



THE SOCIAL BUZZ

East Central University's Social Work Program Newsletter

Greetings from the Director



Hello, and thanks for reading the Social Buzz. This publication is dedicated to highlighting the successes of the East Central University Social Work Program. If you had asked me how I thought Spring 2020 would be different from previous semesters, I would have never in a million years told you that I felt a global pandemic would define the semester. It has been a whirlwind of changes, disappointment, and many attempts to "settle in" to the "new norm." Even with all the upheaval, our students have displayed tremendous courage

and resilience in so many ways. Our interns powered through, focusing not on themselves, but on what was best for their clients. Students continued to do good things while following stay at home orders, and our graduates came

together to celebrate each other in a virtual "Social Work Superlatives Celebration." This semester has not been what we would have hoped for, but it has been a learning experience that has forever shaped the students, faculty, and the world we live in, and I am sincerely in awe of the grace and kindness displayed during these difficult times.

Please enjoy our newsletter and join me in congratulating our social work graduates!

Best,

Amy Ward

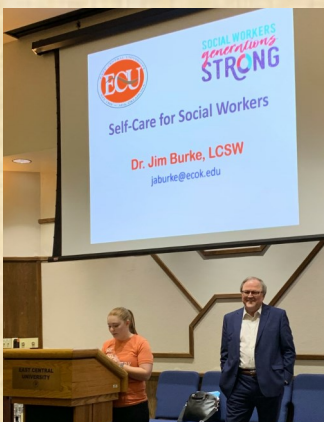
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SWSA Community Training Event

The Social Work Student Association (SWSA) diligently works to provide social work students with a sense of belonging and comradery amongst its members. The SWSA hosts a multitude of community service focused events throughout the year to help social work students give back to their communities and engage in the art of helping others. In honor of Social Work Month, the SWSA decided to host a Continuing Education Event that offered free training hours to area social workers and helping professionals. The SWSA voted to turn this event into a donation accepted event to raise money for the organization to utilize for student activities and community service projects. Two workshops were offered, one by Mrs. Karen Gaddis-Jones, an ECU social work alumna, that focused on Domestic Violence and a workshop on self-care, presented by Dr. Jim Burke, former ECU professor, and social work program director. This student-led event was highly successful, had over 50 attendees, and raised over \$500.

Congrats SWSA on a successful event!



Dr. Jim Burke (left) and Mrs. Karen Gaddis-Jones presenting during the SWSA event

COVID-19

The coronavirus pandemic has made this an unprecedented semester here at East Central University. We understand that the events surrounding COVID-19 have caused our students to experience significant life disruptions. Despite this, you have shown resilience and determination to persevere. Along this journey, ECU faculty, the social work program, and university-at-large have made every attempt to keep you updated with the most recent information. This included creating a special webpage dedicated to the coronavirus. This page features the most recent information regarding the University's COVID-19 response plan and is updated regularly.

As we close this semester, we would like to again highlight important numbers, protocols, and resources that may be helpful to you as you embark this summer. Stay safe and we look forward to seeing you soon!

ECU COVID-19 Response Plan

<https://www.ecok.edu/COVID-19>

Useful Phone Numbers

ECU Student Health Services: 580-559-5713

Pontotoc County Health Department: 580-332-2011

Oklahoma COVID-19 Hotline: 877-215-8336

Emotional Distress Hotline: 800-985-5990

Local Resources

ECU Counseling Center

Jennifer & Cassidy are working remotely to continue providing students with counseling services. Services are provided via tele-mental health, using a video messaging app called VSee.

Students, to request an appointment, please contact Jennifer Cox, LPC via email at jcox@ecok.edu

Services are already paid for via student fees. There is no additional charge.

Addiction & Behavioral Health Center, Inc.

ABHC provides up to 12 weeks of free addiction/other outpatient behavioral health services to any ECU student, staff or faculty member. Currently, all services are virtual via a video messaging app.

To request an appointment, please call ABHC at (580) 332-3001.

Please let the ABHC staff member know that you are an ECU student or employee.

