Greetings!

Welcome to the Fall/Winter 2022-2023 edition of NASW-New York City’s newsletter, Currents! The NASW-NYC team thanks you for your support of the chapter and for being the incredible social workers that you are. As a membership organization, NASW cannot survive without its membership and the ongoing support of individuals and organizations like you. Thank you for journeying with us, navigating the challenges and the successes, and for all that you do to make NYC and the lives of those you serve, better.

Social workers truly empower and uplift and uplift communities. Social Workers are CHANGE makers, HOPE dealers, and LIFE

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changers. As we reflected on what we hoped to highlight for the Fall/Winter 2022 edition, we realized that it was necessary to remind you of the POWER of social work as well as the importance of OWNING YOUR power. Often, when I speak to social workers of all backgrounds, experience levels, and education, one of the things I find is that as time passes and the work becomes more daunting, we may at times lose faith in ourselves and in the power we have to impact change on an individual, family, and community level.

This work can be overwhelming and taxing to the human soul, mind, and body! Social workers expend so much energy advocating for others, that they don’t always advocate for themselves or support the advocacy efforts needed on behalf of the profession. We are human and it is important that beyond the continuum of self-care, we actively engage community care to ensure that we hold ourselves and each other accountable for centering our wellness.

I, too, have felt the burden and the weight of the demands of this profession, in this role, and in the roles I’ve held over my career. I understand the weight and the fear of speaking up, the burden of being from an intentionally marginalized community and being the first, the only, or one of few. I know the disappointment of not experiencing any victories for your efforts and advocacy. I know the worry about ‘what if’ or ‘I need this job to survive because my family is counting on me’. These are all real experiences and it would be unwise to suggest that these thoughts, feelings, and lived realities don’t weigh heavily upon us as individuals and as a profession. YET, they don’t tell the whole story. They don’t center the victories and lives changed because of YOU! They don’t tell of our collective power affecting positive change in the world. It is human nature to focus on what went wrong, what could go wrong, and to remember the bad, so that we can avoid what might hurt in the future. Yes, there are doubts! Yes, we as individuals can be afraid and tired at times because we are human! AND in spite of that, we are brave, we are bold, and we are POWERFUL as individuals and as social workers!

The narrative that social work is not valuable is a lie that we as individual social workers have embraced for far too long and as a result, society has too. We may unconsciously teach it in our schools, say it to each other, and to ourselves! We must stop this now!

The belief that ‘someone’ else will advocate and stand up for us is one that we have rested on. WE are that someone and we must join forces, engage our power, and support each other to be the change we want and need!

Concerns regarding social work salary, positions, authority, and respect for the profession in many work spaces are too frequent. The significant underfunding of our programs, high caseloads, and the burden of efforts we undertake to change organizational culture while advocating for policies that serve to benefit all, rather than just a few, are among the challenges we face. And yes, while it is true that there are many challenges, we often forget that there are many successes! Social workers like you impact and shape policy, get justice for clients, support religious freedom, reproductive choice, immigration reform, hold our systems accountable, march in the streets, vote, run for office, and help shape society every day!

In order to change the harmful narratives about social work that we may have been harmed by, we must first change the narratives in ourselves! We must quiet the doubt that is often in us, and we must return to the core of who we are: ADVOCATES. COMMUNITY ORGANIZERS. EDUCATORS. HEALERS. LIFE CHANGERS! This is social work. This is who YOU are. This is who we all should strive to be. Not just at work, but in every aspect of our lives. It is time you own your power!

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The Code of Ethics reminds us that social work is an active profession. We must be the change we want to experience. NASW-NYC isn’t just going to ask you to Own Your Power without highlighting ours! The power of NASW-NYC is directly connected to the support we receive through your membership and support of our programs and initiatives. NASW-NYC is YOU!

In addition to serving as the Executive Director, and many other roles, I also serve as the Director of Legislative Affairs on behalf of NASW-NYC. To this end, this is my love letter to NYC’s social workers. This edition is to highlight a fraction of the advocacy work that the small and mighty team of four NASW-NYC staff members do on behalf of social work every day. This edition seeks to educate you about NASW-NYC and celebrate the ways that NASW-NYC is owing our power through advocacy on behalf of NYC social workers and the communities we serve. Above all else, this issue is to remind you that YOU are NECESSARY, VALUED, and, POWERFUL!

In solidarity and with deep appreciation,
Dr. Claire Green-Forde, LCSW

CLICK ON ANY IMAGE IN THIS ISSUE TO ACCESS MORE INFORMATION!
REMARKS FROM THE NEW NASW-NYC BOARD PRESIDENT

Emilio Tavarez, MSW
NASW-NYC Board President

It is a great honor to start my term as the new president of the Board of Directors for NASW-NYC. I’ve had the pleasure recently of meeting many leaders within the social work profession and together I know we’ll accomplish great things for the chapter. I’ve learned much from Erica Sandoval, LCSW, and was so honored to be included in Latinx in Social Work Vol. II with her. I’m so grateful to follow in her footsteps and continue fighting for social workers and communities in need. Dr. Claire Green-Forde has been a stalwart defender and advocate of the social work profession and I’m excited to collaborate with her and the staff over the next two years to ensure that the value equity infuses all sectors of the social work profession and to increase the engagement in our volunteer committees. The truth is that we need social workers now more than ever, in every setting, and in every level of practice to fix many of the social and economic issues that our city is facing. The social work values of service, social justice, and integrity have always resonated with me in my personal and professional lives, and I will do my best to support anyone who wants to help the chapter and the profession.

