



ST. CLOUD STATE UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

The Catalyst

DEPARTMENT'S SPOTLIGHT— NIKKI KOEHN



Nikki Koehn, Office Manager

Can you describe your initial experience when you first joined the Department of Social Work? How did you adapt to the new environment?

I had never worked in higher education before, so this was a significant change for me. However, I was excited and eager to learn in my new role. Everyone here has been incredibly supportive and helpful, which made my transition much

easier.

What are some of the most valuable lessons you've learned since joining the department?

Accepting that email is the preferred method of university communication. Coming from a fast-paced office setting where we needed an answer “now”, this has been a pivot for me.

What aspects of your role do you find most fulfilling and why?

Working with students. It is exciting to see the growth of our students from their entry into the program until graduation.

What motivates you to keep going, especially during challenging times?

The students! I have always been so inspired by every one of them.



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Alumni Voice	2
Student Spotlight	3
Fieldwork Adventures	4
Thesis Project.....	5
Department Spotlight Contd..	6
Social Work Association	7
SWA contd.....	8
GA Spotlight	9
Social Work Gallery.....	10-11
Acts of self-care for SW students	12
LGSW preparation	13



CAROLINE STRINGER

VA HEALTHCARE SYSTEMS, CASE MANAGER

Caroline Stringer graduated from the Master of Social Work (MSW) program at St. Cloud State University in May 2024 as a foundation student. Over two years, she completed internships with the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Saint Cloud Area and the Saint Cloud Veterans Affairs Health Care System (VA). Her dedication and passion led to her current role as a case manager on the VA's Homeless Team, where she

supports Veterans facing homelessness. Caroline's connection to NAMI remains strong, as she continues to serve on its board of directors, emphasizing her commitment to mental health advocacy and community engagement.

"Alumni are not just graduates; they are the ongoing story of an institution, shaping its future through their achievements."

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

Caroline attributes much of her success to both her education and serendipitous moments. During her internship with NAMI at a local Veteran resource center, she met a VA employee who worked on the Homeless Team—an encounter that sparked her interest in joining the VA. When an internship on the team opened, she embraced the opportunity and found it so rewarding that she aimed to work there permanently. Coincidentally, a position became available just as she completed her field placement. Reflecting on her time in the MSW program, Caroline highlights the importance of exploring micro, mezzo, and macro

practices, which she incorporates into her work today. For current students, she encourages taking every opportunity to shadow professionals, maintaining connections with professors and colleagues, and staying open to diverse practice styles to enhance growth and prepare for advocacy and resource collaboration.

CELESTINE C. NNENANYA—STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

INTERNING AT SOUTH JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL, ST. CLOUD, MN

I am Celestine Chinedu Nnenanya, a citizen of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. First of all, I have generally dedicated my academic journey to being a support to underserved and vulnerable groups. My journey to the United States and Saint Cloud State University has been an interesting one. I have also dedicated a greater part of my time to building professional skills required to make a unique practitioner. More so, quite a chunk of my time has been dedicated to building myself and developing personal skills that I need for interpersonal relationships and independence. In my private time, I have tried to embark on a massive discovery of both self and environment.



What do you believe is the most important skill or mindset for a future social worker to have?

Apart from professional skills like critical thinking, ethical decision making, teamwork and collaboration, cultural competence and advocacy skills, there are other personal skills that every social worker should have. A social worker must develop a high sense of empathy, emotional intelligence, patience, resilience, self-awareness, adaptability and compassion. Other skills that would be needed in interpersonal dealings as social a worker are communication skills, conflict resolution and cultural sensitivity.

If you could describe our social work journey in three words, what would they be and why?

It would be Empowerment, Resiliency and Growth/Development
At the nucleus of social work is the mission to empower individuals, families and communities. By providing resources, support and protection, social workers help clients regain control over their lives and reach their full potential. Social work is inherently challenging, requiring the ability to cope with adversity and manage emotional and practical obstacles while supporting clients. Resilience embodies the strength and determination that both social workers and customers show in navigating difficult circumstances. Social work travel encourages continuous personal and professional development. Whether by learning new theories, adapting to the client's different needs or reflecting on personal biases, growth is integral to making an intern more efficient.

What inspired you to pursue social work, and what area are you most passionate about?

