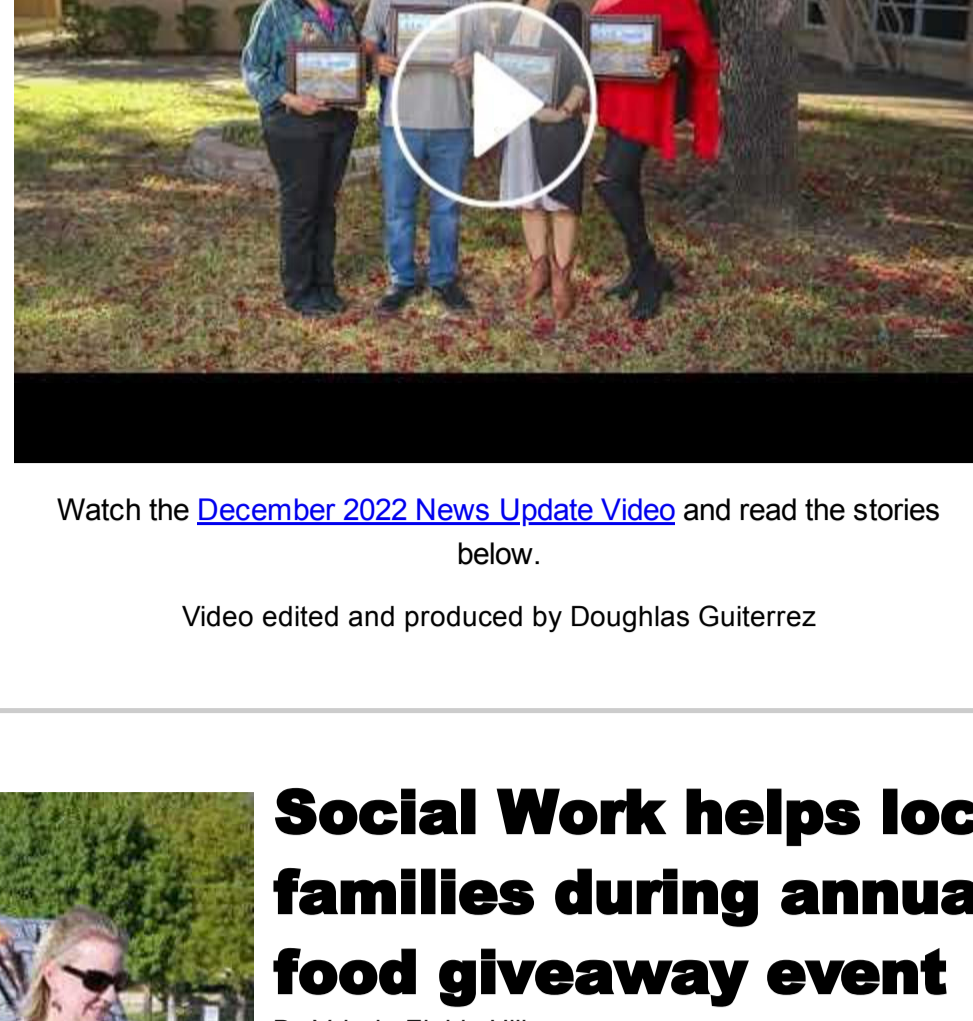
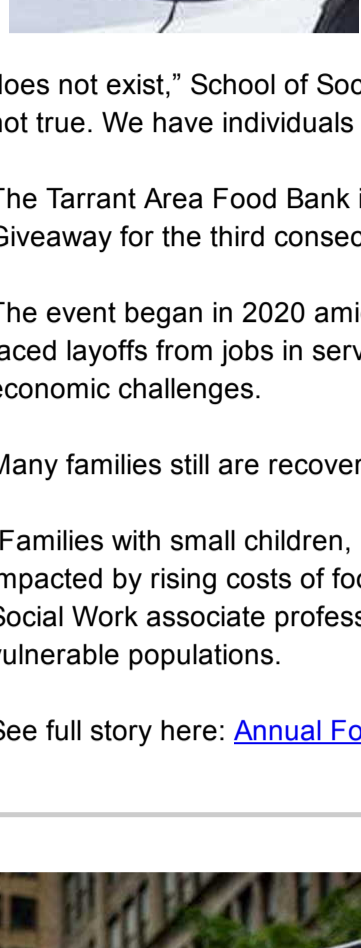


# Fall 2022 News Update



Watch the [December 2022 News Update Video](#) and read the stories below.  
Video edited and produced by Douglas Guterrez



## Social Work helps local families during annual food giveaway event

By Valerie Fields Hill

The University of Texas at Arlington School of Social Work will host a community-wide "Trunk or Treat" and food giveaway this weekend.

