

Master of Social Work

MSW 2018 Hooding Ceremony

INSIDE

THIS ISSUE:

Message from the Chair 2

CaISWEC/DCFS Student Profiles 2

GSWEC 17/18 Culmination 3

Asian, Desi, Pacific Islander Collective 3

SSTAR Conference 3

Alumni Spotlight 4

LA County DMH Filipino Training Summit 4



The CSUN MSW Department graduated five cohorts on Thursday, May 18th, 2018. Students, families, and friends gathered with Department faculty and staff in the early hours of the

day for the hooding ceremony, which featured inspiring speeches from graduating MSW student Taiann Knetge and faculty member Allen Lipscomb. We

congratulate and celebrate all of our graduates as they pass this momentous milestone on their way to bigger and greater things.

DIVERSITY DAY



The CSUN MSW Department hosted the 9th Annual Diversity Day on April 7, 2018, titled "Secondary Trauma Awareness." The event was planned, organized, and facilitated by the student-led Diversity Day Planning Committee, and featured speakers Joy DeGruy, acclaimed author of "Post

Traumatic Slave Syndrome — America's Legacy of Enduring Injury and Healing," and Laura van Dernoot Lipsky, founder and director of The Trauma Stewardship Institute and author of "Trauma Stewardship: An Everyday Guide to Caring for Self While Caring for Others." This year's Diversity Day was a very powerful, affirming event, raising critical consciousness and space for empowerment. The event drew a crowd of over 350 attendees and opened to a performance and blessing by the World Kulintang Institute, which was

followed by presentations from MSW students and keynote speeches from Lipsky and DeGruy, whose combined knowledge, critical analysis, and overall energy gave us the tools and strategies to Know, Heal, and Thrive from multiple forms of trauma. Additionally, the event featured a raffle of youth artwork from the CSUN MOSAIC (Mentoring to Overcome Struggles and Inspire Courage) program, as well as a raffle hosted by the Grad Committee.



**Message from
MSW Chair,
Dr. Eli Bartle**

On Missions...

“What I try to tell young people is that if you come together with a mission, and its grounded with love and a sense of community, you can make the impossible possible.”
—United States Politician and Civil Rights Activist, John Lewis

During this past year, our department revised our mission statement in preparation for reaccreditation. Our accreditation body states our mission needs to reflect our purpose and align our educational efforts with the larger social world, specifically CSUN and the social work profession. The mission of CSUN is to enable students to recognize their educational goals. It is grounded in values, including respect for all people and alliances with the community.

But what is the mission of the social work profession? The National Association of Social Work Code of Ethics states “the primary mission of social work is to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty.” The National Association of Black Social Workers’ mission is “to create a world in which people of African ancestry will live free from racial domination, economic exploitation, and cultural oppression.” The International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) is a “global organization striving for social justice, human rights and social development through the promotion of social work, best practice models and the facilitation of international cooperation.”

Whew. No small task. We rose to the challenge. We decided our revised mission is to prepare professional social workers to be anti-oppressive, socially just agents of change who promote well-being in urban settings. We started implementing our mission with discussions including a cultural humility training. We will continue our work in August. Looking forward to change...We are on a mission. Thanks to each and every one of you for your contributions. Congratulations to each of our 2018 graduates and welcome Fall, 2018 newly admitted students. We are on a mission.

CaISWEC/DCFS Student Profiles



Lorena Gonzalez, CaISWEC Recipient - CSUN MSW class of 2019

Lorena Gonzalez is a current employee of DCFS in the Van Nuys office and also a CSUN MSW student in the CaISWEC Program. She has just completed her first year field

placement at Los Angeles Valley College EOP/Guardian Scholars program. Lorena has excelled in her field placement, expanding the program by presenting on Guardian Scholars to the different San Fernando Valley Offices of DCFS. Lorena was recognized by Los Angeles County for her work in empowering students. She has also volunteered for the MOSAIC program at CSUN, being recognized for commitment to former foster youth. Lorena will graduate with her MSW in May 2019 and will continue her career with DCFS.



