline experience to the social work field. In 2016, she founded a nonprofit organization to support first responders and their families through peer support training and mental wellness services. Her organization has delivered more than 12,500 hours of mental health care to over 3,500 first responders across Colorado and Texas.

[CLICK TO READ MORE ABOUT THE IMA HOGG AWARD](#)

Upcoming SSW Events:

- **May 26:** Memorial Day
- **Jun. 19:** Juneteenth
- **Jul. 4:** Independence Day
- **Aug. 6:** Last Day of Summer Classes

Other SSW News Products:

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Contact the School of Social Work

Address:
501 W. Mitchell Street
Arlington, TX 76019-0129

Phone: 817-272-3181

Email: socialworknews@uta.edu

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