

The School of **Social Work** Southern Miss

Inside the Newsletter

STUDENT SUCCESS

Highlighting some of the outstanding accomplishments made by our Southern Miss School of Social Work students!

FACULTY PROJECTS

Exciting faculty programs and initiatives you should know about!

NEW FACULTY HIRES

Meet our newest School of Social Work instructors!

Deborah Graham, Instructor Emerita

Following Ms. Debbie Graham's retirement from the university at the end of the 2020-21 academic year, the School of Social Work faculty unanimously recommended a university award of "Instructor Emerita" status.

The emeritus/emera status may be bestowed upon retired instructors who meet stringent criteria of continuous excellence in teaching, service, and collegiality over a period of at least 10 years. A recommendation from the faculty for emeritus/emera recognition must in turn be supported and approved by the school director, the college dean, the provost/vice-president for academic affairs, and finally by the university president before it is awarded.



"There was not a shadow of doubt that Ms. Graham well deserved the honor of emerita status, and her recognition proved to be a "slam dunk." An esteemed colleague over 13 years of continuous service to the School of Social Work, Ms. Graham was especially valued for her teaching skills and generously shared practice wisdom, her inestimable contributions to field education, and her reliably thoughtful, calm, and considerate personal manner."

– Dr. Michael Forster

HRSA ACCESS GRANT

"ACCESS: Advancing Community Connections to Enhance Services and Success, aims to expand behavioral health graduate student training opportunities involving underserved communities, such as those from racial/ethnic minority, rural, and low-income backgrounds, and to increase access to behavioral healthcare in our area."

– [Health Resources and Services Administration](#)

Three of our Southern Miss School of Social Work students have been selected to participate in the ACCESS grant! This grant is a collaboration between community-based partners and graduate students to assist with the reduction of disparities in access to behavioral health services.

"My placement at Hattiesburg Clinic will include screening/early intervention for developmental delays and in general providing on-site, integrated behavioral healthcare (screening, education, referrals, testing, and brief interventions) in a pediatric primary care setting."

– **Abigail Douglass**



"My work on the ACCESS grant will be implementing psychoeducational classes to the children at the Forrest County Juvenile Detention Center. I will also be working alongside two psychology students implementing brief group therapy sessions, interventions, providing mental health resources and screeners, and assessments."

– **Allyson McDonald**

"I am specifically assisting with services at Kids Hub Child Advocacy Center. I am currently being trained alongside their team of victim advocates, working to refer children and families to appropriate medical and mental health services."

– **Brenna Rosetti**



GET INVOLVED

BSW Club Meeting

Date & Time:

Tuesday, Oct 5th; 8:30am–9:15am

Location:

JGH 244

ZOOM

Contact:

Tori Ricks

tori.ricks@usm.edu

Rachel Lahasky

rachel.lahasky@usm.edu

Eagle's Nest Food Pantry Hours

Hours of Operation:

Mondays 10am-2pm

Wednesdays 10am-2pm

Location: A Stone's Throw

Contact:

Sirena Cantrell

sirena.cantrell@usm.edu

Tamara Hurst

tamara.hurst@usm.edu

S.T.R.I.D.E. Informational

Date & Time:

Wednesday, Oct 15th

Time: TBD, *please e-mail for more info*

Location:

ZOOM

Contact:

Raevin Wade

raevin.wade@usm.edu

Tamecia Curry

tamecia.curry@usm.edu

INTEGRATIVE HEALTH SCHOLARSHIP

Forrest General's Family Medicine Residency Clinic sponsors an Integrative Health scholarship and internship opportunity. Through the program, awarded students will assist in the collaboration between behavioral health services and primary care by conducting screenings that assess individuals' financial, transportation, safety, and mental health needs. The goal is to offer excellent quality of care for individuals in the most effective and meaningful way. They will work under the supervision of Emily Dixon, LCSW, for the Fall and Spring Semester.

Three of our Southern Miss School of Social Work students have been selected to participate in this scholarship and field internship opportunity!

"As social work interns, we work alongside the doctors to provide the best care possible for the patients at the clinic. This often includes screenings that assess patients' needs such as: financial, transportation, safety, mental health, and whatever else we might be able to help with. Our goal is to improve the patient's overall quality of care and get them in touch with the resources they need"

– Kirsten Abbott



"The integrated health scholarship will help me achieve educational and career goals. I was thrilled to learn of my selection for this honor, and I am deeply appreciative of their support."

– Ahjana Buckley



"The scholarship has lightened my family's financial burden which allows me to focus on the most important part of my internship, learning. I am excited to merge both my passion for health and for social work in the integrative health setting. SMTTT!"

– Lauren Hill

WRAPAROUND INSTITUTE



Tamara Hurst, Associate Professor | Ph.D., LCSW



The Mississippi Wraparound Institute is a partnership between The University of Southern Mississippi's School of Social Work and Mississippi Department of Mental Health. The institute was developed to assist the State of Mississippi and the State's child-serving agencies and their identified partners with efforts to (1) accomplish successful development of integrated systems of mental and behavioral health that follow the principles of the high-fidelity Wraparound model and (2) successfully implement and sustain Wraparound facilitation as a service.