Social Work student organizations, faculty, staff and alumni will join to provide a safe, family-friendly experience for more than 300 families - an estimated 1,500 adults and children - during its 3rd Annual Fall Harvest, Trunk or Treat & Food Giveaway Saturday.

"In a country as rich as the USA, many assume that food insecurity does not exist," School of Social Work Senior Associate Dean Dr. Debra Woody said. "This is just not true. We have individuals and families in our own backyard that are food insecure."

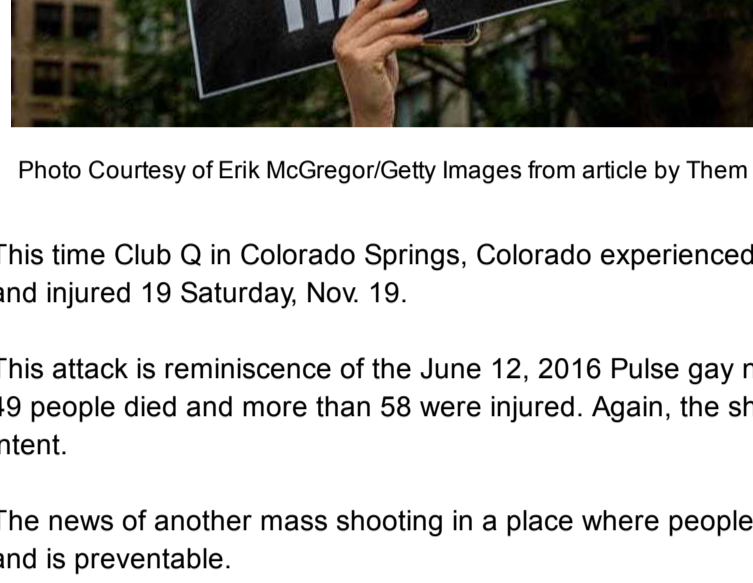
The Tarrant Area Food Bank is a co-sponsor of the Fall Harvest, Trunk or Treat & Food Giveaway for the third consecutive year.

The event began in 2020 amidst the then ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, in which many parents faced layoffs from jobs in service sectors, battled rising viral infection rates and experienced other economic challenges.

Many families still are recovering, Social Work experts said.

"Families with small children, particularly single-parent households, are disproportionately impacted by rising costs of food, housing, and household goods," said Dr. Diane Mitschke, a Social Work associate professor whose research interests are health and mental health of vulnerable populations.

See full story here: [Annual Food Giveaway Event](#)



## Hate speech, anti-LGBTQ+ laws lead to more violence

By UTA School of Social Work

Yet again our country has endured another mass shooting at an LGBTQ+ nightclub.

This time Club Q in Colorado Springs, Colorado experienced the hatred of a mass shooter who killed five and injured 19 Saturday, Nov. 19.

This attack is reminiscence of the June 12, 2016 Pulse gay nightclub massacre in Orlando, Florida, where 49 people died and more than 58 were injured. Again, the shooter entered the club armed and with deadly intent.

The news of another mass shooting in a place where people go to seek safety and community is terrifying and is preventable.

