



SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT NEWS

Spring 2024

McINNIS HALL

A LETTER FROM LESLIE GREGORY

Happy *almost* Spring and Happy Social Work Month!! I was driving into Eastern this morning and noticed the flower beds had been cleaned and new mulch laid. The beds are ready for the many spring flowers, which grace our campus, to push through the dirt and bloom. This made me think of our MSW cohorts who will be graduating on May 3rd and BSW seniors who graduate on May 4th. It has been a privilege to see them grow and start to bloom in preparation for the first or next step in their social work careers. We are trusting the seeds sown during this season of learning will produce fruitful social work careers and inspire lifelong learning. Isaiah 61:11 (MSG) says, "For as the earth bursts with spring wildflowers, and as a garden cascades with blossoms, so the Master, God, brings righteousness into full bloom and puts praise on display before the nations." We are praising God for what he has done and will continue to do in the lives of our students and graduates and for the opportunities they will have to advocate for, support, and empower the clients they serve.



Leslie Gregory
*Social Work Department Chair,
BSW Field Director*



March is Social Work Month and this year's theme is Empowering Social Workers! The National Association of Social Workers hopes to draw attention to the need for higher pay for social workers. The work of social workers is very important and increasingly in demand. NASW seeks to support social work professionals in advocating for better pay for the hard work they are doing. If you'd like to read more about this initiative go to the website listed here: <https://www.socialworkers.org/News/Social-Work-Month/Theme-and-Rationale-2024>



EASTERN
UNIVERSITY

MARCH IS SOCIAL WORK MONTH

On Wednesday March 13th, we will host our annual colloquium for students, alumni, and social work professionals. This presentation will focus on practice wisdom from a Christian worldview.

If you would like to attend, please email socialwk@eastern.edu



SOCIAL WORK COLLOQUIUM

"BUILDING ON THE PRACTICE WISDOM OF
ALAN KEITH-LUCAS"

WEDNESDAY MARCH 13TH

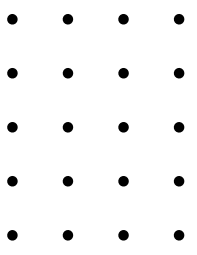
6:30-8:00 PM

VIA ZOOM

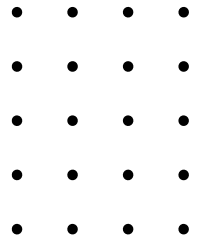
We hope you can join us as Sandy Bauer and Leslie Gregory present "Building on the Practice Wisdom of Alan Keith-Lucas". We will offer 1.5 CEUs for attendance at the training. Please RSVP to socialwk@eastern.edu if you plan to attend and indicate if you need the CEU. We will send a zoom link to all who RSVP.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION EMAIL US AT [SOCIALWK@EASTERN.EDU](mailto:socialwk@eastern.edu)

 **EASTERN**



UNDERGRAD SOCIAL WORK IDENTITY WORKSHOP



Discussion, Insight, & Learning

- Is Social Work the profession for you?
- What is Social Work and where did it come from?
- Your vision and mission as a social worker
- Values
- Professional Identity Development

Date: Saturday March 16th
Time: 9:00 AM- 3:00 PM
Place: Eagle Great Room
Lunch is provided

**Please contact Dr. Sylvia Bekele
for more information at
sylvia.bekele@eastern.edu**

REGISTER HERE



“The LORD will guide you always; He will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail.”

- Isaiah 58:11

MSW INFO

ACCREDITATION UPDATE

We are awaiting a final decision on the accreditation of our MSW program any day now. We should know very soon and will make an announcement in the coming days!

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: SHELBY KEMP

Returning to Eastern University to complete my MSW is very exciting and comforting. I was blessed to live on campus while completing my BSW and always enjoyed the beautiful campus. During my time in undergrad I was able to experience two eye-opening internships and continue to use the knowledge I gained during that time every day.



Once graduating I was able to work with teen mothers in a residential program for two years and even was able to support a youth while she welcomed her baby girl into the world.

Currently, I am working with foster care youth ages 14-23 as a life skills counselor and am a part of the most amazing work team.

