

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
TACOMA



*Master of Social Work
Hooding Ceremony
Class of 2026*

*June 9, 2026
5:30p.m.
William Philip Hall*

Order of Ceremony

MSW Chair Welcome

Dr. Claudia Sellmaier

Dean's Welcome and Opening Remarks

Dr. Keva Miller, Dean

Faculty Speaker

Dr. Ronald San Nicholas

Student Speaker

Thasan Dhaliwal, MSW '26

Presentation of Awards & Student Recognition

Rick Butt, M.S.W.

Child Welfare Training and Advancement Program

Dr. Anindita Bhattacharya

Phi Alpha Honor Society

Hooding of Graduates by

UW Tacoma Social Work Faculty Members

Social Work Faculty

Dr. Anindita Bhattacharya, Associate Professor
Dr. Asia Bishop, Assistant Professor
Dr. Jarrod Call, Assistant Professor
Dr. Charles Emlet, Professor Emeritus
Dr. Michelle Garner, Associate Professor
Dr. Vern Harner, Assistant Professor
Dr. Marian Harris, Professor Emeritus
Dr. JaeRan Kim, Associate Professor
Nancy Kuhuski, M.S.W., Assistant Teaching Professor & Field Faculty
Dr. Keva Miller, Dean and Professor
Dr. Ronald San Nicolas, Assistant Teaching Professor
Joanne Nguyen, M.S.W., Field Faculty
Dr. Claudia Sellmaier, Associate Professor
Rachell Sever, M.S.W., Field Faculty
Dr. Cindy Sousa, Professor
Megan Toothaker, M.S.W., Interim Director of Field Ed and Assistant Teaching Professor

Social Work Staff

Sara Adkins Hook, M.S. Admissions Manager & Recruiter
Diana Brackett, Program Coordinator
Jill Hanson, Criminal Justice Advisor & Academic Specialist
Ryan Kernan, M.S., Social Work Advisor & Academic Specialist
Catalina Seebach, Program Operations Specialist
Terri Simonsen, M.Ed., Director of Academic Services, Finance & Operations

Child Welfare Training & Advancement Program (CWTAP) Faculty & Staff

Rick Butt, M.S.W., Director & Teaching Associate
Dr. Hermenia Butler, Field Instructor & Teaching Associate
Mahealani Kalilikane, M.S.W., Field Instructor & Teaching Associate
Whitney Miller, M.S.W., Field Instructor & Teaching Associate
Lindsey Phillips, M.S.W., Field Instructor & Teaching Associate
Moniquetra Slater, M.S.W., Field Instructor & Teaching Associate
Susan Welk, Program Operations Specialist
Haven Wilvich, Program Coordinator

2026 Master of Social Work Graduates

*Please note that student names will **not** be announced in the alphabetical order that appears below.*

*Denotes collaborative Capstone Project

Abdullahi Abucar

Islamophobia and Culturally Responsive Policies in K-12 Public Schools

Paydrick Adams

Reducing Recidivism Rates and Reentry

Mustafa Alsultani

Self-Care

Roberta Anderson

Nothing About Us, Without Us: Centering Youth Voice Through Exit Interviews to Promote Placement Stability in Foster Care

Robert Ballester

Cooking for the Future: Addressing Food Insecurity in Young Adults

Jennifer Ballsmith

*CareBridge: Reducing Healthcare Stigma Through Person-Centered, Systems-Based Care Coordination for Autistic Adults

Carlos Bernal

*An Offering of the Heart: Where Grief Meets Grace Providing Funeral Assistance and Grief Support for Parents Suffering From the Loss of a Child

Zachary Bockh

*An Offering of the Heart: Where Grief Meets Grace Providing Funeral Assistance and Grief Support for Parents Suffering From the Loss of a Child

Nardos Bonsa

*Promoting Mental Health

Fernando Buitron Hernandez

Youth Education Latinx Support (YELS)

