

Social Work Research

A Newsletter by the Anne and Henry Zarrow School of Social Work



Welcome Statement

by Chie Noyori-Corbett, Ph.D., M.S.S.W., Associate Director of Research

Welcome to our inaugural research newsletter at the Anne and Henry Zarrow School of Social Work! As the associate director of research, I am very pleased to announce this inaugural Social Work Research newsletter. The aim of this newsletter is to promote our faculty members' research activities to scholars from other disciplines at OU and students at our school. More than ever, I acknowledge the strong need for transdisciplinary research activities at the university level for high-quality research projects. I also see the strong need to involve our students in research projects through strengthening the connections between research faculty members and students through valid mentorship.

We will have our faculty members discuss what "social work research" really is and how it can be strengthened by transdisciplinary research projects. By introducing faculty members' research philosophies and projects, I believe we can spread the importance of social work research at OU and the larger research community.

Students will have opportunities to learn what their professors are doing as social work researchers and their actual research projects. Through these opportunities, we hope that students might want to work with and learn more from these faculty members who share the same research interests with them.

Please look forward for more research newsletters!

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by Erika DuBose, Ph.D. Student and Graduate Research Assistant, and Julie Kieu, M.S.W. Student and GRA

Originally from Kosovo, Venera Bekteshi is an associate professor at the Anne and Henry Zarrow School of Social Work. Before her appointment in this position, Bekteshi served as an associate professor at two universities in the United Kingdom – the University of Bath, Department of Social and Policy Sciences, and the University of York, Department of Social Policy and Social Work. She began her academic career at the University of Illinois, in Urbana-Champaign, where she served as an Assistant Professor in the School of Social Work. She also completed her postdoctoral training at Washington University in St. Louis Medical School, Siteman Cancer Center.

Bekteshi's current research focuses on immigrant populations' mental and physical health, emphasizing Latino women and their spiritual and cultural experiences. Her research interest also includes the psychological and physical health of disadvantaged and marginalized women worldwide, especially in post-war countries. Through her qualitative and quantitative methods, Bekteshi's work examines community well-being versus individual care and the impact of spiritual beliefs on health care treatment through the lens of intersectionality.



Bekteshi came to the United States at age 16 to escape Kosovo's complex political and economic situation, which later escalated into war. She began her political science and journalism undergraduate studies at the University of Oklahoma at age 17 and worked 70 hours per week to finance her educational and personal expenses. As a first-generation college graduate and an immigrant in two countries, the United Kingdom and the United States, she relates firsthand to the challenges that immigrant women face as they climb up the socioeconomic ladder to success in their countries of destination. With a focus on social justice, advocacy, empathy and empowerment, Social Work offers Bekteshi adequate space to produce the applied and theoretical research that makes a difference in the lives of immigrant women.



Fun Fact

In 2018, Venera Bekteshi completed the 850-km walk, *El Camino de Santiago*, in 22 days!



Image from *Cycling the Camino de Santiago: The Way of St James - Camino Frances* by Mike Wells (2019)

When not conducting research or teaching, Bekteshi loves hiking, teaching Zumba and Yoga, and engaging in self-care through physical activity. Bekteshi also loves learning foreign languages and is currently fluent in four languages – Albanian, Serbo-Croatian, Spanish, and English. She is now learning French.

Bekteshi is proud of her undergraduate and graduate educational achievements. She earned her bachelor of arts degree in broadcast journalism and political science from the University of Oklahoma. Bekteshi also earned three master's degrees in international relations, social work, and public administration. The college is proud to welcome Venera Bekteshi to the faculty.

If you are interested in working with Bekteshi to enhance your research skills and contribute to immigrants' lives, please contact her at venerab@ou.edu. Bekteshi is eager to work with you.

Researcher Spotlight: Shane Brady, Ph.D., M.S.W.

by Naya Jackson and Julie Kieu, M.S.W. Students and Graduate Research Assistants



Shane Brady is an associate professor at the Anne and Henry Zarrow School of Social Work, a Faculty Fellow with the Hope Research Center, and a Faculty Associate with the Ruth Knee Institute for Transformative Scholarship. Brady considers himself as a *"pracademic"* with his experience in both clinical and community practice. In the past, he has worked in street outreach harm reduction programs, HIV/AIDS prevention, supportive housing and services, school-based programming, prisoner re-entry, homelessness prevention, school-to-prison pipeline advocacy, post-Katrina restorative justice, criminal justice reform, community mental health and substance abuse.

