



Illustration by Alex Nabaum



Social Work Newsletter

17th Annual School of Social Work Conference

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Social work professionals, educators, and students alike gathered together at the Gordon B. Hinkley Alumni and Visitors Center on November 4th, 2022 for the 17th annual BYU School of Social Work Conference, "Grief and Loss in Clinical Practice." The theme was met with high anticipation to say the least by all attendees. One of three speakers, Joanne Cacciatore, captured the reason for this anticipation when she explained the great need for more educational opportunities on grieving and trauma within social work. The objective of the conference aimed to meet that need, and was listed as follows: "help clinicians conceptualize and understand issues of grief and loss, understand the impact of grief and loss on individuals, families, and communities and provide effective services to people within the context of their specific cultures and needs."

Three descriptors can be used to capture the essence of the



Conference Attendees

theme of the conference: vulnerable, meaningful, and essential. Grief and loss are universal experiences all humans will experience at multiple points in their lifetimes. Three speakers presented this year, and all three helped to emphasize the vulnerability, meaningfulness, and essentiality found in discussions surrounding grief, loss, and the trauma that accompanies both.



Dr. Lee Harms

Dr. Lee Harms, Chaplaincy, Social Work, and Mass Grief and Loss

Brother Hoffman of BYU began the conference with a prayer and introduction of the theme. He introduced the first speaker, Dr. Lee Harms, who opened up the conference with his presentation “Chaplaincy, Social Work, and Mass Grief and Loss.” Dr. Lee Harms received his Doctorate of Ministry from the Eskrine Theology Seminary, is a retired Army Chaplain, and a current assistant church history professor at BYU. Dr. Harms began by speaking on the work of a chaplain, and what the educational path to chaplaincy looks like for most individuals. Chaplaincy consists of religious ministry and advisement, and the provision of religious support, which means supporting religious

freedom, providing traditional and religious death ceremonies, and grief ministry within communities. Most often, chaplains work in military and hospital environments. Dr. Harms emphasized that chaplains tend to the religious needs of individuals before, during, and after crisis situations by “nurturing the living, caring for the sick and wounded, and honoring the fallen.”

Dr. Harms’ long experience as an army chaplain qualified him to speak on the ins and outs of mass grief and moral injury, and the various ways in which social workers and chaplains work in response to these experiences. He defined “mass grief” as the experience of grief that happens on the societal level, such as a pandemic or the death of a major social movement figure. In



Presenter, Dr. Lee Harms

dealing with mass grief, Dr. Harms spoke on the need for helpers to avoid becoming victims themselves, exercise patience, and anticipate the impact being a helper during crisis has on individuals in a serving role. Along with mass grief, the term “moral injury” was explained to the audience as an experience in which an individual violates their own morals, and suffers mentally as a result of it. Dr. Harms recalled experiences working with soldiers who were morally injured due to their work actions conflicting with personal values, and how responding with the remembrance of a client’s religious invocations was important in their healing process.

“You aren’t going to solve the larger problem at hand, but you can help the wounds caused by the larger problem.”

Dr. Harms finished his presentation by providing the space for the room full of social workers to ask the hard questions of how to specifically help others move through grief. His central message was that both chaplains and social workers are in a position to help grieving clients find a community that provides them the safe space to move through their hard emotions. He also recommended that workers in both professions remember that “band aids only need to be big enough to cover the wound, but not the entire situation. You aren’t going to solve the larger problem at hand, but you can help

heal the wounds caused by the larger problem.”

Dr. Joanne Cacciatore, Traumatic Grief and Good Grief Support

The conference was honored to have Dr. Joanne Cacciatore and her presentation, “Traumatic Grief and Good Grief Support.” Dr. Cacciatore is a well-accomplished professional known for her work in grief and trauma, and received her MSW from Arizona State University, and her PhD in Child, Youth, and Family Sciences at the University of Nebraska. She is the author of various research publications centered around grief, has written two award-winning published books, “Bearing the Unbearable” and “Grieving is Loving.” She is the founder of the MISS Foundation and Saleh Carefarm, and tenured professor of Arizona State University. Dr. Cacciatore has a passion for providing research and services for families experiencing bereavement due to a deceased child.



Presenter, Dr. Joanna Cacciatore

Dr. Cacciatore opened her presentation with vulnerability by speaking on her own experience of losing a child, and how trauma and grief has motivated her career in mental health. She defined “traumatic grief” (TG) as a grief experience that happens within a traumatic context. She identified four common emotional experiences of TG: fear and terror, anger and rage, numbness and apathy, and shame and guilt. With those emotional experiences, she also identified common interpersonal experiences of diminished intimacy, increased conflict, relational apathy, loneliness, and marginalization. Even though TG has common experiences, Dr. Cacciatore emphasized the uniqueness that occurs with each individual, describing “grief is like a fingerprint, different from person to person.”

After a build-up of describing the in and outs of TG characteristics and experiences, Dr. Cacciatore spoke on a much anticipated topic: how to respond to those who are grieving. The answer, according to Dr. Cacciatore: “Be like a dog. Sit. Stay.” Dr. Cacciatore presented research on the most effective long-term support for those who grieve:

“What better use of pain than to transfigure it into compassion.”

animals and pets. Second to animals and pets were therapists, but by a large margin. Dr. Cacciatore explained why animals may just be the best treatment for a suffering person: they offer unconditional positive regard, are the best listeners, and may even offer expressions of empathy back. She utilizes animal support in her own practices as the founder of Saleh Carefarm, a treatment center for those experiencing traumatic grief and bereavement. At the Saleh Carefarm in Arizona, clients tend to rescued farm animals, forming bonds with them that are beneficial to their own healing process. Dr. Cacciatore described this process for the clients as transformative when they offer compassion to other living things: “what better use of pain than to transfigure it into compassion.”

Other ways she described as appropriate when responding to those grieving include a number of supportive actions such as acts of emotional caring, offering instrumental and emotional support, appraisal support, and reducing the use of problematic responses. Problematic responses were identified as avoiding a person’s grief, being unaccepting of their change, expressing annoyance, offering unsolicited advice, and grieving as though you are the primary griever in someone else’s experience. Similar to Dr. Harms, Dr. Cacciatore also emphasized the importance of building community to support someone who is grieving.

Robert Zucker, Understanding Grief Through Storytelling, Music and Poetry

The final presentation was Grief Through Storytelling, Music and Poetry, given by Robert Zucker, a grief counselor, trainer, consultant, and author of “The Journey Through Grief and Loss: Helping Yourself and Your Child When Grief is Shared.” Robert Zucker also runs his own practice in grief counseling, presents across the nation for various continuing education social work conferences, and has worked as a guest faculty at various universities, such as Harvard Medical School, Smith College School of Social Work, and Dalhousie University School of Social Work.

Robert Zucker’s experiential presentation can be described as artful, vulnerable, and thought-provoking. After a long four hours of sitting and learning, Zucker awoke the conference attendees’ attention with a moving trumpet solo and reading of a poem after introducing himself.

Zucker further engaged the audience by having them read a poem with him, line-by-line aloud, providing the opportunity for each individual to personally engage with the work. Zucker enticed further engagement by having the attendees break into small groups and meet others sitting near them.

The first half of Zucker’s presentation focused on triggered fears and traumas within ourselves and clients. He spoke on his personal experience working through his own anxieties surrounding illness and death through leaning into mindfulness and spiritual practices. Zucker relied on five Buddhist affirmations as part of his self care through triggered fears and traumas: “I am of a nature to grow old, I am of the nature to have ill health, I am of the nature to die, all that is dear to me and everyone I love are of the nature to change, and my actions are my only true belongings.” His emphasis on self care in helping professionals was captured in an emotional story of his late wife’s battle with pancreatic cancer, and how her doctor displayed compassionate care. Zucker explained that resilience to burnout is a must for helping professions, and can be intentionally grown through purposely leaning into discomforts. By doing so, helping professionals create the space that allows them to show love and compassion towards their clients and fight burnout.

Zucker’s presentation continued for a second part after a brief break. The second half dove into the act of developing patience, compassion, and persistence for helpers of adult grievers. Here, Zucker emphasized confronting a person’s pain first, and being patient while allowing a person to endure what he called “the three phases of grief.” He named the first phase “early grief,” which involves a griever’s experience of strong, debilitating emotions, and a loss of control and identity. The second phase was identified as “the second storm” where the big emotions intensify, but people begin to seek help. Here, helpers are valuable in helping a griever find avenues to express their experience.



Robert Zucker

The last phase is referred to as “the search for meaning,” which is a time where grievors begin to ask how their experience was meaningful, how it changed them, and who they are as a result of the experience. Zucker introduced a poem on grief, and asked the audience to interpret it for themselves. Two responses included: “grief is a call to slowness and stillness for me,” and “it reminds me to love.”

Robert Zucker’s presentation left the audience feeling connected due to the experiential and expressive nature of it. Each story he shared grew more vulnerable, and offered more opportunity for attendees to empathetically connect. In a way, the presentation deepened individual levels of vulnerability through the way it artfully engaged each attentive member of the audience through music sharing, story telling, and poetry. As much as it was informative, Robert Zucker properly wrapped up the conference by ensuring it was transformative for each attendee as well.



2022 Conference Attendees

Letter from the Director

I love working at BYU because it allows me to combine the best of my profession, social work, with the best of the gospel of Jesus Christ. In social work, oftentimes it can become overwhelming as we work with difficult clients and difficult situations. For me, my hope in Christ and His gospel strengthens my resolve to be a better social worker. I love how I can do both. Recently I have thought of how this plays out in my spiritual life. Moses 1:39 states “For behold, this is my work and my glory, to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man.” We have heard this scripture over and over again and I fear that because it is repeated so often that it does not hold the significance of what God really does. Our Father in Heaven has already accomplished part of His work, immortality, through His son Jesus Christ. Through Christ’s atonement, all of God’s children who come to earth will receive immortality, or live forever and be resurrected, regardless of any other condition. It is a free gift. President Nelson stated that Christ’s “Atonement made resurrection a reality and eternal life (or exaltation) a possibility for all who would ever live” (Salvation and Exaltation, April 2008 General Conference). Here, the terms eternal life and exaltation are synonymous.

