

*Social Justice & Community Partnerships
through Quality Education & Pioneering Research*

Fall 2015



**School of Social Work Graduate and Online
MSW Programs Ranked Among Nation's Best**

The University of Texas at Arlington's School of Social Work is among the nation's top graduate schools and online MSW programs for those who want to earn a degree according to GraduatePrograms.com and [Social Work Degree Guide.com](http://SocialWorkDegreeGuide.com).

The School of Social Work is ranked No. 10 out of 25 social work programs that are accredited through the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). The CSWE is the only organization that provides accreditation for all 254 Master's in Social Work programs. Scott Ryan, dean of the [School of Social Work](http://SchoolofSocialWork), said the rankings are further recognition of the University's ability to provide the highest quality education and research.

The School of Social Work's reputation of providing quality education has also been recognized by Social Work Degree Guide.com. It ranked among the nation's top schools for those who want to earn a degree through an online MSW program, according to Social Work Degree Guide.com. UT Arlington's online program ranked No. 12 out of 25 accredited online MSW programs in social work.

"We have faculty teaching courses face-to-face and in our online program who are outstanding scholars and practitioners," said Ryan. "They are engaging students using the latest instructional technology, as courses help students learn how to tackle social problems and assist vulnerable persons. These graduates are becoming leaders in social agencies across Texas."

Of the School of Social Work's more than 1,100 graduate students, about 380 are enrolled in the online program. [Read more](#) to learn about the School of Social Work's online MSW ranking by Social Work Degree Guide.com and visit [GraduatePrograms.com](#) to get more information on the school's top graduate program ranking.



Faculty Notes & Highlights

School of Social Work Collaborates with Donaldson Adoption Institute on New Study Investigating Counseling Options for Relinquishment of Parental Rights

The School of Social Work and Donaldson Adoption Institute (DAI) announced their partnership on a new research study of options counseling experiences. Dr. Elissa Madden, social work assistant professor, and School of Social Work Dean Scott Ryan will conduct the study. The research team will investigate decision-making experiences of women and men who relinquished their parental rights as well as the context and standards that guide professionals who provide options counseling. Ultimately, the DAI will use this knowledge to suggest best practice standards.

The Donaldson Adoption Institute recognizes family preservation as optimal and thus it must be central to ethical options counseling. Previous research demonstrates a significant need to better understand and explore options counseling as it is practiced and experienced in modern day adoptions. [Read more.](#)



Dean Scott
Ryan



Dr. Elissa
Madden



Professor Participates in Research Project for Aiding Children in UK's Protective Care System

Dr. Michael Killian, assistant professor in the School of Social Work, partnered with Tilda Goldberg Centre for Social Work and Social Care at the University of Bedfordshire in the United Kingdom to deliver a groundbreaking research project that will improve the quality of care for children and their families.

Dr. Michael Killian

The project is called "Islington Social Workers: Doing What Counts and Measuring What Matters to Make Children Safer." The research project aims to transform social work practice for children in local authorities in England, as well as provide implications for regulation and national inspection, beginning in the London Borough of Islington.

"Our vision for this project is to transform the system of care for children, their families, social workers and the social care system in London. We hope this project will serve as a model for care throughout the country," said Killian.

As a member of the research team headed by Professor Donald Forrester from the University of Bedfordshire, the researchers will evaluate a new care model for children involved in the protective care system in London. They will also implement and examine the care model that combines social work training using motivational interviewing techniques, task-centered work, and a risk assessment that is consistent with motivational interviewing, an alternative model to direct persuasion for facilitating behavior change. Dr. Killian will serve as coordinator of the systematic reporting and evaluation process of the care model for social workers, their supervisors, senior managers, and local government.

According to Dr. Killian, the Children's Social Care Services in London strive to deliver high quality and effective services for children and their families in the protective care system. However, there are many challenges. Many social workers spend little time in direct practice that is needed to create a positive change for children. This project has the opportunity to create a better foundation for social workers and help organizations change to sustain effective practice.

