

SPRING 2022 ISSUE

The Change Agent

The Newsletter for Millersville University's School of Social Work



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 being done on personal, organizational, and community levels. This work speaks to the exceptional experiences our faculty and staff provide members of our social work community that challenge intellectual curiosity, foster rigorous research endeavors, and enhance cultural sensitivity and humility. When we create spaces within and outside our classes that fosters belonging and values diversity in thought, we are all able to become the best versions of ourselves, to shine, achieve our goals, and fulfill our purpose.

To our graduating students, I challenge you to use your education as the transformative tool that it is and remind you to find opportunities to build community and embrace humility. As I shared recently with graduating seniors at my high school alma mater, "create more just and fair solutions, be there for others when they feel lost; the world needs leaders like you." I am confident that MU provided you the skills to do this work; however, don't stop learning and continue advocating for just societies, institutions, and organizations. Congratulations class of 2022 and to all our students for another successful academic semester. Take care, be well, and Together, We Can Be The Change!

Karen Rice

EXPLORATION

Role of Social Workers in Fostering Sustainability

By Jostalynn Parry, MSW
Social Work Assistant Field Coordinator

On Tuesday March 15th, 2022, the School of Social Work was joined by **Nicole Malick, LSW** who is a sustainability consultant, recovering aid and development worker and social worker. Nicole has worked as an international social worker for 17 years, has worked in over 50 countries and is currently a visiting lecturer at Middlesex University-Dubai where she lives in Abu Dhabi. Nicole shared an inciteful presentation titled “International Social Work for Rule Breakers” where she taught the audience more about the basic concepts of sustainability and how it impacts international social work.

The virtual presentation audience comprised MU social work students, MU staff, MU alumni working abroad, and international social work students from the Philippines. **Nicole** shared the various roles that an international social worker can hold including researcher, consultant, working in communications, public policy maker, sustainability expert, partnership manager, philanthropist, and many more. The main takeaway from this educational presentation was that there are many ways to be involved in the world of international social work and how important it is to understand sustainability and its effects on the global economy.

Celebrate World Social Work Day!

SUSTAINABILITY AND SOCIAL WORK: INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL WORK FOR RULE BREAKERS



PRESENTED BY: NICOLE MALIK, LSW

THIS SESSION WILL EXPLORE THE VITAL ROLE THAT SOCIAL WORKERS HAVE IN GLOBAL SUSTAINABILITY. DRAWING ON PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE, NICOLE WILL SHARE HOW SOCIAL WORKERS CAN EFFECTIVELY DESIGN AN INTERNATIONAL CAREER THAT EMBRACES THE PILLARS OF PEACE, SUSTAINABILITY, AND EMPOWERMENT FOR PEOPLE, COMMUNITIES AND COMPANIES THAT NEED IT THE MOST.

8:45-10:00AM | Tuesday March 15th, 2022

Zoom Link:

<https://millersville.zoom.us/j/98076543285>



Millersville University
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
BASW • MSW • DSW

EXPLORATION

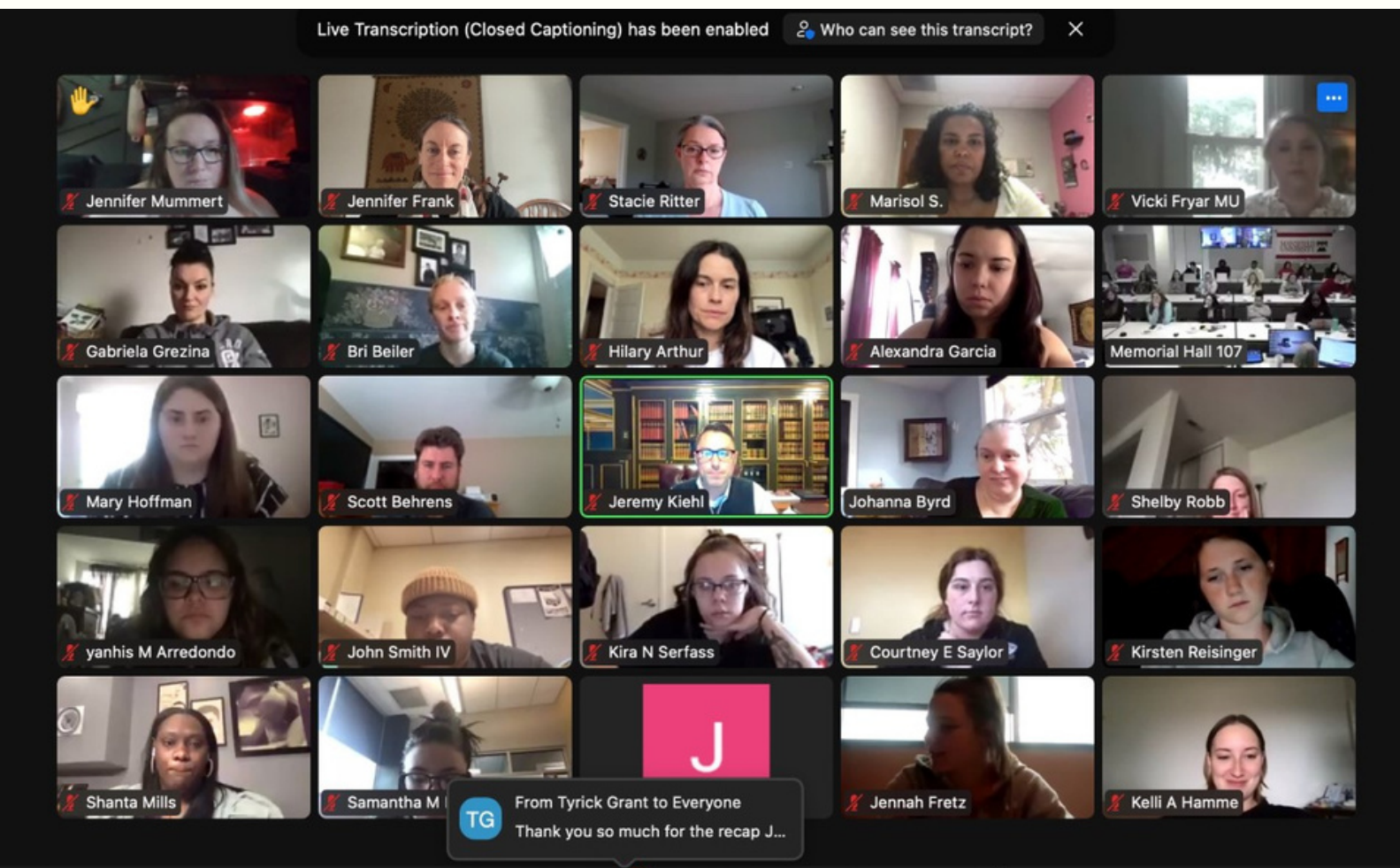
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MU Students attend NASW-PA Legislative Education and Advocacy Day Conference to advocate for telehealth and education

