

The Change Agent

The Newsletter for Millersville University's School of Social Work

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A LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Dr. Karen Rice, Department Chair

I am honored to share with you the incredible work in which our faculty, staff, students, and alumni of the School of Social Work at Millersville University are engaged. Throughout this issue, you will read about the transformative work done this past semester. We are excited about the upcoming semester and hope you will join us throughout the upcoming year at our various events.

Take care, be well, and Together, We Can Be The Change!



BASW Graduates



DSW Graduates



MSW Graduates

School Social Work Certification Awarded to First MSW Graduate

In Pennsylvania, school districts require social workers to obtain a School Social Work certification. **Danielle Dietz, MSW** was the first student to complete the required coursework and receive the First School Social Work Certification. The program is designed to prepare MSW students with the required knowledge, skills, and expertise to “support the academic, career, and personal-social development needs” of diverse, vulnerable, and at-risk PreK-12 students and their families, and is approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE).

Danielle shared her story on the next page.



Danielle Dietz, MSW

SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK CERT

Want to know more about the School Social Work Certification?

REQUEST MORE INFORMATION →

School Social Work Certification Awarded to First MSW Graduate

By Danielle Dietz, MSW

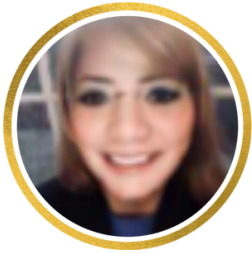
The Millersville University School Social Work Certification, MSW program, and my internship with the School District of Lancaster have prepared me to be a competent professional within my field. Being a School Social Worker requires having a wide variety of skills and knowledge. We serve as a liaison between students and families, the school, and the community. We are seen as Mental Health Professionals and leaders within the school. My coursework ensured I received all the necessary pieces to be an effective SSW such as knowledge of effective evidence-based practices and assessments to employ with students, knowledge of educational laws and policies, preparing me for making ethical decisions, how to work collaboratively with others, how to be an advocate for clients and their families, as well as knowledge on MTSS models, IEP's, behavioral intervention plans, and so much more! My internship at Reynolds Middle School taught me the need to be culturally aware, to value diverse perspectives and experiences, how to support families with low socioeconomic status and/or refugee status, how to be an effective school leader and the importance of connections with community partners to support families in a holistic approach. I am thankful for the professors who provided me with the knowledge and skills, and thankful for my internship supervisor who further expanded them and provided me with valuable hands-on experience as a School Social Worker! Although there is a wide variety of services a School Social Worker provides, and I only touched on a few here, I can feel confident that the certification courses and my school internship have prepared me to be the best School Social Worker I can be.



DSW Students Present their Research

DOCTOR OF SOCIAL WORK

The school of social work extend our congratulation to the four DSW Students below. They have presented their research at various conferences.



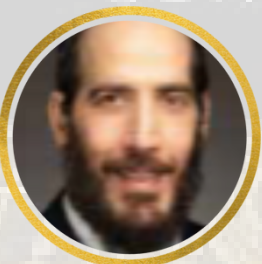
Linda Timme, a third-year DSW student, presented at the International Conference on virtual EMDR Therapy at EMDR Canada in Montreal. She will also be presenting at the 2023 National DSW Conference on Education and Social Work: Social Workers' Perspective of the Effectiveness of EMDR in Telehealth for PTSD Patients.



Michelle Palmieri, a third-year DSW student, presented on her dissertation topic at the 2023 National DSW Conference on Education and Social Work: COVID-19 and Mental Health: Exploring the Impact of a Digital Application.



Kelli Star Fox, a third-year DSW student, presented on her dissertation topic at the 2023 National DSW Conference on Education and Social Work: Playing well with others: Evaluating an intervention to enhance social work student preparedness for interprofessional collaborative learning.



Yechiel Benedikt, a first-year student in the Doctor of Social Work program, led a workshop entitled "Building Resources with Individual Clients" at the 81st Annual Group Psychotherapy & Psychodrama Conference at Fordham University in New York, N.Y., on March 29–April 2, 2023.