In social work we talk a lot about outcomes and best practices (or what actually works). So what is the outcome of everything I hope to achieve in my premortal, mortal and postmortal existence? It is to receive eternal life or exaltation. But too often I can get stuck when I read in Matthew 7:13-14 “strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it” or “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect” (Matt 5:48). I would venture to guess that if I did a survey of our students and alumni and asked the following question, “Do you believe that you will be exalted?” that well over half of you would probably answer “no.” Why is that and how sad is that? We believe in a Savior who saves and a Redeemer who redeems? Many of us mistakenly think that they are and never will be “good



Dr. Gordon Limb

School of Social Work Mission Statement

The mission of the School of Social Work at Brigham Young University is to support the overall mission of BYU and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints by generating new knowledge and by educating and training students to use the appropriate knowledge, values, and skills of the social work profession to serve individuals and families within their environment and the context of their specific cultures.

enough” to be exalted. This is not just a church problem or a social work problem, it’s a universal problem. I have come to realize that this is one of Satan’s great lies. Brother Robert L. Millet related that many times while asking the temple recommend questions, after he finished, he would ask one final question: “If you were to die this minute...and you were allowed to skip the spirit world experience, where would you go? What kingdom of glory would you qualify for?” He said seven out of ten persons would sheepishly respond: “I don’t know. I suppose the terrestrial kingdom?...When asked why they would say that they were not perfect and made mistakes.” How sad that many of us, who are seeking to do our best to follow the Savior, often think we are not good enough because we are not perfect. For many social workers, the day to day grind of our work contributes to this lack of hope. Elder Bruce C. Hafen has written: “The person most in need of understanding the Savior’s mercy is probably one who has worked himself (or herself) to exhaustion in a sincere effort to repent, but who still believes his (or her) estrangement from God is permanent and hopeless...I sense that an increasing number of deeply committed Church members are weighed down beyond the breaking point with discouragement about their personal lives. When we habitually understate the meaning of the Atonement, we take more serious risks than simply leaving one another without comforting reassurances—for some may simply drop out of the race, worn out and beaten down with the harsh and untrue belief that they are just not celestial material” (The Broken Heart, pp. 5-6). So I am working on doing better at believing in a Savior who saves and a Redeemer who redeems. I am especially grateful for the addition of the word “striving” to a number of the temple recommend questions. I am not perfect, but I can honestly say I am striving. I love what Elder Uchtdorf said, “Exaltation is our goal; discipleship is our journey” (October 2015 General Conference, It Works Wonderfully!). We can all be striving disciples of Jesus Christ as we practice and sometimes fall short of what is expected. I try to remind myself as a disciple of Jesus Christ that it is my job to love unconditionally, Christ’s job is to save. Not the other way around. I am grateful for the gentle reminders about how these truths give me hope even when things seem incredibly difficult. BYU and the social work program offers me constant reminders of that hope in Christ.



Illustrated by Alex Nabaum

Letter from the Alumni President

Hello to all my fellow BYU School of Social Work alumni and cougar fans. I am once again excited to greet you as part of the annual newsletter. A year ago, my newsletter focused on perspective and how we view the pandemic and all its affects. Fortunately, a year later, we are starting to see some of the severity of the pandemic fading away. However, many of its effects can still be seen and felt by many. It is now interesting to see how we, as individuals, communities, and countries, are responding to this life challenge. My wife and I recently went on a cruise to the Southern Caribbean. As part of my preparation for the trip I read the book, "Caribbean" by James Michener. I was interested to read the history of the area dating back to the 1300s yet horrified to read of all the atrocities that people inflicted upon people through the centuries. As we visited each island, I was impressed how each community, culture and people seem to be doing well. It appears that as time has gone on, each island's people have been resilient and bounced back from the tragic abuses perpetrated on their ancestors and whatever else life has dished up for them. I pondered how not only do cultures and communities demonstrate amazing resiliency, but how we as individuals often demonstrate this kind of resiliency as well. In my life, I have known so many resilient people. For example, I think of my friend Mike who was shot in the back as a teenager and was paralyzed from the waist down for the rest of his life. He went on to be a successful professional and Olympic Wheelchair basketball champion. I think of Elizabeth Smart and all the trauma she had to endure. In the last chapters of her book, "My Story", she talks about the importance of being resilient and the protective factors that are so important to resiliency.

Those of you who know me know that I am blind. One day several years ago when I had more vision, I was a little late to catch the bus for work. I ran down the sidewalk from my home, hurrying so I would not miss the bus. Since I could not see clearly where the curb was and feared



Dean F. Anderson

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twisting an ankle on it, I stepped off the curb to run on the edge of the street where I had more room than a sidewalk. Three houses down the street I ran straight into the back of my neighbor's boat. Unbeknownst to me, he had left it on the street the night before. My right hip just missed the propeller and engine, but my chest slammed into the back of the boat. It knocked the wind out of me and knocked me straight to the ground. As I lay there gasping for air and wondering how badly I was hurt, I remember thinking, "this is not fair, this is too much, I can't do it anymore." I finally

caught my breath and got up to assess the damage. With tears in my eyes and pain in my chest, I looked toward home and wanted to go that way. I then looked back toward where the bus would pick me up. I looked back and forth between home and the bus several times. At that moment I was at a crucial crossroad and had a decision to make. Home and giving up, or the bus and resilient pushing through and bouncing back. I brushed myself off, took a deep breath, and continued running to meet the bus, which pulled up just as I arrived at the stop.

I have learned from watching others and from my own life that, often, resiliency is a choice. There are often crucial crossroads in our lives where we face a difficulty, a trauma, a loss of a loved one, or some other serious life challenge. It is the decisions we make in those moments that foster or deflate resiliency.

I recently heard a story of an apple, an egg, and a tennis ball. When dropped, the apple bruises and goes bad. The egg smashes into lots of pieces. The tennis ball, however, bounces back up and is resiliently ready for more action. May the Lord bless you and I as we work to be resilient and bounce back in our own life's challenges. May we as Social Workers, then, be better able to coach, mentor, and encourage those with whom we serve to be resilient and be like the tennis ball, able to bounce back and be ready for the next match of life.



Illustrated by Alex Nabaum

Wendy Sheffield Retires

After 28 years Wendy Sheffield is retiring from her work in BYU's School of Social Work Field Education Program. Wendy began her employment with the School in 1995 as the Field Liaison working with Gene Gibbons as the Field Director. Wendy continued her work as a Field Liaison, and later as Associate Field Director, under three additional Field Directors: Shirley Cox, Jini Roby, and Kevin Marett. Wendy has served as the Director of Field Education since 2012. It is estimated that Wendy has influenced around 1,750 Social Work students during her time at BYU!

Wendy's field education responsibilities have included: visiting students and agency field instructors within agency placements to help ensure quality internship experiences for our interns, providing problem-solving and support in difficult internship situations to both students and field instructors, teaching Integrative Field Seminars in both the BSW and MSW programs. As the Director of Field Education she instigated and provided oversight during the transition to all online field forms, management of internship-related information and data, online field agency applications, and the development of the School of Social Work's dynamic field education evaluations.



Wendy Sheffield and her family

The School of Social Work's online field management system, the use of behavioral indicators in competency-based field evaluations, and dynamic field forms led the way and set the standard for national Social Work education field management practices. Her field education curricular contributions included: oversight of the field education curriculum during CSWE's transition to competency-based field education, development and implementation of a self-care curriculum within the field education curriculum, and primary authorship of the field education components in BYU's 2013 and 2021 CSWE re-accreditation documents. Of special note is Wendy's leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic. While others were spending more time with their families and exploring new hobbies, Wendy's workload doubled. Due to her commitment and willingness to "go above and beyond" all our Social Work interns were able to complete their internships, continue to serve in their agencies and the community, and graduate on time!

Wendy has received several University-wide awards for her work at BYU including: a SCERA Award (Staff and Administrative Employee Recognition Award) for "demonstrating Innovation" in the development of BYU's online Social Work field management; a Brigham Award for "Genuine Commitment, Example, and Service Contributions to others throughout the World and the BYU Community" for her humanitarian work; a University Performance Award for her contributions during the COVID-19 pandemic; a SCERA Award for "demonstrating Respect and Belonging for All Individuals;" and an Experiential Learning Award for "Inspired Learning." When asked what awards hold the closest place to her heart she readily responds, "...the 'I'm Actually Glad I Woke Up for This Award' and the 'Most Tears Shed in Office Award for Creating a Safe Place' given to her by students.

social work career she has provided clinical social work services in a variety of settings (inpatient, outpatient, residential treatment, community out-reach, and school settings). She has worked for the Utah Department of Child and Family Services, Wasatch Behavioral Health, the Provo City Housing Authority, Family Services for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, and in private practice. She is the author of “Stay Alive: I Will Live a Long, Loving Life,” a culturally sensitive, skills, empowerment, and family-based HIV-AIDS Prevention/Education program administered and implemented by Reach the Children, Inc. Stay Alive has been taught to over 2 ½ million children and their families in 14 African countries. Wendy is the first author of “The Family Enrichment Program: A Guide for Strengthening Families” that teaches parents and children how to strengthen their families through weekly family nights. Humanitarian Services of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints has overseen the distribution of the Family Enrichment Program; the FEP manual has been used in projects in each of the 50 United States, and in 47 countries worldwide, and has been translated into 14 language. Wendy’s Stay Alive and FEP work has been a work of love; she has not received any compensation for her work with either of these programs.

