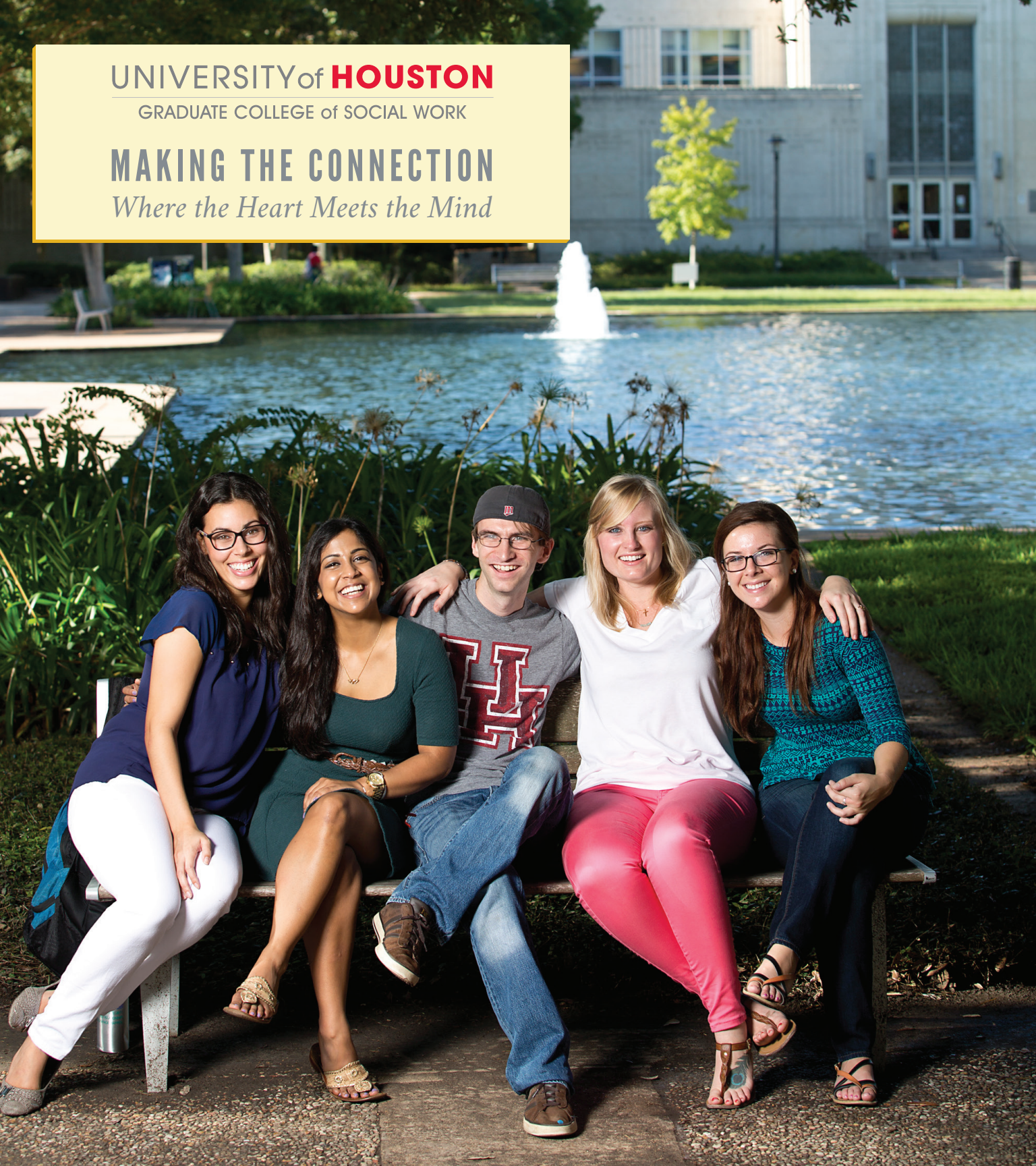


UNIVERSITY of **HOUSTON**

GRADUATE COLLEGE of SOCIAL WORK

## MAKING THE CONNECTION

*Where the Heart Meets the Mind*





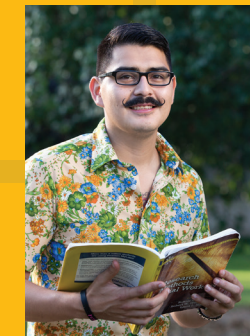
# An education in social work can take you anywhere your heart and mind venture. The journey begins with your connection to GCSW.

**T**he University of Houston Graduate College of Social Work (GCSW), established in 1967, has grown from modest beginnings into a nationally renowned graduate and doctoral program. Today GCSW stands poised to become a global destination for those who will define social work's future. GCSW is the #1 ranked College at the University of Houston, which is recognized as a Tier One research university and designated a Hispanic-Serving Institution. Moreover, GCSW is home to many of social work's boldest, most esteemed scholars, including a Nobel Peace Prize winner, an author of two *New York Times* Best Sellers and the preeminent authority on social work research methodology. As an autonomous college housed in a dedicated facility, GCSW preserves a dynamic, efficient, resource-rich environment, which supports inspired academics, innovative research, authentic community outreach and enduring connections among those who study, teach and empower social work's enduring promise.

GCSW mirrors the diversity of Houston, the nation's fourth most populous city, home to more than two million residents, global industries, acclaimed arts venues, deep-rooted ethnic communities and the world-renowned Texas Medical Center. Our MSW and PhD students hail from near and far, embodying an impressive array of origins, ages, experiences, outlooks and aspirations. Yet all are connected by a passion for the power of social work and a dedication to social justice.



Opportunities for growth abound at GCSW. We not only seize them, we create them.



Ours is a community that thinks critically, embraces challenges and acquires knowledge through experience.



We are colleagues, benefiting from authentic connections among students, faculty, staff and alumni.



Connections among faculty members, students and the community make GCSW an energetic and inspiring environment for academics and research.



### Dr. Luis R. Torres

Associate Dean of Research and Strategic Partnerships | Associate Professor  
Center for Drug and Social Policy Research

Dr. Luis Torres is an incredibly passionate ambassador for GCSW. In his words, “We not only serve the community, we *are* the community.” A native of Puerto Rico, he earned his PhD in clinical psychology from Fordham University in Bronx, New York. Joining the GCSW faculty in 2008, Dr. Torres conducts vital research on health disparities impacting the Latino population. A vanguard for international outreach, borders cannot confine Dr. Torres’ definition of the word community. “Houston is a major gateway to Latin America, yet until recently, we had no study abroad opportunities in the region.” In 2013, Dr. Torres and students closed the distance themselves, launching the Latin American Initiative, with field studies and university alliances established in El Salvador and Bolivia. It is Dr. Torres’ hope that the Latin American Initiative not only grows but continues to illuminate issues close to home. “Houston’s Latino community faces many challenges. With a greater understanding of these phenomena in the countries of origin, we are better equipped to address them in our backyard.”