Check out the College of Graduate Studies and Adult Learning's Spring 2023 Newsletter to learn more about the scholarship

Dr. Frank and Team shines a spotlight on homelessness at Binns Park

A study on homelessness at Binns Park in Lancaster was conducted by Dr. Frank in collaboration with other researchers. Dr. Jennifer Frank, Dr. Mary H. Glazier, Jenna Graeff, Rachel Preibisch, and Dawn M. Watson are among the researchers involved in this study. Reports were released in April and provided valuable recommendations to the City.

Homelessness policy debates have centered around Binns Park in Lancaster. Food distribution to people at Binns Park was discouraged by county official for various reasons that includes, trash and food safety. Increasing empathy, respect, and sensitivity toward homeless individuals in Binns Park and building more collaboration among stakeholders is recommended by Dr. Frank's team.

Passive observation, surveys of elected officials, outreach workers, agency leaders, and semistructured interviews with congregants were used to collect data. and the Team reported that enormous amount of data was collected during the study.



Dr. Frank Continues with the Homelessness Study

Their study revealed a range of disconnects between perceptions of the park's problems and potential solutions.

As part of the team's recommendations, affordable housing, emergency shelters, and transitional housing should be improved in the local area. While making mental and addiction treatment more accessible, coordinating efforts between social service agencies and grassroots volunteers, and reevaluating the policies of institutional social service providers were recommended.

Dr. Frank's team added that closing Binns Park will not solve the problem but rather moved the problem elsewhere.

Millersville University's research was appreciated by the redevelopment authority's homeless coalition, which welcomed input on its next steps.

The team presented their study at the 31 annual GASI conference in Las Vegas.



Jenna Graeff, Dr. Jennifer Frank, Dawn M. Watson, and Rachel Preibisch,



Click above image to download reports

[Read more about the story on Oneunitedlancaster.com](https://www.oneunitedlancaster.com)

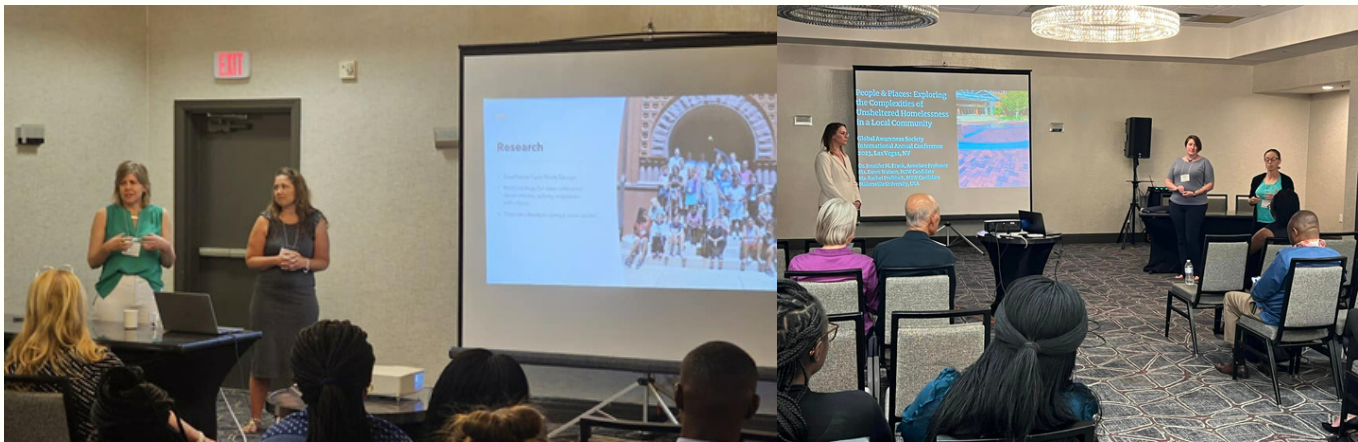


Dr. Jennifer Frank, Dawn M. Watson, and Rachel Preibisch presented at 31 Annual GASI Conference in Las Vegas

PRESENTATIONS

Social Work faculty and Students Presented at Local and International Conferences

A constituent of social work faculty and graduate students presented at various local and International Conferences this past summer. Presentations highlighted efforts made to realize the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals within our own community.



