

Please Read Each Candidate's Platform Statement.
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2020 ANNUAL ELECTION INFORMATION ABOUT THE CANDIDATES

Dear Colleague:

This Chapter election provides you with an important opportunity to shape the direction of the National Association of Social Workers in New York City. By voting for the candidates who most closely represent your concerns, you will be participating in the democratic process of our membership organization.

Sincerely,

Benjamin R. Sher, MA, LMSW
President

Erica Sandoval, LMSW
President-Elect

The following statements and background data may have been edited, where necessary, to conform as nearly as possible to the stipulated length. The NASW-NYC Committee on Nominations and Leadership Identification (CNLI) takes responsibility for the editing of the material supplied by the candidates.

Sincerely,

Jamila Hammami, MSW
Chair, NASW-NYC Committee on Nominations
and Leadership Identification (CNLI)

CANDIDATE PLATFORM STATEMENTS

SECRETARY

(1 position open)



Yurilka A. Hernandez, LCSW, *Program Administrator, Community Associations of Progressive Dominicans; Acacia Network*

Yurilka Hernandez is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) in the state of New York. She is a bilingual, bi-cultural Hispanic female with over 10 years of extensive training and experience in the areas of Mental Health, Cultural Competency, working with Immigrant Families, substance abuse disorders and providing Clinical Supervision. Ms. Hernandez's educational background includes a Bachelor of Science and a graduate degree (MSW) from New York University, Silver School of Social Work. In 2016, she completed a Post-Master's Certificate Program in Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy from Manhattan Institute for Psychoanalysis. As part of the Behavior Team at Acacia Network, the second largest Latino led not-for-profit organization in the country, Ms. Hernandez's portfolio includes Mental Health Clinics, Substance Abuse School-Based Programs and Court Involved Youth Programs.



Kenton Kirby, LCSW, *Director of Practice, Center for Court Innovation*

I began my career in child welfare where I saw firsthand how communities are negatively impacted by oppressive systems. As a Social Worker, I've worked in a number of positions where I've seen how in spite of the oppressive systems our clients navigate, they are extremely resilient. It would be an honor to run for NASW Secretary, because as resilient as our clients are in the face of oppression; Social Workers in NYC are just as resilient and creative when supporting our clients. I would use my close to 20 years of direct practice and leadership experience to continue to build on the relationships NASW-NYC has developed to advocate for our membership. I understand the importance of supporting the next generation of social work leaders and I will work to increase membership from new social workers and work to foster mentoring among social workers. We work in diverse settings with different agency expectations, but our job is to challenge systems to foster equity. There's much uncertainty in the world right now and it's time for social workers to strengthen our connections to one another and double down our efforts to support our clients and ourselves.

MEMBER-AT-LARGE

(3 positions open)



Berlotte Antoine, MSW, *Senior Paralegal, Tenant's Right Unit; New York Legal Assistance Group (NYLAG)*

As an MSW graduate and a Paralegal, I possess an ability to collaborate with others and to maintain an effective working relationship with them in order to accomplish a targeted goal, which is a necessary skill for the Member-at-Large position. As a long-standing member of the Political Action for Candidate Election (PACE), I saw the importance of staying well-informed and being fully engaged in the political process. I hope to have another opportunity to serve in the New York City Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers.

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE Cont'd



Ariana Matos, MSW Candidate, Silberman School of Social Work at Hunter College; Internship Placement, SOMOS Care

I am a passionate social worker with over 15 years of relevant experience, from advocating emphatically for the client in various settings, to my work at Mount Sinai Beth Israel, Peter Kruger HIV/AIDS clinic as a Patient Navigator. Additionally, I worked with a pilot program that would offer case management in the community via the CUNY Research Foundation's Community Navigator Program. As a graduate of the Silberman School of Social Work at Hunter College, I feel that my education and experience working with the disenfranchised members of our community will serve me well as a Member-At-Large. Furthermore, I want to utilize my positionality as a social worker to

discuss major issues that are affecting not only our careers but the people in the communities that we serve.



