



# ST. CLOUD STATE UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

## The Catalyst

### PROJECT HOMELESS CONNECT



Dr. Sheila Moriarty, Ph.D., MSW, LISW

**Tell The Catalyst readers about yourself and how you became a social work professor.**

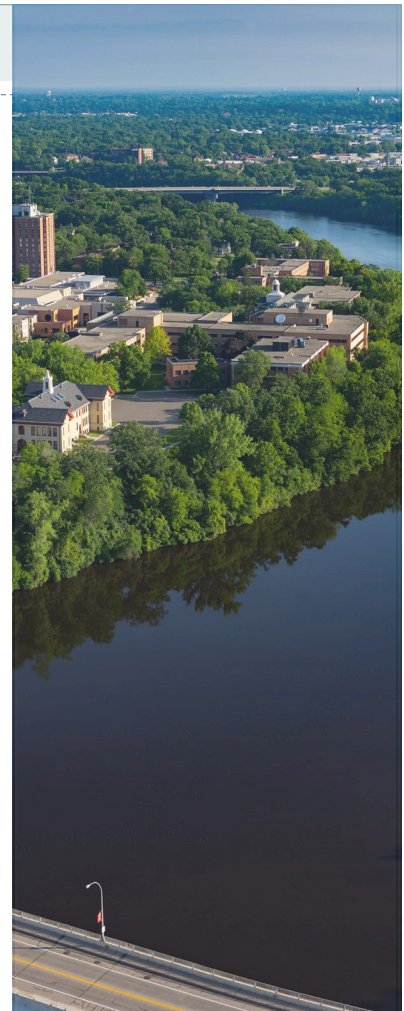
I am sort of unusual in that I didn't know I was going to be an academic until I was languishing at my job at a crisis shelter and I didn't know what I wanted to do next. I had already practiced for almost twenty years. On a whim, I called up the U of MN to ask about the Doctoral program, and they were very thirsty for students. A week later I was enrolled- except I didn't enroll in a Social Work doctoral program. An old professor advised me to follow two professors who did Hermeneutic Phenomenology, so I ended up in the College of Education following these two professors taking all of the classes they offered. It took me a long time to get my doctorate, but I finally made it.

**What inspired you to become involved in the Project Homeless Connect initiative and how that work enhanced your role as faculty at the department of social work at SCSU?**

I was attached to a group of community people who were interested in solving homelessness. I couldn't go one time, and I sent a student, Markie Henry. She came back enthused because they kept asking her about how to get students involved. I merely followed her lead and started talking to students. Each year, we have become more and more involved, and our students lead much of our work.

**In your experience, what are some of the biggest challenges faced by individuals experiencing homelessness in our community?**

Being misunderstood. There are so many myths about people experiencing homelessness. People don't like it when people stand on the corner with signs about their homelessness. They cling to stories about how those people make a lot of money and live in big homes. I am telling you that no one wants to stand on the corner with a sign getting harassed many more times than they get helped. Homelessness is a complex issue. There are people with addiction issues, mental health issues, disabilities, lack of resources, etc. that lead to this phenomenon. If I lost my job and needed help, I would have family that would take me in. What if I didn't have that? What would I do?



#### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

St. Cloud Hospital Internship Highlight .....	2
MSW Intern Experience .....	3
A note from acting Department Chair Dr. Brumbaugh-Johnson .....	4
Title IV-E Child Welfare Program .....	5
Project Homeless Connect Continued .....	6
Meet our Adjuncts .....	8-9
BSW Field Experience Celebration .....	10-11
Important Dates .....	12
Meet our Faculty .....	13



## STEPHANIE KITZMANN

ST. CLOUD HOSPITAL, SOCIAL WORK LEAD

Stephanie received her BSW in 2012 and her MBA in 2021. She is a part of the care management department at the St. Cloud Hospital, where she has been the social work lead since July 2023.

With this role, she provides coaching and feedback to her staff. There is often a need for guidance in complex patient situations as well as follow-up on discharged patients. She finds the main obstacles her team faces are

the patient situations that are becoming increasingly complex and ever-changing. There are many scenarios that involve out of the box thinking due to limited resources.