Wendy has repeatedly shared that the purpose of a BYU Social Work education is to help us become better instruments in the Lord’s hands. That purpose has guided her internship placement decisions, the content included in, and comments she made in her classes, and her personal interactions with students. The following comments are but a few of multiple similar student statements.

“(Wendy’s) classes drew me closer to my Savior. I was inspired to study Him more regularly and more closely. Because of (her classes), I want to be more like Christ so I can learn to love and serve like Christ.”

“(Wendy) was bold about the gospel in her classes. I feel like she actively sought opportunities to teach about the Gospel in her classes. More than ever, I feel that social work and the gospel are intertwined.”

“The theme of (Wendy’s) class was that Jesus Christ is the ultimate social worker and as such, we should always model ourselves from his examples.”

“I love that Wendy wasn’t afraid to share her testimony, incorporate gospel ideas, or discuss how social work and the gospel are connected for her. This was a good example to me of how I can fit my beliefs with the field of social work.”

“Wendy always takes such good care of us in our internships. I was just reflecting a few days ago about how both of my internships have been so perfect for me. I’m grateful for her thoughtful consideration of us in our placements... I’m grateful for Wendy!”

“Wendy always brings in the Gospel and how it connects to what we are struggling with. She is a woman of great faith and I want to be just like her when I grow up! She always reminds me that I can turn to my Heavenly Father and Savior and trust the promptings of the Holy Ghost to guide me in the complex therapeutic situations that come up.”

“Wendy always made sure that we knew she cared about us, and she was always there to answer questions. She was always advocating for us, which I really appreciated!!”

“I am forever changed by her as a professor, as a student, future professional, a person, and a disciple of Christ. She is one of the best parts of the MSW program. She is one of the best people I have ever met and will forever be in my personal hall of fame for people who made a difference in my life.”

Wendy leaves a lasting legacy in BYU’s MSW Field Education Program. She will indeed be missed!



Illustration by Alex Nabaum

A Letter on Resilience

Resilience is a word that has come up often in the aftermath of recent world events. COVID-19 was a historical event that left an impact in some form for every individual across every culture. The worldwide pandemic brought to surface major underlying problems within our social systems, including major social injustices and inequalities. On an individual level, many were faced with the reality of both their mental and physical well-being and in most cases, lack of it due to health, financial, and food insecurities. Political contentions, environmental disaster, and social polarization were just a few extra stressors affecting many across the globe which created waves of astronomical stress exacerbated by the pandemic.

Now put yourself in the shoes of a social worker during that time. How are you supposed to not only serve those most greatly impacted by the hardships consequential to the aforementioned events, but also manage your own well-being? How do you empower those who are experiencing the least amount of control over their circumstances during a time when you, yourself, have little power over the state of the world? History continues to be made, which means that negative events do, and will, continue to happen. However, positive growth, in the form of resilience, is another natural development. Resilience is not only our ability to “bounce back” from hardship, but to function during and throughout the hardship. Right now, we are all entering our own “bounce back eras” as our lives resume a new, consistent normal.

In regards to COVID-19, humanity is entering it’s “meaning making era.” With passing time, we are slowly moving far enough away from that period of insecurity to be able to begin processing and making meaning of the challenges and traumas that happened as a result of the pandemic. We intentionally chose the theme of resilience for the 2022-23 MSW newsletter to recognize and highlight the great amount of resilience we, as social workers, had to develop and utilize in order to remain true to our core, guiding values while managing our own distress.

This year, we asked faculty, alumni, and current students questions regarding their personal experiences with resilience in the field of social work. Emerging themes included: recognizing resilience as a strength in clients, maintaining a beneficial work-life balance, avoiding burnout, and exercising “emotional and social grit.” Recognizing resilience as a strength in others can be a highly beneficial skill for social workers in practice, but should also be a consistent intentional introspective. Engagement with personal resilience may also look like asking for help when needed, and being quick to offer ourselves the grace we need. Recognizing our personal resilience across all of our roles, and especially as social workers, can be an incredibly empowering and meaningful exercise to engage in. Resilience provides the opportunity for surviving to turn into thriving.

“No pain that we suffer, no trial that we experience is wasted. It ministers to our education, to the development of such qualities as patience, faith, fortune, and humility. All that we suffer and all that we endure, especially when we endure patiently, builds up our characters, purifies our hearts, expands our souls, and makes us more tender and charitable.” -Elder Orson F. Whitney

The School of Social Work's Very Own Gallery: **Alex Nabaum's Creative Collection**

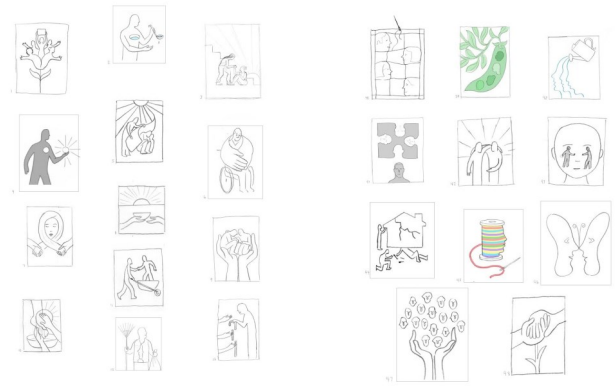
Throughout this year's edition of the newsletter, you may notice some unique illustrations. If you have been in the School of Social Work hallway at BYU recently, you may have recognized them as the artwork that decorates the walls. The School of Social Work commissioned Alex Nabaum to conceptualize the six core values of social work: social justice, service, importance of human relationships, integrity, dignity, and competence. As a co-author of the newsletter, I had the unique opportunity to call the artist, Alex Nabaum, for a brief phone interview regarding his work on the six core values of social work.



We began the interview by talking about his career, and what led him to becoming a freelance illustrator. Alex spoke about his love for drawing in his childhood, and his experience drawing caricatures as a teen in Denver, CO as a part time job. In college at Utah State University, Alex found himself drawn towards the conceptual art often found in magazines and newspapers. Not too far into his college education, Alex landed a job working as an illustrator for a newspaper, and then eventually Deseret News. Today he does freelance illustrating, and has been commissioned by popular sources such as TIME Magazine, New York Times, ESPN, Forbes, Yale, Harvard, Oprah, and Wall Street Journal.

Alex walked me through his process of working as a commissioned artist for BYU. He teamed up with AJ Rich of the BYU Graphics Department.

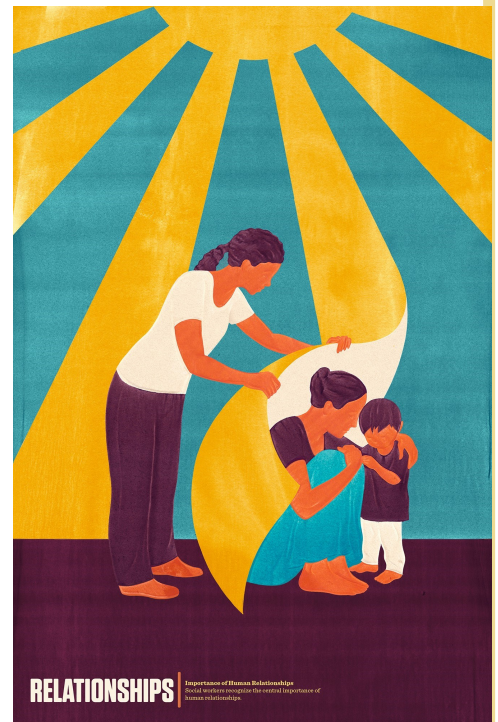
Alex was given the six core values of social work, along with the definitions of each, and was asked to create six unique pieces that reflected them. His artistic process consisted of brainstorming visuals that would convey the words' poetic significance and making twenty or so more sketches for each value. Then, BYU School of Social Work faculty selected the pieces that most conveyed the Social Work core values to them, and Alex finished painting each piece.



Alex's favorite piece of the collection he created was "Dignity." Alex said he was surprised

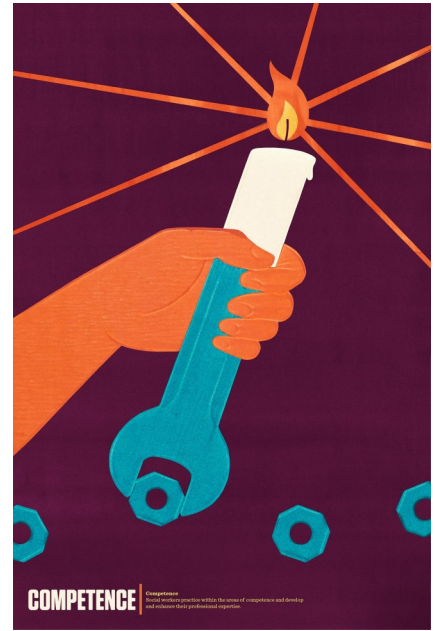


when he saw that BYU selected that one to represent the core social work value of dignity because he sketched it with social justice in mind. For Alex, this reaffirmed that his artwork captures the imagination of his viewers. His other favorite was "Relationships" due to the motivation behind the content of the art. The rays of sunshine were symbolic of "charity in action" and Jesus Christ's example. BYU's School of Social Work recently commissioned Alex once again. This time, they asked him to create work integrating Christ into the essence of the social work core values. Alex created three pieces in this



project, one of which is a mural that incorporates all six of the core value art pieces.

Alex Nabaum's artwork has been a wonderful addition to the BYU School of Social Work space. As a student who walks those hallways regularly, I see many stop and contemplate the meaning and symbolism in each work. I, myself, have paused and let my imagination create connections between the core values of social work, the painted images, and what it all means personally to me. The new art now adorning the walls will continue to contribute to a spirit that creates space for observers to ponder both their professional and spiritual values.