Acquiring a profession in social work is a duty I owe to God, to the society, and to myself. It is an obligation because, it is like a privilege or vocation to serve humanity, hence, would be a failure or disservice to this same humanity and ingratitude to God if such call is not answered. It is a call to serve humanity in my own life by contributing my own strength, actions and words towards uplifting humanity and making the world habitable for all. Service in this context demands that I thoroughly investigate the plights and life-threatening situations always facing the people in environment. Finally, my motivating factor is the fulfilment and satisfaction from the services I render to humanity.

How has your experience as a social work student shaped your goals for the future?

Being a social worker has really given me huge opportunity and leverage to excel and explore social work. At first, my perception of social work profession was only limited to service and social justice. But with the indebt exploration of the professional requirements and principles, I have to say that my experiences have not just reshaped my thinking and perceptions but also have made possible for me to be able redefine my interests and embrace a wholistic approach to my passion through adopting the six principles of social work.



PATIENCE A ACORLOR

SOCIAL WORK INTERN AT
BRIDGE TO COMMUNITY
RESOURCES (BCR)

Field Placement

My field placement is at Bridge to Community Resources (BCR), located in St. Cloud, Minnesota. Through BCR, I work directly with Huskies Food Pantry and the SASSI program at St. Cloud State University. These roles involve providing essential support to students, addressing food insecurity, and fostering academic and personal success. For inquiries about internships, you can contact Dr. Sheila Moriarty, who supervises the work at BCR.

FIELD EXPERIENCE W PATIENCE A.

What drew you to this particular field placement?

My field placement is at Bridge to Community Resources (BCR), located in St. Cloud, Minnesota. Through BCR, I work directly with Huskies Food Pantry and the SASSI program at St. Cloud State University. These roles involve providing essential support to students, addressing food insecurity, and fostering academic and personal success. For inquiries about internships, you can contact Dr. Sheila Moriarty, who supervises the work at BCR.

Can you walk us through a typical day at your placement?

At Huskies Food Pantry, my day often begins with organizing and restocking food items. I interact with students who visit the pantry, helping them navigate available resources and ensuring they feel welcomed. I also assist in data collection for evaluations, such as conducting surveys to understand student needs. With SASSI, I engage in planning events like meetings where students share their feedback and concerns. For instance, after a recent meeting, I noted a student's request for more one-on-one support and planned to connect them with appropriate resources.

How have you applied theories or practices learned in your coursework to your fieldwork?

My coursework in social work has provided a strong foundation in cultural humility, which I apply daily by treating each client with respect and sensitivity to their unique backgrounds. For example, understanding the concept of equity has shaped my approach to resource distribution, particularly when addressing sensitive issues like dietary needs or cultural preferences at the pantry.

Can you share an example of a time you used a specific social work intervention or theory during your placement?

One notable example was when I observed a policy at the pantry that reserved halal meat for Muslim students. While respecting this policy, I considered how to balance fairness and diversity in resource allocation. This experience allowed me to reflect on concepts like cultural competence and social justice, applying these principles by discussing the issue with my field instructor and seeking ways to ensure inclusivity.

In what ways do you feel your fieldwork has prepared you for your future career in social work?

Fieldwork has given me practical experience in addressing real-world challenges, such as food insecurity and student support. Through hands-on tasks like facilitating meetings, gathering feedback, and applying social work theories, I've gained the skills to navigate diverse client needs and advocate for equity effectively. These experiences have built my confidence in managing complex situations and strengthened my passion for social justice.

Approach your fieldwork with an open mind, a willingness to learn, and an understanding that even challenges offer opportunities for growth. Take the time to learn agency policies and dynamics, ask questions, provide feedback, and prioritize self-care to maintain a balance between empathy and resilience.

THESIS

Integrating Cultural Competence Into the Client's Assessment Process in Clinical Social Work Practice

This thesis looks at how mental health professionals can better include cultural factors when assessing and treating people of color in mental health settings. The study focuses on two key areas:

1. How to use assessment tools that are culturally sensitive
2. How to consider cultural factors when making diagnoses and recommending treatments

The goal is to create a framework that helps mental health professionals better integrate cultural competence into their assessment process.