Stephanie believes the environment at the Hospital is very supportive of her team. She herself prioritizes her day in order to be available for questions or concerns that arise.

---

*“We appreciate having interns and hope they learn and love the wonderful world of medical social work!”*

---

### ADDITIONAL PUBLICATION INFORMATION WANTED

If you would like your research or publication information presented in our next issue of The Catalyst, feel free to contact Dr. Teboh with your information.

Dr. Teboh can be reached during his office hours in SH 237 or via email [cteboh@stcloudstate.edu](mailto:cteboh@stcloudstate.edu)

Stephanie works alongside a Case Manager Lead as a part of a collective leadership team that supports various departments. Stephanie appreciates the way the team supports, covers one another, and bounces ideas off each other.

Having social work intern's benefits CentraCare's patients as they come in with a fresh energy and fresh eyes on each case. They may have learned of a new community resource that Stephanie's team hasn't been made aware of yet! Interns are integrated into the work at the Hospital by being assigned to a unit for their semester-long internship.

The social workers on the unit work closely with them to teach them about their role. As the intern progresses in their time at the hospital, the intern then assists with seeing patients and providing resources, working with the interdisciplinary team to aid in transition planning, and providing proper documentation to support this, all while having the social work preceptor observation and support.

When asked her experience with interns, Stephanie says, “We appreciate having interns and hope they learn and love the wonderful world of medical social work!”

## ISMAIL MUSE—MSW GRADUATE STUDENT

### INTERNING AT AWESOME BEHAVIORAL HEALTH, ST. CLOUD, MN

I am Ismail Muse, originally from Somalia, but my formative years were spent in Kenya, primarily at the Dadaab Refugee Camp. In April 2016, I relocated to the United States of America. I commenced my academic journey at St. Cloud State University in January 2020, where I pursued and successfully earned a Bachelor's degree in Social Work, and graduated in December 2022. During my undergraduate studies, I undertook a valuable internship with Stearns County Human Services Adult and Disability sector, assuming the role of a targeted case management intern social worker. Subsequently, in the summer of 2023, I embarked on my Master of Social Work (MSW) Program at St. Cloud State University as an advanced standard student, now entering my final semester with an anticipated graduation date of May 2024.



Ismail with his colleagues at Awesome Behavioral Health

Several compelling factors have motivated my pursuit of a career in social work. Growing up in a refugee camp provided me with firsthand experiences of diverse hardships, reinforcing the crucial role of support for marginalized individuals and emphasizing the significance of unconditional love for adolescents. Additionally, my involvement with various organizations in the Dadaab camp illuminated the urgent need for advocacy and support to uplift traumatized communities. Witnessing the plight of marginalized individuals underscored the importance of guidance, support, and advocacy for their rights. A pivotal influence on my career choice was the assistance I received from a social worker both during my time in the refugee camp and upon my initial arrival in the United States. This support was instrumental in navigating the challenges of adapting to a new and vastly different environment.

Beyond my academic and professional pursuits, my interests include reading novels, providing assistance to others, engaging in regular exercise, and practicing spiritual meditation. These activities contribute to my holistic well-being and further underscore my commitment to personal and community growth.

My internship is with Awesome Behavioral Health, which is based in St Cloud, MN, and provides Adult Mental Health Services (ARMHS) to diverse communities in St Cloud and the surrounding areas. At my internship, I do conduct assessments to identify the strengths, needs, and goals of individuals with mental health issues. I also collaborate with clients to develop individualized treatment plans based on their unique needs and circumstances. I assist clients in developing and enhancing daily living skills, coping mechanisms, and social skills. I also provide guidance and support to help clients achieve their personal and mental health goals. I educate clients about mental health issues, symptom management, and effective coping strategies. I also offer information on community resources and services that can support the client's mental health and overall well-being. I support clients in connecting with community resources, social activities, and educational opportunities. I advocate for clients' needs within the community and assist them in accessing appropriate services and resources. And, I regularly assess and monitor clients' progress toward their goals and modify treatment plans as needed based on ongoing evaluation and feedback. One challenge I've observed is that some immigrant communities still have some negative cultural perspectives on mental health issues, so some clients from these communities may face stereotypes and be labeled with negatives and disrespect due to their mental health limitations. Another issue I've noticed is that clients with a criminal history have a difficult time finding affordable housing resources after graduating from treatment facilities because all landlords conduct background checks, limiting the client's chances of eligibility.

