

# ONGOING

University of Michigan School of Social Work

Winter 2021

“I came with a fire to create change.”

“My studies gave me more fuel and motivation to continue and organize for social justice.”



“We don’t shy away from difficult topics. We amplify them; we lean into the discomfort.”

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100 YEARS OF MICHIGAN SOCIAL WORK

“I was surrounded by people who were vanguards for diversity, equity, and inclusion. They moved the practice forward.”



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### DEAN, SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

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### Mission Statement

Advancing the social work profession's vision and values, the University of Michigan School of Social Work seeks to develop a more equitable, caring and socially just society. Such a society meets basic human needs, eliminates social and economic inequities and empowers individuals, their communities and institutions to reach their aspirations and potential. Drawing on an interdisciplinary faculty within a public university seated in a region of enormous need and promise, the School is dedicated to education, research and service that fosters progressive change at local, national and global levels.



## FROM THE DEAN



As our Centennial winds down, we celebrate a year that has been historic and memorable in a way we never could have imagined. The pandemic both challenged everything — how we teach, learn, work, connect and socialize — and brought us back to basics. Social workers were on the front lines of this crisis, offering support and connection while figuring new ways to reach out and raise hope.

We've also found ways to find joy and connect. By hosting Centennial events online, we were able to join together with alumni across the globe. Together, we enjoyed an encore presentation and discussion of "Reach Out, Raise Hope, Change Society: A Cantata in Ten Movements"; joined Spike Lee and Terence Blanchard as they discussed the convergence of social justice and the arts at the inaugural Social Justice Changemaker Lecture; and deepened our awareness of important contemporary social issues such as reparations for the descendants of slaves, building equity through social policy strategies and preventing child sexual abuse through the Centennial Lecture Series. This fall, we returned to in-person classes and events, including our tradition homecoming tailgate, luncheon and Centennial celebration.

In the midst of a challenging year, these events have reminded us of the power of connection, whether in-person or electronic, to find new solutions in the face of adversity. Marking 100 years of Michigan Social Work during these extraordinary times has meant that each of us has had to face hardship and loss, and recommit ourselves to our mission as social workers. As we begin our second century at Michigan Social Work, we will remember 2021 not just as an anniversary year, but one in which social workers stood firm in our commitment to tackle society's most pressing problems.

On a personal note, the end of the year also wraps up my term as dean of this great school. I reflect further on the challenges and accomplishments of the School in an article starting on page 2. I am so very honored to have been a part of this community of excellence and service, and so grateful for the support from our devoted alumni and donors, the brilliance of our faculty, students and staff and the passion and dedication of our whole Michigan Social Work community.

Always, Go Blue,

**Lynn Videka, Dean**

Carol T. Mowbray Collegiate Professor of Social Work



## CENTENNIAL SOCIAL JUSTICE IMPACT FUND

As the leading school of social work in the nation, we have a responsibility to work to eliminate systemic oppression and eliminate racial, economic and social inequities. To help address these issues, we have established the Centennial Social Justice Impact Fund, an endowed fund that will provide long-lasting support for:

- Scholarships for students leading anti-racism and anti-oppression initiatives;
- Faculty research focused on improving the lives of those affected by racism and structural injustices;
- Community events to inspire others to become change agents;
- A social innovation prize to fund the implementation of a bold idea that addresses social, racial and systemic inequities.

We invite you to stand with us by making a gift to the Centennial Social Justice Impact Fund today. Your support of the Social Justice Impact Fund means you are keeping Michigan Social Work at the forefront of important social justice efforts as we work to find solutions to the world's most challenging problems.

For more information about the Centennial Social Justice Impact Fund and how to partner with us, scan this QR code:





# Delivering on Her Vision

A Conversation with Dean Lynn Videka

## Moving the School forward by bringing in the next generation of ideas through the strategic plan and new faculty

Lynn Videka, dean and Carol T. Mowbray Collegiate Professor, will be stepping down as dean when her term ends on December 31, 2021. Videka's distinguished career includes serving as the dean and vice president for research at the University at Albany, SUNY, and as dean of the Silver School of Social Work at New York University. She has been dean of the School of Social Work since August 2016, and recently spoke with *Ongoing* about the challenges and accomplishments of her tenure. This conversation focused on two of Videka's priorities: the implementation and results of the School's strategic plan, and the new generation of faculty hired during the last five years.

### **ONGOING: Tell us why you came to Michigan.**

**LYNN VIDEKA:** Even before I came to Michigan, I knew the School would be a great match for me, and I knew it would be a tremendous privilege to be the leader of the top school of social work in the country. I first came to know Michigan because [Dean Emerita] Paula Allen-Meares and I were very good friends, and even before I had been to the campus, I had long admired all the graduates of the program.

My two kids have degrees from Michigan, so I like to say that I was a proud Michigan parent before I became a Michigan faculty member and dean. There were so many things that drew me. It was really a hard choice — I was really honored to have the position at NYU — but I'm glad I made the decision to come to Michigan in 2016.

### **ONGOING: Let's talk about the strategic plan. What was its genesis?**

**LYNN VIDEKA:** The strategic plan comes from my own philosophy about leadership. It's common to ask about the dean's vision, but the dean's vision alone doesn't mean as much as a collective vision built by the School community.

I feel like my job as dean is to support — not to create, but to support — a collective vision that brings the faculty and community together, and that enables the school to move to its next level. Many people are skeptical about strategic

plans — that they're just verbiage that sits in the drawer, they don't mean anything, they aren't implemented — but I feel that a good strategic plan engages the whole community and serves as a blueprint for the future. In a good strategic plan, every member of the School community sees something that excites them about the future of the School. Maybe no one but I am excited about all of it, but a good strategic plan should have at least one element — and it won't be the same element — that every single faculty member can get behind.

The most important part of a strategic plan is the implementation. A five-year term is a perfect way to strategize and identify which goals will really mean something for the School, and to use the collective power of the whole faculty as well as the staff to make sure we can achieve them.

### **ONGOING: Five years later, what has the plan accomplished?**

**LYNN VIDEKA:** I'm going to tell you five things we've accomplished from the Strategic Plan, one in each category.

I'm deeply proud of a completely revised and rethought MSW program. It's a very forward-looking program and the pathway approach prepares students for the jobs of the future. We've also strengthened the PhD program, and I'm proud of our graduates who are joining the faculties of the best universities across the country.

Strategic goal two is improving access to a Michigan Social Work education, so of course I'm proud of the part-time and online programs. Working students now have several ways to earn a University of Michigan MSW, including the online program and the part-time on-campus program.

The MasterTrack program — which allows students to begin their degree by earning a certificate online — is really revolutionary. We're the only program in the nation that has cut the cost of an MSW education by 22 percent for those on the MasterTrack Program.

The current generation of students is focused on activism — demanding equity, and fighting racism and oppression. This is the third goal of our plan. This has been a really challenging time for our nation and our School. While we have been heavily criticized by some of our students, we have made strides in terms of anti-racism, diversity, equity and

## STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS 2017-2021

1. Deliver educational programs that prepare graduates for leadership
2. Improve access to affordable education
3. Dedicated to diversity and respect for all
4. Engage with community to advance social justice and progressive change
5. Advance the social work profession through interdisciplinary research



## MASTERTRACK ONLINE PROGRAM

Students can begin their MSW online through the MasterTrack Certificate Program. The six-course program, Social Work: Practice, Policy and Research, which builds critical analysis, problem-solving and research skills in preparation for various types of social work. After receiving the certificate, students can apply to continue their studies online or finish their MSW on campus. Completion of the certificate reduces the amount of credit hours, saving students time and money. Visit [ssw.umich.edu/programs/msw/mastertrack](https://ssw.umich.edu/programs/msw/mastertrack) for full details.

inclusion. I see faculty, students, and staff who are committed for the long run to keep these issues on the front burner, and the schoolwide commitment represents real progress.

With respect to the plan's fourth goal, outstanding interdisciplinary team research that advances social justice, I'm super proud of the collaborations in our School on important social issues. The research centers, including the Vivian A. and James L. Curtis Center for Health Equity Research and Training; the Center for Equitable Family & Community Well-Being; the Center on Assets, Education and Inclusion; the Child and Adolescent Data Lab; the Treatment Innovation and Dissemination Research Group and the many faculty-led labs produce important research discoveries on the most important social and health issues of our time. We've seen a substantial increase in external awards (a 44 percent increase in both 2018 and 2019), which means that public funders, and public and private foundation funders, are recognizing the caliber and quality of our research.

The fifth goal, renewing the School's engagement with its communities, was the last goal we got to work on. When I arrived, the School was concluding the Detroit-based Good Neighborhoods Initiative, funded by the Skillman Foundation. We are now in the process of renewing and revitalizing our engagement with Detroit and with other communities in southeastern Michigan. Under the leadership of Professor Trina Shanks, the ENGAGE program and the Center for Equitable Family & Community Well-Being are partnering with communities and meeting community needs in very visible and tangible ways. I'm proud and I'm pleased that the university is an environment that values engaged research and public engagement enough that it provides incentives and recognition for our faculty like Professors Joe Ryan and Brian Perron, who co-lead the Child and Adolescent Data Lab, Luke Shaefer, who directs U-M's Poverty Solutions initiative and Trina Shanks, who also directs the Center for Equitable Family & Community Well-Being.

**ONGOING: Let's talk about the new generation of faculty that you have brought into the School. Tell us about the changes that you've witnessed in social work and social work education during your time in the field.**

**LYNN VIDEKA:** We've been on a trajectory of tremendous growth in social work as well as at Michigan Social Work. There are now 296 accredited MSW programs in the U.S. When I began my career 40-some years ago, there were about 160 programs. Most of the growth has been in teaching institutions, not research universities.

During this same period, the role of science-based knowledge has become more important than ever in social work. Public investment requires that outcomes be realized, achieved and measured in order to continue investment, and that's been a real challenge for social work education. So more than ever, research universities like ours have a special and critical role to play. Very few universities can marshal all the elements of research in the way the University of Michigan can.

Research that is informed by critical theory and tightly woven into our profession's social justice mission informs the future of



*“Our new faculty are carrying on the proud scholarly and teaching traditions of the School and of the University of Michigan by focusing on the most important social issues of the day.”*

social work. In social work education, new knowledge for tomorrow is being created by research, and that’s what’s so exciting about bringing new faculty to Michigan.

Like many other schools of social work, our School has been experiencing the retirement of a whole generation: the baby boomers and their predecessors. We have hired the next generation of researchers who are going to fundamentally change the field.

Our new faculty are carrying on the proud scholarly and teaching traditions of the School and of the University of Michigan by focusing on the most important social issues of the day. These include poverty, financial equity for all Americans and building assets for children; the well-being of children and families; inclusion and equity for populations who have been marginalized including people who identify as LGBTQIA+ or BIPOC or who manage disabling conditions; health equity for BIPOC people managing chronic physical and behavioral health conditions; Indigenous communities using their cultural strengths to fight depression and hopelessness and violence; inclusion for immigrants and refugee families and communities;

building strong and inclusive service organizations; dismantling misogyny and gender-based violence; and educational success for first-generation, BIPOC and immigrant youth and young adults.

New faculty members are also taking the lead in integrating technology — including mobile apps and interactive computer games — into social work practice, and several new faculty members are focusing on using technology to support mental health in groups of cancer survivors, youth managing cognitive and behavioral health conditions, in rural communities and with homebound elders. I’m so proud of our faculty who are building knowledge in new and important areas.

We have also expanded the number of clinical teaching faculty who bring deep practice experience and innovations. The School has transitioned to the next generation — with a renewed faculty and renewed programs for the next generation of Michigan Social Work. We don’t know all the outcomes, yet we know that they are suited to the social work world of tomorrow, and building on the strong Michigan traditions that we are celebrating this Centennial year. That’s pretty exciting.



**ONGOING: You are stepping down as dean at the end of the year. What comes next for you?**

**LYNN VIDEKA:** I've been a dean for a long time, so I always had more research to complete than I've had time to do. I look forward to being able to complete some of these projects!

One of the areas that I've been working on is the role of peer providers in the delivery of behavioral health services, especially for people with psychiatric disabilities. I also plan to continue my research focusing on parents with psychiatric disabilities — people who are parenting but are managing their own psychiatric disabilities as well — and on providing better support for that population.

I've loved my jobs and I love being a social worker. I've always felt that I made a contribution to society and I'm not giving that up yet, but at the same time, I feel the pull of the next generation, who are my grandchildren. We have six who have been born since we've been here at Michigan, and it is time for me to devote some attention to my family.

