

IT'S TIME

A newsletter of the Steve Hicks School of Social Work
Office of the Associate Dean for Equity and Inclusion

BUILDING A STRONGER COMMUNITY

The Steve Hicks School of Social Work is a place of community. We value every student, faculty and staff individually because of their unique identities, perspectives and talents. At the same time, we recognize that some within our community are not seen or valued as clearly as others. In this edition of IT'S TIME, we highlight two new OADEI initiatives that aim to apply equitable and inclusive best practices to better support and build community for every SHSSW student, faculty and staff.

IT'S BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Take time to reflect on the experiences and contributions of Black social workers.

Visit: <https://www.nabsw.org/page/BlackHistory>
<https://www.nasw-pa.org/page/192/Black-History-Month---Influential-Social-Workers.htm>

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SHSSW ALLIES & ACCOMPLICES INITIATIVE

The SHSSW Allies & Accomplices Initiative is designed to give our community members the opportunity to identify faculty and staff who pledge to use their power and privilege to confront and interrupt oppression. This initiative serves to:

- #1 support students and others who are marginalized through authentic and trusting relationships with an SHSSW ally or accomplice;
- #2 support students and others with privilege in becoming effective allies by working with an SHSSW ally or accomplice;
- #3 grow the presence of allies and accomplices within our school community.

What is an ally?

An ally is someone in a position of privilege or power who takes on struggles of social justice as their own. True allyship is hard work and involves a long-term commitment to learning, activism and taking risks.

What is the difference between an ally and an accomplice?

An ally engages in activism with individuals or groups, whereas an accomplice works to dismantle oppressive structures and systems. The roles are not exclusive and often, allies strive to serve as accomplices.

The SHSSW Allies & Accomplices Directory graphic contains the following text:

SHSSW ALLIES & ACCOMPLICES DIRECTORY

The SHSSW Allies & Accomplices Initiative is designed to give our community members the opportunity to identify faculty and staff who pledge to use their power and privilege to confront and interrupt oppression. This initiative serves to:

- Support students who are marginalized through authentic and trusting relationships with a SHSSW ally or accomplice;
- Support students with privilege in becoming effective allies by working with a SHSSW ally or accomplice;
- Grow the presence of allies and accomplices within our school community.

The individuals listed below have volunteered to serve as SHSSW Allies & Accomplices, a commitment that requires acting intentionally with knowledge, self-awareness and accountability to disrupt oppressive systems. You may learn more about each person by reading below and by clicking on their photo.

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THESE SYMBOLS INDICATE THAT THE PERSON IS FAMILIAR WITH ISSUES RELEVANT TO THE FOLLOWING COMMUNITIES:

- AAPI FOLX
- AGEISM
- ARAB/MENA FOLX
- BLACK FOLX
- DISABILITY
- IMMIGRANTS
- INDIGENOUS PEOPLES/NATIVE AMERICANS
- LATINX FOLX
- LGBTQIA+
- OTHER RACIAL/CULTURAL IDENTITIES
- RELIGIOUS MINORITIES
- SEXISM
- SUBSTANCE USE/ADDICTION RECOVERY

If you would like to connect with a SHSSW Ally or Accomplice, we welcome you to contact them directly or through the [Office of the Associate Dean for Equity and Inclusion](#).

[Click to access Directory](#)

How can I identify the right ally or accomplice for me?

The right ally or accomplice is someone you can build an authentic and trusting relationship with. Because that is a highly personalized decision, the SHSSW Allies & Accomplices Directory describes the social identities and/or social justice commitments of all involved.

The OADEI is also happy to help match you based on your needs.

MENTORSHIP FOR BIPOC MSSW STUDENTS

In light of the systemic barriers faced by non-White students in education settings, mentorship often proves invaluable for BIPOC students navigating academia. "When I was in graduate school, having professors like Dr. [Yolanda] Padilla, who grew up in a border town like me, looked like me and spoke like me, helped me be successful in graduate school," said Director of Student and Community Affairs Ramón Gómez, co-creator of a new mentorship program for MSSW students of color. The program provides a more formal support structure designed specifically for MSSW students of color. The goals of the program are to apply anti-racist mentorship practices to support:

- #1 The transition to graduate school
- #2 Attainment of the MSSW degree
- #3 Professional networking and career paths

Who is involved?

Mentors are faculty, staff, peers, and alumni committed to anti-racist mentorship practices. Mentors work to understand systemic racism, and its impact on BIPOC student experiences, in academia and beyond. Mentors and mentees discuss lived experiences, values, ideas, and goals in support of academic and professional success.

How does it work?

- Mentees are placed into a group co-facilitated by mentors
- Mentors and mentees are matched based on interests
- Mentor groups meet formally three times per semester, and informally as often as desired
- Mentors and mentees have access to an online platform that includes resources and allows for ongoing discussion



OTHER SHSSW SUPPORTS FOR BUILDING COMMUNITY

The new OA DEI initiatives compliment existing programs that aim to build community and offer support to all SHSSW members. Below are some of our other opportunities for students.

1 Our **Student Task Force** is a student-led organization that works to build a genuine culture of equity and inclusion by promoting anti-racist and anti-colonial policies and practices. *Contact Lainey Sevillano.*

2 Our **Students & Scholars Networks** bring together students, faculty and staff with a specific identity for community and support. *For Latinx, contact Mercedes Hernandez; for Black, contact Starla Simmons or Stacey Jordan; for LGBTQ+, contact Sarah Sloan or Tanya Voss.*

3 Our **CARE program** offers short-term counseling and case management to students who need support for non-academic reasons. *Contact Laura Dupuis; https://cmhc.utexas.edu/CARE_dupuis.html*

4 Our **SWEEP** program serves incoming BSW students through mentorship and information sharing. Events are designed to offer students opportunities for professional development and community building, and to increase students' sense of belonging. *Contact Jinane Sounny-Slitine.*

5 Our **Mentor Match** program pairs incoming MSSW students with faculty based on research or practice interests. The mentorship relationship and activities vary and are defined by each mentor-mentee pair. *Contact Andrea Montgomery.*

Contact information available at <https://socialwork.utexas.edu/directory/>

WHAT PROGRAM SHOULD I JOIN?

	For BIPOC students	For students with other marginalized identities	For students with non-marginalized identities
Individual-level Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allies & Accomplices (to connect with an ally/accomplice) SWEEP (BSW only) Mentor Match (MSSW only) CARE services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allies & Accomplices (to connect with an ally/accomplice) SWEEP (BSW only) Mentor Match (MSSW only) CARE services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allies & Accomplices (to learn <u>allyship</u>) SWEEP (BSW only) Mentor Match (MSSW only) CARE services
Group-level Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Black or Latinx Students & Scholars Network POCKET Student Task Force BIPOC Mentor (MSSW only) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LGBTQ+ Students & Scholars Network Student Task Force 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student Task Force



Allyship is important because if we aren't actively working to undo racism, we are complicit in maintaining the status quo.



Social justice is about community, it can never be accomplished by individuals in isolation. We need each other to promote change.