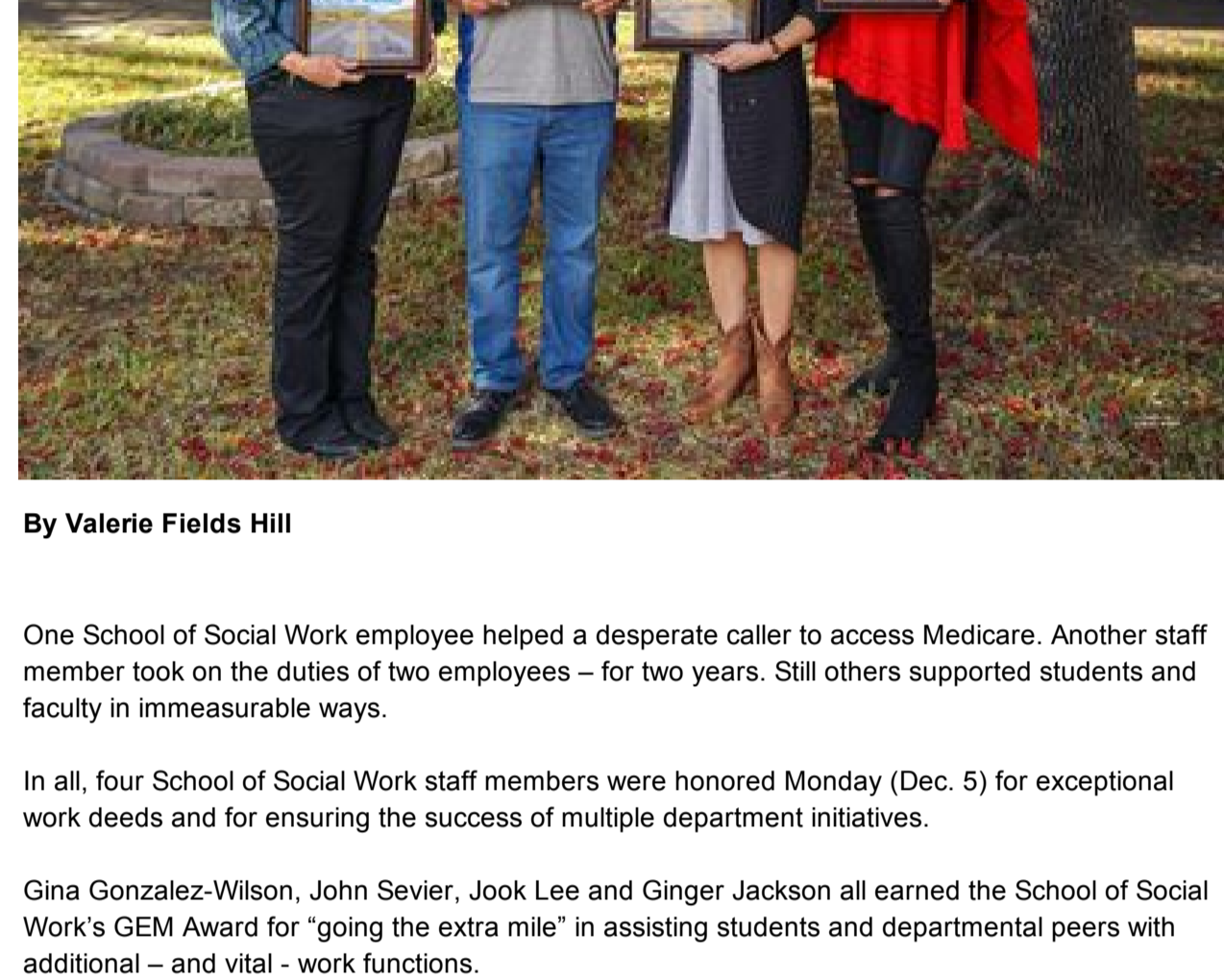
Coincidentally or possibly intentionally, the midnight attack at Club Q coincided with the celebration of Trans Day of Remembrance on Nov. 20. Transgender Day of Remembrance is an annual observance recognizing the hate, destruction, and loss of transgender people's lives due to hatred and violence.

The Club Q attack also happened on the 42nd anniversary of two attacks at LGBTQ+ bars in Greenwich Village on Nov. 19, 1980, in New York City. It is reported a shooter entered the Ramrod and Sneakers bars killing two and injuring six.

Prior to the club shootings in 1980, 2016, and 2022 there was a sustained increase of hate rhetoric coming from politicians, religious, and other so called community leaders. Prior to Club Q's shooting this year, there has been an increase in anti-LGBTQ hate speech primarily from conservative politicians and rightwing organizations.

Read the rest of the story: [Hate speech, anti-LGBTQ+ laws lead to more violence](#)

## Social Work honors four staff members with GEM awards for 2022



By Valerie Fields Hill

One School of Social Work employee helped a desperate caller to access Medicare. Another staff member took on the duties of two employees – for two years. Still others supported students and faculty in immeasurable ways.

In all, four School of Social Work staff members were honored Monday (Dec. 5) for exceptional work deeds and for ensuring the success of multiple department initiatives.

