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Margaret Mary Downey, MSW - Jane B. Aron Fellow
Doctoral Program in Social Welfare, University of California-Berkeley
Dissertation: Animating the Social Determinants of Health

Margaret Mary Downey is a PhD candidate in UC Berkeley's School of Social Welfare, where she also completed her MSW. She was a 2016 UC Human Rights Center Fellow. Downey received her BA from Temple University in 2010. Prior to attending graduate school, she practiced as a birth and abortion doula in Philadelphia, PA with the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania (HUP) and Planned Parenthood of Southeastern Pennsylvania, respectively. During this time Downey also served as a research specialist with the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine on several NIH-funded projects in partnership with the Philadelphia Departments of Education and Public Welfare, supporting teachers and community-based clinicians in implementing evidence-based mental health services. Her current research interests are reproductive and maternal-child health and justice and the political economy of health.

Deborah Moon, MSW - Social Work HEALS Fellow
School of Social Welfare, University of Kansas
Dissertation: Preventing Adverse Childhood Experiences through Trauma-Informed Integrated Primary Care: A Realist Evaluation

Deborah Moon is a PhD candidate in the department of Social Welfare at the University of Kansas. She also works as a research associate at the University of Kansas Center for Telemedicine & Telehealth, providing leadership and assistance in planning, designing and conducting program evaluation activities for various nationally funded research projects under the supervision of the center director. Moon completed a masters' degree in music therapy at New York University as well as in social work at the University of Maryland Baltimore. Prior to joining the center, she provided music therapy and clinical mental health services to children, adolescents and adults with various mental health diagnoses. In particular, as a certified trauma-focused cognitive behavioral therapist, Moon provided therapies to children and adults with a history of trauma exposure. She has also taught undergraduate and graduate social work students at the University of Kansas as a lecturer. Moon brings in her clinical as well as research knowledge and skills in behavioral health and childhood trauma to the field to further
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advance the mission of promoting health and well-being of underserved populations through community-engaged program implementation and research.

Alexandra Morshed, MS - Social Work HEALS Fellow
Brown School of Social Work, Washington University of St. Louis
Dissertation: Rolling Back Social Policies - Examination Of Patterns And Predictors Of Obesity Policy Dismantling

Alexandra Morshed is a PhD student at the Brown School of Social at Washington University of St. Louis and an NIH National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute PhD fellow. Her research agenda centers on the intersection of obesity prevention, translation of evidence into policy and practice, and systems science methods. Morshed’s dissertation work examines the patterns and predictors of dismantling of obesity-related policies. She also contributes to several translational science projects, which include research on the dissemination of evidence to policymakers, advocates, and practitioners, as well as efforts to increase translational research capacity among Washington University investigators. Her obesity prevention research deals with policy- and environment-related determinants of healthy eating and physical activity. Morshed earned a Master of Science degree from Wageningen University in the Netherlands and BA from The George Washington University’s Elliott School of International Affairs.

Meghan Romanelli, MSSW - Social Work HEALS Fellow
Silver School of Social Work, New York University
Dissertation: How do LGB help-seekers reach mental health treatment, interact with service providers, and use informal care options? An examination of health care access and mental health outcomes among LGB adolescents and adults

Meghan Romanelli is a PhD candidate at the New York University Silver School of Social Work and a pre-doctoral research scientist at the McSilver Institute for Poverty Policy and Research. As a doctoral student at Silver and researcher at McSilver, her work focuses on health and mental health disparities among LGBTQ communities, and primarily how disparities develop through the mechanism of forgone care or restricted engagement in care. Because many LGBTQ people cannot access formal treatment settings due to social-structural barriers, Romanelli is also interested in the strengths and informal care networks that
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LGBTQ communities harness to attain or maintain wellness. Her prior research has been published in Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research and the American Journal of Orthopsychiatry.

Roger Wong, MSW, MPH - Social Work HEALS Fellow
Brown School of Social Work, Washington University of St. Louis
Dissertation: Lifestyle Behaviors and Racial Differences in Alzheimer’s Disease

Roger Wong is a PhD candidate at the Brown School of Social Work at Washington University in St. Louis. He earned his Bachelor of Science in Neurobiology and Behavior from Cornell University in 2012. For his graduate training, Wong enrolled in the MSW and Master of Public Health (MPH) dual degree program at the Brown School of Social Work and received his degrees in 2015. Shortly after, he was admitted into the PhD program at the Brown School, where he currently teaches MSW and MPH courses on Research Methods and Systematic Reviews. For dissertation research, Wong is investigating the relationship between lifestyle behaviors (e.g. physical activity, substance use, and social contacts) and racial differences in Alzheimer’s disease risk. His dissertation chair is Dr. Nancy Morrow-Howell.

