

Northwestern
OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

Spring 2020

IMPACT

Serving generations, changing the world.

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A Message From the Department

On behalf of the Department of Social Work, we welcome you to the Northwestern Oklahoma State University's Social Work Program newsletter. This newsletter is updated biyearly and includes the most recent news from the department of social work throughout all of our campuses. Here you will see our most recent projects, upcoming events, student spotlights and more!

We would like to thank those whose efforts assist us in preparing competent, effective Northwest Oklahoma generalist practice social workers. We are so grateful to our field agency partners, field instructors, adjunct instructors, and Social Work Advisory Board Members for enhancing and improving social services in our region. We look forward to all the new developments in the department and are excited to see the benefits these developments bring to our social work students.

Social Workers: Generations Strong – Ride, Rangers, Ride!

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Northwestern Social Work Students Enter the Field

Bachelor-level social work students at Northwestern Oklahoma State University began their field practicums in the Spring 2020 at agencies throughout Oklahoma. These 14 seniors entered practicum agencies to complete 420 contact hours, demonstrate 31 behaviors and master the program's nine core competencies as outlined by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE).

"Immersing students into the world of social work allows them to develop the skills needed to become a bachelor-level social worker," Jennifer Pribble, assistant professor of social work and director of social work field education, said. "As the signature pedagogy for the social work program, the field experience component is very important and needed to increase social work competency for these students."

Each student in their field practicum is assigned to a field instructor, someone with specific credentials in the agency to reinforce social work ideas, behaviors and competencies.

"Without field instructors volunteering their time to contribute to the education of social work students the field practicum component of the program would not be possible," Pribble said. "They are a crucial part of the educational development for these social work students."



These 14 senior social work majors recently completed their field practicums to fulfill requirements for a bachelor's degree in social work.

Listed below are the students who completed their field practicums, hometowns, and their practicum agency placements:

Kathrine Barrows of Blackwell, Oklahoma Department of Human Services in Newkirk; Korbin Bowers of Woodward, Woodward Public Schools; Baylee Chance of Woodward, Circle of Care in Woodward; Reba Finley of Arnett, Northwest Domestic Crisis Services in Woodward; Desiree Fritz of Enid, Circle of Care in Enid; Bailee Hill of Ponca City, Northern Oklahoma Youth Services in Ponca City; Lauren Hitchcock of Kiowa, Kansas, Northwest Family Services in Alva; Keeley Horning of Enid, Department of Human Services in Enid; Kallie Jones of Enid, Youth and Family Services in Enid; Morgan Lopez of Seneca, Missouri, YWCA in Enid; Chanel Martin of Mooreland, Western Plains Youth and Family Services in Woodward; Ashley Neal of Enid, Youth and Family Services of Northcentral Oklahoma in Enid; Savanna Taylor of Covington, Northwest Treatment Center in Waynoka and Department of Rehabilitation Services in Alva; and Jonathan Wales of Woodward, National Association of Social Workers-Oklahoma Chapter and the Oklahoma State Board of Licensed Social Workers in Oklahoma City.



Northwestern senior social work major Jonathan Wales (right) is able to work alongside James Marks (left), executive director of the Oklahoma State Board of Licensed Social Workers, and on this particular day, Oklahoma's Gov. Kevin Stitt during his field experience assignment in Oklahoma City this semester.

Chanel Martin Selected as an Outstanding Senior

This award is sponsored by the Northwestern Foundation & Alumni Association and the Student Government Association to honor outstanding graduating seniors. Recipients must have a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.5, have completed at least 60 credit hours at Northwestern, never been subject to academic or disciplinary action, be involved in campus and/or community activities and show promise of future achievement.

The seniors are traditionally recognized at the annual Spring Alumni Reunion, but the April event was canceled due to the ongoing public health crisis. The honorees will be invited to Spring Alumni Reunion 2021 where they will be recognized.

Chanel Martin, a native of Farwell, Texas, received her bachelor's degree in social work in May 2020. Her memberships included the Woodward Leadership Advisory Board; Single Parents' Group, Woodward Campus; the National Association of Social Workers; and Pi Gamma Mu International Honor Society. While a student at Northwestern, she was a volunteer coach, a receptionist, a legal research assistant and a practicum student at Western Plains Youth and Family Services.

