



# 24th National School Social Work Conference – Virtual Edition

Presented by the:

**School Social Work Association of America**

**March 22 – 24, 2021**



**The School Social Work Association of America (SSWAA)** would like to invite you to be a part of our 24th National School Social Work Conference – Virtual Edition, to be held March 22-24, 2021.

As we have navigated incredible challenges associated with 2020 and the current school year, school social workers have shown great skill in the art of flexibility and adaptivity! SSWAA has needed to readjust and adapt as have many of you. It has been a point of great pride to observe and hear about the flexibility shown by School Social Workers during these challenging times. You have continued to offer meaningful and vital services to your students, families, and school communities, whether in person or virtual. Your leadership in responding during this unprecedented time in our history to meet the needs of the students, staff, families and communities is truly valued!

SSWAA has also needed to transform and shift in order to find creative ways to best meet the needs of our members. Flexibility is a characteristic of good leadership. "Be clear about your goal but be flexible about the process of achieving it." - Brian Tracy. While we were unable to hold an in-person event this year, we look forward with great anticipation to returning to an in-person National Conference in April, 2022. Until then, SSWAA is thrilled and proud to be able to maintain focus on one of our key goals which is provide timely and beneficial professional development training for our members and the School Social Work community. Therefore this spring, we will once again provide a Virtual Edition of our National Conference.

SSWAA has moved to a virtual format for our 2021 national conference. We are excited to announce that our program for this conference was created to not only meet current needs, but it also addresses issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic as well as our important work around racial equity, inclusion and social justice. Join us for a variety of applicable workshops. You can attend all sessions live, or you can attend some live and watch others in a recorded format at your convenience. Recorded sessions and live sessions are available for CEUs (\*see details here -- add sswaa website link).

Come join us for valuable professional development training! We hope to see you soon!



Sincerely,

*Christy McCoy*

Christy McCoy, MSW, LICSW  
President



*Rebecca K. Oliver*

Rebecca Oliver, LMSW  
Executive Director

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# SSWAA 2021 Virtual National Conference

## Schedule of Events

School Social Work Association of America  
Beacon of Hope

### Monday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2021 – PRE-Conference

**ALL TIMES LISTED IN EASTERN TIME**

#### LIVE Session Times

6:30pm-8:30pm: Pre-Conference (Two Options): (2 CEUs)

- Pre-Con Session A: Trauma Informed Forum: Strengthening Trauma-Sensitive Initiatives: Equity and COVID-19 Considerations
- Pre-Con Session B: SEL Forum: Developing a Social-Emotional Learning Multi-Tiered System of Support

**Total LIVE CEU's available Monday = 2 / Live & On-Demand CEU's available = 4**

### Tuesday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2021

#### LIVE Session Times

10:00am-11:00am: General Session: (1.0 CEUs) – Ethical Record Keeping in the Internet Age

11:15am-12: 45pm: Breakout A (Two Options): (1.5 CEUs)

- A1 – Building Belonging: Start With the Heart
- A2 – Fine-Tuning Cultural Competency in Schools

*Lunch Break – 12:45-1:15*

1:15pm-2:45pm: Breakout B (Two Options): (1.5 CEUs)

- B1 – Hope and Promise: Development Assets Mitigating the Impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences
- B2 – Panel Presentation: Impact of Trauma on Refugee and Immigrant Families & School Social Workers as Border Crossers

3:00pm-4:30pm: Breakout C (Two Options): (1.5 CEUs)

- C1 – What's App? How to Use Apps in your School Social Work Practice
- C2 – The Art of Advocacy: Fundamental to Transforming Systems, Policies and Practices

4:30pm-5:00pm: "Happy Hour" Meetings

**Total LIVE CEUs available Monday = 5.5 / Live & On-Demand CEU's available = 10**

### Wednesday, March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021

#### LIVE Session Times

10:00am-11:00am: General Session: (1 CEUs) Discipline and School-Wide PBIS: A Qualitative Study Through a Critical Race Theory Lens

