

Newsletter
Spring 2019



SOCIAL WORK THE LEADER



College of Health & Human Services

Department of Social Work | 270.745.5312 | swrk@wku.edu | College of Health & Human Services



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WKU Photography

OVERVIEW

The Department of Social Work continues to experience growth in terms of students, faculty, and programs. The BSW program is a thriving program with over 300 students. The BSW program has been continuously accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) since 1978. The BSW program is offered in Bowling Green, Elizabethtown and Owensboro! The MSW program enrolls approximately 120 graduate students and received initial accreditation from the CSWE in 2006. Our MSW program offers a unique concentration: advanced direct practice in rural settings. Currently, the MSW program can be completed in Bowling Green as well as an online cohort. Both programs reaffirmed their CSWE accreditations in February, 2018.

The department includes 16 full-time faculty, three faculty members on transitional retirement, two professional staff, four office associates, and four graduate assistants. Significant departmental projects include the WKU Training Resource Center (TRC), the Public Child Welfare Certification Program (PCWCP), the Credit for Learning Project (CFL), and the MSW Cohort Studies Initiative.

about
110,000

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, social work is one of the fastest-growing professions in the United States, with about **110,000 more social workers** expected to enter the profession in just seven years.

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Study Away Program

Western Kentucky University is an equal opportunity institution of higher education and upon request provides reasonable accommodation to individuals with disabilities. www.wku.edu/eoo



NEW SPACE!

Greetings from the new Department of Social Work main office! In case you haven't heard, the entire Social Work Department now resides on the first floor of Academic Complex. The main office suite is AC 110, and our new updated space serves our needs well with a new student area (AC 117) and a new meeting room space. Please come visit!

DEPARTMENTAL NEWS

Following our successful Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) reaffirmations of the BSW and MSW programs last year, we continue to stay focused on enhancing our current programs as well as considering new possibilities. We are in process of exploring additional programming including a child welfare education and research center, a Doctorate of Social Work (DSW), and additional interprofessional education opportunities within WKU and with other universities. These projects will enhance student opportunities and provide focus to our departmental mission: to provide quality programs that prepare competent and responsible professionals to work successfully in a global society. Additional departmental priorities this year include increasing faculty diversity, increasing the number of online courses/electives offered, increasing major donors and scholarships available to students, and strengthening existing partnerships and establishing additional ones. If you are interested in partnering, please contact me!

In addition to educating the newest members of the workforce, the Social Work Department currently adds value to both WKU and local communities through a variety of activities. These include providing field placement students to regional agencies; providing CEUs to practicing social workers; and partnering with local agencies on research, education, and service projects. Any alumni or community members that would like to get involved with these activities may contact me for further information on how to make a difference with our department. Your ideas and energy are vital to helping us accomplish our mission!



Dean Patricia "Trish" Desrosiers, Ph.D., LCSW
Department Head, WKU Department of Social Work

"With the energy and vigor of the new administration group, we are sure to experience new ways of conceptualizing our work and doing business."

MEET OUR TEAM

■ Department Head
Dr. Patricia Desrosiers

■ MSW Online Program Director
Dr. Amy Cappiccie

■ MSW Program Director
Dr. Saundra Starks

■ BSW Program Director
Dr. Simon Funge

■ BSW & MSW Field Director
Kelly McIntyre, MSW



Susan Mkanta, Dr. Theresa Kaijage, MSW Student Emily Holderfield-Gaither, Israel Moore, Dr. Saundra Starks, Saleh Kadope, Rita Minga

PROJECT RAFIKI

Written By MSW STUDENT, EMILY HOLDERFIELD-GAITHER

During the summer of 2017, students and faculty from Western Kentucky University (WKU) studied abroad in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, East Africa through the Kentucky Institute for International Studies (KIIS). While taking a social work course, students volunteered at a local HIV/AIDS center, WAMATA, where they found that a main challenge for these individuals was the lack of food and proper nutrition.

Many of these WAMATA members reported having the right medication for treatment, but lacking food with which to take their medicines. A significant number of these WAMATA members had been abandoned by their families, as part of the common stigma attached to HIV/AIDS in Tanzania. This stigma against people living with this infection often stems from a lack of education about what HIV/AIDS is and where it comes from. Another result of this stigma, means many of them struggle to obtain or maintain employment, leaving them with no means

by which to make a living and, in turn, no income with which to purchase food for nourishment. Members told about their main conflict of concern.