CWPEP Advisory Board Meeting Hosted in Enid

The Northwestern Oklahoma State University department of social work recently played host to a Child Welfare Professional Enhancement Program (CWPEP) Advisory Board meeting on the Enid campus.

CWPEP is a title IV-E partnership between the University of Oklahoma, The Oklahoma Department of Human Services, and the US Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families. The Anne and Henry Zarrow School of Social Work coordinates the contract with Northwestern and other participating accredited undergraduate social work programs including East Central University and Oral Roberts University.

The purpose of this partnership is to enhance and support Oklahoma's public child welfare workforce. It affords interested students financial support by covering books, fees and in-state tuition in return for a specified employment obligation in a Child Welfare position with the Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) or a Tribe with which DHS has a Tribal/State Agreement. The stipend amount for a 12-month employment obligation is \$7,876. This program is funded by OKDHS, Children and Family Services Division through Title IV-E of the Social Security Act. To be eligible to apply to the program, undergraduate students must be fully admitted to a participating accredited social work program. Upon completion of the Bachelor of Social Work degree, social workers enter OKDHS employment as Child Welfare Specialists.

The meeting included a tour of the Social Work Department's Virtual Reality lab that enables students to wear a headset and operate hand controllers that transports them into various virtual environments to learn professional practice skills. The lab was funded by the University of Oklahoma's Anne and Henry Zarrow School of Social Work on behalf of the OKDHS to assist in retaining quality social workers in the public child welfare system.

The meeting was led by Linda Smith, CWPEP program coordinator from the Anne and Henry Zarrow School of Social Work, and attended by Northwestern's Dr. Kylene Rehder, professor of social work and chair of the department, and Jennifer Pribble, assistant professor of social work and director of field experience, along with colleagues Guy Willis, OKDHS Child Welfare Training Program Administrator; Elaine Akin, Bonni Goodwin and Amy White, OU school of social work; Aleece Mann, Misty Stanberry and Jessica Roberson, OKDHS; Brittany Oelze and Stacey Blaylock, Oral Roberts University; and Dr. Jim Burke, East Central University.



CWPEP Advisory Board members Aleece Mann, Dr. Kylene Rehder, Jennifer Pribble, Dr. Jim Burke, Linda Smith, Brittany Oelze, Stacey Blaylock, Guy Willis, Elaine Akin, Bonni Goodwin, Amy White, Misty Stanberry and Jessica Roberson.

Resilience Workshop Presented in Alva

Alva and Northwestern Oklahoma State University played host to Oklahoma’s First Lady Sarah Stitt on Feb. 13 at an event designed to educate community members about Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE). Stitt and her office joined forces with the Potts Family Foundation, Northwestern and Northwest Family Services to present a film screening and panel discussion on this important topic.

The documentary film “Resilience: The Biology of Stress and the Science of Hope” was shown followed by a panel that included Charita McOsker, LPC, program manager for Northwest Center for Behavioral Health; Taylor Randolph, NCC, LPC, LADC, instructor of psychology at Northwestern; Amber Maier, LPC, foster care director for Northwest Family Services; Sarah Sherman, MCP, LPC, LADC, director of outpatient services at Northwest Center for Behavioral Health; and Dr. Chan Hellman, director of the Hope Research Center at OU-Tulsa. The panel was moderated by the First Lady and was the fourth stop on her Raising Resilient Oklahomans Hope Rising Tour.

According to a release, “the greatest public health discovery of our time” revolves around these ACEs and the “toxic stress it produces” and how it impacts communities by “increasing the risk of mental health challenges and chronic health conditions later in life.” Oklahoma brings in an ACEs rate of 28.5 percent as compared to the national rate of 20.5 percent.



Oklahoma’s First Lady Sarah Stitt

“The child may not remember, but the body remembers. Your mental health is inseparable from your physical health. The one-hour documentary delves into the science of Adverse Childhood Experiences. Now understood to be one of the leading causes of everything from heart disease and cancer to substance abuse and depression, extremely stressful experiences in childhood can alter brain development and have lifelong effects on health and behavior,” states information from the event. “Oklahoma’s high rate of ACEs will require a long term effort to build resilience and promote hope.”

