



UNIVERSITY *of* MARYLAND  
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

# *Convocation*

MONDAY, MAY 19, 2025  
1:00PM

LYRIC OPERA HOUSE  
140 W. MT. ROYAL AVENUE  
BALTIMORE, MD 21201

20  
25

**WANT TO VIEW  
TODAY'S PROGRAM  
DIGITALLY?**



**SCAN ME**



UNIVERSITY *of* MARYLAND  
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK



S O C I A L   W O R K

**COMPASSION**  
**+ ACTION**

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS

*Convocation*

MONDAY, MAY 19, 2025  
1:00PM

LYRIC OPERA HOUSE  
140 W. MT. ROYAL AVENUE  
BALTIMORE, MD 21201

## Dean's Letter

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### **Judy L. Postmus**

*Dean & Professor, University of Maryland  
School of Social Work*

School of Social Work Graduates,

Congratulations on successfully completing your academic journey with the University of Maryland School of Social Work. Your hard work, dedication, and commitment to promoting social justice and advancing the well-being of individuals and communities have paid off. Today's convocation marks a pivotal milestone in what I hope will be a long and fulfilling career in the profession of social work. As you know, the need for social workers is greater now than ever.

Many of you began your studies as our school and country were recovering from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Now, five years post-pandemic, our nation is grappling with financial cuts, job losses, the dismantling of key programs and initiatives, and actions and attitudes reminiscent of the pre-Civil Rights era. We need social workers like you in our schools, advocating for children and families, and setting policies at the highest levels of government. We need social workers in hospitals and communities to address the shortage of mental health providers, to combat health disparities, and to conduct life-changing research. The time is now for social work, and the time is now for you.

As you continue your journey, I encourage you to stay connected with your classmates and professors. Maintain the relationships you have formed throughout your experience. Most importantly, as new alumni, stay connected to the School of Social Work. Our school will continue to be a resource for our students, alumni, and community through continuing professional education opportunities and other engaging events.

Best wishes to you in your future endeavors. May you lead with compassion, serve with purpose, and initiate change with boldness.

Congratulations to the Class of 2025!

Warm regards,

*Judy L. Postmus*

Judy L. Postmus, PhD, ACSW



# ***Convocation Ceremony***

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## **Welcome & Acknowledgements**

Dean Judy L. Postmus, *PhD, ACSW*

## **Conferral of Degrees**

Provost and Executive Vice President Roger J. Ward, *EdD, JD, MSL, MPA*

## **Keynote Address**

Tisha Edwards, *JD, MSW*

## **Exemplary Student Awards**

Natan Litchman (Clinical Practicum),  
Psalms Thomas (LPSC Practicum), Jessica Gomes (Clinical),  
Jamel Freeman (LPSC), Alex Wang (Amy Cohen-Callow),  
Courtney Fullwood (Julee Kryder-Coe),  
Jayden Freshwater (Child Welfare Fellowship),  
Christopher Fogarty (The Universities at Shady Grove)

## **Faculty and Staff Awards**

Fernando Wagner (Donna Harrington),  
Temeka Bailey (Faculty), Alex Cosentino-Tich (Staff),  
Jessica Gauthier (Administrative Faculty)

## **Student Convocation Speaker**

Lia Paolucci

## **Honorary Doctorate**

Ronald Chisom

## **Honoring of PhD Graduates**

## **Honoring of Master of Social Work Candidates**

## **Closing Remarks**

Dean Judy L. Postmus, *PhD, ACSW*

## **Recessional**

## Explanation of Codes

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### ACADEMIC CONCENTRATION & SPECIALIZATION

<b>CL</b>	Clinical
<b>AG</b>	Aging
<b>BH</b>	Behavioral Health
<b>BH-EAP</b>	Behavioral Health – Employee Assistance
<b>CASP</b>	Community Action and Social Policy
<b>FAC</b>	Families and Children
<b>HLTH</b>	Health
<b>HTLH-CAFH</b>	Health – Child, Adolescent and Family Health
<b>IND</b>	Individualized
<b>LPSC</b>	Leadership, Policy, & Social Change
<b>OL</b>	Organizational Leadership

### DUAL DEGREES

<b>JD</b>	Juris Doctorate – Dual Degree with University of Maryland School of Law
<b>MPP</b>	Master of Public Policy – Dual Degree with University of Maryland College Park – School of Public Policy
<b>MBA</b>	Master of Business Administration – Dual Degree with University of Maryland College Park – Robert H. Smith School of Business
<b>MPH</b>	Master of Public Health – Dual Degree with University of Maryland School of Medicine or Johns Hopkins University

### OTHER

<b>ADV-AVA</b>	ADVANCE/AVANCE Interprofessional Fellowship
<b>CWF</b>	The Child Welfare Fellowship
<b>LSPN</b>	Behavioral Health Workforce Integration, Service and Education – Lifespan
<b>MCCW</b>	Montgomery County Child Welfare Fellowship Program
<b>SBMH</b>	The Center for Restorative Change's School-Based Mental Health Fellowship
<b>RA</b>	Research Assistant Scholars Program
<b>SUDF</b>	Substance Use Disorders Interventions Fellowship (SUDIF)
<b>SUDW</b>	Substance Use Disorder Workforce Enhancement (SUDWE)

## Academic Costume

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The traditional caps and gowns worn in the academic procession have been the costume of scholars since medieval times. They were probably adapted from ecclesiastical garb, since many scholars in the Middle Ages were clerics. In 1895, an intercollegiate commission drafted a uniform code for academic costumes, which the majority of colleges and universities in the United States have adopted.