Check out more of Alex Nabaum's work at: alexnabaum.com



Faculty Updates

Included with their updates, we asked faculty to answer the question: “How have you seen resilience show up in your social work practice?”

Steve Hoffman

I am currently working on two state evaluations looking at how the foster care system is preparing youth to manage their own health needs. I work with various student co-authors to publish papers looking at the connections between health literacy and various mental and physical health outcomes using data collected from parent-child dyads in Mexico.

Social work is not always a naturally rewarding occupation, so resilience is needed from day one. Resilience keeps us going during tough days/weeks/months/years, and is an essential characteristic for social workers. One important question to ask is “how can we develop resilience,” and for me it is through hope.

As we can hardly know the impact we have on those around us, I simply hope that my smile or my example or my words are helping others in ways I will not see. That hope is what helps me be resilient.



Stacey Shaw

This has been a busy year between the tenure process, a BYU devotional, marriage, and a new home! I’m starting new projects in Turkey and look forward to taking a sabbatical in Winter 2023.

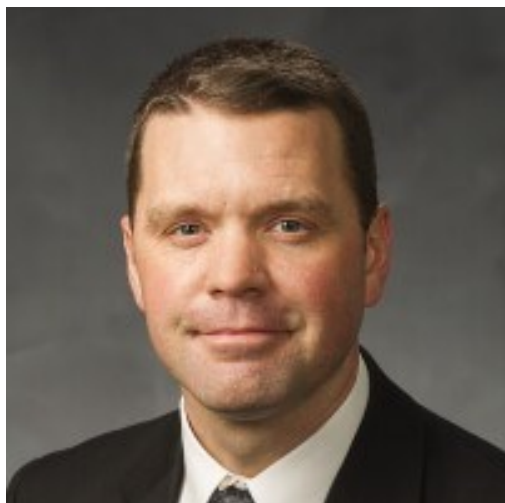
In a recent assignment in the Refugee Studies elective, students explored a particular refugee community and reflected on this group’s challenges and strengths. “Resilience” was a key word that emerged across presentations. Like each of us, refugees have a range of emotional responses to difficulty. But the resilience required to leave persecution, seek safety, endure discrimination, manage legal barriers, and hope for something better can inspire and guide each of us.



Cole Hooley

For the past year I have seen resilience across my work. In teaching, I continue to see our amazing students navigate an ever-changing world in powerful ways. In research, I have continued trying to find ways of getting what works in mental health care to everyone who needs it. We encountered a few roadblocks on a particular project where we were seeking ways to better assess the supply of behavioral health providers in Utah. Fortunately, we were able to find alternatives that ultimately strengthened the project. And in my clinical practice, I have witnessed the power of the human spirit as my clients manage challenges in ways that lead to a better life.





David Wood

Dr. Wood completed his 9th year as faculty in the School of Social Work in January 2023. He continues to teach Social Work Practice Models, Social Work Assessment and Supervised Clinical Practicum. He thoroughly enjoys teaching clinical skills courses. He continues to do clinical work as a uniformed psychologist for the Army National Guard as well as in independent practice. His research continues to focus on military service member and veteran help-seeking behavior and suicide prevention. He was asked to do an interview with PBS News Hour last year on Veteran's Day regarding veteran suicide prevention.

How resilience has helped me in my social work practice: I find that I need to practice what I preach at times! The same skills that I teach students in the clinical skills courses as well as the clinical skills that I use with clients are helpful and universal. I also believe that God has provided important resilience tools through the Gospel of Jesus Christ. One phrase from the Aaronic Priesthood Theme has become very important for my own resilience: "I am a beloved son [or daughter] of God and He has a work for me to do." Knowing that I am doing something meaningful and approved by God helps me maintain resilience in my practice.

Wendy Sheffield

Resilience, or the ability to re-evaluate, problem-solve, and pivot, was absolutely essential to administering the Field Education portion of our curriculum both during and after the Covid pandemic. It was truly an unprecedented time both administratively and educationally when the clinicians, clients, field instructors, interns, and administrators were all simultaneously experiencing the same crisis situation. I readily say that we, the BYU MSW Field Team and interns, weathered the crisis, and grew amidst and from it, due to two key factors: 1) we had been, and continued to, implement pre-emptive self-care practices (we practiced what we were preaching) and 2) the exceptional community social work professionals we are blessed to work with! Building, maintaining, and utilizing support networks is critical to individual and organizational resilience. I am truly grateful for our amazing social work agency partners!





Sherinnah Saasa

For me, resilience is the water that allows me to swallow the stressful and unexpected aspects of my work without choking on them and getting into emotional asphyxiation. I see resilience as my ability to first accept the reality that ‘stuff happens,’ with or without our control, recognize that growth is uncomfortable, sometimes unpleasant and painful even. So when I am faced with challenges, I can sit with the discomfort when necessary, excuse myself when it’s wiser to do so, surround myself with social and spiritual supports that build me up, and strive to learn from the experience in ways that make me better than I was before.

Cory Dennis

I think of resilience as showing up or pushing through stuff even though the instinct might be to check out in some way. Sometimes it’s about just holding on for the ride. The serenity prayer comes to mind as a formula for being resilient in a healthy way rather than some pressured or forced way. Easier said than done, but so are a lot of things.



Charlene Clark

I think we forget how often resilience plays out in our lives. Outside my office is a small sign that says “office manager” with an arrow directing people in. This past year, during a crazy season, Wendy took my sign and returned it with a new title “chaos coordinator.” This pretty much sums up my job. In order to coordinate chaos, you have to be flexible, adaptable, calm, and patient. My resilience is tried every day ... and I LOVE it!

MSW Student Association Officers

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President:
Kaiya Hamlin



Secretary:
Rebekah Hill



BIPOC Representatives:
Ashley Bresee



Activities:
Keeley Doyle



Alyssa Black



Sophia Dimmick



Advisory Council Representatives:
Soana Fifita



Mia Greer



Mentor Liason:
Cerissa Hayhurst



MSW Student Representatives:
Alex Hong



Lowell Lulu



“First year orientation was exactly what I needed! Over the summer my anxiety built as I prepared to come back to school, take on graduate classes, and meet a whole group of people I would be spending the next two years of my life with. Orientation helped in addressing all those fears. Right off the bat I felt a connection to the professors and to our cohort, which has been such a strength for me as classes have begun.”

-Kelsie Heath, MSW First Year Student

“I was very tired that day since I had just gotten back from an international trip. However, as soon as everyone started introducing themselves, I knew the next two years would be full of laughter, fun, and growth. I really appreciate the faculty, staff, and Dean who gave up personal time to be with us. My impression was that everyone I met that day were all willing to help me succeed in this program.”

-Mei-En Huang, MSW First Year Student

The two first year students quoted above capture the feelings of the 2024 cohort on the day of the 2022 MSW New Student Orientation. This first gathering took place August 26th at South Fork Park, just up the sunny Provo Canyon. Nervous excitement led up to the orientation for each new student, and left the cohort feeling more confident about their path to be journeyed together for the next two years.

The first faces the new students saw when they arrived belonged to the BYU School of Social Work faculty. Their warm countenance fostered feelings of ease as they introduced themselves to the students and struck up get-to-know-you conversations. Students were served a continental breakfast and encouraged to mingle with their new peers. Eager to form these new connections, students introduced themselves to their new classmates, finding quickly that the MSW Class of 2024 was filled with diverse individuals from a wide variety of backgrounds.

Students were first greeted by Dr. Gordon Limb, Director of the School of Social Work. Dr. Limb gave a brief introduction of himself and his career, and a short testimony of obtaining a graduate education from BYU, leaving first years excited for their future education. Dr. Limb introduced and welcomed the keynote speaker of the orientation, Dr. Laura Padilla-Walker, Dean of the College of Family, Home, and Social Science. She began her speech reflecting on her 20-year journey to the position she holds today. In that span of time, Dr. Walker learned three key lessons she wanted to pass on to the students just beginning their journeys: remember to be open, remember that you're not alone, and remember that you belong.

She instructed that when remembering to be open it's important to remain open to new ideas, change, and most of all the guidance of the Spirit. She broke this concept down further by quoting Alma 37: “Now these mysteries are not yet fully made known unto me; therefore I shall forbear. And it may suffice if I only say they are preserved for a wise purpose, which purpose is known unto God; for he doth counsel in wisdom over all his works, and his paths are straight, and his course is one eternal round.” To forbear means to have “patient self-control, restraint, tolerance.” As social workers, Dr. Walker emphasized the importance of forbearing with faith, and trusting the Spirit to guide each of us in our work through personal

openness. Dr. Walker's second point, remembering that we are not alone, was accompanied with the advice to form relationships sooner rather than later with faculty and fellow cohort members. She spoke on the value of creating lasting relationships for both personal and professional benefits, and in service to others. Dr. Walker's final lesson went hand in hand with the second point she shared with us. She wanted each student to remember that they belonged, especially in their new cohort and graduate program at BYU. She shared her personal experiences of imposter syndrome as a leading woman in her field, and how remembering that "there is no such thing as a coincidence in the work of the Lord" has powered her through those negative experiences and feelings. She urged the students to take the time to remember that they belong at BYU, and each has important things to contribute during their time there.

After Dr. Limb and Dr. Walker delivered their messages, the students were served lunch and given time to meet their faculty advisors. Following those meetings, get-to-know-you activities pursued. Games like charades and twenty questions hosted by each faculty member only added to the fun of the gathering. Each new student left orientation with excitement for their classes to begin, and relief knowing they would begin their journey on the right foot already having met their peers.