**ONGOING: What memories from Michigan will you carry with you?**

**LYNN VIDEKA:** I've never been at a university that has as deep a pride and identity as the University of Michigan. I have never been in a place where the faculty members and the alumni are so accomplished, esteemed and hardworking. That was especially important last year, when we accomplished so much despite the pandemic. At the individual level, our faculty and alumni were very productive and just shined. At the organizational level, and with our new curricula, nothing missed a beat, even though COVID upset everything.

Believe it or not, I'm going to miss the faculty meetings. They are full of life and energy and opinions and debate. I'm going to miss being able to be as close to the career development of our junior faculty, as it is one of my responsibilities that I've loved most.

Michigan is a unique and special place, and I feel nothing less than totally privileged to have had the opportunity to work here among such dedicated and talented faculty and students, and in such a wonderful environment. It's been the opportunity of a lifetime!

## FACULTY RECRUITMENT UNDER DEAN LYNN VIDEKA

Lindsey Bornheimer, Assistant Professor

Zaynab Boussi, Field Faculty

Amy Burandt, Field Faculty

Miriam Connolly, Field Faculty

Rosalva Osaorio Cooksy, Field Faculty

Fernanda Cross, Assistant Professor

Ashley Cureton, Assistant Professor

Katie Doyle, Clinical Assistant Professor

Abigail Eiler, Clinical Assistant Professor

William Elliott II, Professor

James Ellis, Assistant Professor

Katrina Ellis, Assistant Professor

Lisa Fedina, Assistant Professor

Daniel Fischer, Assistant Dean of Field Education and Clinical Associate Professor

Terri Friedline, Associate Professor

Odessa Gonzalez Benson, Assistant Professor

Jaclynn Hawkins, Assistant Professor

Todd Herrenkohl, Marion Elizabeth Blue Professor of Children and Families

Justin Hodge, Clinical Assistant Professor

Shanna Kattari, Assistant Professor

Ashley Lacombe-Duncan, Assistant Professor

Kathryn Maguire-Jack, Associate Professor

Sunggeun (Ethan) Park, Assistant Professor

Daicia Price, Clinical Assistant Professor

Yatesha Robinson, Field Faculty

Katie Schultz, Assistant Professor

Matthew Smith, Associate Professor

Aimée Vantine, Field Faculty

Lisa Wexler, Professor

Xiaoling Xiang, Assistant Professor

Anao Zhang, Assistant Professor



# Noting Our History

## 100 Years of Michigan Social Work

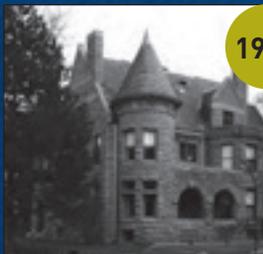
This timeline depicts the U-M School of Social Work's history, from its origins as an undergraduate program, to its current position as one of the world's most prominent schools of social work. The timeline will continue to expand to reflect the contributions of the School of Social Work community and our shared commitment to advancing social and economic justice in a rapidly changing and diverse world.



1921

Meeting the social service needs of the people was U-M's predominant goal for developing a formal curriculum in social work in 1921. The required courses included rhetoric, mathematics, history, foreign language, botany, zoology or geology, English, economics, political science, psychology, sociology, psychiatry and public health.

The Center for Graduate Study in Detroit included educational programs for study in public administration and social service. U-M was given free use of a building at 40 East Ferry Street by owner Tracy McGregor, a prominent Detroitier who ran a mission for homeless men.



1935

1952



*The Link: Alumni Organization Institute of Social Work* was an alumni newsletter that included curriculum information and a section dedicated to alumni updates. A selection from the February 1952 issue: "We are proud to report we have 135 members in the Alumni Organization."

1951

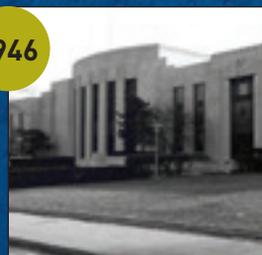


The School began operating in Ann Arbor in September 1951 in an old frame house at 320 East Washington, where the Modern Languages Building now stands. The house held faculty offices and a small meeting room. According to Professor Emerita Katherine Reeber, "The house was eventually torn down, but we used to affectionately call it the little gray house in the West. Others dubbed the house, less affectionately, as "the shack."

### Fedele F. Fauri, 1951

Fedele F. Fauri was appointed the first dean of the School. Fauri was a pioneer in the field of social legislation and public welfare. Much of the current social welfare legislation at both the state and federal levels is the product of his activities, first as director of the Michigan Department of Social Services, and then through his years in Washington, DC, where he held numerous leadership positions.

1946



The Rackham Building, at 60 Farnsworth in Detroit, housed the school during the '40s.

The Rackham Building, at 60 Farnsworth in Detroit, housed the school during the '40s.

The School created the Joint Interdisciplinary Doctoral Program, the first of its kind in the country, combining the study of social work with another social science discipline. This innovative PhD program has launched hundreds of deans, directors and other leaders of the profession.



1957

The School moved from 320 East Washington to the Frieze Building, a former high school at 105 South State Street (today the North Quadrangle Residential and Academic Complex).

Dean Fauri served on the Ad Hoc Committee on Public Welfare of the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, and was President of the American Public Welfare Association.

1960

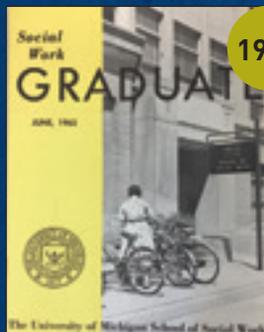
President John F. Kennedy appointed Professor Wilbur J. Cohen as Assistant Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare. Cohen helps secure the passage of many New Frontier and Great Society programs and is an architect of the United States Social Security Act. Cohen later returned to Washington as Secretary of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare under President Johnson.



1960

Today, graduates continue to go to Washington, as well as state capitals, county seats and city councils all across the country.

According to the *Social Work Graduate*, an alumni publication, "Two-thirds of full-time students are receiving financial aid. In 1961-1962 the total amount was over \$300,000." This would equal \$2.5 million in 2018. The School's financial aid for 2018-2019 was more than \$9 million — a 260% increase from 1962.



1962

1971



**Phillip Fellin**

Phillip Fellin was dean from 1971-1981. He collaborated with the schools of Public Health, Law and Medicine resulting in the development of new interdisciplinary

programs to fulfill the School's mission of training students for service at all levels of society.

1970



A grant from the National Institutes of Mental Health allowed the School to consolidate its summer institutes and extension courses into a new Continuing Education Program.

1968



Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. is assassinated in Memphis. A memorial is held at Hill Auditorium, and the School of Social Work sponsors a silent "March of Mourning" through Ann Arbor.

1967



The University of Michigan confronted the social and political crises of the 1960s. Professor Henry J. Meyer was among the sponsors of a university-wide "Teach-In on America in Crisis: The

War, Ghetto Uprising and Third World Revolution" in October. MSW students Russell Garris and Ronald Archambault presented on "The Role of Community Organizing in the Urban Ghetto."

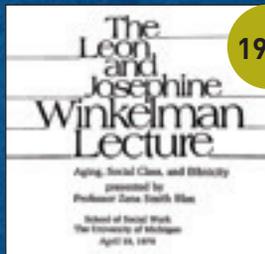


1971

At the urging of MSW student Jim Toy, U-M became the first school in the U.S. to open an office — the Human Sexuality Office (Spectrum Center) — dedicated to the support of gay and lesbian students. Toy, who also cofounded the Gay Liberation Front in Ann Arbor and Detroit, received an honorary doctorate from U-M in 2021.

The School ranked second in the U.S. for the number of enrolled minority students, one of just eight schools nationwide with representation by all major minority groups.

The Leon and Josephine Winkelman Memorial Lecture Series was established by Stanley, John, Frederick and Henry Winkelman as a memorial to their parents. It was the first named lecture series at the School and is held annually. The series provides a forum for the presentation of new and emerging knowledge from the social sciences and the helping professions in the field of gerontology.



1978

**Harold R. Johnson**  
Harold R. Johnson was the first African American dean at U-M from 1981-1993. During his tenure as dean, the School became the number one ranked school of social work in the country. He gained the approval of the regents to construct a new building for the School, representing its value to the university. Johnson believed that racial equity is the single most important issue facing society and that the university reflected the imperfections of society-at-large. Johnson spearheaded a campuswide initiative to improve the quality of life for and with residents of Detroit.



1981



1995

Construction of the new School of Social Work building began in August and was completed in 1998.

1994

U-M School of Social Work was ranked the number one school of social work in the country by *U.S. News & World Report*. Rankings are published every four years. In the latest ranking in 2018, U-M was number one out of 217 MSW programs.

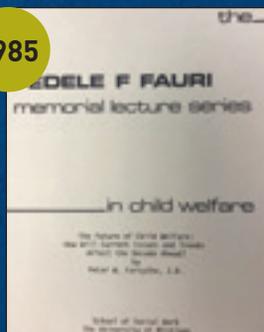
1993



**Paula Allen-Meares**  
Paula Allen-Meares was dean from 1993 -2008. Allen-Meares created the business plan and fundraising campaign for the new, state-of-the-art School of Social Work Building.

As dean, she advanced excellence in research and education. Under her leadership, the School was awarded a five-year grant from the National Institute of Mental Health to help establish the Social Work Research Development Center on Poverty, Risk and Mental Health — one of only three social work mental health research centers in the U.S.

1985



The Fedele F. and Iris M. Fauri Memorial Lecture in Child Welfare was established as a forum for discussing ideas to enhance the well-being of young people.



2002

The School of Social Work's collection of more than 50 works of art by prominent artists reflects the School's mission to improve the well-being of the economically and socially disadvantaged and other vulnerable populations. The centerpiece of the original collection is Sam Gilliam's "The Right View," a four-piece installation commissioned for the School's lower level atrium.

Photo: BILL HABER / Associated Press, File



2005

MSW students formed the Disaster Response Group after Hurricane Katrina to help with the rebuilding of New Orleans and raise awareness of social injustices in federal and state relief efforts revealed in the aftermath of the storm.

Vivian A. and James L. Curtis established the Curtis Center for Health Equity Research and Training. Vivian, MSW '48, and James, a 1946 graduate of the U-M Medical School, met in 1948, when they both were working at Wayne County General Hospital.



2007

2011



The School partnered with the Peace Corps to offer the Master's International program.

The School commissioned a musical work for the 90th anniversary. The cantata "Reach Out, Raise Hope, Change Society" was commissioned for the School by Joan Fisch, MSW '67, and her husband Allan, and performed by the U-M Chamber Choir on November 18, 2011.

2010



The Community Action and Social Change Undergraduate Minor (CASC) launched. Students develop knowledge, skills and experiences in community action and social change. CASC has become the second-largest minor at the University of Michigan.

2009



**Laura Lein**

Laura Lein was dean from 2009 - 2016. During her tenure, the School launched a number of new programs including the undergraduate social work minor (CASC), the Program

Evaluation Group and an African American-centered social work leadership program. She also launched seven learning communities, which included students and faculty, and drew on interdisciplinary approaches to pedagogy and research on current social work topics.

2008

The university-wide Michigan Difference campaign concluded. The School of Social Work raised over \$19 million — \$2.5 million over the goal.



We invite you to add your historical moment to the timeline. Scan this QR code or visit:

[ssw.umich.edu/r/centennial-timeline](http://ssw.umich.edu/r/centennial-timeline)



2016

The University of Michigan launched “Many Voices, Our Michigan,” its first-ever strategic plan for diversity, equity and inclusion. The School of Social Work was part of this university-wide movement to create this DEI initiative.



**Lynn Videka, 2016**

Lynn Videka was dean from 2016 – 2021. Under her leadership, the School launched a forward-thinking five-year strategic plan, to lead social work into the next generation. Results

included the hiring of 31 new faculty members, a redesigned MSW program featuring eight curricular pathways, and new online and part-time MSW programs. MSW enrollment reached an all-time high of 719 students as of 2018. The School’s alumni numbered 16,000+ across the globe.

At the conclusion of the university-wide Victors for Michigan Campaign, the School of Social Work raised over \$24.5 million dollars — \$8 million over the goal.

2018

The COVID-19 pandemic and resulting stay-at-home orders changed how we lived. In a matter of days, the University of Michigan went completely online, with faculty, students and staff employing technology to teach, research, learn and connect. Field placements developed virtual and alternate methods to connect with clients. The Michigan Social Work community was on the front lines — serving in hospitals, at agencies and in communities.



2020



2021

The School launched the online part-time MSW program, providing balance for studies, work, family and other commitments.

