Social Work students earn substantive trans-personal-related research

Joanna Glover, a Purdue University student, had the opportunity to present an innovative idea to a prestigious panel of judges. Glover was part of a team that developed an application aimed at improving the well-being of individuals living with mental health challenges. The team's idea was based on a comprehensive study that identified key factors contributing to mental health crises and developed strategies to mitigate them. Glover, who was a member of the UTA team, noted, “Purdue presented what was our original idea. That was our original plan.”

Glover and her colleagues were pleasantly surprised when the judges praised their presentation. “Purdue had a very nice presentation. It was really well done,” said Social Work graduate Joanna Glover, who earned a master's degree with an emphasis on aging in August, and Erin Murphy, who is pursuing a doctoral degree in Social Work, each won a Student Thesis Dissertation Scholarship from the School of Social Work.

In her final months at UTA, Glover studied how aging adults are affected – and sometimes limited – by social isolation. Glover identified the need for a user-friendly app that could help older adults manage their mental health. “This was a great experience for me,” said Glover. “I learned a lot about the process, and I’m excited to see what the future holds for this project.”

The UTA group is a finalist in a Federal Aviation Administration competition designed to encourage college students across the nation to create solutions to real-world problems affecting U.S. air travel. For example, earlier this spring, Glover and a team of UTA student engineers researched and created an application that could improve the efficiency of air travel. The app uses data from flight paths and landing patterns to predict potential delays and suggest alternative routes.

Joanna Glover learned about the competition from a social media post and decided to participate. “I saw the post and thought, ‘Wow, this could be really cool,’” she said. “I’m really glad I decided to participate.”

The competition is open to students from any major or program, and the UTA team was one of only 10 finalists selected from nearly 200 applicants. The group is eligible for a $50,000 prize, which they plan to use to continue developing the app.

Glover is currently working on a master's degree in Social Work and has been actively involved in community service. She has volunteered at a local retirement home and is working on a project to help older adults connect with their families through virtual reality technology. “I’ve always been interested in working with older adults,” she said. “I think this app could be really helpful in that regard.”

Joanna Glover is one of the many outstanding students at UTA who are making a positive impact in their communities. She is a testament to the School of Social Work’s commitment to preparing students for leadership roles in the field.

As we near the end of celebrating National Hispanic Heritage Month, I would like to recognize the important role that Hispanic and Latinx Americans have played in shaping our nation. This month is dedicated to recognizing the contributions of Hispanic and Latinx Americans to our country and our communities. It is a time to celebrate the diversity of our students, alumni, staff and faculty.

Nearly one-third of our Social Work students identify as Hispanic or Latinx. Our students are leaders, educators, doctors, lawyers, scientists, first responders, and of course, social workers. They are selfless individuals who work tirelessly to make our communities better places to live.

The theme encourages Hispanic and Latinx Americans to be proud of their history, lineage and contributions to our country. This month also gives all Americans the opportunity to learn more about Hispanic and Latinx Americans' rich culture, vibrant history, service and leadership in the United States.

As we look forward to a dynamic future full of hope and promise, I invite you to join me in recognizing the contributions of Hispanic and Latinx Americans. Together, we can build a better future for all Americans.

Thank you for your commitment to diversity and inclusion. Together, we can create a more equitable and just society for all.