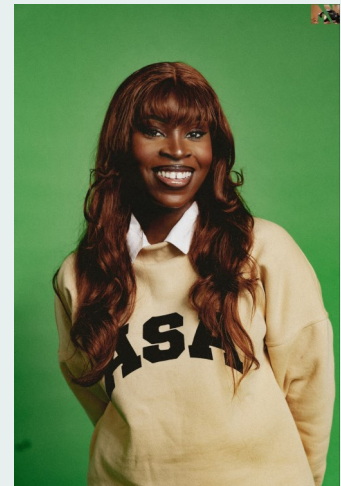
This thesis is about making mental health care work better for people of color. The study looks at how mental health professionals can include cultural factors when they first meet and assess patients, arguing that this early understanding is crucial for creating treatment plans that actually work. The major themes identified include:

- The role of cultural competence in accurate mental health assessment and diagnosis
 - Barriers to implementing cultural assessment tools in clinical practice
 - The impact of systemic whiteness on mental health treatment
 - The integration of cultural considerations into treatment planning
 - The relationship between cultural competence and treatment outcomes
- Practitioner perspectives on cultural assessment tools and their effectiveness

This study aims to help improve the field of social work by making mental health services more culturally appropriate and effective for diverse populations.

METHODOLOGIES

This study employed a qualitative research approach using semi-structured interviews with licensed clinical social workers from various mental health settings (hospitals, residential facilities, and private practices). The research included in-depth interviews with four participants holding LCSW, LGSW, or LICSW credentials. Each participant engaged in hour-long interviews, followed by a follow-up session. The interviews were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed using thematic analysis. The theoretical framework combined Person-In-Environment (PIE) theory and Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory to examine how cultural factors influence assessment and treatment planning.



DEPARTMENT'S SPOTLIGHT CONTD

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.

Can you share any specific strategies or practices that have helped you succeed in your role?

Calendars—Start each day by organizing your schedule with reminders and appointments to help you stay focused and complete all your tasks. In my office, interruptions happen throughout the day, which I welcome, but these can also be distracting. Having a designated place to check what needs to be done keeps me on track and reminds me of my daily goals.

In your opinion, what are some areas within the department that could be improved or done differently?

Overall, we are doing great. However, one area for improvement is the need for more opportunities for student connections. Since we use a cohort model, students often form close relationships within their own cohort. I would like to see more chances for students from different cohorts to interact and network with one another.

I am grateful to be a recipient of their daily support.

How would you describe the overall attitude of the faculty

towards you? Have you felt supported and valued by them?

This is why I love my job! I've never felt more supported in any position I've held than I do in this department. The faculty and staff are professional educators who apply their social work skills in all aspects of their work. I am grateful to be a recipient of their daily support.

What has been your experience working with graduate assistants? How do they generally perceive and interact with you?

I enjoy collaborating with GAs; they always brighten my days. I have gained so much knowledge from each GA I've worked with over the past three years; they truly feel like family.

Can you share a memorable moment or achievement during your time in the department that stands out to you?

One of our graduate students asked me to hood her during her graduate hooding program. It was such an honor to share that special moment with her.

Looking ahead, what are your goals and aspirations for your role within the department? How do you plan to achieve them?

I aim to help keep this department running smoothly and to see growth in both programs. I'm here to support in any way I can.

SOCIAL WORK ASSOCIATION

The Social Work Association (SWA) is a student-led organization at St. Cloud State University. Our mission is to provide opportunities for personal and professional growth, as well as offer outreach and education to our campus and community. Our association also promotes diversity and fosters camaraderie among our members. The purpose of our organization is to create an environment of support, growth, and friendship for all members. We actively advocate for change and raise awareness both on campus and within our local community. Additionally, we adhere to and practice the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics. We aim to uphold a positive and enthusiastic image of social work as a profession, while giving our members the chance to identify as social workers. Any student interested in social work or social justice is welcome to join.

We hold weekly meetings every Wednesday at 2 p.m. in Stewart Hall 221, and a Zoom link is available for those who prefer to attend virtually. Our meetings are also recorded for anyone who cannot attend in person but still wants to stay updated on important information.

My name is Tori Voigt, and I am currently serving as the co-president of the Social Work Association. I have been a member since the fall semester of 2024, during which I also served as co-treasurer. The SWA is something I am deeply passionate about, and this semester, I chose to step into the president role alongside my classmate Rachel Barela, who was our vice president last semester. Together, we work to ensure that the association reflects the interests of our members. We are here to facilitate, but we also want to give everyone a voice and ensure their ideas are heard. Social work is built on collaboration, and we rely on the

the help and input of all our members to run smoothly.

Communication is key, and I send out a weekly email with updates. In these emails, I share what was discussed in meetings, highlight areas where we need assistance, and provide information on upcoming events. At the end of each email, I encourage members to reach out with any questions, comments, or concerns. It's important to me that everyone feels heard. If someone is uncomfortable speaking up during a meeting but wants to share an idea, they can always reach out via email.