The School celebrated its Centennial with a series of events and initiatives focusing on the themes of social justice; our past, present and future; and social work and the arts. The ongoing pandemic meant many events were celebrated online, bringing the community together from around the globe. The ability to find connection and joy in the midst of hardship and loss reinforced the importance of social work and made the Centennial historic, memorable and meaningful.



2020

The brutal killing of George Floyd — the latest in a long line of deaths that reflect the racism embedded in our society — shook the nation and reinforced the importance of the School’s commitment to anti-racism. Many in our community took to the streets to protest, organize and educate. Students led a successful effort by lobbying the Council on Social Work Education to revise competencies around racial justice.

*This timeline is a brief overview and should not be considered a comprehensive history of the School. Throughout Michigan Social Work’s history, many people have supported the mission and values of the School. We thank generations of alumni, faculty, students and staff for their contributions and dedication to advancing the social work profession.*



# Talking Out of School

ORAL HISTORIES FROM OUR COMMUNITY

“If the tale of the hunt is always told by the hunter, then the times the lion won will never be heard.” So goes a traditional African saying, which has a clear application for the School of Social Work. Stories are important, and we must tell our own stories.

In celebrating the Centennial, we have captured oral histories: stories and personal recollections from the Michigan Social Work community. As social workers, we know that the small moments matter, that communities — and histories — are built on the connections forged between individuals.

Stories are alive. They invoke experiences and evoke feelings that can be revisited and often reimagined with each new hearing. These stories explore the history, growth and impact of the School of Social Work through the lived experience of alumni, faculty and students.

The stories of the '60s, '70s and '80s in particular describe the School of Social Work as a brave space for fighting against racism and for expanded

social and political rights. The stories of the early 2000s present the School as a place of discovery, where students could explore the practice of social work in all its boundless potential while shaping their own unique identity as social workers. The stories from 2010 and beyond echo these themes while also capturing a consistent motif in all the stories: belonging.

All of these stories paint a picture of a place where everyone is welcome to learn and live. In these oral histories, the School of Social Work is an enduring canvas where the fears, hopes, anxieties and energy of students are the colors that overlay the unfolding picture of the School's commitment to social justice and social work.





**Sharrell Blakeley, MSW '68**, was inspired by social workers to enroll in the School of Social Work. Her experience at the U-M School of Social Work provided her with inspiration, connection and joy. "Have you ever heard of Washboard Willie? I lived at State and Ann. A few blocks over was Ashley's — it was an old house — and Washboard

Willie would come from Detroit and he literally did the blues on a washboard. And it was packed every single day — whenever he was there you couldn't even move. It was such an enlightening experience to be with a diverse group of people in this old house — there I met friends. It was the most joyous time of my life.

"My experience was beyond anything ever anticipated. My experience allowed me to related to the depth of human interaction, the depth of joy at connecting with people and gave me the ability to take that through my entire life and transform it into my career here."

**Carol Goss, MSW '72**, recounted how she was born with a passion to help others. However, her time at the U-M School of Social Work helped her understand the complexity of individual empowerment and institutional change. She learned to name skills and use them at U-M. "So, let me say that I believe I always wanted to be a social worker. I grew up in a family where my mother looked after everyone on the block. I grew up with a sense of community engagement in the '50s, a time of great turbulence. When I got to the School of Social Work, I came with a fire to create change. I believe the professors at the school like Madison Foster and John Tropman helped teach me skills and shape my social worker identity."



**Eileen Heisman, MSW '78**, said the School of Social Work helped her develop her social work identity. "Growing up, there was a family near us and my mother used to take the family food. It turns out the mother in that family had severe mental challenges. I remember my mother being really gracious about her

community service and serious about empathy. As I grew up, these kinds of values were woven into me. I always wanted to make the world a better place, but I never knew how to

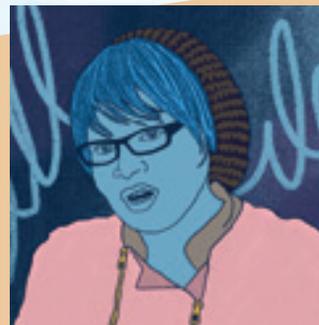
actualize my passion and commitment. I have to credit my mother and my experience at the University of Michigan for helping me find my identity and path in social work."

**Larry Gant, MSW '81 and PhD '86** and Professor of Social Work, reflects on the impact of the School on his social identity. "As I entered the School of Social Work in the fall of 1979, I was in the research and evaluation program and in the doctoral program for social science. There were so many



committed African American faculty that were active parts of the School. Nearly all of them were members of the National Association of Black Social Workers. I was surrounded by people who were vanguards for diversity, equity and inclusion. They moved the practice forward. I learned what it was like to work in Black communities like Detroit. I learned about a rebellious afrocentric framework as a part of social work. This learning was key for me."

**Karen Fein, MSW '85**, credits U-M as the key learning institution on her academic journey. "I had some wonderful instructors. I had great classmates. Without a doubt, U-M is the best education I had in my life. I just feel lucky to have been able to go there. In spite of my learning disabilities, U-M was able to accommodate my processing style. They never talked down to me. The school challenged me."



**Paula Allen-Meaers, Norma Radin Collegiate Emerita of Social Work and Dean Emerita**, served as dean of the School from 1993 - 2008. She reflected on the School of Social Work's art collection, which was established during her tenure. "It was one of the most intellectually stimulating and exciting

experiences I had during my tenure as Dean. I wanted the new School of Social Work building to have a milieu that stimulated reflection and that reaffirmed our professional values. The faculty and students enthusiastically embraced the art acquisition project."

## “The School taught me how to study Detroit and how to



**Nyshourn Price, MSW '01.** Originally from the west coast, she came to Michigan for the macro focus. In the late 1990s, a movement to dismantle affirmative action started gaining steam. While at the School, she was able to apply her social work skills to fight against that movement. “I consider myself a proud Black social

worker. My studies gave me more fuel and motivation to continue and organize for social justice.”



**Rosalva Osorio, MSW '06,** developed a keen lens for the value of learning at the School. “I have had a lot of different teachers, but they all have told me that learning is key to social justice and that our social work knowledge base is going to help us move society forward. Also, I have been able to build different connections in my

time at U-M. I make sure I use the resources that have been given to me that continually help me expand my practice.”

**Jennifer Gardner, MSW '04.**

As the world was reeling from the terror of 9/11, Gardner was living in Queens, New York. She knew she wanted to help people in some sort of capacity. “During this time, I was debating what I was going to do in life. I thought about nursing school or women’s health. Someone suggested social work and I was initially hesitant. I didn’t know about the professional possibilities available to social workers. I thought about it and thought it might be a good fit. I applied to U-M. The university helped me not only help people, but it gave me the words and practices to name and engage in social justice.”



**Duane Breijak, MSW '12,**

worried about whether the School of Social Work was going to be a good fit for him. “I came into the MSW program not necessarily knowing what I wanted to do, and felt a little out of place at the orientation. We were at the Michigan Union at the ballroom — there were about 400 students; it felt overwhelming, and also exciting. I remember sitting down at one of the front tables, I was wearing a bright pink shirt and a bow tie. One of the deans, Michael Spencer, came up to the lectern and told a story about the different identity categories we all have, and he specifically talked about how he owned one pink shirt, and was always being nervous about wearing it because it may reflect on sexual orientation or gender identity. And here I was in the front row wearing a bright pink shirt!



“I knew from that moment that I was in the right room with the right people. This is going to be a place where I can reflect and be who I am, and be around people who get it.”



**Vance Jackson, MSW '06,** works in the Mayor’s Office for the City of Detroit. He is also on the Alumni Board of Governors for the School of Social Work. “The School of Social Work was a privilege and honor to attend. I am a Black male and a first-generation graduate student. The School taught me how to study Detroit and how to

positively impact the city from a social work perspective while working in government.”

**Charlie Cavell, MSW '13,** remembers the power of peer education and group work for learning social work skills. “I was a CBI — a community-based initiative — fellow. I loved learning from my peers. We were able to grow by playing devil’s advocate with each other. This was better than any paper, more insightful than any lecture.”



positively impact the city from a social work perspective.”



**Lloyd Shelton, MSW '15.** Attending the University of Michigan was something that he never thought he would do. In fact, it was his mother who planted the seed about going to U-M for graduate school. After Shelton graduated from Eastern Michigan University, he applied. “I went to the School of Social

Work one day and it felt right and the people were nice. In fact, social work felt like a home to me. I applied twice and got in the second time. After struggling with imposter syndrome, I found success. I found a home there.”



**Justin Woods, MSW '21,** found an environment where he could practice his passion for racial justice. He worked with Dean Lynn Videka and other students to push the School to do more around these issues. “I started the program at 29. I am a queer Black man who is really passionate about racial justice and brought a critical eye to the program. I saw the code of ethics and felt that there was more that we could do around racial justice and anti-Black racism. I co-wrote an op-ed with other students, met with the dean and helped revise the Council on Social Work Education competencies around racial justice.”

**Emily Klueh, MSW '16,** found a place where she could design her own field placement around her interests in mental health and athletics. “I remember how supportive the program is in allowing us to pursue our dreams and passions as professionals after graduation. I was able to design my own field placement.”



### Hear the Full Stories

Scan the QR code to read the complete archive on our website:



**Andrew Stewart, MSW '17,** a school social worker for the state of Michigan, reflected on his time at the School and how he wanted to prove something to himself — that he belonged at top schools. He was led to social work through previous work with youth in elementary school. “As my passion for working

with youth grew, I was impacted by the teacher strikes in Detroit. U-M is so close to Detroit, and I want to learn skills at school and in a powerful urban laboratory like Detroit. The School also helped me think about how social work connects to larger social issues. As a biracial male, I confront the complexity of race as a potential challenge. The School has helped me navigate race with integrity.”



# Tell Us Your Story

Inspired? Our Centennial website includes complete instructions on how to prepare and record your oral history on your own. We are also happy to discuss story ideas, pair you with an interviewer and record the story for you.

Get started at: [ssw.umich.edu/r/oral-histories](https://ssw.umich.edu/r/oral-histories)

# ONCOLOGY SOCIAL WORKERS: CONNECTING THE MEDICAL TO THE PSYCHOSOCIAL



**C**ancer. If it attacks your body, you will need great physicians. But if it leads to you or family members feeling anxious or depressed, if it forces you to leave your job and lose your insurance, if it drains your savings and threatens your home, if your treatments lead to long-term problems like fatigue or infertility, you will also want to have trusted social workers to support you and to work with your physicians as part of the team, to ensure the best possible outcomes for you and your family.

There will be a tremendous need for oncology social workers in the coming decades. People are living longer and are at greater risk for cancer. In particular, 70 million baby boomers are aging; one in two men and one in three women will get cancer at some point in their lives. Meanwhile, from a social work student point of view, cancer covers so much — psychosocially, spiritually and medically — that a student who has worked with cancer patients is prepared to work with almost anything else the profession hands them.

The Michigan Social Work PhD program has cultivated a number of national leaders in oncology social work research. Below, we profile three who

graduated at different times, eventually met up and collaborated and continue their passion for oncology social work and research in different ways.

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF A BRIDGE

“The experience of cancer is biological, psychological, social and spiritual,” says Professor **Bradley Zebrack**, PhD ‘99, who studies the integration of practice and research in medical social work. “Social workers’ training in assessment and intervention prepares us perfectly to respond to the psychosocial needs of cancer patients. It has been hard, though, to bridge medicine and social work. Health care is a business, so we have to make a business case for social work and social work research in oncology. I have more flexibility in my day-to-day life than a physician does, so I can take the initiative to reach out to physicians, and maybe we can cross that bridge.”



**Bradley Zebrack**

“The psychosocial was missing when I started working in health care,” is how **Julianne S. (Julie) Oktay**, MSW ‘66, PhD ‘74, puts it. At Michigan, Oktay studied community organizing (MSW) and got her PhD in social work and sociology. Early in her career, she taught in an experimental interprofessional health professional training program at Johns Hopkins School of Health Services in Baltimore in the 1970s. “That program tried to integrate the psychosocial into general medicine practice,” she recalled. “In hospitals at that time, the psychosocial aspect was often missing. Social work offices were sometimes in hospital



**Julianne S. Oktay**

basements. Medical teams did not include social workers as they discussed cases. The social workers I encountered in those days were often the only ones who saw the importance of the whole person and whole family receiving care. I was inspired to use my research skills to further their effectiveness.”

Oktay soon moved across town to the University of Maryland School of Social Work, and promptly started a health specialization for MSW students; she also taught a course that addressed the psychosocial aspects of health care. “Over time,” she said, “social work became more recognized in health care settings. For example, when new fields developed, hospitals began to include social workers as core staff. The social work office was right there in the unit and social workers began to attend rounds.”