"What is Legislative Education and Advocacy Day?"

Legislative Education and Advocacy Day (LEAD) is an annual event hosted by NASW-PA, at which nearly 1,000 social work students and professionals gather to advocate for legislation that is relevant to the social work profession. Attendees visit their legislators throughout the day and tell them why such legislation is important and how it will serve the Commonwealth. NASW-PA will schedule all legislative meetings, so attendees don't need to worry about doing so. Just make sure you know who your state legislators are!"

-<https://www.nasw-pa.org/page/LEAD>



MU Students attend NASW-PA Lead Conference to advocate for telehealth and education

PROFESSIONALISM

Dr. Marc Felizzi Takes on Olympic-Sized Job

In a presentation this past January to MU alumni, **Dr. Felizzi** shared about his new role with the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee (USOPC) as a mental health provider. He posed the question, "If you are asked which populations would be considered vulnerable to a social worker, would you include amateur and professional athletes?" **Felizzi** continued to explain that despite the common misconception of athletes as "indestructible," they may report difficulties in areas of social, emotional, and academic functioning.

Many may also assume athletes are "mentally tough" as their outward appearance is usually that of strength and endurance. These "superstars," may also struggle with the expectations that come with such labels and find the pressure challenging to cope with.

Furthermore, athletes are acculturated to not show weakness, play despite injuries, and sacrifice all for their team or program. Athletes may encounter barriers that come with the stigma of recognizing,

discussing, or treating and improving mental health, especially in the athletic sub-culture.

Felizzi further explained that, "When they are at their lowest emotionally, they can be in dark areas. Besides depression and anxiety, they may face the onset of eating disorders, need to be educated on drug and alcohol use and abuse, understand what their careers and educational opportunities can offer them in the future, and they face the realization that they may not be able to participate in their sport after a certain point." **Felizzi** stresses that athletes need emotional support and a safe space to express their feelings.

It is estimated by Athletes for Hope that about 1 in 3 or 33%, of college athletes have experienced mental health issues (2019). It is clear that Social Workers, who are the pre-eminent providers of Mental Health services in North



Dr. Marc Felizzi/MU SSW Associate Professor

Millersville offers a dual Master of Social Work/Master of Education in sport management for those interested in working with and supporting athletes at all levels, from youth sports to professional. Learn more about this opportunity today!



Continued

America (NASW, 2022) may play a role in helping athletes of all levels with their emotional well-being. This may fall on a range from youth and amateur through high school, college, elite and Olympic athletes.

Felizzi continued on how he became involved specifically with the USOPC. "With the emergence of Sport Social Work, I was encouraged by my colleagues at the Alliance of Social Workers in Sport (ASWIS), to apply to the USOPC to participate in their Mental Health Registry program. This initiative provides Olympic athletes, active and retired, with a resource to link them to mental health providers in their region, who are trained to work with athletes, by providing therapy, evaluation and assessment of their mental health needs."

"To become selected by the USOPC as a Mental Health provider, I first applied and provided them with my background and discussed my experience working with a number of populations the past 30 years as a clinical social worker. After several interviews, the close to year long process was completed when the USOPC notified me that I was selected to be a provider."

Felizzi shared what it means to him to now be involved with the USOPC.