### Dr. Danielle Parrish

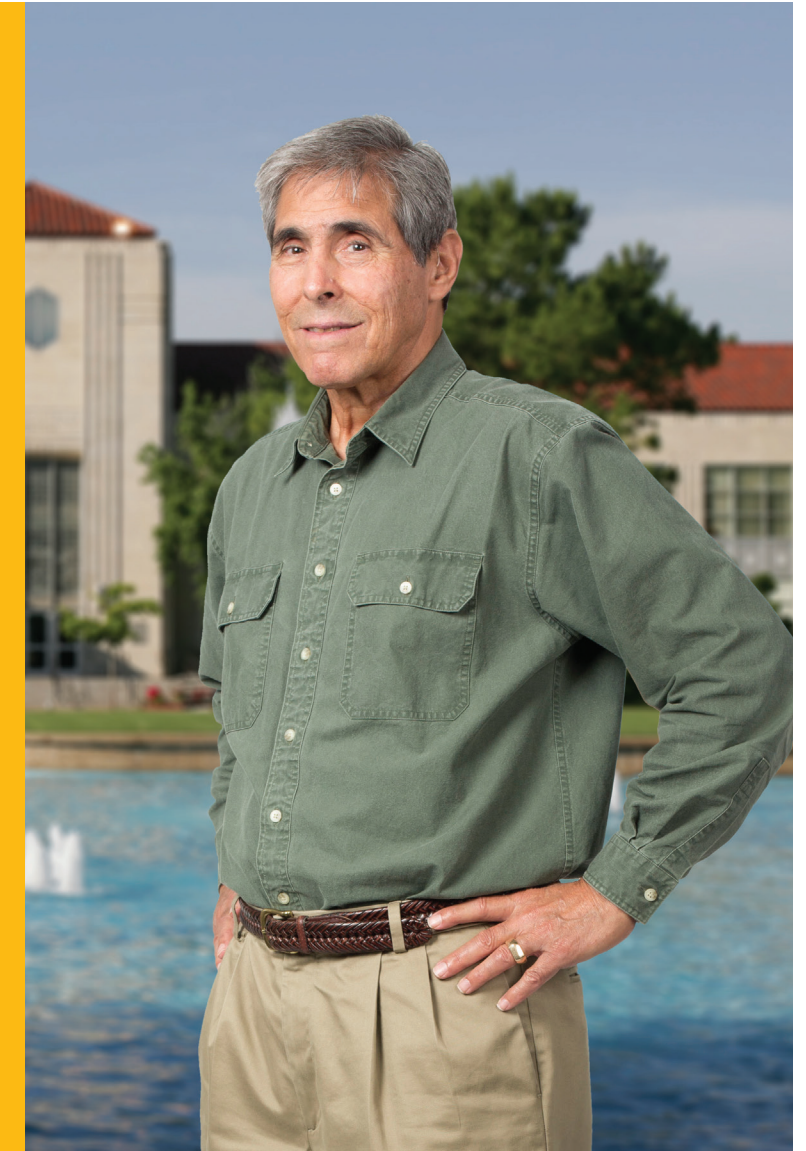
Associate Professor

“During my doctoral studies, I benefited from amazing mentoring, so it’s especially gratifying when I can do the same for my students,” says Dr. Danielle Parrish, an instructor and ardent researcher at GCSW. While pursuing a PhD at the University of Texas, she was invited by her research methods instructor, Dr. Allen Rubin, to contribute to an article on research-based practice. “We have collaborated ever since. Allen has been an incredible mentor.” In turn, Dr. Parrish has become a valued and trusted mentor herself. She is a four-time recipient of the Council on Role and Status of Women in Social Work Education Mentor Recognition Award. Through her research, Dr. Parrish seeks ways to best deliver empirically supported practice in the field. She focuses primarily on the efficacy of interventions in reducing the prevalence of pregnancies affected by alcohol, drugs and HIV/AIDS. “We can help at-risk youth and women in settings like juvenile justice and large medical systems. Research shows that interventions work, but we need efficient, cost-effective ways to better implement them in the real world.”

### Dr. Allen Rubin

Jean Kantambu Latting  
College Professorship of Leadership and Social Change

An accomplished pioneer in social work research and education, Dr. Allen Rubin joined GCSW in 2013 after more than three decades as a University of Texas faculty member. He has served as president of the Society for Social Work and Research, received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Council on Social Work Education and co-authored a best-selling textbook, *Research Methods for Social Work*, which can be found at roughly 40 percent of social work schools. “After I got my master’s degree in 1969 and began working, I saw very little research-based evidence of effectiveness surrounding social work and mental health practices,” says Dr. Rubin. This realization prompted him to earn a PhD in 1976, launching a now celebrated career dedicated to research methodology and the efficacy of social service programs, policies and interventions. Today, much of Dr. Rubin’s work centers on bridging the gap between experimental outcomes and those realized in everyday practice. “Real world conditions typically make it impossible to achieve results as good as those seen in rigorous studies. Ideally, we can maximize the degree to which satisfactory results are achieved in the field, where there are often limited resources or intervention opportunities.” An immense source of knowledge and insight for students and faculty members alike, Dr. Rubin led efforts to transform the curriculum. The GCSW has set a bold standard for social work education, focusing an entire doctoral curriculum on evidence-based practice.





STUDENT HIGHLIGHTS

“With a social work degree, I can go anywhere and do practically anything. The sky’s the limit.”

So says GCSW graduate Dixie Hairston. She and fellow GCSW student Arielle Stephens put these eloquent words into action through far-reaching academic and advocacy efforts in Kenya and at the United Nations. “Social work is a hidden gem,” says Arielle. “It might appear rough on the outside, but when you look deeply, its facets are amazingly beautiful.”



It’s no surprise that Arielle Stephens and Dixie Hairston became fast friends during their GCSW master’s studies. The pair share boundless passion for social work’s far-reaching promise.

“There were opportunities to study abroad in some amazing places, but we kept asking ourselves, how about Africa?” says Dixie.

With support from GCSW staff and faculty, Arielle and Dixie embarked to the Cura Rotary Home, an orphanage located in the village of Cura, Kenya, northwest of Nairobi. On average, the home houses 50 children, who have lost their caregivers to AIDS.

“These kids are educated, well cared for and happy, but we wondered how well they adapt when coming of age and leaving the home,” says Arielle.

To help the orphanage address children’s future challenges, Arielle and Dixie conducted a needs assessment, recommended program enhancements and helped Cura Rotary Home better connect with youth and social service agencies in nearby Nairobi.

Inspired by their encounters in Kenya, Arielle and Dixie again took flight, this time to New York City. They, along with three other GCSW students, were selected as delegates for the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom to the 58th Commission on the Status of Women. The conference addressed issues such as global gender equality, child and maternal mortality, education and the environment.

“Africa gave us the grass-roots experience to draw upon at the UN. The trips truly built on one another,” says Dixie. “From instructors who inspired us in the classroom to advisors who helped coordinate our studies abroad, wonderful mentors at GCSW encouraged us every step of the way.”