"Continuing to work with the research team at Tilda Goldberg Centre is an incredible opportunity. This work is a continuation of a partnership between Tilda Goldberg Centre and Children's Services in London. A number of dedicated social work researchers and practitioners are focused on excellent practice that make a positive difference for children and their families," said Killian.

Dr. Killian previously served as a Leverhulme Visiting Fellow with the Tilda Goldberg Centre in 2013 under the direction of Professor Forrester. This new project is a continuation of a large study that uses motivational interviewing in children's services that were conducted during Dr. Killian's service with Tilda Goldberg Centre.

Social Work Professor Acquires Grant in Honor of Student Veterans on Campus

Dr. Alexa Smith-Osborne, associate professor and director of the Center for Clinical Social Work, attained a grant to welcome student veterans on campus as they advance their education at UT Arlington.

Dr. Smith-Osborne is the founding advisor for the Student Veterans Organization on campus and was awarded a \$7,700 grant for the organization to build a commemorative tribute to student veterans. The award was provided by the Vet Center Initiative Grant Program.



Dr. Alexa
Smith-Osborne

The commemorative tribute will add value to the Vet Center using merchandise from Home Depot and employee volunteer labor. The Vet Center Initiative Grant Program is a partnership between Student Veterans of America and Home Depot Foundation.

The Student Veterans Organization competed with other chapters across the country to submit the best plans for a Vet Center. The 50 best plans were selected to receive grants to turn their plans into reality.

"This is our second time to submit for this Home Depot and Student Veterans of America collaboration in a competitive national award. It will be used to assist us in constructing a student veteran tribute as an architectural feature of the Vet Center and make a welcome spot for the Student Veterans Organization to meet while studying with all the library's resources at their fingertips," said Dr. Smith-Osborne. "With these additions, UT Arlington hopes to help make the campus a more comfortable and welcoming place for student veterans."

The tribute was designed by a class from the School of Architecture Design Studio as a competitive collaboration with the Student Veterans Organization. The winning interior design was created by Christopher Box.

The Vet Center space was allocated two years ago by Rebecca Bichel, dean of libraries at UT Arlington. It is located in the Central Library on campus in room 216.

The Student Vet Club is a chapter of the Student Veterans of America and supports the education of student veterans and their transition to college life. For more information, visit the [Student Veterans Organization's](#) website.

Student Notes



Social Work Student and Affiliates Join Campaign to Build Strong Communities in Nepal

Dr. Arati Malek, a 2015 School of Social Work graduate, and Bonita Sharma, PhD student and adjunct professor, are participating in a global campaign to construct solid communities in Nepal, a country located in South Asia in the Himalayas.

The campaign is called Nepal Rising and was launched by an enthusiastic group of young professionals, students, and individuals joining forces to build resilient communities in Nepal. Through local and global collaborations, Nepal

Rising seeks to provide a common platform to share ideas, unleash knowledge, translate information into practice, support policy and advocacy efforts, as well as monitor and evaluate community development.

The campaign strives to change the current discourse in communities in Nepal using an integrated community engagement model that utilizes evidence-based strategies, such as Asset-Based Community Development and the Place-Based Initiative.

Nepal Rising's newsletter provides a brief synopsis of their strategies and methods in building resilient communities in Nepal. [Read more](#) for additional information.





Bonita Sharma

Doctoral Student Recognized for Contributions and Service in Social Work

Bonita Sharma, doctoral student and social work adjunct professor, is one of three award recipients of the 2015 Partners in International Education (PIE) Award presented by the Council on Social Work Education's Katherine A. Kendall Institute for International Social Work. Recipients of the prestigious PIE Award have demonstrated outstanding contributions to the field of international social work education.

Sharma was also recently accepted into the Network for Social Work Management's 2015 Research to Practice Institute (RPI), an international organization dedicated to advancing professionals in social work administration, hosted by Howard University's School of Social Work. She was one of the eight doctoral students competitively selected on a national and international level with research interests in organizational management and leadership. Recipients of this award receive mentorship from a distinguished group of social work faculty from around the country with expertise in organizational management and leadership knowledge.