In the late 1980s, Oktay met a colleague who had done a qualitative dissertation on women’s timing of motherhood. “I was blown away,” Oktay said. “You could do legitimate research on something close to real-life experience!” Oktay and her new colleague, Carolyn Walter, decided to look at cancer this way. They would do a study on women’s life course development and breast cancer. They interviewed women who had experienced breast cancer, and in 1991, Oktay and Walter published a landmark study, *Breast Cancer in the Life Course: Women’s Experiences*. “I began attending oncology social work conferences,” Oktay recalled, “and there I met social work practitioners who wanted to use our work in their practice with cancer patients. I was thrilled. I had

been trained by Michigan’s joint doctoral program to bring research skills to bear on practice. I wanted my research to be used by those in the trenches to help patients and families cope with illness. In oncology social work, I found a place where that was going to happen!”

Oktay was building the bridge, as Brad Zebrack might say, between medicine and social work.

## COMING TOGETHER IN KENTUCKY

**Karen Kayser**, MSW ‘77, PhD ‘88, earned her master’s and doctorate at Michigan Social Work after several years as a couples and family therapist. A member of her dissertation committee, Professor Oscar Barbarin III, invited her to do a postdoc to test a clinical intervention for families of children with cancer. “We came up with a theoretical model to understand parents coping with stress,” Kayser recalls, “and how a clinician might help them manage that stress, together, as a couple.” The postdoc experience solidified Kayser’s interest in oncology social work, as she could see a visible difference in the impact cancer had on families.

Kayser subsequently established herself at Boston College conducting intervention research in oncology social work until, in 2011, opportunity beckoned from a very different place: the University of Louisville, where she would assume the Professor and Dr. Renato LaRocca Endowed Chair of Oncology Social Work. (Kentucky has some of the highest cancer incidence and death rates in the U.S.)



**Karen Kayser**

# ONCOLOGY SOCIAL WORKERS

Kayser established a successful oncology social work program at Louisville, and her endowed chair financed meetings and other activities of a small, ad hoc group of oncology social work researchers, including Oktay and Zebrack. All three knew one another through the American Cancer Society, and of course they had immediately noted their Michigan connection.

**“Julie’s lifelong experience observing and reporting on the health care system was tremendously valuable.”**

Kayser, Zebrack and Oktay — and a few other hand-picked leaders in the field — began holding annual gatherings in Louisville, a kind of once-a-year oncology social work research think tank that ultimately carried out several joint research projects. Among these was a project to address distress management through the screening of cancer patients for psychological and social challenges (distress) at the time of their cancer diagnoses. The group spearheaded a special distress management issue of the *Journal of Psychosocial Oncology*, and they looked at how well cancer centers across the country were adhering to their own plans for distress screening and management. This study was, in Zebrack’s words, “an important bridge for bringing attention to the critical role oncology social workers play in cancer care.” Kayser currently is Professor Emerita at the University of Louisville and serves as editor of the *Journal of Psychosocial Oncology*.

“Julie’s lifelong experience observing and reporting on the health care system was tremendously valuable,” Zebrack said. “She is such a strong proponent of strengthening the role of social workers in health research.” Oktay had, for example, helped to develop oncology social work research as chair of research for the Association of Oncology Social Work. She had supported the American Cancer Society’s MSW training program for social workers. She and Zebrack developed a training program within the American Cancer Society to prepare emerging PhDs to be competitive in research, training and education.

## ON CAMPUS NOW

As this issue of *Ongoing* was headed to the press, Zebrack received notification of a five-year \$4.6 million R01 award from the National Institutes of Health for a project entitled “Social genomic mechanisms of health disparities among adolescent and young adult (AYA) cancer survivors.”

Zebrack is surrounded by a number of colleagues at the School of Social Work who are studying oncology-related issues and carrying out collaborations with oncologists at Michigan Medicine. Among them:

Assistant Professor Katrina Ellis, who studies the influence of co-occurring illnesses on the psychosocial and behavioral well-being of cancer survivors and their families; Associate Professor Jamie Mitchell, studying mechanisms of patient-centered communication between older African American men and their physicians in the course of cancer care; Clinical Associate Professor Daniella Wittmann, who develops and tests interventions that support couples’ sexual recovery after cancer; and Assistant Professor Anao Zhang, who specializes in psychosocial interventions to treat depression and anxiety among adolescent and young adult cancer patients.

Zebrack and Zhang co-direct the research arm for Michigan Medicine’s Adolescent and Young Adult Oncology Program. Zebrack points out that, “A big issue for this population of teens and young adults is the risks for infertility as a result of chemotherapy,” Zebrack says. He has helped to integrate Michigan Medicine’s Reproductive Endocrinology Clinic with oncology care at the Rogel Cancer Center.

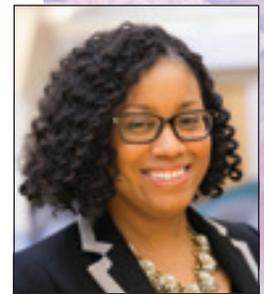
Zebrack and Zhang, assisted by joint PhD candidate Nina Jackson Levin, conducted qualitative research, interviewing teens with cancer to learn about their experiences of being told about infertility risk. Were they offered reproductive preservation services before cancer therapy? How was this option communicated to them? Michigan Medicine’s reproductive health program has used results from this study to help improve treatments and referrals for young cancer patients for fertility services. It is hoped that dissemination of findings will help improve services at other cancer centers as well.



Katrina Ellis



Nina Jackson Levin



Jamie Mitchell



Daniella Wittmann



Anao Zhang



**“Julie’s gift to the U-M School of Social Work will help build that bridge between research and training at the school and clinical care in our communities.”**

– Bradley Zebrack

# A GIFT FOR THE FUTURE

**T**his year, Dr. Julianne S. Oktay, MSW ‘66 , PhD ‘74, professor emerita of social work at the University of Maryland, and her husband, Dr. Erol Oktay — a three-time Michigan graduate (BSE ‘63, MSE ‘64, PhD ‘69) and retired plasma physicist — are establishing the Julianne S. Oktay Oncology Social Work Fund at the School of Social Work through an estate gift.

This endowed fund will support oncology social work research at Michigan Social Work in Oktay’s name in perpetuity. “The fund that we are establishing will support Michigan faculty and students in oncology social work research,” Oktay said. “This can mean support for faculty research, dissertation support and research expenses for PhD students, attendance at conferences, professional development, collaborative events and other activities that will enrich the School’s commitment to the field of oncology social work research.”

Looking at the oncology social work practitioners and researchers who have come out of Michigan already, one can only agree with Oktay that Michigan is well positioned to lead the nation in this field.

Michigan Social Work is the top school of social work for training at all levels: faculty, postdocs and master’s and doctoral students. The Julianne S. Oktay Oncology Social Work Fund can encourage interested students and scholars to come to Michigan because of its research in oncology social work. The U-M School of Social Work is already well respected. Through this generous philanthropic investment from the Oktays, the School can take its social oncology program to the next level and simultaneously demonstrate to the wider community the importance of this field. The Fund can encourage leadership development and the ability to brainstorm new ideas and strengthen research — the core of the Michigan School of Social Work.

Fellow Michigan Social Work alumni and oncology social work research colleagues, Karen Kayser PhD ‘88 and Professor Bradley Zebrack, PhD ‘99 both applaud Julianne Oktay’s gift. “I am behind anything Michigan can do to build up even more its training and research efforts in oncology social work,” Kayser said. And in Zebrack’s opinion, “Julie’s gift to the U-M School of Social Work will help build that bridge between research and training at the school and clinical care in our communities.”

**Interested in including Michigan Social Work in your estate plans?**

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STEPHANIE LONGMIRE:

## A SOCIAL WORKER IS BORN

**W**e think of scholarships as paying primarily for tuition, and of course they help enormously in this area. Students say, “Without my scholarship, I couldn’t even dream of being here.” So said Stephanie Longmire, MSW ’21, and yet she also called attention to a nuance that applies to many students: they get here, their tuition paid, their dream realized, but still they must go without. Every day you go without something else: your own printer, a book for class or a networking dinner with friends. You are at the University of Michigan but living in a shadow world, just making do, not feeling like you belong.

Longmire is able to be here, and to feel like she belongs, thanks to her Kristine Siefert and Kalyan Dutta Endowed Scholarship and her Rosemary Sarri Endowed Scholarship. The Siefert/Dutta Scholarship supports students from Detroit; the Sarri Scholarship supports students interested in community organization.

Longmire grew up knowing financial insecurity—and worse—in the Livernois section of Detroit, often ranked among the nation’s most dangerous neighborhoods. “When I was a teen, it felt like people died every two seconds,” she said. “It was always, who died yesterday? Who was shot last night? As a child, I kept a plastic bag of shell casings from shootings.” Longmire wanted to join the police or the military. Instead, she headed to Bowling Green State University in Ohio.

Not that she wanted to. Or that she even applied.

Her mother applied for her, got her in, then told her she was going. “I partied for the first three years,” Longmire said, “and I just passed.” Then she found Common Good, an interfaith residence. “We never locked our doors except for bedrooms. You could come in, make a sandwich, borrow a

book, sleep on the couch, attend free community dinners, whatever you needed.”

Common Good’s open doors encouraged Longmire to explore new experiences. “I never had a white friend until college,” she said, “and a lot of my white friends were meeting Black people for the first time. They were asking me ‘Black questions.’ They were not offensive; they just didn’t know.” So she and a Black male friend assembled a circle of white community members at Common Good, and set about answering those questions.

And a social worker was born.

She facilitated other groups, and she took a class called The Listening Post, about learning to listen. “That course was profound for me,” Longmire said. “I would love to teach nontraditional classes like that, and to work with professors creating trips, so students could be immersed in the cultures they learn about. That would be my dream job.”

After college, Longmire endured a few years of non-dream jobs. Then she came to the School of Social Work with a field placement at Michigan Medicine’s Maternal Infant Health Program. She has started writing legislation on prison pregnancy, including the practice of shackling women to their beds. That’s a lot of writing and printing. A lot of books and networking. That’s how Longmire came to appreciate her Siefert/Dutta and Sarri Scholarships all over again: she was grateful for the tuition help, and also grateful for those smaller things — like having your own printer when you need it — that make you feel human, that make your work and your goals feel worthwhile and that make you feel you have finally arrived at the University of Michigan.

Interested in supporting students through a scholarship?

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DIPITA DAS:  
ACKNOWLEDGING HER  
PRIVILEGE ALLOWED HER  
**TO DISCOVER  
HER POWER**



**D**ipita (Dee-pee-tha) Das graduated in May from the U-M College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, where she was a Gender and Health major and earned a Community Action Social Change (CASC) minor from the School of Social Work.

Das was born in Bangladesh, but grew up in Michigan. Her family immigrated to America, moving to Detroit to find factory work. Das' parents experienced a deep disadvantage: even though they were educated in Bangladesh, they did not speak English well. They were limited by the language barrier and the fact that their degrees were not from American universities.

"My parents' experience helped me realize the power of advocacy. Someone needs to speak up for our community. As Malala Yousafzai says 'even one voice can be powerful,'" said Das.

In Detroit, Das attended school in a multicultural community. "My journey in community work started in high school and continued throughout my

U-M educational experience," she explained. "I was a part of the Michigan Community Scholars Program [which is for those committed to social justice]. It allowed me the opportunity to model an ideal community through intergroup engagement, responsibility, friendship and collaboration.

"I came to realize that I do hold privileges. I am a citizen of the U.S. I can speak English well. In high school, I didn't realize I had these privileges; now I realize I can use them to impact my community.

"For me, the CASC class was on an introductory level. As a visibly brown petite woman I was already aware of discrimination and privilege. The predominantly white students in my class were just becoming aware of these issues and concepts," she recalled. "However, after some reflection, I realized that many students were just starting their social justice journey, and while interacting with them, I was able to reflect more on my own experience. I learned how to have conversations with people who are

on their own social justice journey, and I could appreciate that everyone is on a different part of the journey."

Through the CASC minor, Das learned about group dialogue, privilege, advocacy and the power of voice. Now a proud CASC graduate, she is back in the metropolitan Detroit community working as a Civic Engagement Coordinator for Planned Parenthood. "My biggest role is to create inclusive spaces. I enjoy the process of figuring out what the community needs and what the community values," said Das. "Detroit is a diverse and big space; I want to create a safe space for residents to talk to me, and to use my resources to uplift the community values and offer additional support as needed.