As delegates to the United Nations, Arielle and Dixie shared in social work’s power to positively impact global issues.



Arielle Stephens and Dixie Hairston

Calling upon international connections, trailblazing GCSW students Arielle Stephens and Dixie Hairston created their own study abroad program at Cura Rotary Home, an orphanage outside of Nairobi, Kenya. In an effort to enhance the orphanage’s youth development resources, Arielle and Dixie spent three weeks forming alliances with social service groups in nearby Nairobi. Along the way, the duo made plenty of new friends and lasting memories. Arielle and Dixie regularly Skype with the staff and children of Cura Rotary Home, where they are always welcome with open arms.



## MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK DEGREE

4000

More than 4,000 people have earned an MSW at the University of Houston. GCSW alumni continue to make significant local, regional, national and global contributions to the practice of social work and the pursuit of social, political and economic justice for all.

900

MSW students complete 900 hours of field practica, which begin with a general field placement, followed by a second advanced placement attuned to a student's Clinical or Macro concentration.

450

There are typically about 450 students enrolled in the MSW program, with approximately 40 additional students pursuing a PhD. Coming from all walks of life, a variety of states and a number of nations, they typify the diversity that abounds throughout Houston.

### Concentrations

The MSW program at GCSW offers a unique 15 hour foundation curriculum, which serves as the prerequisite for all following coursework. The foundation semester includes courses in Social Work Practice, Policy, Research, Human Behavior in the Social Environment and Practice Lab, as well as a field practica.

Following the foundation semester, all students complete advanced courses in Social Welfare Policy, Assessment and Evaluation of Practice (three credit hours each), plus nine to 12 credit hours in their chosen concentration of study. Students choose an advanced concentration in either Clinical Practice or Macro Practice. Additionally, all students complete at least one crossover concentration course.

The advanced curriculum also includes a minimum of 12 credit hours of free-choice elective coursework and an additional three-hour Human Behavior in the Social Environment elective. All students complete 480 hours of advanced field practice, for a total of 900 MSW field clock hours.

#### Clinical Practice Concentration

Clinical Practice is the application of theories, methods, skills and ethics for the enhancement of cognitive, mental, emotional and social well being of individuals, couples, families, groups and communities. Clinical Practice requires leadership in promoting social, economic and political justice. Its methods are relationship centered, contextualized, culturally sensitive and strengths focused. Clinical Practice calls upon knowledge surrounding biopsychosocial functioning and evidence-based interventions.

It can include assessment and intervention, diagnosis and treatment, education and prevention, advocacy counseling and psychotherapy, as well as supervision and consultation.

#### Macro Practice Concentration

Macro Practice prepares students for work in settings where the needs of diverse, vulnerable populations require highly skilled, professional leaders. Practice in both public and private organizations is designed to promote progressive social change that contributes to the growth and empowerment of individuals, agencies and communities. Core concepts and practice skills are developed for work at the organizational, community, societal and global levels. Students are prepared to assume leadership positions as advocates, managers, program planners, researchers, policy analysts and agency and community-capacity builders.



Read what GCSW MSW and PhD students have to say about their experiences. Visit the GCSW Student Ambassador Blog at [uhsocialwork.wordpress.com](http://uhsocialwork.wordpress.com)

### Specializations

The GCSW is committed to graduating highly trained social workers who can meet the high needs and demands of the Houston area and the broader Gulf Coast region. MSW Clinical and Macro students have the opportunity to further focus their advanced studies through four unique specializations. Students may select **Health and Behavioral Health, Social Work Practice with Latinos, Political Social Work** or an **Individualized Specialization**. The individualized option is an opportunity for students to create a specialization from their own unique interests.

The **Health and Behavioral Health Specialization** is an innovative program designed to prepare students with the advanced knowledge and skills necessary to meet the growing demands in Texas and nationally for social workers with advanced training in healthcare, mental health and substance abuse. Social workers are increasingly called upon to serve clients across the lifespan with multiple and complex presenting problems who need both medical and mental health services.

The **Social Work Practice with Latinos Specialization** enables students to gain advanced knowledge and skills for engaging with Latino families and communities. As a Hispanic-Serving Institution, the University of Houston offers unique opportunities for increasing professional cultural awareness with diverse populations of Latinos from Mexico, Central and South America

GCSW students can choose from many paths that lead to fruitful careers in social work and complementary fields.

and the Caribbean. Offering this specialization is part of a greater commitment to preparing students for culturally competent work with diverse populations from all backgrounds.

The **Political Social Work Specialization** trains students to develop the advanced political skills necessary to promote social, economic and political justice on behalf of many vulnerable populations. Through innovative programming such as the Austin Legislative Internship Program and the GCSW's status as the only social work program in the world with a Nobel Peace Laureate on its faculty, students learn skills to challenge barriers to effective services in local, national and international communities.

The **Individualized Specialization** enables students to focus their studies and field work on a specific population, social issue or practice area of interest to them. This builds on the GCSW's commitment to innovation and offers flexibility to students; we envision students specializing in topics as varied as international social work, human trafficking, domestic violence among older adults, practice with LGBTQ clients and myriad other topics aligned with a student's interests and professional values.

#### Dual Degree Options

Collaborative degree programs are available that enrich options and opportunities for GCSW students. Dual degree programs allow students to earn two degrees in less time than it would take to complete them sequentially. ***Students interested in a dual degree must be admitted separately to each of the programs. Admission to one has no official bearing on admission to the other.*** Since admission to two programs is required, candidates are encouraged to begin the application process early. In addition, it is recommended that students plan to complete the dual degree options as full-time students, as GCSW accreditation standards dictate that students must complete an MSW within four years.

**MSW/PhD** (*in Social Work*)  
**MSW/MBA** (*Master of Business Administration*)  
**MSW/MPH** (*Master of Public Health*)  
**MSW/JD** (*Doctor of Jurisprudence*)  
**MSW/MPP** (*Master of Public Policy*)





MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK DEGREE

350

GCSW preserves enduring connections with more than 350 social work field sites in the greater Houston area and beyond. These organizations serve as community partners and collaborate with the college in field education, research and outreach.

1967

The Graduate College of Social Work was established by the Texas State Legislature in 1967 with initial funding of \$150,000. The “founding” faculty totaled seven individuals, with 26 enrolled in the first class. The program was initially housed in a World War II Quonset hut.

\$1000

At GCSW any non-Texas resident who receives a scholarship of \$1,000 or more will receive in-state (resident) tuition rates.

Enrollment Options

Face to Face Program  
Full-time (2-year) and  
Part-time (3-year) Options

The GCSW offers a face-to-face program at the main UH campus that can be completed in two years for full-time students or three years for part-time students. Students take classes during the day and evening and complete field work during daytime hours. Full-time students enroll in 12 to 15 hours (4 – 5 classes) each semester while part-time students enroll in six to nine hours (2 – 3 classes). Students can participate in either concentration, Clinical Practice or Macro Practice, and may also select one of four specializations: Health and Behavioral Health, Political Social Work, Social Work, Practice with Latinos or the Individualized Specialization option. All students complete 900 hours of field work in two different settings. Students are assigned to a cohort for the foundation curriculum which helps them build a strong support network.