Anthony Barnes, DCFS Stipend Recipient, CSUN MSW class of 2018

Anthony Barnes is graduating in May 2018 after a year interning with DCFS in Lancaster. Anthony is part of a Native American tribe and completed his graduation Capstone project on Native Americans and the foster care system. Anthony’s Capstone Project explored the relationship and culture between the American

Indian Alaska Native (AIAN) people and public child welfare agencies, and he collected data from AIAN tribal welfare officials about the ability, integrity, and trustworthiness of public child welfare workers and U.S. Government officials using the standardized Mayer and Davis Interpersonal Trust Inventory. Anthony presented his findings at the 2018 Western Social Science Conference in April, and submitted abstracts to the Council for Social Work Education and American Public Health Association 2018 conferences in October and November. He won the Association of Retired Faculty Award for his research, and was honored at the award ceremony on May 12, 2018 where he presented his research and accepted a check for \$2,000. Anthony is graduating in May 2018 and will begin employment with DCFS over the summer.

GSWEC 17/18 Culmination



CSUN is honored to have a long standing relationship with the Geriatric Social Work Education Consortium (GSWEC). On April 25th GSWEC hosted an End of Year Celebration to recognize and share all of the great work the 2017-18 GSWEC Interns had completed. GSWEC offers internships working with older adults in "Centers of

Excellence" throughout the Los Angeles County area. CSUN had 11 students who were selected for these prestigious internships. Our students were placed with Motion Picture Television Fund, Alzheimer's Greater Los Angeles, Huntington Senior Care Network, Pacific Clinics, Partner's in Care Foundation, and the Veteran's Administration.

Asian, Desi, Pacific Islander Collective



The department of Social Work Asian, Desi, Pacific Islander Collective (ADPI Collective) was formed during the 2017/18 academic year and held their first official meeting earlier this spring. ADPI Collective seeks to establish academic and social justice awareness amongst students, faculty, staff, and allies in the field of social work. The collective strives to celebrate, educate, embrace, and share the beauty of ADPI cultures through educational outreach, events, workshops, and club meetings. They challenge and critique perspectives and narratives

of self as well as various institutions and systemic values that continue to oppress people today. ADPI Collective continues to enhance the educational experience for both current and prospective students of all cultural backgrounds and hopes to strengthen the overall Asian American experience at CSUN. On May 1st, ADPI Collective held a showcase to educate students, faculty, and staff on ADPI experiences as they relate to personal trauma, microaggressions, the model minority myth, and the field of social work.

SSTAR 2018 Annual Meeting



L to R; Dr. Allen Lipscomb, Jovon Riggins

Dr. Allen Lipscomb, Dr. Wendy Ashley and MSW Candidate Jovon Riggins presented at the 2018 Society for Sex Therapy and Research (SSTAR) Conference held in Philadelphia on April 19th. The title of the

research was Sexual Healing: Exploring the Utilization of Sex among Racialized Cisgender Heterosexual Black Males to Cope with Stress, Loss and Separation. Dr. Lipscomb's research utilized a qualitative research methodology to explore the lived experiences of cisgender, heterosexual Black males, focusing on sexuality as a coping strategy within the context of loss, separation and stress with a critical race theoretical lens. In addition, Dr. Lipscomb's research won two awards at the 2018 SSTAR

Conference: Best Empirical Research Award and Voters Choice Award. SSTAR is an international society founded in 1975. SSTAR is a community of professionals who have clinical and/or research interests in human sexual concerns. Its goals are to facilitate communication among clinicians who treat problems of sexual function, sexual identity, and reproductive life. SSTAR strives to provide a forum for exchange of ideas between those interested in research in human sexuality.