If we haven’t met yet, I’d like to introduce myself to you. My name is Emilio Tavarez, MSW, and I have been in the field of social work for over 10 years. I started when I was an undocumented, Dominican immigrant in high school just discovering my sexuality, and I now have a work permit under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). My first professional experience was doing LGBTQ+ street outreach to promote safer sex and harm reduction practices among my peers, so I’ve always shown empathy for others. After college I did casework for many years helping families apply for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly called Food Stamps) among many other economic support programs like childcare, housing, and healthcare. I’m thankful to my professors at the Lehman College School of Social Work who taught me how to apply my social work principals to clinical work, management, and policy advocacy and opened my eyes to multiple career pathways. I’ve been a part of many settings and levels of practice, which has imbued in me a respect for all of you, my colleagues, whether you are providing clinical practice, managing a program, or advocating for policy change.

We need skilled clinicians working at the micro-level, helping families deal with the impact of trauma, disasters, and the multiple tragedies happening every week throughout this country and throughout the world. The children in our schools have lost many of their friends, parents, and family members to COVID19, so they need support to get through the grieving process and to prevent learning loss. We are still losing about 400 hundred people per day nationwide, so the pandemic is not over yet for many of us. Adults are still trying to figure out the best safety practices for themselves and their families while also paying the rent and buying basic necessities. When I worked at Part of the Solution, I was proud to provide casework and SNAP enrollment services to hundreds of families and individuals just trying to put food on the table. Being exposed to that much trauma, though it wasn’t my own, still made a negative impact on my mental health so

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we must remember to take care of ourselves as well.

We need caring and compassionate managers working at the mezzo-level, providing leadership and guidance to new generations of social workers, nonprofit organizations, government agencies, and businesses. Empathy and compassion are skills that are needed for all workplaces to have healthy cultures where colleagues feel camaraderie and a shared purpose. Still, Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) are consistently and disproportionately harmed by discriminatory treatment in healthcare, criminal justice, housing, education, and employment, but only 14% of social workers in this country are Latinx, and Black social workers make up just 22% of the field while Asian Americans make up only 5% of social workers. We need to make social work programs and social services more responsive and accessible to the communities we are trying to serve, so I believe we can co-design better systems in partnership with community leaders, social work members, and NASW-NYC.

As a senior manager for Hunger Free America, I strive to treat my staff as I would any client and support their emotional, instructional, and educational needs while empowering them to grow on their own. The need for production and profit can be damaging if it is put above the health and wellbeing of the workers, and I will work with NASW-NYC to keep doing everything we can to advocate for higher pay and better working conditions for social workers. I’ve been blessed with great managers throughout my career, people who mentored me and guided my growth and we need more people in the world that are looking to nurture the talent and interests of others, because we all have a part to play in making the world a better place.

We need more analytical social workers working at the macro-level, shaping and implementing the social programs that we all utilize. Whether it is better healthcare, food assistance, housing, or mental health, we as social workers have a unique insight through our casework experience that could lead to more robust and effective policy interventions to better support entire communities: this is where I’ve found my specialty. Since I grew up as a poor immigrant in this country, I’m grateful to all the sacrifices my family made to support my success, and I can identify many ways we could redesign our laws to better support families like mine. I’ve dedicated my career to fighting hunger and have been in the hunger policy space for the last three years, so while I’m proud to lead these efforts I’m also aware of the critical need for more social workers to be shaping public policy with our social work value of social justice at the forefront. Means-testing for services harms our clients emotionally when they must share their trauma with multiple case workers before receiving aid, a process that is often demeaning. I strive for the burden of application to be put on the government agencies we pay through our tax dollars so that we can make it easier for people in need to get through the tough times.

People in poverty are usually dealing with unexpected costs like natural disasters, sudden deaths, or new healthcare costs, so we need systems that will catch them when they fall and help get them back on their feet as soon as possible. Any one of us could face a crisis like that someday, so we can work now to prevent more harm later. We don’t need law degrees to draft legislation, elected officials are just people and they need staff who know what their constituents need. I’ve been proud to collaborate with champions like Jessica Gonzalez-Rojas, New York State Assemblymember representing Jackson Heights, East Elmhurst, Woodside, and Corona, who are unapologetic the fight for dignity, justice, and equity for our communities. I want more social workers to explore the role they can play in improving or establishing the government programs and funding streams that we need to end these problems at the root of their design, and not just deal with their negative outcomes downstream, like homelessness, substance abuse,
and mental illness.

To the students still deciding what to specialize in, open your mind to the possibilities that you could have a job that is both financially stable and personally satisfying. I found a way to combine my creative writing, public speaking, and social work skills to make a difference in creating the work I want to see through policy advocacy and macro-practice. NASW-NYC has a number of volunteer committees for you to support, and I want to use NASW-NYC to help the future generations find their path to fulfilling careers in social work, no matter what setting or level of practice they are drawn to. Through my work with the Political Action for Candidate Election (PACE) committee now led by Luisa Lopez, MSW and Shanequa Moore, LMSW, and the Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression (SOGIE) Collective now lead by Jessica Hardial, LCSW, I learned how the chapter functions and found the best way I could support NASW-NYC, which is why I moved my way up to President of the chapter. Talk to your professors, classmates, and colleagues about the careers they’ve had, and think critically about your own strengths and weaknesses.

I encourage members to reach out to any of us on the board, staff, or volunteer committees. The winter months are especially hard for the most vulnerable of us and we all have something to offer, we just have to do the internal reflection to align our interests with our talents. As I start my presidency I hope to establish the structures and pipelines that will lead to the growth of our chapter and the improvement of our city.

With love,
Emilio Tavarez, MSW
OWNING NASW-NYC'S POWER: ADVOCACY IN FOCUS (2021-2023)

Dr. Claire Green-Forde
NASW-NYC Executive Director/
NASW-NYC Director of Legislative Affairs

Dr. Claire Green-Forde, Executive Director of the NASW-NYC Chapter, who manages and oversees the legislative advocacy of the NASW-NYC Chapter details the legislative work that has been happening at the NASW-NYC Chapter from 2021-2023 in the following report.

