



UMBC

Social Work Program Newsletter

September 2022

Catch the Social Work Spirit

INSIDE

Spring 2022 Graduation

A Word from the Chair

Welcome Dr. Ashley Prowell

Fall Open House 2022

Phi Alpha 2022 Induction

Comings and Goings

2022 Scholarship Recipients

Innovation in Action

UMBC Social Work Program

Sherman Hall-B, 322

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Congratulations to our Spring 2022 graduates: Yabissira Afework, Rossmery Alustiza Montoro, Valeria Alvarez, Bright Ansa, Madelynn Argumedo, Veronica Arroyo, Julia Aviles-Zavala, Daniel Bailer, Sam Berlin, Simone Boggs, Amy Caballero, Sarah Campbell, Priscila Canas, Bailey Clum, Catherine Coleman, Pierce Conner, Teko Edwige Lea Da Silveira, Christiane Davis, Briana Davis, Jane De Hitta, Jacob Dugan, Emma Earnest, Udochi Elendu, Elsy S. Estrada, Madison Finnerin, Kerry Garrity, Katie Gelardi, Melissa Susana Gilardi, Sebastian Gill, Phumelele Ginindza, Glenda Gutierrez, Anoa Hawkins, Dashawn Herbert-Williams, Erica Hernandez, Lorilee Jiron, Elijah James Johnson, Hamin Jung, Kimberly Kouame, Amber Kreitzer, Stephanie Kresloff, Kathryn Ladson, Harvey LaGuerre, Tatiana Laguna-Sosa, Emily Lipsitz-Wardrick, Marybeth Mareski, Christopher Mason-Hale, Jocelyn Mayer, Navid Mehrabkhani, Lina Merma, Jamila Michael, Rabia Missana, Bianca Marie Morales Gonzalez, Hannah Morgan, Nick Nemphos, Annick Ngo Bolla, Jason Norwood, Arifat Ola-Dauda, Bhavna Persaud, Dwayne Phillips, Angie Quiroz-Flores, Taylor Racicot, Bertha Ramjit Monroe, Nicholas Reglein, Mary Remmers, Zahra Riaz, Shawn Rill, Francheska Risos, Elizabeth Rockabrand, Veronica Romero, Aria Schrader, Andrew Schwabeland, Karen Schwartz, Kathy Sheridan, Audralina Sherman, Iesha Smith, Deborah Smith, Kimberly Snyder, Par Tial, Ruby Gabrielle Tippett, Joana Wall, Joshua Wenzinger, Luke Wheatley, Sam Wypych, and Jaime Yang!

The Social Work Program wishes you the best on your journey beyond UMBC!



A Word from the Chair

We are excited about the new beginnings that the fall semester brings. We welcome our new UMBC President Dr. Valerie Shears-Ashby; we are certain that her energy and vision will move us forward as we advance in research, teaching, and inclusion. We welcome Drs. Elisabeth Chakmakian and Ashley Prowell to our faculty. We also welcome two new part-time faculty: Mrs. Debra Linsenmeyer and Mr. Louis (Chip) Morlier. Their teaching and research bring new ideas and new energy to our learning environment. We are especially excited to welcome our new and returning students to the UMBC and USG campuses. Our hallways and classrooms are a buzz with students eager to learn and engage.

We were delighted to graduate 84 students last May who are pursuing graduate education and careers in social work. Social workers are especially needed to address the challenges occurring in the US and around the world. The pandemic brought new pressures to bear on already stressed systems. People contend with economic, health, mental health, and social challenges. These new social workers have the skills to work with individuals, families, organizations, and communities to improve their circumstances and influence change. We frequently hear about our graduates from community members and graduate programs. They tell us that our students do well in graduate school and that they make a difference with the work that they do. We are very proud of our graduates!

We look forward to a school year enriched with new ideas, learning, growth, and change. We hope to see our new students and graduates around the halls and in the community as we all strive to do better in the world each and every day.



Welcome Dr. Ashley Prowell!

We welcome Dr. Ashley Prowell to the Social Work Program as an Assistant Professor. She comes to us from the University of Alabama where she recently earned her Ph.D.

Her research centers on culturally responsive resilience theory that is inclusive of racially and socioeconomically marginalized perspectives. She brings new ideas and fresh perspectives to our program.

Welcome Week!!

Wednesday, September 7, 2022

**11:30am–1:00pm @ Flat Tuesdays
Outdoor Patio**

On behalf of the Baccalaureate Social Work Program, we would like to welcome social work students to an open house to kick-off the fall 2022 semester!

We invite you to stop by and meet some of the faculty and staff from the Social Work Department!