Additional Websites and Telehealth Resources

Disaster Distress Helpline

Call 1-800-985-5990 or Text "TalkWithUs" to 66746

Available to anyone experiencing emotional distress related to COVID-19.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

Call 1-800-273-TALK or Text "HOME" to 741741

When calling, you can press 1 or Text 838255 for Veterans Services.

National Domestic Violence Hotline

Call 1-800-799-7233 or Text "LOVEIS" to 22522

If you're sick, stay home, rest, and remember to:



Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.



Wash your hands often with soap and water.



Clean frequently touched surfaces and objects (for example, TV remotes and computers).



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



Loads of Love

This spring, the ECU Social Work Program sponsored the 2nd Annual Loads of Love, a donation drive that is held for the Family Crisis Center (FCC) of Ada. The FCC provides free and confidential services to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking. ECU social work students come together to create donation drop offs across campus. These locations not only raise awareness about Domestic Violence but also encourage the community to donate items to help victims fleeing domestic violence relationships. This year, donations included everyday items such as sheets and laundry detergent. The event was highly successful and social work students were able to present the FCC with items that go to help support the domestic violence shelter, as well as items that will be given to women having to start over after fleeing domestic violence.



"...it always feels so special to be able to help and be a part of something amazing. I truly hope that we can keep this tradition going and make it an even bigger event in the future!" - Samantha Hall, ECU Social Work Student

If you would like to learn more about domestic violence contact the Family Crisis Center of Ada at 580-436-3504 or visit their website <http://familycrisiscenterada.com/#home>.

NASW Conference

In March, social work faculty attended the 2020 National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Oklahoma Chapter 45th Annual State Conference. During the conference, ECU Social Work Program Director, Dr. Amy Ward, and ECU Instructional Services Librarian, Calantha Tillotson, hosted a workshop entitled, "Infusing Kindness and Empowering Self-Care: A Social Worker's and Librarian's Shared Journey to Craft Authentic Student Training." This engaging and interactive presentation shared how their uniquely collaborative partnership resulted in an innovative approach to student training, allowing library student employees to apply social work techniques to customer service interactions. They specifically discussed differences in expectations, experiences, and expertise between the social work and library science fields and provided tips on how to navigate said differences in order to construct effective experiential training for front-line employees. Attendees participated in embedded hands-on activities on the topics of de-escalation and self-care, as well as applied suggested collaboration techniques to individual professions.

In addition, Dr. Ward and Dr. Schafer-Morgan also had the opportunity to chat with Dr. Angelo McClain, CEO of NASW, about some of the most pressing social issues occurring at this time. Dr. McClain is an expert in public policy and has a breadth of social work experience in administrative, clinical, and quality management.



Alumni Feature



This year, the ECU Social Work Program is proud to present Mrs. Karen Gaddis Jones with the prestigious Distinguished Alumni Award.

Karen Gaddis Jones is the Director of Violence Prevention Services at the Chickasaw Nation. She has been employed with the tribe for 15 years and oversees program services relating to domestic and sexual violence. Under her leadership the Chickasaw Nation program has been recognized as a leader in the Native American community in regards to awareness, prevention and direct services for Native

families experiencing domestic and sexual violence. In 2008, Karen was instrumental in opening the Chickasaw Nation's first domestic violence shelter for women and children, in 2009 the establishment of a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) and Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) program at the Chickasaw Nation Medical Center, in 2013 a tribal batterer's intervention program and in 2015, the first tribe in Oklahoma to offer Domestic Violence Nurse Exams (DVNE.) Ms. Jones currently oversees four federal grants through the Department of Justice Office of Violence Against Women, Administration of Children and Families Family Violence Prevention and Indian Health Services. Her most recent focus was planning the Violence Prevention Center which opened December 2018. Through the generous support of the Chickasaw Nation, this new facility quadrupled shelter space available for women and children needing emergency services.

Ms. Jones is a licensed clinical social worker (LCSW) who holds a Bachelor's Degree in Social Work (1999) from East Central University and a Master's Degree in Social Work (2003) from the University of Oklahoma. Her background also includes experience as a medical social worker in a community hospital setting. She was recognized by the University of Oklahoma's School of Social Work Hall of Fame in 2012-2013 by being named the Rural Social Work Professional and in 2016 one of 100 alumni recognized for their achievements during the 100th anniversary celebration of the school of social work. Ms. Jones has served as a practicum instructor and mentor for many social work students through both East Central University and the University of Oklahoma and an aspect of her career that she truly enjoys.