The support network within my internship has been instrumental in fostering a conducive learning environment. I am fortunate to work under the guidance of a highly supportive and understanding task supervisor. The collaborative spirit of the team at the field agency further bolsters my efforts, as they willingly contribute to the achievement of my objectives. Both my field instructor and practicum instructor consistently demonstrate their commitment to my professional growth by providing invaluable guidance and support throughout my internship journey.





DR. BRUMBAUGH-JOHNSON

ACTING SOCIAL WORK  
DEPARTMENT CHAIR FOR ST.  
CLOUD STATE UNIVERSITY

Dr. Brumbaugh-Johnson is filling in as the department chair for the 2023-24 academic school year and is an associate professor at SCSU. She received her:

- Ph.D. in 2010 from the University of North Dakota
- M.S. 2002, University of Wisconsin-Madison
- B.S. 2001, University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Her areas of expertise are Racial disparities, LGBT people of color, religious identities and spirituality, and intersectionality.

## A NOTE FROM DR. BRUMBAUGH-JOHNSON

I am humbled to have been chosen as interim department chair this year while Dr. Sara DeVos is on sabbatical. At our first department meeting of the semester, I graciously asked faculty to work with me and for all of us to be team players as we navigated a new academic year together. I believe we're doing just that regardless of differing thoughts and opinions. It truly has been an absolute pleasure working with my colleagues. Although the university is currently facing some very tumultuous times, knowing that my colleagues remain committed to the values and mission of the university, our profession, and to students has been a bright spot because we are still motivated to do purposeful work.

As interim department chair, first and foremost, it is important that I continue to be willing to learn from others. Collectively, my colleagues have such a wealth of practice, teaching, and leadership experience that I am eager to glean from them to better assist me in this role. It is also important to continue to have humility and to actively listen to other people's ideas. The work of a department chair is challenging so I am always open to ways in which we can support each other and the goals of our department. I definitely value shared governance! Further, I am learning more about how to effectively organize teaching schedules as well as how to monitor and manage the departmental budget with the assistance of Nikki, our office manager.

I eagerly look forward to the upcoming spring semester because my colleagues and I are working together on new projects to help move the university and the department goals forward. For example, we plan to consider ways in which we can collaborate with other departments within the College of Health and Wellness Professions (CHWP) as we embark with the university with their new online certificate program in cannabis education and the implications around social work practice with students, individuals, families, and communities. Further, under the leadership of Dr. Consoler Teboh, our department is working to include SW 190 (Democratic Citizenship) as a course for the Accelerated Online Program (AOP), a new course delivery program for the university designed for working adults who have not yet completed their bachelor's degree.

## TITLE IV-E CHILD WELFARE PROGRAM

Minnesota Title IV-E Consortium, part of a nationwide program, manages federal funds to help Social Work students become better prepared to work in public or tribal child welfare throughout Minnesota. Stipend awards, specialized advising, and child welfare curricula are provided to students who are accepted into the program during their Social Work studies.

Nationwide, a greater number of child welfare specialized BSW and MSW workers, engage in public Child Welfare Service areas, counteracting the trend of non-professionals working in the public child welfare field. A positive impact is in retention of professionals who have gone through the program, decreased worker turnover with families, providing children and families with greater consistency to achieve better outcomes.

We guide & assist our Title IV-E Child Welfare Scholars to become well prepared and exceptional social work professionals focused on child safety, permanency, and well-being. The goal of the Title IV-E Child Welfare Program is to strengthen staffing in public child welfare agencies serving at-risk families and children. If this program is of interest to you, please reach out and let us know!

Be aware and on the lookout for events in the fall regarding application deadlines, interviews, and program info sessions.

Please see page 12 for future application deadline dates for this program.



