



THE EAGLE ADVOCATE

*THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF NORTH CAROLINA
CENTRAL UNIVERSITY'S DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK*



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“You may encounter many defeats, but you must not be defeated. In fact, it may be necessary to encounter the defeats, so you can know who you are, what you can rise from, how you can still come out of it.” Maya Angelou

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Social Work Society



Social Work Society is an integral part of our student experience within our department. This year, they inducted 50 students in a beautiful and professional ceremony. Our EBoard insisted on greatness and it shined through. In addition the induction ceremony, they sponsored a huge variety of events.

BUILDING COMMUNITY:

VISION BOARD PARTY
DANCE COLLABORATION
RESTORITIVE YOGA IN THE GREEK BOWL
SPREADING LOVE AND LIGHT (VALENTINES DAY)
OPEN MIC NIGHT - UNHEARD STORIES



SERVICE:

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY
SERVING AT URBAN MINISTRIES
DISTRIBUTION OF HYGIENE SUPPLIES

EXPERIENTIAL:

FATE VS FACTOR (HEALTH EDUCATION WORKSHOP)
SOARING TO THE POLLS
DISTRIBUTION OF HYGIENE SUPPLIES
VIDEO HIGHLIGHTS OF BLACK SOCIAL WORKERS





Social Work Graduate Student Association Event Highlight



Social Work Career Panel, the guests were Mr. Neil Khot, Ms. Valerie Sauer, Ms. Tara Jones, and Dr. Quadasha McIlwaine

Social Work Panelist

The Social Work Graduate Student Association hosted a Social Work Panelist Event designed to expose students to diverse career pathways within the field of social work. The panel featured four experienced professionals representing areas such as policy practice, data collection and evaluation, therapy, medical social work, and school social work.

Panelists responded to guided questions that allowed attendees to gain insight into their professional roles, daily responsibilities, and career journeys. The event also included an interactive discussion segment, providing students the opportunity to ask targeted questions and receive personalized advice related to their specific areas of interest within the profession.





Phi Alpha Sponsored Professional Development Fair



On behalf of North Carolina Central University and the Nu Gamma Phi Chapter of Phi Alpha Honor Society, thank you for participating in our 3rd Annual NCCU Social Work Professional Collaboration Event. This event is designed to bring together social work professionals, community agencies, and organizations to foster collaboration, strengthen partnerships, and create meaningful connections with students and professionals across multiple helping disciplines.





GURS (Research Symposium)



GURS - left to right - Dr. Andrae Banks, Robert Perkins, Austin Reaves (2nd place), Aniyah Lane (3rd place), Aleta Alade, and Dr. Monique Hyman

The Department of Social Work proudly recognized students who participated in the Graduate and Undergraduate Research Symposium (GURS) through oral and poster presentations, volunteering, and peer support. The event provided a valuable opportunity for students to showcase their research, engage in academic dialogue, and strengthen connections within the university community. The Master of Social Work (MSW) students that participated include Aleta Alade, Chyna Marbury, Trinity Turkson, Tolayah Stancil, and Stephanie Anagor under the guidance of Dr. Monique Holsey-Hyman. Dr. Hyman had the most student participation in the history of our department!

The department also celebrated the achievements of two Master of Social Work (MSW) students who received recognition for their research presentations. Austin Reaves earned second place for his project titled Systemic Oversight and Diminished Engagement of Fathers in Child Welfare Systems, while Aniyah Lane received third place for her project titled The Role of Fathers in Preventing Juvenile Delinquency and Barriers to Engagement. Both Austin and Aniyah were guided by Dr. Andrae Banks. Their accomplishments reflect the dedication and academic excellence of the 2026 graduating MSW cohort and continue the department's legacy of success at this event over the last two years! Their accomplishments reflect the dedication and academic excellence of the 2026 graduating MSW cohort and continue the department's legacy of success at this event since its inception in 2025.





Service Impact Award Ceremony



Three BSW Graduates earned the honor of the Service Impact Award: *(identified with arrows left to right)* Sahniya Bilkerdyk, Tashiona Holmes and Zariyah Cowan.