Feelings of belonging play a major role in fostering resilience for individuals. The MSW New Student Orientation did just that: it set the foundation for the journey the new grad students have begun. Cohort cohesiveness, faculty-student relationships, and feelings of belonging all were successfully fostered in just a few hours. Orientation offered the students resources to help them each be resilient and successful through building relationships and confidence as they start their new adventure as MSW students at BYU.



MSW Class of 2024

The 2022 Evening for New Graduate Students was an exciting start to the school year for the new 2024 BYU MSW Cohort. University President Kevin J. Worthen welcomed the 750 plus new graduate students with an opening message on the unique experiences that accompany receiving a graduate education from BYU. Following President Worthen, students were given a speech by Carl Hernandez, newly appointed Vice President of Belonging. His speech began with a special shout out to the MSW students for bringing some life into the night with their enthusiastic cheering. Carl's heartfelt speech on his personal experience as a graduate student at BYU left students with a sense of belonging in their respective programs.



Award winner and MSW student, MarjAnn Ober

Students were served a three course meal while socializing with peers from both their programs and others. The social work students sat as a cohort, and were extra lively going into the award ceremony after their brief recognition for their energy. As a welcoming tradition, BYU Graduate Studies gave five \$2000 Professional Development Awards to randomly drawn new graduate students. The highlight of the evening for all MSW graduate students in attendance was easily when their very own MarjAnn Ober (pictured) was awarded one of the five awards. First year MarjAnn was elated to accept the award, and felt so supported by her peers.



First year MSW students at the 2022 Evening for New Graduate Students

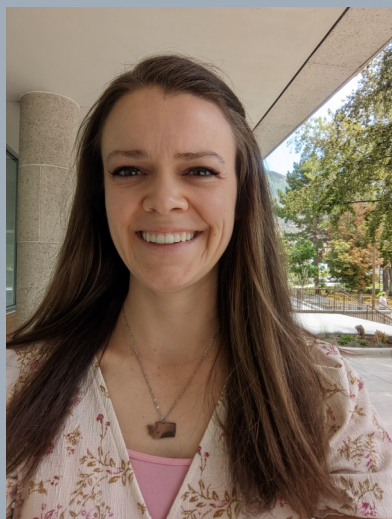
Dr. Limb spent a lunch with first year students on October 24th, 2022, providing them an opportunity to ask him questions and give feedback on their experience in the MSW program nearing the end of their first semester, all while snacking on donuts. Dr. Limb spoke on the uniqueness of the structure of BYU's School of Social Work program. His advice for first years was "just trust the process." The idea behind the unique structure consists of front loading research and statistics coursework, and ending with the clinical classes. Dr. Limb expressed having continued amazement with the program and it's outcomes in student success.

First year students asked Dr. Limb about his career, eager to learn from the director. Dr. Limb spoke on his decision to focus his career on the Native American population. Following this, students expressed their various anxieties about their future careers and ways to achieve them, all in which were dispelled by Dr. Limb. The meeting allowed for Dr. Limb to boost each students' confidence regarding their future educational, internship, and career paths.



Class of 2024 MSW students meeting with Dr. Limb at Donuts with the Director

Class of 2024 Cohort



Kyleigh Hatch

I am from Pocatello, Idaho and have lived in Utah on and off for the last eight years. I am loving the MSW program at BYU due to the compassionate and spiritual focus of our awesome faculty and cohort members. Currently, I am considering pursuing a career in research, specifically focusing on factors within families that predict future stability for children and youth.

Jenae Jepson

I received my bachelor's degree in Social Work from Utah State University in 2006 and worked in the social work field at CASA, Hospice of Santa Barbara, and Princeton Child Development Institute. Most recently I was a case manager at WBH Center for Opiate Recovery and I particularly value my work as a volunteer sexual assault victim's advocate through The Refuge. I am excited, though intimidated, to be a first year MSW student at BYU. I look forward to using this incredible clinical and field training to earn my LCSW and be an effective therapist for adults suffering from depression, anxiety, trauma, and substance use disorders. I also hope to use my skills to raise awareness on social issues and resources through community outreach. I have three awesome kids and with any spare time I love photography and to travel— and all the better if they are combined. I was drawn to social work early on in my education as I have always been a helper and seek to be empathetic and compassionate. "Never dismiss a generous thought" is a mantra I try to guide my life by.



Sophie Dimmick

I'm from Idaho. I'm excited to be in the MSW program at BYU because it can combine spirituality and a different perspective with the career path I'm already interested in. My career goals include working part time or full time as a therapist, but I am also interested in other areas of the social work field! I love painting, doing DIY crafts, and spending time with those around me! I know I will have hard times so resilience will help me to bounce back and continue trying.



Mia Greer

I am from Lehi, Uah. I am most excited about building relationships and learning from amazing professors. My current career goal is to become EMDR certified as well as be on track to get my clinical licensure.

Paul Coyne

I am from Dublin, Ireland. I'm looking forward to all of the learning and making deeper connections within the cohort. I came into the program wanting to keep an open mind as far as what a future career will look like, letting my learning take me where it will. Having said that, I had in the back of my mind that private practice is my default goal. In my free time, I like to spend time with my family, watching my kids compete in their sports, play board games and soccer, teach and train Brazilian Jiu Jitsu, and running. Resilience will play a huge role in my success as a grad, there's no realistic way I can survive this experience without it. Some other things about me: I like long walks on the beach, humor is my defense mechanism, and I have no nail on my left big toe.

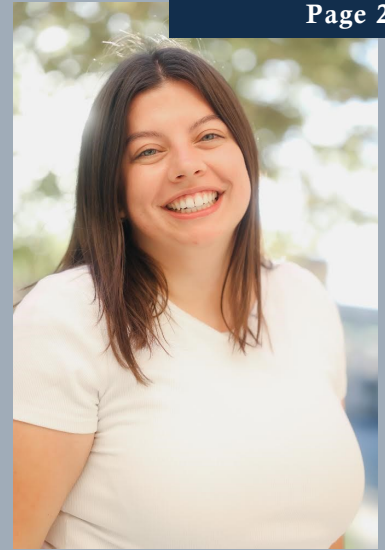


Carlos Rios

Hi y'all! That's as much Texan as I will be able to speak. But! I do love Whataburger (Sorry In-n-Out) My name is Carlos Rios and I am from El Paso, Texas. I absolutely love being a student here at BYU under the Social Work program. I have the unique opportunity to be able to combine the love and light of the gospel of Jesus Christ with my passion of helping others who think they are without help! One of the reasons why I wanted to practice in Social Work is to be able to work with individual's who wish to leave their addictions behind, as well as being able to work with individuals who want to remove themselves from negative values and environments. If it wasn't for cycling, I think I would not have been this happy! There's just something about biking to school or work, or simply exploring the world around you at 15 MPH that makes everything better. I am a big advocate for individuals to give cycling a try as an alternative mode of transportation. **YOU WILL HAVE FUN ON A BIKE !**

Michaela Palensky

My name is Michaela Palensky and I am from Omaha, Nebraska. I am most excited about the new opportunities to learn about the social work field and to build on what I already know. My current career goal is to go into healthcare social work. For me, self care looks like reading (for leisure), paddleboarding, and baking. I think resilience will be so important in helping me continue to overcome challenges when they arise as I am navigating this new phase of life. I am so happy to be here!



Haylee Burnett

My name is Haylee Burnett and I'm from North Ogden, Utah. I love dogs and trying new foods with my husband! I am excited to continue to learn and grow in this program, and especially to be able to have hands-on clinical experience. I don't know the specifics on what my future career will look like yet, but I would love to be involved in both clinical practice on the micro level and also engage in advocacy on a larger scale as well!

Kelsie Heath

My name is Kelsie Heath and I'm from Gillette, Wyoming. As an MSW student I am most excited about meeting new people, developing clinical skills, and learning from others. My current career goal is undecided, but I do know that I love working with kids and that I am looking forward to learning about working with a variety of different populations. Some of my favorite self-care activities include being outdoors, playing tennis, running, painting, and spending time with friends and family.





Clint Callender

I am an international student from Georgetown, Guyana located on the continent of South America. As a student in the BYU MSW program, I am most excited to expand my spiritual knowledge, qualifications, and cultural awareness while pursuing an MSW at BYU. My current career goal is to be an LCSW and open my own private practice. Some of my favorite ways to spend time is with my amazing wife and kids, taking long, observant walks, and watching comedy. Having resilience as a grad student will undoubtedly aid in my ability to safeguard myself from the harmful consequences of work-related stress, and to “bounce back” from challenging circumstances.

Sadie Clark

I am from Springville, Utah. I am most excited about BYU's MSW program because of the focus on clinical training and the connections with classmates and professors. I am not sure what kind of job I want after graduation, but the clinical aspects of social work really resonate with me and I hope to have that as my focus. I think working with children or families would be fun. My favorite self-care activities are taking naps and going on runs along the Provo river.

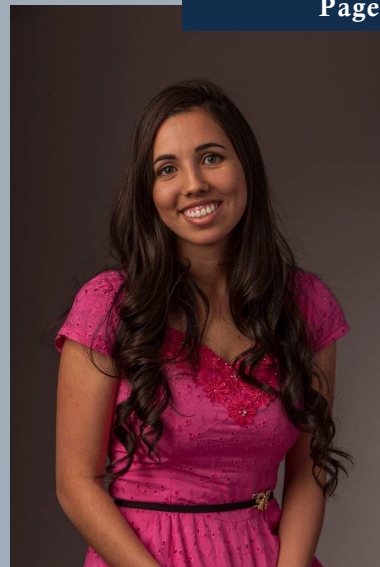


Jacy Larson

I was born and raised in Safford, Arizona. I am very excited to be in this program, and the thing I look forward to the most is continuing to build relationships with my fellow students. I am not sure where my career will take me, but I hope to do macro level work. My hobbies include reading and hiking. I also like to bake/eat/share desserts.