Each of the three academic degrees has its own distinctive gown and hood. The gown representing the bachelor's degree has a long, pointed sleeve; the master's a narrow sleeve; the doctor's a full, bell-shaped sleeve with three bars of velvet. The opening of this gown is faced with wide velvet bands, which may be black or of a color indicating the wearer's general field of learning.

The most colorful and distinctive part of the academic costume is the hood, which passes around the neck and extends down the back. The color of the velvet edging indicates the wearer's field of learning. The colors of the silk lining exposed in the center of the hood are those of the college or university that conferred the degree. The tassel may be either black or the color of the field of learning. The tassel of a doctor's cap may be gold.

## Keynote Speaker

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### **Tisha S. Edwards**

*President & CEO, Maryland Bankers Association,  
EVP of the Mid-Atlantic Bankers Association*

Tisha S. Edwards is the newly appointed President and CEO of the Maryland Bankers Association and EVP of the Mid-Atlantic Bankers Association. She brings a wealth of executive experience in both the public and private sectors, with a strong commitment to representativeness and service.

Previously, Tisha served as the Chief of Staff for Wes Moore's Maryland gubernatorial campaign and as Appointment Secretary for Governor Moore's administration. From 2019 to 2021, she was the Director of the Baltimore Mayor's Office of Children & Family Success. She has also held leadership roles as President of BridgeEdU, Vice President of Corporate Affairs for War Horse Cities, and Interim CEO of the Baltimore City Public Schools System.

Tisha earned her BSW from Georgia State University, her MSW from the University of Maryland School of Social Work, and her JD from the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law. She has been a trustee of the University of Maryland Baltimore Foundation since 2016 and serves on the University of Maryland School of Social Work Board of Advisors.

Her ability to navigate complex systems and advocate for the greater good has defined her career, making her a driving force for economic growth and community development in Maryland.



## Honorary Doctorate

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### Ronald Chisom

*Co-Founder Of The People's Institute For Survival And Beyond*

**Ron Chisom, Co-founder and National Visionary of The People's Institute for Survival and Beyond.** Ron has organized tenants, cane cutters, and poor people throughout the South for over 50 years. He was Co-founder and Associate Director of the Tremé Community Improvement Association, which won several significant Louisiana victories in New Orleans in the 1970s. He is also the Executive Director Emeritus and Co-Founder of The People's Institute for Survival and Beyond. Established in 1980, The People's Institute is one of the premiere organizations that address Individual, Institutional, and Cultural racism by demonstrating and educating people on anti-racist organizing and the principles that support organizing for systemic change.

As a lead developer of the Undoing Racism™/Community Organizing Workshop, Mr. Chisom has educated and inspired people worldwide, taking his training curriculum to South Africa; Japan; Switzerland; Puerto Rico, England, and major cities, rural towns, and community programs all over America.



Mr. Chisom was also the lead plaintiff in the Class Action Suite suing the State of Louisiana. *Chisom v. State of Louisiana* arises from decades-old litigation instituted by Black voters in New Orleans who were denied the opportunity to elect a candidate of their choice to the Louisiana Supreme Court. For over a century, the legislature diluted the power of Black voters by packing them into a voting district with Jefferson, Plaquemines, and St. Bernard parishes, which all have majority white populations. After protracted litigation that reached the United States Supreme Court, the parties agreed to resolve the case by Consent Judgment – supervised by the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana – which mandated that a New Orleans-based voting district be created during the subsequent redistricting cycle. To rectify the ongoing harm Black voters were experiencing, the Judgment prescribed the creation of an eighth seat on the Louisiana Supreme Court: The Chisom Seat.

Ron has served as an organizer, lecturer, and consultant to various community, legal, and church groups. Some of these organizations include The Fisherman and Concerned Citizens Association of Plaquemines Parish, New Orleans Legal Services, Southern Organizing Committee for Economic and Social Justice, South East Consortium on Human Needs and Peace, Gulf Coast Tenants Leadership Development Project, United Way of Minneapolis, National Association of Social Workers, St Thomas Community Health Clinic, Southern Partners Fund; Texas Child Protective Services; Casey Family Programs; and many school districts around the country. He has presented at the Council of Social Work Education Annual Meeting, the National Organization of Blacks in Law Enforcement, and countless other professional organizations.

Ron has led countless workshops nationwide on “Undoing Racism™,” community organizing, leadership, and strategic development. He has also traveled to Japan, South Africa, Cuba, Nicaragua, Haiti, and France, bringing the analysis of Undoing Racism. He has served as a Kellogg Coach and received many prestigious awards, including the Ashoka Fellowship, Bannerman Fellowship, Thomas Merton Award, Petra Foundation Award, Pax Christi Bread & Roses Award, and Tenant Resource Center Achievement Award. Ron is married to Jerolie Encalade Chisom. He has one daughter, Tiphonie Chisom-Eugene, and two grandchildren, Jessica and C.J. (Cory Jr.).

## Student Convocation Speaker

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### Lia Paolucci

Lia Paolucci is a Master of Social Work student graduating in July with a Clinical concentration. Lia is from Havre de Grace, Maryland, and earned a Bachelor of Science in Psychology at Fordham University in 2019. While at Fordham, Lia completed Army ROTC and was commissioned as an Aviation Officer in the Maryland Army National Guard following graduation. After her time at Fordham, she served in the Jesuit Volunteer Corps at Cristo Rey Philadelphia High School, then attended US Army Flight School, graduating in 2021.