Hybrid Program  
UH Main Campus  
UH Sugar Land Campus

GCSW’s Hybrid Program is designed to provide those who are currently employed in social work and related fields the opportunity to pursue an MSW exclusively on evenings and weekends. Students in the Hybrid Program participate in the Clinical Practice concentration and meet for classes no more than two Saturdays per month. Courses take place face-to-face and online. Students complete a total of 900 hours of field experience.

For the foundation field placement the field office will work to match students with an agency that offers a flexible schedule. For the advanced placement, students will attend Marketplace and interview with agencies. Typically the program is completed in three years. Students attend classes as a cohort together. The cohort model allows for the development of a strong, connected network.

**Online Program**  
The Online MSW program is a great option for independent, self-motivated learners requiring a flexible schedule. Students are assigned to a cohort with which they take the majority of their classes. Students participate in the Clinical Practice concentration. The program takes three years to complete. For field placement, students work closely with the Field Education Office to identify qualified agencies in their area.

**Advanced Standing**  
Applicants holding a Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) degree from a Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) accredited undergraduate program may request review for Advanced Standing admission. Advanced Standing students waive foundation coursework requirements, which is equivalent to 15 semester credit hours of the 63 semester credit hour MSW program. The face to face program is available to Advanced Standing students in Fall or Spring. The online options, including the Hybrid and Online Programs, are available only in Spring.

Admissions Requirements Overview

**MSW Admissions**  
To be considered for admission to the MSW program, applicants must hold a bachelor’s degree from an accredited college or university with a grade point average of 3.0 or better (4.0 scale) for the last 60 hours of academic coursework. The undergraduate education must reflect a sound liberal arts foundation, including courses in the humanities, as well as in the social, behavioral and biological sciences. Graduate Record Exam (GRE) scores are required.

**Advanced Standing for BSW Graduates**  
Applicants holding a Bachelor of Social Work degree from a Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) accredited undergraduate program may request review for Advanced Standing admission. Applicants for Advanced Standing admission must meet all regular GCSW admissions requirements, plus have achieved a grade point average of 3.0 or better (4.0 scale) for the social work major.



GCSW offers more than 30 named scholarships and fellowships, from which multiple awards are granted each year.

Throughout the year, GCSW welcomes prospective students to on-campus information sessions. E-mail [gcswinfo@uh.edu](mailto:gcswinfo@uh.edu) to find out more.

**Conditional Admission**  
An applicant whose grade point average is below a 3.0 for the last 60 hours of academic work may be admitted conditionally if they hold a 2.6 or better (4.0 scale) and meet additional admissions requirements.

**PhD Admissions**  
To be considered for admission to the PhD program, applicants must hold a master’s degree in social work (MSW) from a CSWE accredited program **OR** hold a master’s degree in a related social science discipline from an accredited program with a grade point average of 3.5 or better (4.0 scale) in all previous undergraduate and graduate work. Applicants who do not meet the minimum 3.5 GPA requirement but who demonstrate excellence in other areas of the application may be considered. Graduate Record Exam (GRE) scores are required.

Social Work Transfer Students

Those transferring from a CSWE accredited MSW program must meet all regular admissions requirements **AND** submit:

- Statement of Good Standing from the dean or director of current program
- Syllabi for courses completed

A maximum of 30 hours credit, earned within five years of the student’s enrollment at the UH Graduate College of Social Work, with grades of B or above, can be transferred for credit toward the GCSW degree.



International Students

International applicants, those holding F1 or J1 visas, must complete additional University requirements including:

- Scores on the TOEFL or IELTS standardized exams
- Scanned copy of a passport size photo
- Scanned copy of passport
- Letter of Financial Backing



# PHD PROGRAM

**Dr. Sheara Williams Jennings**  
Associate Professor  
PhD Program Director

Our PhD Program embraces and nurtures passionate, self-aware, confident students who possess a passion for research and the desire to assume a leadership role in the social work profession. Located in an incredibly diverse city, an international gateway and home to one of the world's leading medical centers, GCSW offers abundant opportunities for research, engagement and outreach. As an autonomous college, GCSW also allows for authentic, one-on-one connections between our students and esteemed faculty members, who are personally invested in our PhD candidates' success. Applying what they've learned – the art of teaching and the science of advanced research – our graduates have done truly amazing things: achieving full professorship, tenure and even establishing new schools of social work.

For all these reasons and more, GCSW is poised to become a national program of destination for those pursuing a doctorate in social work.

## Education for Social Work's Next Generation

Established in 1993, The GCSW PhD Program continues to empower those who define social work's future. Equipped to become influential scholars, teachers, researchers and leaders, our PhD graduates advance the field's knowledge base, promote evidence-based interventions and champion the values of social justice. The GCSW PhD Program offers students the opportunity to:

- Facilitate change through rigorous and contextualized analysis of social problems and evidence-based social work interventions
- Apply analytical models and multi-disciplinary theories in the study of social problems and human behavior
- Focus on innovative methodologies in knowledge building
- Conduct translational research from problem-solving to real-life solutions
- Foster individual connections and collaborative mentorship
- Write competitive grant applications

### Our Students are People First

GCSW places a high priority on doctoral student support, making every effort to assist students during their educational endeavors. Numerous scholarships, assistantships, fellowships and financial aid opportunities are available.

PhD Program coursework can be completed in two to three academic years, with nine to 12 credit hours per semester, followed by an original PhD dissertation of publication quality.

In addition, GCSW welcomes applicants without a master's degree in social work to pursue a program of study that leads to both MSW and PhD degrees. Upon acceptance to both the MSW and PhD Programs, this dual degree program can be completed in approximately three-and-a-half years with an additional six months to two years allotted for doctoral dissertation.



**Dr. Hyosu Kim**  
Visiting Professor,  
Chung-Ang University  
  
Director, Seoul Child Welfare  
Research Institute

Full circle. That's one way to describe Hyosu Kim's professional and personal journey as a social worker. A native of South Korea, Hyosu earned his PhD from GCSW in 2013. Soon thereafter, he returned home as Visiting Professor at Chung-Ang University in Seoul, founding the Seoul Child Welfare Research Institute.

Born and raised in a rural region of South Korea, Dr. Kim feels a special connection to children and his overarching mission of child welfare.

"Many impoverished children from Korea are adopted each year by families in the United States," says Dr. Kim. "These children typically don't share race and ethnicity with their adoptive families. As they grow older, this presents challenges."

To better understand socialization that surrounds children arriving in the United States from Korea, Dr. Kim looks to connect with colleagues in the U.S. who can share in his research efforts. In fact, Dr. Kim's passion for research and its real-world application is precisely what led him to the United States and ultimately to doctoral studies at GCSW.