The GASI conference attendees and researchers included: Drs. Jennifer Frank and Karen Rice; Professor Lauren Corso; MSW students, Rachel Preibisch and Dawn Watson; and MSW/MSEM student, Rasheed Osman. (pictures above)

10th Annual Global Wellbeing Conference:

The School of social work collaborates with other campus organizations to host the Global Well-Being Conference. Participants from around the world joined their Millersville University colleagues to present and participate in the 10th Annual Global Wellbeing Conference at the Ware Center. During the presentation, the presenter discussed our global interconnectedness and discussed individual and collective action to take in order to address and realize a number of the United Nations Global Goals, such as poverty, hunger, homelessness, child safety, quality education, and climate change. During the conference, attendees were reminded that we are "guests on this land, who may be evicted for bad behavior" so do your part to promote social, economic, and environmental justice. We are pleased to congratulate all faculty, students, and staff from the School of Social Work and College of Education and Human Services who presented research at the conference this year.

PRESENTATIONS

Social Work faculty and Students Presented at Local and International Conferences



Here are some pictures from the 10th Annual Global Wellbeing Conference

PRESENTATIONS

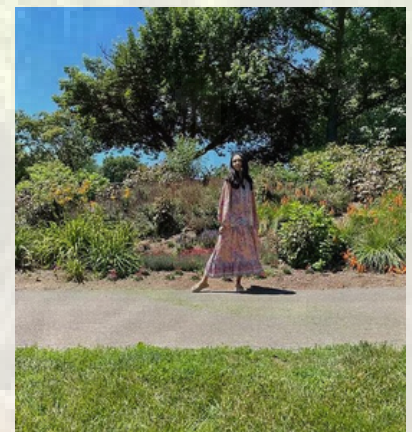
Social Work faculty and Students Presented at Local and International Conferences - Cont

Ubuntu Leaders Fellow Program: The 2022-2023 Ubuntu Fellows presented their research at the Made in Millersville Conference. Addressing Global Challenges Through Community Projects is the title of the 2022 - 2023 cohort paper published in the 2023 Made in Millersville Journal. Several conferences were also attended by the group, including Made in Millersville, Global Well-Being, and The Global Awareness Society Conference in Las Vegas.



*Carolina Hidalgo-Ahmed ,
MSW Student*

The fellows' projects addressed four global challenges identified in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (2,3,4,13), which pose a major threat to Black women, children, and families with low incomes and other vulnerable groups. The topics include; Social media and food knowledge; a historically responsive literacy framework; Black maternal health; and climate action and awareness in Lancaster County.



*Delanie Ouk,
Early Childhood Elementary Education.*

As Global Citizens, the fellows are prepared to use their experiences and community networks for the benefit of their community having completed all program requirements and graduated from Leadership Lancaster Millersville College Core Class.



*Katherine McLaughlin,
Speech Communications*

[Learn more about the Ubuntu Leaders fellows Program](#)

Dr. Marc Felizzi Welcomed Two Excellent Speakers for his SOWK 602; Behavioral Health MSW course last semester.

By Dr. Marc Felizzi

Dr. Marc Felizzi invited two mental health experts to share their professional knowledge and experiences with the MSW students last semester. The speakers were, Brandon St. Croix, MSW, RSW, from St. John's Newfoundland/Labrador Canada, who discussed the effectiveness of Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT) when applied to client populations. Mr. St. Croix, who is associated with Eastern Health Services of Canada, and his own private practice, gave an overview of DBT, as well as its applicability to a number of mental health disorders. Students asked a number of questions regarding when to employ DBT, as well as on the "how-to" of the various techniques used with clients.

Cassandra Rutledge, MSW, LCSW (a 2017 MU MSW graduate), and a supervisor with Wellspan Health, discussed career opportunities with Wellspan across their system. Students learned about the treatment population for Wellspan, as well as the current openings within the healthcare system. Ms. Rutledge also shared with the students her recent experiences regarding her preparation for the PA Licensed Social Worker (LSW) and Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) exams, which she recently passed.



The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania welcomes William and Hannah Penn Fellows - MSW Student Rebekah Orlando to DHS.

By Rasheed Osman

This is an excellent opportunity for Rebecca Orlando, a student at Millersville University, to contribute her skills, knowledge, and experience to the 5-Year Comprehensive Housing Strategy Plan of the Department of Human Services (DHS). Rebekah will work with her team to develop and implement the first year of DHS's 5-Year Comprehensive Housing Strategy, including addressing social determinants of health and making sure that planning and implementation efforts are informed by the lived experiences of individuals experiencing housing instability and homelessness.