11:15am-12:45pm: **Breakout D** (Two Options): (1.5 CEUs)

- D1 – The Days After: Best Practices for Supporting Staff and Students Through Grief
- D2 – An African-Centered Approach to School Social Work Practice

*Lunch Break – 12:45-1:15*

1:15pm-2:45pm: **Breakout E** (Two Options): 1:45pm-2:45pm (1.5 CEUs)

- E1 – Creativity Calms: Art-Based Interventions for Improving Social/Emotional Well-Being
- E2 – A Panel Discussion with LGBTQ+ Youth

3:00pm-4:30pm: **Breakout F** (Two Options): 2:50pm-3:50pm (1.5 CEUs)

- F1 – Assessing Social-Environmental Risk and Protective Factors with the School Success Profile (SSP) 2020
- F2 – Faith & Mental Health: Mental Health Professional Competency in Faith and Religious Beliefs

4:30pm-5:00pm: Closing Announcements

**Total LIVE CEUs available Tuesday = 5.5 / Live & On-Demand CEU's available = 10**

*\*The SSWAA Virtual National Conference is being submitted for approval from NASW for up to 24 CEUs. Submission has also been made to the New York School Social Work Association (NYSSSWA) for approval in New York state for CEUs.*

## Information & Special Notes

### Registration

ALL registrations must be completed on-line. Individuals will need to pay online at the time of registration or if making payment by invoice/P.O., payment must be received prior to the start of the conference. Workshop descriptions are included in the brochure for the attendee's convenience and planning purposes. Speakers bios are also included online on the National Conference - 2021 webpage:  
<https://www.sswaa.org/2021-national-virtual-conference>

### Refund Policy

Due to the format of this event, there will be no refunds offered. Since the event is a virtual event, all content will be available to registrants via recording and is not dependent upon attendance at the live event.  
*\*An additional fee adjustment may be necessary depending on the registration purchased.*

### CEU Process

This program has been submitted for approval by the National Association of Social Workers for up to 24 Continuing Education Contact Hours. Details regarding CEU credits are listed on the conference app per session listing.

To receive CEU credit during the live event, individuals will "sign in" via the conference app. At the end of the session, the speaker will give you a session code to input into the conference app which will direct you to a required session evaluation and will validate your attendance. All CEUs will be tracked via the Conference App. It is the conference participant's responsibility to attend the full session and write down or enter the session code for CEU credit and to keep record for licensure purposes. (More information on how to download a certificate is mentioned below in the Conference App section.) When your license comes up for renewal, submit the information regarding your hours to your licensing agency.

For individuals who watch the sessions after-the-fact accessing the “on-demand” recordings, individuals will need to complete a post-test for each session and will need to pass the post-test with 80% or higher to receive CEUs. On-demand recordings will be available April 5<sup>th</sup> – May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021.

For complete CEU details, please see the CEU Procedures document, posted on the 2021 National Conference page of the SSWAA website ([National Conference - 2021 / sswaa](#)). [www.sswaa.org](http://www.sswaa.org)

### Conference Event App

Please download the **Conference Event App** now! It features speaker details, handouts, and sponsor and exhibitor information. Evaluations and CEU awards will also be done through the App. SSWAA encourages all participants to use the **FREE** App. The App can be accessed via your mobile device and/or via a computer. After the event, you will be able to download a certificate of participation as well as a listing of the sessions attended. More information will be shared with registrants as the event approaches.