Fall 2023 Semester Graduates

## CONTACT US

### **Title IV-E Child Welfare Program Director**

Consoler Teboh, MSSW, ACSW, LISW, MBA, PhD

320-308-1603

cteboh@stcloudstate.edu

### **Title IV-E Child Welfare Program Assistant**

Amanda Johnson

320-308-4880

amanda.johnson@stcloudstate.edu

*Please*  
VISIT OUR  
WEBSITE



<https://www.stcloudstate.edu/socialwork/title-iv-e-childwelfare.aspx>

## ST. CLOUD STATE'S BACHELORS OF SOCIAL WORK (BSW) DEGREE



As a student in the social work program, you'll find a strong emphasis on diversity and social justice. You'll learn how to connect people who are vulnerable and marginalized to programs that provide support and help.

Our graduates help people find work, form stable relationships, avoid drugs and alcohol or cope with physical or mental disabilities. You will learn counseling and casework management methods used in private and public agencies. Your classes will prepare you to work in health settings, nursing homes, social services programs, family and mental health agencies, schools and the correctional system.

For more information on this program and how to earn this degree, please contact Dr. Teboh or Nikki Koehn. Their contact information is on page 13.

## PROJECT CONNECT CONTINUED

### **How does Project Homeless Connect work to address the specific needs and barriers faced by homeless individuals?**

The idea behind Project Connect is to bring people to a large Convention space, and then bring in 60 service providers so people experiencing homelessness can find fill all of their needs by speaking to everyone in person. They also learn about new resources they didn't know about earlier. There are also haircuts, quashing warrants, basic needs bags, shoes, coats, etc.

### **Can you share a success story or powerful anecdote that highlights the impact of Project Homeless Connect on someone's life?**

Well, people are really impacted by Project Connect when they get hooked up with someone who can help them get ahead. When you are homeless, you often don't have transportation. So, getting to these different



agencies can be a struggle. I do remember a young woman who came in looking for help getting into an apartment. She didn't have the first and last month's rent plus the damage deposit. I saw her later in the day and she was smiling. She found a resource that would help her with the money to get into an apartment. It was nice to see that.

### **What partnerships or collaborations have been instrumental in the success of Project Homeless Connect?**

We have a great team that is made up of people from area agencies, myself from the university, and some community folks. They are all very involved in the fundraising, finding resources for the event, and organizing everything. We

all have a real appreciation for one another. I can't wait until we start work on next year's. From the University side, I have a partner in Dr. Phyllis Greenberg who works with me throughout the planning for the event. She's integral to our success.





## ST. CLOUD STATE'S MASTERS OF SOCIAL WORK (MSW) DEGREE



The mission of the Master of Social Work program is to engage students in an educational program that prepares them to think critically and evaluate practice and programs and contribute to the body of social work knowledge through active research.

Students will be prepared to work effectively and collaboratively as professional social workers to enhance human well-being and promote economic, political and social justice in a diverse and global society.

Using justice centered and community based practice approaches, the MSW program will prepare social work professionals at the advanced generalist level who can practice across a variety of social service settings.

For more information on this program and how to earn this degree, please contact Dr. Yeo or Nikki Koehn. Their contact information is on page 13.

### **How does Project Homeless Connect engage with the broader community to raise awareness and build support for its mission?**

Well, we try to engage media and different outlets for social media. We are slowly gaining recognition. This year, we served 594 people, which is the most we have ever done.

### **Are there any innovative programs or initiatives within Project Homeless Connect that you are particularly excited about or proud of?**

I am really proud of what the students do every year to work on fundraising. The students design a shirt every year and we made quite a bit from that. We have a wonderful silent auction that made us \$3500 this year, and we have an event at Beaver Island Brewery where we make money as well. The students are so great about being active and helping with this work.

### **What steps does Project Homeless Connect take to ensure long-term solutions and support for individuals transitioning out of homelessness?**



We are not specifically offering long-term support. We are focusing on an event to encourage connections, hope, and support. We are hoping that people will use this event as a steppingstone toward success.

### **How do you measure the effectiveness and impact of Project Homeless Connect on social work students' experiential learning at the department of social work?**

We have started doing an evaluation so that we can measure. Anecdotally, we often hear from students about how the event impacted them. Students love to help others, and it is shown at every Project Connect. Additionally, the data from the evaluation backs this up.