Overview of NASW-NYC

The National Association of Social Workers - New York City Chapter (NASW-NYC) aims to support and create opportunities through impactful programming and advocacy so that NYC social workers can elevate in their careers, further develop their professional skills, and have a space where they feel a sense of belonging. Powered by our diverse membership, NASW-NYC effectively promotes the value and visibility of the social work profession, enhances the profession's credibility and influence at state and local levels, and assures that the social work profession remains highly relevant and effective in the years ahead. We do this on behalf of the communities that social workers serve, and for future generations of social work professionals.

NASW-NYC Advocates for YOU

One of the primary benefits of NASW-NYC membership is the comprehensive political and legislative representation we provide you on a daily basis. While you are busy practicing, NASW-NYC serves as your advocate at the state capitol and in NYC, protecting your career, defending your scope of practice, advancing legislation to expand practice opportunities, advocating for the communities you serve by demanding access to quality healthcare, and providing visibility on a number of social justice issues you’ve identified as priorities.

NASW-NYC Advances Social Work through:

• Testifying on a number of legislative matters to advocate on behalf of social workers and intentionally marginalized/oppressed communities

• Strengthening the social work voice and credibility in partnership with our contracted Government Affairs representatives

• Drafting bills and writing memos in support, concern, or opposition on a number of bills and ensuring that we consistently center the social work position as well as racial and social justice in our efforts

• Building relationships with partners to ensure that efforts towards positive change happen

• Participating on a number of panels and coalitions to ensure that social work values and ethics are included in proposed policies, programs, and services

• Actively engage with elected officials to understand their positions, share resources, share support or concerns, build bi-partisan relationships, and promote the values and mission of the social work profession

• Provide educational opportunities for the social work community to learn about advocacy, and get involved in local and state effort through reaching out to their elected officials and representatives.

While our membership is diverse with many perspectives and our members work in a broad range of settings including hospitals and health

Continued on next page
OWNING NASW-NYC’S POWER: ADVOCACY IN FOCUS (2021-2023) CONTINUED...

Dr. Claire Green-Forde  
NASW-NYC Executive Director/  
NASW-NYC Director of Legislative Affairs

Care settings, community agencies, jails and courts, government, academia, nursing homes, schools, private practice and more, social justice is central to the values and mission of the social work profession. NASW-NYC works to ensure that this framework guides our advocacy efforts in NYC and beyond.

NASW’s Social Justice Priority Areas:

Guided by NASW-National social justice priorities, NASW chapters across the country work to advocate on behalf of the social work profession and their local communities. While not exhaustive, five social justice priorities serve as guiding principles for NASW’s national office and Chapters:

- Voting rights
- Criminal justice / Juvenile justice
- Environmental justice
- Immigration
- Economic justice

NASW also has a robust Blueprint of Federal Social Policy Priorities (2021), which guides the work of local chapters in the interest of larger social justice needs.

NASW-NYC’s Legislative Efforts & Focus (2021-2023)

NASW-NYC’s legislative and advocacy work is guided by our deep commitment to health equity, racial and social justice, self-determination, and our belief that human rights are non-negotiable. As an association that is represented by diverse voices, views, and experience, NASW-NYC’s focus is on larger systemic needs, rather than individual.

Your Membership and Support Matter

As a membership organization, our sustainability and work, including legislative and advocacy efforts, are directly impacted by the level of support we receive financially through membership, and the tangible support of social workers helping with our legislative efforts, volunteering and serving on the Board of Directors and on committees, responding to calls to action, and contacting their local representatives and elected officials about matters important to social work. As support for the chapter declines so too does NASW-NYC’s ability to serve the social work community and advocate for all of the concerns and demands brought to our attention. Please join/renew your membership today so that NASW-NYC can continue to fight on behalf of you, and intentionally marginalized communities.

NASW-NYC’s Advocacy and Legislative Efforts Center on Four (4) Key Themes:

- Professional Practice and Advancement
- Human Rights and Protection
- Social and Racial Justice**
- Criminal Justice Reform

**Social and racial justice underpin all of our work. Advocacy efforts in all areas will intersect with racial and social justice and may not be clearly separated in the examples below.

How NASW-NYC Uses Your Dues:

Examples of some advocacy work NASW engages

Professional Practice

- NASW-National and NASW-NYC have been advocating for Student loan debt relief, signed

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OWNING NASW-NYC'S POWER:
ADVOCACY IN FOCUS
(2021-2023) CONTINUED...

Dr. Claire Green-Forde
NASW-NYC Executive Director/
NASW-NYC Director of Legislative
Affairs

NASW-NYC has been instrumental in advocating for the expansion of tele-health, including audio only.

Advocacy for increased Medicare reimbursement for clinical social workers and mental health access for all. This is done through the support of the Improving Access to Mental Health Act, S. 870/H.R. 2035

NASW-NYC and NASW-National have continued to call for equity in compensation for the high level of skills, training, education, and experience that social workers possess.

National Association of Social Workers-New York City Chapter (NASW-NYC), presented testimony regarding the 2021-2022 adopted education budget’s planning requirements for Foundation Aid and federal funds under the American Rescue Plan (ARP). NASW-NYC noted concerns for NYC social workers regarding:

- Extremely low compensation for the education, skills, training, and licensure social workers must hold to practice
- High caseloads and inadequate staffing
- Inadequate or no supervision.

NASW-NYC has advocated to protect the scope of practice of social workers including diagnosis. NASW-NYC fully supported the expansion of provider privilege to other professionals, so long as requirements were equitable and met quality standards. NASW-NYC took a position to oppose S.6431 as the chapter could not, in good faith and in consideration of the NASW Code of Ethics, endorse the perpetuation of a two-tier system of credentialing – the provisions of vital mental health services by unlicensed practitioners through state agency providers – beyond that contemplated by the Legislature in 2018.