"In my nation, there is little research on intercultural adoption and less focus overall on evidence-based social work," says Dr. Kim. "In the U.S., social work is taught and practiced with a greater reverence for research and methodology. Building upon research, we can work to measurably improve advocacy for adopted children and adoptive families."

At the GCSW, Dr. Kim made connections and acquired the knowledge and tools necessary to assume a leadership role and advocate for innovative solutions promoting change.

"As a child, I had very bright friends, but so many of them never amounted to who they could have been," he says. "Adults can be difficult to change. With a child we have the opportunity to affect change early, which can result in a lifetime of benefits."





*We are committed, engaged and determined. We champion social, economic and political justice with passionate, innovative and energetic actions. We are the UH Graduate College of Social Work.*





## Research

### At the Leading Edge

A key component of an urban-focused Tier One research university, GCSW advances multidisciplinary, translational and transformative research, which aligns with the policies of the National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation. Our college contributes significantly to Community Advancement and Bio-med Sciences and Engineering Research Clusters, connecting those in various disciplines across a multi-campus system to industry partners and funding agencies. MSW and PhD students benefit from GCSW's rapidly accelerating research efforts, which are realized through exciting, inspiring and innovative methodologies, tools and techniques. Moreover, Houston's incredible diversity, numerous social service agencies, world-renowned medical center, global enterprises and industry research sectors provide for a dynamic and fertile "testing ground."

GCSW is home to two multidisciplinary research centers and a first-of-its-kind Virtual Reality Clinical Research Laboratory. These centers and this highly advanced facility serve faculty, students and an international community of collaborators who strive to enrich the knowledge and practice of social work.

### Child and Family Center for Innovative Research

Through the use of pioneering technologies and approaches, the Child and Family Center for Innovative Research aims to better understand and address challenges related to the social functioning of children and families. The center's capacity integrates extensive behavioral health and clinical research components.

### Center for Drug and Social Policy Research

As a multidisciplinary university research center, the Center for Drug and Social Policy Research is dedicated to the development of new knowledge surrounding substance abuse and related social problems. Diverse studies focus on the health consequences of substance abuse, HIV, mental health disorders and infectious diseases.

### Virtual Reality Clinical Research Laboratory

The only laboratory of its kind in the social work field, the GCSW Virtual Reality Clinical Research Laboratory advances the study of



human behavior in astounding ways. Established in 2002 under the expert guidance of visionary researcher and Associate Dean for Research, Dr. Patrick Bordnick, the lab immerses subjects in virtual environments that are especially conducive to the study of addiction, mental health disorders and coping strategies.

Using highly advanced hardware and software, researchers bring incredibly realistic locations, sights, sounds, smells and tactile sensations to life. Providing "best-of-both-worlds" opportunities for study, the advanced facility bridges the gap between laboratory controls and real-world situations. While researchers oversee, observe and measure the cognitive and behavioral mechanisms of phenomena such as addiction and relapse, true-to-life environments and encounters enable research subjects to learn more about triggers and temptations. Social work practitioners and therapists can participate in virtual sessions, helping subjects to refine coping skills.

Frequently employed in research surrounding alcoholism, nicotine and drug addiction, the lab quite literally makes virtually anything possible, such as studies of food cravings, combat-related post-traumatic stress and hostage negotiation techniques.

## Field Education

### Connecting Theory to Practice

As the signature foundation of social work education, field practicum enables GCSW students to apply knowledge acquired in the classroom within real-world settings. Through hands-on service delivery and practice situations, field study allows students to fully integrate the "knowing," "feeling" and "doing" facets of their social work studies.

### A Community Like No Other

Houston is a large and amazingly diverse home to numerous ethnic groups, global industries and a world-renowned medical center. Amid this metropolis and beyond, GCSW has fostered long-standing connections with programs offering more than 350 field placements, including hospital systems, government offices and a host of community outreach, behavioral health and nonprofit agencies. Within these settings, and under the direction of a faculty field liaison, students receive intensive field instruction from highly qualified professional social workers.

An MSW student's field studies typically begin with a first-year generalist placement, followed by a second-year advanced Clinical or Macro field placement. Opportunities are vast and varied, with specialized placements available in all areas of social work including Healthcare, Behavioral Health, Political Social Work, Child Welfare, International Social Work, Aging and Gerontology and Trauma, in settings all over the city working with diverse populations.

### Jamie Parker Director of Field Education

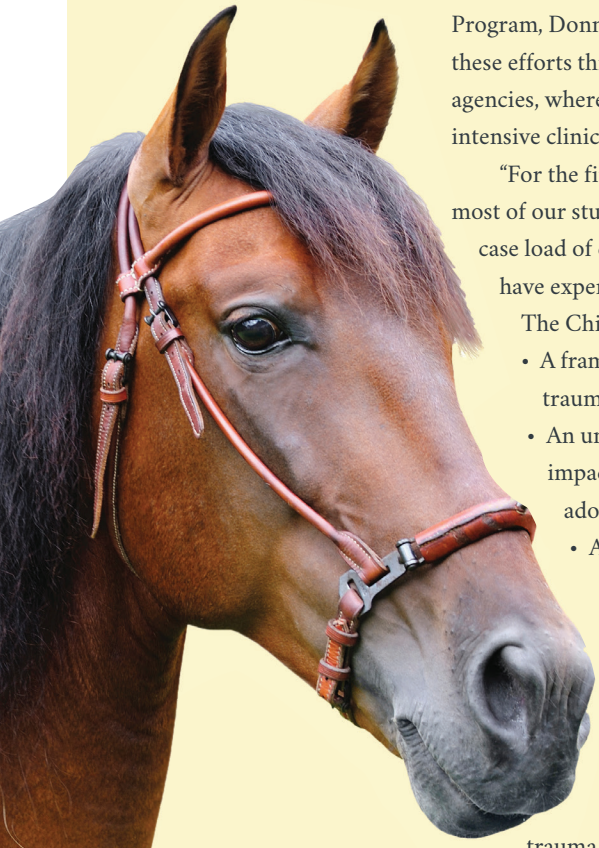
GCSW boasts a long, proud history of engagement with the Houston community. The college's groundbreaking field education program is at the heart of this mutually beneficial connection. While acquiring hands-on experience in the field, MSW students also increase the capacity of agencies serving those in urgent need. Many students are attracted to GCSW specifically because of the myriad unique opportunities and affiliations allowing for experiences working with groups combating human trafficking, international study opportunities and the college's Austin Legislative Internship Program. But these are only few of the many ways our field education program encourages students to pursue their passion for social justice. Sometimes, our MSW students arrive expecting an education based largely in the classroom. Thanks to field education, they graduate with an enriched sense of the applied knowledge it takes to be a social work professional.





UNIQUE OPPORTUNITIES

Through EAP field experience, GCSW students can join an especially unique multidisciplinary team, consisting of a therapist, an equine specialist and a horse.