She currently serves as a Detachment Commander and UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter pilot. Lia is concurrently enrolled in a Respiratory Care program at Saint Joseph's University pursuing a parallel career in healthcare. Following graduation, Lia will work as a therapist at a practice in Chesapeake City, Maryland.

### *Convocation Planning Committee Student Members*

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**Courtney Fullwood**  
Leadership, Policy and Social Change

**Noudjal Gamougoun**  
Clinical

**Adenike Omosebi**  
Clinical

**August Page**  
Clinical

**Morgan Carroll**  
Leadership, Policy and Social Change

**Psalms Thomas**  
Leadership, Policy and Social Change

**Karina Zelaya**  
Clinical

## Exemplary Student Awards

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The exemplary clinical, LPSC, and practicum awards are decided upon by the Student Convocation Planning Committee, based on nominations from other students, field instructors, and faculty members. These awardees have demonstrated a unique combination of social work skills, which have made them stand out to their peers. These students have been exemplary leaders, have motivated and inspired others, are strong advocates, show commitment to social change, and have made a significant contribution to our social work community.



### Exemplary Clinical Practicum Award

Natan Litchman

Natan feels very blessed to receive the Exemplary Clinical Practicum Student of the Year Award. During his placement with the HIAS Legal & Asylum Social Services team, Natan had the privilege of working with displaced people under the supervision of Sheri Laigle, the clinical director, who provided incredible support and inspiration, allowing him to thrive. Natan also feels honored to have had the opportunity to work with such a diverse range of clients, each demonstrating resilience and bravery in their journeys to rebuild their lives in this country. He is deeply grateful for these experiences and looks forward to serving his community as a bilingual mental health therapist after graduation.



### Exemplary LPSC Practicum Award

Psalms Thomas

Raised by a single mother, Psalms, a first-generation student, has always understood the importance of perseverance and hard work in overcoming challenges. Her journey into social work is driven by a deep-rooted commitment to challenging the status quo, especially in areas where Black voices are underrepresented. She is determined to be part of a movement that not only addresses the immediate needs of marginalized communities but also seeks long-term, systemic change. Throughout her academic and professional journey, she has focused on improving the child welfare system and ensuring that the voices of

Black women are represented and valued, breaking the negative stereotypes often associated with it. As a Black woman in the field, she is deeply aware of the need for more diverse representation and the unique perspectives that people of color can bring to the table. In everything she does, Psalms strives to be a go-getter, never settling for the way things are but always thinking about how they can be improved. This mindset has propelled her through her studies and fieldwork, where she has worked with a variety of communities to advocate for changes that empower and uplift those who have been historically marginalized. She is incredibly proud to be among the growing group of Black women with a master's degree and remains committed to dismantling the barriers that prevent underrepresented individuals from entering the field. As she continues her journey, Psalms aims to not only change the narratives in child welfare but also inspire the next generation of Black social workers to pursue careers where they can make a profound, lasting impact.



## **Exemplary Student Clinical Award**

**Jesscia Gomes**

Jessica Gomes grew up in Sacramento, California, and found her calling and passion in social work after moving to Maryland. She values deeply understanding her clients, families, and their communities. After earning her Bachelor's in Social Work from the University of Maryland Baltimore County, Jessica pursued further education at the University of Maryland School of Social Work. Throughout her undergraduate and graduate programs, she has been a child welfare fellow dedicated to serving children and families, interning in family preservation in Prince George's County and at Family Connections Baltimore. Mentored by Omar Wilkins and Stacey Wilson, Jessica honed her clinical skills and built strong

connections with families, community members, peers, colleagues, sanitation workers, RISE caregivers, and staff. She has a deep love for people and sees the undeniable value in their stories, showing up as her whole self in the field and connecting with families on the deepest levels. Jessica embodies the title of Exemplary Student Clinician and looks forward to continuing her career with the Prince George's County Department of Social Services in the fall.



## **Exemplary Student LPSC Award**

**Jamel Freeman**

Jamel Freeman, a proud military dependent and son of a Master Chief in the US Navy, hails from Newark, New Jersey. As a devoted father, published author, and student, he excels academically, having enrolled as a Summa Cum Laude and Delta Alpha PI student at the University of Maryland Baltimore. Jamel is deeply committed to his community, volunteering in various roles across Northwest Maryland. As a Suicide Loss Survivor, he serves on the Frederick County Suicide Prevention Coalition, promoting community collaboration and best practices for suicide prevention, safe gun storage, stigma reduction, and support for those

affected by suicide. His volunteer experience includes work as a Certified Peer Support Specialist and at The Ranch in Urbana, MD. Additionally, Jamel serves as a board director member under the subcommittee for the Western Maryland Branch of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), focusing on increasing engagement, membership, and resource connection. As an ally, advocate, mobilizer, and public speaker, Jamel Freeman continues to positively impact diverse communities, prioritizing those that are underserved and marginalized.

## LPSC/Amy Cohen-Callow Award

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This award is presented by the LPSC faculty to a student who both meets high academic standards and distinguishes themselves in pursuit of excellence in human service delivery systems and interventions. Such activities include new program development, strategic initiatives, volunteer management, fundraising, and performance management. The award is also our way of paying tribute to a beloved colleague, Dr. Amy Cohen-Callow, who passed away from cancer in 2018. Amy was an organizational scholar, with expertise in non-profit volunteer management, was a dedicated teacher, and epitomized organizational citizenship. We are inspired to see that her ideals live on in the work of our students.