They have two choices: Individuals with food insecurity who are living with HIV/AIDS can either not take their medicine, for fear of getting sick (because of having little to no sustenance with which to take it), or they can choose to take the medicine anyway, trying to comply with treatment, with the consequence of getting sick anyway. Either way, by no choice of their own, these individuals' medical treatment directions are not being followed.

After finding out this main concern, and after learning that the Swahili word "rafiki" means "friend," the social work students came up with Project Rafiki, a food assistance program that allocated at least one hundred and fifty U.S. dollars to WAMATA each month for one whole year. The monies collected were donations from the students, organizations, churches, school clubs, and fundraisers.

One hundred and fifty American dollars can be used to feed approximately six families for a month in Tanzania. Each month, the food was purchased in Dar es Salaam and distributed by WAMATA staff and volunteers and interns from the Social Work Program at Hubert Kairuki Memorial University (HKMU) in Tanzania. Detailed reports, which itemized and totaled purchases, were sent to the research team each month. In these reports, recipients of the food assistance were also listed.

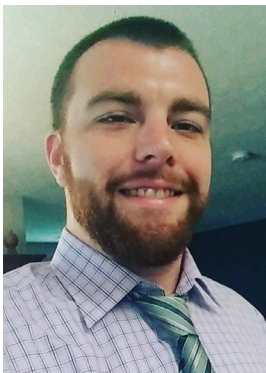
Since June 2017, Project Rafiki has consistently provided food sustainability for six families in East Africa (with the exception of one month). Members of the Project Rafiki Research Team and Advisory Board include: Dr. Saundra Starks, Dr. William Mkanta, Susan Mkanta, Emily Holderfield-Gaither, Israel Moore, Angelique Horace, Casey Carey, Shawnice Whitfield, Chanel Watkins, Sierra Bailey.

We have presented Project Rafiki at BPD in Atlanta last spring (with BSW student Chanel Watkins), APM in Orlando this fall (with grad assistant and MSW student Angelique Horace), and at our local Rotary Club.



MSW Student, Emily Holderfield-Gaither, Dr. Saundra Starks

“and after learning that the Swahili word ‘rafiki’ means ‘friend,’ the social work students came up with Project Rafiki, a food assistance program...”



MSW ALUMNI FOCUS

Jordan Milby, MSW, LSW, LCAC, N. O. W. Counseling Services, LLC Class of '16

My journey in social work has been nontraditional to say the least. It all began in 2011 when I entered a long-term recovery center for substance use. This struggle really laid the foundation for my life entering the field of social work. Towards the end of this program, I was working with the social worker for the program who encouraged me to go back to school as part of my plan leaving the program. Upon signing up for school, I was unsure what I wanted to do. I knew that I wanted to help people in the same way that people took the time to help me. That is when the academic advisor suggested that I try the social work program. I have not looked back since that day.

I worked my way through the community college and eventually transferring to WKU to get my BSW. At that time, I was encouraged to go on to pursue my MSW. All of this played a crucial role in my life and in my recovery. I do not think I would be able to be as successful as I have had it not been for the social work program and the faculty that encouraged me along the way. Upon graduation, I began working with a gentleman I met through my work. He and his wife had the dream of starting an outpatient treatment clinic and wanted me to join the team. That was two years ago shortly after my 2016 graduation from the MSW program.

Today, the organization has grown to having over 20 staff and we also have multiple sober living facilities that we manage as well. Within the organization, we also utilize 10 full-time peer support staff. This is where my passion really is being able to supervise and train these peer support staff in addition to overseeing the recovery residences. I have also had the opportunity to present on these topics at the University of Southern Indiana at their Institute for Alcohol and Drug Studies (IADS). Most recently, I was accepted into the PsyD program at WKU to begin in 2019. I am excited and eager to take this next step in my journey. The journey has been fun, difficult, and rewarding all at the same time. At the end of the day, I know that I would not be able to be where I am at today without the social work program and the Faculty at WKU. I will be forever grateful for my experience there.

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT



Dr. Whitney Harper to participate in Substance Abuse Curriculum Development

Dr. Whitney Harper will be involved in a national task force through CSWE to develop competencies and curricular resources addressing substance use.