"Being selected as a Mental Health provider for the USOPC is a culmination of my 50 years as an athlete, coach, administrator and instructor with various sports and organization.

My leap from coach to social worker was seamless, and natural. In working with any population, social workers need the ability to engage, relate to, intervene and assess clients. Coaches, or anyone working with athletes need to possess the same skills social workers have such as the ability to collaborate with others, to genuinely respond and to empathize with those with whom they work.

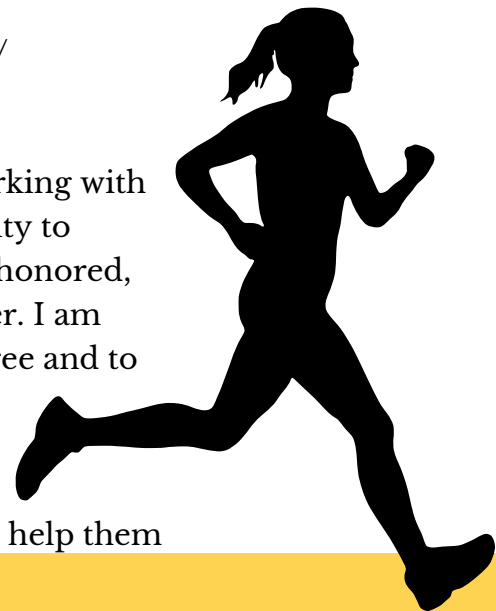
Therefore, working with elite, or Olympic athletes is a natural progression and a terrific fit for social workers."

Felizzi also expressed why students should consider MU's dual MSW/ Med in Sport Management.

"We offer an opportunity for students to learn the ins and outs of working with athletic programs, as well as offering graduate students the opportunity to hone their skills to work efficiently with the athlete population. I am honored, and grateful, to be selected by the USOPC as a Mental Health provider. I am thankful that MU presented the opportunity to develop the dual degree and to promote the inclusion of social workers in the treatment of athletes. I look forward to sharing my experiences in working with Olympic athletes with our students, and urge all interested social work students, and professionals to consider how we can assist athletes and help them achieve their goals."

"With the dual MSW/Med in Sport Management (the only one of its' kind in north America), we offer an opportunity for students to learn the ins and outs of working with athletic programs, as well as offering graduate students the opportunity to hone their skills to work efficiently with the athlete population."

-Dr. Felizzi

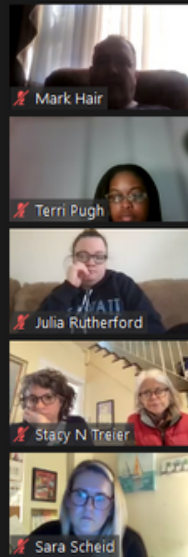


MU Organizes LSW Licensure Workshop

*By Jostalynn Parry, MSW
Social Work Assistant Field
Coordinator*

How do you know if
you are ready to take
the licensing exam?

When you give an "elevator speech"
– identifying key concepts –
about each of the KSAs



The School of Social Work sponsored two MSW Licensure Trainings that were held via Zoom on Friday April 8th and Sunday April 10th from 9:00am-4:30pm. The trainings were presented by Dawn Apgar, PhD, LSW, ACSW, who has extensive experience in the areas of direct practice, policy, and management in the human services field. The sessions were organized by **Dr. Kat Walsh** who was able to secure the training for graduating students and field instructors. The majority of the participants were preparing to take the master's level exam with one field instructor preparing for the clinical exam. During the training, Dawn provided a workbook and study guide that she wrote that discussed training techniques and the topics that are most important to focus on when preparing for the test. Based on the feedback received on the post-survey, participants found the break down of the questions and being given time to practice them the most beneficial. Dawn devoted a significant amount of time during the training to working through questions as a group and getting a better understanding of how to comprehend and answer them on the exam. This is just one way MU School of Social Work supports the ongoing professional development and success of our students and professional community members.

Do not study using practice questions, but
helpful to take a mock exam



You will not get same
questions on examination



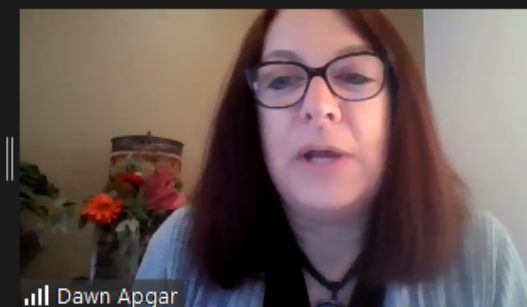
PROBLEM! Likely to
influence your answer on
actual examination



Can't "get into the head" of
exam writer as questions
constructed by different
people



Not good indicator of passing
as only tests small bit of
knowledge – better to study
actual content



Dawn Apgar

PUBLIC MISSION

EPPIIC Academy of Millersville University

By Abby Gabner, MSW Student

The EPPIIC Academy was developed as a result of a collaboration between **Christina Pantoja Williams**, Associate Director of MU's Student Access & Support Services (SASS), and **Abby Gabner**, MSW student. This eventually grew to include not only SASS but members of MU SSW, and the School District of Lancaster's Jackson Middle School.