Alex Wang

Alex Wang (they/them) is a 2025 graduate of the University of Maryland, Baltimore School of Social Work in the LPSC (Leadership, Policy, & Social Change) concentration. They came to the SSW after graduating with their B.A. in Cognitive Science and working with youth in the detention system in Baltimore for 3 years. Their decision to focus on macro social work was informed by their experience with undergrad campus activism and passion for the LPSC concentration's anti-oppressive structural lens. Currently, the issues they are dedicated to organizing around include queer & trans communities, immigrants & refugees, and Palestine. They were involved in the 2024 commencement protest around the latter, opposing the pro-Israel and pro-war sentiments of the chosen

commencement speaker. Post-grad, they are looking forward to continuing that work and becoming a union and community organizer. They are grateful for the generous support of their family, found and biological, without whom they would not be the person they are today.

## LPSC/Julee Kryder-Coe Award

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The Julee Kryder-Coe Award for Outstanding Achievement in Advocacy and Social Justice is presented by the LPSC faculty to a student who both meets high academic standards and distinguishes herself in pursuit of activities that enhance the lives of those who are oppressed, marginalized, and excluded — and seeks to overturn the dominant paradigm. The award is also our way of paying tribute to a beloved colleague, Julee Kryder-Coe, who passed away from cancer in 2003. Julee was a true advocate for equality and justice in many important causes. We are inspired to see that her ideals live on in the work of our students — including this year's recipient.



Courtney Fullwood

Courtney Fullwood is currently attending the University of Maryland School of Social Work, where he serves as the Student Government Association President. He served as an intelligence analyst in the US Navy from 1999 to 2006. Courtney was honorably discharged and worked as an intelligence analyst supporting several US government agencies. Over time, he decided to pursue higher education. He attended Bowie State University and graduated Summa Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Science degree in History. After his undergraduate studies, Courtney completed an AmeriCorps service year with Reading Partners, tutoring children behind their grade level in reading. Then he transitioned into teaching for two years before deciding to pursue his Master of Social Work at the University of Maryland

School of Social Work. Courtney has also worked for One Fair Wage, a non-profit organization looking to end the use of sub-minimum wages for tipped service workers, and most recently interned at the Maryland General Assembly.

## The Child Welfare Fellowship (CWF) Student of the Year Award

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The Child Welfare Fellowship Student of the Year Award is awarded to a graduating student who has demonstrated an outstanding level of proficiency, initiative, and commitment to the highest standards of social work practice in a public child welfare field placement. The Child Welfare Fellowship prepares social work students for practice with families and children who are served by Maryland's public child welfare system. The program is a partnership with Maryland's Department of Human Resources and is a federal initiative to encourage social work students to pursue careers in child welfare.



**Jayden Freshwater**

Jayden Freshwater was born and raised in Howard County and has always had a passion for helping others. His early experiences included peer mentoring and working for the National Sexual Assault Hotline, where he provided survivors with a safe space. Jayden graduated Cum Laude from Bowie State University with a degree in social work. Inspired by his mother's unwavering dedication to the field of social work and his experiences as a Black man, it became clear that social work was his true calling. As a Black man, Jayden understands the struggles of feeling sad or upset but expressing it only through anger. Many days and nights, he felt misunderstood, forced to appear "okay" when no one seemed to care about his mental state. He knows what it's like to shed a tear and quickly

wipe it away, feeling that vulnerability is a weakness. With this in mind, his mission is to let every young Black male he encounters know that it is okay to be sad. It is okay to cry; they don't have to feel angry all the time. Jayden wants Black men to understand that it is okay to talk through their emotions and that there is strength in vulnerability. His time in the child welfare program with his task supervisor Simone Barzal, his field instructor Rebecca Seader, and his work with Paris Brown at DSS has ignited a fire within him. He cannot wait to create positive change within his community.

## The Universities at Shady Grove Award

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The Universities at Shady Grove award is given to a student who exemplifies scholarship excellence, service to the campus and broader community, demonstrated leadership in departmental or campus graduate student issues and involvement in campus organizations, issues, and activities.



**Christopher Fogarty**

Christopher Fogarty is a 2025 graduating MSW student who transitioned from a career in IT software implementation and quality assurance to pursue his passion for social work. After earning his B.A. in Philosophy from Georgia State University in 2009, Chris's journey into social work began in late 2011 when he was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis, sparking a deep interest in disability justice. This passion has been integral to his time at the University of Maryland, Baltimore, where he has excelled as an RA Scholar to Dr. Shafer, Associate Dean of Student Affairs, and as a contributing member of the Accessibility Advisory Group at the School of Social Work. Chris's dedication to social work and disability justice has shaped his academic and professional journey, preparing him to make a meaningful impact in the field.



## **Donna Harrington Exemplary Mentor Award**

**Dr. Fernando A. Wagner**

Dr. Fernando A. Wagner is a professor at the University of Maryland School of Social Work. He is interested in the development of methods, knowledge, and community-based participatory interventions promoting wellness and public mental health and has led research in the US and Mexico for over 45 years. Dr. Wagner earned his Doctor of Science degree from the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health (Mental Hygiene, 1999), where he also completed a year of postdoctoral training in psychiatric epidemiology (2000), and a Master of Public Health (1993). He has received important awards, such as the Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship (1992-93), the Morton Kramer Award (Johns Hopkins University, 1998), the WHO/

CPDD/NIDA International Award (2002); as well Faculty of the Year (2007,) Investigator of the Year (2008), and the Golden Apple Award (2010) during his tenure at Morgan State University from 2002 to 2017. Inducted to the National Public Health Honor Society (2007), he is the first author or coauthor in prestigious scientific journals such as the American Journal of Public Health, Neuropsychopharmacology, the American Journal of Epidemiology, Drug and Alcohol Dependence, Addictions, and Preventive Medicine, and Adolescent Health. Recently, Dr. Wagner received a prestigious Fulbright Fellowship Award to support his sabbatical collaboration at the Universidad Autónoma de Querétaro.