Graduating students at North Carolina Central University (NCCU) have the opportunity to apply for the Service Impact Award, which recognizes graduating seniors who have completed a minimum of 250 hours of community-engaged service and demonstrated a meaningful impact within the community. To be considered, undergraduate students must submit an engagement portfolio that includes acknowledgment letters from their community organization and an NCCU faculty or staff member, along with a personal reflection outlining their service experiences. Students selected for this honor are formally recognized in the graduation program and receive a service honor cord in recognition of their dedication to community service. Notably, three of the students recognized for this achievement were participants in the Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) program, highlighting the program's commitment to service, community engagement, and professional development.





The Graduate School Opportunities Fair



From left to right: Dr. Andrae Banks, Robert Perkins (2nd Year MSW), and Dr. Watson

The Graduate School Opportunities Fair, co-hosted by the NCCU School of Graduate Studies in partnership with The Leadership Alliance, provided students with valuable exposure to a wide range of advanced educational and research opportunities. The event brought together representatives from several prestigious institutions offering information on summer research programs, post-baccalaureate pathways, and graduate degree options. Students were able to engage directly with admissions representatives, ask questions about program requirements, and explore potential career pathways in various professional fields.

The Master of Social Work (MSW) program also participated in the fair with its own dedicated table, creating a welcoming space for students interested in pursuing graduate-level social work education. The MSW representatives provided detailed information about program structure, field placement opportunities, and career outcomes, while also sharing insights about the profession and the impact of social work in diverse communities. This presence served as a valuable networking opportunity, allowing students to build connections, seek mentorship, and gain a deeper understanding of how an MSW degree can support their professional goals.



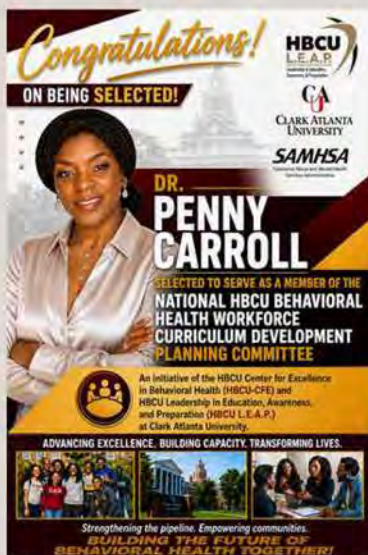
MSW & Nursing AI Simulation



MSW students wrapped up the semester with a two-class immersive simulation in SOCW 5205 Social Work Practice with Organizations & Communities, stepping into the role of Macro Social Workers at NCCU School of Nursing's Eagle General Hospital. They developed system-level solutions to reduce frequent Emergency Department use through collaboration, advocacy, and systems thinking.

Students completed pre- and post-surveys to assess learning outcomes. Using AI-generated, diverse patient scenarios, the simulation highlighted social, structural, and health-related drivers of ED utilization.

During the debriefing, students identified and developed solutions to address these underlying factors, including care coordination, community partnerships, policy advocacy, preventive outreach, improved discharge planning, and data-informed strategies to support high utilizers.



DR. PENNY CARROLL SELECTED FOR HBCU L.E.A.P. NATIONAL CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT TASK FORCE, A SAMHSA INITIATIVE.





CASH FACULTY AWARDS AND HONORIES



The Department of Social Work, now includes Sociology and Behavioral Social Sciences, under the leadership of our chair Dr. Lorraine Graves.

Awardee's from left to right:

Dr. Pamela Davis - Excellence in Service - her service to the Sociology program has been invaluable and extends well beyond her role as an adjunct instructor. Her dedication to teaching is consistently reflected in her excellent SRI evaluations; however, her contributions do not stop there. She is consistently present and actively engaged in meetings, readily assists with curriculum updates, and demonstrates a strong commitment to program development that enhances student awareness of the sociology profession. Dr. Davis has provided steady and meaningful service to the Sociology program, enhancing both its academic quality and overall student experience

Professor Kevin Tolson - Excellent in Services - has demonstrated exceptional service that extends well beyond his role as an adjunct professor in Field Education. He has taken on special projects with field director, contributed to field education curriculum updates, provided supervision to students, supported the recruitment of new field placement and community partners, and has served on the MSW Admissions Committee for several years. His continued commitment reflects a level of engagement and leadership that goes above and beyond his formal responsibilities.

