

SPRING 2021

# IMPACT

*Serving generations, changing the world.*



**Northwestern**

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK



## 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 Are Essential – Ride, Rangers, Ride!

**DR. KYLENE REHDER, LCSW**  
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Social Work Program Director  
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# Celebrating Social Work Month in March

by Dr. Kylee Rehder, LCSW

The Department of Social Work celebrated Social Work month in March. This year's theme "**Social Workers Are Essential**" has provided an opportunity for social workers around the nation and their supporters to educate the public about the invaluable contributions of the profession.

Social workers are essential to community well-being. As practitioners, social workers are trained to help people address personal and systemic barriers to optimal living. They are employed to effect positive change with individuals, families, groups and entire communities. As a profession, social workers frequently use their collective power to pass laws and establish policies that give more people access to community services and benefits, improving the quality of life for everyone. Social work is the only helping profession which requires social justice advocacy as part of its professional code of ethics, and is therefore a large workforce mandated to advance the rights of the most vulnerable in society. For more than 120 years, the social work profession in the United States has helped bend the arc of justice, making our nation a more equitable and inclusive place.

## ABOUT SOCIAL WORKERS

There are more than 700,000 professional social workers employed in the United States, and more than three million worldwide. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics continues to identify social work as one of the fastest growing professions in the United States. Other government sources report there are more clinically trained social workers providing mental health and behavioral health services than any other professional discipline in the nation. The nation needs more social workers as it continues to deal with entrenched problems that have stressed our society, including systemic racism and the Coronavirus pandemic. The United States is also experiencing one of its worst economic downturns since the Great Depression. Social workers are on the front lines, helping people overcome these crises. In fact, social workers are everywhere people need help navigating tough life challenges. They contribute to interdisciplinary care teams in schools, hospitals, mental health centers, nonprofits, corporations, the military—and in local, state, and federal government. Many social work professionals also own private consultation practices.

(Adapted from the National Association of Social Workers, 2021)





# Northwestern

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

Please join the Department of Social Work  
in congratulating our seniors!

The following students are graduating with a  
Bachelor of Social Work (B.S.W) degree:

**SARA HOUCHIN**

**ISIS LAIR**

**CYNTYIA LLOYD**

**SCOTT MESSENGER**

**JAMIE METCALF**

**SYNDEE MILLER**

**MAZZY PRIEST**

**REBECCA WASSON**

**JESSICA WILDMAN**

**HEATHER WILKINSON**

**WYNTER WILSON**



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## CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FOLLOWING SENIORS:

**Sara Houchin** was accepted in the National Education for Women's (N.E.W.) Leadership Institute

<https://www.nwosu.edu/news/senior-social-work-student-accepted-into-the-new-leadership-institute>

**Jamie Metcalf & Heather Wilkinson** were accepted in the CWPEP Program

<https://www.nwosu.edu/news/child-welfare-professional-enhancement-program-stipend-awarded-to-2-social-work-majors>

**Jessica Wildman** was named Northwestern's deSERVING Ranger Award recipient

<https://www.nwosu.edu/news/wildman-earns-campus-deserving-ranger-award>

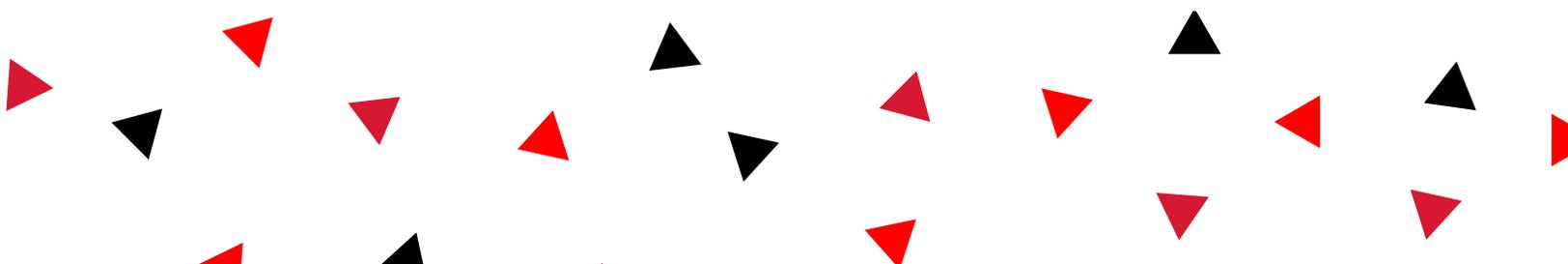
AND

## WE WANT TO WISH OUR BSWs GOOD LUCK IN GRADUATE SCHOOL:

**Isis Lair, Cyntyia Llyod, Mazzy Priest,** and **Jessica Wildman** will be attending the Masters of Social Work Program at the University of Oklahoma

