



# ACES Community Engagement Project

Partnership Training Skills: Connecting MSW  
and BSW Students in Two UH Campuses

# Partnership Training Skills: Connecting MSW and BSW Students in Two UH Campuses Final Report

**A community engagement project funded by  
Advancing Community Engagement and Service Institute (ACES)**

Reported by

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## Executive Summary

With a strong emphasis on community engagement, the University of Houston (UH) has placed importance of service learning on students' achievement record. The Advancing Community Engagement and Service Institute (ACES) was launched in October 2017 with the vision to deepen student learning through direct community service planning and implementation. The promotion of service learning aims to combine real-world learning and community engagement so that our students become engaged learners and informed citizens.

With full support from Dean Alan Dettlaff, the Graduate College of Social Work (GCSW) received an ACES grant to implement a project "Partnership Training Skills: Connecting MSW and BSW Students in Two UH Campuses," led by Principal Investigator Dr. Monit Cheung, Mary R. Lewis Endowed Professor of Children & Youth, Director of Child & Family Center for Innovative Research. From Spring to Summer 2019, a service learning course ("Partnership Training Skills" or PTS) was planned and delivered to infuse child welfare contents into the Master of Social Work (MSW) curriculum and to encourage Title IV-E students to work in practice projects with Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) students from the University of Houston-Downtown (UHD). UH and UHD students were paired to test training effectiveness that benefits foster/adoptive parents, with an added component focusing on kinship foster families.

When submitted this grant to Sarah Fard, Program Director of ACES Institute, Dr. Cheung shared with her about the newly passage of the *Family First Preventive Services Act*. This grant would set a beginning effort to prove that kinship training could provide data for securing additional research funding for child protection. In January 2019, Dr. Cheung worked with the staff of her Title IV-E grant, Ms. Arnitia Walker and Dr. Trish Taylor, and invited Dr. Dawn McCarty of UHD to join this team to plan this service learning course and pilot-test the course in the summer semester of 2019. Four MSW students and 4 BSW students received a scholarship to enroll in this course. These students formed 4 dyads to deliver four foster parent training programs under supervision. Curricular activities were planned to integrate knowledge acquired from the kinship/foster care community before delivering the course. Service learning evaluation was performed based on three anticipated outcomes: problem solving, communication, and interpersonal collaboration—needed skills for social workers to be successful. Although no significant changes were found in the problem-solving area, due to high pre-course scores already expressed by these students, the areas on communication and interpersonal collaboration have shown improvement. Further investigations will focus on attitudinal changes toward improving child welfare services and kinship involvement.

Evaluation data from the foster parent training programs showed every success of this project: as a bridge to connect the faculty, staff and students from two UH campuses, showing leadership in the field of child welfare training that provides support to foster parents in the community. The winners are our students as the ACES fund was awarded to the eight students who demonstrated effort to make kinship care a trauma-informed choice for the youth in the child welfare system.

## Appendix B. Video of Project Evaluation

### Video Report (8:38')

This video report was created to demonstrate how the dyadic relationship between the MSW and BSW students from two campuses (UH and UHD) were formed and bonded. Eight students and four faculty members of the Partnership Training Skills course offered in the summer semester of 2019 talked about their learning experiences and training benefits. This video report is now posted at the National Title IV-E Website: <http://www.uh.edu/socialwork/academics/cwep/title-iv-e/Child-Welfare-Video/> and can also be found at: <https://youtu.be/HlmXPtQWEIM>