"CASC taught me how to network and build my community," stated Das. "My social justice journey is not complete, but my CASC experience gave me the tools I need to help people navigate, and benefit, challenging conversations and experiences."

## COMMUNITY ACTION AND SOCIAL CHANGE MINOR (CASC)

The CASC program is a multidisciplinary 16-credit minor, which allows undergraduates to choose courses from a wide range of elective clusters, and provides a framework for understanding and promoting community action and social

change. Since its founding in 2010, over 900 students from schools and colleges across U-M have completed the program, making it the second most popular minor on campus.



ANGIE PERONE:

**UNIQUELY PREPARED**  
FOR THE INTERSECTION  
OF SOCIAL WORK, SOCIAL  
SCIENCE AND THE LAW

**A**ngie Perone, PhD in Social Work and Sociology. In June, she successfully defended her dissertation entitled “Safety, Autonomy, Discrimination, and Religious Exemptions: Three Papers on How Long-Term Care Facility Staff Navigate Conflicting Rights.”

Angie Perone’s research probes the collision between the demand to keep long-term care facility residents safe and the conflicts that arise when making important medical decisions. “I wanted to find ways to support older adults and the people who care for them. As an attorney, I quickly realized that the law may not always be the best tool for resolving conflicts, and I increasingly began incorporating social science into my civil rights work. I returned to graduate

school to better understand how to merge these areas.” She received her PhD in Social Work and Sociology in 2021.

Perone has an undergraduate degree in women’s studies and a minor in political science and African American studies from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She also has a law degree from UC Hastings College of the Law. Before attending the School of Social Work, Perone worked as a civil rights attorney. “I was first exposed to social work while working with the National Association of Social Workers on a brief about conversion therapy. I was hooked after that!”

Eventually, she pursued her newfound passion for social work, and looked for a doctoral program that would allow her to research and work at the intersection of the law and the social sciences. She chose Michigan for the academic culture and geographical location. “I was looking for interdisciplinary training programs and Michigan is one of the best. I found a place where I could learn, grow and be challenged. The faculty and students were so friendly and so smart. It seemed like a good place to put down some roots,” she recalled.

During her doctoral studies, Perone continued to work. “After I moved to Michigan, I reached out to an attorney I had collaborated with in the past, who connected me to a new group called the LGBT Older Adult Coalition (now called SAGE Metro Detroit). I served as the founding executive director of this organization,” said Perone. “I have been able to merge all these different worlds at my job, and my social work background served me well in practice, in research and in policy and program evaluation.”

Perone wasn’t just a working PhD student: she also juggled other responsibilities, including having a baby during the time she was in the program. “My cohort was just awesome, particularly my social work cohort. I had a variety of people to talk to and help me navigate graduate school as a parent.”

Perone entered the workforce uniquely prepared for the intersection of social work, social science and the law. After graduation, she went to work in a policy position in Washington, DC. Next year, she’ll join UC Berkeley as an assistant professor at the School of Social Welfare, and lead their Center for the Advanced Study of Aging Services.

## DISSERTATIONS DEFENDED



**CHANGE KWESELE**

Social Work and Psychology

“Shibukeni!: Exploring the Mental Health Perceptions and Experiences of Young Adult Children of African Immigrants through the Lens of Sociocultural Influences”



**LISA LARANCE**

Social Work and Sociology

“Talking Back to the Web of Power: Women’s Legal, Child Protection, and Antiviolence Intervention Entanglement and Resistance”



**JOYCE LEE**

Social Work and Psychology

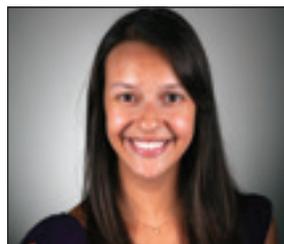
“Family Processes Underlying Economic Insecurity, Father Involvement, and Child Outcomes in Families with Low Income”



**ANGIE PERONE**

Social Work and Sociology

“Safety, Autonomy, Discrimination, and Religious Exemptions: Three Papers on How Long-Term Care Facility Staff Navigate Conflicting Rights.”



**AMANDA RODRIGUEZ-  
NEWHALL**

Social Work and Psychology

“Examining the Impacts of Youth Dialogue: Anti-Racist Behavior, Social Responsibility, and Civic Habitus”



# Giving Where It's Needed

Kristine Siefert and Kalyan Dutta  
Support Social Work Students

**M**any of our international students — as well as our Detroit-area students, especially those who work with Black and Latinx populations — have benefited greatly over the years from the scholarships established by Kristine Siefert, MSW '75, Edith S. Gomberg Collegiate Professor Emerita of Social Work, and her husband, Kalyan Dutta, MBA '78.

Together, Siefert and Dutta have established the Kristine Siefert and Kalyan Dutta Endowed Scholarship, as well as the Geeta Dutta Memorial Scholarship, in honor of Kal Dutta's mother.

Kris Siefert has a long history at Michigan. She, her father, her sister and her nephew are all graduates.

"I was born right here, when my dad was a graduate student in architecture," she says. "Later, I graduated from U-M with a degree in English. My first job was in volunteer services at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital. I became interested in medical social work, so I went back to U-M for my MSW. In my field work, I saw tremendous health care disparities that led me to formalize my interest in public health." Off she went to the University of Minnesota for a joint MPH/PhD in social work and public health. She then returned to U-M and served on the faculty of the School of Social Work for 33 years, teaching in the MSW and PhD programs and holding many administrative positions throughout her career.

Siefert's research focused on health disparities. She studied inequities in African American and white birth outcomes, and was interested in food insecurity and in other modifiable risk factors for poor health outcomes. She was funded by the federal government, including NIH, served on various advisory and review committees, and collaborated on research with U-M units other than the School of Social Work, including the Medical School and School of Public Health. "I am very grateful to the university for the support I received throughout my career," she says. One of Siefert's most rewarding assignments has been here at the School of Social Work, on the Dean's Advisory Board. "I have worked with five different deans. I have especially enjoyed working with Lynn Videka. She has led the school well and she has hired excellent faculty."

Kalyan Dutta followed a different path. He came to Ann Arbor from India as a graduate student in computer engineering. He was only allowed to bring \$50 in cash with him. "That's all I had when I landed on State Street," he says, "Given the role that financial aid played in my life, I feel obligated to give back as much as possible." He eventually received an MBA and spent his career at Ford Motor Company, retiring from there as manager of Global Product Development Process.

The Siefert and Dutta scholarships support students who are residents of the Detroit area — with a preference for those working with Black and Latinx populations — as well as international students. Siefert explains how her interest in metro Detroit students comes straight from classroom experience. "Many Detroit students contributed so much to my classes," she says. "I was impressed with how much juggling they did. Some students had kids at home, they were working and going to school, and still they were so tremendously committed to making a difference. As for international students, they contributed an invaluable perspective that enriched

**"As I myself well know, student aid flows directly into student pockets, and it makes all the difference in the world."**

— Kalyan Dutta

my classes. I am so grateful for the wonderful students. Endowed scholarships were a way to make sure that the support would continue into the future."

The Geeta Dutta Memorial Scholarship came about in a different way. Kal Dutta's mother had a small inheritance, with which she funded her son's early education. But, Dutta says, she had another remarkable skill. "She ended up with a few hundred left over," he says, "and she invested it in the stock market. After she passed away, when I looked into her portfolio, I was amazed at the wealth she had accumulated! We thought it was totally appropriate that we

should invest her money in a scholarship fund. Education was so important to her." Dutta points out that there is a long history of people honoring mothers at the university, and he cites two residences named for alumnae mothers — Martha Cook and Helen Newberry. "More donors need to step forward and honor their parents." Dutta says.

Siefert explains how the couple's giving evolved. "When we were first married," she says, "we donated modest amounts. As time went on, we gave more and then decided to document a bequest because it seemed like a way to invest in the future. We always planned to leave part of our estate to U-M and we thought we should formalize it."

Discussing his wife's varied career and influence, Dutta jokes that "I am not as illustrious as Kris." Of his career at Ford he says, "I kept my head low and was a good capitalist!" But there was a strain of social work in Kal Dutta's career, too. Early on, when he became a supervisor, he noticed that women engineers were not being invited to join teams or be promoted. Management was all male, and they only promoted those who looked like them. So he actively recruited women. "The day before I retired," he recalls, "I found out that I had been given Ford's first Global Diversity Award. It was a proud moment for me."

A decision to make a gift may honor the past, but, as Siefert says, "student support is investing in the future. Kal and I focus on students making a difference in an area we care about. People don't go into social work for the money. They want to do something good. So you want to put your money on someone who believes in something. It is wonderful to help students accomplish their goals by removing financial barriers. Then they can focus on school and not worry about finances." Dutta adds, "We always ask ourselves, what has the biggest leverage? As I myself well know, student aid flows directly into student pockets, and it makes all the difference in the world."

**Interested in establishing a named scholarship?**

Contact our development team at [ssw.development@umich.edu](mailto:ssw.development@umich.edu) or (734) 763-6886.



Matt Bouse

**MATT BOUSE**, MSW '19 recently completed an hour-long documentary about the 2011 earthquake and tsunami that occurred in northeastern Japan. The film focuses on how a natural disaster impacts survivors' mental health and how community bonds and strong social support can create resilience after a tragedy. It also discusses the important role that socioeconomic factors play in disaster recovery and mental wellness. This project began life as part of a Global Independent Study that Bouse completed through the School of Social Work's Office of Global Activities. The full film can be found online. Bouse also presented on this topic at the 2021 NASW-Michigan Meeting of the Profession Conference.



Andrea Brand

**ANDREA BRAND**, MSW '94 has recently published her first book, *Stop Sweating & Start Talking — How to Make Sex Chats with Your Kids Easier Than You Think*. With the goal of empowering tweens and teens to make intentional decisions based on facts, Brand helps parents overcome their fears and barriers to having informative sex conversations with their kids. Given the inconsistencies in the sex education that is offered in the U.S. school system, kids need a trusted resource for accurate information. This book encourages and helps parents have ongoing, developmentally appropriate, scientifically accurate, sex-positive conversations and offers practical tools and tips to help get the ball rolling.



Duane Breijak

**DUANE BREIJAK**, MSW '12 was appointed as the new executive director of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Michigan chapter. For the last nine years Breijak has served social workers as the director of Member Services & Development for NASW-Michigan. In that role, he initiated and executed the recruitment and retention strategies of the chapter, implemented inventive new programming and data collection, designed and managed website and social media platforms, assisted on grant projects and collaborated with individuals, organizations and schools, as well as with other chapters to support social workers at all ages and in all types of practice. As a graduate of the University of Michigan School of Social Work, he focused

on Policy and Evaluation in Community and Social Systems and minored in Community Organization. Breijak has served in active roles as an election poll challenger, adjunct social work faculty and national radio correspondent and has held leadership positions within the Michigan Democratic Party LGBTQ+ Caucus, Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia Fraternity and the LanSINGout Men's Chorus.

**VIOLETA DONAWA**, MSW '19 in fall 2019, Donawa earned her MSW from the University of Michigan School of Social Work with a focus on Interpersonal Practice and African-centered social work. Since bridging her master's in sociology ('14), community-care based experience with healing justice, and her most recent accomplishments in Social Work, Donawa prioritizes working on health and healing strategies and interventions in clinical and macro-level settings. Donawa currently holds two transformative social work positions. First, she is a clinical therapist at Integrative Empowerment Group, PLLC in Ypsilanti and Ann Arbor where she works with many clients of multiple-marginalized identities and supports clients across a number of presenting needs including but not limited to racialized stress and trauma, gender identity expression, LGBTQIA+ issues, anxiety and depression, sexualized violence and complex trauma. She has served as a board member of the National Queer and Trans Therapists of Color Network and as a partner to Healing by Choice! Detroit. In 2020, Donawa was featured on Lindsay Bryan-Povin's podcast, Mind Money Balance, addressing the importance of spirituality and rest in the quest for financial wellness.



Violeta Donawa

**CLAUDETTE GRINNELL-DAVIS**, PhD '14 has received a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Policies for Action program to study the implementation and impact of the 2015 Nebraska Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) statute. Grinnell-Davis, an assistant professor in the Anne and Henry Zarrow School of Social Work at OU-Tulsa, will serve as the principal investigator for the research grant, in conjunction with community partners Nebraska Indian Child Welfare Coalition, LLC. & Nebraska

Appleseed. This grant is the first step in understanding how best to support Indigenous communities in Nebraska in restoring balance within their communities and generating collaborative strategies to heal the historical trauma that has disrupted tribal communities there for over 150 years.

