



The Social Buzz



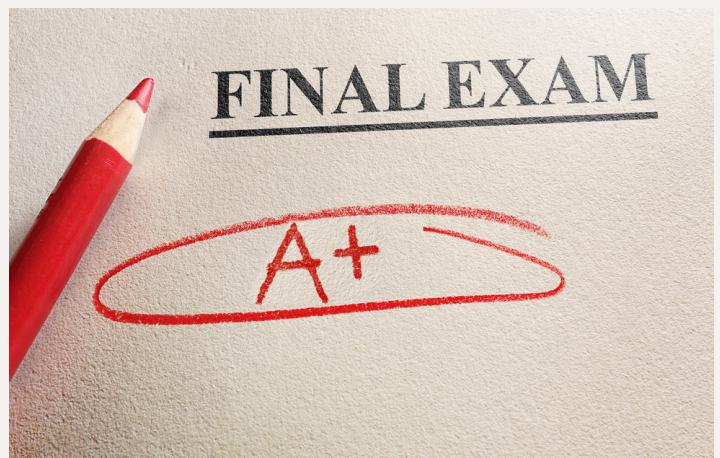
School of Social Work

December 4- December 10, 2025

MESSAGE FROM DIRECTOR

Dear Social Work Students,

This is our final week of classes, and I want to acknowledge your hard work and dedication this semester. I know this time of year can be both demanding and rewarding, and I hope you're finding moments to care for yourselves as you prepare for finals and wrap up practicum hours.



This week brings several exciting opportunities for our school community:

Faculty Candidate Presentations – We're hosting five outstanding candidates for our tenure-track assistant professor positions December 3-9. I encourage you to attend their research presentations (schedule on page 5) and share your feedback through the surveys. Your perspectives are invaluable as we build our faculty team.

Angel Tree Project – Our Child Welfare Scholar Program is partnering with CYFD to brighten the holidays for local children in protective services. Physical tags are available in HSS 210, or scan the QR code (see flyer below) for a virtual tag. Wrapped gifts are due by Thursday, December 18th. What a wonderful way to give back to our community!





MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR



Important Federal Policy Update – You may have seen news about the federal reclassification of some social work degrees. Please know that New Mexico has robust state-level financial aid, scholarships, and paid training opportunities to support your education. The Master of Social Work remains crucial for serving our communities, and we're here to support your success regardless of federal classification changes.

Don't forget about our wonderful **Student Peer Support team** – they offer office hours throughout the week for emotional support, academic guidance, professional development help, and community building. Check **page 17** for their schedule, or scan the QR code to make an appointment.

Finally, if a faculty member has made a difference in your journey here, please consider nominating them for our Faculty Recognition program (**page 15**).

These acknowledgments mean so much to our dedicated faculty.

As always, my door is open. Wishing you strength and success as you finish the semester strong.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Mary Nienow", positioned above the printed name.

Dr. Mary Nienow, Director





In This Issue



SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

<u>Child Welfare Angel Tree Project</u>	4
<u>Faculty Candidates</u>	5
<u>Federal Reclassification</u>	6
<u>DSJ Nook Book</u>	7
<u>New Course Addition</u>	8
<u>Give Feedback to Peer Support</u>	9

NMSU ANNOUNCEMENTS

<u>Spring semester Graduate Assistantship Award</u>	10
---	----

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

<u>Peaceful Demonstration for Human Rights</u>	11
<u>Survivors of Suicide Support Group</u>	12
<u>Dissertation Study</u>	13

SOCIAL WORK

<u>DSJ Column</u>	14
<u>SW Faculty Recognition</u>	15
<u>SW Student Peer Support</u>	16
<u>Peer Support Office Hours</u>	17
<u>Careers And Opportunities</u>	18
<u>Connect With Us</u>	19





Angel Tree Project



The Child Welfare Scholar Program at NMSU's School of Social Work is partnering with the Children, Youth, and Families Department (CYFD) to make the holidays bright for local children in Child Protective Services care.

How You Can Help

Choose a *physical tag* from our tree (HSS 210), or
Request a *virtual tag* by scanning the QR code:



CLICK HERE!

Gifts should be **wrapped & returned with tag** to the School of Social Work front office (**HSS Building, Suite 210**) by **Thursday, Dec.18th.**

****Gifts must be age appropriate and nonviolent. Don't forget to leave your contact info before you take your tag!***

Questions? Contact Erica Tontodonati at ericat@nmsu.edu, or
Caroline Klocksien at cklocksie@nmsu.edu





FACULTY CANDIDATES

Dear students and faculty/staff,

We are very excited to host 5 stellar faculty candidates for our tenure track assistant professor positions for full-day campus interviews December 3-9. You should have just received calendar invites from Sherry Cain to attend their "job talks", or presentations they will provide on their research. All presentations will be held in person in HSS 219 and on zoom (links below).

