

Child Welfare Education Project

CWEP NewsLine



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Director's Corner

Amitia Walker



In 1999 when the first students entered the CWEP program, they probably did not have a clue as to how the program would enhance their skills and make them more qualified child welfare workers.

As of today, CWEP has graduated over 170 students and is proud to say that our goal is to continue to provide CPS staff with the tools that they need in order to become effective Child Protective Service employees. The goals of the CWEP program include preparing students for leadership roles and teaching them how to work effectively with various cultures, organizations and communities.

The benefits of being a child welfare worker with a MSW degree are many. Child welfare workers possess the knowledge and skills necessary to resolve the many complex issues that their clients in today's society face, including substance abuse, mental health issues, unemployment, anger management, homelessness, etc. Social workers in other fields may only have to deal one particular issue.

Child welfare is a challenging field that requires the professional to multitask, make assessments and life decisions, work long hours, and carry large caseloads. Having a MSW in the child welfare field gives workers more power and prestige in their position which allows them to advocate for their clients while serving as experts in the area of child welfare. Both classroom knowledge and internships provide the worker with the knowledge and skills necessary to achieve success.

The work of a child welfare worker is never done. They are charged with the responsibility of working with families and children to help them locate and utilize much needed services. They make critical decisions which include whether or not a child will return to their biological family or spend the rest of their lives in another permanent living arrangement. There are not many other professions where employees are tasked with making such critical decisions.

CWEP graduates are not only better prepared and qualified to be successful in the area of child welfare but they are also opening the door to multiple opportunities upon retirement from this fulfilling career.

Announcements

CSWE Annual Program Meeting

October 15-18, 2015

Denver, Colorado

Registration: <http://www.cswe.org/Meetings/2015APM/77159.aspx>

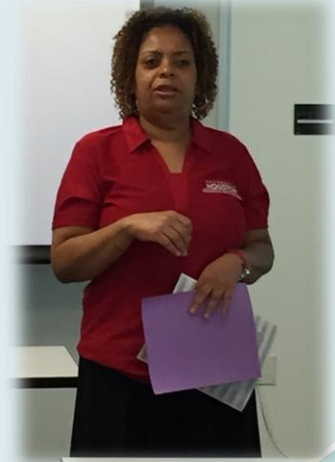
NASW Texas State Conference

November 12-14, 2015

Galveston, TX

Registration: http://www.naswtx.org/events/event_details.asp?id=652726

- We have a new L.E.O. Mentor, Shu Zhou (p. 7)! Please also meet our **CWEP-CPS mentors** and feel free to reach out to them for additional guidance:
 - Jaysa Curry (Jaysa.Curry@dfps.state.tx.us)
 - Meredith Atkinson (Meredith.Atkinson@dfps.state.tx.us)
 - Yolette Sneed (Yolette.Sneed@dfps.state.tx.us)
 - Ashley Monie (Ashley.Monie@dfps.state.tx.us)
- Welcome, new CWEP students! CWEP orientation was held on August 13, 2015.



Advising Tip: Brunessia Lewis

- ✓ Students, always follow your degree plans when you are registering for classes!!!!

Field Tips: Vanessa Shippard

- ✓ Gain trust early on.
- ✓ Take your work seriously.

e-Library Resources

You now have online access to DSM-5 books: including DSM-5 manual, DSM-5 casebook, other DSM-5 materials through this website (you need to log on with your CougarNet ID):

<http://guides.lib.uh.edu/socialwork>. In this website, you also have online access to many video collections on child welfare and other related topics. If you have questions, please contact Dr. Cheung.

The screenshot shows the 'Social Work Resources' website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'Libraries', 'Research Guides', 'Social Sciences, Business & Education', and 'Social Work Resources'. Below this is a search bar and a 'Print Page' button. The main content area is divided into several sections: 'Quick Links' with various service links like 'DSM-5', 'DSM-5 Clinical Casebook', and 'Library Hours'; 'About This guide' which explains the site's purpose; 'Online Video Collection' listing resources like 'Kanopy Online Video Collection' and 'Firms On Demand: Health & Medicine Videos Collection'; 'Featured Resource: Encyclopedia of Social Work Online'; 'Search Library Collection (For Books, Videos and Others)' with a search box; and 'WorldCat Search'. On the right side, there is a 'Contact Your Librarian' section featuring a photo of Irene Ke and her contact information, including phone number (713-743-8768) and email (i@uh.edu).

LMSW Licensing Prep Exam Center

As a CWEP student, your name will be added to Dr. Monit Cheung's LMSW Center (Free Access via Blackboard) for this academic year. You may start practicing your exam strategies via this website where you have many attempts to four-module tests and a 170-question mock test. Contact Dr. Cheung if you have questions about LMSW licensure.

Student Spotlight

Elizabeth Wade



Hello, my name is Elizabeth Wade, and I am pleased to say that I am a CWEP student. I have been employed with DFPS for over 12 years. I initially began with the agency as an Investigative worker. I really did not know what I was getting into at the time; however my experience as an investigative worker was a very "eyes wide open" experience. If I had been in the CWEP program during that time I feel I would have been more effective in my interactions with clients.

As I transitioned from investigation to a Foster Adoption worker and Foster Adoption Supervisor, I was able to get a clear understanding of why it is so important to collect and provide as much information as possible initially, and to make the connections of how cases' stages progress from one program to the next.