**Child Trauma Program**

In January 2011, GCSW joined forces with eight other social work graduate programs to participate in the *National Center for Social Work Trauma Education & Workforce Development* project. The collaborative project endeavors to build a mental health workforce of social workers trained to serve traumatized children and adolescents by preparing MSW students for trauma informed, evidence-based and culturally sensitive practice.

As Director of the GCSW Child Trauma Program, Donna Amtsborg works to advance these efforts through alliances with local agencies, where GCSW students are placed for intensive clinical field study.

“For the first time in their academic careers, most of our students in the field will have a case load of children and adolescents who have experienced trauma,” says Amtsborg.

The Child Trauma Program offers:

- A framework for understanding trauma, trauma types and effects of trauma;
- An understanding of the significant impact trauma may have on children, adolescents, adults and older adults;
- A framework for understanding trauma informed and evidence-based skills necessary for effective trauma intervention; and
- A second year field practicum/clinical experience which allows for practical application of evidence-based trauma treatment interventions with a

targeted population within an agency recognized as a provider of trauma-focused treatment

“The Child Trauma Program is truly a collaborative relationship between GCSW and community agencies,” says Amtsborg. “Without the agencies, we couldn’t positively impact our students and our community.”

**Equine Assisted Psychotherapy**

In addition to directing GCSW’s Child Trauma Program, Donna Amtsborg oversees field studies in Equine Assisted Psychotherapy (EAP). Beginning in 2011, in private practice as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, Donna began exploring the promise of EAP, which she calls “a wonderfully creative and spontaneous form of therapy.”

With an established international history, EAP has recently made greater inroads within the U.S. It is also gaining wider recognition as an evidence-based practice, with an increasing amount of research revealing its measurable outcomes.

**Donna Amtsborg**

Clinical Assistant Professor  
Director, Child Trauma Program



**Jody Williams**

Sam and Cele Keeper Endowed Professor  
in Peace and Social Justice

A guardian of human rights and global security, Nobel Laureate Jody Williams has made our world safer.

Each fall, Jody Williams, a Nobel Laureate and international expert in issues of activism teaches a course in Global Justice where GCSW students can learn from an activist on the world stage whose work spans both continents and decades.

In 1997, Williams received the Nobel Peace Prize for her work as founding coordinator of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, which shared the Peace Prize with her that year. She is one of only 15 women to have received the Prize and only the third American woman.

Ms. Williams has received myriad honors, including 15 honorary degrees. In 2003, she was named Distinguished Visiting Professor of Global Justice at GCSW. She was appointed the Sam and Cele Keeper Endowed Professor in Peace and Social Justice in 2007.

Global Justice challenges the views of MSW students to consider social work from a global perspective.

“Through my Global Justice project I learned that advocacy isn’t always easy, but it is always worth it. Jody Williams was inspirational.”

Natalie Powell

“I have an unswerving belief that everyone can make a difference in the world. Ordinary people can accomplish extraordinary things when they work together.” Jody Williams



**At GCSW, opportunities abound on and off campus**

**Unique Field Placements**

- Habitat for Horses
- The Michael DeBakey VA Medical Center
- The Daring Way with Brené Brown
- Austin Legislative Internship Program
- Chinese Community Center
- Harris County Institute of Forensic Science
- League City Police Department
- The Council on Alcohol & Drugs
- The Montrose Center
- Pasadena Independent School District Behavior Response Team
- Third Ward Community Cloth Project
- Refugee Services of Texas, Inc.

**Unique Classes**

- Global Justice taught by Nobel Laureate **Jody Williams**
- Overrepresentation of Minority Males in the Criminal Justice System taught by Civil Rights pioneer **Reverend William Lawson**
- Shame, Empathy and Resilience taught by Best Selling Author **Brené Brown**
- Spirituality and Aging taught by Historian and Author **Andy Achenbaum**
- Trauma and Social Work taught by **Allen Rubin**

“Jody Williams really got me thinking about what I want to do in terms of a future career and where I would really make the biggest impact.”

Erica Kang

Jody Williams offers students a current perspective and fresh lessons gleaned from her continued activism including as a founder of the Nobel Women’s Initiative. Representing five continents, the initiative uses the prestige of the Nobel Peace Prize and the influence and access of the women Nobel Laureates themselves to support and amplify the efforts of women around the world working for sustainable peace with justice and equality.



UNIQUE OPPORTUNITIES

From interns to social work professionals

For over ten years, GCSW has offered the Austin Legislative Internship Program. During this time over 50 GCSW students have successfully completed this internship. Current positions held by program alumni include:

- Director of Behavioral Health Initiatives and Governmental Relations, One Voice Texas
- Director of Field Education and Clinical Assistant Professor, Graduate College of Social Work
- Director of Public Policy, United Way of Metropolitan Dallas
- Assistant Director, Harris County Office of Social Services
- Mental Health Policy Analyst, Center for Public Policy Priorities
- Lobbyist, Mignon McGarry & Associates
- Presidential Management Fellow
- Field Specialist, Public Affairs, Legacy Community Health Services
- Associate Director, Family and Community Engagement Specialists

Austin Legislative Internship Program

The Graduate College of Social Work selects graduate students to intern at the Texas Legislature during its legislative session every two years. This internship is a block placement, open to both Clinical and Macro students, and academic credit is provided. It requires relocation to Austin for the entire Texas legislative session (January – June) and offers an excellent opportunity to experience firsthand how policy is made in Texas. Student interns work as full-time staffers in the Legislature, either as policy analysts with the Legislative Study Group, a caucus of the Texas House of Representatives, or in legislators’ offices.

Each session, GCSW interns help the Texas Legislative Study Group compile analytics and policy information.

The Austin Legislative Internship is one of very few opportunities nationally for social work students to participate full-time in the legislative policy-making process. Both Clinical and Macro students report that this is an incredible and useful learning experience, one that often changes their lives. Clinical interns often find that they better understand how policy impacts practice and feel more equipped to support their agencies in advocating for policies to meet clients’ needs. Macro students gain valuable insight into the policy-making process and are competitive for policy advocacy jobs requiring prior legislative experience.

Agencies for Gerontology Intercultural Field Training (AGIFT) Fellowships

The AGIFT Fellowship Program, originally funded by the John A. Hartford Foundation of New York City and later by the William Randolph Hearst Endowment in Gerontology Social Work Scholars Program, prepares graduate social work students for competent, culturally sensitive practice in gerontological social work. AGIFT fellows take part in training seminars, provided by leading experts in the field, for their entire course of study. They are also placed in unique field settings, at designated AGIFT agencies, with field instructors who are members of the AGIFT Consortium. AGIFT fellows further focus their learning by completing gerontology coursework.

Fellowships are available during the semesters a student is enrolled in designated field practicum courses and placed in designated AGIFT agencies. The AGIFT Fellowship Program aims to produce competent and professional social workers who are immediately ready to be advocates and leaders in the gerontology workforce.