Main objectives of the EPPIIC Academy are to lower student drop-out rates and improve college attendance among Lancaster children by providing them with an early, positive, pre-college experience on Millersville University's campus. **Christina and Abby** received funding for the project through the Positive Energy Fund Grant and later secured funding to support a mentoring portion of the programming through the Mentorship Support Fund Grant.

After several COVID delays, the inaugural EPPIIC Academy programming began on April 8th, when 18 eighth grade students came to campus as our EPPIIC Academy Ambassadors.

Their leadership, feedback, and advice will be critical as we look to grow this program in the future. On-campus activities included MU student mentorship, a MU student panel discussion on our EPPIIC values, a higher education information session, hands on t-shirt printing with the Marauder Graphics Club, campus building tours, lunch at the Upper Deck, and games/trivia.

The academy closed on April 20th with a reflection event at Jackson Middle School, which included dinner, certificates, gifts, and networking with EPPIIC Ambassador students, parents/guardians, School District of Lancaster staff, and MU students, faculty, & staff.



(Left to right) Emmalee Miles, Abby Gabner, Shanyia Johnson, Dr. Heather Girvin, and Josepha Hernandez

SPECIAL THANKS TO THE KEY SUPPORTERS OF EPPIIC ACADEMY:

- **DARLENE NEWMAN, SASS, & THE LATE, GREAT RENARDO HALL, STUDENT AFFAIRS & ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT**
- **GERTRUDIS EASTERLING, MARIO NIEVES, SHENAYE VANWYNGARDEN, & PRINCIPAL DIAZ, JACKSON MIDDLE SCHOOL**
- **DRS. HEATHER GIRVIN, WANJA OGONGI, & JENNIFER FRANK, MU SOWK**
- **EPPIIC ACADEMY STUDENT MENTORS: EMMALEE MILES (SOWK), DONTE KENT, JADEAN NICHOLAS, KATELYN VRABEL, & CRIMSON SWINTON**
- **PROFESSOR DONNA PAINTER & DR. LEN LITOWITZ, APPLIED ENGINEERING, SAFETY, & TECHNOLOGY**
- **MARAUDER GRAPHICS CLUB**
- **STUDENT COLLABORATORS: CIMONE WEEKS, SARAH CONHEIM, SHANYIA JOHNSON (SOWK), & SHAYANNAH BRISTOL**
- **DR. ANN GANTT, SDOL**
- **JOSEFA HERNANDEZ, ASHLY DUIN, DANIELLE HORNING, & DANIELLE FOSTER, SOWK MSW STUDENTS**
- **DR. RENE MUNOZ, INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD**
- **THE POSITIVE ENERGY & MENTORSHIP FUND COMMITTEES**



Sam Quinones Visits Millersville University

Gwen Burkholder, MSW, LCSW, CAADC
Program Coordinator for OWEP (Opioid Workforce Expansion Program)

Sam Quinones, New York Times bestselling author of *Dreamland: The True Tale of America's Opiate Epidemic*, came to Millersville University to speak in person at the Student Memorial Center on March 21 and 22, 2022, about his recently published book, *The Least of Us: True Tales of America and Hope in the Time of Fentanyl and Meth*.

Michael Botticelli, former director, White House Office of National Drug Control Policy, stated, "With *The Least of Us*, Sam Quinones continues to be the preeminent chronicler of the national opioid epidemic. By combining rigorous research, keen insight, and listening to people's stories across the country, Sam has once again captured not only the pain and sadness but the resiliency and optimism that have come to be the hallmark of this epidemic."

Sam Quinones described himself as a beat reporter, journalist and an author, as he engaged in three educational events at Millersville University, sponsored by the School of Social Work and the Wehrheim School of Nursing. A total of 169 people attended one or more of three events including a book club through Zoom on 3/17/22, a formal presentation on 3/21/22 and an interview on 3/22/22

There was ample time for a live Q & A and conversation with Sam, followed by book signing at each of the in-person events at the Student Memorial Center. In his book, *The Least of Us*, Sam Quinones describes the gripping stories of people whose lives have been impacted by substance use, and also the stories of the people who use interpersonal connections within their communities to do what they can, to promote good health and recovery from substance use disorders. The title of the book *The Least of Us* implies that as a society and from a public health perspective, we are no better off as a whole, than the people among us who suffer the most, perhaps from homelessness, substance addiction or mental health concerns. Sam specifically outlined the current threat for an increased rate of death by drug overdose due to the prevalence of fentanyl being laced into most street drugs. Sam noted that a person could die the first time they ever use fentanyl because of how strong it is, in comparison to heroin and other opioids. Sam advocated for people to stick to using prescription drugs only, if needed, because the content is clearly identified on the labels of the bottles from pharmacies. Sam also described the prevalence of the new meth use and the mental health symptoms such as hallucinations that result. Sam challenged us to not wait until we have lost family members to death by drug overdose related to fentanyl, before we take action to

Sam Quinones Visits Millersville University (continued)