### **Looking ahead, what are some of the goals and aspirations you have for Project Homeless Connect in the coming years?**

We want to continue to refine our fundraising so that we can make more money faster. 100% of our fundraising goes to the event. It would be great for more departments to get involved so that we can do more good. That's what I dream for.

## MEET OUR ADJUNCTS

### MARISSA BERGDAHL-HAY



Marissa currently teaches graduate level field placement and seminar classes.

**Where did you get your undergraduate and master's degrees?** I got my BSW at the College of St Benedict in 1993, my MSW at University of MN-Twin Cities in 2002, and my LICSW in 2005.

**Where do you work in the field? What is your area of interest?** I have been with Stearns County Human Services for 30 years (3 years in Child Protection, 14 years in Children's' Mental Health, and the last 13 supervising various programs including Children's' Mental Health, waiver programs, Chem Dep assessments/Drug Court, Adult Protection, and Mnchoice assessments. Working here this long certainly demonstrates my interest in county government and assisting clients in need, supervising nurses and social work staff, etc. has been a nice change over the past 13 yrs. from direct practice.

**What are your takeaways from our social work program at SCSU?** I have been Adjuncting in the SW Dept here periodically over the past 18 yrs. I love the dedication of students to this field and to helping

clients. This shared passion gives me energy to keep working towards solutions to barriers and working closely with colleagues to ensure students find their learning here valuable and challenging, furthering their growth.

**How has the experience been in the transition from your own time as a student to now giving back to students?** I thoroughly enjoy giving back/sharing my experiences with students, helping them to grow and find their way through this career and difficult work. Even though I went to school 18 years ago, I'll never forget the juggle of work, interning, and family life. It is quite the balance on top of studying a lot and staying organized.

**How do you think you impact students with your skills and knowledge? What is your best asset you offer to your students?** I hope that by sharing my years of experience in the field, that I inspire them to continue to work in social work. There are so many different ways to utilize this degree and knowledge. The sky is the limit! My best asset is likely my patience. I try very hard to be patient and accommodating to alleviate stressors for students. Humor is a helpful attribute as well.

**How has the experience of teaching impacted your time in the field?** Many students that have previously been in my classes have gone on to work in county government, some right here in Stearns County! I love watching students grow in their learning and implement it into practice. I talk about student needs, internship opportunities, and partnering with SCSU at my other job frequently.

**Why do you teach? What is your motivation?** I truly teach because I think it's important to have Adjunct professors that work directly in the field and have direct practice with clients. I get energized by teaching and offering feedback that students find helpful. It's part of my 'giving back' as many of my professors taught me a lot as well as supported me in my learning journey.



## MEET OUR ADJUNCTS

### PAULA WATTS-ZEHRINGER

**Where did you get your undergraduate and master's degrees?** I got my BSW at St Cloud State University in 1992 and my master's degree at Augsburg University in 1999.

**Where do you work in the field?** I currently do private consulting, supervision, training, and advocacy work and some lobbying.

**What is your area of interest?** Primarily anything having to do with families, disability, aging, and social work practice initiatives.

**What are your takeaways from our Social Work program at SCSU?** I really appreciate the students-their desire to learn from others and the effort they put forth in their practice development and their peers' development too. It's a very collaborative experience and I think that it's so important for social workers to engage like this.

**How has the experience been in the transition from your own time as a student to now giving back to the current students?** I've been teaching for over twenty years now and I still remember what it felt like to be a student for me and what I wanted from my education and my professors-I know I wanted to learn as much as I could and have what I'm learning be relevant to what I would do in the field. I do know what I wanted may not be what others may want so I make a point to ask each student what they want to get out of course/career and I try to support their goals and needs as best I can. I also try to use their strengths so they can contribute their knowledge and skills to the course. I also like connecting students to resources and other professionals in the field that can help support their goals too.

**How do you think you impact students with your skills and knowledge?** What is your best asset you offer to your students? I hope students feel I offer them experience and knowledge that is worth their time, effort and expense. I think my best asset is that I really try to be a model of what I am teaching them about social work. I also see learning as a collaborative exchange between instructor and students. We all learn from one another.

