

Cardinal Connections

ISSUE 1 | FEBRUARY 2021



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NEXT MONTH

Did you know that March is National Social Work Month? NCSSS is excited to be working on some exciting virtual events to celebrate our profession. Stay tuned for more information!

ACADEMIC CALENDAR

2/8 First day of in-person classes

2/17 Ash Wednesday

3/12 Midterms

3/15 Summer term registration opens

3/23 Fall term registration opens

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National Catholic School of Social Service

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From the Dean's Desk

Happy New Year and welcome back! I hope each of you had some time to relax and recharge during the holiday break! We are excited to launch this newsletter to enhance communication with students.

As we begin 2021, I hope you are filled with a renewed sense of energy and excitement about moving forward especially after a year like no other with a global pandemic, protests across the country against racism and social injustices and a historic presidential election. The recent insurrection attempt at the U.S. Capitol in January was even more disturbing to witness. I and the [Diversity, Equity and Inclusion \(DEI\) Taskforce](#) issued the following statement on behalf of NCSSS faculty, staff and students. "We at National Catholic School of Social Service (NCSSS) of The Catholic University of America stand in solidarity with President John Garvey's [letter](#) condemning the violent insurrection that occurred on January 6, 2021. We stand with and pray for

the family members of those who lost their lives and were injured."

During times like these, we must uphold our social work code of ethics, which charges us to be attentive to social injustices and value the dignity and worth of all people. The de-escalation methods in response to the violent rioters were strikingly different from the startling and often violent use of force by authorities on Black Lives Matter protesters marching for racial justice during the summer months. As social workers and educators, we must call out these injustices and mobilize ourselves and our communities for change.

As we begin to honor and celebrate Black History Month, we must all consider our next steps. We all have a role to play to move our country forward. To this end, NCSSS will host a "Call to Action" meeting for all staff, faculty, and students this semester to identify clear strategies that NCSSS can undertake. Together, we will develop a plan for mobilizing our

NCSSS community to action. The DEI Taskforce will be following up with an invitation to this meeting on March 5 with further details but we are excited to have [Dr. Charles E. Lewis, Jr.](#) from the Congressional Research Institute for Social Work and Policy (CRISP) to lead us in this endeavor.

Now more than ever, we need compassionate and skilled social work professionals committed to leading change! All of us at NCSSS are honored to be part of your educational journey and look forward to our collaborative work together to end racial and social injustices.

Dean, National Catholic School of Social Service



The history of social work is interwoven in the fabric of the African American experience. With the vibrant birth of movements such as Black Lives Matters, social workers are being asked to reflect critically on issues of complicit bias and their own complicated relationships with oppressive institutions and ideals that inform our profession.

Celebrating Black History Month

NCSSS continues to work towards a school-wide commitment to anti-racism and social justice. The [Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Taskforce](#) was founded in 2015 and "provides leadership on best practices in developing and sustaining an inclusive School of Social Service." On February 12th as part of its Anti Racism Expert Se-

ries, the DEI Taskforce is hosting Dr. Leticia Villarreal from the Dominican University School of Social Work, who will meet with students, faculty, and staff to present on Racial Justice Through a Clinical Lens. Stay tuned for more information about this and additional upcoming events hosted by the DEI Taskforce.

*From the desk of the...***Masters Students Association (MSA)**

The MSA holds virtual office hours the first Friday of each month from 12-1pm ET. Please look out for an email with the Zoom link!

The MSA is recruiting on-campus and online foundation year or part-time students interested in becoming more involved in programming and student advocacy. If you are interested or want to learn more please [email us!](#)

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Program Highlights & Announcements

PHD PROGRAM

Interested in pursuing a PhD? Do you think you may be interested in doctoral level education? Have you thought about how to position yourself as a thought leader in the profession? Are you curious about how a PhD program could help you conduct your own research or further the knowledge base on your area of interest? Join Dr. Eileen Dombo, PhD Program Chair, for an informal discussion on the impact of doctoral education on February 10 from 3-4pm. [\[Zoom link\]](#)

MSW PROGRAM

[University Research Day](#) (URD) is April 15! Abstracts are due February 19. The URD Abstract Workshop will take place on February 2 at 12:00 with keynote speaker Dr. Venigalla Rao, Ph.D. [Email](#) for more information.

Students are encouraged to participate in the [4th Annual Dr. Dorothy I. Height Center HBCU Student Leadership and Social Justice Conference](#)

on March 24-26.

Summer course offerings have been decided and registration will open March 15. The classes being offered anachronistically are: SSS 581D, 582D, 590D, 655D, 740D and 756D.

Are you an advanced year student preparing to take the [ASWB Licensing Exam](#)? [Join a study group!](#) Please email [Kim Sims](#) for more information.

MSW ONLINE PROGRAM

The MSA is hosting its first "Meet the Professor" Series with Dr. Melissa Grady on February 9 at 7pm ET. This series is an opportunity for online students to meet professors, faculty and fellow students. Please reach out to [Garrett Morris](#) for more information. [\[Zoom link\]](#)

BSW PROGRAM

Congratulations to the following students who have been recognized for their academic achievements in the Fall 2020 Dean's List: Oluwaranti Agbe-Davies, Natalie Bauman, Grace Birth, Eileen Bren-

nan, Natalie Carcarno, Elizabeth Darragjati, Rachel Devincentz, Mary Therese Druffner, Mya Fasolo, Q. Garcia-Geary, Enola Hernandez, Caitlin Lennon, Joanna Liotta, Kathleen Polking, Annabelle Prezioso, Sophia Radich, Rachel Sanders, Elizabeth Throm and Kathryn Von Heeringen.

The BSW Students Association is excited to launch this semester and is hoping to create a community of Social Work majors, minors, and all students interested in Social Work. This organization advances the dialogue between faith and reason, utilizing the values of social service, justice, and scholarship. Students will be provided trainings, information about internships, and a respectful environment to engage in certain topics, and voice all opinions. Please reach out to Vice President [Semion Masuba](#) for more information.

Chats with...

Dean Regan

Occur every first Wednesday of the month at 12pm ET or 6pm ET. [\[Zoom link\]](#)

In the Field

Each month we explore field from the perspective of a current student

Tanzia Matthews is a foundation year MSW student currently in field with the COMPASS Program at Catholic Charities DC. Tanzia explains, "The COMPASS works with DC residents by providing assistance with creating a plan for achieving their goals." Tanzia's day usually starts with skills practice with her

fellow interns, followed by participation in communications meetings allowing her to provide ideas on how the program can be improved for its clients. Tanzia also spends time conducting client surveys, which assist in informing the program's improvements. Tanzia explains, "I have learned a lot in my placement from skills prac-

tice to being in the community...For someone following in my footsteps, I would tell them this is your time to shine. This is not a competition, go at your own pace, take breaks and remember self-care is important...also get all that they can out of field placement and their courses because both are equally important in this field."