NASW-NYC lent expertise and advocacy on behalf of NYC children through supporting for the expansion of school-based social workers to address the biopsychosocial needs of in NYC students.

NASW-NYC fully supports the policy advanced by A.5019 (Gonzalez-Rojas) / S.1969 (Jackson) which would require that a school social worker be available to each school within a school district. Only enhanced access to quality mental health services can assure the most successful educational experience for our State’s children and adolescents.

NASW-NYC has been in ongoing discussions and participating with NYSED regarding continuing Education (CE) Requirements for Psychologists, Social Workers, and Mental Health Practitioners.

In case you missed it: After years of efforts to include LCSW's to the Workers Compensation Program, NYC was successful. Effective January 1, 2020, LCSW’s in NY became authorized providers of mental health services in the state’s Workers Compensation Program.
OWNING NASW-NYC’S POWER: ADVOCACY IN FOCUS (2021-2023) CONTINUED...

Dr. Claire Green-Forde
NASW-NYC Executive Director/
NASW-NYC Director of Legislative Affairs

Human Rights and Protection:

- NASW-NYC endorsed the New York Health (A.6058/S.5474) and firmly believes that access to high quality, culturally humble, and comprehensive healthcare is a basic human right that everyone, regardless of race, gender identity, religious identity, employment status, immigration status, wealth, or any other factors, must be afforded.

- NASW-NYC also supported changes in New York State Constitution proposing an amendment to article 1 of the constitution, in relation to equality of rights and protection against discrimination.

- NYC signed onto bill with W.I.N. to have mental health providers in family shelters. The New York City Council - File #: Int 0522-2022 (nyc.gov)

- In the interest of human rights, and valuing the dignity and worth of every individual, NASW-NYC overwhelmingly supported A.306 (Gottfried) / S.794 (Hoylman). Once enacted, this anti-torture bill will prohibit social workers, medical doctors, dentists, psychologists, and other NY State licensed health care professionals from participating in or planning the torture, unethical, and improper treatment of individuals who are incarcerated or otherwise detained.

- NASW-NYC supported work place safety reform to protect those who are victims of domestic violence.

- NASW-NYC supported legislation (S.07144/A.07686) to provide Addiction and Mental Health Services Training, Including Crisis Intervention Team Training, Mental Health First Aid, Implicit Bias Training and Naloxone Training.

- NASW has continued to advocate for the protection and expansion of rights for individuals and families who are immigrants.

- Reproductive Justice: The bills of note in New York that NASW-NYC fully supports include: Equality Amendment (S.9707, Krueger); Reproductive Freedom and Equity Fund Act (S.9078/A.10148,Cleare/Gonzalez-Rojas); Protection for Abortion Providers (S.9070A/A.9678A, Kaplan/Rosenthal); Role of New York Law Enforcement (S.8778/A.9615, Krueger/Lavine); Role of New York Courts (S.8779/A.9613, Krueger/Lavine). Additionally NASW-NYC supports any others that might become a package of bills to protect reproductive freedom, protect providers and patients, highlight social and racial justice needs in healthcare and abortion access, and improve safe and accessible healthcare. In the interest of public safety, human rights, and the right to healthcare access, we affirm the necessity of protecting reproductive justice and freedom in New York and beyond.

- NASW-NYC supported a package of bills to provide support and resources to victims of human trafficking.

In case you missed it: NASW-NYC was successful in advocacy efforts to end the harmful laws that unfairly targeted LGBTQ+ individuals and communities. We advocated for the repeal of Walking While Trans Ban.

In case you missed it: NASW-NYC participated in the Collation to End Child Marriage in New York before the age of 18 and is happy that this law passed in 2021.

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OWNING NASW-NYC’S POWER:
ADVOCACY IN FOCUS
(2021-2023) CONTINUED...

Dr. Claire Green-Forde
NASW-NYC Executive Director/
NASW-NYC Director of Legislative Affairs

Social and Racial Justice:

NASW-NYC works to ensure that our efforts consistently center equity, racial, and social justice. The chapter provides, when feasible, comments and feedback on a number of bills and will express support, opposition, or concern for bills being proposed. Typically, NASW-NYC will express concern or opposition where we find that proposed laws, may negatively impact the social work profession, or may have unfair and inequitable outcomes for marginalized communities.

- NASW-NYC provided memos of concerns for a number of bills, including A.6008/S.9449 which concerned the expansion of diagnostic privileges. NASW-NYC has long maintained that we welcome non-social work professionals also having diagnostic privileges so long as the education, experience, and examination requirements met or superseded those required of social workers. NASW-NYC has taken this position because our code of ethics calls upon social workers to be anti-oppressive and anti-racist. We found that the legislation in question, may have unintended harmful racial and social implications and may further exacerbate the systemic inequalities already present in NYS and around the country regarding access to quality health care providers and treatment. The chapter believes that should the measure pass, without considering these implications, and ensuring that providers meet high standards, the already bifurcated health care system would render those unable to pay for quality treatment and unable to access professionals of their choosing.

- NASW continues to call for the protection of voting rights and has been clear that voter suppression efforts are deeply connected to racial and social inequalities.

Criminal Justice Reform:

- NASW-NYC has continued to advocate for the protection of bail reform measures.

- In the interest of acknowledging the growth of individuals and the transformative impact of support towards positive change, NASW-NYC supports S.1553 (Myrie) / A.6399-A (Cruz) ‘Clean Slate ACT’. The bill that would seal criminal records in New York for three years after sentencing for misdemeanors and seven years for felonies passed the Senate in 2022, but stalled when it made it to the Assembly. It is our hope to continue advocacy in the next legislative session for 2023. NASW-NYC views this bill as a positive step towards a commitment to remedy concerns with criminal justice reform needs in New York that have by and large, disproportionately harmed Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) and other marginalized communities. It also supports the concept that people have the ability to grow and make positive changes in their lives; NASW-NYC firmly believes that on the continuum of human development, and the adage that people do and can indeed evolve, no one should continue to be punished once they have paid their debt(s) to society.