Sharma's research interests are in sustainable development, gender issues, gender rights, refugees and displacement, and global social work practice. She has a passion for promoting policy and practice methods that are research informed, relevant, pragmatic, and culturally relevant.

Doctoral Student Presented with Leadership Award

The School of Social Work is pleased to announce Brandi Felderhoff as a recipient of the Doctoral Student Leadership Award for 2015-16. The Association for Gerontology Education in Social Work (AGESW) will present doctoral student Brandi Felderhoff with the award at this fall's Gerontological Society of America's conference in Orlando, Florida for demonstrating strong leadership in social work education and aging.



Brandi Felderhoff

Brandi Felderhoff is an emerging scholar and has demonstrated outstanding service, education, and research in social work and aging through activities on campus, in social work agencies, and various communities.

Felderhoff was recently awarded Social Worker of the Year by the National Association of Social Workers for her accomplishments in social work practice in the areas of guardianship, hospice, and inpatient mental health treatment. Her primary research interests are elderly caregivers of patients who are at the end of their life spans and the general care and welfare of patients who are dying.

"I am a social worker, because I love what I do. Working with people, empowering them to take their lives into their own hands to improve their circumstances is my motivation. For me, there is nothing more rewarding than sharing my profession with others through service," said Felderhoff.

Doctoral Student Receives Competitive Award for Gerontology Social Work Studies

The School of Social Work congratulates Dorothea Ivey on her Pre-Dissertation Award from the Association for Gerontology Education in Social Work. She is a



Dorothea Ivey

doctoral student in the School of Social Work and was granted the Pre-Dissertation Award to provide support for her dissertation studies and help prepare for a career in gerontology social work research and education.

Ivey's research agenda includes the area of kinship care and centers on grandparents who are raising grandchildren. She is an advocate that promotes awareness on the growing need of programs and policies to better support older adults raising children. Ivey will receive 10+ hours of programming delivered by nationally recognized faculty who are experts in gerontology social work.



Scholarship Recipients

Hector Ventura, MSW student, was awarded the Ima Hogg Scholarship to support his graduate studies in social work. The scholarship is awarded to second-year graduate students who demonstrate a strong commitment to providing mental health services after graduation in Texas.

"This scholarship has allowed me to focus more on pursuing my professional goals. My career goals consist of eventually obtaining my LCSW and working in the mental health field. Preferably, I would like to work with the Latino community in mental health since there aren't many mental health professionals who are capable of serving them due to language and cultural barriers," said Ventura.



Hector Ventura

Alletia Smith, MSW student, is one of four recipients of the 2015-16 NASW Verne LaMarr Lyons Memorial Scholarship. The Verne LaMarr Lyons Memorial Scholarship



Alletia Smith

LaMarr Lyons Memorial Scholarship. The Verne LaMarr Lyons Memorial Scholarship is awarded to master degree candidates in social work who demonstrate an interest in or have practice experience in mental and general health. Scholarship recipients are committed to working in African American communities.

Smith began her studies in the School of Social Work in August 2014 and plans to graduate in May 2016 with a MSW degree emphasizing mental health. She is currently researching and working on her thesis on African American female veterans.

Amberly Prykhodko, MSW student, is a recipient of the Roy and Betty Dulak Endowed Scholarship established by the Hillcrest Foundation. This scholarship is awarded to first and second-year social work Master students entering the the field of community and administrative practice.

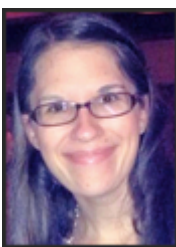
"Many people in the cycle of addiction and incarceration experience mental, physical and sexual abuse, poverty, homelessness, and more. They are a population in need of much help, but invisible to the general public. My future aspirations include advocacy on behalf of incarcerated individuals struggling with substance abuse and other mental health issues," said Prykhodko.