**How has the experience of teaching impacted your time in the field?** I think teaching makes you a better practitioner. You are more aware of how things could be and why you should or should not do something. It becomes easier to someone to consult with, find solutions and resources. Being connected to a university also means free access to journal articles and a library. I love that!

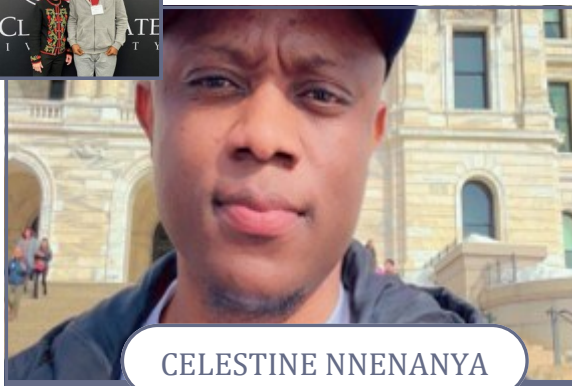
**Why do you teach? What is your motivation?** It's about giving back for me. I think being a good social worker can be challenging-I want to help support students to feel prepared for these challenges.



Paula currently teaches an undergraduate level field placement class as well as a graduate level Advanced Policy Practice

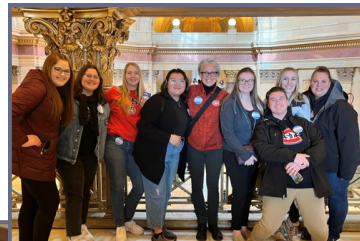
# BSW FIELD EXPERIENCE

At the end of each semester, BSW students have the opportunity to showcase how their internship went to their peers. They submit a slideshow of pictures representing how their final student experience was in the field. It is a time of celebration and unity as they wrap up this chapter of their education.



CELESTINE NNENANYA

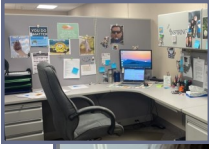
The first day of lectures in St. Cloud State University got me anxious. It was a question of where to go, how to get there, what to do and what is expected of me. Wondering on several questions about language, culture and religion amidst expectations. At the end of the day, we are our best therapists and heroes.



ANDREA GLOMSKI

I learned the need for social works in the geriatric field of social work and the importance of being able to help others. I hope to continue working with the aging population.





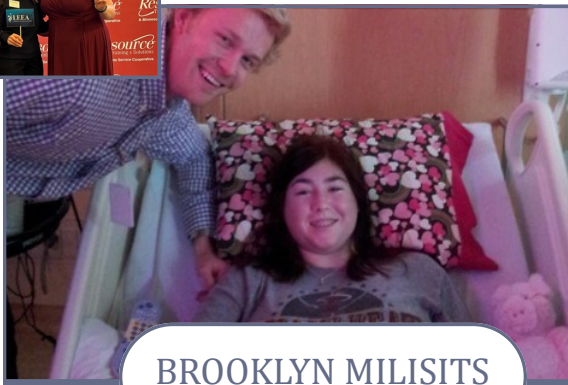
VERA VANG

One major lesson I learned is take time to know your coworkers. Get connections and stay connected to them. Also to stay open-minded and positive.



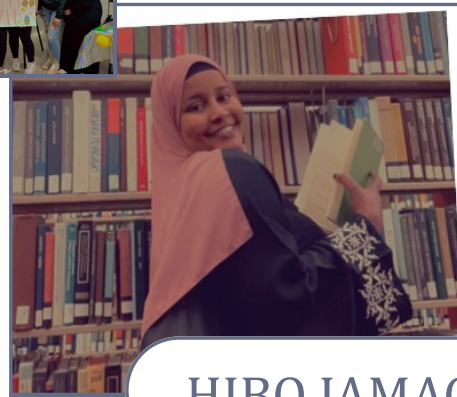
BRANDON TUCKER

During my internship, I focused more on my skill set regarding micro and macro social work. My knowledge of the infrastructure of a school, a resource center, and a youth center has impacted me and provided me with a surreal experience that I will never forget. The opportunities and growth that came from each of these places were instrumental for me.