One of the SWA's biggest events each year is Project (Homeless) Connect, which takes place at the end of October. This event brings together more than 60 service providers and local businesses at the River's Edge Convention Center to help people in our community who are experiencing poverty. It offers individuals the chance to learn about available resources and make connections that can help them move forward. The SWA plays an active role in fundraising and collecting donations to provide essential supplies to attendees.

Last fall, Rachel and I visited businesses throughout our community to gather items for our silent auction, which takes place in Atwood each fall. All funds raised through the auction are directly used to purchase basic necessities for the bags distributed at Project Connect. These items include \$10 gift cards for Coborn's, rain ponchos, nail clippers, first aid kits, snacks, can openers, toiletries, and more. We also purchase diapers of various sizes and feminine hygiene products for those in need.

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.

SOCIAL WORK ASSOCIATION CONTD



Tori Voigt, Co-President,
SWA.

This past year, we also organized a winter clothing drive that collected coats, hats, mittens, boots, snow pants, and warm socks for those in need.

Another annual event we host is the Beaver Island Brewery fundraiser, where we sell bingo cards and pizza at Beaver Island Brewery. This event allows us to interact with community members while raising funds for basic needs bags. All proceeds from pizza and bingo card sales, as well as a portion of the brewery's sales during the event, go toward purchasing essential items.

Once all donations are collected and funds are raised, the SWA spends a day packing the bags before the event. It's a fulfilling experience to see firsthand the positive impact these efforts have on individuals.

This spring semester, we hosted our second annual bake sale, with a Valentine's Day theme on February 13th. The event was a great success, bringing joy to both those who purchased treats and those who participated in organizing it. All proceeds from the bake sale will go toward purchasing basic needs items for Project Connect this fall. As our event grows, so do our fundraising efforts. We are already planning more events, as we've learned that the fall semester goes by quickly. Between schoolwork, reaching out to businesses, and organizing fundraisers, Project Connect sneaks up on us. That's why this year, we've worked ahead of schedule to ensure another successful event that will support our community.

Although Project Connect is our largest event, the SWA also hosts a Ramadan Iftar event each spring. On March 17th, we held our second annual Iftar potluck. This event brings together students, friends, families, and community members for a joyous evening and meal. During the event, we also collect donations for non-profit organizations in need. This year, we supported two organizations: "Les Petits Anges de Dieu," an orphanage in Gabon that cares for children abandoned by their families due to developmental disabilities, and Minnesota Community Integration (MCI), a local non-profit dedicated to supporting low-income families in their journey toward a new life. MCI implements support programs aimed at helping youth overcome addiction and foster a supportive environment for their recovery.

All of the events and initiatives organized by the Social Work Association reflect the core values of the social work profession. Our commitment to service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, and the importance of human relationships is evident in everything we do. By advocating for individuals experiencing poverty, organizing community events, and supporting those in need, we demonstrate our dedication to social justice and human rights. Our efforts to promote diversity, foster collaboration, and empower marginalized groups align with the social work values of respect for the inherent worth and dignity of every individual. We recognize and celebrate the uniqueness of each person and strive to create a space where everyone, regardless of background or identity, feels welcomed and valued. Through our work with Project Connect, Iftar potluck, and other community outreach, the SWA embodies the social work profession's goal of creating positive change and improving the well-being of all people. These values of diversity and inclusiveness are not only a guiding principle for our organization but also for the practice of social work as a whole, reinforcing our role in advancing social good and advocating for a more just and compassionate society.

GA SPOTLIGHT

ABBIGAIL R BULLARD

What inspired you to become a Graduate Assistant in the Social Work Department, and what does your role entail?

I chose to become a graduate assistant because I was excited to be as involved in this program and department as possible. I also am an eager learner. I was looking for something that would support my academic and professional goals and this graduate assistant position has been just that.

How has this experience contributed to your academic and professional growth in the field of social work?

This experience has contributed to my academic and professional growth in many ways. First, it is so beneficial to work with individuals who have similar professional goals as you. Additionally, I find that the support that is given throughout the department is huge to success in the classroom and in the field during field placements and internships.

Can you share a memorable moment or project from your time as a GA that has had a significant impact on you?

One moment from my year as a graduate assistant that stands out to me was the project homeless connect event. This event was so huge and benefitted so many individuals in the city of St. Cloud. It was so fun to see so many social workers, students, and community members come together to support the homeless population of our community.

What challenges have you faced in this role, and how have you navigated them?

I think one of the challenges that I have faced is just learning how to navigate a new master's program, a new internship, and a new graduate assistant position. Especially at the beginning of the semester I felt super overwhelmed with everything. I think one way I have navigated this is to think about work while at work, and think about school while at school etc. This has helped me categorize my workload as I have the capacity to work on it.