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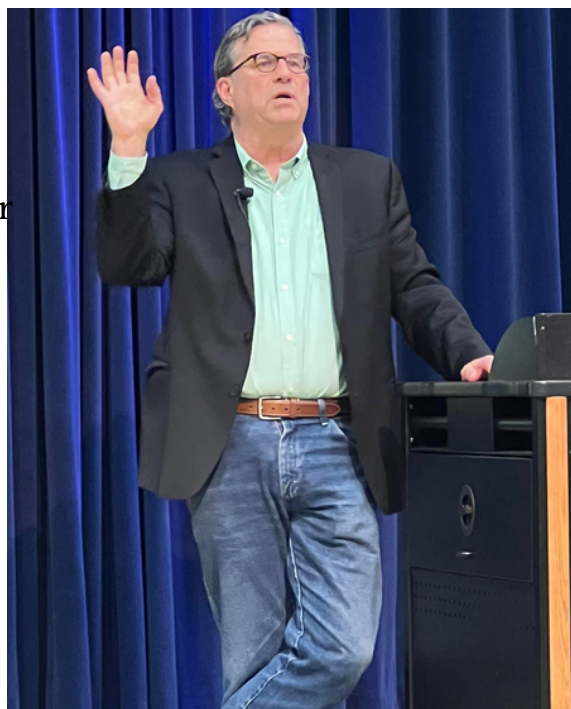
change policies that impact the public health concern of accidental death by drug overdose.

People who attended the educational events provided feedback through an evaluation survey in Qualtrics. One professional noted that Mr. Quinones “was laid back yet engaging, very knowledgeable... The audience posed a number of thought-provoking questions--none of which stumped our presenter.” Alexandra Jean-Paul, MU MSW OWEP graduate shared “I really valued Mr. Quinones' raw and genuine responses to the questions asked. Often times, when presenters visit, the intent is to remain PG or [maintain good] public relations. Sam spoke to us as his equal. He didn't shy away from certain topics and addressed the presentation as a conversation versus a lecture style.” Shontell Moman, MU MSW OWEP graduate noted, "I listened to Sam Quinones' book *The Least of Us: True Tales of America and Hope in the Time of Fentanyl and Meth* [which] captured my interest, and I could not stop listening to it or put the physical copy down as I followed along. It was great to hear the stories in person [when Sam Quinones came to campus] and to learn how some people overcame their struggles with OUD (Opioid Use Disorder) and how those who were responsible for the beginning of the crisis (Purdue Pharma/The Sackler Family) are now being held accountable. I have recommended this book to a partner [agency of my job], which is a recovery center.” The Opioid Workforce Expansion Program (OWEP) is a three-year grant that was awarded to Millersville University's School of Social Work and the Wehrheim School of Nursing in 2019. By the end of the implementation of the current grant, more than 75 stipends will have been awarded to MSW graduates from Millersville University and Shippensburg University and Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) graduates from Millersville University, for completing OWEF participation requirements. The goals of OWEF are to increase the professional capacities of MSW social workers and DNP

nurses to address the Prevention, Treatment and Recovery aspects of Substance Use Disorders and Opioid Use Disorder among people from Medically Underserved Populations (MUPs) and Medically Underserved Areas (MUAs).

Collaborating with interprofessional teams in order to address the goals of Prevention, Treatment and Recovery, is also emphasized.

Funding for Sam Quinones' educational presentations on the Millersville University campus, was provided by the acquisition of an Opioid Workforce Expansion Program (OWEP) grant, the Health Resources Services Administration, US Department of Health and Human Services, 2019-2022, CFDA 93.732, Award No. T98HP33406-01-01.



PA Second Lady, Giselle Fetterman Visits with MSW Students to Discuss Mental Health Needs in the Area

By Danielle Hornung, Recent MSW Graduate and Intern For Lone Oak Animal Assisted Therapeutic and Educational Services

Lone Oak Animal-Assisted Therapeutic and Educational Services is a nonprofit organization located in Lancaster County, PA. The organization is a unique collaboration of interns, researchers, Millersville University faculty, and community volunteers working together to provide services, conduct Institutional Review Board research, and build community. Lone Oak utilizes an Expressive Arts Therapeutic framework with a focus on equine-assisted therapeutic interventions that are evidence-based or promising practices for providing trauma-informed care. Lone Oak is experiencing an exciting growth opportunity with the welcomed continued addition of new clients, educational partnerships, and community collaborations. Because of this, Lone Oak has begun its relocation campaign to move to an area that will allow the organization to practice in its own space with more fresh air and open land, and the opportunity to continue to grow as a community. Due to our plans to relocate, fundraising efforts have increased, including significant and frequent networking with supporters, community members, and community leaders. These fundraising efforts led to a wonderful opportunity.

Recently, we were honored by the visit of the Second Lady of Pennsylvania, Gisele Fetterman, who has pledged her support to our fundraising efforts, including our relocation campaign, and eagerly discussed with us the need for innovative child and family services, the exciting development of equine-assisted therapies, and the need for therapeutic services financially accessible to marginalized groups. The Second Lady of PA is a strong advocate for the underserved and marginalized communities and populations of Pennsylvania.