Dr. Jay Gabbard Named Vice-Chair of National Board of Directors for Phi Alpha

Dr. Jay Gabbard, Professor of Social Work at WKU, was recently elected Vice-Chair of the Board of Directors for Phi Alpha Social Work Honor Society International. In addition to assisting with board oversight, organizational governance, and chapter development, he will be involved with developing Phi Alpha Chapters outside of the U.S. He is very proud that in recent years the WKU chapter of Phi Alpha won a National Chapter of the Year Award for service and thanks all current and past members for their contributions to the success of Delta Mu chapter.

BSW UPDATE

Respectively, mental health and substance abuse social workers, and child, family, and school social workers are among the top ten fastest growing bachelor-level occupations and occupations with the most annual job openings in Kentucky.

The BSW program is well-positioned to provide the preparation needed for these jobs.

Graduates from our Bowling Green, Elizabethtown/Fort Knox, and Owensboro campuses are trained to engage across all levels of client systems, to respect diversity and differences, work in interdisciplinary settings, and provide services to promote health and well-being throughout our region.

Seventy BSW graduates began their careers as professional social workers or continued their education in an MSW program in 2017-2018. In fact, over a third of new MSW students in fall 2018 were WKU BSW graduates.

While in the BSW program our students provide over 25,000 hours of community and client services each year in approximately 200 agencies including those settings where social workers are employed in “fast growing” occupations.

And our BSW graduates pay it forward! Approximately 35 of our Field Instructors and a quarter of our amazing adjunct faculty are WKU BSW graduates! Each make invaluable contributions to our students’ learning and professional development.

In this context, some exciting changes are happening in the BSW Program.

In fall 2018, Dr. Simon Funge was appointed as the new BSW Program Director following Dr. Sullivan’s successful 4-year tenure in the same position.

And since our successful re-accreditation by the Council on Social Work Education in Spring 2018, WKU approved several program and curricula changes to the BSW program that will allow students to now complete the Major in 4- versus 5- semesters.

Starting in Fall 2019, these changes will not only reduce students’ tuition expenses, but the revised curriculum will better prepare our graduates for today’s social work practice – particularly in some of Kentucky’s top ten occupations!



Dr. Simon Funge

FIELD HAPPENINGS

The WKU Field Office has been busy developing an online resource toolbox for field instructors. We are excited to announce the Field Instructor Toolbox is now available on our website!

The toolbox has a variety of information to support field instructors. The student's field syllabi, field manual, learning plan and other field forms, as well as helpful links, resources, and online field instructor trainings can be found on the website.

Currently, there are 5 training videos available online for field instructors. A few of the training videos offer free CEUs!! The topics for the online videos include:

- Field instructor orientation
- A short tutorial on completing the learning plan evaluation
- Connecting theory and practice
- Providing supervision around the core competencies on the learning plan
- Roundtable discussion with experienced field instructors

A big thank you to Field Consultants Eileen Arnold, Vivian Hurt, and Kevin Garvin for their work developing informative and interactive training videos for field instructors.

Check out our Field Instructor Toolbox, found on our field website, by clicking [here](#).

QUESTIONS OR SUGGESTIONS?

Our goal is to continue to develop and improve this resource for field instructors.

If you have any ideas or suggestions for the toolbox, please feel free to contact Field Director Kellye McIntyre at kellye.mcintyre@wku.edu.



Field Director, Kellye McIntyre



SOCIAL WORK PRESENTATIONS



Drs. Murphy, Starks, and Griffiths presented their research on the importance of self-care in Social Work Education at the Council on Social Work Education's 2018 Annual Program Meeting in Orlando, FL. Be on the lookout for the manuscript, as it will be in print soon!



MSW Students Angelique Horace and Emily Holderfiled-Gaither presented information on Project Rafiki at APM in Orlando, Florida.



Drs. Dana Sullivan and Larry Owens held an e-poster presentation titled Baccalaureate Social Work Education: The Branch Campus.



MSW STUDENT FOCUS

Written By MSW STUDENT, RODERICK MAUL

Roderick Maul, MSW student, attended the national conference in Arlington, Virginia for the 2019 Institute for Teaching and Mentoring that hosted the largest gathering of minorities that recently graduated with their PhD's. The name of the organization that hosted the conference is the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB). The purpose of the 2019 Institute for Teaching and Mentoring conference is to expose current master's students and master's graduates to a full time faculty positions or reenrollment to graduate school on a higher level. The event consisted of

breakout sessions that included tips for writing a proposal, financial planning for the future, getting published, and even men of color in academia. The event highlighted newly graduate doctoral students, and allowed for them to share their experience while obtaining their PhDs.

