

MARCH 2024 NEWSLETTER



LING XU, PHD
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

Dr. Ling Xu, Social Work Associate

Watch the March 2024 Monthly News Video Update and read the stories below.

Video edited and produced by Doughlas Gutierrez

[CLICK TO WATCH MARCH 2024 NEWS VIDEO UPDATE](#)



UTA School of Social Work graduate holding *Mavs Up* sign during the December 2023 commencement ceremony.

Social Work moves from 51 to 43 in *U.S. News & World Report* graduate program rankings

By Neph Rivera

UTA's School of Social Work (SSW), which for over 50 years has been training the next generation of professionals looking to improve the lives of their clients, improved eight spots to No. 43 overall out of 319 schools.

SSW trains professionals through education, interdisciplinary research and evidence-based clinical practice.

The school has more than 12,000 alumni making a difference every day in government agencies and organizations, as well as creating and leading nonprofits, working in the military or in private practice and serving as deans, professors and directors in social work programs worldwide.

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE ABOUT THE RANKINGS](#)



MSW student, Stephen Silva-Brave, left and Dr. Kirk Foster, dean of the UTA School of Social Work standing at the podium during the Dean's Alumni Breakfast March 21 in the SWSH building.

SSW holds first alumni breakfast since COVID, 72% increase in attendees

By Jaelon Jackson

The School of Social Work held the Dean's Alumni Breakfast March 21 with more than 80 attendees, marking the first time having this event since the COVID-19 pandemic.

This event also represented the first time Dr. Kirk Foster presided over such an event since assuming the role of dean of the School of Social Work.

Dr. Kirk Foster, dean of the School of Social Work at The University of Texas at Arlington, thanked the alumni for their dedicated efforts in the field.

Dean Foster emphasized the alumni's embodiment of the school's mission through their daily commitment to assisting individuals. He underscored the significance of alumni returning to share their insights and experiences with current students.

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE ABOUT THE RETURN OF THE ALUMNI BREAKFAST](#)



Dr. Hui Huang, Social Work Associate Professor

UTA Study: Vaccination mistrust still widespread with pregnancy

By Neph Rivera

Four years after COVID-19 began to spread worldwide, a University of Texas at Arlington social worker says work still needs to be done to address the importance of getting vaccinated.

Research led by Hui Huang, associate professor in the School of Social Work, shows some apprehension remains among pregnant woman in getting vaccinated against the virus. The findings are published in the [International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health](#).

Huang and her colleagues took an innovative approach in gathering feedback from pregnant women by partnering with the app Count the Kicks to analyze pregnancy survey results from women who had recently given birth.

For the study, the team took a close look at responses regarding adult beliefs and behaviors related to COVID-19 vaccinations and found about two-thirds of respondents had been vaccinated.

[CLICK TO READ MORE ABOUT DR. HUANG'S RESEARCH](#)



UTA School of Social Work students, staff, and faculty rallying at the State Capitol in Austin, Texas March 22.

Social Work Advocacy Day in Austin


Social work professors, students and other community members all rallied together for Social Work Advocacy Day at the State Capitol building in Austin, Texas March 22.

This was an excellent opportunity where students learned about the policies that impact the lives of our communities and further developed their advocacy skills.

We had representation from UTA SSW students in Arlington, Austin, and across the state of Texas that all merged cohesively for this fun, inspiring, and educational event!

[CLICK TO SEE PHOTOS FROM ADVOCACY DAY](#)



A portrait of Brandi Felderhoff, a woman with long blonde hair and black-rimmed glasses, smiling. She is wearing a black top with a red and white floral pattern. The background is a dark grey studio backdrop.

BRANDI FELDERHOFF, PHD, LCSW-S, APHSW-C
UTA SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK PHD ALUMNA
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY

Brandi Felderhof, a 2017 UTA Ph.D.

News Video: UTA School of Social Work alumnae and student recognized at NASW-TX NCT Area Fort Worth Branch annual awards dinner March 28.

Video: UTA alumnae, student honored at NASW-TX Fort Worth Branch event

The National Association of Social Workers, Texas Chapter - North Central Texas Fort Worth Area Branch held their annual awards dinner March 28.