Learn about how MU advocates for student mental health needs:

<https://www.millersville.edu/counsel/>

She has founded and co-founded numerous nonprofit organizations, community projects, and initiatives such as Freestore 15104, For Good PGH, and 412 Food Rescue. Mrs. Fetterman has had a lifelong vested interest in fostering community-wide social change through promoting inclusion, diversity, equity, accessibility, and kindness.





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Mrs. Gisele Fetterman's visit to Lone Oak was a very exciting and valuable experience. As a Millersville MSW intern and Lone Oak team member, it was an immensely empowering learning opportunity. The Second Lady's visit came to fruition by simply sending an email. Mrs. Fetterman responded promptly and asked to meet at Lone Oak's barn location the following day, where she then spent her afternoon with us discussing social issues, advocacy efforts, hopes for Pennsylvania's communities and services, and fundraising techniques while building genuine relationships with each of us and our wonderful animals. The Second Lady's visit was a clear testament to the undeniable value of fostering connections between social workers and community leaders. Community leaders such as elected officials, political members, legislators, and all those in positions of influence are positively worthy of engaging with as stakeholders.

Social workers have the unique tools necessary to create community and state-wide connections to better support macro, mezzo, and micro social work efforts. Involving key leaders provides considerable opportunities for diverse collaboration, participatory action, resource growth, and ultimately, social reform. Civic engagement in social work practice can often be misconstrued as strictly lobby-like political practices. However, macro practice and advocacy can often be as simple as sending an email to a key leader or elected official in hopes to develop a network of support. Involving key leaders is exciting and essential, and we remain ecstatic about this experience and our continued opportunity to grow our community and programs with the support and valuable perspective of the Second Lady of Pennsylvania.

PRIME and the Advancement of Millersville's Social Work Field Placements

Heather Strohman, MSW, LCSW
Social Work Field Director

The Millersville University School of Social Work and Clinical Psychology programs were awarded a \$1.9 million-dollar Behavioral Health Workforce Education and Training grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HRSA). The program, titled PRIME (Promoting Rigorous and Interdisciplinary Mental Healthcare Education), provides specialized training for students, and enhances professional development for faculty and community partners. The goal of the grant is to grow and diversify our behavioral health clinicians working with underserved populations in high need and high demand areas. Students in PRIME receive specialized, interdisciplinary training opportunities and complete a field practicum within an approved PRIME placement site. Students who complete the requirements of the program receive a \$10K stipend during their last year of their respective program.

With the first year of this four-year grant ending, we have seen tremendous value added to our social work and clinical psychology programs. Our first cohort consisted of 29 students, 11 faculty, and 25 field placement sites. We have enhanced our field curriculum with the addition of a simulation software to increase the experiential learning opportunities for specialization year MSW students. We have engaged our students, faculty, staff, and community partners in four well attended educational opportunities related to

behavioral health in children, telehealth services, and cultural linguistics. The data from these highly attended trainings has been positive showing that there is not only an increase in knowledge, but further plan for implementation. We have increased our PRIME field placement sites by an additional 9 sites for each Clinical Psychology and Social Work, which far exceeds our original goal of 2 additional PRIME sites per year.

Over the second year of the grant, we have plans to enhance our curriculum with additional electives and provide trainings on interprofessional education as well as opportunities for growth and self-care for our participating PRIME students and partners. Graduate students in the MSW and Clinical Psychology programs who are interested in PRIME are encouraged to apply now by going to: [THIS LINK](#)

<https://www.millersville.edu/education/prime/> or requesting more information by emailing prime@millersville.edu.



Graduate students in the MSW and Clinical Psychology programs who are interested in PRIME are encouraged to apply now by going to <https://www.millersville.edu/education/prime/> or requesting more information by emailing prime@millersville.edu

INCLUSION

Dr. Karen Rice Appointed Inaugural Faculty Fellow for the Office of Diversity and Social Justice

Committed to promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts at Millersville University and in the broader community, **Rice** has been a leader in developing and implementing Millersville University's Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) strategic efforts since 2017. In 2022, she was appointed inaugural faculty fellow for the Office of Diversity and Social Justice, supporting faculty in identifying ways to foster inclusive, equitable learning environments. At Millersville, she has helped enact implicit bias training and DEI training for faculty, staff, and students; develop a resource guide for supporting students' wellbeing needs; and create a clothing closet and lending library. **Rice** is a recipient of Millersville University's Vanguard Award for support of students transitioning to college and a three-time nominee for Millersville University Educator of the Year. She was inducted into Omicron Delta Kappa, The National Leadership Honor Society, in 2019.

Rice's efforts also extend to the broader community. She has over 25 years of practice experience creating equitable and inclusive programs and policies. Through her evidence informed DEI curriculum, she trains numerous individuals on a social justice model to fostering inclusive environments that ensures the psychological safety, meaningfulness, and value of members of an organization. The MU DEI Faculty and Staff Champions who received this training have served as trainers and consultants to various community organizations and non-profit boards as they work to create environments that are inclusive and foster a sense of belonging among its members.

[Read more here!](#)



Rice's efforts also extend to the broader community. She has over 25 years of practice experience creating equitable and inclusive programs and policies.