GLOBE

The Global Leaders of Behavioral-health Education (GLOBE and GLOBE-Youth) programs at GCSW prepare students for advanced practice in behavioral health with vulnerable populations including children, adolescents and transition age youth (under 26 years old). Funded by federal grant money totaling close to \$2 million to date, GCSW’s GLOBE programs respond proactively to the forecast of a critical shortage of mental and behavioral health providers in the coming years, especially those trained in assessment and intervention of mental illness and co-occurring disorders.

GLOBE-Youth fellows focus on areas of trauma and abuse, combat-related stress, substance abuse, and the needs of chronically ill people and their families. GLOBE fellows receive training that enhances their field practicum experience through workshops, coursework, field education and significant financial support. Selected from a competitive application process,



Unique opportunities at GCSW empower students though field placement, related coursework, training and financial support.

GLOBE fellows are placed in Harris County agencies where they receive hands-on training and supervision. Fellows agree to work with underserved, vulnerable populations for a minimum of two years in Harris County after graduating with their MSW.

Linguistically and culturally competent service delivery will be a great asset in Houston and surrounding areas. GLOBE programs were developed to proactively address this need with an aim to help increase the number of culturally competent social workers who deliver behavioral health services.

A comprehensive program, GLOBE draws upon community connections and collaborations, providing workshops open to GLOBE fellows, area agencies and social work practitioners. Workshops facilitate networking between GLOBE fellows and their future colleagues as well as provide a platform for timely, relevant discussions on issues facing the practice community fellows will join post graduation.

Dr. Monit Cheung  
Professor of Social Work  
Principle Investigator, Child Welfare Education Project  
Associate Director, Child and Family Center for Innovative Research

**CWEP**  
Child Welfare Education Project (CWEP) Stipends are awarded to incoming and current MSW students. CWEP’s focus is to prepare master’s level social work students for challenging and rewarding work in children’s protective services. CWEP program participants receive a large stipend, field experience in child welfare and mentorship from practitioners with expertise in the field. Students repay the stipend through professional employment at Children’s Protective services after receiving their MSW degree. CWEP is a great opportunity for students passionate about gaining hands on experience in order to make an immediate impact in the lives of children.





OUR ALUMNI



“The more people I met, the more often I heard ‘We need social workers!’ I knew I had chosen the right path.”

U.S. Army Reservist and GCSW graduate Torey Powell is not one to shy away from a challenge.

Shortly after earning his bachelor’s degree from Concordia University Texas in 2010, Torey was deployed to Afghanistan. When not performing human resources duties, Torey spent downtime volunteering at a combat-stress clinic.

“Connecting with soldiers returning from combat was an experience that will always resonate with me,” says Torey.

After about 400 days, Torey was again stateside with a renewed sense of purpose. “My goal was to become a therapist with the Department of Veterans Affairs, which led immediately to my pursuit of an MSW.”

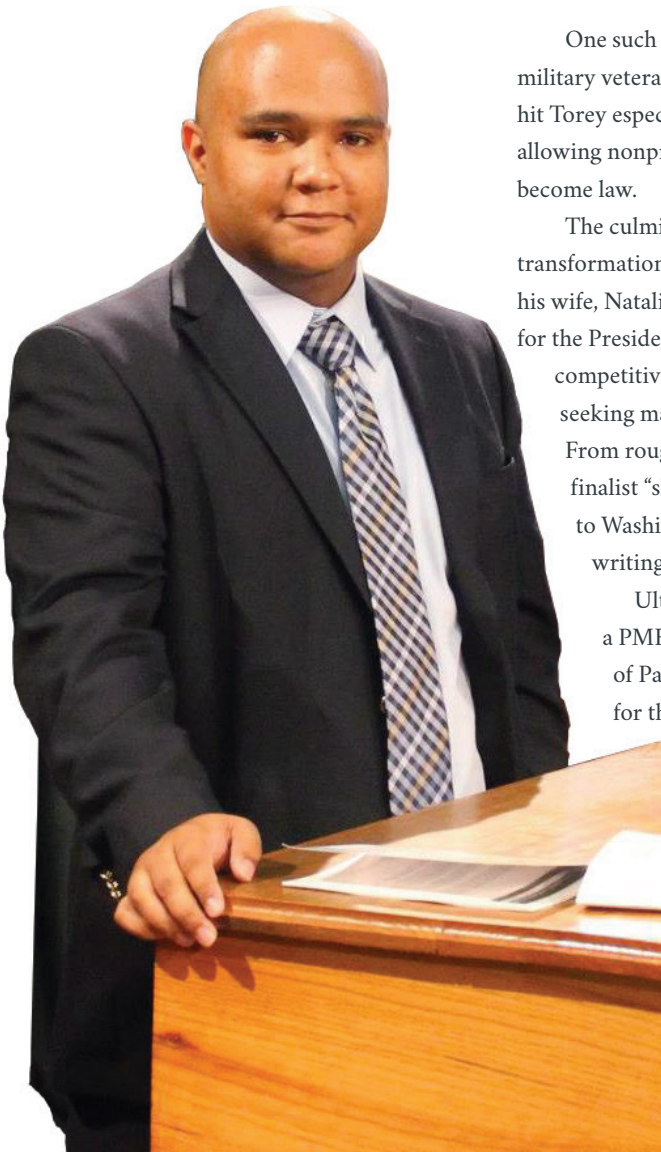
Enrolling at GCSW with visions of a clinical specialization, Torey’s academic field placements gradually broadened his perspective. His placements included Southeast Houston Transformation Alliance in Houston’s Third Ward, where Torey helped establish the organization’s mission, brand and nonprofit status. For his second-year placement, Torey decided to broaden his experience even more with a unique opportunity and coveted placement in the GCSW’s Austin Legislative Internship Program.

“Working as part of a caucus, you begin to understand the impact of legislation and policy, good and bad,” says Torey. “The system can work, but it takes persistence.”



**Torey Powell**  
GCSW Alumnus  
MSW, Macro, Political Specialization

Participating in GCSW’s Austin Legislative Internship Program, Torey Powell experienced the power of political social work in action. “Long hours spent analyzing bills, combined with the amazing policy professors at GCSW, taught me that social workers can influence legislation for the greater good.”



One such policy, which prevented the remains of cremated military veterans from being released to anyone but next of kin, hit Torey especially close to home. The solution? A proposal allowing nonprofits to claim remains, a bill that Torey helped become law.

The culmination of Torey’s personal experiences, transformational field assignments and studies were catalyzed by his wife, Natalie, also a GCSW student. She urged Torey to apply for the Presidential Management Fellows (PMF), an intensely competitive and prestigious fellowship program for those seeking management positions within federal agencies. From roughly 12,000 applicants, Torey made the semi-finalist “short list” of approximately 6,000. Invited twice to Washington, D.C., he endured a gauntlet of evaluations, writing assessments and interviews.

Ultimately, Torey stood as one of only 200 selected for a PMF position. The reward for his persistence: the title of Partnership & Community Outreach Coordinator for the U.S. Forest Service in Anchorage, Alaska. His wife Natalie also landed a role as transition coordinator for a homeless shelter in Anchorage.