**ANDREW HORNING**, MSW '97 recently released the book *Grappling: White Men's Journey from Fragile to Agile*. It is available at Amazon and with other booksellers.

**MELISSA MENDEZ**, MSW '01 has worked for the past 20 years in the field of infant and early childhood mental health. Mendez spent the first five years of her career with Head Start programs in Jackson County, Michigan and then moved to Connecticut in 2006 to work as an early childhood consultant at Wheeler Clinic. Mendez is currently Director of Early Childhood Programs at Wheeler and is also a part-time professor of child and family clinical practice in the MSW program at Southern Connecticut State University. Mendez served as president of the CT-Association for Infant Mental Health from 2015 - 2018 and is still active with the work of CT-AIMH. She authored, illustrated and published several children's books in 2020 that are focused on children's social emotional health and development. Mendez participates in many statewide early childhood workgroups and projects designed to address the needs of vulnerable children and families in Connecticut. She is an active volunteer and supporter of *Nuestro Pequeños Hermanos* (Our Little Brothers and Sisters), an international nonprofit that cares for over 3,300 children in nine countries throughout Latin America and the Caribbean.

**ALLESSIA OWENS-KING**, MSW '03 earned tenure and promotion to associate professor at Salisbury University School of Social Work. At a time when colleges and universities are closing, and some institutions are discontinuing the tenure process, she is fortunate to have a measure of professional success and stability.

**HARLENA REED**, MSW '06 JD, LCSW LMSW is excited about her new role as LCA Deputy Director for the State of New Mexico. Reed will oversee the Children Youth and Families Department (CYFD) Licensing and Certification Authority Bureau monitoring health, safety, supervision and quality of care for licensed facilities throughout the state of New Mexico. She will support and monitor compliance with the Kevin S. Settlement Agreement and CYFD's Family First Prevention Services Act Strategic Plan.

**JAZMINE WELLS**, MSW '20 concentrated in Interpersonal Practice and Mental Health and currently works as a mitigation specialist/social worker at SADO—Michigan's award-winning statewide indigent appellate defense provider. Wells works on the Juvenile Lifer Unit, where she collaborates with attorneys and clients to develop strategy for new sentence hearings. She represents individuals who were unconstitutionally sentenced to life without parole for crimes they committed as children and who are now entitled to new sentences and eligible for an opportunity for release. Wells also started a new service-learning partnership between SADO and Project Outreach's Juvenile and Criminal Justice section, which is an undergraduate service learning course housed within the University of Michigan's Department of Psychology in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

**TAMIKA WHITE**, MSW '08 has been appointed as clinical assistant professor at the University of Houston Graduate College of Social Work. As a new faculty member, White will have an appointment primarily with the Field Education program and will also be contributing to the college's teaching and service needs.



Andrew Horning



Melissa Mendez



Alessia Owens-King



Jazmine Wells

## Faculty

Karen S. Harlow-Rosentraub | PhD, February 19, 2021

## Alumni

Garabed Tadian | MSW '66, October 11, 2019

Antoinette M. Knecht | MSW '78, April 26, 2020

Kathleen M. Poelker | MSW '89, April 27, 2020

Mary Lou Healy | MSW '84, September 18, 2020

Kerry J. Duty | MSW '04, September 25, 2020

Nariman Zarzour | MSW '04, October 29, 2020

Anne M. Marshall | MSW '92, November 11, 2020

Ronald W. Philburn | MSW '92, December 8, 2020

Karen M. DuPage | MSW '81, December 23, 2020

Wally D. Versaw | MSW '66, December 26, 2020

Ron A. Roby | MSW '82, December 29, 2020

Ruben G. Zamorano | MSW '72, January 14, 2021

Franklin T. Setter | MSW '71, January 15, 2021

Rashel Jeffrey | MSW '68, January 30, 2021

Jean M. LaRosa | MSW '65, February 3, 2021

Ruth N. VanDoren | MSW '92, February 11, 2021

Alex J. Walsh | MSW '10, February 12, 2021

Catherine E. Mahoney | MSW '83, February 17, 2021

Wilma M. Williams | MSW '78, February 22, 2021

Colleen A. Karim | MSW '18, February 26, 2021

Nancy J. Kujawa | MSW '63, March 1, 2021

Mary A. McRobert | MSW '87, March 5, 2021

Nancy K. Graham | MSW '02, March 10, 2021

Joyce M. Weipert | MSW '00, March 14, 2021

N. Trevor Matthews | MSW '71, March 25, 2021

Janet L. Herman | MSW '55, March 29, 2021

Larry E. Davis | MSW '73, PhD '77, March 30, 2021

Victoria J. Gadbow | MSW '73, April 5, 2021

Peter W. Vidor | MSW '74, April 15, 2021

Margaret E. Sullivan | MSW '66, April 16, 2021

Alfrieda Daly | MSW '71, PhD '82, April 18, 2021

Craig G. Lundsted | MSW '83, April 25, 2021

Doris A. Thomas | MSW '89, May 3, 2021

Linda Warner | MSW '64, May 5, 2021

Marianne J. Deschaine | MSW '09, May 7, 2021

Martha S. Shuberg | MSW '89, May 8, 2021

Tonya K. Gray | MSW '99, May 20, 2021

Peter G. Dwyer | MSW '61, June 10, 2021

David Katz | PhD '70, June 19, 2021

Suzanne McCune | MSW '67, June 29, 2021

Lois P. Landrie | MSW '87, July 15, 2021

James E. Johnson | MSW '63, July 23, 2021

Roland L. Etcheverry | MSW '71, August 2, 2021

Cheryl A. Hill | MSW '85, August 5, 2021

Evaristo G. Flores | MSW '74, August 10, 2021

Kathy M. Kelley | MSW '88, August 18, 2021

Diane A. Forbes | MSW '78, August 27, 2021

Wilma S. Darby | MSW '59, August 28, 2021

Elizabeth K. Kro | MSW '08, September 10, 2021

Paul N. Veltman | MSW '71, September 21, 2021

Karen E. Martz | MSW '68, September 28, 2021

Gerald W. Myers | MSW '71, September 29, 2021

*Notices of deaths received before October 20, 2021*

# CENTENNIAL SOCIAL JUSTICE IMPACT FUND

**A**s we mark our 100th anniversary, we find ourselves in the midst of a collective awakening that challenges the history of biased policies and systems that perpetuate racism and inequality in our nation, the world and in our social work profession.

As the leading school of social work, we have a responsibility to rise as a leader to dismantle systemic oppression and eliminate racial, economic and social inequities.

To help address some of the biggest problems impacting our nation today, we have established the Centennial Social Justice Impact Fund — and we invite you to join us.

Your support of the Social Justice Impact Fund means you are investing in keeping Michigan Social Work at the forefront of important social justice efforts as we work to find solutions to the world's most challenging problems.

This endowed fund will provide long-lasting support for:

- **Scholarships for students leading anti-racism and anti-oppression initiatives.**
- **Faculty research focused on improving the lives of those affected by racism and structural injustices.**

- **Community events to inspire others to become change agents.**
- **A social innovation prize to fund the implementation of a bold idea that addresses social, racial and systemic inequities.**

Michigan Social Work is rising to the time — just as we have for one hundred years — to address the most pressing social problems of our day. Stand with us.

For information about the Centennial Social Justice Impact Fund contact [ssw.development@umich.edu](mailto:ssw.development@umich.edu) or call (734) 763-6886.



## CENTENNIAL CELEBRATIONS

### A Cantata Redux

In January, we kicked off our anniversary year with an encore broadcast of “Reach Out, Raise Hope, Change Society — A Cantata in Ten Movements.” Composed by Bruce Adolphe, the cantata was originally commissioned by alumna Joan Fisch, MSW '67, and her husband, Allan, for the School of Social

Work's 90th anniversary. After the recording, our Zoom audience participated in a panel discussion, moderated by Professor Larry Gant and featuring Adolphe as well as Ken Fisher, president emeritus of the University Musical Society and Jeff Jaeczko, curator of the Milken Archive of Jewish Music.



Spike Lee



Terence Blanchard

### Inaugural Social Justice Changemaker Lecture

In April, filmmaker Spike Lee and musician Terence Blanchard discussed the role of social justice and the arts in the inaugural Social Justice Changemaker Lecture. The freewheeling, livestreamed conversation was moderated by Robin R. Means Coleman, vice president and associate provost for diversity and inclusion, chief diversity officer and the Ida B. Wells and Ferdinand Barnett Professor in the Department of Communication Studies at Northwestern University and Daphne Watkins, University Diversity and Social Transformation Professor, director of the Vivian A. and James L. Curtis School of Social Work Center for Health Equity Research and Training, and Professor of Social Work.

Lee and Blanchard returned repeatedly to the theme that their work builds on the generations of Black artists who came before them. The conversation included questions from U-M students, many of whom were concerned about how to manage their social justice work as artists. Lee's advice: Don't put yourself in compartments. “These beautiful minds are putting up limitations and fences that aren't there. For me, it's all filmmaking and storytelling.”

Established by a generous gift from Neil and Annmarie Hawkins the Social Justice Changemaker Lectures Series brings prominent experts and advocates from multiple disciplines — including social sciences, science, humanities and the arts — to address pressing social justice issues.

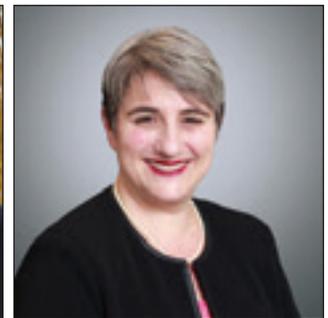
### Series Examines Today's Toughest Issues

The Centennial Lecture Series gave the Michigan Social Work community the opportunity to deep dive into some of the critical issues of our time. Dr. William Darity and Kirsten Mullen discussed their book, *From Here to Equality: Reparations for Black Americans in the Twenty-First Century*. The authors confront injustices head on and make a comprehensive case for economic reparations for U.S. descendants of slavery. Sharon Parrott, MSW '92, president of the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities spoke on “Pandemic, Relief, and Building toward an Equitable Future.” She emphasized the impacts of the health and economic crisis and discussed the strengths and weaknesses of the public response to the crisis, the opportunity for long-term, systemic policy changes to reduce poverty and inequality and the challenges to achieving these policy goals.

During the fall, the series featured three sessions devoted to innovations in mental health research. These sessions highlighted Michigan Social Work faculty's contemporary research in addressing health disparities, reducing suicide and depression in diverse communities and the development and use of technology-based innovations.



William Darity and  
Kirsten Mullen

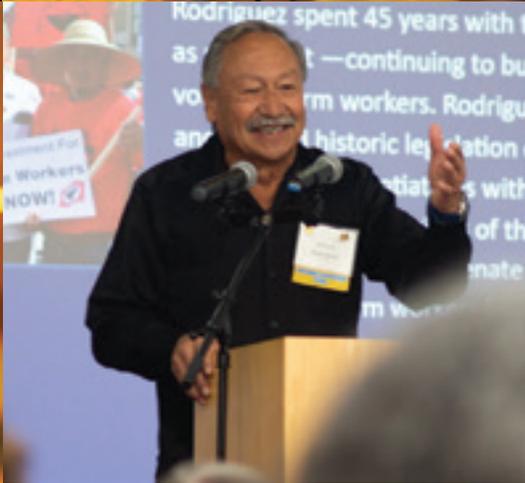


Sharon Parrott



## Homecoming

Homecoming marked the first time the School has hosted in-person events since the beginning of the pandemic. Festivities included a reunion luncheon, a Centennial birthday celebration and a tailgate before the Michigan football win over Rutgers University. What a great way to reconnect with our Michigan Social Work community!





**CENTENNIAL DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARDS**

**A**s we celebrated 100 years of social work at the University of Michigan, the Distinguished Alumni Award recognized School of Social Work alumni whose achievements exemplify the values of the School of Social Work and who have made an exceptional impact on the profession, the community and/or social work education.



**GARY ANDERSON, MSW '76**

Professor, School of Social Work, Michigan State University

Anderson has spent his career as an advocate for children and youth. He has been the editor for the journal *Child Welfare*, director of the Michigan State University School of

Social Work, and has served in Michigan on the Governor's Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect. For over a decade, he has led the state-funded Child Welfare In-service Training Project, training thousands of child welfare workers and supervisors in Michigan. Anderson has written numerous publications addressing child abuse and neglect, the child welfare system and working with vulnerable families.

