



SOCIAL WORK NEWSLETTER

Fall 2024

A MESSAGE FROM LESLIE GREGORY

The word celebration seems to be a fitting one for this newsletter! This fall we admitted the first MSW students since our MSW program received accreditation! We also celebrated 50 years of our BSW program being accredited with a gathering during homecoming week! At that gathering we caught up with one another and heard from a couple of former faculty members. We watched a video from Dr. Ed Kuhlmann, who was the Director of our program when we were accredited and a vital leader of the Social Work Department for decades. He provided the historical context of Tony Campolo, in 1969, being the founder of the BSW Program prior to our accreditation in 1974 (the earliest year accreditation was available by CSWE). I also read some words from Dr. Sandy Bauer (Dr. B.), a long time faculty member, Field Director, and Chair. She said, "I celebrate the students who made a difference in the lives of people who are hurting and who continue to do so." I echo this sentiment as we celebrate all of our students who are social work professionals and interns and making a difference each day! Thank you for carrying on our rich legacy over these past 50 years!!



Sincerely,

Leslie Gregory

50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION



Photo: Heather Stube, '02, Leslie Gregory, '88, and Justin Piff '02

On October 11th, we celebrated 50 years of BSW accreditation with a dessert reception in Baird Library. This event brought together faculty, students, and alumni for a memorable evening. Guests enjoyed some delicious desserts while sharing stories and reminiscing about their experiences at EU. The event featured messages from current and former faculty reflecting on the program's significance in shaping careers. This gathering celebrated past achievements and fostered connections and dedication to social work education.

NOVEMBER TRAINING OPPORTUNITY



The Ethics of Wellness

LESLIE GREGORY, MSW, LSW

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 20TH
6:30-8:30 PM EST

Please plan to join us for this virtual training which is open to students, alumni, and social work professionals. Two (2) CEUs are available to those who need them. Please RSVP to socialwk@eastern.edu if you wish to attend. A meeting link will be sent to you the day before the event.

WE'RE GROWING !

Since earning accreditation our enrollment has jumped significantly and we were thrilled to welcome our largest incoming cohort of students this fall. 81 new students joined our program with 65 enrolled in our regular program and 16 in our advanced standing program.

In addition, several BSW students have returned to us for their MSW degree. We are grateful they entrusted us with their education for a second time.



Considering an MSW?

Our admissions office regularly holds online information sessions. Faculty are on hand to provide program information and answer your questions.

Our next session will be on **November 27th @ 7:00 PM**. Please register at our website or the link below:

[MSW Open House Registration](#)

or

eastern.edu/open-houses-graduate-adult

MSW STUDENT SPOTLIGHT:

Elizabeth Osterday is a recent graduate of our MSW program. In August she began working full time at the non-profit, Inclusion Family Counseling Center in New Bedford, MA. which is also where she did her advanced practicum. She enjoys working in a culturally diverse setting with clients and colleagues who represent a variety of cultural identities including Portuguese, Cape-Veardean, Latinx, and Haitian. She sees clients experiencing a wide variety of mental health issues, including symptoms of complex trauma, PTSD, bipolar disorder, ADHD, anxiety, depression, and grief.

Elizabeth shared that the education she received at Eastern prepared her to approach the helping process for each individual client with cultural humility, seeking to come alongside each person according to their own values and beliefs. By personalizing care around the things that are meaningful to each client, Elizabeth is able to better collaborate with individuals and families to help them address barriers to their wellness that exist on multiple levels, and to help bolster the strengths they already possess to enhance wellbeing.

Recently, Elizabeth helped form a community partnership between her church and her local Immigrants' Assistance Center. Last month, they were able to bring in agency representatives to provide a Q&A info session to the congregation, and now her church is helping to support the Amigos Program, designed to provide unaccompanied minors in her region with helpful resources and quality mental health care. She is excited to continue finding ways in both her professional and personal lives to advance human rights for traditionally marginalized people groups and to build mutually beneficial bridges between minority and majority groups.

ELIZABETH OSTERDAY



PRISON MINISTRY

The EU Prison Ministry is a student-led ministry which provides education about the justice system to students and ministry to those at the Lancaster Youth Intervention Center. Weekly meetings are held on Tuesday evenings with educational lessons and discussions on the criminal justice system. On Friday evenings members travel to the LCYIC, where they lead a bible study as well as engaging with the youth through games. October was Youth Justice Awareness Month and the Prison Ministry hosted it's annual YJAM week the 28th -1st. On Tuesday evening they hosted a guest speaker from the Prison Education Program. This speaker was previously a student of the program and just recently was released. On Wednesday evening they hosted the Y-JAM open mic competition sponsored by PEP. All students, staff and community members were welcome to watch or perform! There were judges and gift card prizes for the top two performances! Hosting these events was very exciting, especially the Y-JAM, and for the partnership with PEP! This is something that used to happen in the past years but is the first year since the pandemic that they are able to host it again.