## **Exemplary Faculty Award**

**Temeka Bailey**

Dr. Temeka Bailey is a licensed clinical social worker with over 20 years of experience in the profession. Her areas of expertise include clinical trauma practice across K–12 schools, hospitals, and community-based settings. She is a Board Approved Social Work Supervisor and holds an Administrator certification from the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE).

Dr. Bailey currently serves as the Director of Social Work Education at the Center for Restorative Change and is a Clinical Assistant Professor at the University of Maryland School of Social Work.

A proud member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Dr. Bailey earned her Bachelor's in Social Work from Bowie State University and her Master's in Social Work from the University of Maryland. She completed her PhD at Morgan State University, where her research focused on systemic trauma and racial disparities in urban K–12 education.



## **Exemplary Staff Award**

**Alex Cosentino-Tich**

Alex Cosentino-Tich is the Academic and Career Advisor at the University of Maryland School of Social Work. They are dedicated to empowering students in their academic and career trajectories, and this is the greatest joy of their work. In addition to connecting with students, Alex has represented the School of Social Work within UMB's Career development programming, and they have presented at NACADA: The Global Community for Academic Advising's national conference. Alex earned their Bachelor of Arts in English and Psychology from New York University and their Master of Social Work at the University of Pennsylvania.

Prior to their work as an Academic Advisor, Alex was a therapist and case manager for teens and young adults in Pennsylvania and Maryland. In their personal time, Alex enjoys playing tennis, creative writing, and exploring Maryland with their family.



## Exemplary Administrative Faculty Award

Jessica Gauthier

Jessica Gauthier, MSW, LCSW-C, LICSW, LCSW has served the State of Maryland since 2012, beginning her career in Child Support Services and later earning her MSW from the University of Maryland School of Social Work through the Child Welfare Fellowship Program, known then as Title IV-E. Her early work included internships focused on public child welfare in Baltimore County Department of Social Services (DSS) and the Maryland Department of Human Services, Social Services Administration (SSA), followed by her initial role as LMSW at Anne Arundel County DSS, where she licensed and trained resource parents for foster care, kinship care, and adoption.

From 2018 to 2022, Jessica contributed to macro-level initiatives at SSA, including statewide training, federal reviews, and policy development. She became LCSW-C in 2019 and launched a virtual therapy practice in 2021, specializing in trauma, anxiety, and depression.

In 2022, Jessica returned to the University of Maryland School of Social Work as a faculty member, now serving as a School of Social Work Professor and Training & Recruitment Coordinator for the Child Welfare Fellowship Program. She also serves as a Board-Approved Clinical Supervisor in Maryland and holds clinical licensure in D.C. and Virginia. Known for her creativity and enthusiasm, Jessica is a passionate educator who supports the next generation of social workers through innovative training and mentorship.

### PhD Graduates & Dissertation Titles

**Vashti Adams**

*Exploring Black Women's Perspectives on Weight-neutral Approaches to Health*

**Allison Holland Howard**

*The Cycle of Objectification, Fragmentation, and Consumption: Power and Control Dynamics in Domestic Sex Trafficking*

**Danielle R. Phillips**

*Reimagining Cis-Stems of Care: Exploring Health and Well-Being Among Transgender and Gender Diverse Young Adults Through an Intersectional Strengths-Based Lens*

**Yao Wang**

*Examining Foster Care Status, Social Support, and Health Outcomes Among Transition-age Youth with Foster Care Experience*