BROOKLYN MILISITS

Originally, I started as a nursing major, but when covid hit, it made me realize I wanted to help others on a more emotional level, rather than physical. While in the Program, all the friends I met along the way just clarified that this field was meant for me.



HIBO JAMAC

My plan is to work for UNHCR and travel the world in providing social worker services to people.



**St. Cloud State University  
Department of social Work**

224 Stewart Hall  
St Cloud State University  
720 Fourth Avenue South  
St. Cloud, Minnesota 56301-  
4498

Phone: (320) 308-3139  
Fax: (320) 308-3285  
Email:  
socialwork@stcloudstate.edu

Visit us on the web at  
[www.stcloudstate.edu/  
socialwork/](http://www.stcloudstate.edu/socialwork/)



The mission of the department is to use an anti-oppression lens, with a focus on race, class and gender, to inform both its educational environment and educational programs. Faculty, staff and students commit to an experiential and transformative educational process that will challenge them to think critically and analyze systemic inequalities in the United States and the world. This process will prepare professional social workers to work as change agents in a diverse world.

## IMPORTANT DATES

### **March 20-22th, 2024**

MSSA's 125th Annual Training Conference & Expo

### **February 26-29, 2024**

NASW Day at the Capital

### **February 19, 2024**

Title IV-E Child Welfare Program Info sessions

Dr. Consoler Teboh | [ctebboh@stcloudstate.edu](mailto:ctebboh@stcloudstate.edu)

Amanda Johnson | [amanda.johnson@stcloudstate.edu](mailto:amanda.johnson@stcloudstate.edu)

### **March 11, 2024**

Title IV-E Child welfare Program Interviews

Dr. Consoler Teboh | [ctebboh@stcloudstate.edu](mailto:ctebboh@stcloudstate.edu)

Amanda Johnson | [amanda.johnson@stcloudstate.edu](mailto:amanda.johnson@stcloudstate.edu)

### **February 26 - March 1, 2024**

BSW Interviews

Dr. Consoler Teboh | [ctebboh@stcloudstate.edu](mailto:ctebboh@stcloudstate.edu)

Nikki Koehn | [nichole.koehn@stcloudstate.edu](mailto:nichole.koehn@stcloudstate.edu)

### **March 1, 2024 (Final)**

### **May 1, 2024 (If spaces available)**

Application deadlines

Dr. Younsook Anna Yeo | [yyc@stcloudstate.edu](mailto:yyc@stcloudstate.edu)

Nikki Koehn | [nichole.koehn@stcloudstate.edu](mailto:nichole.koehn@stcloudstate.edu)

## MEET OUR FACULTY



**Sara Devos**

Associate Professor  
Chairperson / MSW Program Director  
[sara.devos@stcloudstate.edu](mailto:sara.devos@stcloudstate.edu)



**Deola Brumbaugh-Johnson**

Interim Department Chair  
Associate Professor  
[djohnson@stcloudstate.edu](mailto:djohnson@stcloudstate.edu)



**Sarah Meisinger**

Director of Field Education  
[semeisinger@stcloudstate.edu](mailto:semeisinger@stcloudstate.edu)



**Sheila Moriarty**

Associate Professor  
[mmoriarty@stcloudstate.edu](mailto:mmoriarty@stcloudstate.edu)



**Katie Querna**

Assistant Professor  
[katie.querna@stcloudstate.edu](mailto:katie.querna@stcloudstate.edu)



**Consoler Teboh**

Associate Professor  
BSW Program Director  
[ctebob@stcloudstate.edu](mailto:ctebob@stcloudstate.edu)



**Patience Togo-Malm**

Professor  
[ptogo@stcloudstate.edu](mailto:ptogo@stcloudstate.edu)



**Younsook Anna Yeo**

Interim MSW Program Director  
Professor  
[yyeo@stcloudstate.edu](mailto:yyeo@stcloudstate.edu)



**Nikki Koehn**

Office Manager  
[nichole.koehn@stcloudstate.edu](mailto:nichole.koehn@stcloudstate.edu)

Find us on Social!

**facebook**