Chelsea Guidry, MSW student, is a recipient of the Roy and Betty Dulak Endowed Scholarship established by the Hillcrest Foundation. This scholarship is awarded to first and second-year Master students entering the field of community and administrative social work practice.

"While gender inequality is an area that I am particularly interested in, I want to understand more about the relationships between different manifestations of inequality and the impact that intersectionality has on our ability to address these issues. Following completion of my degree, my ideal career would be one that allows me to focus on helping to develop programs that will build a more even playing field for women and young girls," said Guidry.



Chelsea
Guidry



Clarissa Miller

Clarissa Miller, MSW student, was awarded the Judith Granger Birmingham Memorial Endowed Scholarship. Recipients of this award are full-time BSW and MSW students pursuing an education in social work.

"My first year internship was an exceptional experience. I learned from social workers who have been in the field for over thirty years. I also learned that while the wheel does not need to be reinvented, there is still much work to be done," said Miller.

Erica Washington, MSW student, was recently awarded the Jeanette Coburn Scholarship in honor of Jeannette Coburn and her commitment to the University of Texas at Arlington. This scholarship is awarded to incoming or continuing MSW students pursuing their educational goals in social work.

"I aspire to gain a position where I have the ability to advocate for families in need and assist them in gaining access to shelter, food, parenting skills, drug and alcohol treatment, counseling, etc. I want to make

sure that underprivileged children are living in safe and nurturing environments and receiving adequate educational and medical attention," said Washington.

Janine Smeriglio, MSW student, is a recipient of the Glen W. and Miriam S. Rollins Mental Health Graduate Scholarship. This scholarship is awarded to social work graduate students pursuing their studies in mental health or public social service.

"Ultimately, I plan to focus on military social work. I will work hard to ensure that those who protect us and our future generations are protected when they return home," said Smeriglio.



Janine
Smeriglio



Jonathan Delarosa

Jonathan Delarosa, MSW student, was awarded the Roy and Betty Dulak Endowed Scholarship established by the Hillcrest Foundation. This scholarship is awarded to first and second-year Master students entering the field of community and administrative practice in social work.

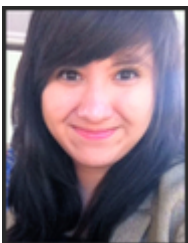
"I want to pursue advocacy on a national level through working with the American Civil Liberties Union or an equivalent agency in advocating for minorities and those of lesser means," said Jonathan Delarosa.

Jonathan Prouty, MSW student, is a recipient of the Roy and Betty Dulak Endowed Scholarship established by the Hillcrest Foundation. This scholarship is awarded to first and second-year Master students entering the field of community and administrative practice in social work.

"Many people in the cycle of addiction and incarceration experience mental, physical and sexual abuse, poverty, homelessness, untreated mental and physical health problems, and more. They are a population in need of much help but invisible to the general public. My future aspirations include advocacy on behalf of incarcerated individuals struggling with substance abuse and other mental health issues," said Prouty.



Jonathan Prouty



Karla Martinez

Karla Martinez, MSW student, was awarded the Federico Souflee Jr. Memorial Scholarship. Students eligible for this scholarship must be MSW students or students in their senior year of the BSW program. Scholarship recipients are dedicated to serving Mexican-American communities through social work.

"What I hope to accomplish with my degree is to be an advocate, not just for healthy relationships, but for healthy sexual relationships, both heterosexual and homosexual. Dating violence, rape, domestic violence, teen pregnancy, LGBTQ hate crimes are all results of the sexual ignorance our society has," said Martinez.

Kathleen Preble, Ph.D. student, was recently awarded the Joseph, Lucille and Rebecca Hegar Endowed Scholarship. This award is presented to eligible doctoral students who have successfully defended their dissertation proposals.