This is a wonderful opportunity to get to have conversations to get to know candidates and ask questions. We hope you can all attend, whether in person or virtually, and complete a short survey following the meeting.

Here is the schedule, and their CVs are attached here.

Kate Watson	PhD, Social Work, University of California, Los Angeles	Weds Dec. 3	2- 3:30pm	https://nmsu.zoom.us/j/87015718297#success
Tural Mammadli	PhD candidate, Social Work, University of Maryland, Baltimore	Thurs Dec. 4	8:30- 10am	https://nmsu.zoom.us/j/81264507069#success
Anna Walther	PhD candidate, Social Work, University of Wisconsin, Madison	Fri Dec. 5	1- 2:30pm	https://nmsu.zoom.us/j/88431372331#success
Dominique Henderson	PhD candidate, Social Work, University of California, Los Angeles	Mon Dec. 8	10- 11:30a m	https://nmsu.zoom.us/j/88615945307#success
Elizabeth Goldborough	PhD candidate, Social Work, University of Connecticut	Tues Dec. 9	2- 3:30pm	https://nmsu.zoom.us/j/84051260618#success





FEDERAL RECLASSIFICATION OF DEGREES

New Mexico officials are urging students eyeing graduate studies in social work to take advantage of state-level financial aid — just as the federal government moves to reclassify many social work degrees away from “professional” status, potentially reducing federal loan eligibility. The state’s New Mexico Higher Education Department notes that New Mexico has allocated millions for scholarships, graduate support, and paid training opportunities to keep social work programs accessible. Meanwhile, leaders at New Mexico State University emphasize how crucial a master’s in social work remains to serve communities statewide — from schools and hospitals to nursing homes — regardless of the federal classification change.

Read more here: <https://www.krqe.com/news/education/new-mexico-officials-promote-financial-aid-options-as-feds-reclassify-social-work-degrees/>





*This month's recommendations by
Sara H. (student), Mary N.
(admin), and Profs. DiSimone and
Valdespino.*

From the DSJ Book Nook



Curiosity. Escape. Self-care. Grounding. Entertainment. Critical thinking. Expanding your worldview. Cultural humility.

What pulls you back to a dog-eared favorite you've read a dozen times? What makes you hit "play" on the latest beautifully messy, brutally honest memoir? We all read — or listen — for different reasons, and those reasons ebb and flow the same way we do.

Now that the Thanksgiving rush has passed and winter break is coming into view, I hope something in this month's short list gives you exactly what you're looking for — a little rest, a spark of inspiration, a moment to reflect, or just a few minutes of quiet joy.

Remember that reading isn't just an escape; it's one of the ways we stay connected to the complexity of being human. The right story — whether it's thoughtful, ridiculous, honest, or wildly entertaining — can ground us, challenge us, or simply give us a moment to breathe. And honestly, if all you're looking for is something that makes you laugh, gasp, or forget your to-do list for a minute? That counts too.

Angelina Valdespino
DSJ Committee Chair



Scan to access this
month's
recommendations

 THE DSJ COLUMN

DECEMBER 2025





NEW COURSE ADDITION

WHAT HAPPENS
WHEN WE START
PAYING MORE
ATTENTION TO
WHAT'S GOOD?

CEPY 4997 (CRN:50548)
psychology of flourishing

SPRING 2026: TUESDAYS 1:30-4PM

What does it mean to truly flourish, to live a good and meaningful life, even when life is hard? Using a positive psychology lens, this elective course seeks to answer the question of how to thrive and live well. This course will leave you with roots with which to anchor a good life - for yourself and for those whom you seek to serve in the helping professions.



Questions?
Sophia Daley
sophiad
@nmsu.edu





GIVE YOUR FEEDBACK!



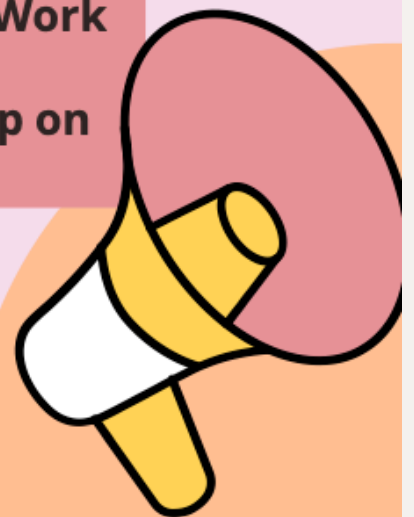
WHAT NEEDS TO BE IMPROVED?