- NASW-NYC is calling for reform in NYC jails and the humane treatment of all those who are detained on Rikers Island.

SEE THE NEXT PAGE TO SEE HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED!

Continued on next page
OWNING NASW-NYC’S POWER: ADVOCACY IN FOCUS (2021-2023) CONTINUED...

Dr. Claire Green-Forde  
NASW-NYC Executive Director/  
NASW-NYC Director of Legislative Affairs

Want to get involved? To learn more about NASW’s work and ways you can get involved:

NASW-NYC CARES - NASW-NYC’s Chapter initiative that aims to engage our membership and all NYC social workers while promoting the values of the social work profession through civic engagement and community volunteerism.

NASW-NYC PACE (Political Action for Candidate Election) Committee is the independent political arm of the Chapter. PACE identifies qualified candidates running for local and state offices and garners support for them among the Chapter membership.

NASW-NYC CNLI (Committee on Nominations and Leadership Identification) is the independent leadership identification body of the chapter. CNLI seeks qualified NYC based social workers to serve on the NASW-NYC’s Board of Directors and Delegate Assembly. The basic requirement for being nominated is current membership in NASW-NYC.

NASW-NYC SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS/COMMITTEES - meet regularly and offer networking and professional development opportunities, as well as educational or advocacy involvement for a specific area of concern.

LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION & ADVOCACY DAY - Annual association wide day of advocacy! In NY, NASW-NYC partners with many social work organizations and schools of social work, to bring together social workers, students, and allies in the state capitol (Albany), to advocate for specific issues of significance to the social work profession. LEAD typically occurs each March during Social Work Month.
NASW-NYC BOARD ELECTIONS:
MEET NEWLY ELECTED BOARD MEMBERS & THE CO-CHAIRS OF CNLI AND
FIND OUT HOW YOU CAN RUN FOR NASW-NYC CHAPTER OFFICE

Co-Chairs of the The NASW-NYC Committee on
Nominations and Leadership Identification (CNLI)

Carolyn Blair, LMSW
Schanica Pickens, MSW

Newly Elected NASW-NYC Board Members

Emilio Tavarez, MSW  President
Shanequa E. Moore, LMSW  1st Vice President
Edith Chaparro, PhD, LCSW-R  2nd Vice President of Budget & Finance
Appointed by the Board
NASW-NYC BOARD ELECTIONS:
MEET NEWLY ELECTED BOARD MEMBERS & THE CO-CHAIRS OF CNLI AND
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NASW-NYC Board Members-at-Large

Kristina Coleman-Foster, LMSW, MPA
Renee Spivey, LMSW
Ralph Soto, LMSW, LMHLC, CASAC
Nanda Prabhakar, LCSW
Jina Park, LCSW

Elected to Member-at-Large for 2nd term
NASW-NYC BOARD ELECTIONS:
MEET NEWLY ELECTED BOARD MEMBERS & THE CO-CHAIRS OF CNLI AND
FIND OUT HOW YOU CAN RUN FOR NASW-NYC CHAPTER OFFICE

Student Members-at-Large

Farah Reynoso
MSW Member-at-Large

Jameal Reid
BSW Member-at-Large
Appointed by Board

NASW-NYC’s Committee on Nominations and Leadership Identification has requested that members begin to make recommendations now. The basic requirement for being nominated is current membership in NASW-NYC.

In keeping with NASW’s affirmative action policy, Chapter leadership must proportionally reflect the number of women (79%) and people of color (19%) in the organization’s overall membership.

NASW recognizes the following groups in its Affirmative Action policy: American Indian/Native Americans; Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders; Black and Latinx people. The Chapter will also consider transgender/ gender non-confirming/ gender diverse community, sexual orientation, Indigenous community, those with varying migration status, young people, individuals with different abilities/ disabilities, Veterans, and people with varying cognitive and behavioral health conditions, as part of its affirmative action goals.

CLICK ON THE BELOW IMAGE FOR MORE INFORMATION ON WHAT ROLES ARE AVAILABLE AND HOW YOU CAN NOMINATE SOMEONE (OR YOURSELF!) TO BECOME A NASW-NYC CHAPTER BOARD MEMBER
NASW-NYC EDUCATES CONTINUING EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

Call for Workshop Proposals to Present at NASW-NYC’s 8th Annual Social Work in the City Conference for the Profession

DEADLINE DECEMBER 2, 2022

Social Work & Wellness: Successes and Opportunities in Transcending Chaos

Wednesday, June 7 and Thursday, June 8, 2023
Virtual/Online Conference

The 2021 update to the NASW Code of Ethics addresses the importance of professional self-care. We ask social workers to share with their fellow professionals: how do you promote wellness? What does promoting wellness look like, not only within the communities we serve, but within ourselves as well?

Within these past few turbulent years – socially, politically, mentally, and medically – let’s look to celebrate the work social workers accomplish, especially in times where we’re expected to thrive. How do social workers succeed when facing seemingly insurmountable challenges while also mitigating their own turmoil? What does success in these spaces look like? What tools and resources do social workers have to achieve these successes?

With this year’s NASW-NYC’s annual continuing education conference, which includes keynote presentations, continuing education workshops, networking opportunities, and sponsorship exhibits; we ask social workers to consider the above and share their successes and opportunities in transcending chaos while keeping their wellness, as well as those they serve, first.

CLICK ON THE ABOVE IMAGE FOR DETAILS ON THE SUBMISSION GUIDELINES!

