

# Spring 2024 Newsletter

**EDITS BY:**

**ABBY DAVIS, GRACE MILLER & DEBBIE CHOPKA**

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**MICAH 6:8**  
“ACT JUSTLY, LOVE  
MERCY, AND WALK  
HUMBLY WITH  
YOUR GOD”



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## *A Letter From the Chair*

A STATEMENT FROM DR. LING DINSE,  
DSW, MSW, LSW



It is an honor to greet you as the new Department Chair of Social Work. I have been a licensed social worker for almost three decades and continue to see the value of my chosen profession. I believe social work training equips us to meet the needs of our increasingly complex world, and the profession's six core values encourage us to engage the world to reflect the love and compassion of Jesus. The core value of service reminds us to serve with a posture of humility, as modeled by Jesus, who came to serve and not to be served. Our profession's strong emphasis on social justice motivates us to advocate and empower the marginalized. Jesus did not shy away from challenging the religious leaders with political power and lovingly engaged with the outcasts. Social workers also affirm each person's dignity and worth as an image bearer and embrace individuals from diverse backgrounds. Jesus affirms our worth to the point of sacrificing his life on the cross. One of the central tasks of social work is to promote relational healing as we fulfill the value of the importance of human relationships. Jesus came to earth with the key mission to mend our broken relationship with God and this sacrificial act reflected how much he cares about relationships. Finally, social workers fulfill their responsibilities with integrity and competency to support others' flourishing in a trusting relationship, as Jesus fulfilled the promise foretold in ages past.

The field of social work has its challenges, but the joy of encouraging others' flourishing outweighs the trials along the way. I hope this message encourages you to continue to embrace the social work profession as a beautiful way to share the love of Christ in our hurting world.

Peace and Grace,  
Dr. Ling Dinse

MESSIAH UNIVERSITY  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

[www.messiah.edu/socialwork](http://www.messiah.edu/socialwork)

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## FAREWELL TO DR. LANE

We would like to thank Dr. Lane for all you have done for the Department of Social Work and your commitment to making a positive difference. We pray blessing over you as your transition into your role at the Department of Aging.



## SPRING SEMESTER "WELCOME BACK" HOT COCOA RECEPTION

The Department of Social Work kicked off the spring semester by celebrating with a hot cocoa party! Dr. Dinse and Professor George welcomed students back from winter recess and shared about some upcoming department events. Phi Alpha and the Social work club also discussed some of their upcoming events.



# Semester Highlights

## LEAD DAY

MARCH 19, 2024

Professor Tara Piechowicz, the policies class, and any additional students had the opportunity to travel to the PA Capitol and participate in LEAD Day. Legislative Education and Advocacy Day (LEAD) is an annual event hosted by NASW-PA, where close to 1,000 social work students and professionals gather to advocate for legislation that is relevant to the social work profession. This year the house was voting upon the Social Work Licensure Compact Model Legislation HB 1500. The compact permits eligible social workers to practice in others states that are under the compact.

Upon arriving at the Capitol there was a rally on the front steps and legislators gave speeches encouraging social workers and describing the importance of the Social Work Licensure Compact Model Legislation HB 1500 and the Minimal Wage Bill. Then students had the privilege of meeting with Senator Maria Collett. Throughout the day students had the ability to learn about the capitol's policies and bureaucracy.



## IPE Spotlight: Disaster Drill

MARCH 7, 2024

Professor Michelle George and the Social Work sophomore class partnered with the Department of Nursing to participate in their annual disaster drill. The students attended a pre-brief with the senior nursing students who were acting as first-responding nurses. During the pre-brief, the social work students learned about the basic structure and processes of the disaster drill, and what the roles of the nurses are. During the drill, the social work students stepped into their roles as social workers and provided care for victims and support for nursing team members. The students utilized critical thinking other social work skillsets to provide care. Afterward, all participating faculty and students attended a debrief. Many of the nursing students, both those who were acting as nurses and those who were victims, expressed that they found Social Work's participation in the event to be influential. Many of the students who were playing disaster victims expressed that having emotional and spiritual support from the social workers helped them to see how social workers can provide aid during a crisis situation.

"ALTHOUGH I FELT NERVOUS GOING INTO THE DRILL, ONCE IT STARTED, I FELT LIKE I WAS QUICKLY ABLE TO FIND MY ROLE AS A SOCIAL WORKER AND UTILIZE THE SKILL SETS AND TOOLS I HAVE TO BEST SUPPORT THOSE AROUND ME. I AM THANKFUL FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE IN IPES AND GAIN EXPERIENCE COLLABORATING WITH THOSE WHO HAVE A DIFFERENT VOCATIONAL CALLING THAN ME."

-GRACE MILLER, SOCIAL WORK SOPHOMORE CLASS

# Semester Highlights

MESSIAH UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

## Intentional Dialogue: Bridging the Divide through Conversation

PRESENTED BY DEPARTMENT CHAIR DR. LING DINSE  
CO-HOSTED WITH THE OFFICE OF ALUMNI RELATIONS

Learn the concept and practice of intentional dialogues.