Dr. Lorraine Graves - Excellence in Leadership - Dean Smallwood selected one Chair to give this award. He spoke of Dr. Graves as a team player and how he can count on her to get things done.

Dr. Penny Carroll - Excellence in Research - she has made a significant impact this academic year, successfully achieving key scholarly milestones across all three areas of academic productivity - grant funding, publications, and presentations. Through the implementation of a FRAP grant, multiple presentations, and her first publication, she has demonstrated a strong and well-rounded research trajectory. As an early-stage investigator, she is establishing a strong research agenda in artificial intelligence and social work practice. She has expanded her collaborative partnerships and professional networks and has laid the foundation for our innovative AI lab within the department that will enhance student learning opportunities and foster faculty collaboration.

Dr. Caitlyn Eckert - Excellence in Teaching - As a new adjunct faculty member, Prof. Eckert stepped in to teach several weeks into the Fall semester with no hesitation and has extended herself well beyond the classroom. Her students frequently share how much they enjoy having her as a professor. She regularly shares job opportunities with BSW students, serves on the curriculum committee, and supports the BSW Director with updating assignments and rubrics. She consistently attends department meetings and events to support both faculty and students. In addition, she has been selected as a speaker for the Social Work Society Induction Ceremony and will facilitate an APA session at the MSW orientation. Her ability to engage students beyond the classroom to enhance their learning experience has been especially impactful and is reflected in her strong SRI feedback.

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PRESS RELEASE



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BSW Graduates

Penelope Baker
Mekhi Baldwin
Sahniya Bilkerdyk
Ahmira Blount-Coston
Zariah Carter
Zariyah Cowan
Ayanna Dennis
Saniya Dyson
A'Niyah Grant
Ariel Green
Tashiona Holmes
Jadyn Hunter
Cire' Johnson
Dymund Johnson
Jada Jones
Kahmiyah Jones

Tamia Keith
Nyla Lee
Kailah Moore
Keshawna Moore
Jayah Morris
Dajah Moses
Lemaria Neal
Dynaija Paris
Kamyra Prince
Sole Ramirez
Hailey Rochelle
Prim Shepard Jr.
Crystal Smith
Zayla Smith
Daej'nique Terry
Janiya Williams-Tomlinson

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MSW Graduates



Aleta Alade
Stephanie Anagor
Corranda Baker
Chantel Barkley
Danielle Bennett
Yolanda Blossom
Jasmine Bradley Wilson
Micaiah Brown
Carlos Bryan
Christina Carlisle
Myka Carroll
Tierney Coleman
China Dailey
Kimberly Deberry
Ariel Elliott
Jarrian Fuller
Ebony Fulmore
Dion Gaines
Ceaira Gillis
Taneeya Greene
Kayla Hairston
Zy'Annah Haizlip
Nia Hamilton
Jamiya Hargraves
Mi'kayla Harris
Paura Heo
Deja Hill
Jaida Hines
Kaylaa' Holman
Anthony Hughes
Coogi Johnson
Faith Johnson



Erica Joynes
Hilary Keller
LaRhonda King
Victoria Kroll
Aniyah Lane
Zariyah Lock
Gwendolyn Lomax
Nicholas Major
Chyna Marbury
George McGue
Kyra Mitchell
Niyah Moore
Destiny Mullen
Christina Parker
Sasha Paxton
Robert Perkins
Sommer Presswood
Joshlen Purnell
Tiana Ramsey-Gathers
Austin Reaves
La'Nia Richardson
Tanay Richmond
Danielle Rinz
Cristina Rodgers
Amiri Sims
Tolayah Stancil
Ella Thomas
Trinity Turkson
Adina Warren
Andrea Wiley
Timayah Williams

Congratulations

CLASS OF

2026