This event was not only educational but a call to action for community members to ask how Oklahomans can integrate the science of hope and resilience into the state’s systems, communities, homes and lives.

RUSO Success Story: Kylene Rehder

Most college students have “that one professor” who’s made a profound difference in their education. Dr. Kylene Rehder’s impact goes beyond the classroom. The social work students at Northwestern Oklahoma State University get the benefit of her dedication to teaching, as well as her commitment to expand their career opportunities as she works to transform the social services landscape in Northwest Oklahoma.

After graduating from Northwestern with her Bachelor of Social Work in 2001, Rehder went to OU for her Master of Social Work but discovered she was at a disadvantage.

“When I registered for my master’s, I found out that I didn’t qualify for advanced standing. Only then did I learn that our undergraduate program was not externally accredited, meaning I had to take two years to get my MSW instead of one,” Rehder said. “That was the start of my desire to come back to Northwestern and make our program accredited.”

After her master’s, Rehder started work as clinical therapist before becoming an adjunct instructor at Northwestern. When a full-time professorship opened, she took the job with the main focus to gain external accreditation by the Council on Social Work Education.

“My goal with accreditation was that more students would come to the university for the social work program and stay in the region to practice in rural areas. Many graduates leave for a master’s program like OU and never come back,” she said. “I wanted to expand our communities’ access to professionally trained social workers.”

Accreditation is a four-year writing process that begins with self-study followed by a commission review of the university’s curriculum. Having a degree from an accredited program means graduates can sit for the licensing exam upon graduation with a BSW, while also having the opportunity for advanced standing in master’s programs. It’s a long and arduous process to ensure curriculum quality, academic improvement and public accountability. But Rehder took it in stride.

“This was one of those tasks that was so huge in nature, I’m not sure anyone believed I could do it. I was 25 at the time, quite naive and ambitious, but very determined,” Rehder said.

NWOSU began the accreditation path in 2005, and after a lengthy process and thorough review, they got word in 2009 that the program would become only the fifth accredited social work program in the state – and the only one in northwest Oklahoma. The application is retroactive, meaning any graduate since 2005 now has a degree from an accredited program.



**Dr. Kylene Rehder, Social Work Program
Chair & Professor**

“Since then, the growth of the program has been amazing. In 2005, we had 6 majors in the program. Now 40 to 50 are admitted in the program with 60 to 70 currently majoring,” Rehder said. “As a volunteer for the Oklahoma Medical Reserve Corps disaster response team, I’ve seen first-hand the incredible impact this has made. After the Woodward tornado several years ago, one of the things that struck me the most was that everywhere I looked, there was a graduate of mine! And not just ‘there,’ but they were leading teams and in charge of agencies – truly contributing to the community.”

Rehder was recently awarded the National Association of Social Workers “Social Worker of the Year” award for 2018, in no small part due to her efforts to achieve external accreditation for NWOSU. The association recognized Rehder for the detail and complication of the task and the resulting contribution to the community - a marked increase in professionally trained social workers in the region.

“Every one of our graduates are offered jobs before they leave, and most are staying in the region. I’m so excited to see how the landscape has changed in providing adequate social services,” she said. “And it’s not just about more graduates, it’s also the awareness in the region for the important work social workers do.”

“It’s just one of those things you think, ‘if I could do anything...’ I’d go back and contribute to my university and make an impact in the community. It really is a dream come true.”

Student Spotlight

Kallie Jones, Senior

“Whenever I first started in social work I lacked confidence, but the program supported me and helped me develop my passion and professional purpose. I have enjoyed my time at NWOSU and look forward to using my knowledge and skills as a professional social worker.”



Annual Primp for Prom Attracts Hundreds

More than 250 dresses were given away to students from 26 high schools in Oklahoma and Texas during the annual Primp for Prom event recently held in the Woodward High School Practice Gym.

This year more than 400 dresses and nearly 75 pairs of shoes were donated to the Northwestern Oklahoma State University Department of Social Work that co-sponsors the event with members of the Woodward High School Key Club.