"It was a great opportunity to network and to be motivated by the same people that have been in my situation before."
- Roderick Maul

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS

Dr. Cappiccie ended a three-year term (2015-2018) as the Region IX Representative to the National Board of Directors for the National Association of Social Workers (NASW). In summer of 2018, she successfully ran for the role of Vice President of NASW Kentucky Chapter. In addition, Dr. Cappiccie was nominated as Chair of Kentucky's Political Action for Candidate Election (PACE) Committee.



Dr. Sullivan currently serves as the South-Central Branch Chair of NASW KY. In her role, she is vital in helping the counties of Warren, Barren, Butler, Simpson, Edmonson, Allen, Monroe and Metcalfe to connect with our larger organization to support change in the lives of client populations and to advocate for the profession of social work.



Monica Hines, Julie Jones, Dr. Amy Cappiccie, MSW Student Roderick Maul with LeMoyne-Owen College BSW faculty and students

HBCU RECRUITMENT

Ms. Julie Jones, MSW has been instrumental in setting up various recruitment visits to Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) in the South. In October, Ms. Jones, accompanied by Drs. Griffiths and Green and current MSW Student, Mr. Maul, traveled to Miles College in Birmingham, Alabama. Ms. Jones traveled to Alabama State in Montgomery, Alabama in December of 2018. Most recently, Ms. Jones along with Dr. Cappiccie, Ms. Monica Hines and Mr. Maul visited LeMoyne-Owen College in Memphis, TN and Rust College in Holly Springs, MS.



Dr. Kimberly Green, Dr. Austin Griffiths, Julie Jones, MSW Student Roderick Maul with Miles College BSW faculty and students



Dr. Austin Griffiths, Dr. Kimberly Green, Julie Jones, and MSW Student Roderick Maul

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT



Dr. Whitney Harper and Owensboro SWSU students hold toy drive for women's shelter

Owensboro Social Work Student Union held a Toy Drive for OASIS women's shelter in Owensboro. The group collected over 200 toys for children living in the shelter during Christmas.



Dr. Owens releases new book at CSWE APM Conference

E. Grise-Owens, Jay Miller, & L. W. Owens (2018). *Activating a Teaching-Learning Philosophy: A Practical Guide for Educators*. Alexandria, VA: CSWE Press. Both Erlene and Jay are WKU alumni and Jay graduated from the WKU BSW program.



Danaia Gates, Melanie Smith, Briyana Lauderdale, and Jonny Silva.

SOCIAL WORK STUDENT UNION

Written By BSW STUDENT, JONNY SILVA

The Social Work Student Union (SWSU) is the undergraduate student organization focused on enriching the social work program by participating in community service projects, education and fellowship. A few areas the SWSU focuses on are raising funds for local charities, sponsoring various drives for food, clothing and toys, as well as offering opportunities for guest speakers to come to campus to enrich the learning experience of all students. Besides being the representatives for the Social Work program, the SWSU ambassadors host general assembly meetings for all students in the program to get together and discuss how we will better serve this campus and the surrounding community. For WKU Homecoming 2018, the SWSU teamed up with the Graduate Student Social Workers (GSSW) to host the Social Work table under the College of Health and Human Services tent on South Lawn. The SWSU exists to continually encourage current students as well as champion graduates holding remarkable accomplishments, and homecoming is the perfect space to reconnect with these world-changers.

Towards the end of the fall 2018 semester, the SWSU hosted the departmental Holiday Social. This annual event had one of the greatest turnouts to date and was filled with great expectation for the spring semester as students, faculty and staff gathered for a hearty meal and looked ahead at what is to come in 2019.

SWSU hit the ground running in 2019, planning events in March in celebration of Social Work month. This was more than simply a month of proud celebration for the social work profession, but also an opportunity for students to spread awareness for topics that matter to them the most. As warmer weather approaches, the SWSU looks forward in taking part in community service/fundraising projects including a hygiene drive for Bowling Green City Schools. A special thank you to Dr. Dean May and Dr. Whitney Harper for their role as lead advisors in this organization as well as the ambassadors who are fervent in wanting to make a difference in the community and serve as catalysts for change within the student body.

 @SocialWorkStudentUnion  @WKUSWSU

Follow us for information on meeting times and upcoming events!