We understand that big listening sessions haven't felt realistic or motivating for many, so we're switching it up!

This is an opportunity to **ANONYMOUSLY** share your experiences, ideas, and concerns to help build a stronger, more inclusive School of Social Work

Your voice matters, and we're not giving up on showing up for you!

Insert your anonymous
comment here:





SPRING SEMESTER GRADUATE ASSISSTANTSHIP AWARD

The Graduate School is pleased to share the 2026 Spring Semester Graduate Assistantship Award announcement for new and continuing graduate students.

The 2026 Spring Semester Graduate Assistantship Award is granted through a competitive basis. This award is for one academic semester (Spring 2026 semester) only! Nominees must be a current graduate student in good academic standing (GPA of at least 3.0 and not on Academic Probation) or admitted as a regular student to a graduate program prior to being nominated for this award.

Nominees must be hired as a Graduate Teaching Assistant or Graduate Research Assistant and not as Graduate Assistant-Other.

Students who are admitted to only Graduate Certificate programs are not eligible to be considered for this award.

The deadline is Friday, January 16, 2026, 5.00 pm.

Faculty must submit the nomination Form available at [2026 Spring Semester Graduate Assistantship Award](#) including the required information:

1. A written statement of about two paragraphs demonstrating how the nominee will be engaged in the teaching and/or research or creative scholarship mission of NMSU.
2. A retention plan that outlines specific strategies that will support the student's success in the graduate program if the nominee is not graduating in Spring or Summer of 2026.





COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENT

Peaceful Demonstration for Human Rights at UTEP

**Want to peacefully
protest Border
Czar Tom Homan?**



Tom Homan to visit UTEP for Turning Point USA chapter event

Homan's visit will take place at 7 p.m. on December 4th at the UTEP Undergraduate Learning Center in room 106. The UTEP student chapter of Turning Point USA is hosting the event.

HERE ARE THE EVENTS TO BE AWARE OF



A PEOPLE'S ACCOUNTABILITY ASSEMBLY
ON INSTITUTIONAL VIOLENCE & CONSTITUTIONAL & HUMAN RIGHTS

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 3
UTEP-LEECH GROVE
4:30PM MST

BORDERNETWORK THE HUMAN RIGHTS JUVENTUD DIGNIDAD INDIVISIBLE 915 LAS AMERICAS

DEC 4TH

**5:00PM- UTEP UNION EAST THOMAS
RIVERA CONFERENCE CENTER**

(Day of)

Culture, Identity, and Governance in the Borderlands

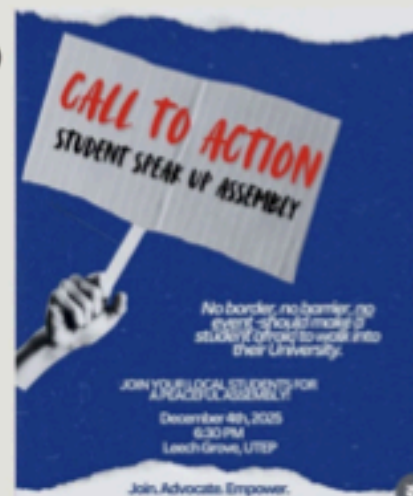


December 4th
Union East
Thomas Rivera
Conference
Center
5 to 7:30

DEC 4TH

6:30PM - UTEP LEECH GROVE

(Day of)





COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENT

SOS

Survivors of Suicide

A Support Group



Free 8 week support group starting in January

Join us for this free, peer-led support group for anyone who has lost a loved one to suicide.

It doesn't matter if it was a spouse, relative, child, sibling, family, or friend. It doesn't matter how long ago.

Please be with us.

Participants are then able to join a monthly drop in group or facilitate meetings in the future.



Registration is required
Contact SOSGroupLC@gmail.com
(575) 249-5375

LCSUICIDEPREVENTION.com 





COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENT

IRB#2025-0398

STUDY ALERT



Student perceptions of their social work programs, police, and immigration enforcement for Dissertation Research

A dissertation research study survey that explores the perceptions of social work students about their social work programs, policing, and immigration enforcement.