Paola Bustos

*Culturally Responsive Wellness and Connection Support for Immigrant and Refugee Newcomer Students

Danielle Cannon

Breaking Bread to Break the Cycle: A Community-Level Prevention Strategy to Alleviate Domestic and Sexual Violence in High Risk Neighborhoods in the US

Pedro Corona

Active Duty Military Need Psychoeducation Related to Mental Health to Reduce Internalized Stigma about Seeking Help and Successfully Reintegrate into Civilian Life

Caitlyn Corzo

Burning Out the System: Connecting Homeless Service Provider Burnout with Unlivable Wages, Undermining the Fidelity of Homeless Service Programs

Aleah Curtis

Lack of Mental Health Resources for Long-Term Illness Patients

Donicha Daniels

*Breaking the Cycle: Stabilizing Families in Tacoma

Illyana Davis

Bridging the Housing Divide: Building an Equitable Recovery Ecosystem to Support Two-Parent Families in Recovery

Thasan Dhaliwal

Reducing Recidivism & Overdose: A Comprehensive Approach to Reentry Support

Katherine Dolphin

School Alliance for Mental Health Project: Making Mental Health and Wellness Inclusive for All

Abby Endalew

*Breaking Generational Silence: Addressing Mental Health Disparities in the African American/Black Community

Elaina Falefitu Evans

Breaking Barriers: Strengthening Provider Understanding of API Cultural Histories to Reduce Shame and Fear

Robert Foster

The Campfire Effect: How Informal Conversations Reduce Mental Health Stigma

Josephine Fuhri

*Reducing Employment Stigma Through Employer Education: A Fair Chance Hiring Intervention

Maria Garcia-Toche

Structural and Behavioral Health Barriers to Substance Use Recovery in Chronically Unhoused Populations

Desi Garrett

A Demoralization Podcast: (Changing Conceptions of Mental Health and Suicide)

Kennedy Harmon

*Reducing Employment Stigma Through Employer Education: A Fair Chance Hiring Intervention

Darnell Harris

A Cross-System Social Work Approach to Youth Reentry and Violence Prevention Through Cultural Engagement

Najma Hassan

*Breaking Generational Silence: Addressing Mental Health Disparities in the African American/Black Community

Tobi Hickenbottom

*Rise & Restore Women's Health Institute – Tacoma Centering Women of Color in Whole-Person Care

Hana Hossein-Khan

Reducing Recurring Child Maltreatment: A Prevention and Services Framework

David Jacobs

Skill and Knowledge Building for WISE Providers Serving Survivors of Domestic and Interpersonal Violence

Michelle Jenkins

Strengthening Trauma-informed Responses in Military Leadership: Addressing Barriers to Domestic Violence Help-Seeking

Angeline Jimenez

Addressing Social Isolation Among Older Adults: Using Community Engagement for Increased Social Connection

Adriane Johnson

*Breaking the Cycle: Stabilizing Families in Tacoma

Chynah Kinlow

*Rise & Restore Women's Health Institute – Tacoma Centering Women of Color in Whole-Person Care

Aubrey Klumker

*Improving Sexual Healthcare for Queer and Gender Diverse Communities: A Provider Education Toolkit

Dawnette Kouttanay

Improving Engagement and Housing Stability for Unhoused Youth Through Integrated Behavioral Health Outreach

Rosy Lancaster

Thriving as Newcomers: Accessing Resources to Support Development for Afghan Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers and Their Families

Faye Lesniewski

Poverty in Rural Communities: Building Relationships, Building Trust

Ceejay Mabbott

The Ripple Effect of Addiction: Loved Ones Impacted by Addiction

Sandra Mattson

Culturally Responsive Wellness and Connection Support for Immigrant and Refugee Newcomer Students

Christopher McKnight

The Missing Piece: Why Group Practices Need Social Workers, Not Just Therapists

Sabrina McLendon

Decoding the Doorway: Why Neuro-Affirming Housing is the Real Code to Stability

Emmi Modahl

*CareBridge: Reducing Healthcare Stigma Through Person-Centered, Systems-Based Care Coordination for Autistic Adults