### Social Media

Please be sure to follow SSWAA on:

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Instagram
- LinkedIn

Use our 24<sup>th</sup> National School Social Work Conference™ hash tags –  
**#SSWAA2020 #SSWAAgonevirtual #BeaconofHope2021**

## VIRTUAL PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS

**Monday, March 22, 2021**

**DAY 1**

### Pre-Con Session A: 6:30pm – 8:30pm Eastern (Two Options)

#### “Trauma-Informed Forum: Strengthening Trauma-Sensitive Initiatives: Equity and COVID-19 Considerations”

Mary Jo Davis, MSW, LCSW – Fairfax County Public Schools, Virginia; Laura Thieman, MSW, LCSW, MPH – Fairfax County Public Schools, Virginia; Quyen Duong, MSW, LCSW – Virginia Department of Education

This workshop will present an overview of strategies to strengthen trauma-sensitive practices in classrooms and schools. During the pandemic and in light of racial injustices, trauma-sensitive practices are more critical than ever in supporting students and families. Examples of how educators are provided with the knowledge and tools to create safe and supportive environments will be shared.

### Pre-Con Session B: 6:30pm – 8:30pm Eastern

#### “SEL Forum: Developing a Social-Emotional Learning Multi-Tiered System of Support”

Kevin Tan, PhD – University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign; Brenda Lindsey, Edd, MSW – University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign; Sheri Olson, LCSW - 27J Schools, Colorado; Stephanie Ochocki, DSW, LICSW – Rosemount -Apple Valley – Eagan District #196, Minnesota

SEL and MTSS are contemporary approaches to improving student achievement. This workshop focuses on the tools and knowledge SSWs need to develop a SEL MTSS. Based on SSWAA's National SEL Standards, the morning session will cover issues relating to screening for SEL needs, intervening through a MTSS, and monitoring SEL at the student-, school-, and profession-level. In the afternoon, implementation successes from an elementary, a middle and a high school will be discussed in break-out groups. The workshop concludes with a panel discussion on the implications and challenges of SEL MTSS for SSWs.

## VIRTUAL CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS

**Tuesday, March 23, 2021**

**DAY 2**

**General Session:** [10:00am – 11:00am Eastern](#)

### **“Ethical Recordkeeping in the Internet Age”**

Tory Cox, Ed.D, LCSW, PPS – University of Southern California; Rachel Meffe, LISW-S, LSSW – Cuyahoga Heights School, Ohio; Annette Clayton

This workshop will cover seven issues regarding ethical record-keeping with a focus on internet-related challenges. Issues addressed will include privacy, accuracy, confidentiality, access, communication, documentation, and destruction of records. The workshop will incorporate the recent changes to the NASW Code of Ethics (2018) with their focus on electronic communication.

**Breakout A:** [11:15am – 12:45pm Eastern \(Two Options\)](#)

### **A1: “Building Belonging: Start With the Heart”**

Michelle Kelsey Mitchell, BA, - Pure Edge, Inc; Gill McClean, - Pure Edge, Inc; Anne Contreras, MACP, MFTI – Pure Edge, Inc

Neuroscience research provides evidence that human beings learn best when relationships are strong. In this session, participants engage in evidence-based breathing and movement strategies that promote self-management, self-awareness, and decision making to foster a sense of belonging for learners and educators. Resources are open source and CASEL validated.

### **A2: “Fine-Tuning Cultural Competence in Schools”**

Stephanie Carnes, LL.M, LCSW – SUNY Albany School of Social Welfare, New York

School social workers have the unique opportunity to advocate for our students' voices to be heard and to provide space for their views, beliefs, and experiences to be expressed in our school communities. This presentation focuses on the ways in which school social workers can lead the charge toward cultural competence and responsiveness, ultimately fostering a stronger sense of community and improved academic and mental health outcomes. Participants will develop a nuanced understanding of the concept of cultural competence as well as the skills needed to examine and identify school policies that are stigmatizing or oppressive.

## **Breakout B: [1:15pm – 2:45pm Eastern \(Two Options\)](#)**

### **B1: “Hope and Promise: Developmental Assets Mitigating the Impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences”**

Tim Schwaller, MA, MS

Research has informed us of the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) on individuals, families and entire communities, including the inter-generational trauma. This is especially evident today, given the reality of racial injustice, and the stress from COVID19. There is hope for both prevention and lessening the impact of ACEs. We will explore how intentionally utilizing the Search Institute's research on Developmental Assets offers hope in mitigating the impact of ACEs, with promising exploration of prevention.