“Primp for Prom is an event that always highlights the generosity of others and the kindness that exists in our local communities,” Dr. Kylene Rehder, department of social work chair, said.

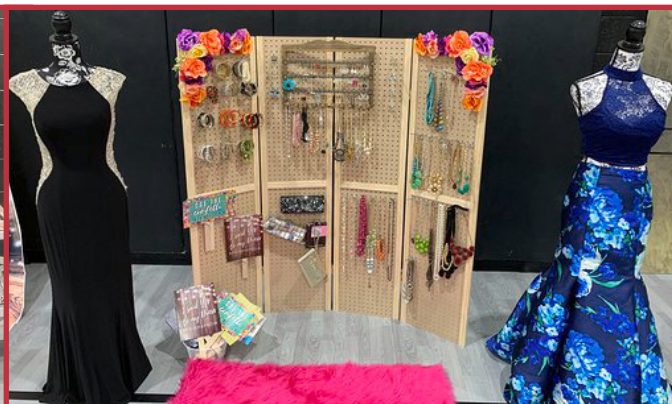
This event is something that Key Club members look forward to helping with each year.

“It’s always fun to see the bus loads of girls come in from surrounding towns and from Woodward as well, who get to come shop around,” said Key Club sponsor Stefanie Alexander. “They get to look for shoes and jewelry and find the perfect dress. And, it’s just always such a fun experience to get to see them enjoy the shopping experience.”



Students from Northwestern Oklahoma State University and Woodward High School helped set up the gym in preparation for the big event.

Wynter Standridge, a Northwestern junior from Woodward and member of the Social Workers Association of Tomorrow (SWAT) organization that helps with the event, enjoys being a volunteer. She sees Primp for Prom as being an important event for any high schooler who is dreaming of a wonderful prom experience but is not quite sure they can afford their attire.



Several girls attending the event also noted cost-factor including Carlie Gallegos, a Forgan High School junior, who has attended Primp for Prom in the past and also attended this year. She said it can be expensive to purchase a prom dress when coming from a single-mom family, so she is thankful for those who donated dresses and accessories so that girls can choose items for free. She added that she brought back the dress she chose last year and picked up a new one this year.



Alva High School freshman Erica Coday (right) and her mom Tricia look for the perfect dress at Primp for Prom.



Dr. Kylene Rehder and Stefanie Alexander pose for a picture in front of a backdrop they set-up for students to take photos in their new dresses.

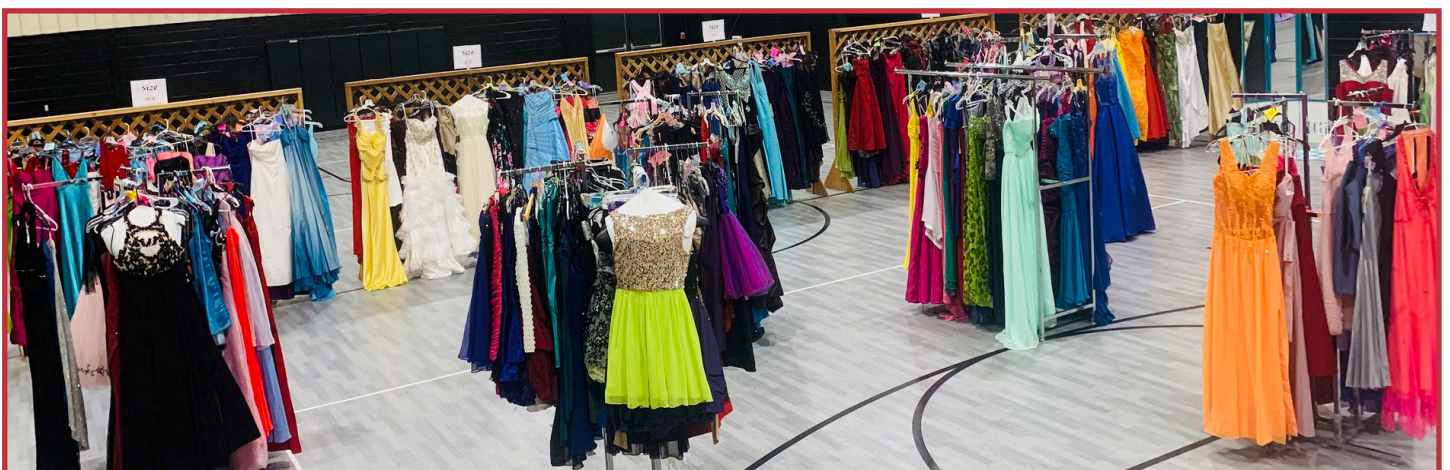
Hanna Bowen, Woodward High School junior, is also thankful for this event.