"I am currently in the process of collecting data for my dissertation research. This research on human trafficking will shed light on sex trafficking victims' perceptions of the kind of power traffickers use at three points in the trafficking experience (i.e., recruitment, maintenance, and rescue/escape) and how entrapment factors influence this perception at each point in the experience," said Preble.



Kathleen
Preble



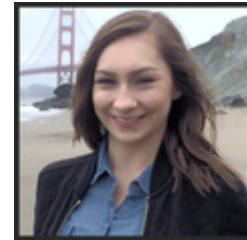
Katie Christie, MSW student, was awarded the Peter G. Gaupp Scholarship. This endowment is offered to eligible first-year graduate students who intend to major in community and administrative practice in social work.

"I would like to dig deeper into resolving problems in the homeless community and find more ways to give back to those who are less fortunate," said Christie.

Katie Christie

Kristie Apodaca, MSW student, was awarded the Lila B. Hagins Scholarship. Eligible recipients of this endowment must be BSW, MSW, or PhD students planning to pursue a social service career.

"My long-term career goal is to become a licensed clinical social worker and therapist for foster and adoptive youth or children and families," said Apodaca.



Kristie Apodaca



Mariana Carpio, MSW student, is a recipient of the Coleen Shannon Memorial Scholarship Endowment Fund. Scholarship recipients of this award are BSW and MSW students whose major field of study is social work.

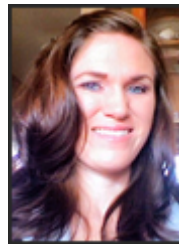
"When access is denied to children due to poverty, unequal opportunity, vulnerability, stigmatization, etc., the lack of proper mental health care follows them into adulthood. I am committed to advocating, empowering, helping navigate, and working side by side with children and youth in the mental health setting," said Carpio.

Mariana
Carpio

Vanessa Trupiano, MSW student, was recently awarded the Carolyn C. and Santos H. Hernandez Scholarship Endowment for the School of Social Work. Recipients of this

scholarship are BSW, MSW, and PhD students enrolled in an academic social work program at UT Arlington.

“I have personally witnessed the struggle of some of our country’s veterans as they transition from active military duty to civilian life. That struggle often includes managing symptoms of PTSD, TBI, depression, and drug addiction. These experiences have led me to the decision to work with veterans in mental health and suicide awareness, in addition to becoming a traumatic brain specialist,” said Trupiano.



Vanessa
Trupiano



Alumni Notes

Award Honorees



Jack Nowicki

Jack Nowicki, MSSW 1979, was recently honored at the 2015 Champions for Children Awards Luncheon in Austin, TX. The luncheon was presented by Don Hewlett Chevrolet Buick in October. Champions for Children honorees were awarded for their service and exemplary work with children in need. Since 2000, Nowicki has served as Senior Program Development Specialist at Texas Network of Youth Services. He has dedicated over 35 years of life working with children and their families, as well as working with children protective services and psychiatric residential treatment for adolescents. Nowicki also has extensive experience in marriage and family counseling.

Wayne Carson, MSSW 1987 and Ph.D. 2002, was awarded Non-Profit CEO of the Year in Tarrant County by Fort Worth Business in August 2015. Carson is the chief executive officer at the All Church Home for Children in Fort Worth, overseeing management of all programs for the nonprofit agency, which serves children and families in crisis. He is a former member of the School of Social Work's Research and Community Outreach Advisory Council.



Wayne Carson

School of Social Work Alumna, Advocate for Compassion and Justice



Heather Reynolds

Heather Reynolds, MSSW 2002, is one of the School of Social Work's distinguished alumna because of her professional leadership and dedication to community service in the DFW area.

Reynolds was honored at the Young Visionaries Breakfast, sponsored by the Fort Worth Chamber, in September and provided insight on how to use one's talents and resources to advocate for and serve individuals affected by systemic poverty.

"Look ahead, make it happen, and always learn from others along the way. Having your own board of directors, an advanced degree and surrounding yourself with people you can trust contributes to success," said Reynolds.