### **B2: “Panel Presentation: Impact of Trauma on Refugee & Immigrant Families: Building Trauma-Informed School Communities & School Social Workers as Border Crossers: Helping Latinx Youth in Anti-Immigrant Times”**

Bianca Vargas Ocasio, MSW – Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago; Caryn Curry, LCSW, - Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago; Leticia Villarreal Sosa, PhD, LCSW, CADC – Dominican University

Within a three-tiered public health framework, the proposed workshop aims to provide participants with universal and early intervention strategies to provide support for refugee and immigrant students. This workshop includes discussion, visuals, and videos that provide an overview to the impact of trauma on youth, with attention to the unique stressors for refugee/immigrant students in the current social and political climate. Activities and discussion will explore tiered strategies and practices applicable to school-wide infrastructure, policies, and culture; staff training; classroom instruction; connection with community resources; and support for individual encounters and group interventions with distressed students.

Latinx youth continue to be underrepresented in honors courses, Advanced Placement courses, and gifted programs while they are overrepresented in discipline referrals, dropout rates, grade retention, and special education (Noguera, 2008). Educators, some by necessity and some by choice, become *nepantleras* in the process of mediating their own or their students' cultural and psychological borders (Reza-López, Huerta Charles, & Reyes, 2014). This paper explores the degree to which school social workers and teachers act as *nepantleras*, and the various constraints they face in attempting to serve immigrant and Latinx students. This will be an experiential workshop with some lecture, and some application activities.

## **Breakout C: [3:00pm – 4:30pm Eastern \(Two Options\)](#)**

### **C1: “What's App? How to Use Apps in Your School Social Work Practice”**

Brenda Lindsey, PhD – University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Apps are convenient, readily available, and innovative solutions to address many of the common challenges faced by students. They can expand the reach of traditional school social work services by offering 24/7 self-help and gather progress monitoring data. This fun, interactive session will showcase a number of apps that you can use right away. Bring your smart phone, iPad, or laptop and join us to learn how you can use apps in your practice.

### **C2: “The Art of Advocacy: Fundamental to Transforming Systems, Policies and Practices”**

Christy McCoy, MSW, LICSW – Agape High School, Minnesota

While our nation continues to navigate the ongoing anxiety and uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic, we are also facing increased political and social unrest in response to racial violence which is exacerbating underlying angst and

suffering. Our service to others is based on the basic fundamental values of recognizing the dignity and worth of every human being while challenging injustices that continue to oppress and divide. As school social workers, we not only practice on the micro level with students and families but recognize the necessity of aligning our practice to transform policies and practices that further marginalize or negatively impact the populations we serve. Thus, this session will strengthen and enhance your advocacy and leadership skills to be a voice for those that feel voiceless and to be an agent of change. As a unified force, we truly can be agents of change bringing about the best outcomes for all people.

**Wednesday, March 24, 2021**

**DAY 3**

**General Session:** [10:00am – 11:00am Eastern](#)

**“Discipline and School-Wide PBIS: A Qualitative Study Through a Critical Race Theory Lens”**

Michael Massey, PhD, MSW, M.Ed. – Catholic University of America, District of Columbia

School-Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS) is a preventative school disciplinary framework and alternative to exclusionary zero tolerance disciplinary practices that have been used to disproportionately punish Students of Color compared to White students. Using a qualitative, single-case examination of high school educator perceptions of SWPBIS and school discipline through a critical race theory (CRT) lens, the study revealed two related meta-themes present throughout the interviews, highlighting the complex and racialized nature of school discipline. These findings suggest that SWPBIS may be an alternative to punitive school discipline, but barriers in addressing disciplinary disproportionality persist. Implications for school social work practice are examined.