For Brady, social work research *"must be applied and value lived experiences, the centrality of community, and the importance of racial, social, economic, and environmental justice."* While social work often emphasizes individual change, Brady believes there is a clear need for structural level reforms within systems and policies.

Brady is most passionate about working with community-engaged and involved neighborhoods, community institutions and people in building capacity, addressing challenges together and creating culturally and contextually responsive interventions that leverage local strengths and value the diversity, history, and vision of community members. When approaching research, Brady relies on both his educational experiences, his diverse practice experience, and his desire to create empowering community-rooted and participatory solutions for complex local and societal problems. Brady also writes critical theoretical and qualitative methods articles that are well-received across disciplines.

One example of Brady's research is the **Southside Initiative**, which was collectively named in partnership the South Oklahoma City community. *"This initiative,"* explained Brady. *"emphasizes creating in and out of school opportunities for young people in South Oklahoma City neighborhoods through bringing together schools, libraries, community centers, and community institutions."* The Southside Initiative also created the first truly community-centric practicum placement within the Anne and Henry Zarrow School of Social Work, where students worked between and within many different partners while receiving supervision from Brady and guidance from professionals across many different disciplines. From this practicum experience, students and partners have created many successful events and programs, including peer-to-peer mentorship through the arts between high school students and younger youth, community block parties, psychosocial educational groups in schools, and arts-infused, youth-led participatory research that created opportunities for young people to leverage their voices to community leaders through hip hop, dance, spoken word, graffiti art and photography.

Another project Brady is still currently working on is the **Community Needs Network**, which is a collaboration between the community and the university. This project brought together over 30 local systems and organizations in the Norman and Cleveland County to identify existing strengths and challenges to better promote collaboration and innovation between sectors and organizations. The CNN, which is sponsored by the local United Way, conducted the first community assessment in more than 20 years. The data from this assessment is being used by organizations to leverage funding, create and improve programming, and create better systems for education and awareness raising.

If you are interested in learning more about Brady's research, please contact him at srbrady@ou.edu.



Fun Fact

"I am a first-generation college student, a fourth-generation Detroiter, an animal lover, songwriter and guitarist and a philosophy and theory nerd. I also had the privilege of meeting four current and former U.S. presidents and numerous U.S. senators and representatives through my social work, organizing and advocacy work during my career."

- Shane Brady, Ph.D., M.S.W.

Researcher Spotlight: Bonni Goodwin, Ph.D., LCSW

by Julie Kieu, M.S.W. Student and Graduate Research Assistant



Bonni Goodwin is an assistant professor of macro social work at the University of Oklahoma's Anne and Henry Zarrow School of Social Work. With over 20 years' experience working in children and family services, including five years' experience working as a therapist in a specialized program, Goodwin also serves as the statewide coordinator of adoption preservation services for the Oklahoma Department of Human Services' Child Welfare Division.

In 2019, Goodwin began her career at the Zarrow School of Social Work as a program manager for the Center for Child Welfare Training and Simulation and then as a research associate for post-adoption research. In 2020, Goodwin earned her doctor of philosophy degree in social work from Baylor University, and as of August 2022, she began her work as an assistant professor at the University of Oklahoma.

Goodwin was drawn to the social work field and research because she, like many others, wanted to help people. *"I wanted to get into the trenches with people and be to work with them."* explained Goodwin. She is also grateful for her past experiences working in direct practice because this gave her first-hand knowledge and opportunities to understand and identify the gaps and needs in the child welfare field.

"I absolutely love what I do." said Goodwin. *"Research, for me, is a privilege, especially being able to talk with adoptees and parents and being able to use my research to inform and guide policy and practice."*

As an assistant professor of macro social work, Goodwin also loves teaching, sharing her knowledge, and being able to inspire new generations of social workers. Through her facilitative teaching style, Goodwin said she *"hopes to continue to make research and advocacy approachable so students can see that they're not separate pursuits."*



Fun Fact

"My first job was roofing with my dad. I did it for several years in the summers. It was one of my favorite jobs! I loved manual labor because at the end of the day, you can see the progress you've made."