Know the guidelines and steps to engage in intentional dialogues.

IN-PERSON PARTICIPANTS WILL RECEIVE A SOCIAL WORK APPRECIATION MONTH GIFT AND COMPLIMENTARY BREAKFAST.

3.5.2024  
8:30-11:30 am  
3-CEU CREDITS  
VIRTUAL OR IN-PERSON  
COST: FREE!

[RSVP HERE](#)



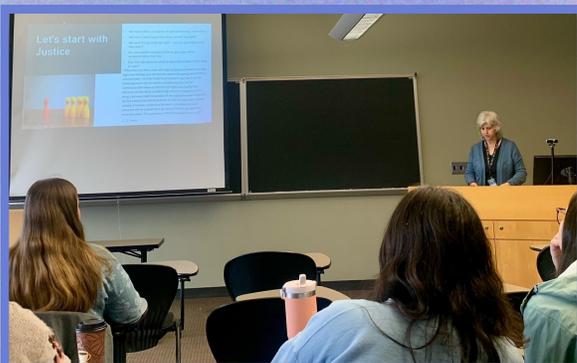
## CEU WORKSHOP

MARCH 5, 2024

Messiah University Department of Social Work hosted a CEU Workshop. The Department of Social Work Chair, Dr. Ling Dinse spearheaded this initiative. The Department partnered with the Office of Alumni Relations to host the event. The event aimed to engage the local community of social workers, provide an affordable option for continued education, and give back to Social Work Alumni. The event was held virtually, over Zoom, with 60 individuals in attendance. Dr. Ling Dinse lectured on facilitating intentional dialogue, and its importance for social workers. Dr. Dinse shared some of her research findings. After the lecture portion, the participants then engaged in intentional dialogue in small groups. In the future, we are looking forward to continuing CEU events. Many of the responses from the attendees were positive. The department would like to thank all those who attended the event, as well as those who helped behind the scenes to make the event happen. We are looking forward to hosting CEU workshops in the future.

## SOCIAL WORK 4X4 CHAPELS

Dr. Dinse and Professor George led a 4X4 Chapel Series for social work students titled, "Applying Biblical Perspectives to Contemporary Issues". In the sessions, topics like suffering, social justice, conflict, and cancel culture were discussed.



Social workers engage with diverse populations, and continuing education is vital in ensuring practitioners' practice competency. As a CSWE-accredited program, Messiah's social work program serves as a preapproved provider for continuing education to PA-licensed social workers



## Michelle George and Alumni, Jordan Zercher Present at NACSW

NOVEMBER 9, 2023

Professor Michelle George and Jordan Zercher ('23) presented at the NACSW Annual Convention in Pittsburgh on “Preparing students to thrive in the interprofessional environment”. The presentation was based on research conducted between social work and the PT program based on interprofessional collaboration activities that were conducted. Students also had interprofessional collaborations provided between the social work department, PT and nursing especially. Additional interprofessional opportunities offered SW students exposure to OT, nutrition, and counseling this year.

# Faculty Accomplishments



## Professor Nakeesha Kenney-Futrell's Article

FEBRUARY 13, 2024

One of the department's adjuncts, Nakeesha Kenney-Futrell, was featured in an article by Bold Journey. Within the article Nakeesha shares the challenges she has overcome and gives advice she has learned from the field. She is the founder of Elevated Mental Health Service which is an “outpatient mental health clinic dedicated to serving individuals of all ages and families.” She gives the advice to have resilience, embrace challenges, show empathy, continually learn from your experience.

# Messiah University Department of Social Work Class of 2024



Darren Miller, Annie Carter, Jessica China, Kyra Shoeberger, Annika Gerber, Rachel Crago, Celeste Reed, and Ziyan Horne

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## PHI ALPHA HIGHLIGHT

Phi Alpha hosted multiple department events including a Field Placement Event, a spotlight event with Dr. Dinse, and their service project trip.

## SOCIAL WORK CLUB HIGHLIGHT

The Social Work Club hosted many events over the course of the school year. Some of the events that the Social Work Club hosted included Prayer Walks, Prayer Shawl Meetings, and Peer Mentor Events.



# Messiah University MSW Program

We are excited to launch our MSW Program this Fall!

## Program Information

“If you have a passion for helping people and would like to be an advocate for change or a leader of programs that make a difference in society, consider a Master of Social Work (MSW) degree from Messiah University. In fall of 2024, Messiah University will introduce an advanced generalist MSW degree that will prepare you for professional licensure and a career in the growing field of social work. The program will offer interdisciplinary focus areas in mental health, health or leadership in organizations. Coursework is 100% online.”

SCAN FOR MORE INFO



## Program Details

- 61 credits (regular standing); 30 credits (advanced standing)
- Three degree tracks: mental health, health and leadership in organizations
- Students in advanced standing can complete the MSW in one year
- Cohort model
- Online coursework
- 900 field placement hours (500 for advanced standing students)
- Designed to academically prepare you for professional social work licensing
- One-year full-time completion for advanced standing students; part-time completion in two years
- Two-year full-time completion for regular standing students; part-time completion plans in three or four years