Shamhad Mohamed

*Breaking Generational Silence: Addressing Mental Health Disparities in the African American/Black Community

Oak Nelson

Relational Resilience in Care: A Narrative-Based Intervention to Strengthen Coping and Resource Use Among Spousal Caregivers

Myla Nixon

Barriers to Father Engagement: Addressing the Gaps in Societal Supports for Fathers

Erica Olson

Low Income K12 Public School Students in Washington State Access to Culturally Competent School Social Workers

Stephanie Orta

Human Trafficking in Child Welfare

Taylor Owens

*Improving Sexual Healthcare for Queer and Gender Diverse Communities: A Provider Education Toolkit

Christina Qiao

Safety Net: Building

Rhonda Roberts

Reflective Supervision & Humanistic Leadership Training Program for DCYF

Allison Rogers

Growing Together

Makaela Russell

CSE Youth– Equipping Communities to End The Homelessness to Sexual Exploitation Pipeline

Valerie Santana

*Rise & Restore Women's Health Institute – Tacoma Centering Women of Color in Whole-Person Care

Arizbe Silva

Increasing Engagement in the Emergency Room and Reducing Stigma Towards Mental Health Within the LatinX Community

Alyssa Smith

The Second Chance Scholarship: From Recovery to SUDP certification

Ashley Stansberry

Addressing Burnout and Secondary Trauma Among Child Welfare Workers in Washington State

Judy Svann

Southeast Asian Generations of Health (SEAGH): Reducing Late-Stage Liver Cancer Diagnosis

Natalie Tadeo Noel

Corazón y Comunidad: Culturally Responsive Behavioral Health Support Group for Latinos in Pierce County

Megan Toney

Addressing Mental Health Inequities for Youth Experiencing Homelessness

Adonai Valdez

Reducing Biases in Healthcare & Providing Culturally Relevant Care to Black Women

Nicole Warren

Girls Supporting Girls: Empowering Female-Identifying Youth Within School Systems

Aubrey Waslawski

Affirming Practice in Child Welfare: Improving Outcomes for LGBTQIA+ Youth

Rebecca Webster

*Reducing Recurring Child Maltreatment: A Prevention and Services Framework

Koko Yasunaga

Barriers to Re-Engagement in Schools: Addressing Disciplinary Inequities Among BIPOC Students

Academic Regalia

The history of the gowns and hoods of today's traditional academic attire can be traced to the middle ages and the earliest universities. The ordinary dress of the medieval scholar was the long gown of a monk or cleric. Long gowns and colorful hoods were worn for warmth and hoods served to cover the head in unheated buildings. As education became available to laity, the garments became standardized as academic ones.

The master's gown is untrimmed, and has long closed crescent-shaped sleeves. The master's hood signifies achievement of high academic rank. The velvet panel denotes the degree of discipline—all of today's candidates wear citron for social work. The inside silk lining is folded outward to show the colors of the university conferring the degree—for today's graduates you will see the purple and gold of the University of Washington.

When the master's candidates are hooded today by their faculty mentors signifying their advancement in academic rank, they will be joining a tradition of scholars reaching back over 900 years.

School of Social Work Mission

The MSW Program at the University of Washington School of Social Work is dedicated to preparing professional social workers through rigorous, community-engaged, critically reflexive research, teaching, and learning. The program is grounded in our commitment to social justice informed by and for those at the social margins of our local, national, and global communities.

Our mission is to advance social justice through transformative education and practice, innovative research, and meaningful community engagement as we prepare dynamic and diverse leaders to build a more just and equitable society.

Our school is guided by six primary values:

- Dedication to Students
- Social Justice & Anti-Oppression
- Faculty Excellence
- Community Engagement
- Shared Identity
- Innovative Spirit