- Bonni Goodwin,
Ph.D., L.C.S.W.

Goodwin's primary research focus is in child welfare permanency, adoption and policy practice. With a preference for community-based participatory research, Goodwin seeks to work alongside foster and adoptive parents, adoptees and professionals to better understand their experiences and to evaluate and improve upon related policies and practices. At the Council on Social Work Education's Annual Program Meeting in November 2022, Goodwin participated in three research presentations – one of which discussed implications for adoption services based on the experiences and perspectives of adoptive parents.

Furthermore, Goodwin hopes to develop, implement and evaluate a post-adoption model to increase support for foster and adoptive families in Oklahoma. Additionally, she is developing a brand-new program for clinical social workers and a best practices guide for mental health professionals working with adoptive families. Inspired by her time as a program manager conducting simulations for law enforcement and child welfare personnel, Goodwin also hopes to establish virtual simulations at the national level to provide additional teaching opportunities for high-stakes career personnel who need to practice necessary skills (such as de-escalation) in a safe environment.

If you are interested in learning more about Goodwin's research, please contact her at bgoodwin@ou.edu.

Transdisciplinary Research in Action

by Julie Kieu, MSW Student and Graduate Research Assistant



OU HIRG and Their Work

Founded in 2020, the OU Humanitarian Innovation Research Group is a transdisciplinary team with a mission to improve the well-being and overall integration of refugees in host communities through their research, creative activities and community building. OU HIRG is also an affiliate of OU's Institution for Community and Society Transformation.

Through their work, OU HIRG wishes to work toward developing an effective refugee resettlement model for the benefit of both host and refugee communities in the United States and do so within a global framework. As a transdisciplinary team, OU HIRG is able to tackle the multifaceted problems of refugee integration by drawing from the different perspectives and expertise of their team members and their graduate research assistants, with representations in the fields of social work, architecture, education, business, health and mental health, innovation, library and information science, mathematics, communication, and diversity, equity, and inclusion. This team is currently represented in social work by Chie Noyori-Corbett, who is the OU HIRG team leader, and Shane Brady, who is one of the newest additions to the team.

OU HIRG is currently working on a variety of research projects to help refugee communities in Oklahoma and Dallas, Texas. The section to the right briefly describes some of their current projects.

To learn more about OU HIRG or to discuss possible research partnership opportunities, please contact Chie Noyori-Corbett at chie.noyoricorbett@ou.edu.

Some Current Projects



Public Library Services for Refugees, funded by the Institute of Museum & Libraries Services, investigates the strengths, needs and challenges public libraries face in serving refugees in their communities.



Refugee Integration Research Project, funded by the Data Institute for Societal Challenges, investigates the refugee resettlement process toward integration into the community.



Refugee Children Language Development Project, funded by the OU Institute of Community and Society Transformation, investigates refugee children's oral language development in the Head Start Program.



Burma Bag Project seeks to bring long-term self-sufficiency among Burmese/Myanmar refugee women by helping them attain the necessary skillsets to develop and sell products from recycled materials.



Reducing Health Inequalities Among Refugee Youth, in collaboration with the EAGLE Scholar program in Dallas, Texas, explores ways to reduce inequalities among refugee youths by giving them access to the same educational facilities available to any native-born American.



Development of an Efficient, Healthy Living Environment for Refugees works toward developing an educational intervention program about healthy living and environment-friendly sustainable practices for refugee communities as they prepare to settle in the United States.

CSWE 2022 Presentations

by Julie Kieu, MSW Student and Graduate Research Assistant

In November 2022, the Council on Social Work Education hosted their 68th Annual Program Meeting in Anaheim, California. Many OU Anne and Henry Zarrow School of Social Work faculty and students attended this event and presented their proposals along the event's theme of "Leading Critical Conversations: Human Rights are Global Rights."