“Primp for Prom is pretty important to me because there are some people out there who can’t afford prom dresses and don’t have money for shoes or jewelry,” Bowen said. “It’s something important for getting to actually be involved in prom. I think it’s something unique that all schools should have.”

Rehder expressed appreciation on behalf of the department of social work to those who helped with the event’s success including the Woodward High School Key Club members and their sponsor Stefanie Alexander; Woodward campus dean

Dr. Deena Fisher and her husband Tom, Judy Guthrie, Northwestern social work student volunteers, SWAT members, Woodward High School employee volunteers, Stage, and all the generous dress and accessory donors from across northwest Oklahoma. She noted a special thanks to the administration of Woodward Public Schools for playing host to the event.

“The department of social work and the Key Club are always honored to sponsor this event,” Rehder said. “This event is about more than dresses for us; we see it as a means to embody our university mission to build a sense of community and an opportunity to serve others.”



Primp for Prom Receives Award

“Primp for Prom,” an annual community service project co-sponsored by the Northwestern Oklahoma State University Department of Social Work’s student organization Social Workers Association of Tomorrow (SWAT) and the Woodward High School Key Club, has earned a state-wide community service award.

The Woodward Daughters of the American Revolution chapter nominated the event that has earned the 2019 Oklahoma State Daughters of the American Revolution (OSDAR) Community Service Award.

The recipient of the OSDAR Community Service Award must have contributed to the community in an outstanding manner through voluntary, civic, benevolent service, and by organizing or participating in community activities within the past five years with no compensation. It is given to individuals or organizations that help with events or activities that serve people in their communities.



Northwestern’s Social Workers Association of Tomorrow (SWAT) campus organization from the Department of Social Work being congratulated by Woodward DAR Chapter members for receiving the OSDAR (Oklahoma State Daughters of the American Revolution) Community Service Award for their annual event “Primp for Prom.” Pictured are (back row, left to right) Dr. Deena Fisher-Northwestern-Woodward dean, Elizabeth Fox-Shipley, Jessica Goodballet, Woodward DAR Chapter representative Kitty Frech, Alicia James, Katelyn VanVickle, Woodward DAR Chapter representative Roberta Chance, Mirissa Beavers, Reba Finley, and Dr. Janet Cunningham- Northwestern president. (Front row from left to right) Jennifer Pribble-assistant professor of social work, Jennifer Ruppel, Marsellia Rael, and Dr. Kylene Rehder, social work department chair and professor of social work.

OSDAR State Chair Lisa Hefner said that Primp for Prom is an event that is a wonderful example of how young people are helping other young people and demonstrates true service to others. This event shows young people citizenship and service that is so important in today's society.

Sponsors for SWAT are Dr. Kylene Rehder, chair of the department and professor of social work, and Jennifer Pribble, assistant professor of social work and director of social work field education. Sponsors for Woodward High School Key Club are Stefanie Alexander and Beth Baker.

Primp for Prom is held in Woodward for northwest tri-state area high school students to pick out a formal dress, shoes and accessories at no charge. This event is set up like a department store with volunteers ready to assist shoppers with finding the perfect dress. In 2019, these high school shoppers were able to select from more than 100 pairs of shoes and more than 400 dresses that were donated in all sizes, styles and colors. All shoppers have the opportunity to choose their special dress in a supportive, caring environment without the stress of financial consideration.

Students volunteer their time and expertise to help shoppers to find that perfect dress. One of the special volunteers was Miss Oklahoma Teen USA Abigail Billings.

"Primp for Prom is an event that always highlights the generosity of others and the kindness that exists in our local communities," Rehder said. "The Department of Social Work and the Key Club are always honored to sponsor this event, which is about more than dresses, as we see it as a means to embody our university mission to build a sense of community and as an opportunity to serve others."