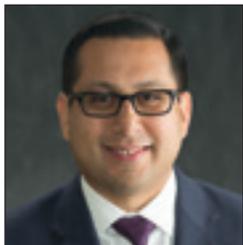


**STEPHANIE CHANG, MSW '14**

Senator, Michigan State Senate

Chang is the first Asian American woman to be elected to the Michigan Legislature. She worked as a community organizer in Detroit for nearly a decade before serving two

terms in the Michigan House of Representatives. In the State House, Chang led the way on air quality protection, education, criminal justice reforms, improving economic opportunities and affordable, safe drinking water. She passed bipartisan legislation on a range of issues including female genital mutilation, nitrous oxide "whip-its" and reentry services for wrongfully convicted individuals who were exonerated. Chang is cofounder and past president of Asian and Pacific Islander American Vote-Michigan, and she served as a mentor with the Detroit Asian Youth Project. She is a founder and board member of Rising Voices of Asian American Families and serves on the board of the Southwest Detroit Community Justice Center.



**DIEGO BERNAL, MSW '01**

Representative, Texas House of Representatives

Bernal was born in South Texas and raised in San Antonio. He attended the University of Michigan, where he earned his undergraduate degree, MSW and law degree. After

graduating from law school, he returned to San Antonio as a staff attorney for the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund. He was elected to the San Antonio City Council representing District 1 in 2011. Bernal was elected to the Texas House of Representatives in February 2015. He represents District 123 and currently serves as a member of the House Committee on Public Education and the House Committee on Urban Affairs.



**CAROL GOSS, MSW '72**

President and Founder of Warrior Women Against Poverty

Former President and CEO of the Skillman Foundation

Goss is the president and founder of Warrior Women Against Poverty, a movement of African American women providing support to our most vulnerable children and families. Prior to founding Warrior Women Against Poverty in 2015, Goss served for nearly a decade as president and CEO of the Skillman Foundation, whose mission is to improve the lives of children in Detroit. Goss currently serves as chair of the board of Planned Parenthood of Michigan and on the boards of BoardSource Inc., Safe Routes Partnership, Detroit Children's Fund and the Greenlight Fund and COTS.



**SHARON PARROTT, MSW '92**

President of the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities

Parrott is president of the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. She has nearly three decades of experience at the Center and in government. Her expertise spans

a broad range of issues, including policies to reduce poverty and expand opportunity, the intersection of the federal budget and low-income programs, and the use of data and analysis to inform policy debates. Before becoming president, she served in a variety of roles at the Center. She has also held senior leadership positions at the Office of Management and Budget and the Department of Health and Human Services. In addition to her MSW, she received her BA in economics from the University of Michigan.



**TONY SALAZAR, MSW '75**

President, McCormack Baron Salazar, Inc.

Salazar earned his MSW from the School of Social Work in 1975 and has dedicated his career to rebuilding distressed urban communities. He has specialized in developing innovative

projects — such as transit villages, earthquake recovery projects and the first LGBTQ senior development in the U.S. He was inducted into the affordable housing hall of fame, and is an adjunct professor at the USC Price School of Public Policy, where he teaches affordable housing and urban development to graduate students. To date, McCormack Baron Salazar has developed and manages over 25,000 housing units and over four million square feet of retail/commercial/community space.



**ARTURO RODRIGUEZ III, MSW '73**

Former President of the United Farm Workers of America

Rodriguez spent 45 years with the United Farm Workers of America — the last 25 as president — continuing to build the union Cesar Chavez began into a powerful voice for farm workers.

Rodriguez's leadership increased the UFW's membership and pushed historic legislation on immigration reform and worker rights. Rodriguez led negotiations with the nation's major grower associations to fashion the agricultural provisions of the bipartisan comprehensive immigration reform bill that passed the U.S. Senate in 2013. His efforts led to the adoption of protection of farm workers from excessive heat and overtime pay. Today, Rodriguez continues to support the work of the UFW as president emeritus and to lead the national effort to provide immigration opportunities for farm workers.



**STACY SANDERS, MSW '07**

Staff Director of the U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging

As staff director of the U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging (chaired by U.S. Senator Bob Casey), Sanders oversees the committee's team and advances a broad-based policy agenda

to enhance health and economic security for older Americans and people with disabilities. Before joining the committee, Sanders was the Federal Policy Director for the Medicare Rights Center, a nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing access to affordable health care. Sanders led the organization's federal policy analysis, regulatory and legislative advocacy and coalition building efforts. Prior to that, Sanders oversaw a national advocacy campaign to build economic security for older adults at Wider Opportunities for Women, where she participated in federal initiatives to protect Social Security and strengthen the Older Americans Act.



**ABRAHAM (AVI) SAGI-SCHWARTZ, MSW '75 and PhD '76**

Professor Emeritus University of Haifa

Sagi-Schwartz earned his BA in social work from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and at U-M received his MSW, an MA in psychology and a PhD in the Joint Program in Social Work

and Social Science (developmental psychology). He returned to Israel and served as Professor of Social Work, Psychology and Child Development at the University of Haifa, where he founded and directed the Center for the Study of Child Development until his retirement. As part of his service at the University of Haifa he was also dean of the Graduate School and dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences.



**JASON SMITH, MSW '10**

Executive Director of the Michigan Center for Youth Justice

Smith is the executive director of the Michigan Center for Youth Justice (MCYJ). Smith began his career in the field of juvenile justice as an intern with the Ingham County Circuit Court's

Family Division. After graduating from Michigan State University, Smith worked as a direct care provider at a transitional home for adjudicated girls, then as a case manager within Wayne County's juvenile justice system. While working on his MSW degree, Smith interned with the Washtenaw County Michigan Prisoner Reentry Initiative and MCYJ. Before joining MCYJ in 2014, Smith co-managed a youth diversion program in Skokie, IL. He was also a 2011 Youth Justice Leadership Institute Fellow with the National Juvenile Justice Network.

## Sculptural Installation and Performance

In October, the School presented Professor Rogério M. Pinto's "Realm of the Dead," a multimedia sculptural installation and live performance. Pinto conceived and designed the installation — based on his original award-winning play, *Marília* — to tell the story of how he and his family coped with the tragic death of his three-year-old sister. The installation comprised more than 30 suitcases, which Pinto created to reflect different aspects of his physical and spiritual journeys and to address issues of gender, family of origin, immigration, grief and social justice.

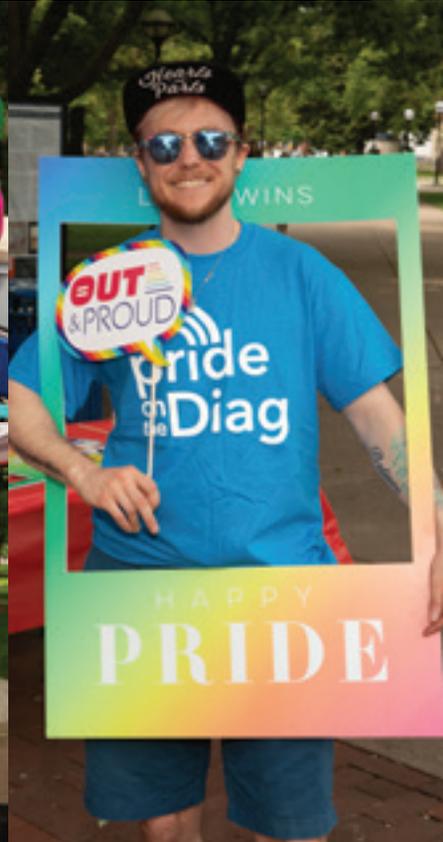
"I hope that by showing my vulnerability, more people will do the same," he said. "Community mourning and healing is what I think gave me the strength to write the text and conceive the pieces of the exhibit." The presentation of "Realm of the Dead" highlighted the connection between arts and social work, which was a key theme of Centennial celebrations.





### Celebrate PRIDE

U-M Social Work students from the Queer Advocacy Coalition (QAC) hosted a campuswide Pride celebration on the Diag. "Organizing Pride on the Diag was a great experience that allowed our organization to get more involved with community organizations, as well as bring topics such as LGBTQIA+ safe sex into a school-adjacent space. It was really important for us to put on an event that celebrates queer culture in all of its facets, as well as provide resources that our schools do not teach," said Amy Belfer and Bethany VanderPloeg, QAC members.



## MENTORING PROGRAM HELPS DIVERSE SCHOLARS NEGOTIATE THE ACADEMY

“One of the greatest joys of running this program is hearing from former participants and seeing their numerous accomplishments. Many of the former participants are now full professors and leaders in their field.”

**T**his past June, the Michigan Center for Urban African American Aging Research (MCUAAAR) and the Program for Research on Black Americans (PRBA) held their 2021 Summer Mentoring Program via Zoom. Established in 1998, the training and mentoring sessions are open to faculty, researchers and doctoral students studying aging in African American populations. This year, the program’s focus was expanded to include doctoral students studying Latinx and American Indian/Alaskan Native populations.

Professor Robert Joseph Taylor is the principal investigator of MCUAAAR and the director of the Summer Mentoring Program. He is the Harold R. Johnson Endowed Professor and the Sheila Feld Collegiate Professor of Social Work, and the director of PRBA at U-M’s Institute for Social Research.

“It has always been a pleasure of mine to conduct the MCUAAAR summer program,” said Taylor. “One of the greatest joys of running this program is hearing from former participants and seeing their numerous accomplishments. Many of the former participants are now full professors and leaders in their field. This year’s summer program was particularly rewarding because instead of seeing the Zoom environment as a limitation, we used it as a strength and expanded the program.”

School of Social Work faculty who were among the 26 MCUAAAR mentors this summer included Associate Professors Cristina Bares, David Córdova, Terri Friedline, Sandra Momper and Robert Ortega; Professors Linda Chatters and Lisa Wexler; and Assistant Professors Jaclynn Hawkins and Katie Schultz.

In addition to School faculty members, the Summer Mentoring Program also recruits former participants and Michigan Social Work alumni as mentors. Karen Lincoln, MSW ’96 and PhD ’02, is an associate professor at USC’s Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work. She spoke about her history with the program and its collective impact: “I helped organize the very first summer program when I was a graduate student at Michigan. I helped select participants and designed the agenda for the program that we are still using.

“I received such excellent mentoring while I was at Michigan, particularly with PBRA, and I realized that it was special because I had peers who weren’t getting that type of mentoring. As faculty, I can see that nothing like PRBA exists in other institutions,” says Lincoln. “The mentoring that MCUAAAR offers students of color is really important, because it is one of the hallmarks of preparing students for tenure, and preparing students to survive in the academy — particularly

students of color, and most especially African American students.”

This year, 131 doctoral students participated in the program, including 45 focused on Latinx populations and 15 focused on American Indian/Alaskan Native populations. Doctoral students were able to connect with fellow students and program faculty who share the same area of research. The mentoring component featured lectures and discussions on negotiating the Academy, including grant funding and job searches, mock job interviews, presentations and feedback. Students and faculty were assigned to small breakout groups for the length of the workshop, allowing for deeper conversations and connections.

One of those doctoral students was Kexin Yu from USC’s Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work. “Presenting my research trajectories and future agendas to mentors and peers helped me look at



## PROFESSOR ROBERT JOSEPH TAYLOR RECOGNIZED

MCUAAAR was founded in 1998 by James S. Jackson, who was the Daniel Katz Distinguished University Professor Emeritus of Psychology at the University of Michigan College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, and research professor emeritus in the Institute for Social Research's Research Center for Group Dynamics. A leader in the field of gerontology, he was essential in developing the groundbreaking National Survey of Black Americans, which provided researchers with the most extensive social, mental and physical health-focused data on Black populations in the United States. Jackson passed away in September 2020 after a lengthy illness; in May, the Gerontological Society of America announced that they were changing the name of their mentorship award to honor Jackson.

In July, Professor Robert Joseph Taylor received the inaugural James Jackson Outstanding Mentorship Award from the Gerontological Society of America.

"I wrote the letter nominating him for that award," said Lincoln. Supporting letters were sent by Carl Hill, chief diversity, equity and inclusion officer at the Alzheimer's Association; Ann Nguyen, assistant professor at Case Western Reserve; and Amanda Woodward, professor of social work at Michigan State University. "We were all mentored by Robert, and so it really does speak to the importance of the summer program, and of the extraordinary network of peers I've gained through years of participation."

my research from a different angle," she said. "I personally felt motivated and ready to take on larger responsibilities in my career after participating in the workshop. As emerging scholars, we all need good mentors to help us navigate the academic landscape."

"The program is great for making the opaque parts of this professional journey — PhD through tenure track — explicit," said Professor Lisa Wexler, who served as program faculty. "When I got into academia, I really was not aware of the many, varied, subtle but important elements of the job search, of communicating about my research and of knowing all that job-hunting and interviewing entailed. Dr. Taylor's lectures laid out many of these important factors, and we were able to unpack and discuss in-depth in small groups."