Rebekah second from the right. Source: [CMS](#)

PUBLIC

MISSION

Rebekah wrote that "Millersville University's rigorous social work curriculum prepared her well for these responsibilities.

Rebekah wrote in an email to inform the school of social work about her recent accomplishment.

"I hope you've been able to enjoy your summer so far and had a nice 4th of July! I just wanted to share some exciting news with you. I have just accepted an offer for the William and Hannah Penn Fellowship working with DHS on their 5-year housing strategy plan where I will be working with Stephanie Meyer, LSW who is the special assistant to Secretary Arkoosh. I wanted to share this with you because I cannot express enough how grateful I am for all the experience and support I have been given from the social work program. I truly feel that the program and the support from all of you have led me to this amazing opportunity to pursue my dream of working in macro/policy social work. I am proud to be able to represent Millersville's School of Social Work, and hope that I will be able to represent the program well!

Thank you for all the support that you have given throughout my educational journey, I am forever grateful!"

[Pennwatch has more on the story](#)

MU MSW Graduate and School of Social Work Faculty Member Collaborate on Article

MU MSW Graduate and School of Social Work Faculty Member Collaborate on Article

Shiloh Hagerty, a 2022 MU/SU MSW graduate and Dr. Marc Felizzi recently collaborated on an article, which was published in the Spring 2023 issue of the Sport Social Work Journal. The article entitled The Impact of Authoritarian Coaching Styles on Athletes' Anxious States

<https://openjournals.bsu.edu/sportsocialworkjournal/issue/view/329>, is part of a growing body of research which seeks to promote the inclusion of social workers in the athletic arena with the intent of assisting athletes of all levels with their emotional and mental health well-being.

Sport Social Work is developing into a viable and active area of concentration for social workers. The idea for the publication was inspired by Ms. Hagerty's final paper in the Spring 2022 section of the School of Social Work's Sport, Social Work and Mental Health course, which was developed and taught by Dr. Felizzi.



Dr. Marc Felizzi

The article reviewed the competitive nature of sports can and explored how competition alone exacerbate an athlete's anxiety state. As well as the athlete's cognitive and behavioral functioning, which in turn affects their performance. Ms. Hagerty noted that athletes handle an increased amount of pressure and can be affected by an emotionally abusive or authoritarian style of coaching. Self-determination theory can serve as the underpinning for two different coaching styles, authoritarian and autonomy-supportive, that can impact an athletes' anxiety. An authoritarian coaching style may be defined as one where the coach has set strict rules and structure for their athletes, but not freedom enough to provide a sense of autonomy among participants (Brinton, Hill & Ward, 2017). An autonomy -supportive coaching style may be defined as one where the coach creates a culture whereby athletes are provided choices, within certain guidelines, allows athletes to take initiatives and avoids guilt inducing and shaming behaviors. (Brinton, Hill & Ward, 2017) An autonomy-supportive coaching style may reduce athletes' anxiety and enhance the athlete's wellbeing and athletic performance while an authoritarian style can induce and sustain athletes' anxiety symptoms. Conitinue on next page.

MU MSW Graduate and School of Social Work Faculty Member Collaborate on Article

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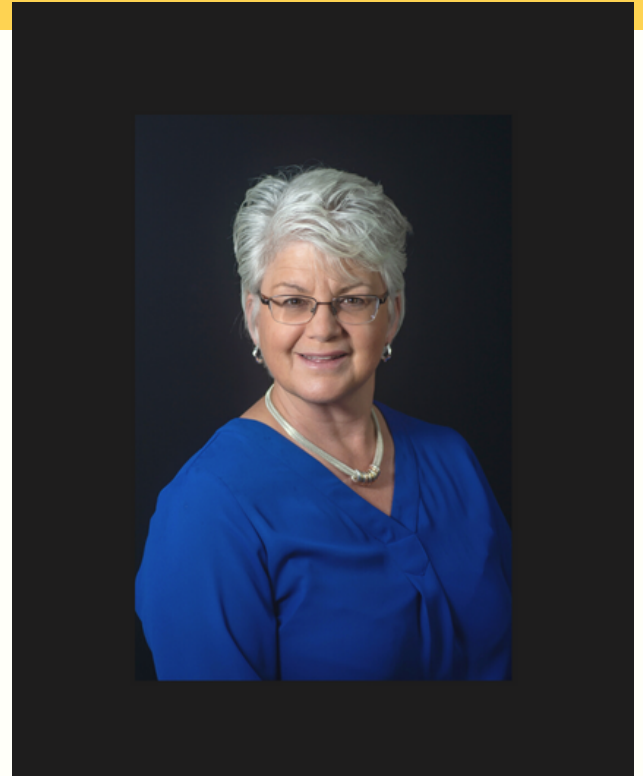
Social learning theory provides awareness of how coaches internalize styles of coaching and offers interventions that can be used to instill a positive coaching style with athletes. Sport social workers hold unique qualities to provide effective interventions at the micro and macro level. At the individual level, sport social workers can utilize evidence-based interventions including CBT and mindfulness to reduce anxiety symptoms and teach coping skills. At the organizational level, sport social workers can provide education and awareness of mental health and teach autonomy-supportive coaching. Sport social workers are an integral factor to assuring a safe, positive environment in the athletic arena.