Andressa Little

I am from Brazil. I am thrilled about being a student in the MSW at BYU. I look forward to embracing the values of the social work profession and becoming an ethical and competent professional. I am excited to become a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and help empower and advocate for those in need. Besides being a student, I am also a mother of a six-month-old baby and am married. My favorite thing to do is spend time with them. They give me the strength I need to give my very best in all aspects of life. This program is intense but also rewarding. Having said that, I hope future students will be brave to do what they love despite their life circumstances. I hope they are brave and have faith that somehow things will work out for the best.



Shara Jackson Harper

I grew up in TN, moved to UT last year from MI. I am most excited about expanding my perspectives and growing my capacity to show up for the issues and individuals who need it most. Current career goal: Perinatal Mental Health Therapist, Women's Wellness Educator, Change maker for women's issues. Favorite self care: music, candle light, herbal tea, mindful meditation. For me, resilience for success as a grad student is connected to understanding divine purpose, choosing self-compassion, creating patterns of presence (with my kids & with my studies), and setting timers to keep me focused.

Nicki Derr

My name is Nicki Derr, I was born and raised in Sacramento! I love playing volleyball, riding my bike and just doing anything active with friends and family! I am most excited about being here at BYU in the MSW program to learn how to help others create and keep healthy relationships with others and themselves. I am excited to learn how to help others be more self aware, resilient and capable in their daily lives. My current career goal is to be an LCSW.



Rajkumar Tamang

I am from Nepal. As a student in the MSW program at BYU, I am most excited for the amazing support system! The first impression that I felt, and still do, is that I belong! My current career goal is to work with international social work issues. Some of my favorite things to do are run, watch or play soccer, play board games, and visit nature.



Ashton Seely

I grew up in a small town in central Utah, Nephi is the place I call home, and I'm so grateful that it is. Many believe growing up in a small town is challenging; however, Nephi is all about lending a hand and building a community. That attitude is where my love for serving began. What I am most excited about is the opportunity to receive an excellent education from an amazing university. While also creating a close relationship with members of my cohort. My current career goal is work for a local hospital in rural Utah while also exploring options of a private practice. A few of my favorite selfcare activities involves leatherworking, going finishing and woodworking. I also enjoy watching and coaching wrestling.

Rachel Parkinson

I am from Draper, UT. As a student in the MSW program at BYU, I am most excited to continue learning from wonderful professors, identify a specific niche I want to work in, and navigate world of social work along side my amazing cohort! I am also excited to incorporate gospel knowledge into my practice of social work as BYU helps implement a spiritual aspect into our education. What is your current career goal? My current career goal is to find a population that I am passionate about, and dedicate my learning in order to better serve this population. Some of my favorite things to do include snow skiing, teaching dance classes, cooking, and spending time with family. My favorite form of self care is enjoying ice cream while cuddled up on the couch watching Grey's Anatomy.



Julianne Croft

Hello! My name is Julianne Croft and I am from Kaysville, Utah. I am really enjoying being an MSW student here at BYU. One aspect of the program that I particularly appreciate is the opportunity to reflect on how social work principles align with gospel truths. After completing this program I hope to work at a residential treatment center for youth. Some of my favorite things to do are read, hike, and sing.



Alyssa Black



Hi! My name is Alyssa. I am from a small town near Dallas, Texas. I am so excited to learn more about human nature and the many therapeutic approaches and am so glad that I get to do it with an amazing cohort! I have a lot of interests within the field of social work and am excited to try a range of different things, but am also really passionate about working with and supporting children and families. In my spare time I like to do anything outside in the warm sun including hiking, running, swimming, reading, or just snacking and chatting.

Iida Harju

I am from the Arctic Circle, northern Finland. I am excited to expand my knowledge of social work in an international environment. Gaining a psychological and therapeutic perspective on social problems has been very rewarding and has strengthened my professional competence. Working either in research or at the macro level of society has always fascinated me. On the other hand, international social work could also be an interesting career choice. I am not sure yet what the future holds, but the MSW program will certainly give me a good framework to work in a variety of positions in the social sector worldwide.





MarjAnn Ober

I'm originally from Arizona but I have lived in Salem UT for the last 13 years. I am super excited to learn how to raise the collective consciousness of the world through social work! My career goal is still unknown—I'm taking my time in the program to figure out what I really want to do. I love to hike and read and sit in a hammock for self-care.

Samantha Day

I was born and raised in Spanish Fork Utah and currently live in Vineyard. I am so grateful for the opportunity that I have to be in the BYU MSW program. I am truly living out my dream of becoming a therapist and getting to help people in a more individual and meaningful way. I love working with kids and adults and hope to help individuals who have experienced loss, are processing grief, or working through mental health struggles such as anxiety or low self esteem. When I have down time, which is rare, I love to spend time with my husband, take warm baths, take care of my plants, bake or cook, and watch a good movie or baking show. Resilience in my opinion is summed up well by one of my favorite quotes by C.S. Lewis. "Hardships often prepare ordinary people for an extraordinary destiny." By exercising resilience through this program I know that I will come out stronger, and be better prepared to help and relate to the people I work with. This makes every hardship worth it.



Annika Barrick

My name is Annika and I am from Orem, UT. I am excited about being a student in this program because of all of the great professors we to learn from, and the opportunity to get to know the amazing students in my cohort. My current career goal is to get licensed after I graduate and to work in a clinical setting doing mental health therapy with clients. Some of my favorite things to do are hiking, dancing, and spending time with friends and family.

Jen George

I am from San Luis Obispo, California. Swimming and food adventures are two of my favorite things. I am excited to learn how to sit with a person and really hear them and be part of their quest for greater peace and joy. I hope to become an LCSW and eventually teach about relationships and human behavior, empowering people to live more authentic, fulfilling lives.



Allie Bonner

Hello! I am Allie Bonner, and I am from Cedar Hills, UT. After I am done with the MSW program, I am hoping to do clinical work with trauma. When I am not in school, I enjoy reading, embroidery, hanging out with friends, watching TV (anime is my new favorite genre), and playing with my parent's dog. For me, resilience is all about being able to effectively accept new resources, in addition to accepting new challenges.

Mei-En Huang

I am from Taiwan and my first language is Mandarin Chinese. I always knew I would go to grad school since I graduated in 2015, but my family has come first in the past few years. Now I am excited to continue learning more about Social Work and deepen my clinical skills. I am excited to be part of a wonderful cohort, where everyone is so supportive and loving. I love traveling and experiencing new things.





Jamie Call

I'm from California and something I have been really excited about being a social work student is the opportunity to learn how to connect with people in more meaningful ways. My current career goal is to help families with young kids find greater love, peace, and satisfaction through helping the individuals in the family heal and process. Some of my hobbies include scuba diving, paddle boarding, and dancing. I believe that resilience allows us to bounce back from the setbacks and exhaustion inherent in a program that asks us to get out of our comfort zones and show up in vulnerable ways with our peers, professors, and clients.

Brynlee Shults

I am from a small town in northern Nevada called Fallon, but I claim the red rocks of Cedar City, UT as my home! I am so grateful for the opportunity to get my education in clinical social work at BYU, and look forward to developing my perspectives, skills, and values when it comes to serving others in a therapeutic capacity. My current career goal is to be a therapist, and the specific population I want to work with changes every week as I learn more and more. Some of my favorite pass times include running, mountain biking, creating pottery, folding origami, and adventuring to beautiful places. Resilience is one of my favorite concepts as I believe that it's something everyone has, and can learn to utilize in order to thrive.



Brenda Barrow



Hi, I'm Brenda. I am a recreational therapist and a "hobbyist" because if there's something new to try, I'm going to try it. I enjoy mountain biking, skiing, canyoneering, hiking, climbing, and anything that invites me to spend time outside with Mother Nature. Whether indoor or outdoors, there is something so powerful yet sacred about movement; and while I still cannot touch my toes, yoga practice has become a "home" for me. At BYU, I look forward to studying trauma and attachment so that I can help create healing environments and opportunities as an LCSW where people can come "home" and reconnect with their truest selves. Resilience is an essential part of healing and becoming. To me, resiliency is a process, an undertaking. It involves giving ourselves and others grace for being human, creating room to learn hard lessons as we navigate our mortal experience. Grace is essential because it invites us to more easily pick ourselves up again and the safety to feel able to embrace our shadows, accept hard truths, and face harsh realities with flexibility. The process of developing resilience allows us to enjoy life rather than endure it. Once we accept that life is hard, the mere fact that life is hard no longer gets in the way; we transcend it.



Alondra Cardiel

Hi my name is Alondra Cardiel. I'm originally from Chihuahua, Mexico and my family moved to Nashville, Tennessee when I was ten years old. I'm passionate about social work in that I'm service-oriented and a social justice advocate. My current goal is to be able to work with children and families, specifically within the Hispanic community. Some of my hobbies are baking, reading, going on walks with my dog, and five dollar movie Tuesday.

Zach Davis

The majority of my childhood was spent in West Valley City, Utah. I served my mission in the Farmington, NM Mission, which largely serves the Navajo Nation. I met my wife in 2016 and married a year later. We now have 2 crazy boys - Lewis and Steven, 4 and 2 years old respectively. We also have a pet turtle named Koopa. The thing I am most excited about in this program is having the opportunity to learn that I have a lot to learn about being a social worker, having a safe environment (between my cohort and professors) to normalize the fact I have a lot to learn, and to be able to cover some ground in learning the things I haven't learned yet. When it comes to resilience and school I feel much like a Steve Rogers, where after grueling days and weeks of schooling I pop back up with the phrase "I can do this all day." My current career goal is to develop the habits necessary to be in a state of constant improving competency as I move out into the workforce, find an organization that serves the needs of my family and is one I can feel proud working for, so that I can rest a bit before setting my sights on future career goals. I love hanging out with my family, listening to music, playing and nerding about The Legend of Zelda games, reading, thinking about stories I swear I am going to write one day, commenting a lot in class, and making spreadsheets.