Presentations From AHZSSW Faculty & Staff

Promoting Environmental Justice in Field: Equipping Faculty and Instructors to Operationalize Competency

Presented by: Tiffany Adamson, M.S.W., LCSW, Carrie Jankowski, M.S.S.W., LCSW, Rachel McBride, M.S.W., LCSW, and Austin McCoy, M.S.W., LCSW



Structuring and Supporting International Field Placement

Presented by: Tiffany Adamson, M.S.W., LCSW, Amanda Clark-Andrejkovics, LCSW, M.S.C.J., Carrie Jankowski, M.S.S.W., LCSW, and Sierra Copeland



A Case of Creativity: Responding to Placement Barriers and Advancing Justice for Students

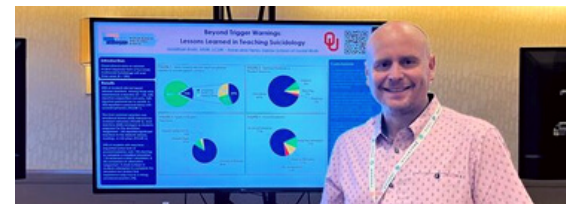
Presented by: Jasmine Aaenson-Fletcher, M.S.W. and Trina DuVall-Strout, M.S.W.

Hope to Resilience for Adults in Criminal Justice Division Programs

Presented by: Burcu Ozturk, Ph.D., M.S.W., David McLeod, Ph.D., M.S.W., Angela Pharris, Ph.D., M.S.W., and Ric Munoz, J.D., M.S.W.

Beyond Trigger Warnings: Lessons Learned in Teaching Suicidology

Presented by: Jonathan Kratz, M.S.W., LCSW



Practice Adaptation in a Pandemic: Some Surprising Outcomes

Presented by: Lori Franklin, D.S.W., LCSW, Jonathan Kratz, M.S.W., LCSW, Christina Miller, Ph.D., and Julie Miller-Cribbs, Ph.D., M.S.W.



Inspiring Students to Engage Globally through International Educational Partnerships in the Pandemic

Presented by: Chie Noyori-Corbett, Ph.D., M.S.S.W., and Christina Miller, Ph.D.

COVID-19 Impact on Early Career Social Work Faculty: Creating a More Inclusive Culture

Presented by: Bonni Goodwin, Ph.D., LCSW

Adoptive Parents' Perspectives on Adoption Adjustment

Presented by: Bonni Goodwin, Ph.D., LCSW

Human Rights in the US: A Political Cultural Perspective

Presented by: Angela Pharris, Ph.D., Anthony Natale, Ph.D., and Bonni Goodwin, Ph.D., LCSW



Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Prison Pipeline: Human Rights Challenges in Forensic Social Work

Presented by: Anthony Natale, Ph.D., and Angela Pharris, Ph.D., M.S.W.

Research Grant Awardees

by Julie Kieu, MSW Student and Graduate Research Assistant

The AHZSSW Internal Research Grant

Developed by Noyori-Corbett, this seed grant funding for Anne and Henry Zarrow School of Social Work faculty members was inaugurated in fall 2022. The first purpose of this grant is to enhance social work knowledge, which will benefit our society and communities where oppressed populations are struggling. The second purpose is to allow faculty members to disseminate their research activities within and outside of our school so that the members of the school will have more opportunities to be a part of transdisciplinary research teams. These purposes align with the University of Oklahoma's several aspects of Pillar 5 of the Lead On, University Strategic Plan, primarily within its vision for research and creative activity:

1. Development of transdisciplinary research projects
2. Cultivate community-engaged research to solve critical challenges facing the state, tribal nations, the United States, and the world.

Grant Awardees

Venera Bekteshi - "Fear Not and Live Healthy Without Cancer"

Kimberly Cassie - "Medically Related Social Services in Oklahoma Nursing Homes"

Claudette Grinnell-Davis - "Participatory Action Research on Child Welfare Reform Submitter"

The Knee Center Research Grant

The Knee Institute for Transformative Scholarship offers seed grants for social work faculty. Funding can be used for research participant incentives, summer pay, to help support a course buy-out, specialized research software, publication fees, or pay collaborators. All Knee-supported projects are aligned with the core areas of the Knee Institute:

1. Aging and Lifespan Issues
2. Family Safety and Healthy Relationships
3. Arts and Creative Activity in Social Work Practice and Education

Grant Awardees

Amanda Clark-Andrejkovic and Jasmine Aaenson-Fletcher - "ReImagine Dance: Providing Dance Instruction to Individuals with Developmental Disabilities"

Kimberly Cassie - "Oklahoma Nursing Home Study"