Reynolds said teamwork and having mentors to rely on for professional guidance and wisdom is key in building strong networks and using one's gifts to serve communities of interest. To do so, one must have a passion for service, determination, and courage to accomplish the goals that an individual sets for themselves and in helping others.

"Bravery is an important characteristic to have. It's amazing what you can do when you have a team of people working together," said Reynolds.

Reynolds' passion for serving underprivileged individuals derived from her desire to be an achiever at a young age and her work with Catholic Charities Fort Worth, where she has served as president and chief executive officer for 13 years.

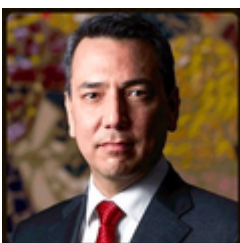
Reynolds earned a MSSW degree from UT Arlington's School of Social Work in 2002 and an executive MBA degree from Texas Christian University in 2010. Her professional expertise includes strategic planning, fundraising, social enterprise, poverty trends, and hardship issues

Professional Appointments

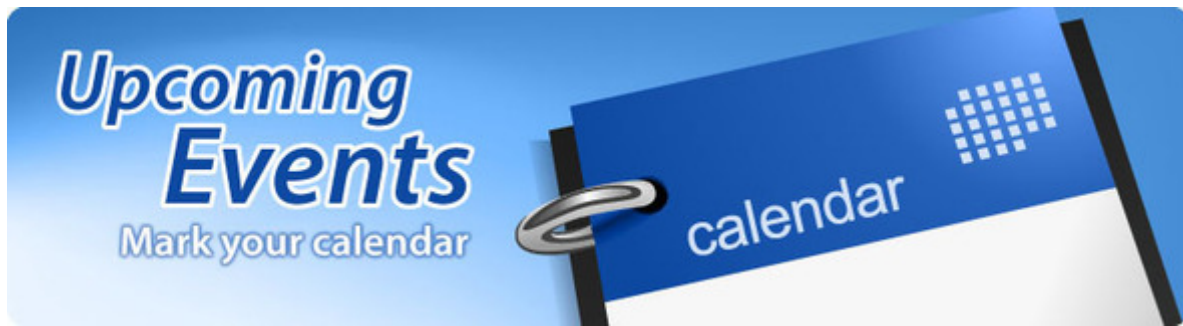
Jo Ann Coe Regan, Ph.D. 1999, was recently appointed Vice President of Education at the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). She previously served as director in the Office of Social Work Accreditation at CSWE for almost three years and accreditation specialist for over a year at the organization. Regan was on the faculties at the university of South Carolina, University of Hawaii at Manoa, and California State University.



Jo Ann Coe Regan



Alan Dettlaff, MSW 1999 and Ph.D. 2004, was recently appointed Dean and the Maconda Brown O'Connor Endowed Dean's Chair in the Graduate College of Social Work at the University of Houston. He previously served on faculties at the University of Illinois at Chicago and Texas Christian University.



Domestic Violence Awareness Month. School of Social Work students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to wear purple on Wednesday, October 21st and throughout the month of October in recognition of domestic violence awareness.

State Employee Charitable Campaign. School of Social Work faculty and staff are encouraged to support this charitable program that is important to the North Texas Community from October 1-31, 2015. Contributions may be made through a payroll deduction throughout the year or through a one-time donation. For more information, visit [S.E.C.C.'s website](#).

Communicating CPS Authority in an Ethical and Balanced Way, sponsored by the School of Social Work's [Center for Child Welfare](#) on October 22nd from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at LaQuinta Inn and Suites. Located at 825 N. Watson Road, Arlington, TX 76011.

Renew, Relax, Revive. Cindy Manzano from UT Arlington's Counseling and Psychological Services will discuss mindfulness and meditative techniques to effectively manage stress. This event is open to School of Social Work students, faculty, and staff from 12-12:30 p.m. on Thursday, November 12th in Social Work Building, room B107. Another session will be from 12-12:30 p.m. on Thursday, December 10th in Social Work Building, room B107.

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