

Child Welfare Education Project CWEP NewsLine



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UNIVERSITY of **HOUSTON**
GRADUATE COLLEGE of SOCIAL WORK

Director's Corner

Arnitia Walker



April is Child Abuse Prevention Month.

The main focus is to promote safety, well-being and permanency of children. Every year thousands of children across the state of Texas are abused and/or neglected. The Department of Protective and Regulatory Services is charged with investigating referrals and providing services to families and their children. Although great efforts are being made to prevent child abuse, unfortunately some of these children are removed from their homes. Children have a right to grow up in a safe and nurturing environment and it is the responsibility of the state agency to ensure that they have a safe home and a positive future. The University of Houston and the Texas Department of Protective Services have a unique partnership that was created in an effort to professionalize the department and allow as many students as possible the opportunity to earn their Master's Degree in Social Work. We here in the CWEP department understand the challenges that the staff face on a daily basis and are here to provide the support and guidance to our students. The CWEP program is designed to provide master's level social work students with the skill and knowledge necessary to engage with families that are involved with Children's Protective Services. They receive a variety of coursework, seminars, trainings and field placement experiences that prepare them for the challenging work at CPS. Our students work with children who are in kinship, foster and adoptive placements. They are charged with providing stability and permanency for the children that they serve.

Each of us must do our part to put an end to the vicious cycle of child abuse. Our children are our future!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Celebrating CWEP

Celebrating CWEP” is organized by Trisha West and Ms. Brunessia Lewis.

Please RSVP to Trisha West’s eVite. If you did not receive the eVite, please email tnpetty@uh.edu

21st annual National Title IV-E Roundtable

ASU's (Arizona State University) Center for Child Well-Being is hosting the 21st annual National Title IV-E Roundtable May 23-25, 2017 in Phoenix, Arizona. This year's theme is, Examining Efficiency and Increasing Access Across Systems through Collaboration.

Field Tips Vanessa Shippard

- An internship is a place to start building your professional network. Initiate conversations and ask questions of the people you work with and come in contact with. That includes not just your supervisor, but the other people that you work with
- **Learn, learn, learn**
- Build relationships with people who can serve as advisers or mentors

Advising Tips Brunessia Lewis

Don't forget! All hybrid students must register on **April 8th** (like other GCSW students) for courses. Check UH Peoplesoft for times!

CWEP Mentors 2016 – 2017

Tovie Davis
Shaunquette Garrett
Elizabeth Wade

Welcome New CWEP Students!

Melissa Eglund

Jamayne Carter

Rachael Taylor

LaDreamer Harrison



LaTesa Spencer

Cari Schroeder

Tekeisha Lewis

Kimley Meredith

New Student Spotlight Crystal Valmont



Tell us about yourself.

I have been employed in Child Welfare for 15 years. I have worked 12 of those years within Child Protective Services. I started my career in Child Welfare working as a generic worker doing all stages of service within CPS. I have worked in Kinship, Conservatorship and Investigations within in the Department. For 3 years I worked at a private Child Placing Agency as an Area Director. I am currently a foster/adoption trainer for CPS. Work and school keep me busy, but my number one priority is my family. My husband and I are proud parents of a 2 year old Jolie and a 6 month old Joey.

Student Spotlight

Kimley Meredith



1. Tell us about yourself.

I'm currently a Foster/Adoption Development Supervisor in Harris County with CPS. I have been employed with DFPS since 2001. During my tenure with DFPS, I have worked as a child care licensing representative and foster/adoption development worker. As a FAD Supervisor, I support and manage a FAD unit that monitors foster and adoptive homes for compliance as it relates to Child Placing Agencies Minimum Standards and DFPS policy.

2. What motivated you to join the MSW program?

The major factor to joining the MSW Program was to enhance my education in an area that I aspire to continue to work and offer a contribution to individuals, families, and communities. Understanding that there are various areas that social work can be applied daily whether in an agency setting, hospital, school, or corporate setting the MSW program will allow me to secure the knowledge and skill, along with various opportunities in the future to help others

3. We knew that you won the 3rd place in the GCSW research conference last year. Tell us about your research.

My research topic was related to cyberbullying. "What is the most effective way to reduce or stop cyberbullying." This topic is very important as it is becoming a serious issue amongst our teen population. In the past, children were usually bullied at school or in a neighborhood setting. The news media locally has made awareness of the cyberbullying topic. Within the year there have been several teenagers in the metropolitan area that have succumb to suicide because of being bullied via the internet. I believe children and parents should be made aware as to the support available when cyberbullying has affected them. Seemingly, we are living in a society where children are using the internet to bully and not fully understanding the possible consequences as to their actions. Nevertheless, we are all living in a technological age where children younger and younger have access to the means of the internet and applications, such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat to name a few with little or no supervision of parents recognizing the bullying. My research concluded that the best intervention to alleviate or reduce cyber-bullying was to offer a school based bullying intervention program in schools in early elementary through high school.

CPS Staff Spotlight

Michael Cutaia

- 1. What is your current position with CPS? How long have you been working in this position? What prior experience(s) did you bring with you to this position?**

My Current position with CPS is that I am the Regional Operations Support Administrator (ROSA) in region 6B and I have been in this position for just over 1 year. My overall tenure with CPS spans 33 years of service from worker (INV, FPSS, CVS, ADO, FAD), INV supervisor, program specialist, and regional director assistant.

- 2. What have been the greatest rewards working in the CWEP or CPS family?**

My greatest reward working in the CPS Family has been my various involvements/interactions I have had with CPS clients and all levels of staff from local to State Office to general community and government. Every day is new and exciting; something and someone new to interact with and learn with. CPS as a whole, weather you are talking about client interaction, to policy and procedure, is always changing and most of all enduring.

- 3. What advice do you have for our CWEP students?**

Child Welfare/Family Welfare is like many professions. It is a calling; a love for others; a value of others. Make sure it is what you feel passionate about wanting to do. There are many avenues to peruse in this profession from being a boots on the ground caseworker to management to support. There are outside agency programs to engage in as well. CPS will fill your life with a multitude of enrichment experiences.

Alumni Spotlight

Angela Killian



1. What is your current job position?

I am currently still employed with DFPS and have moved up to the Master CVS position just recently.

2. How did CWEP or your MSW program prepare you for your job?

The CWEP program gave me the ability to complete the Master of Social work degree while being employed with DFPS. It also provided me with a wealth of knowledge to empower me to do my job at a higher level. The program increased my knowledge base along with building a great foundation when it comes to working with clients and the ability to build stronger relationships in my current employment and also outside of the agency.

3. Tell us about your achievements in your work.

This position travels all over the state of Texas when assistance is needed in areas with case work. I currently travel at least 4 days a week and also mentor new employees as needed that come to the agency.

4. What advice do you have for current CWEP students?

The only advice I would give to new CWEP students is to push through it and do your best. Build lasting relationships with other students and your professors and enjoy the great experience.



Child Abuse Prevention Month

National Child Abuse Prevention Month April 2017

Do you know¹...

- One in four girls and one in six boys will be sexually abused before their eighteenth birthday
- Over 95% of children are abused by someone they know and trust
- Only one in ten children will tell of their abuse
- One in five children are solicited sexually while online

Let's join hands to make a difference!

¹ The Children's Assessment Center (2017). *April Child Abuse Prevention Month*. Retrieved from <http://www.cachouston.org/child-abuse-prevention-month/>



CWEP Students Graduating in May 2017

Jamie Taylor

Trisha West

Fakiaya Blade



Congratulations!