This year the UTA School of Social Work had multiple individuals from our community honored for their contributions to the practice, including a current student, former faculty, and alumnae.

[VIEW THE NEWS VIDEO CLIP](#)



Social Work's new *Blaze the Mic* Podcast - Episode 1 featuring BSW and military veteran student Sebastian Molina.

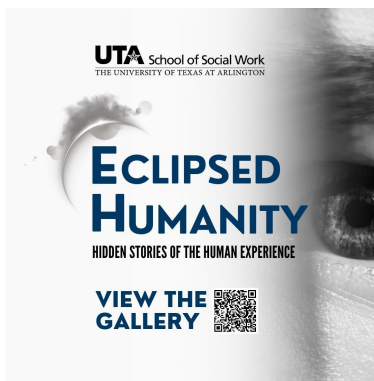
New Social Work *Blaze the Mic* Podcast now available

The SSW Office of Communications and Marketing released the first episode of our student focused podcast -- *Blaze the Mic*.

This first episode features BSW student and military veteran Sebastian Molina - "*Why did I switch my major from Engineering to Social Work?*"

Our new podcast is available on Spotify, Amazon Music, iHeart Radio, PlayerFM, Podbean App, and soon on Apple.

[LISTEN TO SSW BLAZE THE MIC - EPISODE 1](#)



Eclipsed Humanity Flyer

Eclipsed Humanity photo gallery now available online,

The School of Social Work was thrilled to embark on a special campaign, illuminating the profound significance of social work during the solar eclipse on April 8.

Images submitted depict the story of the often-hidden human experience – shining a light on marginalized populations and elevating the voices of those often not heard or misunderstood.

View the images and complete the online form providing your thoughts and comments about the SSW Eclipsed Humanity experience.

Together, let's shine a light on the positive change social work brings to our world.

[CLICK TO VIEW ECLIPSED HUMANITY IMAGES](#)

March SSW Spotlights

This section highlights the remarkable achievements and contributions of individuals within the social work community. From esteemed faculty members to dedicated alumni, their accomplishments reflect a commitment to excellence and a passion for making a positive impact in society. Whether through groundbreaking research, innovative teaching methods, advocacy efforts, or community engagement, these individuals embody the values of social work and inspire others to strive for

greatness. Join us in celebrating their successes and acknowledging the profound influence they have on the field of social work and the lives they touch.

Awards & Recognitions

Dr. Jessica Sanchez - appointed as a Committee Member of the NASW-TX Women's Rights Committee.

Dr. Christian Vazquez - for securing a significant grant from the Pennington Biomedical Research Center and being selected for the Phase 4 Postdoctoral Fellow Program of the RISE 100 initiative.

Dr. Darlene Hunter - inducted into the 2024 National Wheelchair Basketball Association Hall of Fame.

Dr. Richard Hoefler - acknowledged with the 2024 Textbook & Academic Authors Association (TAA) Most Promising New Textbook Award.

Presentations & Outreach

Tracy Orwig - for the successful execution of the Virtual Discharge Planning Simulation IPE Experience.

Dr. Rebecca Mauldin and **Dr. Noelle Fields** - for their excellent organization of the 3rd Annual Celebration of Aging Luncheon.

Dr. Micki Washburn - for her representation of UTA School of Social Work at a regional conference and being selected for the Phase 4 Postdoctoral Fellow Program of the RISE 100 initiative.

In The Media

Dr. Christine Spadola - recognized for her insights on adjusting to Daylight Saving Time on KLIF-AM | 96.3 FM.

Dr. Kathy Lee - featured for her expertise in an article addressing the challenges faced by informal caregivers.

Upcoming SSW Events:

- [Eclipsed Humanity](#) (April 8)
- "A Day in the Life" Poverty Simulation (April 13)
- [April Social Work Movie Night](#) (April 25)
- Importance of Minority Serving Institutions Discussion (May 10)

Other SSW News Products:

- [News Stories and News Releases](#)
- [Upcoming Events](#)
- [Monthly News Video Updates](#)
- [Podcasts](#)
- [Monthly Newsletters](#)
- [Courtyard Conversations - SSW Talk Show](#)

- [SSW in the Media](#)

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