Everyday looks different but the youth continue to inspire me every day to learn something new. I'm excited as I begin the MSW program at Eastern because I know I will have the most caring instructors and challenging coursework. While beginning my MSW internship I look forward to learning more about the DEI program at my agency and how to bring their work into the everyday work with my clients. In the future my goal is to network with other professionals to create more independent living programs for youth to be better equipped for a successful future.

PRISON MINISTRY PROGRAM

Prison Ministry is a student-led ministry at Eastern University. Prison Ministry strives to create a positive and spiritual atmosphere for those impacted by the justice system by teaching the Word of God and supporting families. They educate the campus on the components of the justice system and the hardship caused by the prison system. They help the Eastern community find ways to get involved and make a difference.

Friday nights the club travels to the Lancaster Youth Intervention Center to meet with the residents. They hold Bible lessons, topical studies, snacks, and gym time with them.

Two of our social work students are leaders of this ministry.

Kaila Alessi is a senior and has been involved in Prison Ministry since her freshman year at Eastern in 2020. Kaila chose to attend Eastern University for the social work program, but especially because she knew she needed to be involved in Prison Ministry. She says, "I think this was my calling from God all along. I needed to be at this school to be in the club. After I toured and attended a Prison Ministry meeting for the first time before even becoming committed to the University I knew."

Jenna joined the leadership team during her Sophomore year and has helped co-lead the ministry ever since. Jenna states, "since joining Prison Ministry my freshman year, there is nothing I'd rather do on a Friday night than spend time with the youth at LCYIC. Leading the ministry has helped me grow in my leadership skills and overall understanding of the prison system. I truly believe that the club has helped open my eyes to the purpose God has for my life".



Senior, Kaila Alessi and Junior, Jenna Crowley

BRINGING A MALE PERSPECTIVE TO SOCIAL WORK

Though most of my peers are and will be women, I feel right at home in this profession. Growing up with two social workers for parents, I knew I wanted to help people. Despite my own desire not to become a social worker, life and societal circumstances began to lead me toward the path of social work. I had many people supporting my decision, but also many questioning it. They commented "Why would you want to do that, you won't make any money." I heard what they said and always discounted it. What stuck with me is what they usually said next: "Social work could use more men." This inspired me. My whole life I was blessed to see my father break stereotypes and excel as a man in a profession society had deemed to be "for women". Now I have the privilege and opportunity to walk in his footsteps and continue breaking stereotypes and barriers. I am excited to be able to help a population of male individuals who may not have had someone in social work to represent them. I hope to bring a diverse perspective and a different lens to helping. I have the privilege of being in a cohort with two other male students: Will Campbell and Jameson Brown. They have been paramount in my process of growing as a fellow male social worker. I cannot thank all of my peers enough for constantly challenging me and helping me learn.



Seniors, Jameson Brown, Will Campbell, and Toby Gregory



SSWA NEWS

On February 12th, the Student Social Work Association held a plant workshop, as a self-care event. Student chose a plant, learned how to care for it and were able to take it home at the end of the night.



STUDENT PRACTICUM TRAVEL ASSISTANCE FUND

The social work department has a fund designed to assist BSW practicum students with the cost of travel to & from their agencies. As we all know, the cost of gas, tolls, parking, bus & train fare adds up quickly. This fund is intended to offset some of those expenses for students. We wish to thank our alumni who have generously contributed to this fund.

If anyone wishes to add to this fund, you can go to the site below to make a donation. Be sure to add Social Work Student Travel Fund in the comment section.

<https://www.eastern.edu/about/offices-centers/advancement/where-give/eastern-fund>

Day of Giving

Another way to help students is to contribute on EU's Day of Giving on March 19th -20th. Simply go to eastern.edu/dayofgiving to contribute. These gifts are used for our Student Social Work Association (SSWA) and Student Travel Assistance



A Message of Thanks

Our students have expressed gratitude for the assistance they've received from the travel fund. Below is a message we wanted to share from one of our junior students

"I just wanted to let you know how much appreciation I have for these travel funds for students. Thank you, and the alumni that helped contribute to make this happen. I am beyond thankful for this distribution to me and other social work students. This is not something I am taking lightly, this means a lot to me. This has eased a lot of stress concerning practicum travel. Thank you and everyone else who made this possible."

*-Kay Burak
Class of 2025*