MSW and BASW Students Advocate for Hunger-Free Campuses

Abby Gabner, MSW Candidate

HB 2205

SB 719

Swipe Out Hunger

College Hunger Advocacy Day

MU SSW students Abby Gabner & Amber Graby (MSW), and Bemnet Bekele & Carolina Hidalgo-Ahmed (BASW) attended College Hunger Advocacy Day at the state capitol in Harrisburg on March 28, 2022. The event was organized by PA First Lady, Francis Wolf's office and Swipe Out Hunger, a national non-profit advocacy group. Governor Wolf has allocated \$1 million (out of a \$7 billion state surplus) in his budget proposal for a hunger-free campus initiative in PA. Students responded to the First Lady's call to action by rallying together from across the state to support this fight against college student hunger. Gabner, Graby, Bekele, and Hidalgo-Ahmed met with associates from Senator Martin's and Representative Hickernell's offices to discuss the potential impact of this legislation on our Millersville campus. Please write your state senators & representatives and ask them to pass this important legislation that supports the fight to end college student hunger!



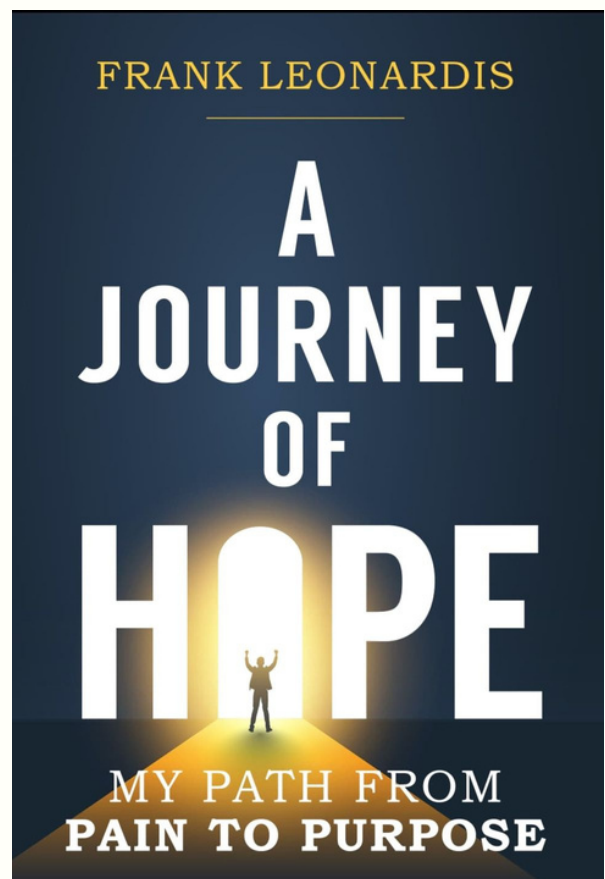
MU Students: Abby Gabner, Amber Graby, Bemnet Bekele, and Carolina Hidalgo-Ahmed.

COMPASSION

A Journey Of Hope

Frank Leonardis, MSW Graduate

Frank Leonardis had to grow up at a young age from dealing with an abusive family and dealing with bullies all throughout school. After his mother passed away in his arms at six years old, Frank embarked on a journey with an abusive father for several years. While living with his father in New Jersey, **Frank** experienced physical and emotional trauma. From being beaten several days a week to being told he was hated and loved by his father; **Frank** had entered the foster care system at nine years old. For six to nine months **Frank** lived with his Aunt and Uncle in Jersey until he moved back in with his father. Within a year, **Frank's** father found an apartment in Pennsylvania that would help him escape the Children and Youth system in New Jersey. **Frank** and his father moved to Pennsylvania in 2010. Rather quickly, **Frank** made a group of friends that would assist him with coping with the abuse of his father and helping him grow into the man he is today. After the first three years of living in PA, **Frank** then stood up for himself after being abused daily and talked with the school counselor about the abuse going on inside of the home. Children and Youth then became involved in PA and **Frank** moved in with his best friend Anthony. Within a month, **Frank** wanted to move back in with his father because he had thought he had changed and thought the cycle had ended. Within the same day **Frank** realized that his father did not change. As **Frank** continued to be abused by his father for another year, there was one night where **Frank** could no longer handle the trauma that was being dealt. One evening, **Frank's** father had attempted to burn him with his lit cigarette and **Frank** thought to himself, "Enough is Enough". **Frank** then approached the school counselor and stated that he no longer wanted to live with his father and needed a place to stay.



That evening, **Frank** packed his belongings and moved into his best friend Tyler's home. Little did Frank know that in two weeks his life would change forever. Frank's father passed away from a heart attack and stroke when Frank was 13 years old. **Frank** was broken but determined to continue with life with new beginning. Years would go by and **Frank** living with Tyler until he was 18. Frank then moved into a group home through Valley Youth House where they eventually assisted him with moving into his own apartment. During his time with being involved with Children and Youth, **Frank** received several awards and accomplishments along the way. Once Frank turned 21, he exited the system and continued his journey of life. **Frank** has a hectic schedule as he continues to embark on his journey. Currently, he is finishing up his master's degree in Social Work as well as enjoying his journey of being a professional wrestler for PPCW. **Frank** has a full-time job working for Community Services Group as well as maintained a 4.0 in his Master's program during the first semester. **Frank** continues to strive for his ultimate dream of becoming a public speaker through his upcoming book, A Journey of Hope. In his book, **Frank** shares his life story and talks about how the challenges he faced became life-changing for the better. Frank discusses the importance of holding onto and maintaining hope while leaning on a core community of people to help us get through the darkest times. **Frank** has been seen on Fox News in 2020, as well as in 2022 talking about his upcoming journey and upcoming book release.