If there are any questions, please contact Linda Lee at llee.naswnyc@socialworkers.org

ALL SUBMISSIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY 11:59 PM ET ON FRIDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2022

ONLY ELECTRONIC SUBMISSIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED.
NASW-NYC EDUCATES
CONTINUING EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES
NOVEMBER 2022

CE ONLINE WORKSHOP

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2022
10:00 AM - 1:00 PM ET | 3 HOURS

(CFT) Compassion Focused Therapy: The Neurobiology of Soothing Systems - Fostering Self-Compassion, Inner Safeness, & Finding Balance

Live Online Webinar with:
Dr. Rej Mathew, LCSW, REAT Candidate

NASW-NYC Members: $44
Other Chapter Members: $68
Non-Members: $81

With this workshop, participants will be able to:
• Understand the conceptual framework of CFT and how it differs from other evidence-based approaches such as DBT/ACT/CBT
• Identify compassion-focused strategies to guide clients to regulate mood, calm the inner critic, and develop a compassionate self-concept
• Know how to integrate compassion-focused techniques within a comprehensive integrative treatment plan
• Understand how to adapt mindful compassionate practices to clients' individual needs

Wednesday, December 7, 2022
10:00 am - 11:30 am ET | 1.5 Hours

HUMAN TRAFFICKING: BLACK GIRLS VULNERABILITY TO SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Live Online Webinar with: Crystal Bennett, LMSW

NASW-NYC Members: $29 | Other Members: $36 | Non-Members: $43

NOTE: THIS WEBINAR WILL BE RECORDED

Tuesday, December 13, 2022
10:00 AM - 11:30 AM ET
1.5 Hours

The Maternal Mortality Crisis

Live Online Webinar with:
Lejeune Johnson, LCSW

NASW-NYC Members: $29 | Other Chapter Members: $36 | Non-Members: $43

Note: This webinar will be recorded
Dr. Angelo McClain will retire as chief executive officer of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), an organization he has steered for nearly 10 years as it modernized systems and services, supported social workers during the COVID-19 pandemic, and increased its focus on ending systemic racism within the social work profession and the nation.

“It has been an honor and a privilege to hold one of the most important positions in the social work profession and to lead this organization and its deeply committed staff through exciting but often challenging times,” said McClain, PhD, LICSW. “I thank our staff at the chapter and national levels for their phenomenal service during my tenure. NASW is an even stronger organization now and I am confident its next leader will take the association to new heights.”

McClain was hired as CEO at NASW in March 2013 after serving six years as commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families under Governor Deval Patrick. He immediately launched a modernization and revitalization initiative to update NASW business practices, aligning its 55-chapter structure to strengthen the association’s long-term financial viability and better serve its members. The multi-year effort allowed NASW chapters to focus more resources on local programming, including advocacy, professional development, and member services.

Over the past decade, McClain also helped the association and the larger social work profession respond to pressing social issues, such as inhumane child migrant detention, gun and police violence, increasing mental health needs and growing inequity across all systems of care. When the COVID-19 pandemic hit in March 2020, McClain led NASW efforts to quickly provide social workers with information and services required to better serve clients caught in the triple tsunami of unequal health access, unmet mental health needs and economic crisis. This included advocating on the federal and state levels to allow social workers to provide more telehealth services.

McClain began steps to make NASW a more welcoming and inclusive workplace in 2019, when he hired the association’s first vice president of diversity, equity and inclusion.

The murder of George Floyd by a Minneapolis police officer in May 2020, prompted McClain to focus NASW on addressing systemic racism not only in society but also in the ranks of the profession. NASW held a series of chapter and national meetings and public townhalls in partnership with other social work organizations to determine how different areas of the profession could work together to end racism.

In June 2021, NASW issued a formal apology for supporting practices that harmed people of color. The report, Undoing Racism Through Social Work: NASW Report to the Profession on Racial Justice Priorities and Action, includes a framework for how NASW is working to achieve an anti-racist profession.

NASW’s national policy agenda has expanded significantly under McClain’s leadership. Results include new federal commitments to research and support the social work workforce, as well as Continued on Next Page
increased visibility for social workers in the Biden-Harris Administration.

In fact, NASW released a 2021 Blueprint of Federal Social Policy Priorities that articulated meaningful actions the Biden-Harris Administration and Congress could take to address the COVID-19 crisis, promote mental and behavioral health, eliminate systemic racism and ensure civil and human rights for all. Nationwide, the association continues to participate in hundreds of prominent social justice and social care coalitions.

McClain will stay in the position until the end of the year and promises members and staff that he will work closely and assiduously with the NASW Board of Directors to ensure there will be a "good and smooth" transition process.

"The NASW Board of Directors and I thank Dr. Angelo McClain for his stewardship and stellar leadership as the CEO of NASW over the last nine years – he was the right leader for NASW at the right time and he led the association during some of the most momentous times in our nation’s history,” said NASW President Mildred “Mit” Joyner, DPS, MSW, LCSW.

"Angelo has positioned NASW and the professional membership to respond to inequality and injustice, including protecting reproductive rights, voting rights, and liberating all people so that everyone can live their lives free from bias and discrimination. More social work professionals are now in position to change oppressive systems rather than maintain the status quo, due to his vision and leadership.”

McClain resides in Rhode Island with his wife Terri Hubbard, a retired psychiatric nurse executive. He has been a continuous member of NASW since 1978 and said even in retirement he intends to stay active with the association and keep his membership current.

“I will always have the highest regard for NASW – it’s in my DNA,” he said.

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW), in Washington, DC, is the largest membership organization of professional social workers. It promotes, develops, and protects the practice of social work and social workers. NASW also seeks to enhance the well-being of individuals, families, and communities through its advocacy.

The NASW-NYC Chapter congratulates Dr. McClain on his accomplishments during his tenure as CEO of NASW and wishes him the best in his future endeavors.