Prison Ministry Team Members: Isaiah, Jenna, Kyle, & Micah

Check out what BSW students say about their experience in Prison Ministry

Prison Ministry for me was a chance to build a relationship with those around me whether it be my friends or peers. Prison justice has always been an interest of mine even when I was younger. For me this Ministry grew my fellowship with Christ as well which has helped me build an understanding and an appreciation for those around me and helped shape my dedication for my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. His guidance leads me to help others no matter the circumstances and he often reminds me that I am his loving child and not his Wrath and Judgement. Empathy and courage goes a long way with the Lord and I. - Kyle Gileot '26

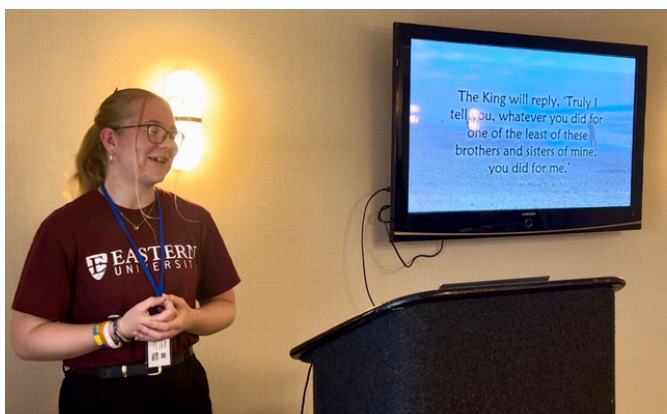
Without joining Prison Ministry my freshman year I truly believe my college experience would have been drastically different. Prison Ministry has opened my eyes to the love of Christ and has provided me with many of the friendships and connections I value. The ministry has also helped me discover my passion for at-risk youth and desire to pursue a social work career helping those affected by various at-risk factors. This ministry has also helped me discover my love for spreading God's word and leading discussions about His goodness. I am very grateful for the teens we have met at the LCYIC, the opportunities the Prison Ministry has provided me and for the lasting impact it has had on my life. - Jenna Crowley '25

Prison Ministry has been and will be one of the highlights of ministry times at Eastern University. I have loved serving in the Prison Ministry ministry at EU with amazing leaders as it is simply amazing to live in the calling of God to share the gospel and love of Jesus Christ by meeting people where they are and simply being with them intentionally through the Holy Spirit. Prison Ministry is living out the call of Micah 6:8 to "do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God" and the great commission of Jesus Christ to make disciples of all nations to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. I have been blessed to serve, honor, and love the people of Lancaster Youth Intervention Center to Jesus Christ with amazing people and leaders who serve in the Prison Ministry Club of Eastern University. - Micah Chapman '27

BSW STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

We are proud of freshman, Cathleen Saunders, who presented "Community Solutions to Homelessness in a faith based practice: YACHT" at the NACSW annual conference on October 10th in Dallas, Texas.

Below is a photo of Cathleen presenting and one with her father who was there to cheer her on.



KYRA GONZALEZ

Kyra Gonzalez '18 is a proud graduate of Eastern's BSW program and she earned an MSW from Widener University '19. Since graduation Kyra has served as a Foster Care Adoption Supervisor, and Family Preservation Worker. Currently, Kyra works as an Emergency Department and Intensive Care Unit Social Worker at UPMC Harrisburg, where she assists in discharge planning for all patients, helping them navigate complex care situations. Kyra recently received the Above and Beyond award for helping a mother in critical need of life saving treatment. This mother had a newborn baby, had limited supports, and was from another country. Kyra and her team helped the mother and baby by providing support during their stay and after leaving the hospital. The mom now has a job and is stable thanks to community support. Kyra and a coworker went on to win the Presidents Award, which recognizes individuals whose service was exceptional and outstanding from the President of the hospital. Kyra is extremely grateful for the education she received from Eastern's BSW Program, which taught her how to love the marginalized and seek to honor their dignity and worth.



Kyra Gonzales '18

HEATHER STUBE

Heather (Darby) Stube is a proud graduate of Eastern's BSW program in 2002. She went on to obtain her Master's of Social Work from Widener University in 2003, and began her journey in social work at a non-profit organization counseling pregnant and parenting teens. Heather shifted her career in 2005 and spent the next 18 years in various roles as a medical social worker and administrator in a long-term care facility. Heather left the healthcare realm in 2023 to pursue her lifelong dream as a mental health therapist and is excited to be opening a local branch of the Centre Counseling and Wellness in Phoenixville this fall! Heather is also overjoyed to be teaching a social work elective at Eastern this fall on Social Work and Services to the Aging. Heather married her college sweetheart, Nathaniel, and they celebrated their 20th wedding anniversary last year! They have 2 wonderful and energetic sons (9yo and 15yo) and are proud and loyal residents of Phoenixville, PA. Heather and her family love traveling to the beach, visiting museums, and spending time at home outside playing fetch with their dog, Poppy.



Heather with her husband, Nathaniel and sons, Colston, 9 & Miles, 15

MEET THE SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT



Kimberly Bass teaches in our BSW program.



Sylvia Bekele teaches in the MSW program and is the co-director of the MSW program.



Christyn Dodla teaches in both the BSW and MSW programs.



Joy Elvin teaches in our MSW program and is the MSW internship director.



Paul Felker teaches in both the BSW and MSW programs and is the MSW program director.



Leslie Gregory is the department chair, the BSW practicum director and teaches in the BSW program.



Dianna Montgomery teaches in both the BSW and MSW programs



Colleen Ellis
Administrative Operations
Coordinator

HAPPY THANKSGIVING

As we look forward to the Thanksgiving holiday, we want to take a moment to express our gratitude for your support and connection. May your holiday be filled with warmth, laughter, and delicious food shared with loved ones. This season, let's celebrate the moments that bring us together and God's blessings in our lives.

The social work faculty and staff wish you a joyful and fulfilling Thanksgiving!



Happy Thanksgiving