Elizabeth Byers



I am from Sunny Orange County, California. A small town called Westminster. Everything in my High School was themed after the Westminster Abbey. We didn't have a class president, we had a Prime Minister and an Exchequer. I grew up just 15 mins from Huntington Beach, one of my favorite places in the whole world. When I "go to my happy place" in my mind, I go to the Pier at Huntington Beach at dusk. As an MSW student, I am the most excited about getting to use everything I'm learning here at BYU out in the field to help people on their individual journeys of growth and healing. My current career goal is to be an LCSW in an in-patient setting.

Lowell Laula

My name is Lowell Laulu, I was born and raised in the islands of Samoa. I served my mission in Australia Sydney South mission, and then attended BYU-Hawaii for my undergrad in social work and fell in love with it. I came to Utah for an internship, worked for DCFS afterwards and wanted to broaden my horizons in my education and applied to BYU. I am very grateful to be here and to have the opportunity to serve those around me now and in my future careers.

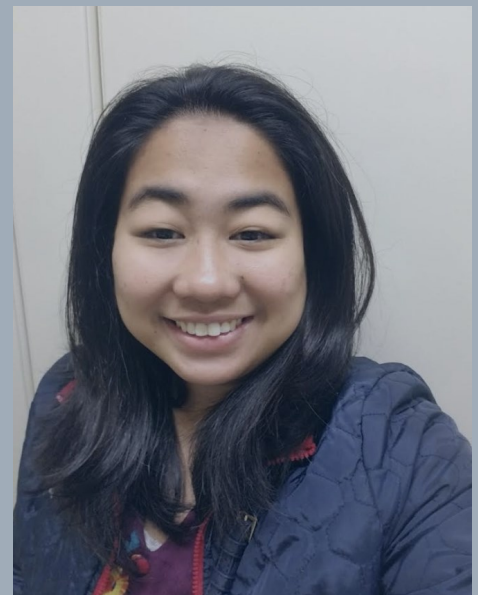


Frisca Natalia

My name is Chrisever Natalia, I go by Frisca. I'm from Central Java, Indonesia. Something that I like to do for fun is playing the ukulele and drawing. In the future, I want to be a case manager and provide free services to assist those in need with social issues. It will be provided voluntarily and without payment—pro bono. PS. I love the MSW program.

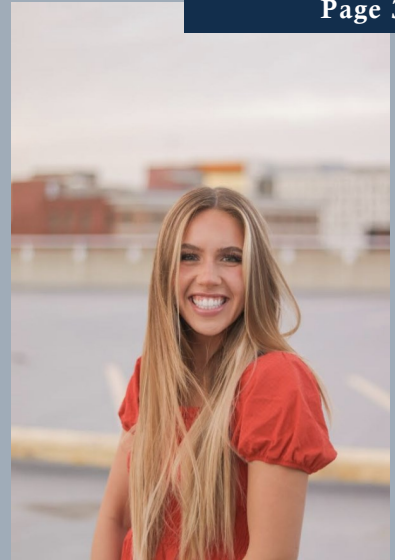
Ana Katrina Fugaban Dela Pena

I am from the Phillipines. I am most excited to get to know my wonderful cohort. My current career goal is to graduate and get licensed as a therapist. Some of my favorite self care activities include sleeping, movie nights, and walks with my kids.



Rachel Vance

My name is Rachel! I recently started my MSW program. My future goal is to work with teenage/adolescent girls with eating disorders! I am passionate about loving myself and others, sunsets, eating good food, dancing, sleeping, and meeting new people and hearing their stories. I am from Calgary Canada and recently married my highschool sweetheart. I love therapy and am excited to become better able to connect with others.



Yuehan Jin

My name is Yuehan. I am from Beijing. I love baking, gaming and summer. My dream is to become a therapist that specializes in meditative practice.

Second Year Student Resilience

We asked Second Years in the MSW program to answer: How has resilience played a part in your role as a graduate student in the MSW program at BYU?

Larissa Vecchi

Grad school has come as a new and different challenge. There have been difficult aspects that I was ready to face and others that I had not anticipated. Sometimes being in a field that requires so much of us can really take it out of me but resiliency has stepped in and taken care of me. I am able to rely on past experiences and the confidence that I can get through hard things and do hard things. Building that trust in myself has proved to be my biggest resiliency support.

Leah

Life is wild and chaotic at times but I'm in school and want to be an LCSW so I push through.

Heidi Hydrick

It has been a cyclical pattern. Being an MSW student has allowed me to learn more about resilience and how to build it. I have used this knowledge to strengthen my resilience which I then use to handle the stress of the program and not become depleted mentally, emotionally and physically.

Kristen Kinghorn

Resilience has kept me moving forward. It has motivated me to keep going even when I feel overwhelmed.

Ty Beard

Resilience kept me going when my motivation fell short.

Rebecca Madsen

I have had to dig deep and really connect to my emotions and self care to push me forward.

Emily Collier

Resilience has been essential through my schooling as a graduate student in the MSW program. There have been many challenges and life events that have added stressors to my experience as a student, and having resilience and good coping skills has helped me make it this far and will help me graduate!

Sarah Hokanson

In the MSW program I have learned more about the impact of life experiences and trauma. This has helped me to better see the role that resilience has played in my life and helps me to have hope for how I can use resilience for myself and my clients moving forward.

Alumni Updates

This year we asked the alumni to answer “What role has resilience played in your social work practice?”



Debby Hill, 1975

Resilience in my practice means never giving up on those that need help.

Kevin Theriot, 1978

Without resilience, you won't last long in this field!



Marja Himmist, 1979

Resilience has helped me assist others learn strength to handle difficulties in their lives, which has strengthened me in handling my own trials.

Bruce Davis, 1981

Having resilience allowed me to work for 38 years with the Department of Veteran Affairs with our blind and visually impaired veterans.

**Robert Riggs, 1983**

Working through devastating medical diagnosis with patients and their family members was very taxing. Being resilient allowed me to continue to focus on the patients needs. I have been retired for sometime and now get to participate in more joyful activities.

Reed Stoddard, 1983

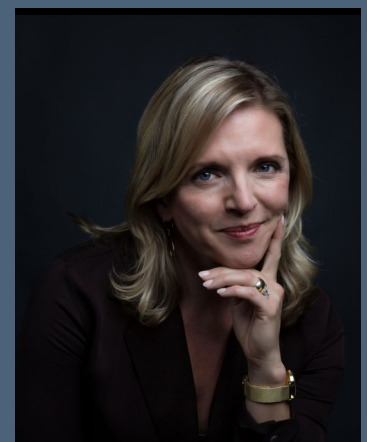
Resilience is a regular part of my personal life and clinical work.

Barry D. Glum, 1983

Resilience has been a very important part of my social work practice. People that I have worked with are seldom on the same page as I am and most take things at their own pace. Thinking outside the box is a must and a willingness to make changes and adjustments that will lead to positive outcomes.

Cindy Hopper, 1987

Understanding that overcoming challenges is a part of growth. For me and for my clients.



Richard Whiting, 1989

It has helped my clients as well as me. I have realized that resilience is just one of the ways we can endure to the end. As a family member said: do we have a choice? I think resilience speaks to growing, learning, and progressing rather than simply marking time or not utilizing the opportunities we have been given.

Mike Hanley, 1990

Resilience has played a significant role in my practice. Without resilience to change throughout the last three decades, my professional growth and development would have been thwarted. Resilience in the face of change, doubt, challenge and disappointment has been critical. I have been able to rebound from myriad situations directly related to my practice that were arduous and demanding.

Sherry Eastman Gunn, 1990

I get to help patients and families each day find ways to accept their current states and work toward finding joy in a new normal.

**Geri Lehnardt, 1992**

Resilience helps with continuity and longevity in my practice.

Taressa Weaver Earl, 1993

I work with BYU Pathway and sit on the board of advisors for a foundation called The Lords Hands. I meet weekly with students in Africa over Zoom who are working hard but struggling to obtain higher education. They often don't have electricity, network, or a laptop to do their school work but manage to complete their assignments on their phones. They face challenges with paying their tuition, feeding their families and medical needs but I have witnessed time and time again how they have learned that to trust in the Lord and that God will provide. Because resources are low or nonexistent I have noticed how these people have developed low expectations for obtaining comforts of life. They have learned to be resourceful and learned to be patient. I have watched students be without work for months and learn to plant gardens to feed their families. Some have chosen to go to one meal a day to put the money towards paying tuition. The governments neglect to reinforce a nearby dam has cause great flooding in southern Nigeria and a couple of my students have lost their homes and they seem to be used to having to rebuild.



Brian Anderson, 1993

We talk about it frequently at Family Services where I work both for clinicians and clients.

Mike Rowley, 1995

To truly find power in resiliency you must first have a vision of the outcome so you or the people you are working with have idea about what they are working for and towards. Once they have the vision, then realistic expectations can be set, obstacles can be overcome, and resiliency can be built. Vision with resiliency are vital when working through our our most difficult challenges.



Tim Frost, 1993

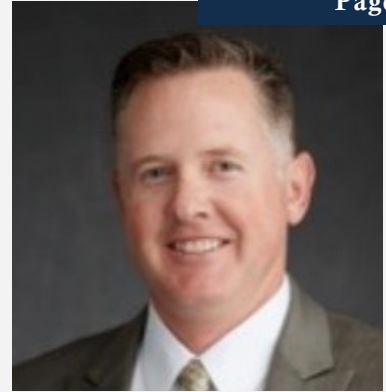
Resilience has made all the difference in the world in my practice.