State Representative Visits MSW Classrooms

Professor Deb Jones invited Representative Izzy Smith Wade-El to visit the MSW Advanced Social Welfare Policy Classroom at Millersville University. As a macro work practitioner teaching SOWK 615 Advanced Social Policy Welfare, Adjunct Professor Deb Jones envisions a Lancaster County that harnesses energy and possibilities beyond the status quo to address needs around housing insecurity. Representative Izzy Smith-Wade-El presented to eighteen (18) students in the SOWK 615 class in the Spring of 2023 to learn the importance to track legislation in the PA General Assembly and understand how legislation impacts local services.

Representative Smith-Wade-El explained the legislative process in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and discussed specific bills sponsored by the Representative around housing insecurity. Representative Smith-Wade-El has sponsored 98 House bills during the 2023-2024 session and specifically discussed House Bill 66 exploring the impact of housing on health including lead paint remediation. In addition, House Bill 366 addresses fair housing, the statute of frauds, mortgaging of leaseholds, and rental applications. With a specific passion to help others, founded in his core values, Representative Smith-Wade-El is a local champion of initiatives that directly impact constituents in his district. His engaging personality and courage to lead change are an inspiration to the students.



Deb Jones, MSW, LCSW (she/her/hers)
Adjunct Professor, School of Social Work



Representative Izzy Smith Wade-El



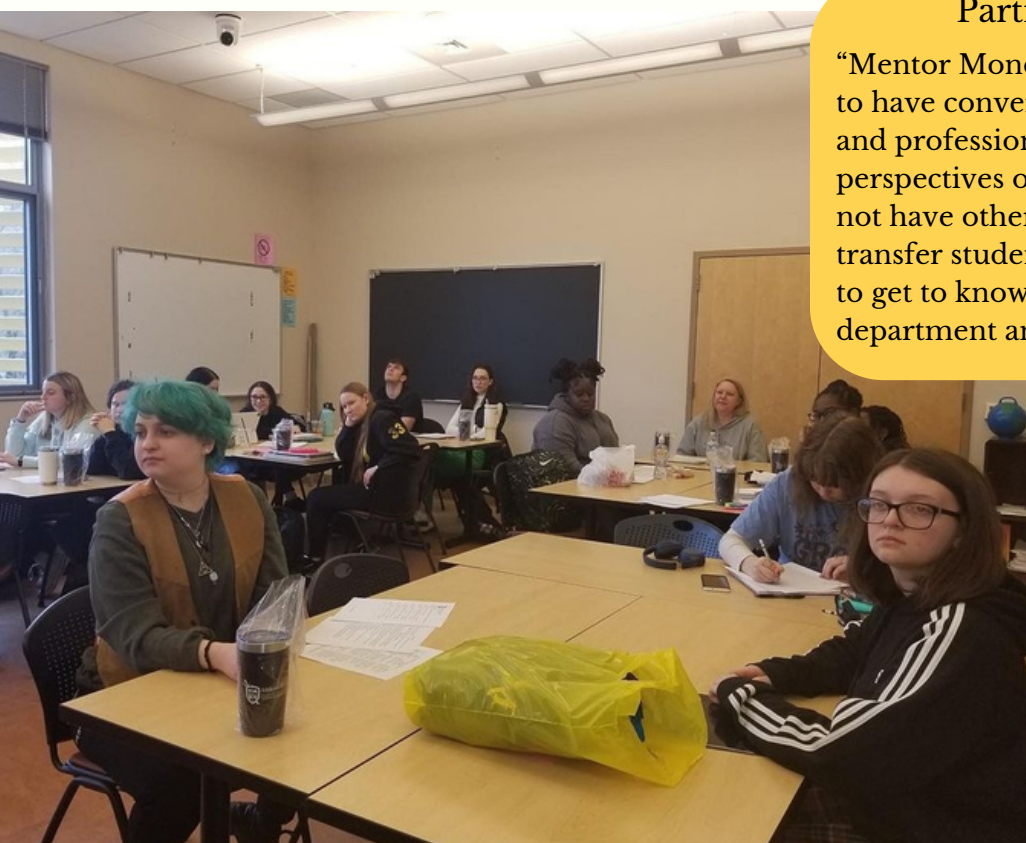
First Year Students Continue to Participate in Constructive Dialogues Series