Alumni Spotlight: Interview with Brandon Kennedy

By MSW Chair, Dr. Eli Bartle



I heard through the social work grapevine that Brandon Kennedy, one of our former graduate students, presented his research from his final graduate project at the Society for Social Work Research (SSWR). As

Brandon's professor for this final project, I was happy to hear the news and simultaneously wondered how that came about so I asked Brandon if he would agree to an interview to talk about it. Brandon agreed and here is what I learned.

Dr. Bartle: What motivated you to choose this topic for your graduate project?

Brandon: I wanted to choose something that I was personally passionate about and would also provide a good educational component to the masters. So being a homosexual man and an HIV-Positive advocate, doing something surrounding PrEP (Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis) was near and dear to me and also, we needed more research done on it.

Dr. Bartle: What helped you the most?

Brandon: Picking something that I am passionate about helped me to stay motivated when it got tough. Also, tapping into my own social support network, looking for guidance and assistance, while going through the project. Like my mentor.

Dr. Bartle: At times, I felt like I should be able to help you more. Talk to me about teachers vs. outside support systems.

Brandon: You gave me the meat and potatoes and then I took that information you gave me and explained it to my support system.

Brandon explained that his support system included a mentor who has followed his life for 9 years. Brandon met this mentor while looking into volunteering at an LGBT drop-in center; the

mentor was the program coordinator. This mentor was in a social work doctorate program when Brandon was in the CSUN MSW program. Brandon took additional questions about his research project to his mentor. "There were times when I called him while he was at a concert and he would pick up the phone and answer my question. It helped that he was dedicated to my professional advancement."

Dr. Bartle: How did your final research project go from a required paper to a presentation at SSWR?

Brandon: My mentor submitted my abstract to SSWR. My mentor [copied] me on the submission but he accidentally used the wrong email [address]. My mentor assumed that I got the submission and, later, acceptance email, too. He called me and said 'congratulations.' I said 'What are you talking about?'

Dr. Bartle: Did you feel ready to present?

Brandon: No, but my mentor assured me that 'you got this; you already know your stuff and you know what to do.' I knew I retained the core basics and just needed a refresher.

Dr. Bartle: Are you going to go on with your research?

Brandon: There have been some talks about it. My mentor asked me if I may want to pursue it. I have been asked if I am going to submit to Gilead and other pharmaceutical companies that are in the antiretroviral field. I haven't decided on what it is I want to do yet but whatever I do, I want to do it while the information is still in current relevance.

Brandon just moved from his job as an inpatient therapist at a psychiatric hospital into a new role as School Social Worker/Therapist with a charter academy in Indianapolis.

We talked about his stress during graduate school (a break-up, owning a business, a move) and he explained that when he heard his teachers tell him that something wasn't right based on his course work, he decided to bring everyone together for an online conference. The professors offered him assistance but still held him to core deadlines. He said the conference brought up "tears of stress" and that he was not sure what he would have done if he had not been in a social work program. Everyone remained solution focused and empathetic.

LA County DMH's Filipino Training Summit

By MSW Graduate Lainey Sevillano



CSUN MSW Students Edward Jason Valdez and Lainey Sevillano with MSW Faculty Jose Paez

The Los Angeles Department of Mental Health hosted the first ever Filipino Wellbeing Training Summit on February 24, 2018. The day was full of learning, listening, and *lambing*. CSUN MSW students Edward Jason Valdez and Lainey Sevillano participated in the event with a presentation titled, "*Creating Liberation-based Learning Spaces: Deconstructing Colonialism in Edukasyon*" recognizing the impact of colonialism on educational institutions and the social work profession, the model minority myth, the danger of the single story, and many other factors contributing to an

educational experience that dehumanizes, marginalizes, and maintains the status quo. Their presentation focused on how teachers and students attempt to engage in creating liberation-based learning spaces as a way for Filipino MSW students to reclaim identity, history, language and space toward healing from historical and current trauma. Utilizing the *Head-Hand-Heart* activity, the team engaged audience members to dialogue about identifying effective strategies to better serve Filipino communities from a liberation-based perspective.