Maria E. Ortiz, LMSW, Forensic Social Worker, Legal Aid Society: Juvenile Right Practice

My name is Maria E. Ortiz. I work at the Legal Aid Society as a Forensic Social Worker with children and youth. Previously, I was part of ThriveNYC and worked as a social worker in a family shelter. I also worked as a CPS worker with ACS. I obtained an M.A. in Forensic Psychology at CUNY's John Jay College in 2005 and an M.S.W. from Fordham University in 2014. In social work, I found a home and what I was meant to do. The six core principles of our profession spoke to me and learning about social work history influenced my decision to become involved in macro practice social work. Since 2014, I have been on a number of boards and have served on Manhattan Community Board 4. My commitment to macro practice social work is not just in words but in action too. I would love the

opportunity to have more of an impact on and advocate for the NASW-NYC community.



Reverend James Sampson Jr., MSW, Social Worker, Jewish Child Care Association (JCCA)

I was elected as an MSW Student Member-at-Large in 2019. I made sure that my colleagues' voices were heard at the table. One of the most significant concerns my colleagues had were student loans and I made sure that it was addressed. Now I am graduating; I would love to serve as "Member-at-Large," so my colleagues who are new generation social workers and members of NASW can have their voices heard. My previous experience as a new generation social worker qualifies me to be the next candidate as Member-at-Large for the NASW-NYC chapter.



Jennifer Schultz, LCSW, Program Director, Good Shepherd Services

Jennifer Schultz, LCSW completed her Bachelor of Science Degree in Human Services and Master's Degree in Social Work from California and moved to New York City in 2009. Since moving to New York City, Jennifer has worked in child welfare, with the focus on preventing the removal of children from their family. Each prevention program Jennifer has worked with has been funded by the Administration of Children's Services and focused on working with care-takers and children with Substance Abuse and/or unmet Mental Health needs to ensure the children's safety in the home. Jennifer is currently working as a Program Director with Good Shepherd Services in the Bronx, where she continues to partner with ACS to prevent the removal of children from their family home

to be placed in foster care. Jennifer also participated in an NYU speaker series "Supervision (Not) in a New York Minute" and served as Member-at-Large for NASW-NYC from 2016-2019.

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE Cont'd



Tania Vargas, LCSW, Homefinding Supervisor, Good Shepherd Services

Over the last 3 years, I have witnessed and been part of the amazing determination and resiliency that the NASW-NYC chapter holds. Being part of the Board of Directors has been life changing and I have learned so much on how the Chapter supports social workers and NYC as a whole. I would be honored, once again, to be part of the board for my second and final term. I plan to continue my work as a dedicated board member; ensuring that all NYC social work voices are heard.

MSW STUDENT MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

(1 position open)



Hannah Babiss, MSW Student, Fordham University School of Social Work; Intern, New York Immigration Coalition

It is an honor to be considered as an applicant for the NASW-NYC MSW Member-at-Large position. I have spent several years working in micro-focused positions in South America, and am currently an MSW student at Fordham University and a leader within our student congress pursuing a macro-focused career path. I am committed to social justice and am passionate about speaking out to be an advocate of systemic change. I hope to make a contribution to NASW as a student member as I work towards my long-term career goals of implementing socially just policies that empower individuals and communities both in the United States and globally.



Stephanie Smiley, MSW Student, Touro College Graduate School of Social Work

I'm simply honored at the opportunity to serve in this capacity. With over 12 years of experience in the Department of Education, I've advocated for families from all backgrounds with a wide variety of social emotional traumas. As a result, I've built lasting relationships with many NYC dignitaries ranging from the Mayor's Office, NYS Senators, and nonprofit organizations. If elected, I'd love to support members at large with these partnerships. *At the end of the day it's not about what you have or even what you've accomplished... it's about who you've lifted up, who you've made better, it's about what you've given back. – Denzel Washington*



Jazmin Marbella Vargas, MSW Student, Fordham University School of Social Work

Hello/Hola! My name is Jazmin M. Vargas and I am currently a Master of Social Work (MSW) student, with a concentration in Leadership and Macro Practice, at my alma mater, Fordham University. As an undergraduate student, I majored in Humanitarian Studies, with a concentration in Global Health. I am passionate about education, global health, and gender equality. I stand for advocacy, especially for the Latino/Hispanic community, and have dedicated my time and service towards my community. It would be an honor to be a representative and be a MSW Student Member-at-Large.