“With a social work degree from GCSW, you can create the career you want,” says Torey. “Even my undergraduate degree in communications is a natural fit with my education and role as a social worker.”



From Afghanistan to Alaska, Torey Powell has learned that the experiences and expertise of a social worker can translate anywhere. After both graduated from GCSW, Torey and his wife Natalie departed for Anchorage, where Torey holds a position with the U.S. Forest Service and Natalie works as a transition coordinator at a homeless shelter.



“Figuring I was a long shot, I waited until literally the last day to apply.” Little did Torey Powell know his application to the Presidential Management Fellows (PMF) Program would soon change his life’s course. His skills as a social worker helped Torey stand apart from a crowd and emerge a PMF.



## “Through social work, I found myself as a professional and a person.”

“At first, I didn’t know what it meant to be a social worker,” says Deysi Crespo. “But the desire to help others was in my blood.”



In January 2014, GCSW alumna Deysi Crespo was named CEO of Katy Christian Ministries, a faith-based nonprofit serving the communities of west Houston. The organization’s multifaceted client-assistance programs include essential social services, a food pantry and crisis intervention centers for victims of domestic abuse and sexual assault. While Deysi’s education, certifications and diverse professional experiences as a social worker, advocate and organizational leader are essential to her everyday tasks, it is her own story and experiences that most closely connect her to those she serves.

“A lot of what I knew in my youth – poverty, malnutrition, feelings of abandonment – children and families are still enduring today,” says Deysi.

At the age of seven, Deysi took the first steps of her personal journey, embarking from her grandparents’ rural home in El Salvador. Led by her aunt and uncle, Deysi and her sisters were among 12 children who fled the ravages of an encroaching civil war, seeking refuge in the United States. Traveling through Guatemala and Mexico,



A mother, wife and leader of a dynamic social service agency, Deysi Crespo represents the talent and tenacity of GCSW alumni.



Deysi’s early childhood was spent in El Salvador, along with 15 other children, in her grandparents’ care. At the age of seven, she departed for the United States, on a harrowing journey that would ultimately reunite her with her parents.



Honored by her peers, Deysi was named the 2013 GCSW Barbara Jordan Integrity Award Winner, an especially proud occasion she shared with her mentor, Sandra Lopez.



The clinical skills Deysi mastered at GCSW are applied every day through psychological, social and spiritual assessments of her agency’s clients.

the small caravan walked, hopped trains and kept moving at all costs, often under the cover of darkness.

“I don’t know how long our trip took, but it felt like forever,” says Deysi.

Crossing into Texas, Deysi was reunited with her parents, who in years prior, had built the foundation of a new life in the United States. Deysi recalls challenges during childhood and adolescence, but remembers a household that always upheld the value of helping others.

“Even when we had very little, my father would take people in,” she says. “I learned to do for others, without expecting anything in return.”

While working for the Fort Bend Independent School District, Deysi came to the aid of children and families displaced by Hurricane Katrina, who often arrived to register for school in need of basic necessities. The seeds of her social work career began to take root. The first among her family to complete high school and earn an advanced degree, Deysi graduated from the GCSW in 2012. A passionate participant in student activities and community outreach efforts, she earned numerous accolades and an MSW, with a Clinical concentration, specializing in Social Work Practice with Latinos. For her family, Deysi’s achievements proved priceless.

**“As a student at GCSW, you’ll be offered plenty of unexpected opportunities. Be prepared to embrace them.”**

“Growing up, my sisters and I had to overcome some very complex feelings,” says Deysi. “Through my studies, I saw our journey more clearly and found myself. Sharing what I discovered helped my sisters and parents become closer. GCSW was both a culmination and the beginning of something entirely new.”

## Dr. Brené Brown

Research Professor of Social Work

On campus and beyond, connections are at the heart of Dr. Brown’s efforts.

How do we learn to embrace our vulnerabilities and imperfections so that we can engage in our lives from a place of authenticity and worthiness? Questions such as this have inspired Dr. Brené Brown’s research for more than a decade. Building upon her intensive study of vulnerability, courage, worthiness and shame, Dr. Brown has twice topped *The New York Times* Best Seller list. Her groundbreaking work has also been featured on PBS, NPR and CNN and has appeared in *The Washington Post* and *Psychology Today*. While cultivating a career as a nationally renowned author and speaker, Dr. Brown’s roots have remained firmly planted in Houston. Since earning her PhD at GCSW in 2002, Dr. Brown’s students have benefited from her unique understanding of advocacy-based social work research, political social work, feminist practice and social justice.



Photo Credit: Danny Clark



We are members of a global community that is rapidly changing and increasingly interdependent.

## A Global Perspective

Winner of the 2013 Partners in International Education (PIE) Award for International Social Work, GCSW is committed to providing a global perspective of the social work profession. We have a long-standing tradition of offering opportunities for students and faculty to interact and learn about cross cultural social work in a hands-on environment. Through our Office of International Social Work Education, students have journeyed to destinations around the globe including: Bolivia, China, Cuba, England, Hong Kong, Russia, South Africa and Turkey for travel study courses.

GCSW students benefit from established partnerships with a number of agencies and institutions worldwide. For 15 years, we have offered international opportunities including hosting four to five exchange students each spring and placing students in agencies in Hong Kong focusing on clinical or community practice. We are forging new partnerships with the GCSW Latin American Initiative that has



already established connections with educational institutions and agencies in Mexico, El Salvador and Bolivia. The Initiative will expand and create alliances with even more countries in Latin America who are important neighbors to those residing and practicing social work in the Houston/Gulf Coast region.

Throughout the year, we regularly host international social work scholars and students to promote an environment of cultural exchange. Our lunchtime international lecture series provides students a window to the world they will encounter post graduation. GCSW is committed to offering our students programs, opportunities and experiences to enrich their social work studies with a global perspective.

**We recognize that competent practice requires knowledge of other countries, appreciation of cultural diversity and the capacity to function as internationally competent individuals.**

### The David M. Underwood Chapter of Nonprofit Leadership Alliance

As part of our commitment to developing skilled leaders who advocate for social change, the GCSW is proud to host the Nonprofit Leadership Alliance Program (NLA), a national alliance of colleges, universities and nonprofit organizations dedicated to preparing and certifying future professionals for leadership in America's diverse and vital array of nonprofit enterprises.

NLA is an innovative course of study that equips undergraduate and post-baccalaureate students to become skilled professionals and leaders in America's nonprofit organizations.

Students and "passion" are nearly synonymous in this nationally recognized, award-winning program. Passion is what drives the program to excellence, because students play a primary role in program planning, curriculum content and other decisions that affect their certification experience.

At graduation, students receive not only the nationally recognized NLA certificate but also the professional credential of Certified Nonprofit Professional (CNP) in addition to their undergraduate degree. To learn more visit our website! [uh.edu/socialwork](http://uh.edu/socialwork)



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