Click on the Below Image to Access

[Image of book cover: UNDOING RACISM THROUGH SOCIAL WORK Vol. 2]

A Collaborative Vision for an Anti-Racist Future
SELF-PRESERVATION IS A RIGHT

Rosaana Conforme, LCSW, PhD Candidate
Senior Clinical Director of Community and Specialized Programs
Violence Intervention Program

We are living through historical times of threat! Just this year alone, we witnessed mass shootings, the war in Ukraine, experienced rising gasoline prices and inflation, and the prolongation of COVID-19, all of which have caused a profound sense of helplessness, insecurity, and fear. The pandemic, increase in community violence, comorbidities, political and racial trauma, the surge in poverty – and for many – the inability to meet basic survival needs, have caused a devastating mental health (MH) crisis, which has overwhelmed our mental health system. One collective trauma after the next, combined with the impact of our own personal trauma histories, has not allowed us to grieve or heal from our losses. These psychological stressors have had a substantial effect on our mental health and have triggered our trauma responses. Trauma causes many symptoms of post-traumatic stress (PTS), including sleeping difficulties, depression – changes in mood, appetite, and energy – difficulty concentrating and making decisions; feelings of anger, fear, frustration, sadness, worry, and increased use of tobacco, alcohol, and other substances. Trauma is not an isolated incident. It is an accumulation of external and personal factors.

Social workers are not exempt from experiencing PTS, so we must continuously pay attention to our mental health. Like many mental health providers, during the height of COVID, I experienced anxiety, uncertainty, and fear, while watching Latinx communities suffer the highest number of COVID deaths. I witnessed the lack of healthcare access and housing, the increase in food insecurity, and worsening economic conditions, and I watched the rise in xenophobia towards Latinx immigrants and racial violence against BIPOC communities. In addition, I suffered innumerable human and social losses, including the loss of cultural practices, such as not being able to participate in any traditional life and death celebrations due to isolation mandates. It was challenging to deal with all the suffering and grief while coping with secondary traumatic stress associated with everyday work. As first responders, social workers are tasked with helping clients meet their basic and complex needs, often neglecting our own stressors. COVID is a perfect example of how as social workers, we helped clients cope with crisis and trauma and struggled to combat the social justice issues inherent in the pandemic while also needing support to manage our grief, pain, and vicarious trauma. The prolonged stress of COVID and constant pandemic-driven changes have manifested in social workers as burnout, compassion fatigue, and moral injury. Social workers need support to deal with individual and collective trauma, so we must intentionally invest in their healing and restoration. With the increase in work demands and stress, it is also crucial for social workers – across all practice settings – to practice professional and personal self-care. While self-care is essential, shifting the narrative and looking at adversity as a collective issue is vital. Employers must work to lessen mental health stigma in the workplace and commit to systemic wellness. They can begin by framing employee distress as a collective rather than an individual problem. When employee distress is framed as collective, individuals experience themselves as part of a joint struggle. This fosters an environment

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SELF-PRESERVATION IS A RIGHT CONTINUED...

Rosaana Conforme, LCSW, PhD Candidate
Senior Clinical Director of Community and Specialized Programs
Violence Intervention Program

of compassion and empathy that reduces isolation and shame and results in staff feeling less alone in their struggles. Employers should also create and foster ‘relational pauses’ that allow staff to reflect on how work affects them within a group reflection process. Finally, employers must consider changes to organizational culture and develop policies that address workloads, employee support, supervision, MH training, flexible days, and time-off practices.

As social workers, we should work on identifying ways to manage our trauma symptoms and maintain a healthy balance between the work and non-work parts of our lives. There is no right or wrong way to deal with stress and trauma. Inclusively, we all process grief differently, so try strategies that work for you. Human well-being is not achieved alone, so talk to others when you are feeling depressed or share with those going through the same experience. Be aware of your feelings by slowing down the speed at which you function daily — enough to notice your emotions. Perform a body scan and observe which part of your body you are feeling anxiety, anger, or fear. Put things in perspective — we have no control over the things that happen in the world, but we can relieve the smallest tensions that arise throughout the day. Any physical activity that calms your nerves and makes you feel good can help you counter stress and negative emotions. Creating self-care plans, practicing self-compassion and gratitude, and sustaining a healthy lifestyle is also vital when caring for your mental health. Lastly, be kind to yourself, set limits, take a break, pause, and give yourself the care you need to handle stressors, and remember that mental health care is not a luxury; it is a necessity and a right we all have as human beings.
Benjamin R. Sher, MA, LMSW is currently the Director of the Office of Global and Lifelong Learning at the NYU Silver School of Social Work.

He began his career at the Institute for Community Living, Inc., (ICL), a behavioral healthcare agency serving metropolitan New Yorkers with mental illness and/or developmental disabilities, as a Program Director overseeing residential services. He served in this role for eight years and then transitioned to Director of Training and Staff Development, overseeing all clinical, regulatory and student development activities at ICL. In addition to this work, Ben has been an Adjunct Instructor with Metropolitan College of New York in the School for Public Administration, and Public Affairs, CUNY/Queensborough Community College and the NYU Silver School of Social Work. Ben was recently awarded the D.R.E.A.M. Foundation’s 2019 Dorothy Irene Height Memorial Award for his commitment to racial and social justice.

Ben’s work with NASW-NYC did not end when his tenure as board president concluded in 2020. His support during the transitions that needed to be made at the chapter during the COVID-19 NYC shutdown were invaluable and continues now with his participation in the NASW-NYC CE Committee, which supports NASW-NYC Educates, and with his support of the NASW-NYC CARES Mentors Program for the 2022-2023 round.