**Sydnee Miller** will be attending the Masters of Social Work Program at the University of Missouri Kansas City

**Congratulations to all of you and your success in the social work program- we are so very proud of you!!**

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# DeServing Ranger Award Jessica Wildman

Jessica Wildman, a senior social work major at Northwestern Oklahoma State University who has been honored with this year's deSERVING Ranger Award from the Service Learning and Civic Engagement (SL/CE) program. Kaylyn Hansen, director of assessment and institutional effectiveness who also leads the service learning and civic engagement program, said each spring the award recognizes an outstanding Northwestern student who demonstrates the following :

Dedication to service and a sense of responsibility to the Northwestern service learning and civic engagement vision; Serves as a community service model for other students;  
Exceptional leadership and organizational skills;  
and,  
Consistent work ethic and availability.

Congratulations Jessica- We are so proud of you!



## Student Spotlight Mazzy Priest, Senior



“I realized early on that I wanted to be someone to fill the gap when one is plunged with crisis; to be an advocate and foster change. That ambition led me to a profession where I could positively impact people’s lives. The NWOSU Social Work Department has been a true example of what it means to empower, advocate, and motivate. I truly did not know the positive impact the program and professors would make in my own life. The professors have not only instilled every professional aspect that is needed for the field, but confidence so I feel prepared for graduate school and starting my career.”

# Northwestern SWAT Participates in 'Wooden Children' Project



The 248 wooden characters displayed on the northeast corner of the Garfield County Courthouse are being used to increase community awareness of children abused or neglected in Garfield County.

Members of the Northwestern Oklahoma State University Social Workers Association of Tomorrow (SWAT) have taken part in the “Wooden Children” project sponsored by the Garfield County Child Advocacy Center. The “Wooden Children” project is designed to bring awareness to the number of child abuse cases that are investigated each year. In 2020, 248 confirmed cases of child abuse were reported in Garfield County. The Garfield County Child Advocacy Council has conducted the Wooden Children Program annually for approximately the last 10 years. It was canceled last year due to the pandemic.

“The number of substantiated abuse cases are usually higher than the number of cases in 2020,” Dustin Albright, Garfield County Child Advocacy Council executive director, said. “We believe that quite a few cases were not reported last year because children were not in school and not in the public eye.

“Teachers, counselors, and the child’s friends are sometimes the ones who cause the abuse to be reported because either they see injuries or the child confides in them about abuse.”

Each wooden figurine is approximately two to three feet high and was cut out by volunteers from the Garfield County community. Once the forms were cut out, the Junior Welfare League and other individuals painted on the faces and hair.

Organizations, businesses, groups and individuals were asked to “foster” a wooden child for \$25. The group sponsoring the child dressed and displayed them. On April 1 the Wooden Children were taken to the courthouse lawn to be displayed for all of April, which is Child Abuse Prevention Month.

This project not only creates awareness about the number of children who are abused but also helps the Garfield County Child Advocacy Council fund the services that are provided to the child and family. In Oklahoma “every person” has a statutory obligation to report a suspected abuse of a child.

If you would like to volunteer with the Garfield County Care Campus or become a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) call 580-242-1153.



**The Wooden Children on the Garfield County Courthouse lawn wearing their SWAT organization t-shirts.**

“This is a subject not many enjoy discussing, and amid the COVID-19 pandemic, there is still child abuse occurring within our area,” Jennifer Pribble, SWAT sponsor and assistant professor of social work, said. “This is a subject that all individuals need to be aware of as mandated reporters of child abuse in Oklahoma. Visual reminders of this act bring the awareness that there are children experiencing child abuse and neglect, and it takes all of us to protect this vulnerable population.

“Participating in Child Abuse Prevention initiatives allows our organization to show support for advocacy efforts to end child abuse in the state of Oklahoma.”

To learn more about Northwestern’s Department of Social Work, contact Pribble at (580) 213-3148 or [jlpribble@nwosu.edu](mailto:jlpribble@nwosu.edu).

# Social Work Faculty Present at NASW 46th Oklahoma State Conference



**Northwestern Oklahoma State University social work faculty members Dr. Kylene Rehder (left) and Jennifer Pribble recently presented at the National Association of Social Workers 46th annual Oklahoma State Conference.**

Northwestern Oklahoma State University social work faculty recently presented at the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) 46th Annual Oklahoma State Conference.