Gina Gonzalez-Wilson, John Sevier, Jook Lee and Ginger Jackson all earned the School of Social Work's GEM Award for "going the extra mile" in assisting students and departmental peers with additional – and vital - work functions.

"They are truly remarkable achievements, and it attests to the contributions in all that they do for the School of Social Work, university and local community," said Nelda Lawson, a Social Work manager who oversees the GEM Award program. "They are extraordinary."

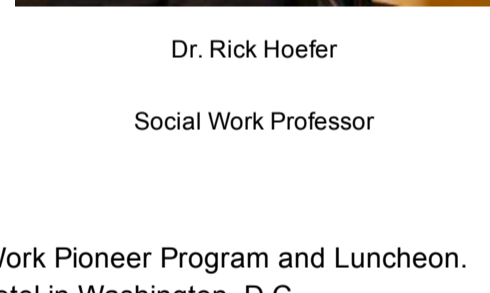
The four staff members were recognized during a surprise presentation at the School of Social Work's Annual Holiday Luncheon Monday. Each employee will receive a \$1,000 stipend.

The honorees were selected by a committee after being nominated by faculty and staff peers. The honorees were considered based on their performance in at least one of four areas: customer service, community outreach, climate /diversity and teamwork.

"The GEM Award is significant because it is based on criteria representative of the university's mission and reflective of the characteristics of outstanding service and performance by individuals," Lawson said.

Read the rest of the story [Social work honors four staff members with GEM awards](#)

## Professor Rick Hoefler earns Social Work's highest NASW honor



By Valerie Fields Hill

The distinguished Social Work educator and best-selling author Richard Alan Hoefler will be recognized this week for his three decades of national and international contributions to the profession.

Dr. Rick Hoefler  
Social Work Professor

Dr. Hoefler, author of the shift-changing best-seller Advocacy Practice for Social Justice, which is in its fourth edition, will be invested, or formally established, as a "Pioneer" Saturday by the National Association of Social Workers.

The investiture is part of NASW Foundation's 16th Annual Social Work Pioneer Program and Luncheon. The event will be held Saturday, Oct. 15, at the Omni Shoreham Hotel in Washington, D.C.

"I've been nominated for a lot of awards and haven't gotten it," Dr. Hoefler said recently, adding that this nomination was different "and it was accepted."

Dr. Hoefler is the latest UTA School of Social Work researcher to be named a Pioneer. Most recently, Dr. Cathleen Jordan, who created and refined a range of assessment tools for clinical Social Workers to evaluate clients and who also is a decorated author, was named an NASW Pioneer in 2017.

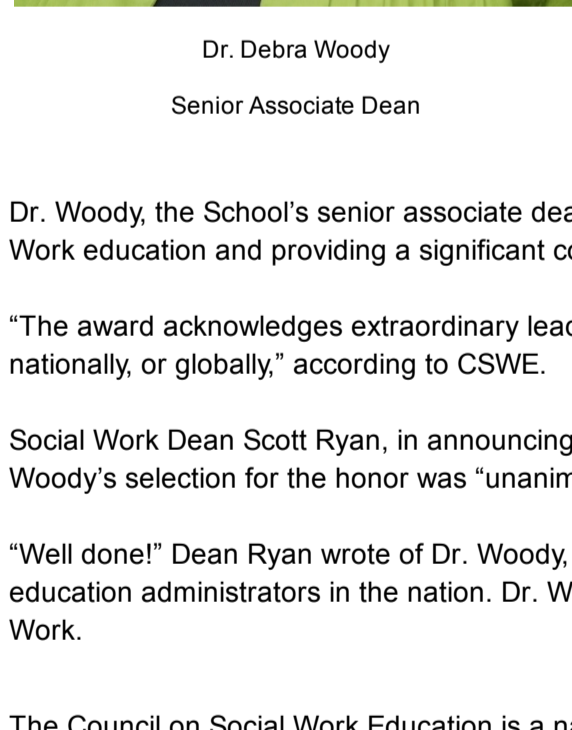
Other former UTA professors who are NASW Pioneers are: Dr. Fran Danis, Dr. Doreen Elliott, Dr. James Callicutt, Dr. Donald Granvold and Dr. Ira Colby.