BSW STUDENT MEMBERS-AT-LARGE



Mel Variano, BSW Student, New York University Silver School of Social Work

As a BSW student for the last 3 years, I have been exposed to multiple realms of social work in New York: academia at NYU, research, and clinical work. These roles, including in women's professional development, prison justice, and anti-racist training, have been governed by unifying tenets of social work which I hold dear such as service, integrity, and community. A position on the NASW Board would allow me an opportunity to use my motivation in the field to aid social workers on a broad level as well as learn about policy, practice, and leadership in New York during an unprecedented time. I am eager to learn and interweave my current knowledge with new perspectives.

NASW-NYC COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS AND LEADERSHIP IDENTIFICATION (CNLI)

(6 positions open)



Lauren M. Bahar, MSW, Community Empowerment Specialist/Program Director, The Jewish American Council (JCC) of Canarsie; Administrative Assistant, Refuat Hanefesh

I am a proud graduate from the Silberman School of Social Work. I have a diverse Middle Eastern and Jewish background and believe diversity makes room for the acceptance of all individuals. I have been working in East New York Brooklyn as the program coordinator and community empowerment specialist for an initiative uniting community leaders to help improve education, social emotional development, and aid the needs of the community. My passion as a social worker is to help break the stigma around mental health and illness. I am able to practice this passion through the work I do for the non-profit organization, Refuat Hanefesh. Refuat Hanefesh is an online platform providing a safe and unanimous way for individuals to communicate with their peers and professionals regarding mental health and illness. If we are open to new ideas the possibilities are endless!



Eden Dawodu, MSW, Youth Counselor, Ali Forney Center

It is my philosophy that leadership development is a lifelong process. As a recent graduate, I am ready to hit the ground running and work in furtherance of the profession. Having served in leadership positions in most settings I have accessed (church minister, undergraduate club president, class representative, intern made assistant census program manager etc.), I can unequivocally state that I am a leader. As a member of the CNLI, I will continue to hone my own leadership qualities, and also effectively collaborate with my esteemed colleagues to identify and select future leaders for our distinguished organizational chapter.



Shantel Mayris, MSW, Family Defense Social Workers, Bronx Defenders

I am a recent graduate from Fordham University Graduate School of Social Services where I obtained my MSW and induction into the Phi Alpha MSW Honor Society Xi Gamma Chapter. I currently work as a Family Defense Social Worker at the Bronx Defenders office, providing advocacy for parents in Family Court. Furthermore, with my experience in providing supportive services as an Assistant Program Director for five years; joined with my passion to enhancing the social workers through the United Front of Social Workers, I've explored new ways to raise the concerns of social workers, by unifying and promoting the profession.

NASW-NYC CNLI Cont'd

(6 positions open)



Susan Mason, Ph.D., LCSW, *Professor, Wurzweiler School of Social Work, Yeshiva University, Washington Heights, NYC.*

As a 20-year member of NASW-NYC and past Delegate for the chapter, I am seeking membership on the Committee for Nominations and Leadership Identification (CNLI). Today more than ever, social workers are in the forefront, guiding families through a multitude of crises. NASW-NYC, the identified organization supporting our profession continues to demonstrate a strong leadership tradition. We are fortunate to have a large, diverse pool of qualified professionals to remain a strong presence among city decision makers. My knowledge of the agency and academic community can serve to recruit new innovative leaders to maintain and enhance our influence and visibility



Laura Swanson, MSW, *Psychotherapist, Community Counseling & Mediation*

My experience within residential facilities, the American Red Cross, community nonprofits, and outpatient mental health has continued to solidify my calling as a social worker. As I am a recent MSW graduate from Columbia University, I have worked endlessly in a variety of roles in order to bring awareness, education, prevention services, disaster relief, financial assistance, and mental health support to the many individuals that make up our communities. I believe my fresh perspective would be an asset to the NASW, as I bring new ideas, a fierce passion for social work, and a desire to create lasting and impactful change in our communities.



Harleny Vasquez, MSW, *Care Coordinator Supervisor, Good Shepherd Services*

My mission and purpose are to help social workers achieve their highest potential. If chosen as a member of CNLI for NASW-NYC, it would support my continued dedication to giving back to the social work community. If we uplift and empower one another to succeed, then there will be more leaders in this field. Success first starts with an opportunity. As a supervisor, I have extensive knowledge in professional development as I empower my staff to advocate and support their own career goals. I vow to continue my journey in empowering upcoming leaders to implement the changes we want to see in underserved communities.