Debbie Muhlenstein, 1995

Resilience is what helps us through the times that we feel stuck. Resilience is what pushes us through unknown territory because we done other difficult tasks or accomplishments.

Nathan Gibbons, 1996

Resilience is how I handle a heavy caseload and manage the work stress in my own life, well enough, such that I can be an efficient, effective worker. I learned this from my social work professors and experience over a number of years.

**Ricardo Merchan, 1997**

It's a trait often identified as a strength in many of my clients, and it is frankly a trait required of a social worker in dealing with the politics, stressors, and ups and downs in the life of a family or minor.

Holly Waite, 1998

Social Work is a high burnout profession. I actually have not worked in it for 17 years because I have been raising a family. But prior to this I worked professionally for 15 years. I would say resiliency played a big role in my years of practice. I exercised resilience in the many years of college to get my BSW and later my MSW. The varied work experience and job roles I took on as a social worker required resilience especially working with particular populations. Social Work requires a lot of emotional and social grit and faith, both of which are part of being resilient.

**Rachel Crandall, 1998**

It's amazing how resilient people are!

Jonathon Pingree, 1998

Enhancing the clients ability to bounce back from tough times is a very important part of treatment.

**Kyle Oswald, 2000**

Resilience plays a central role in each and every session in my work.

Alfred Dodini, 1999

For me, gaining more resilience has allowed me to work with clients who are facing more serious challenges in their lives.

Jared Powell, 2002

Resilience is critical. In my work, vicarious and secondary trauma are ongoing phenomena. When the demands of the organization and oversight bodies meet the demands of the clients and Effectiveness requires Attunement and empathy, resiliency becomes critical. I take a neurodynamic approach to both therapy for my traumatized clients and in working through my own triggers. I'm working on a training program that could potentially be turned into a peer-to-peer neurodynamic resilience building process. Post-traumatic growth is something that we realistically need to enjoy if we're going to thrive and have increasing passion and pleasure in our work rather than jadedness and burnout on the one hand, or panic and running from the field on the other.

**Chad Schaugaard, 2003**

I've been blessed to be able to find meaning in my work. Knowing that my work is impacting lives on a personal level helps me to avoid burnout and refills my resiliency cup.

Drucilla P. Christiansen, 2004

Resilience has played a major role in my work.

**Brad Evans, 2007**

Resilience is needed every day in maintaining balance, avoiding burnout, and modeling for clients.

**Erin Shepard, 2009**

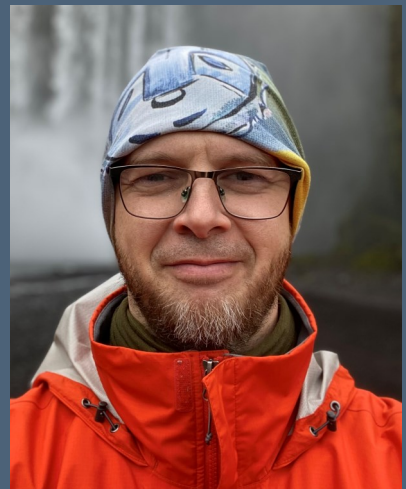
Resilience has allowed continued opportunities to grow!

Cathy Sullivan, 2009

Resilience has helped me and clients get through tough times.

Fredrik Gudmundsson, 2009

Resilience has helped me, as a provider, recover from the stresses of clinical work and administrative burdens of practice. In that way, it has afforded me more time and energy that I can devote to the service of those that are suffering.



Zachary Duvall, 2013

I find it helpful to look for reasons my clients are resilient, not only why they struggle. It's helpful to do the same for myself too!

**Wendy Beres, 2014**

In order to transition to working remotely, resilience and flexibility during Covid have been essential.

Valerie Payne, 2014

Resilience has played an extremely important role in my social work practice. The more I study and use aspects of positive psychology (including resilience) the more I see hope and growth in clients.

Melissa Pomale, 2014

I have worked for the last almost 10 years as an LCSW. When I started to feel burnout, I chose resilience by adding being a baggage handler as a second job to enable my family to travel for free. Here is a picture of us in Cancun! Also, just began another career as a Real Estate Agent. I am starting to enjoy therapy more again as I have found other healthy outlets and more balance in my life.

Julie Potter, 2013

I've started a couple of businesses, and some have failed, but I have to just keep working at it!

Paul Epperson, 2016

I have learned resilience from my clients and coworkers, and I am trying to be resilient myself.

Troy Marie Young, 2016

Resilience has helped me try to take a positive perspective on situations and try to view challenges as learning opportunities. As my husband's autoimmune disease has resulted in his confinement to a wheelchair for the rest of his life, focusing on the things we can manage (I don't like the word control) instead of dwelling on what we cannot change has helped us to build awareness, think of new ways to tackle his immobility, and reach out to others for help. Our six children and their families have rallied to help and support us physically and emotionally. We hope we can all emerge stronger after enduring our difficulties and finding creative solutions to our problems together.

**Phoebe Kung, 2016**

Resilience has opened my eyes to how capable we truly are at overcoming adversity. I am humbled by my clients and how they allow resilience in their own lives despite the trauma they went through. Their willingness to allow me to be a part of their journey is already a great strength of resilience.

Lindsay Powell, 2016

Seeing my clients innate ability to heal inspires me and gives me hope in my own resilience to learn and heal and dance forward through the pains and difficulties of life!

**Megan Urick, 2016**

Believing that people are resilient and capable is something I deeply value in my practice. I work to help my clients believe they are resilient and can heal and empower them to make choices that align with their core values. So many of my clients haven't had a figure in their life who believes in them.

Ryan Turner, 2016

Especially during the first 5 years, resilience against self-doubt and the temptation for negative self-talk regarding my competency has been a major role in developing professional maturity and sustainable clinical skills.

**Rachel Steinberg, 2017**

A major one! It's important to manage the expectations that we have of ourselves and accurately assess our capacity to give. At the end of the day, I hope we all go home with our own mental health and wellness intact. Something that has helped me with resilience, in addition to self-care, is remember my personal mission statement as a social worker. Reflecting on why I wanted to be a social worker in the first place, helps to remind me of the big picture in regards to this profession.

Nathan Porter, 2018

I believe that each person has inherent resilience to face the challenges of life. I've noticed that resiliency has helped both me and my clients to lean into distress and challenging experiences, instead of avoiding them. I've seen clients increase their resiliency in the process, which has led to facing new challenges with confidence instead of avoidance. Resilience has made a big difference in my social work practice!

**Colbey Strong, 2018**

Resilience has helped me take the risks to accomplish and do what I have done. It has given me the confidence to believe in myself and my abilities and has helped me to work through the difficult situations that have come up. It has helped me to work hard and be there for my clients and family when they have needed me.

Brianna Davis, 2018

As a therapist who specializes in trauma, resilience has played a central role in my practice. I have seen the signs of burnout many times, and each time have been able to tune into myself and do my own emotional work in order to be a safe, consistent presence for my clients.

**Zachary Larkin, 2019**

It is the only way I have survived my career.

Stephanie Nixon, 2019

I have seen resilience play out in my social work practice as I have witnessed clients face difficult things daily. I am amazed at the resilience clients demonstrate as they work at their problems, their relationships, and improve their lives.

**Candice Child-Illum, 2019**

It has allowed me help co-workers who struggle during very difficult situations. It has allowed me to continue to practice when I might otherwise wanted to quit.

Kelly Sykes, 2019

Hearing and guiding humans through some of life's most difficult times requires resilience, period. As a practitioner you have to have resilience as an accompaniment to boundaries so as to not carry every burden you hear about from those you work with and speak with.

**Jessica Meyes, 2019**

I learn about resilience each week from my clients. I don't use the term "bounce back" anymore because usually people will bounce forward after a hardship. It's a beautiful thing to witness.

Olivia Nash, 2020

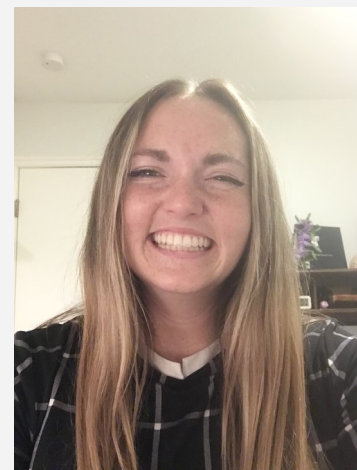
Resilience has been crucial to continuing on when everything in life changes. I have been able to adapt and be flexible because of supports and tools that I have access to, I have been able to take care of myself through stressful transitions, and I have been able to push forward through all the hard things. Because right when I think I'm getting settled somewhere, things change again!

**Kiley Garber, 2022**

I'm trying to continue to show up for my clients each day with a curious attitude and the humility needed to keep learning!

Rachel Andelin, 2021

I am honored and privileged to work with refugees, immigrants, and victims of human trafficking at my current place of employment. These individuals have experienced some of the most unspeakable and brutal treatment. Most of them have experienced lifelong, chronic trauma. At times it is easy to look at their brokenness and feel so angry at the world that holds such injustice. However, as I look for their strengths and identify their resilience, something magical happens. These individuals are survivors, warriors, conquerors! I ask them, "What is motivating you to keep getting up out of bed each morning? What is motivating you to stay alive after all you have suffered?" And almost always, their answer is someone they love, usually a family member, or their relationship with God. I have experienced that resilience comes from relationships of love and trust. No wonder social work emphasizes the importance of human relationships as one of its key values.

**Pamela Love, 2022**

In going through the crisis of my husband's disability and all its effects on me and our family, I so appreciated a therapist who reassured me that I was going to be ok. She had previously shared a bit of her own story with me--just enough that I knew she spoke from experience. From her I learned that hope and resilience can be shared. Her resilience encouraged my own, just as I now share and encourage resilience with my clients who are in the thick of tough family situations.