**Kimberly Williams**

*Exploring the Therapeutic Foster Parent Experience*

# Master of Social Work Candidates

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Grecia Andrea Albarracin - CL  
Kim Michelle Alston-Akers - CL ADV-AVA (July)  
Glenn Irving Altshuler - CL (July)  
Dennise Alvarez - CL (July)  
Ema Siomara Amaya Cornejo - CL CWF (July)  
Thobile Amon - CL-LPSC SUDW (July)  
Thulisile Amon - CL-LPSC SUDW (July)  
Manar Anani - CL CWF (July)  
Grecia Melissa Arevalo - CL  
Haley Ascher - CL  
Namrah Ashraf - CL-LPSC SBMH (July)  
Melissa August - CL SUDF (July)  
Kathleen Austin - CL  
Courtney Nicole Baehr - CL LSPN/RA  
Jamie Delaney Baggett - LPSC (July)  
Mona Baguira - CL  
Kyler Barbieri - CL  
Rachel Batson - CL (July)  
Ebony D. Battle - LPSC - CL  
Emma Catherine Berk - CL LSPN (July)  
Naiely Bermudez Rivera - CL (July)  
Amelia Best-Washington - LPSC - CL (July)  
Kaelyn Rose Betterton - CL  
Jacob Giolas Bierstaker - LPSC  
Jessica Rachelle Binder - CL LSPN  
Brynisha Boatwright - CL/BH (Dec)  
Alex McNichol Boldin - CL LSPN  
Aaraa Nonie Brown - CL-LPSC  
Nicole Bryant - CL-LPSC (July)  
Tarcila Lopes Burkhardt - CL (July)  
Tamia Bydume - CL CWF (July)  
Katherine Calhoun - LPSC - CL  
Morgan Haley Carroll - LPSC (July)  
Trinity Cephas - CL (July)  
April Rose Chenier - CL  
Jaya Jasmine Chittams - CL SBMH  
Liesel Clark - CL LSPN (July)  
Abby Marie Claytor - CL SUDW (July)  
Michelle Wright Cogar - CL SBMH  
Omari Coleman - CL (July)  
Marquia Coleman - LPSC-CL/MPH  
Tessa Mackenzie Cone - LPSC - CL (July)  
Karen Connery Cook - CL-LPSC  
Willitta Cooper - CL/HLTH (Dec)  
Taylor Louise Cover - CL ADV-AVA  
Bethany Cox - CL (July)  
Lucy Marie Cronin - CL MCCW  
Jennifer Elizabeth Cruz - CL (July)  
Ashley Maureen Cugno - CL-LPSC (July)  
Dominique J. Culley - CL-LPSC/FAC (Dec)  
Olivia Clare Curti - CL  
Kelly D'Addona - CL CWF (July)  
Da'Naya Dagner - CL/MCST  
Oluwasomidotun Mojisola Dauda - CL CWF  
Katherine Davis - CL-LPSC  
Madeline Davis - CL-LPSC SUDW  
Tia Deal - CL CWF  
Noelle Marie Diaz - CL ADV-AVA  
Delaney Margaret Dignam - CL  
Jasmine Nicole Dilworth - CL SBMH (July)  
Samuel Preston Dixon - CL LSPN  
Sarah Dolina - CL  
Jesse David Dortzbach - CL/BH  
Sara Douglas - CL-LPSC LSPN/RA  
Briel-Cristina Madje Durand-Zara - CL MCCW  
Paramita Dutta Ray - CL LSPN  
Mary Alexis Eanes-Favazzo - CL  
Shamarra Easley - CL-LPSC LSPN (July)  
Erin Edwards - CL SBMH (July)  
Megan Egan - CL LSPN/RA  
Madeline Madeline Ehrlich - CL LSPN  
Janice Ann Eisenberg - CL LSPN  
Selome Ejigu - CL-LPSC LSPN  
Alexei Rafaelevich Ekimian - CL-LPSC  
Angela Elias - CL  
Michelle Elias - CL (July)  
Dominic Elliott - CL (July)  
Grace Erb - CL (July)  
Ernest Etahkwelle - CL  
Victoria Ezeji - CL-LPSC  
Nili Ezekiel - CL  
Kayla Fains - CL (July)  
Kyla Farmer - CL CWF (July)  
Sydney Fingerhood - CL (July)  
Ivan Flores - CL SBMH (July)  
Christopher George Fogarty - CL RA  
Meghan Lindsay Frazho - CL  
Katherine Cynthia Freeman - CL  
Jamel R. Freeman - LPSC - CL (July)  
Jayden Freshwater - CL CWF (July)  
Courtney Darnell Fullwood - LPSC  
Karen Galdamez - LPSC SUDW (July)  
Noudjal Gamougoun - CL ADV-AVA  
Osazia Aaliyah Garwood - CL-LPSC SBMH (July)  
Kalkidan Getahun - CL (July)  
Lisha Gibson - CL-LPSC SBMH  
Isabel Bonnar Gilday - CL  
Gregory Gillespie - CL SUDW  
Conall Michael Gilvary - CL/BH (Dec)  
Christa Gloster - CL RA (July)  
Alexandra Danielle Goldstein - CL  
Jessica Gomes - CL CWF  
Olivia Gonzalez - CL ADV-AVA  
Sarahi Gonzalez - CL CWF (July)  
Connor Graham - CL SUDF (July)  
Ezra H. Gray - CL MCCW

# Master of Social Work Candidates

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Sophia Kathryn Nordstrom Griffiths - CL

Robert Gross - CL LSPN

Devyn Groth - CL SUDF (July)

Marlena Groves - CL SUDW

Denire Maribel Guerrero - CL CWF

Ilse Yadira Guerrero - CL SBMH (July)

Dylan Patrick Gugerty - LPSC - CL (July)

Rebecca Saydiah Gurwah - CL-LPSC/FAC (Dec)

Alexis Renee Hager - CL CWF (July)

Morgan Hall - CL

Amy Louise Hallman - CL

Lauren Harcarik - CL SUDF

Coral Hauser - CL

Katelyn Healey - CL (July)

Glenda Henning-Augustine - CL SBMH

Dary Yaneth Herrera - CL SUDW (July)

Sandro R. Herrera - CL/BH (Dec)

Anne-Claire Hervy - CL (July)

Justin Taylor Hicks - CL SUDW (July)

Sydne Joyce Hill - CL SUDW (July)

Adrian Val Hinderlie - CL SBMH

Elie Saul Holzel - CL LSPN

Brianne Hoyt - LPSC - CL

Jessica Hyman - LPSC - CL/FAC (July)

Malaz Ibrahim - CL LSPN

Abby Jacobsen - CL

Anaiyah Dyese James - CL

Alex James - CL SUDF (July)

Jennifer L. Johnson - CL SUDF

Karan Kapoor - CL (July)

Kate Rebecca Kaufmann - CL

Thomas Egan Keane - CL (July)

Amanda Kim - CL SBMH

Kathryn Brooke Kindler - CL/FAC (Dec)