This year is the first time since 2020 that NASW and its subsidiary, NASW Foundation, will host the Pioneer Awards in person. The Foundation delayed hosting the awards for two years because of the Covid-19 pandemic.

"COVID made things more complicated," Dr. Hoefler said. "I was notified in 2021, but they couldn't have the ceremony."

NASW is the largest membership organization of professional Social Workers across the world. The organization's members work to grow the profession and to create and maintain professional standards for Social Workers.

Read the rest of the story: [Professor Rick Hoefler earns Social Work's highest honor](#)



## National Social Work educators honor UTA Senior Associate Dean

By Valerie Fields Hill

Dr. Debra Woody, a senior School of Social Work administrator, will be honored this weekend at a national meeting of researchers and peers in higher education.

Dr. Debra Woody  
Senior Associate Dean

Dr. Woody will receive the Established Faculty Service and Leadership in Social Work Education Award at a presentation ceremony Sunday, Nov. 13, in Anaheim, Calif.

The award comes during the Council on Social Work Education's 68th Annual Program Meeting Nov. 10-13 at the Hilton Anaheim in southern California.

Dr. Woody, the School's senior associate dean, is being recognized for advancing and promoting Social Work education and providing a significant contribution to "extend its reach."

"The award acknowledges extraordinary leadership contributions that affect Social Work education locally, nationally, or globally," according to CSWE.

Social Work Dean Scott Ryan, in announcing the recognition to faculty and staff members, said Dr. Woody's selection for the honor was "unanimously supported by the CSWE Board of Directors."

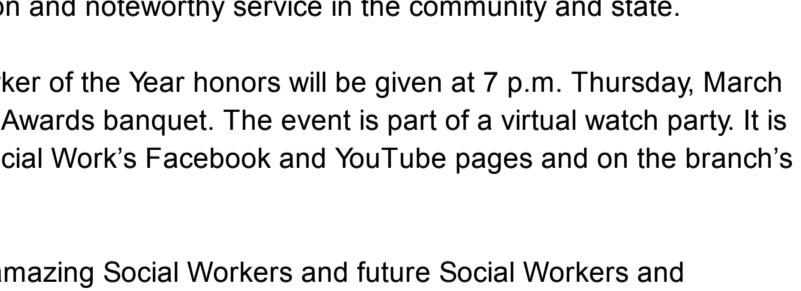
"Well done!" Dean Ryan wrote of Dr. Woody, who is among a growing group of female Social Work education administrators in the nation. Dr. Woody is senior associate dean in the UTA School of Social Work.

The Council on Social Work Education is a national group of more than 800 accredited university Social Work programs and individual Social Work educators. CSWE accredits bachelors and master's academic programs in the United States.

Dr. Woody is among three educators from Texas and across the nation whom CSWE will recognize this weekend.

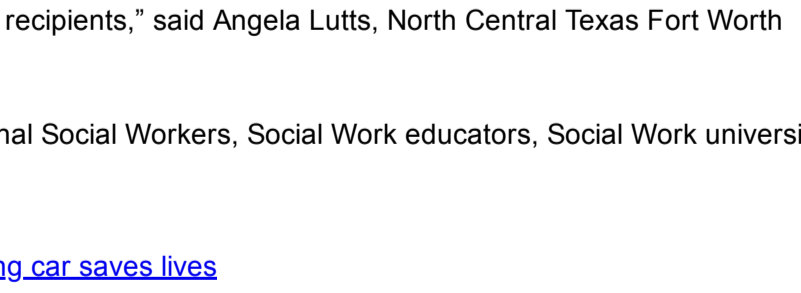
Read the rest of the story: [National Social Work educators honor UTA Senior Associate Dean](#)

## Gender affirming care saves lives



By UTA School of Social Work

A Texas Social Work organization will recognize the dean of the School of Social Work and a faculty member with its highest honors during a virtual celebration this week.



The North Central Texas Fort Worth Area Branch of the National Association of Social Workers will honor UTA School of Social Work Dean Scott Ryan and Associate Professor of Practice Kiva Harper with its Lifetime Achievement and Social Worker of the Year awards, respectively.