Our first-year students participated in the weekly Constructive Dialogue Series hosted every Monday and Tuesday by Peer Mentor Rasheed Osman, MSW / MSEM Student. The group engaged in critical dialogue around racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion. Constructive Dialogue fosters respectful, critical discussion for the purpose of learning and self-development. The Program that was rolled out in the fall of 2022 as Mentor Monday continues to attract students from various levels of social work programs.

Spring 23 Constructive Dialogue focused on racism. A deck of cards by Ibram X. Kendi called the Antiracist Deck was used by the facilitators. Every week, cards were drawn from the deck and read. The card prompted a discussion about racism in various contexts and participants engaged respectfully, listen, and learn from shared experiences.

Constructive Dialogue provides students with the opportunity to express themselves freely outside of the classroom without judgment and the ability to have challenging conversations about racism, values, and self-reflection without being judged. Constructive Conversation aims to help students to develop social work professional identity.

In Spring of 23, our MSW peer mentor hosted a discussion about anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion in Dr. Wanja Ogongi's SOWK 102 class. Please see the photo below.



Participants' Takeaways

“Mentor Mondays has been a great opportunity to have conversations that facilitate personal and professional growth. We share ideas and perspectives on important topics, that we may not have otherwise been exposed to. As a recent transfer student, I also found it to be a great way to get to know more about the social work department and meet new people.” -

“I keep coming back to Mentor Mondays because it has really helped me become more open and less shy. It has made me more comfortable to talk about important things. I can say things without being judged and we are all very supportive!!”

“i went to one last semester-loves it. very challenging” “I think this is a very good group.”

“Important conversation” “I enjoyed the discussion” “So far Mentor Monday is good.”

[Registration is open for the Fall 2023 Constructive Dialogue](#)

Online Delivery Option Launched in MSW Program

By Laura Brierton Granruth, MSW, PhD
Associate Professor - School of Social Work

The MSW program began in 2006 as a collaborative, in-person program with Shippensburg University. From 2006 through about 2014, faculty from both universities traveled on alternate weeks to each campus and used often unreliable teleconferencing software to beam us to the other campus. The program grew sufficiently at both universities allowing us to teach required courses and our home campuses but continue to share electives.

We were thrilled in Fall 2022 to launch the Advanced Standing program as a fully online option, We are even more excited to add the Regular Standing program in Fall 2023. The online delivery option is in demand. We will continue to offer the in-person program. Both programs are taught by the same faculty—either full-time faculty from Millersville or Shippensburg universities or adjuncts who are interviewed and hired directly by us. Our Field Director and her staff are fully able to arrange field practicums in a student's home state.

Students in the online program will have one professor from Millersville and one professor from Shippensburg each semester, except for Field and Practice courses, which will be taught by the student's home campus. Online students also can access all certificate and certification, and dual degree programs that are available to in-person students.

The online MSW program is an excellent opportunity for online BASW degree completion students to continue on to the MSW program. Of course, in-person students also are welcome to apply to the online program.



ONLINE MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

Our same great MSW program, taught by the same faculty. Courses may meet synchronously or asynchronously. Field placements will be available near the student's physical location.

[REQUEST INFO, ONLINE MSW](#)



MU SSW ALUMNI

Stay connected! We love to hear from our alumni and feature the great work you are doing! [Click here to give us an update!](#)