Daisha King - CL SUDW

Samantha Danielle Kreindler - CL

Katherine Hamill Lalos - CL

Nicholas Lamberth - CL

Erika Susan Larios - CL (July)

Jaimee Louise Lavarias - CL SUDW

Chaya Esther Leiman - CL MCCW

Khalia Diane Lemon - CL

Natan Dvir Lichtman - CL (July)

Shannon Llanes - CL

Giovanna Marie Lopresti - CL

Najuma Louison - CL-LPSC SBMH

Emma Elizabeth Lynch - CL MCCW (July)

Sarah Wynne Magid - CL LSPN

Padmini Mahurkar - CL

Elsa Christina Maltese - CL

Cameron Rose Mangold - CL

Elena Rosa Martinez Fernandez - CL (July)

Gabrielle Kierra Matthews - CL LSPN

Temerriel Maynard - CL/FAC

Ashley Mankaa Mbah - CL RA

Krista Ann McCall - CL MCCW (July)

Ria Terrelle McCormick - CL

Killian McGinnis - CL RA

Sarah McKinley - LPSC-CL/BH (Dec)

B.A. Medina - LPSC-CL/OL

Lia Mejia - CL SUDF

Brianna Mercer - CL CWF

Emma Jean Meredith - CL

Chris Michael - CL

Leah Mietus - CL

Emilia Ann Milheim - CL

Brea Miller - CL

Brittany Miller - CL-LPSC SBMH (July)

Carine Meya Milongo - CL

Christopher Thomas Minarcin - CL (July)

Yvette Mingia - CL SBMH (July)

Chifundo Misomali - CL

Anika Mittu - CL RA

Oscar Mauricio Molina-Trejo - CL

Dajai Moore - CL SUDF (July)

Skylar Regina Moroz - CL

Jaela Yvonne Morris - CL SBMH (July)

Madeliene Moses - CL

Adishree Nayak - CL RA/MPH

Jermaine Nelson - CL LSPN

Lisa Lee Nho - CL (July)

Isata Nadia N'jal - CL

Andréa Annelia Noel - LPSC-CL

Tessa Norris - CL (July)

Jason Douglas Norwood - CL/BH (Dec)

Eden Julia Oberfeld - CL

Brendan O'Connell - CL (July)

Casey Jillson Ojeda - CL

Ehizokhale Okoukoni - CL

Kuburat Olamide Oladiran - CL

Eniola Desiree Olawunmi - CL CWF (July)

India Oliver - CL SUDW (July)

Adenike Titilayo Omosebi - CL

August Lowen Page - CL SUDF

Lauren Paniati - CL-LPSC LSPN

Fannya Rebecca Panoff - CL (July)

Lia Paolucci - CL (July)

Christy Parayil - CL LSPN (July)

Valeria Parra-Torres - CL

Alexandra Pates - CL (July)

Abigail Patschorke - CL (July)

Jonathan Mitchell Payne - CL/MSJS

Jennifer Grace Peck - CL

Kyarah Rosete Pete - CL (July)

RayLee Peterson - CL LSPN (July)

Bonnie Cahill Pfeffer - CL

# Master of Social Work Candidates

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Ellen Kyong Hong Pilon - CL (July)  
Alexis Christina Pollock - CL  
Celeste Puente - CL SUDW (July)  
Alejandra Paola Quintero - LPSC - CL  
Karla A Ramirez - CL (July)  
Norsha Contura Rankine - CL CWF (July)  
Alexa Jeanette Raymundo - CL  
Aliza Reinstein - CL  
Christina Diane Reuling - CL CWF  
Keysi Anahi Reyes - CL (July)  
Riley Robinson - CL RA  
Faith W. Rogers - CL SBMH (July)  
Stephen Rose - CL SUDW (July)  
Stacey Valentine Royster - CL-LPSC SUDF  
Jeffrey Rubin - CL (July)  
Grace Rupp - CL LSPN  
Matlyn Rybak - CL MCCW  
Zoe Schmauder - CL/BH  
Karen Belinda Schwartz - CL  
Conqualla Scott - CL (July)  
Shaunna Scott - CL (July)  
Khalia Scott - CL-LPSC SUDW  
Claire Segal - CL  
Luz Angelica Serna Giraldo - CL CWF  
Nicole Anna Shaffer - CL (July)  
Mahvish Shahid - CL LSPN (July)  
Tomin Shibu - CL  
Allison Nichole Shuff - CL  
William Waring Simpson - CL  
Simone Smith - CL CWF (July)  
Veronica Gabriela Soriano Lara - CL SBMH (July)  
Daniel James Sparaco - CL  
Sade Alexis Spriggs - CL  
Philip St. John - CL  
Danielle Stanton - CL/MBA  
Anesha Stelly - CL CWF (July)  
Tristan Stevens - CL LSPN (July)  
Desmyn Stevenson - CL SUDW  
Jemeka Stewart - CL SBMH (July)  
Latoya Stewart - CL-LPSC (July)  
Jacob Stibbe - CL LSPN (July)  
Liewawit B. Tafesse - CL (July)  
Ayesha Taylor - CL (July)  
Vernessa Luanne Taylor - CL-LPSC  
Rafaella Tejada - CL (July)  
Rebecca Tercero - LPSC (July)  
Andrea Theis - CL LSPN/RA  
Claudia Thomas - CL (July)  
Psalms Thomas - CL CWF  
Morgyn Mackenzie Thomas - CL LSPN  
Molly Thompson - CL-LPSC (July)  
Tyler Thornton - CL-LPSC SUDW (July)  
Michelle Thornton - CL-LPSC/FAC