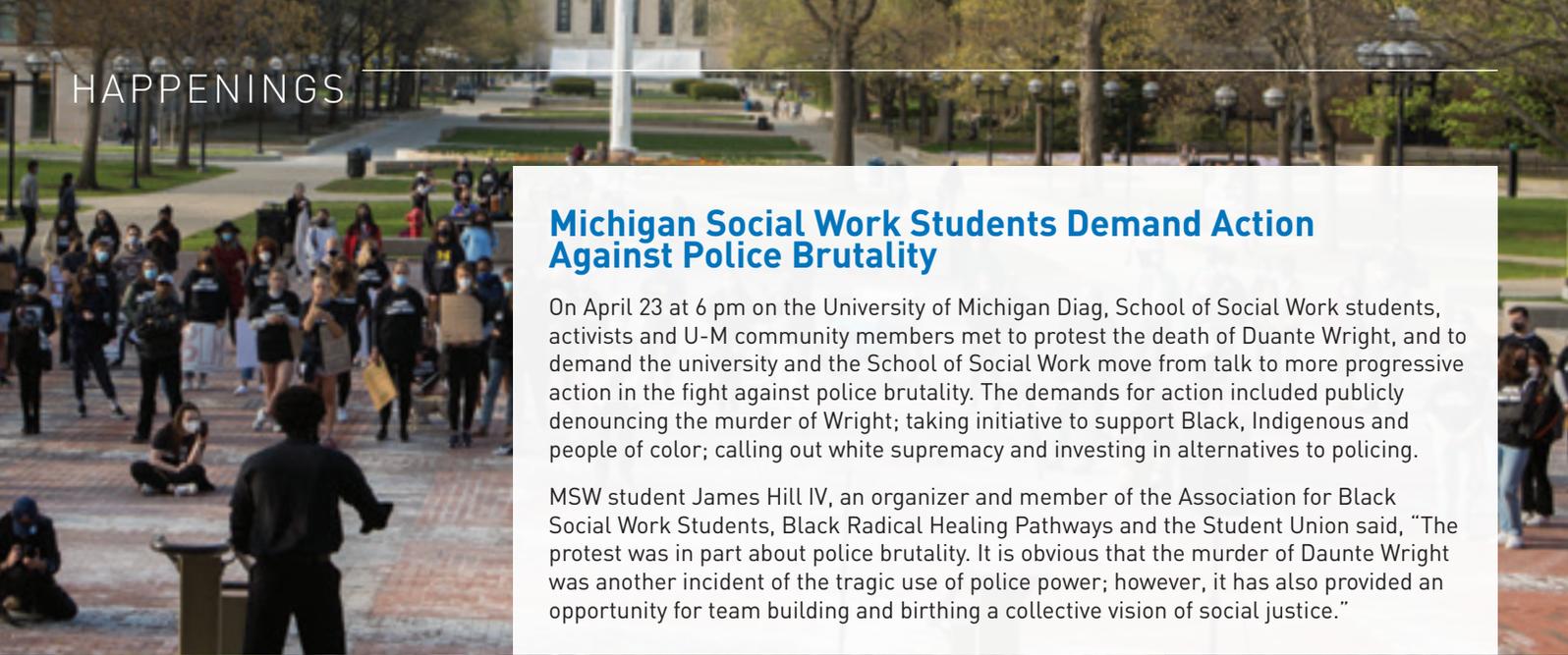
Janelle Goodwill, MSW '15 and PhD '20 is an assistant professor at the Crown Family School of Social Work, Policy and Practice, University of Chicago and, like Lincoln, has participated as both a student and now as a faculty mentor.

"This program offers students from historically marginalized and underrepresented backgrounds an opportunity to receive guided careful feedback and mentoring about their work and the trajectory of their academic career at a very early stage," said Goodwill. "That is transformational because a lot of times students from underrepresented backgrounds might be enrolled in PhD programs, but they're not getting the mentoring that they need, and disparities in mentoring ultimately lead to disparities in terms of future opportunities and jobs.

"If I hadn't received the mentoring that I received during my time at Michigan, then I would not be a faculty member at the University of Chicago," Goodwill said.

It isn't just the mentoring, she added, but the opportunity to meet and build connections with colleagues who are at the same phase of their career. "When I went to the University of Chicago for a job interview, one of the people that I met at the program was there — she was at my job talk and was able to offer me additional insight about the institution, and about the department that I wouldn't have known if I hadn't met her 10 months before at the summer program. Meeting other people you're going to be working with throughout the duration of your career, and see at conferences, is something that's really special and beneficial."

MCUAAAR is a joint program between the University of Michigan, Michigan State University and Wayne State University, and was established with funding support from the National Institute on Aging. The program's co-principal investigators are Peter Lichtenberg, Distinguished University Service Professor of Psychology at Wayne State University and Joan Illardo, Director of Research Initiatives for the Michigan State University College of Human Medicine.



## Michigan Social Work Students Demand Action Against Police Brutality

On April 23 at 6 pm on the University of Michigan Diag, School of Social Work students, activists and U-M community members met to protest the death of Duante Wright, and to demand the university and the School of Social Work move from talk to more progressive action in the fight against police brutality. The demands for action included publicly denouncing the murder of Wright; taking initiative to support Black, Indigenous and people of color; calling out white supremacy and investing in alternatives to policing.

MSW student James Hill IV, an organizer and member of the Association for Black Social Work Students, Black Radical Healing Pathways and the Student Union said, "The protest was in part about police brutality. It is obvious that the murder of Daunte Wright was another incident of the tragic use of police power; however, it has also provided an opportunity for team building and birthing a collective vision of social justice."





**FERNANDA CROSS**

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF SOCIAL WORK

Fernanda Cross received a 2021 Society for Research in Child Development, Outstanding Doctoral Dissertation Award



**SHANNA KATTARI**

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF SOCIAL WORK AND ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF WOMEN'S STUDIES, COLLEGE OF LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND THE ARTS

Shanna Kattari received the Society for Social Work and Research 2021 Deborah K. Padgett Early Career Award.



**JOSEPH RYAN**

PROFESSOR OF SOCIAL WORK AND FACULTY ASSOCIATE, POPULATION STUDIES CENTER, ISR

Joseph Ryan was appointed to lead the data subcommittee of a new task force addressing racism in Michigan's Child Protection System.



Daicia Price

**AYESHA GHAZI EDWIN** and **DAICIA PRICE** received the 2021 Provost's Teaching Innovation Prizes.

**DEBRA MATTISON** was named a 2021 Association of Oncology Social Work Fellow.

**ROGÉRIO M. PINTO** and **DAICIA PRICE** received Harold R. Johnson Diversity Service Awards.

**TRINA SHANKS** was named a 2021 Society for Social Work and Research Fellow.

**ROBERT JOSEPH TAYLOR** received the James Jackson Outstanding Mentorship Award from the Gerontological Society of America.



Debra Mattison



Abigail Eiler

**AYESHA GHAZI EDWIN'S** letter to the editor "Race and ethnicity shouldn't determine women's pay" was published in the *Detroit News*.

**ABIGAIL EILER** discussed student-athlete mental health as part of the Big Ten Mental Health Awareness Rountables.

**WILLIAM ELLIOTT III** was quoted in the *New York Times* on how college savings accounts help low income children build assets.

- **WILLIAM ELLIOTT III** and MSW student **SOPHIA NIELSEN'S** article about reducing poverty and promoting economic mobility through Child Savings Accounts was published in the College Promise newsletter.

**TERRI FRIEDLINE** and her coauthor published a commentary on alternatives to predatory money lenders in the *Chicago Sun Times*.

- **TERRI FRIEDLINE** and PhD student **SO'PHELIA MORROW'S** call to President Biden to stop the predatory burden of student loan debt was published in *Ms. Magazine*.

**ANDREW GROGAN-KAYLOR, SHAWNA LEE** and PhD student **GARRETT PACE'S** research leading to Colombia's ban on corporal punishment was featured on Bogotá radio.

**SHANNA KATTARI** was quoted in *USA Today* about celebrities teaching kids to be more inclusive.

**EDIE KIEFFER** and a U-M team's study about the impact of dental coverage improving enrollees' health in ways that have helped them seek a new job or do better at the one they have was featured in the latest issue of *American Dental Association News*.



William Elliott III



Terri Friedline



Andrew Grogan-Kaylor

**SHAWNA LEE'S** Parenting in Context lab research on how parents are overwhelmed and kids are anxious during the pandemic featured on Detroit 4 Local News.

**ROGÉRIO M. PINTO** spoke with West Michigan's Fox 17 on how protests affect public opinion.

**DAICIA PRICE** discussed mental health in the community with Michigan Medicine's Mental Minute.

**JOSEPH RYAN** was quoted in the American Public Media story on discipline at a Utah youth treatment center.

**LUKE SHAEFER'S** work was cited in *New York Times* articles on anti-poverty programs.

- Senator Sherrod Brown told the *New York Times* he gave **LUKE SHAEFER'S** book to all Democratic senators and the book helped lay the groundwork for anti-poverty legislative efforts, including President Biden's American Rescue Plan.
- **LUKE SHAEFER** was quoted in the *New York Times* about the expansion of the child tax credit in Biden's plan against child poverty.
- **LUKE SHAEFER** was quoted in the *New York Times* on his stimulus check study.

**TRINA SHANKS** was quoted by CNN on the legacy of racial violence.

- **TRINA SHANKS** was interviewed by West Michigan's Fox News about research on vaccine hesitant groups.

**MATTHEW SMITH'S** research on how virtual training can help young people with autism was featured in *Disability Scoop*.



Edie Kieffer



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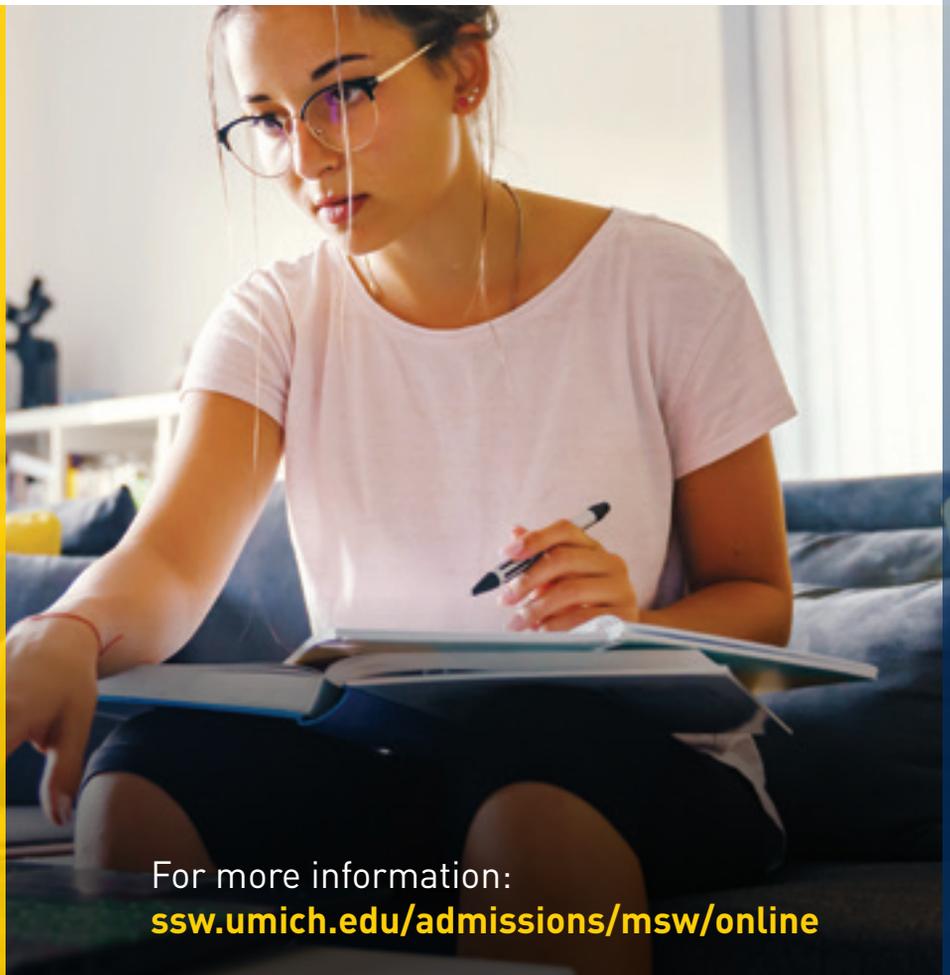
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