Woodward High School Key Club members helping with Primp for Prom include (left to right) Xiomara Guzman, Dr. Kylene Rehder-chair of the department and professor of social work at Northwestern, Fatima Flores, Christol Ruttman, MaKenzie Miller, Abby Billings and Crystal Standridge.



Jonathan Wales

Recognized by NASW-OK

Jonathan Wales, Northwestern Oklahoma State University senior from Woodward, has been named the 2020 National Association of Social Workers, Oklahoma (NASW-OK) Undergraduate Student of the Year. He received this award during a ceremony in March held at the NASW-OK Annual State Conference in Midwest City.

The Undergraduate Student of the Year Award honors a bachelor's level social work student from a Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) accredited program. Wales' selection was based on the ability to demonstrate leadership qualities, contribute to the positive image of a social work program, successful academic performance, and representation of the profession's core values.

Dr. Kylene Rehder, chair of the department of social work, said that Wales' recognition is well-earned.

"We are proud of the commitment that Mr. Wales has demonstrated to the profession of social work and are excited his contributions to service and social justice are being recognized in such a prestigious way," Rehder said.

NASW is the largest membership organization of professional social workers in the world and focuses on enhancing the professional growth and development of its members, creating and maintaining professional standards, and advancing sound social policies.

"I'm so honored by this award and grateful to Northwestern's Department of Social Work for their support of the profession and student success," Wales said. "I'm grateful to the social work faculty as they have prepared me to excel in professional social work practice."

Wales currently is completing a practicum with the Oklahoma Board of Licensed Social Workers and the National Association of Social Workers with a focus on administration, advocacy and social work policy. He will be graduating in May and continuing his education in the fall to obtain his Master of Social Work (MSW) degree.



(Left to Right) Dr. Angelo McClain, CEO of NASW is pictured with Jonathan Wales, NASW-OK BSW Student of the Year, alongside social work faculty, Dr. Kylene Rehder and Jennifer Pribble.

Tricia Mitchell Named a 2020 Outstanding Graduate

Tricia Mitchell, class of 2013, is being honored in the Humanitarian category by the Northwestern Foundation & Alumni Association. Mitchell is currently the Executive Director of the 4RKids Foundation in Enid, Okla. She also serves on the Social Work Program Advisory Board. Mitchell has dedicated her life to improving the welfare and safety of those around her. With a heart for those in need, she has spent countless hours in service to others.

Congratulations Tricia from the Department of Social Work.



Congratulations Dr. Fisher on your retirement!

We are grateful for your years of support to the Department of Social Work.

Advisory Board Members

The Social Work Program Advisory Board is comprised of social workers, practitioners, and leaders in our local communities that foster and support the continued development of social work education in the region. While members come from different communities, the committee is seen as one functional unit and focuses on the overall development of the program. The primary purpose of the board is to maintain active communication between the social work practice community and the program to ensure continued improvement.

The Social Work Program Advisory Board addresses the following: student preparation to meet community and agency needs, expectations for students in field education, program assessment outcomes, input on educational policies, student recruitment and retention, job placement, research initiatives, and identifying agency needs that the social work program can address to contribute to community betterment.



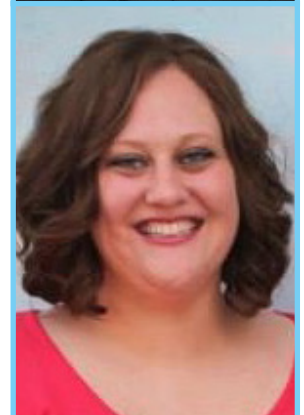
Kevin Evans, Executive Director
Western Plains Youth and Family Services

Amy Whitson, Child Welfare Deputy Director
Region I, Oklahoma Department of Human Services



Morgan Lopez, SWAT President
Northwestern Oklahoma State University

Raquel Razien, Regional Program Director
United Methodist Circle of Care



Pamela Bookout, MSW, LCSW, Integrated Health Specialist
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Tricia Mitchell, Executive Director
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Nancy Prigmore, MSW, JD, Manager
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