Sophia Tilton - LPSC - CL  
Carter Tipton - CL (July)  
Halley Marie Tootle - CL  
Nika Toure - CL (July)  
Aerie Anne Treska - CL RA  
Anna Marshall Trundle - CL RA  
Julian Adolfo Urbina - CL  
Kati Utter - CL (July)  
Holly Elise Bulgarella Van Winter - CL LSPN  
Emily Jane Varlas - CL  
Grace Benson Virden - CL  
Stephenie Nichole Volmar - CL CWF  
Taylor Iman Waklatsi - CL CWF  
Anna Walker - CL (July)  
Bernice Adrienne Walker - CL-LPSC (July)  
Sophia Wan - CL-LPSC  
Alexander Wang - LPSC (July)  
Kiana Ward - CL-LPSC SUDW/MPH  
Crai-Symone Watson - CL CWF (July)  
Eliza Alexandria Biddle Weeks - CL (July)  
Cam Whelley - CL  
Lindsey Kate Wiedel - CL (July)  
Aaleah Williams - CL (July)  
Tenaya E Williams - CL CWF  
Oya L. Wilson - CL-LPSC  
Diamyn Michelle Wilson - LPSC - CL (July)  
David Alderman Wolfe - CL  
Victoria Jane Yamarone - CL  
Mia Yau - CL  
Karina Alejandra Zelaya - CL (July)

## **Behavioral Health Workforce Integration, Service and Education (BHWISE) Fellowships**

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### **BEHAVIORAL HEALTH WORKFORCE INTEGRATION, SERVICE AND EDUCATION (BHWISE) FELLOWSHIPS**

The BHWISE Fellowships are specialized fellowships for social work students committed to working with underserved populations with behavioral health care needs. BHWISE fellows receive interprofessional training, specialized seminars, a focused plan of study, and funding support. The University of Maryland, School of Social Work currently has four BHWISE Fellowships.

**ADVANCE/AVANCE** is an advanced year interprofessional fellowship training social work and psychology interns in the provision of integrated, culturally, and linguistically competent behavioral health services in settings with children, adolescents, and young adults in underserved and rural communities. It is a workforce development grant funded by the Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA), currently an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

**LIFESPAN** is an advanced year fellowship in integrated, interprofessional behavioral health to clients of all ages with a priority of service to underserved communities. It is a workforce development grant funded by the Health Resources and Services Administration, currently an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

**SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS INTERVENTIONS FELLOWSHIP (SUDIF)** is a two-year MSW fellowship for social work students committed to a course of study focusing on the treatment of substance use disorders. Funded through the State of Maryland University System, SUDIF aims to increase the workforce of clinical social workers who provide evidence-based interventions in the substance use treatment field. SUDIF Fellows commit to two years of employment in a substance use disorder treatment program in Maryland post-graduation.

**SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS WORKFORCE ENHANCEMENT(SUDWE) FELLOWSHIP**  
The Substance Use Disorders Workforce Enhancement Fellowship prioritizes advanced standing students committed to working with individuals living with substance use disorders and their families. It is a workforce development grant funded through the State of Maryland Behavioral Health Administration via a grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), currently an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

## **The Child Welfare Fellowship**

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**(CWF)** The Child Welfare Fellowship is a partnership between the University of Maryland School of Social Work, the Maryland Department of Human Resources, and social work programs statewide to recruit and retain professionals in public child welfare. Funded federally, it provides stipends for students who complete specialized training and coursework. Graduates work in local departments of social services, with most placed in Prince George's County and Baltimore City through the Urban Child Welfare Initiative.

## **The Research Assistant Scholars Program**

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**(RA)** The Research Assistant Scholars Program is a highly competitive award that pairs students with expert researchers in the field of social work. In exchange for a weekly 10-hour work commitment, RA Scholars receive a stipend as well as the opportunity for first-hand research experience with a social work faculty member. Program recipients are chosen based on their overall application for admission to the MSW program as well as interest and experience in research.

## **Fellowship For School-Base Mental Health**

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**(SBMH)** The Center for Restorative Change's School-Based Mental Health Fellowship aims to address the shortage of mental health providers in high-need K-12 school districts in central Maryland. This unique fellowship opportunity offers tuition scholarships to MSW and BSW fellows. MSW and BSW fellows benefit from a generous tuition scholarship, along with an additional stipends and various other incentives.

## **Montgomery County Child Welfare Fellowship Program**

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**(MCCW)** The Montgomery County Child Welfare Fellowship Program is a partnership with the Montgomery County Government and Department of Health and Human Services to provides UMSSW students with a stipend and specialized training in exchange for a commitment to work in child welfare in Montgomery County. This innovative partnership aims to meet local workforce needs and decrease educational costs for students interested in working in child welfare.



# *Congratulations,* **CLASS OF 2025!**



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## Stay connected to University of Maryland, Baltimore's School of Social Work

**1**

The University of Maryland School of Social Work Office of Continuing Professional Education (CPE) offers a variety of workshops designed to advance the knowledge-base of post-graduate social workers. School of Social Work alumni can access a robust catalog of offerings. [Visit ssw.umaryland.edu/cpe](https://ssw.umaryland.edu/cpe).

**2**

Follow the School of Social Work on all social media channels to stay connected, learn about our workshops and events, research and programs.



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**3**

Connect and network with other alumni and current students by participating and attending UMSSW and UMB Alumni events.





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