What advice would you give to future graduate assistants or students considering this opportunity?

The biggest piece of advice I would give is to just do it, even if it is something that might be outside of your comfort zone. When I was considering applying, I was nervous because I had never done anything like this before. But now that I have been here for a year, I know that this was one of the best opportunities I could have taken.



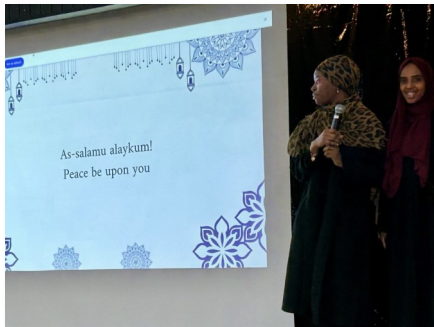
Abigail is a Graduate Teaching Assistant in the social work department, SCSU.

SW DEPARTMENT GALLERY

This space captures moments from community engagement initiatives, department events, and advocacy efforts. From classroom discussions to hands-on service projects, these images reflect the heart of social work in action. Take a glimpse into the journey of future changemakers and the meaningful work being done



Social Work Association
team



Project Connect

When: October 29th, 2024
10 AM – 3 PM

Where: River's Edge Convention Center
10 – 4th Avenue South
St. Cloud, MN 56301

What: Project Connect is a free event that offers people within our community the opportunity to access services offered by governmental, non-profit, and other agencies.

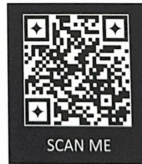
Services Offered:	Veteran's Services	Housing
Legal Resolution	County Financial	Haircuts
Disability Services	Public Health	Medical Care:
Clothing/Coats/Shoes	Family Support	- Blood Pressure
County Social Services	Mental Health	- Vaccinations
Legal Services	Youth Agencies	- Doctor Visits

Somali, Spanish, and ASL interpreters will be available

Like us on Facebook for updates:

**Free Lunch!!
Door Prizes!!
Lots of Giveaways!!**

<https://www.facebook.com/phcstcloud>



SCAN ME

**Project
Connect**

SCSU PROJECT HOMELESS CONNECT SILENT AUCTION

BASKETS
GIFTS CARDS
ARTS & CRAFTS

**OCTOBER 9,
2024**

October 9th 2024, 10 - 3 PM

Atwood Memorial Center

All proceeds benefit Project Homeless Connect: an event serving people experiencing extreme poverty and homelessness.

For more info:
Dr. Sheila Moriarty (smmoriarty@stcloudstate.edu)
Dr. Phyllis Greenberg (pagreenberg@stcloudstate.edu)

Share the Warmth
**WINTER CLOTHES
DRIVE**

Help Us Collect Winter Gear for
Those in Need!

UNTIL OCTOBER 28TH

Help us help our community!

**DROPOX LOCATED IN SCSU SOCIAL
WORK OFFICE IN STEWART HALL**

**THE SOCIAL WORK ASSOCIATION
VALENTINE'S DAY
Bake Sale**

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 13TH
10AM-3PM**

ATWOOD MAIN LOUNGE

SCHEDULE

06:15	Doors Open
06:40	Meet SNA
06:50	What is PANDAS?
07:15	Charity Fundraiser
07:25	Magfred - Break Fast
07:35	Magfred - Play
07:50	Let's eat & socialize
08:30	Event Ends

Minnesota Community Integration
At Minnesota Community Integration, we are committed to empowering and supporting low-income families on their journey to a new life. Our focus is on providing comprehensive resources that address crucial needs that individuals from their families have the tools for a brighter future. Additionally, we recognize the challenges faced by youth in the community, particularly in the realm of drug addiction. ACT is dedicated to implementing support programs aimed at helping youth overcome addiction and fostering a supportive environment for their recovery.

PROJECT HOMELESS CONNECT 2024

We are here again with the biggest event that SCSU does with the community. Project Connect is a one day event for people experiencing homelessness that happens at the Rivers Edge Convention Center on October 29th. We hope to raise \$11,000 worth of resources, monetary and in kind, to make sure that SCSU provides at least 500 basic needs bags with \$10 gift cards, thousands of pairs of socks, adult disposable underwear, etc.

We want to show the community how we care about people experiencing economic stress.