The MU SSW appreciates **Frank's** willingness to share the power of his story to help others.

FIELD INSTRUCTOR OF THE YEAR: CHRIS MCCOMSEY

The faculty, staff, and students at MU School of Social Work thank you for all you do to support our programs and our students' professional development.



What do you love most about being a social worker?

As a Social Worker serving adolescents in recovery, I am able to not only focus on the individual and their personal challenges, but also promoting success in all aspects of their life. What I love most about being a Social worker with this population is helping them explore their true potential and opportunities they never considered possible.

What is most rewarding about being a field instructor?

As a non-traditional student at Millersville, I feel like I was given the grace and autonomy to explore myself as a Social Worker and a professional by the faculty of Millersville, as well as the field instructor I had in graduate school, Bridget Martin.

Now that I am a field instructor for Paije who is nontraditional student as I was , I am able to pay forward to her the grace and autonomy that was given to me to help nourish her competence in the Social Work field and as a counselor.

What has been the most surprising aspect about being a social worker or field instructor?

As a Social Worker, one of the most surprising aspects is even though I may not believe the clients I have served over the years were listening in the moment, after speaking with them later down the road, I realized that seeds have been planted. This is a reminder for me that the advice, guidance, and support we give our clients is genuine because it imperative to their growth and well-being.

What advice would you give students or future interns as they go through the programs?

The field of Social Work in Lancaster County is very small, especially if you want to work in a niche population. As an intern, it is important to remember this because how you carry yourself as an intern can help you or possibly prevent you from gaining potential jobs in the future. In your field placement, show up as if you're an employee, and carry yourself as an employee because you never know who is watching and who can help you network for future opportunities. Be curious, be brave, and ask questions.

**"Be curious,
be brave,
and ask questions."**

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND SCHOLARSHIP ACTIVITIES

PRESENTATIONS

- **Felizzi, M.** Sport Social Work as a US Olympic & Paralympic Committee Mental Health provider. Presented on Podcast by *Athletic Wellness Services*. March 29, 2022.
- **Felizzi, M.** Mental health and athletics: Critical areas for social work intervention. Presented for Ville Voice Speaker Series. January 26, 2022.
- **Felizzi, M., Quinones, S.** Hope in the time of fentanyl and meth. Presented for OWEP grant. March 21, 2022.
- **Felizzi, M., Khiteier, V., Tomljanovic, M., & Bookmiller, K.** Discussion on the War in Ukraine. Panel discussion for the Learning Institute. March 24, 2022
- **Hidalgo-Ahmed, C.** Using Hands-On Nutrition Education to Reduce Food Insecurity In Households with Children. Presented for the National Council on Undergraduate Research Conference. April 6, 2022.
- **Osman, R., Hidalgo-Ahmed, C., Abdullah, N., & Mclaughlin, K.** Ubuntu leaders fellows program: Addressing the global goals through community based projects. Presented for Made in Millersville. April 4, 2022.
- **Rice, K.** Building Authentic Alliances Through Critical Conversations. Keynote Address at the 25th National School Social Work Association of America in Chicago, IL. April 8, 2022.

PUBLICATIONS

- **Felizzi, M, Rice, K.,** (2022) Social Work's Role in Athletic Recruitment: New Opportunities for the Profession. *Sport Social Work Journal*.
- **Frank, J., Granruth, L. B., & Girvin, H.** Stepping Stones Featured. *The Lancaster Newspaper*. February 26, 2022.
- **Frank, J.M., Granruth, L.B., Ogongi, W., & Nyce, K.** (2021). Joining the conversation: Using technology to enhance policy practice, *Journal of Teaching in Social Work*, [https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/08841233.2021.2010262?](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/08841233.2021.2010262?journalCode=wtsw20)
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- Hidalgo-Ahmed, C. (2022) Food Insecurity in Children Literature Review. *Made in Millersville Journal*.
- Osman, R., Hidalgo-Ahmed, C., Abdullah, N., & Mclaughlin, K. (2022) Ubuntu leaders fellows program: Addressing the global goals through community based projects. *Made in Millersville Journal*.
- Watson, D., Frank, J.M., & Graeff, J. (2022) Two sides of the same coin: Homelessness as environmental injustice. *Engage for Change Journal*.
- Johnson, D.H. (2022). Social Welfare: Politics and Public Policy (9th ed, eText). Boston: Pearson/Allyn & Bacon.

APPOINTMENTS AND RECOGNITIONS

- Frank, J., Watson, D. Feeding the Poor: Exploring the Nature of Disconnection Among Charitable Food Resources in Rural Areas. Community Engagement Grant in the amount of \$1800. April 25, 2022.



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