Dr. Kylene Rehder, chair of the department of social work, and Jennifer Pribble, director of field education presented, "Virtual Reality: Building Awareness and Skills in Social Work Practice."

Their presentation focused on recent research on the use of virtual reality in social work education and applications of this technology in the field of social work practice.

The opening address was presented by the president of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Mit Joyner, DPS, MSW, BSW, LCSW.

Northwestern was also represented by the following social work students: Sara Houchin, Ardmore senior; Cyntyia Lloyd, Enid senior; Julie Mayer, Enid junior; Barbara McPherson, Enid senior; Jamie Metcalf, Blackwell senior; Mazzy Priest, Enid senior; Carolyn Reaves, Fort Supply senior; Wynter Standridge, Woodward senior; Rebecca Wasson, Enid senior; and Heather Wilkinson, Enid senior.

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.

# Social Work Accreditation Reaffirmed



During the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Commission on Accreditation's (COA) February 2021 meeting, the COA voted to grant reaffirmation of accreditation to Northwestern Oklahoma State University's social work program for eight years, ending in February 2029.

Reaffirmation is administered through a multistep accreditation process that involves program self-studies, site visits and COA reviews. To become accredited, Dr. Kylene Rehder, professor of social work and chair to the department of social work, and Jennifer Pribble, assistant professor of social work and director of field experience, worked diligently preparing a written self-study that covered the program's mission and goals, implicit and explicit curriculum and assessment.

In September 2020, a site visitor from CSWE visited the program and interviewed faculty, administration, advisory board members and students.

"Reaffirmation of accreditation assures the highest quality of education to our students and prepares them for the professional practice of social work," Rehder said.

CSWE is a national association preserving and enhancing the quality of social work education for practice and promoting the goals of individual and community well-being and social justice.

"I am extremely proud of our social work department," Dr. Janet Cunningham, university president, said.

"The faculty navigated the reaffirmation process flawlessly. Our program provides social work professionals who are sorely needed in all areas of the state and nation."

The profession of social work in the United States looks to CSWE-accredited programs to produce social workers with the knowledge and skills to be professional social workers. To apply for licensure as a social worker one has to be a graduate of a CSWE accredited program. This accreditation also affords students the opportunity to apply for advanced standing placement in a Master of Social Work program. Northwestern's social work department has been accredited since 2005 and offers state-of-the-art labs to Alva, Enid and Woodward students.

"Trained with the professional foundation of social work, graduates are prepared to address complex psychosocial functioning in individuals, families, and groups; as well as create change in society to enhance the welfare of all people," Rehder said.

# Students From 18 High Schools Attend Annual Primp for Prom Event in Woodward

More than 300 dresses were given away to students from 18 high schools across northwest Oklahoma during the annual Primp for Prom event recently held in the Woodward High School Practice Gym.

This year more than 500 dresses and nearly 100 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 northwest Oklahoma,” 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 busloads 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.”

Camryn Beaner-Howard, a Northwestern junior social work major from Woodward loves her volunteer experiences with Primp for Prom. She enjoys assisting girls in finding the perfect dress and watching their smiles emerge in the mirror. Wynter Standridge, a Northwestern senior from Woodward and member of the Social Workers Association of Tomorrow (SWAT) organization that helps with the event, enjoys being a volunteer each year. She sees Primp for Prom as being an important event for any high school student who is dreaming of a wonderful prom experience but is not quite sure they can afford their attire.

Several girls attending the event noted that it can be expensive to purchase a prom dress so they were thankful for those who donated dresses and accessories.

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. Jonathan Thomason, Northwestern social work student volunteers, SWAT members, Woodward High School employee volunteers, 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.”