Do you have questions about your new major? Are you hoping to catch up with classmates and faculty? Would you like to learn more about our student association? Stop by!

We will be offering pizza and drinks.

2022 Phi Alpha Induction



Congratulations to our 2022 Phi Alpha inductees:

Jasmin Alvarado Cruz, Bright F. Ansah, Jessika Bonilla, Andrew Chau, Madison Doss, Udochi Elendu, Elsy S. Estrada Murillo, Haley Ewing, Kerry Ann Garrity, Phumelele S. Ginindza, Teresa E. Guillen, Jenna Gwinn, Destiny E. Jennings, Hamin Jung, Xiaoming Li, Emily Lipsitz-Wardrick, Rebecca M. Lowe, Aliza Menick, Brittany Murillo, Nicholas Nemphos, Dwayne Alvin Phillips, Breighan Pressley, Francheska Emelli Risos, Liewawit Biruk Tafesse, My-Trinh Tran, Selena Justine Troxell, Elise Turner, Anna D. Walker, Deana Olayinka Wilson, and Jaime Adelina Haiyan Yang!

The new Phi Alpha members were celebrated in an evening ceremony at

UMBC on April 11, 2022. UMBC faculty member, Dr. Marcela Mellinger was the 2022 honorary inductee.



Faculty News:



Welcome Dr. Elisabeth Chakmakian

We welcome Dr. Elisabeth Chakmakian to the Social Work Program as a Visiting Clinical Instructor. She has taught across the curriculum in the program as a part-time

instructor for over 16 years. She brings a great deal of social work practice and teaching experience to our program.

James Bemby Retirement

We celebrate Dr. Jim Bemby's 36-year career in the Social Work Program. We recognize his many contributions to UMBC and the Social Work program. His teaching engaged students and got them excited about careers in social work. We wish him all the best in his retirement. If you would like to honor Dr. Bemby, please consider contributing to the [Shirley Bemby Scholarship Award!](#)



Student News:

Each year the Social Work Program offers several scholarships for students in the major.

We would like to congratulate the 2022 recipients!

*Tina D'Angelo Memorial Scholarship: **Selena Troxell***

*Shirley Bemby Scholarship: **Nohemi Macias and Hailey Peters***

*Gust W. Mitchell Scholarship: **Jessika Bonilla***

*Tejal Khajuria Memorial Scholarship: **Cai Diederich***

*Susan Bernstein-Charlotte W. Newcombe Memorial Scholarship: **Beatriz Soriano Luna***

*Rose Grabania Tice Scholarship: **Millena Prather***

Read more about each scholarship [here](#) or contribute to the social work program scholarships click [here!](#)



Innovation in Action



How would you feel when you walk in to class mid-semester (when so many of us feel overwhelmed and exhausted) and the professor says that instead of a lecture, you're going to break into groups of 6 and play a board game?! As someone who strives to have an engaging classroom, my hope is that this might peak your interest, keep you awake, and make you curious about how a game is relevant to your social work journey.

Last year, I received a Hrabowski Innovation and Implementation Research Grant from UMBC in collaboration with two colleagues in the Department of Education, Keisha Allen and Jiyeon Lee, in order to develop and test a training tool to increase cultural sensitivity and empathy for working with immigrant students in K-12 educational settings. As

social workers and many other helping professionals play a key role in the educational ecosystem, we hope that this game will be used in UMBC classes across the social work, education, psychology, and sociology curriculums.

Six UMBC students (including social work majors: Ashley Pereira and Xiaoming Li) helped us to 1) conduct a systematic review of barriers and facilitators to success for immigrant students in K-12 education, 2) synthesize this information into common themes, and 3) translate it into the deck of cards that facilitates the play of the board game! Along the way, the team conducted reviews of many existing board games to determine how to best accomplish our goals and we landed on something that is a mix of Forbidden Island, building puzzles, and group consensus building. The main goals of the game include:

1. *Increase awareness about the challenges and emotions associated with being an immigrant or ESOL student*
2. *Highlight the importance of collaboration between school staff members to ensure the success of their immigrant and ESOL students*
3. *Provide education about the support systems available to immigrant and ESOL students*
4. *Open a dialogue about what success may look like for different students*

At this point 20 students from across the university (though most have been social work majors- thanks for your enthusiasm!) have come in to play the game and give their feedback, which has been overwhelmingly positive. For those of you interested in learning more, please keep your eyes out for an interdisciplinary elective course to be offered Spring 2023 as SOWK 390 Special Topics in Social Welfare with Dr. Allen and myself. The course will focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion for immigrant children in US school systems and students will play the game three times throughout the semester, along with engagement in role-plays, and circle discussions.

I hope to see you in the classroom in January!

-Dr. Evans