You must be

- 18 years+
- Currently in the last academic year of your social work program or have graduated in the last 2 years from a Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) fully accredited undergraduate or Master of Social Work (MSW) program within the United States.



<https://utaedu.questionpro.com/t/AcBtmZ5v2m>

CLICK HERE



Compensation:
\$10 e-gift card
Survey will take
approximately 20-30
minutes



The Social Buzz



socialwork.nmsu.edu 13





SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Voices in Action is the DSJ Committee's ongoing space for connection, creativity, and community. Here, we celebrate the diverse experiences and ideas that shape our collective journey toward social justice. Whether you're a student, faculty member, or staff, this is your space to reflect, express, and inspire.

Voices in Action A DSJ Committee Column

Joy Harjo, an internationally renowned poet, performer, and writer of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, served as the 23rd Poet Laureate of the United States from 2019 – 2022. She's a UNM alum. Learn about Joy and her works here: [Joy Harjo](#)



Share Your Story: We're calling on all creative minds to contribute. Students, your voices are especially vital. Share your practicum insights, reflections on challenging cases, or explore social issues you're passionate about. Faculty and staff, share your research findings or teaching reflections. Your perspectives on social justice are invaluable. Submit your piece through our easy-to-use form and become a part of our creative tapestry.



Click Here

CLICK HERE



Curate Our Reading List: Book lovers, unite! Our monthly reading list offers stories and ideas that challenge, inspire, and connect us. We want to know what books, short stories, and essays have influenced your practice or expanded your worldview on social justice. Share your favorites and discover new reads every first Wednesday of the month.

STUDENTS! We want YOU to Lead the Conversation

We're inviting students to lead short presentations for faculty and staff, offering insight from their lived experiences and the knowledge rooted in their identities and communities. Whether through your cultural background, LGBTQ+ identity, disability experience, first-generation journey, or another underrepresented perspective—your expertise can help shape how we teach, communicate, and connect.



**CLICK
HERE**



Scan to access our
monthly reading
recommendations

 **THE DSJ COLUMN**

NOVEMBER 2025





SW FACULTY RECOGNITION

Welcome back students! Last Spring we launched a **Faculty Recognition program**. We are excited to continue recognizing faculty this year. If there is an instructor/advisor/administrator who has helped you during your time at NMSU, consider nominating them for this honor. Please scan the QR code or click link below to vote!

CLICK HERE

Outstanding Faculty Recognition Form





SW STUDENT PEER SUPPORT

How SW Student Peer Support can Help!



Emotional Support

With the most current events and changes, we are here to listen to your concerns, provide a safe space for all thoughts and feelings, and offer coping strategies. You are not alone, and we are in this together!



Academic Support

We are students too, and we want to share our knowledge and tips to help you all succeed as you navigate the Social Work Program and develop the skills and confidence throughout your journey



Professional Development

We can help you with all inquiries regarding resume building, filling out applications, interview preparation, career planning, skill development, and networking opportunities



Community Building

We strive to create an inclusive and welcoming environment where students can build meaningful connections with their peers through social events, meet & greets, and collaborative learning experiences



Scan here to make an appointment with us:



We hope to connect with you!





OFFICE HOURS

Monday
5 PM - 7 PM

Tuesday
7 AM - 9 AM / 5 PM - 8 PM

Wednesday
7 AM - 9 AM

Thursday
7 AM - 9 AM / 5 PM - 8 PM

Friday
7 AM - 9 AM / 1 PM - 7 PM

Can't meet at these times? Schedule
an appointment using our QR code!

Office Location:

HSS Building, 2nd floor, room 201

Zoom Link:

[https://nmsu.zoom.us/j/831912592
21#success](https://nmsu.zoom.us/j/83191259221#success)



nmsu_socialworkpeersupport





SW CAREERS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Careers & Opportunities webpage dedicated to connecting you with meaningful job openings. From roles within NMSU to opportunities in the broader community, this page is designed to help you find positions that align with your passion and expertise. Visit the page to explore the latest listings and take the next step in your career!



Careers & Opportunities



CONNECT WITH US

School of Social Work Website



Facebook



Instagram



Stay tuned for the latest updates, stories, and highlights from the School of Social Work!

In next week's edition, we'll bring you:

- Spotlights on Recent Achievements
- Upcoming Events and Workshops
- Student and Faculty Features
- Useful Resources and Tips

Got something to share or a question to ask?

Feel free to reach out to us:

✉ socwork@nmsu.edu

☎ Phone: 575-646-2143

🏢 Office: HSS 210

We'd love to hear from you and feature your news in our next issue!