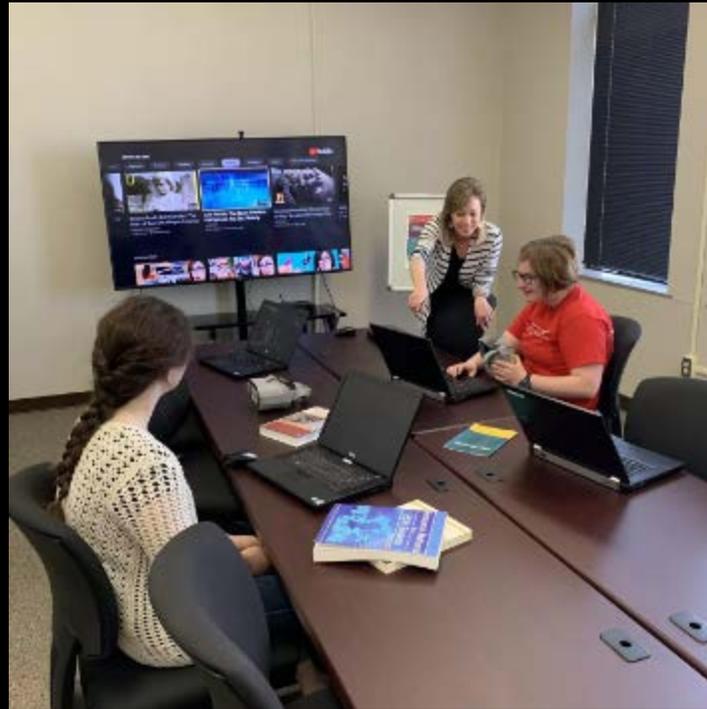




Dr. Thomason, Dean of NWOSU's Woodward Campus, stops by Primp for Prom



# Northwestern Social Work Program Earns CWPEP Grant



**Dr. Kylene Rehder instructs students using a technology based active learning classroom**

Northwestern Oklahoma State University's social work program has been awarded a \$40,000 grant by the Child Welfare Professional Enhancement Program Student Payback Fund Grants to develop active learning environments for social work students.

Dr. Kylene Rehder, chair of the department of social work and program director, authored the grant and will serve as the project's principal investigator.

"Technology's influence on contemporary and future social work practice is profound," Rehder said.

"Therefore active learning environments are needed to support learning goals, professionalize students to practice, and teach the ethical and effective use of technology."

Rehder said this grant project will improve the educational technologies, resources, and spaces provided to social work students to increase their learning engagement, skill development and preparedness for professional practice. Both hardware and software resources will be enhanced across the program's locations in Alva, Enid and Woodward.

"As a social work student studying in a rural area, the necessary settings and resources for diverse and real-world learning experiences are not always easily available," Woodward campus junior Jewel Shepherd said.

"This grant will provide the cutting-edge technology and resources necessary for myself and other Northwestern social work students to become effective and educated social workers."

This grant is being administered by the University of Oklahoma on behalf of the Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) to assist the department in retaining quality professional social workers in the public child welfare system.

"I have always been passionate about helping others," Woodward campus sophomore Camryn Beaner-Howard said. "This grant will provide our program access to the technology and tools to advance us in the field and strengthen our abilities."



Congratulations to Jonathan Wales, NWOSU BSW graduate and social work student from the OU Anne & Henry Zarrow School of Social Work on his co-interview with Oklahoma Senator Julia Kirk as part of NASW-Oklahoma Legislative Advocacy and Education Day events.



Congratulations to Western Plains Youth & Family Services for receiving the 2021 Youth Award from the Oklahoma Nonprofit Excellence (ONE) Awards. The ONE Awards are dedicated to honoring the outstanding work of Oklahoma nonprofits statewide.



Kevin Evans, executive director of Western Plains Youth & Family Services and advisory board Member for the Department of Social Work at NWOSU, accepting their ONE award.

# SWAT Compassion in Action Dignity Drive



Northwestern's Campus Cabinet food pantry receives donations from the SWAT Compassion in Action Dignity Drive. SWAT Enid campus members pictured (left to right) with donations are Julie Mayer and Barbara McPherson

Students in the Social Workers Association of Tomorrow (SWAT) chapter at Northwestern Oklahoma State University recently completed their Compassion in Action Dignity Drive for the 2020 fall semester.

SWAT is a student-run organization that seeks to enhance the social work learning experience. One of SWAT's purposes is to employ community service projects while supporting community partners and their consumers. The Compassion in Action Dignity Drive is one of the community service projects SWAT students host to give back to the community.

This year SWAT was able to gather donations for Northwestern's Campus Cabinet food pantry at all three campus locations to begin filling their personal hygiene product needs.

"Gathering these donations was not possible without the help from the Northwestern community," Jennifer Pribble, SWAT sponsor and assistant professor of social work, said. "The annual Dignity Drive would not be possible without this wonderful community and the giving spirit this community has."

The Campus Cabinet is a resource available to assist Northwestern students and employees on all three campuses. This resource offers non-perishable food assistance as well as personal hygiene products. In order to assist, all requests can be made via their online web form. To learn more and access this resource visit their website at <https://www.nwsu.edu/campus-cabinet>.