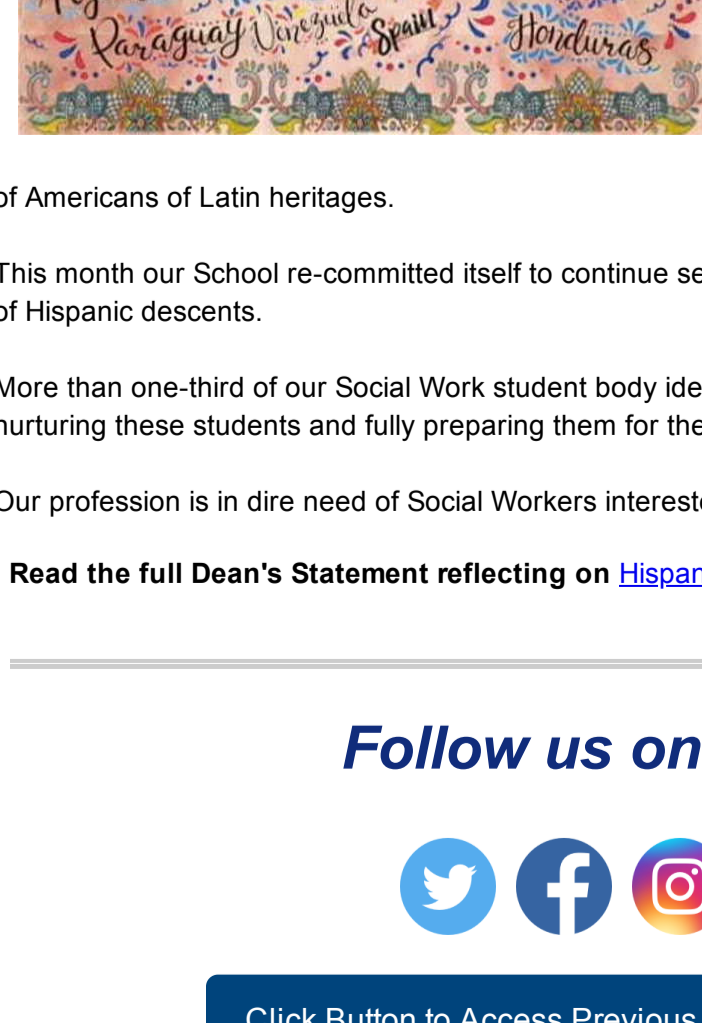
The two honors are the highest Social Work recognitions given by the branch. The honors recognize outstanding achievements in the profession and noteworthy service in the community and state.

The Lifetime Achievement and Social Worker of the Year honors will be given at 7 p.m. Thursday, March 25, during the branch's 2021 Social Work Awards banquet. The event is part of a virtual watch party. It is free and will premiere on the School of Social Work's Facebook and YouTube pages and on the branch's Facebook page.

"Our steering committee identified some amazing Social Workers and future Social Workers and community members as our 2021 awards recipients," said Angela Lutts, North Central Texas Fort Worth Area Branch chair.

The association is comprised of professional Social Workers, Social Work educators, Social Work university administrators and Social Work students.

Read the rest of the story: [Gender affirming care saves lives](#)



## Dean's statement reflecting on Hispanic Heritage Month, Social Work

By Dean Scott Ryan

As we come to the end of Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept. 15 – Oct. 15), let us not forget you can continue to celebrate and learn more about Hispanic Americans achievements and contributions.

For sure, no 30-day period offers adequate time to reflect fully on the multiple, diverse heritages that, for decades, have been excluded from public discourse and historical annals.

This timeframe provided us with the opportunity to relearn more inclusive American narratives. I hope our community of Social Work scholars will choose to study and understand the myriad points of view

of Americans of Latin heritages.

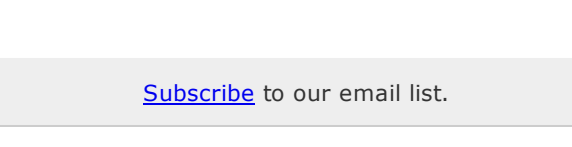
This month our School re-committed itself to continue serving and mentoring Hispanic Social Work students of Hispanic descents.

More than one-third of our Social Work student body identifies by ethnicity as Hispanic. We need to continue nurturing these students and fully preparing them for the work that our profession so desperately needs.

Our profession is in dire need of Social Workers interested in serving Hispanic populations.

Read the full Dean's Statement reflecting on [Hispanic Heritage Month and Social Work](#)

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