Wraparound is a planning process that follows a series of steps to help children and their families realize their hopes and dreams. The process gathers individuals from different parts of the entire family's life. With assistance from facilitators, the group works together toward coordinating activities and blending their perspective of the family's situation.

For more information on the Wraparound Institute, [click here](#).

PERSON CENTERED PRACTICE INITIATIVE

Bret Blackmon, Associate Professor | Ph.D.



The Mississippi Person Centered Practices Initiative (MS-PCPI) is a partnership between the Mississippi Division of Medicaid and The University of Southern Mississippi's School of Social Work.

The primary objective of MS-PCPI is to train professionals from Home and Community-Based Medicaid Waiver programs on person centered thinking and person centered plan facilitation to assist them in supporting persons with disabilities and older adults in Mississippi.

For more information on the Mississippi Person Centered Practices Initiative, [click here](#).



NEW Faculty & Staff in the School of Social Work

Tamecia Curry, Instructor | LMSW, Ph.D. Candidate



Tamecia M. Curry received her BSW and MSW from the University of Southern Mississippi. She is currently a PhD candidate in Social Work at Louisiana State University. Her research examines mental health service utilization rates among African American emerging adults with an emphasis on mental health stigma in the Black community and minority help-seeking behaviors. She has worked as a school-based clinician for Hattiesburg High School and a Pine Belt wraparound facilitator serving families and at risk youth in need of mental health service intervention. As a Southern Regional Education Board Fellow, she travels the nation to participate in initiatives focused on the enhancement of teaching, mentoring, diversity, equity, and inclusion in academia. She is a member of the National Coalition of 100 Black Women where she advocates on behalf of girls and women in the areas of education, health, and economic empowerment.

Interests: Mental Health Service Utilization, Service Barriers, Emerging Adulthood

Tiffany Dear, Visiting Instructor | LCSW



Nikki Dear received her BSW (2011) and MSW (2013) from the University of Southern Mississippi. Throughout her career, she has worked with Child Protective Services (CPS), Pine Grove Behavioral Health and Addiction Services, and Pine Belt Mental Healthcare Resources. Nikki is the owner of Accepted Therapy Services in Hattiesburg, MS. She specializes in shame and trauma. She is certified in Eye-Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) and has extensive training in Motivational Interviewing.

Interests: Shame, Trauma, Dissociation, Substance Use/Addiction, Motivational Interviewing

Kimberly Hogan, Instructor | LMSW, Ph.D. Candidate



Mrs. Hogan is a current PhD Candidate and holds an MSW from Arizona State University. She has a focus on domestic sex trafficking and the therapeutic needs for exiting. Kimberly is a research scholar-in-training with the Global Association of Human Trafficking Scholars (GAHTS). She has worked closely with community groups, including the United States Department of Justice, National Criminal Justice Training Center, AMBER Alert, Navajo Nation, Las Vegas Rape Crisis Center, City of Phoenix Starfish Place, Save Our Adolescents from Prostitution (S.O.A.P. Project), Starfish Mentoring Programs, and the Phoenix and Las Vegas Metropolitan VICE Units.

Interests: Human Trafficking, Homelessness, LGBTQ+ Issues, Social Enterprises, and Social Justice.

NEW Faculty & Staff in the School of Social Work

Denise Brown-Rouse, Instructor & Field Coordinator | LCSW



Denise Brown-Rouse is a licensed clinical social worker residing in Carriere, Mississippi. She received both her BSW and MSW from the University of Southern Mississippi. After college, she was employed by the Mississippi Department of Human Services, Family & Children Services Division for more than seventeen years. During her tenure she served as a child welfare caseworker, supervisor, USM Field Instructor and Training Director. Recently, she was a school social worker with the Pearl River Central School District since 2010. In her time at PRCSD, she has served as the mental health provider, Special Education related-service provider, TIER behavior specialist, USM Field Instructor and as the team leader for the Pearl River Central Middle School's Positive Behavior Intervention and Support Team.

Interests: Family and Children, Child Welfare, Field Education, School Social Work

Diana Smith, Visiting Instructor | LCSW



Diana M. Smith, LCSW received her BSW and MSW from the University of Southern Mississippi. She received her LCSW at Edgewood Children's Center in St. Louis, MO. From St. Louis, she moved to Atlanta, GA, where she accepted a position of clinical therapist at a wilderness camp for adolescents in the juvenile justice system. She has received specialized training in Moral Reconciliation Therapy (MRT®), which is a cognitive-behavioral group therapy and has the distinction of being a CBT Diplomate. She returned to Hattiesburg in 2005 and joined the staff at Pine Grove Behavioral Health, where she has spent the last 16 years working with multiple populations in both inpatient and outpatient settings. For the past seven years, she was the Pine Grove program director of Inpatient Therapy Services.

Interests: Children & Adolescents, Trauma, Substance Use, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Person-Centered Practices, Adults mental illness.