**Breakout D:** [11:15am – 12:45pm Eastern \(Two Options\)](#)

**D1: “The Day(s) After: Best Practices for Supporting Staff and Students through Grief”**

Wendy DuCasse, MSW, LCSW - Special School District of Saint Louis County, Missouri

Community violence. Car accident. Death of a staff member. What can school professionals do to support students and staff through losses such as these? Participants will review their setting's current procedures, explore research-based best practices, and identify key strategies to consider when revising their crisis plan.

**D2: “An African-Centered Approach to School Social Work Practice”**

Ashley Waddell, LCSW, MSW – HCPS, Virginia; Shenita E. Williams, LCSW, MSW – HCPS, Virginia

African-centered social work seeks to shift the social worker's mindset to critically examine the experiences of the Black Community. Participants will explore African-centered social work and implications for school social work practice. Participants will be provided with strategies using a multi-tiered system approach.

**Breakout E:** [1:15pm – 2:45pm Eastern \(Two Options\)](#)

**E1: “Creativity Calms: Art Based Interventions for Improving Social/Emotional Well Being”**

Christina Devers, LCSW - Prince William County Public Schools, Virginia; Jennifer Roberts, LCSW – Prince Williams County Public Schools, Virginia

This presentation and experiential workshop will focus on art-based interventions that can be used in both small group and individual settings within all K-12 schools. We will work to build participants understanding of creative interventions through a discussion of theoretical frameworks. Participants will learn how to apply those interventions



to address a wide variety of social/emotional challenges including: depression, anxiety, grief and trauma. Additionally, participants will learn how to utilize art-based interventions to facilitate discussion of racial injustices and give a platform for students to express feelings related to race relations. Hands on activities will allow participants to walk away with additional tools to help a wide variety of students. Participants will also be given examples of how to incorporate art-based activities using Virtual Learning Platforms. This workshop will also highlight the partnership that has been formed with a local Art Therapist as well as grant opportunities to provide art materials to students in need.

## **E2: "A Panel Discussion with LGBTQ+ Youth"**

Vincent Pompei, PhD – Human Rights Campaign (HRC)

In 2021, there is still a misconception that LGBTQ people no longer face significant challenges or discrimination because marriage equality is a reality across America. However, LGBTQ folks, particularly LGBTQ young people, still face discrimination and rejection in school, in housing, in healthcare, and so many other systems integral to their daily lives. In this panel, 3 Youth Ambassadors from the Human Rights Campaign will discuss their experiences as current and former students, to give attendees direct insight into what life is like for LGBTQ young people today, and how school social workers can create safer and more equitable learning environments for LGBTQ students.

## **Breakout F: [3:00pm – 4:30pm Eastern \(Two Options\)](#)**

### **F1: "Assessing Social-Environmental Risk and Protective Factors with the School Success Profile (SSP) 2020"**

Michele Patak-Pietrafesa, MSW, LISW-S - Ohio State University; Natasha Bowen, PhD, MSW, MA – Ohio State University; Robert Lucio, PhD, LCSW – Saint Leo University

This workshop walks participants through the use of the new (free) SSP 2020 for school-wide assessment of student risk and protective factors. Participants will engage in interactive activities that demonstrate quality implementation of the SSP and interpretation of the data and reports produced by the assessment.

### **F2: "'My Faith Saved' Faith and Mental Health -Mental Health Professional Competency in Faith and Religious Beliefs"**

Martha Rodrigues, LCSW - University of South Florida, Florida Department of Education

Now more than ever as we make attempts to support those suffering with grief and loss associated with Covid-19, Mental Health professionals need to be competent and knowledgeable in faith, spirituality, and religious beliefs, as well as the significance this has in our client's life. During this workshop participants will learn how do these inform, define, and affect our client's life, decisions and values? Participants will become competent and knowledgeable in faith and religious beliefs- "bio-psycho-social aspects of a patient" How can we ethically Integrate these into treatment, how and why doing so is clinically beneficial. We will also learn about positive coping mechanisms that are offered through religion and spiritual practices, & how religion/faith/spirituality is used to cope with COVID-19 and the challenges of this illness.