SWAT members would like to thank everyone who assisted with putting this event together and those who were able to donate from all three Northwestern locations.



**Scott Messenger, Enid senior and SWAT Enid campus vice president, separating the donations to disperse to all three campuses.**

“The Dignity Drive is something that pulls all students from the three Northwestern locations together to be able to assist the community,” Wynter Wilson, SWAT president and Woodward senior, said. “As the pandemic thrived, students of Northwestern fought back, showing their resilience and desire to be able to serve the community.”

Northwestern’s SWAT members and social work majors, with their hometowns, classification and SWAT involvement include Ty Albers, Woodward senior, member; Perla Fonseca Torres, Enid junior, member; Natalie Haskins, Woodward sophomore, member; Sara Houchin, Ardmore senior, member; Camryn Beaner-Howard, Woodward junior, member; Joelynn Karben, Enid senior, member; Isis Lair, Woodward senior, member; Kori Leech, Kiowa, Kansas, senior, member; Cyntyia Lloyd, Enid senior, treasurer; Patricia Lugo, Enid senior, member; Julie Mayer, Enid junior, member; Barbara McPherson, Enid senior, member; Scott Messenger, Enid senior, Enid campus vice president; Jamie Metcalf, Blackwell senior, member; Mazzy Priest, Enid senior, member; Carolyn Reaves, Fort Supply senior, member; April Schultz, Alva sophomore, member; Jewel Shepherd, Mooreland junior, member; Jessica Wildman, Pocasset senior, Alva campus vice president; Heather Wilkinson, Enid senior, member; and Wynter Wilson.

# Student Accepted Into National Education for Women's Leadership Institute



Northwestern Oklahoma State University social work senior Sara Houchin of Ardmore has been accepted into the National Education for Women's (N.E.W.) Leadership Institute.

Each year, about 35 students are selected for the institute through a competitive application process. Houchin was chosen based on numerous factors including, but not limited to: individual leadership potential, maturity, ability to deal with challenges, capacity to reflect on one's personal strengths and weaknesses, special interests, unique characteristics or diverse experiences that contribute to the N.E.W. Leadership learning goals, interest in politics, public service or public policy, and a commitment to participate fully in the N.E.W. Leadership Institute.

"I am beyond excited and honored to have been accepted to attend the N.E.W. Leadership Institute this summer," Houchin said. "As a social work major, the training and resources provided at this program will be invaluable as I work to be a public servant and grow in my leadership skills. This program is set up to develop a professional network of women leaders both in the state of Oklahoma and nationally. I believe it will be a great benefit to me in my future career."

N.E.W. Leadership is an intense, five-day program that takes place each year on the University of Oklahoma's Norman campus and is designed specifically for undergraduate women from colleges and universities across the state of Oklahoma. This year the event will be June 9-13.

"The department of social work is excited for Sara to participate in this award-winning program and be connected to policymakers engaged in shaping the public agenda," Dr. Kylene Rehder, social work department chair, said. The award-winning program educates and empowers undergraduate women to participate actively in politics and public service. The program connects students to policymakers and community activists to engage them in shaping the public agenda. Launched in 2002, the program is part of the N.E.W. Leadership National Network at the Center for American Women and Politics at Rutgers University.

The program includes hands-on projects, skill-building workshops, keynote speakers and panels featuring prominent female officeholders, public administrators, community advocates and business leaders. N.E.W. Leadership includes networking opportunities with women leaders and culminates in a day spent with elected officials at the Oklahoma State Capitol.

For more information visit [www.ou.edu/carlabertcenter/womens-leadership/new-leadership.html](http://www.ou.edu/carlabertcenter/womens-leadership/new-leadership.html)



The Department of Social Work thanks Jennifer Pribble for her outstanding contributions to the Social Work Program and wish her luck in her new adventures. Jennifer will continue working with the program teaching elective courses as an adjunct instructor. We are excited to continue to be able to work together to bring social work education to Northwest Oklahoma!

# 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



**Wynter Standridge, SWAT President**  
Northwestern Oklahoma State University



**Pamela Bookout, MSW, LCSW, Integrated Health Specialist**  
Great Salt Plains Health Center, Inc.

**Nancy Prigmore, MSW, JD Manager**  
Legal Aid Services of Oklahoma

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



**Raquel Razien, State Director of Community and Prevention Services**  
United Methodist Circle of Care



**Tricia Mitchell, Executive Director**  
4RKids Foundation

