

UTA School of Social Work

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON

NOVEMBER 2024 NEWSLETTER

"Thrive Here, Thrive Forever"



NOVEMBER



MONTHLY NEWS UPDATE 2024



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON
School of Social Work

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

Video edited and produced by Douglas Gutierrez

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



Summer PhD and Fall Graduates (From Left: Rebecca Cole, Katherine Kitchens, Alan Kunz Lomelin, and LaTisha Thomas)

COMMENCEMENT

College of Nursing and Health Innovation School of Social Work

Recording of Fall 2024 Graduation Ceremony

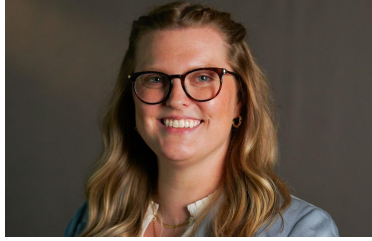
SSW celebrates 337 graduates

The University of Texas at Arlington's School of Social Work held its Fall Commencement Ceremony Friday, Dec. 15, graduating two PhD, 267 master and 68 bachelor students.

The ceremony, held at Globe Life Field in Arlington, was a testament to the dedication and hard work of these students as they stepped into the next chapter of their lives, equipped with the knowledge and skills gained during their time in the Bachelor of Science in Substance Use and Treatment, Bachelor of Social Work, Master of Social Work and PhD in Social Work programs.

[CLICK TO VIEW PHOTOS FROM FALL 2024 COMMENCEMENT](#)

[CLICK TO VIEW LIVESTREAMED RECORDING OF FALL 2024 COMMENCEMENT](#)



Dr. Jennifer Murphy, Assistant Professor

School social workers an underutilized resource

By Katherine Egan Bennett

Youth in America are experiencing a mental health crisis, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The CDC reports that an increasing number of students are experiencing symptoms of hopelessness, depression, and anxiety, along with thoughts of self-harm.

One thing known to improve mental health among students is increased school connectedness—when students feel that the adults and peers in their school care about them as individuals in addition to their learning ability.

Schools are working to improve their connectedness by adding social workers to their staff to help address the mental health concerns of students.

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



Dr. Darlene Hunter being inducted into NWBA Hall of Fame.

NWBA Hall of Fame inducts professor, Paralympian

By Jaelon Jackson

The University of Texas at Arlington School of Social Work's director of undergraduate programs and associate professor of practice was inducted into the National Wheelchair Basketball Association Hall of Fame Class of 2024 during a ceremony held earlier this year at the War Memorial in Richmond, Virginia.

Dr. Darlene Hunter, a Paralympian who has earned a gold medal and a bronze medal, is originally from Walled Lake, Michigan. She began her athletic career in track and field before transitioning to wheelchair basketball while attending college.

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE ABOUT DR. HUNTER'S INDUCTION](#)



Katherine Kitchens, Fall 2024 PhD Graduate

PhD student defends dissertation on Equity in Cognitive Assessments

By Jaelon Jackson

In November, a PhD candidate in the School of Social Work at the University of Texas at Arlington successfully defended her dissertation.

Katherine Kitchens defended her dissertation titled *“Enhancing Cognitive Assessment for Forcibly Displaced Populations: An Integrated Theoretical, Methodological, and Empirical Investigation.”*

Kitchens’ academic journey reflects her dedication to addressing disparities in cognitive assessments for forcibly displaced populations. She earned her bachelor’s degree in political philosophy from the University of Dallas and her master’s degree in social work from UTA.

[CLICK HERE TO READ ABOUT DR. KITCHENS' DISSERTATION](#)



LaTisha Thomas, PhD Graduate

PhD graduate examines trauma, Black womanhood in dissertation

By Jaelon Jackson

In December, a PhD candidate in the School of Social Work at the University of Texas at Arlington successfully defended her dissertation.

Dr. LaTisha Thomas focused her dissertation on how trauma exposure influences Black women’s coping styles, perceived stress and the Superwoman Schema.

Framed by Africana Womanism, Black Feminist Thought, and Intersectionality, her research highlighted the role of systemic oppression in the trauma experienced by Black women in relationships and workplaces.

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE ABOUT DR. THOMAS' DISSERTATION](#)



Discovering the Maverick Factor - Episode 7, After the Call of Duty features Social Work student Sebastian Molina

Social Work student featured on Discovering the Maverick Factor podcast

In this episode of *Discovering the Maverick Factor*, host Shaunda Musick sits down with James Kumm, executive director of Military and Veteran Services at UTA, and Sebastian Molina, Army veteran and social work student.

Together, they explore the University's commitment to veteran-friendly resources, the impact of the Maverick veteran community, and Sebastian's personal journey toward building a career focused on serving his fellow veterans.

This episode dives deep into what makes UTA—ranked the No. 1 public university in the nation for veterans by *Military Times*—a top choice for veterans seeking purpose, connection, and new opportunities.

[CLICK TO WATCH EPISODE 7 - AFTER THE CALL OF DUTY](#)



Social Work's new student-focused *Blaze the Mic* Podcast - Episode 10 featuring MSW student Emily Rappaport

New Social Work *Blaze the Mic* Podcast now available

The SSW Office of Communications and Marketing released the 10th Episode of our student-focused podcast -- *Blaze the Mic*.

This episode features BSW student Kai Santos - "[Studies & Staff: Inside the Life of Student and Staff Member](#)"

MSW student Emily Rappaport shares her journey from nursing to social work and her passion for interprofessional education in healthcare.

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 10](#)

Important Upcoming Events



UTA presenters and poster display lists for January 2025 SSWR Conference in Seattle, RSVP for UTA SSW reception

Many of our Social Work faculty and students will present some of their latest research and clinical practice findings at the Society for Social Work and Research (SSWR) conference in January 2025.

Click on the link below to view the list of UTA presenters and the list of posters that will be displayed. Alumni and invitees click on the image of the UTA SSW reception flyer to RSVP.

Please stop by our exhibit booth and attend one of the many presentations, panel discussions, or poster displays involving faculty and students from the University of Texas at Arlington!

Our faculty, students, and alumni work tirelessly to ensure that individuals and communities thrive through advocacy, mental wellness, and social justice. The conferences they attend allow colleagues and peers to further their understanding of the human condition in clinical practice and research.

[CLICK HERE TO ACCESS UTA LIST OF PRESENTERS FOR SSWR 2025](#)

SSW 2024 Year-in-Review Newsletter coming in early January

In the upcoming 2024 year-in-review newsletter, we will highlight the top moments of 2024 here at the School of Social Work and the Fall Commencement.

Upcoming SSW Events:

- **Jan. 13:** First Day of Spring Semester Classes
 - **Jan. 17:** SSW Dean's Evening Reception at SSWR in Seattle
-

Other SSW News Products:

- [News Stories and News Releases](#)
 - [Upcoming Events](#)
 - [Monthly News Video Updates](#)
 - [Podcasts](#)
 - [Monthly Newsletters](#)
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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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