01.
You can help by participating in our fundraising or donating items that we are seeking.

Here is how you can help:

Project Homeless Connect silent auction, **October 9th from 10-3:30 P.M.** We are looking for donations of gifts, arts, gifts, baskets of items, and gift cards. We would be so grateful for your help.

02.
Project Connect night at **BEAVER ISLAND BREWERY** on **October 9th from 5-7 P.M.** Come and celebrate with us. For that two hours, tips and \$1 from every drink goes to support Project Connect. We will also have pizza for sale and bingo for you to enjoy.

04.
We also have shirts for sale! With a strong social justice message. All proceeds will go toward funding Project Homeless Connect. Check them out!

03.
Contact us if you want to donate basic needs. We would love to collect those from you. We are looking for the following socks, papers, adult underwear, and nail sizes of the following: shampoo, deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrush (Regular Size), and deodorant.

05.

Please contact Sheila Moriarty
@SMMORIARTY@STCLOUDSTATE.EDU OR
612-703-9690 OR PHYLLIS GREENBERG
AT PAGREENBERG@STCLOUDSTATE.EDU

**BEAVER ISLAND
BREWING CO.**
TENDING FOR A CAUSE

BENEFITTING PROJECT CONNECT
An event serving people experiencing extreme poverty or homelessness.

**BEAVER ISLAND
BREWING CO.**
ST. CLOUD, MINN.

BINGO

*Come buy some pizza!
*Play BINGO with us!

OCTOBER 9th, 2024 5:00 P.M. - 7:00 P.M.
Beaver Island Brewing Company 216
6TH AVE. S, Saint Cloud, MN, 56301

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/



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.

TINY ACTS OF SELF-CARE FOR BUSY SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS

(Gentle reminders for when you're running on caffeine and compassion)

In the whirlwind of classes, fieldwork, assignments, and emotional labor, it's easy to put yourself last. But your healing matters too. Here are 10 tiny, realistic acts of self-care that take just minutes — and can shift your whole day:

1. Sip water like it's a ritual. Slow it down, close your eyes, and *really* feel it.

Name how you feel — out loud. "I feel anxious and scattered right now." Naming it helps regulate it.

Two-minute desk stretch. Shoulder rolls, neck circles, and unclenching that jaw.

Carry a grounding object. A smooth stone, crystal, or bead to hold when you're overwhelmed.

5-5-5 breath. Inhale for 5, hold for 5, exhale for 5. Repeat 3x.

Say no — and don't apologize. Boundary-setting is self-care.

Voice memo to yourself. Talk it out like you're your own therapist.

Text a friend a heart. Connection without conversation.

Spend 30 seconds in the sun. Let it kiss your face. Be still.

Celebrate something small. "I got out of bed today." That counts.

Taking care
of yourself
is productive.

Self-care doesn't have to be perfect — it just has to be yours <3

SOCIAL WORK BOOK & MEDIA RECS TO FEED YOUR SOUL

Books:

"My Grandmother's Hands" by Resmaa Menakem An essential guide to racialized trauma, somatic healing, and social justice in practice.\

"Emergent Strategy" by Adrienne Maree brown For macro minds and movement builders. A poetic, practical look at systems change and collective healing.

Podcasts:

Therapy for Black Girls – Clinical meets compassionate, especially for those working with marginalized communities.

Code Switch (NPR) – Deep dives into race, identity, and social systems — a must for macro social workers.

Latinx Therapy – Decolonizing mental health, one episode at a time.

Believe you can
AND YOU'RE HALF WAY THERE

I AM A SOCIAL WORKER.
WHAT'S YOUR SUPERPOWER?

Tips to prepare for your LGSW

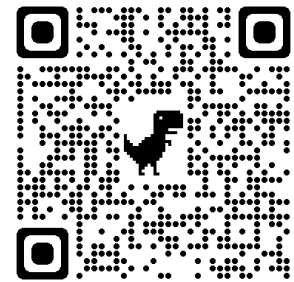
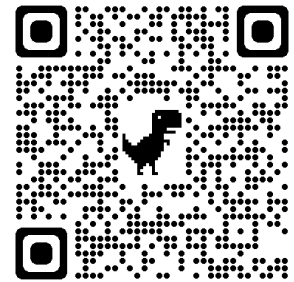
- understand the exam content and format
- develop a study plan
- utilize reliable study materials
- **practice with realistic practice tests**
- **identify your learning style**
- focus on key social work concepts
- manage exam anxiety
- seek support and collaboration
- review state-specific regulations.



REGISTER for your LGSW

Find us on Social!

facebook



ASWB

Association of Social Work Boards