Ms. Jones has served on various committees and task forces to address issues related to family violence, mental health and substance abuse. She currently serves on the Advisory Committee for the East Central University Social Work program and is Vice-President and a founding member of the Native Alliance Against Violence, Oklahoma's tribal domestic and sexual violence coalition. Congratulations, Karen!

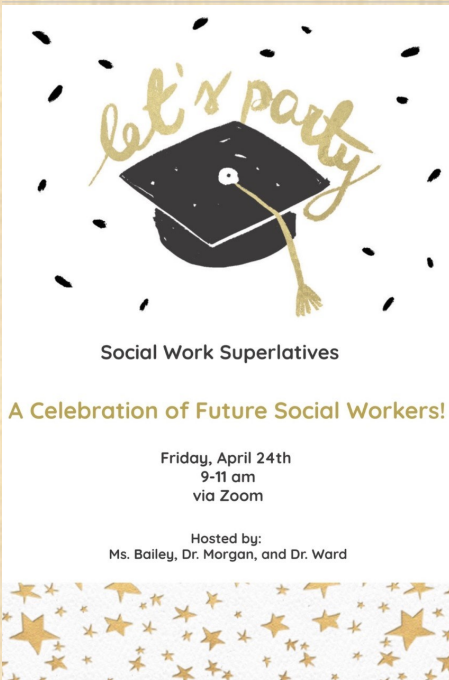
Student Award Winners

Several social work students were honored by the Department of Professional Programs in Human Services for their hard work and dedication to the program. Social Work Student of the Year was awarded to Kasidy Pember-ton, while the Outstanding Social Work Intern was granted to Victoria Ochoa. In addition, the Leadership Award was bestowed to Samantha Hall.

Congratulations students!



Social Work Superlatives Celebration



COVID-19 has affected our students in so many ways. One of the most heart-breaking consequences of this situation has been the cancellation of the spring 2020 commencement ceremony. In an effort to honor our students and highlight their accomplishment, the social work faculty came together to throw our graduates a Social Work Superlatives Celebration. This event was held via Zoom and gave our graduates one last chance to come together “face to face” before venturing out to their next chapter.

During the celebration, faculty members gave each graduate a superlative award that described the hard work and dedication they put in during the completion of the social work program. In addition, each student gave a positive affirmation to their colleagues. These affirmations will accompany the new graduates as they make their way into the field of social work, and will provide encouragement when they encounter difficult field situations.

Congratulations to the following Spring 2020 Graduates...

Desirea Coon Janna Curry DREAM GREENE Amy Hare **Tory Nations**

Victoria Ochoa Emilee Rogers *Shannon Stephens* Madison Wheat

Calantha's Corner

A hearty hello to my cherished Social Work folks!

Oscillation is the word dominating my quarantine. From day to day, moment to moment, I find myself rotating between bursts of equally bright joy and fear. I've learned to cling to the simple: the tart taste of my blueberry pomegranate tea, the humorous sight of my silly dog, the rich smell of blooming irises, the sweet sound of my grandmother laughing. The isolation has taught me to treasure every single conversation I have with another human being, noting our shared burden of wary hope and weary grief.



Loss is a wild, wandering beast, and it has become an uninvited houseguest of us all. Whether it be for a loved one, an income, a routine, a celebration, or a fellowship, we are all grieving right now, and unfortunately, grief does not dissipate on command. It can only be tamed through patience and companionship.

As our world shambles towards recovery, I hope we may honor what has been lost by infusing kindness and compassion into everyday interactions with friends, neighbors, clients, mailmen, grocery clerks, health care workers. Whenever you next get a chance, take a moment to let the people around you know they matter and remember we can only get through this tumultuous time together.

As always, if you need anything, feel free to contact your very own friendly librarian at ctillotsn@ecok.edu and/or make an appointment at https://ecok.libcal.com/appointments/calantha_tillotson.

All my support,

Calantha