Julie Miller-Cribbs and Shane Brady - "The State of Social Work in Oklahoma: A Multi-Methods Deep Dive into the State of the Social Work Workforce in Oklahoma"



How to Become a Graduate Research Assistant

by Julie Kieu, MSW Student and Graduate Research Assistant

As a social work student, the idea of "research" may sound daunting or uninteresting, but actually, social work research may be more achievable and satisfying than you might think! Through graduate research assistant (GRA) positions, students can work alongside OU social work faculty in various research projects that seek to better understand and improve the world we live in. GRA positions are periodically available throughout the year, with most requiring a commitment of 10 or 20 hours a week.

If you are interested in becoming a social work GRA, please follow the steps below to find and apply for currently open positions! Also, make sure to keep an eye out for school emails that may announce GRA position openings.

Step 1: Go to [JOBS.OU.EDU](https://jobs.ou.edu)

Step 2: Click on STUDENT JOBS. Then, click on ON CAMPUS STUDENT JOBS.

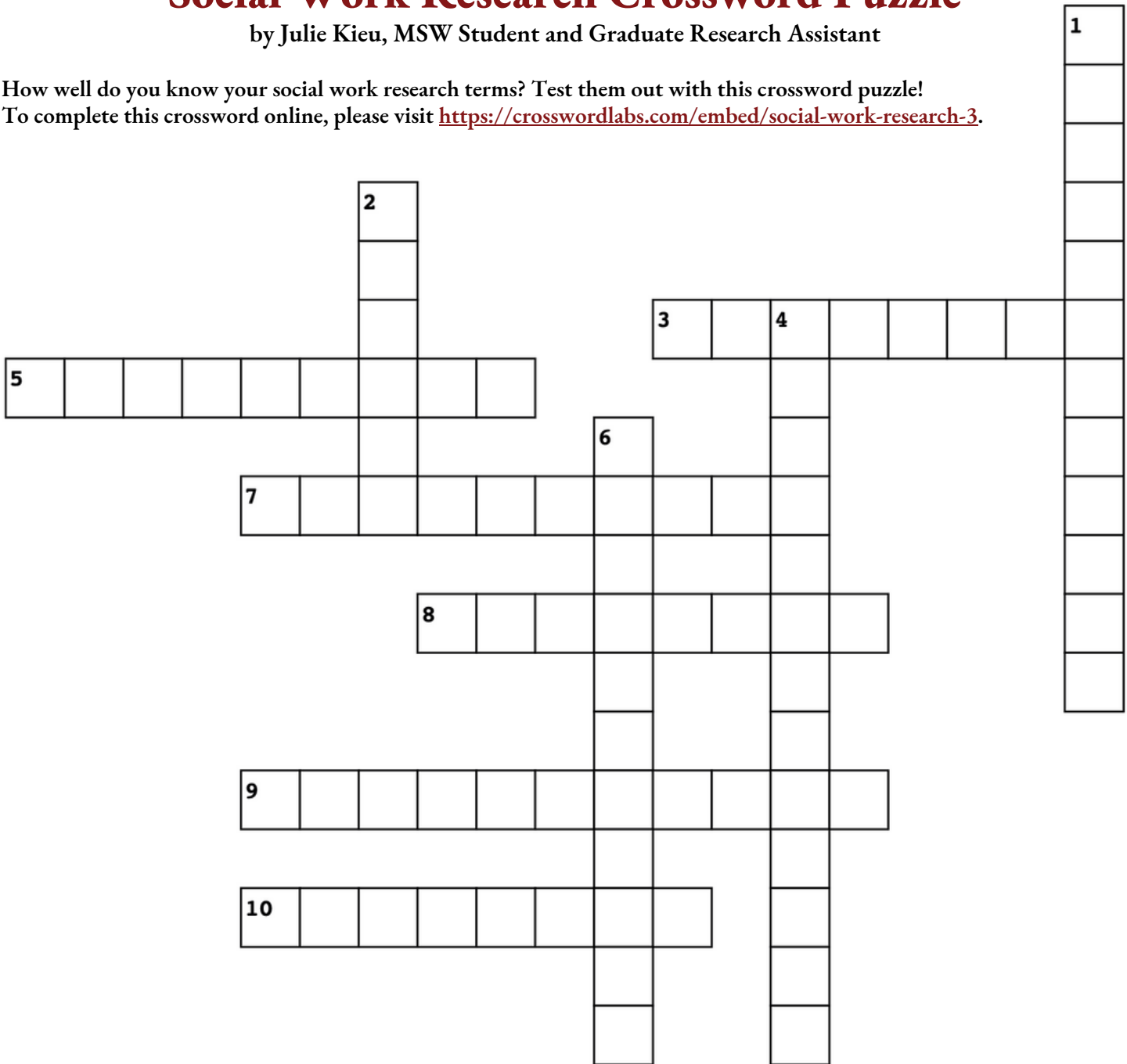
Step 3: Search for any available Graduate Research Assistant Positions in the Social Work department.