I became interested in the CWEP program after talking to previous graduates of the CWEP program and attending two CWEP Information meetings before I made up my mind to apply. It was interesting that all of the CWEP graduates spoke very positively about the program. So I was motivated to seek a MSW to acquire as much knowledge and skills as possible, with an agency that supports this program. Since I've been with DFPS, there have been continual changes in policies and business practices, and I want to continue to be a valuable contributor to DFPS through the changes and in my personal life. My course work has helped me to understand DFPS clients better and to hopefully be of better service to them regardless of their circumstances.

I can truly say that I have gained knowledge and skills from my courses that I am transferring over into my professional and personal life. I secretly smile to myself when I am having a discussion at work or away from work regarding an issue; I find myself, when speaking with others, referring back to something I've learned in class and trying to reference it to them.

I try to reflect on my experiences and I implement them through my education. As a CWEP student, my accomplishment is in being a better DFPS employee as a result of being in the graduate Social Work program. I now have an in-depth understanding of trauma and how it affects the victim and how everyone in the family suffers too. The CWEP program will help me in my abilities to carry out my duties with the agency, and later in the future when retire. My skills could possibly help with a part-time job to subsidize my retirement income, as I know being in social services that my retirement alone will not be enough to maintain my expenses.

Additionally, I am an older student so I have been impressed overall with the instructors' willingness to explain and teach to the different learning styles and age groups with limited computer skills. I feel blessed to be a student in a program that wants everyone to be successful. A Social Workers' skills are transferable skills that can be utilized in all walks of life.

Alumni Spotlight: Arnitha Jones



1. What is your current job position?

I am currently employed with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. I have been employed with the agency for over 13 years. I am currently a Supervisor II of an Investigation Unit that investigates abuse and neglect of children in areas that have a high poverty rate in the Region 6 area. I review and approve casework to ensure decisions are appropriate and consistent with policies and procedures.

2. How did CWEP or your MSW program prepare you for your job?

Obtaining my MSW at UH GCSW helped me to better serve my agency, my staff and most importantly, the family's that I serve. The MSW program gave me a better understanding of how to engage clients while respecting the various family dynamics. The GCSW program also helped me to understand the importance of community engagement to achieve social, economic and political justice. The GCSW program provided me the confidence to promote, monitor, and ensure that respect is demonstrated for cultural diversity.

3. Tell us about your achievements in your work.

I have supervised both Investigation and Family Based Safety Service (FBSS) units while being employed with DFPS. I have obtained my certification as a Supervisors II. I have completed the DFPS leadership program and I am currently preparing to sit for the MSW licensure exam.

4. What advice do you have for our current CWEP students?

I would advise anyone who is currently in the program to enjoy the learning that is being provided and to not under estimate the value of the program's curriculum. The knowledge that is provided by the GCSW will be a benefit in a myriad of areas in Social Work. I would also advise current students to take the MSW exam as soon as possible after graduation.

Staff Spotlight

Simon Law



- 1. What is your current position with CWEP ? How long have you been working in this position? What prior experience(s) did you bring with you to this position?**

I am currently working as a research assistant (RA) for CWEP. I started working as an RA in February 2015. I also teach elementary and middle school students from Hong Kong about their homework via Skype in the mornings. Before I immigrated from Hong Kong to the United States, I was a teacher and discipline master in a school in Hong Kong. My prior experience showed me a new interest in this position.

- 2. What have been the greatest rewards working in the CWEP family?**

As a member of the CWEP, I have received memorable experiences when interacting with professors, staff, and other research assistants. My position allowed me to learn more on how to find therapists for children and how to correct their inappropriate behaviors. I hope that I can use the knowledge that I have acquired over this period of time to promote the general welfare of Houston's children.

- 3. What advice do you have for our CWEP students?**

The best advice that I can provide for others is to actively listen to the children's thoughts. When you interact with them, you should be patient and respectful. The most important factor of all, though, is to thoroughly explain the causes and effects of all your actions before you take them.



Do You Know L.E.O.?

Learning Enhancement Opportunity

LEO is an academic mentorship program providing academic support for Child Welfare Education Project (CWEP) students

Under the supervision of Dr. Monit Cheung, PhD, LCSW (Professor of Social Work, mcheung@uh.edu), a Social Work Doctoral Student (Shu Zhou, LMSW) will serve as the "LEO Mentor" to current CWEP students to provide consultation in the following areas:

- Research skills
- Résumé polishing
- Paper or presentation preparation
- LMSW exam preparation
- Other academic consultations

Consultation can be provided through either face-to-face meetings or emails to:
LEO Mentor: Shu Zhou, LMSW, at zhoushu0630@gmail.com.



*Since CWEP LEO doesn't provide editing services, you are encouraged to consult the UH Writing Center if you need editorial assistance (FREE service for graduate students by appointment): <http://www.uh.edu/writecen/> (Click at "Student Services" and "Schedule an Appointment for a Writing Consultation" (face-to-face or online).

*For APA referencing format, go to CWEP website for current students: http://www.uh.edu/socialwork/New_research/cwep/current-students/ (scroll down and click at "APA format for citations")

***Get to know L.E.O.
You'll be glad you did.***

An academic mentorship program offered by
Child Welfare Education Project
A Title-IV-E GCSW/CPS Partnership Grant