Dr. Simon Funge and Students: (front row) Kazandra T., Rebekah T., Kimberly H., Rebecca H., Amanda W., Kayla S., Ariel L., Kaitlyn H., Amy N. (back row) Katie H., Shelby W.

WKU STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN STUDY AWAY PROGRAM TO METROPOLITAN LOS ANGELES

In summer 2019, ten undergraduate students (9 Social Work and 1 Sociology) traveled to southern California as part of the two-week Study Away LA program led by Dr. Simon Funge and Professor Amy Nemon from the Department of Geography and Geology. The program explored innovative social services in the region as well as some of the unique cultural sites the Los Angeles area is known for - from Venice Beach to Santa Monica and downtown LA to Hollywood.

For Funge, "The program was a fantastic opportunity to leverage the professional relationships I built living and working in the LA area for almost 20 years as well as visit iconic landmarks people often only see on TV or in movies like the Santa Monica Pier, the Hollywood sign, Watts Towers, or the Queen Mary in Long Beach."

The Study Away group met with providers, volunteers, and clients from a variety of social services including WISE & Healthy Aging - a comprehensive service provider for older adults in Santa Monica, and Homeboy Industries - an innovative service provider for former gang-involved and previously incarcerated men and women in Los Angeles. In Long Beach, the group toured Century Villages at Cabrillo - a community that provides shelter, transitional, and permanent supportive housing and services to over 1,000 veterans, survivors of domestic violence, and other low-income individuals and families, and received training on the recovery model at Mental Health America Los Angeles's the Village - an internationally recognized program for adults in recovery from mental illness.



Kayla Shepperson, Amanda Wasney, Rebekah Toney, Ariel Lee, Shelby Watson, Katie Hudgems, Kazandra Trejo

The California Conference for Equality and Justice (where Funge was formerly employed as a community educator - then known as NCCJ) provided training on its restorative justice programs, The LGBTQ Center Long Beach offered a workshop on culturally competent practice with the LGBTQ population, and the group learned about the Cambodian refugee population at United Cambodian Community of Long Beach.

Nemon - a veteran program leader of Study Away and Abroad programs at WKU - observed that, "the program offered students multiple new experiences that both challenged and enriched them," adding that "in fact, many of the students had never been west of the Mississippi, stayed in a hostel, or flown on a plane before." In a similar vein, Funge noted that "relying on the train and bus systems was an eye opening experience for many of the students. We learned, for instance, that the Metro system has hired social workers to contact individuals who ride the trains and are experiencing homelessness."

Also part of their experience, the group explored the culture of Los Angeles with a visit to Olvera Street - the oldest street in Los Angeles, a back lot tour of Paramount Studios, a taping of the Late Late Show with James Corden, a hike up to the Hollywood sign, and a day on Catalina Island.

On the last morning, the group participated in a neighborhood clean-up and tree watering project

sponsored by the City of Long Beach Neighborhood Services Bureau. Working alongside local community members, the students watered recently planted crape myrtles, planted to mitigate pollution produced from the nearby Ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles. "Air pollution from the Ports is a significant problem for communities on the west side of Long Beach - in fact, the asthma rate for children in this area is five times the national average," Funge reported, adding that, "from an environmental justice standpoint, maintaining these trees will make a significant long-term impact on the health and well-being of residents in this neighborhood."

In the evening of the final day, the group hosted a Kentucky-style cookout and reflected on their experiences over the two weeks.

"I had a phenomenal time on my study away trip to California," said Kimberly Helton - now a graduate of WKU's BSW program. "Dr. Funge and Professor Nemon created the perfect balance of service learning and sightseeing. One of my favorite events on the trip was the pride parade in Long Beach. There was magic in the air that day with all the love people had for each other. I felt so inspired and passionate that day, it was amazing being able to show my support for the LGBTQ community and fight alongside others for a better world. This trip is life changing and I would tell anyone to go!"

To fund their participation in program, students received scholarships through WKU's Student Government Association (SGA), Center for Citizenship and Social Justice Scholars in Service program, and the Department of Social Work.

"The opportunity to travel - even domestically - broadens our perspectives about ourselves and the world," said Funge, "and my hope is that this program fosters students' curiosity and motivation to apply the information and lessons learned to their eventual practice in their home communities - all for the betterment of the clients, organizations, and communities they will work with."

Funge will lead the next Study Away LA program in Summer 2020.

Questions? Call 270.745.5312,
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