Step 4: Apply online!

Social Work Research Crossword Puzzle

by Julie Kieu, MSW Student and Graduate Research Assistant

How well do you know your social work research terms? Test them out with this crossword puzzle!
 To complete this crossword online, please visit <https://crosswordlabs.com/embed/social-work-research-3>.



ACROSS

- 3. the short paragraph at the beginning of an article that summarizes its main points
- 5. type of criteria containing characteristics that disqualify a person from being included in a sample
- 7. type of interval that describes a range of values in which the true value is likely to be
- 8. term to describe an instrument's ability to measure what it is designed to measure
- 9. a person or individual who takes part in a study
- 10. form of bias that occurs automatically and unintentionally

DOWN

- 1. type of study that occurs over an extended period of time
- 2. type of research that is conducted for the purpose of creating some form of social change in collaboration with stakeholders
- 4. when a research consciously or unconsciously influences assignment into experimental and control groups
- 6. term to describe an instrument's consistency to measure some phenomena

About the Authors

Chie Noyori-Corbett, Ph.D., M.S.S.W.

Chie Noyori-Corbett is the associate director of research at the Anne and Henry Zarrow School of Social Work and the founder of the OU Humanitarian Innovation Research Group, which was created to bring awareness to refugee integration issues in the United States. Most of Noyori-Corbett's work is related to people who are displaced globally, including immigrants, refugees and human trafficking victims, and her work has contributed to significant implications for better practices and policies to assist globally displaced populations. In her free time, Noyori-Corbett loves reading and playing with her seven cats.



Julie Kieu, M.S.W. Student

Julie Kieu is a third-year M.S.W. student at the Anne and Henry Zarrow School of Social Work. She is currently assisting in various research projects to improve and understand challenges associated with refugee integration in Oklahoma. Kieu is also in the process of writing a paper, exploring the underrepresentation of Asian Americans in the social work field and identifying ways to improve career recruitment and retainment. After graduating in May of 2023, Kieu plans to pursue her LCSW licensure and work toward addressing the behavioral health needs of youth, refugees, immigrants and BIPOC communities. In her free time, Kieu loves to learn new, creative hobbies and to volunteer with her therapy dog, Alfred.

Naya Jackson, M.S.W. student

Naya Jackson is a student at the University of Oklahoma, studying to receive her master's degree in social work. She is a mother to a compassionate toddler boy. As a graduate of Howard University, Jackson has embodied a servitude attitude and enjoys serving as an agent of social change. Jackson also enjoys working with adolescents, women and mothers because of her own personal and professional experiences. Her experience as an alumna of Teach for America has equipped her to passionately serve children and families in Tulsa, Oklahoma. She is eager to deepen her skills and knowledge as a student at OU. In her free time, Jackson loves to meditate, go nature sightseeing at parks with her son, roller skating, and listening to podcasts that spark her interest.



Erika DuBose, M.S.W., Ph.D. Student

Erika DuBose is a graduate of the M.S.W. program and a recipient of the Student Advocacy Award from the OU Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. DuBose is currently a second-year Ph.D. student in the Organizational and Community Leadership doctoral program at OU, where she serves as vice president of the student association. Her research, through a grant from the George Kaiser Family Foundation, focuses on vaccine hesitancy in rural and underserved populations. She is also a journalist and editor with The Black Wall Street Times and a member of the Community Relations Committee of the Jewish Federation of Tulsa. In her free time, DuBose loves to create fiber art and cook for her family.