The NASW-NYC Chapter Staff would love to give a special acknowledgment and shoutout to Benjamin R. Sher, MA, LMSW, former President of NASW-NYC BOD (2018-2020), for his continued and consistent support and steadfast love for NASW-NYC and the social work community!
NYC SOCIAL WORK STUDENT VOICES:
INTRODUCING THE 2022-2023 NASW-NYC CARES MEMBER AMBASSADORS

My experience thus far as a NASW-NYC CARES Member Ambassador has been amazing. The support I’ve received from my fellow MAs and the Manager of Community Engagement & Volunteer Initiatives at NASW-NYC has been encouraging and uplifting for me. Being a Member Ambassador has allowed me to network with many MSW students both at my University and other school of social work and has allowed me to share all the amazing events going on at the NASW-NYC Chapter.

My social work interests include Macro and Micro work with children and families, as well as program management.

I look forward to all the amazing things to come in my social work career with the amazing educational exposure I am receiving at the NASW-NYC Chapter.

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NYC SOCIAL WORK STUDENT VOICES:
INTRODUCING THE 2022-2023 NASW-NYC CARES MEMBER AMBASSADORS CONTINUED...

So far, I am enjoying my experience as a NASW-NYC CARES Member Ambassador. I receive support and encouragement from the NASW-NYC Manager of Community Engagement & Volunteer Initiatives. Additionally, I work with an excellent team of other MAs who share the same mindset to promote NASW-NYC information throughout colleges in New York City. Before I joined the NASW-NYC CARES Member Ambassador Program, I was nervous. Today, I am learning how to create, organize, and host workshops. I also feel confident in sharing my voice with others regarding NASW-NYC and its benefits. I feel empowered.

My social work goal is to open a non-profit organization and advocate for social justice. I pivot towards promoting community resources and helping families rebuild broken relationships.

Monique Murray
CUNY Lehman College
Class of 2023

My experience as a NASW-NYC CARES Member Ambassador has been amazing. It has allowed me to work on my public speaking skills all while building my confidence. What I love most about this program is the ability to connect and network with other amazing social work students across NYC. This allows the opportunity to support each other and share resources. I cannot recommend this program enough to other social work students.

At Columbia, I’m an Advanced Clinical Practice student with a focus on Health, Mental Health, and Disabilities. Upon graduation, I plan on pursuing a PhD in Social Work.

As a Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) MFP Fellow, I am currently being trained to work with underrepresented and underserved racial/ethnic minority persons with or at risk for mental health and/or substance abuse disorders. This aligns with my interest in learning and researching the connection between substance use, intimate partner violence, incarceration and vulnerability to HIV among young Black men.

Linden Christopher Isles
Columbia University - SSW
Class of 2023

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NYC SOCIAL WORK STUDENT VOICES:
INTRODUCING THE 2022-2023 NASW-NYC CARES MEMBER AMBASSADORS CONTINUED...

Yanina Prado
CUNY Lehman College
BSW Class of 2024

Being a first-semester BSW student and a NASW-NYC CARES Member Ambassador has allowed me to connect with other social work students at both the BSW and MSW levels so I can begin expanding my social work community.

In addition, it offers me opportunities to collaborate with other Member Ambassadors on different projects and workshops, which helps enhance my public speaking skills, as well as my presentation and project management skills. Furthermore, it allows me to connect and network with other social workers working in many various fields of social work.

Being a first semester BSW student, I am still determining which area I want to focus on. I’m confident that as I progress on this journey and continue working with NASW-NYC, I will eventually find my niche.
IN MEMORIAM
BARBARA BRENNER, DRPH, MSW
FORMER NASW-NYC BOARD PRESIDENT
1994 – 1996

PLEASE NOTE SOME OF THE LANGUAGE AND WORDING WAS TAKEN DIRECTLY FROM A NY TIMES LEGACY.COM OBITUARY.

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Dr. Brenner began her career as a social work intern, becoming the first Director of Community Relations for Mount Sinai in 1985. In that role, she spearheaded the expansion of Mount Sinai’s services into East Harlem, leading teams providing health care education and medical screenings for public housing residents, and she was instrumental in founding Linkage House, which contains 71 units of supportive housing for older adults.

In partnership with New York City, Dr. Brenner founded a farmers market at Mount Sinai to bring affordable, healthy food to local residents. She was a board member of several community nonprofit organizations, including the NASW-NYC Chapter, where she served as Board President from 1994-1996 and was instrumental in the early years of NASW-NYC PACE.

After retiring in 2013, she continued as Adjunct Associate Professor of Environmental Medicine and Public Health at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai. In that role, Dr. Brenner was a pioneer in building meaningful and collaborative partnerships with community leaders to reduce health inequities.

The social work profession has lost a tireless social justice advocate and mentor, known for her intelligence, diplomacy, humanity, and love for East Harlem. The NASW-NYC expresses our deepest condolences to her husband, Bob Rosengard, and loved ones.

Some Words from Colleagues
(Taken from Legacy.Com)

"So sad to hear about the untimely death of my social work colleague and friend Barbara Brenner. I first met her in NASW-NYC when she was President and later when she was Chair of the Social Work section of NYAM. Barbara was an incredible leader, so knowledgeable, so inclusive, so respectful of all, and so able and eager to create and develop programs to help the most needy. She wasn't a person who just talked about what would benefit others but always moved ahead with initiatives that actually make a difference."

-- Dr. Elaine Congress
Associate Dean and Professor - Fordham University GSSS
Associate Director, The Fordham Center for Nonprofit Leaders
NASW-NYC Pioneers Committee/ NASW-NYC Ethics Committee

"Barbara was a friend and mentor and an outstanding social worker. She served as President of the NYC chapter of the National Association of Social Workers from 1994 to 1996 and advanced the cause of the profession in health care. Her role in connecting Mount Sinai Medical Center to East Harlem and overcoming its isolation from the community cannot be overstated. Condolences to her husband of 30 plus years, Bob Rosengard."

-- Robert Schachter, DSW, MSW
Former NASW-NYC Executive Director

NASW-NYC CURRENTS NEWSLETTER
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