Jon Phillips – Eileen Blackey Fellow
Graduate School of Social Work, University of Denver

Jon Phillips is a PhD candidate at the Graduate School of Social Work at the University of Denver. He has extensive practice and research experience related to the child welfare system. Phillips was first exposed to the child welfare population when he joined the Kempe Children’s Center’s Fostering Healthy Futures Program as a therapeutic mentor for children in foster care. He subsequently worked for child protective services for six years, holding several positions, including caseworker, interagency liaison, and supervisor. After learning first-hand about the inner workings of the child welfare system, Phillips returned to school to earn his PhD so that he may conduct research and develop interventions to help improve its functioning and performance. His current research examines how the quality of collaboration between professionals working on the frontlines of the child welfare system (i.e., interprofessional collaboration) impacts child, family, and professional well-being. For his dissertation, Phillips is conducting a mixed methods study that
explores if and how interprofessional collaboration relates to the safe and timely reunification of children placed in foster care.

Danny Carroll – Consuelo W. Gosnell Scholar
Indiana University

Danny Carroll is a second year MSW student at Indiana University. He is currently working with Kids First Adoption in Indianapolis, Indiana focusing on international adoption at the macro level, specifically the Dominican Republic and Burundi. Carroll hopes to enter a PhD program in Social Work and to continue to work with the Latino population. He has a desire to teach the next generation of social workers as well as research social service management.

Turquoise Devereaux – Consuelo W. Gosnell Scholar
Arizona State University

Turquoise Devereaux is in the accelerated MSW Program focusing on Policy, Administration, and Community Practice at Arizona State University. She is a first-generation descendant of the Salish and Blackfeet tribes and is from the Flathead Indian Reservation in Western Montana. Devereaux graduated with her BSW degree from the University of Montana. She has experience in community organizing through data analysis and dissemination pertaining to Native American student experiences, and education on historical and intergenerational trauma. Since receiving her bachelor’s degree, Devereaux has worked at American Indian Student Services and TRIO- Upward Bound at the University of Montana where she helped Native American, low income and first- generation college and high school students be successful in higher education through advocacy, mentorship and resource referral. She received a Diversity Leadership Award during her undergraduate studies and the Indian Support Staff of the Year Award from Montana Indian Education Association for 2017. Devereaux is interning with Morning Star Leaders and will be working within communities to inform them of the education systems serving their children as well as help create safe learning environments
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for Native American students in an urban setting and a tribal community. She plans on continuing similar macro level social work for her career in order to ensure equal access to education for Native American populations.

Maybeth Gomez - Consuelo W. Gosnell Scholar
University of Chicago

Maybeth Gomez is in the accelerated MSW Program with a specialization in Children and Families at the University of Illinois at Chicago. She is a proud first-generation college graduate, whom was brought to the United States by her paternal uncle at the age of four after her father was murdered in Mexico. Gomez had trouble adjusting to this foreign country grieving, dealing with the separation of her immediate family, and learning a totally different language and culture. She was reunited with her mother and older brother a year later. While Gomez was attending high school and preparing for graduation, she was also working full-time to help her mother financially while also caring for her siblings. Her desire was to go to college, but she thought it was almost impossible. Right before graduation, Gomez was informed that she had been awarded a two-year soccer scholarship to attend college. She graduated with honors with her BSW and a minor in Psychology from Northeastern Illinois University. Gomez plans to apply to PhD programs after gaining practice in the field, while continuing to volunteer in her community offering resources to youth. She is interested in conducting in-depth research regarding social services offered to undocumented people and how communities have responded to the needs of this population. Gomez would like to open a non-profit organization in a low-income community providing services for recently arrived immigrants.

Cindy Hernandez - Consuelo W. Gosnell Scholar
University of California, Berkeley

Cindy Hernandez is an MSW student with a concentration in Strengthening Children, Youth, and Families at the University of California, Berkeley. She is the daughter of an immigrant farm working family and was raised in Hood River Valley, Oregon. Hernandez is a first-generation American child, and the first in her family to attend a university. Her parents are from a small village in Colima, Mexico. She majored in Human Development and Family Sciences and minored in Spanish at Oregon State University. During her undergraduate studies,
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Hernandez completed a six-month internship in Guatemala where she learned about the culture, the child welfare system, and enhanced her Spanish vocabulary. She gained experience as a bilingual family advocate in an early education program, worked as a case manager for a group of at-risk Latino youth in a low-income neighborhood and worked in child protective services. After working in this field, Hernandez recognized the enormous need for Spanish speaking mental health providers. She is interning at Oakland Unity High School and Unity Middle School, where she serves students of color, low-income students, immigrant students, and first-generation students to overcome barriers to fully access educational opportunities. Post-graduation, Hernandez will continue her journey to becoming a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and serving Latinx children experiencing mental health illnesses.

Stephany Mejia - Consuelo W. Gosnell Scholar
University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill

Stephany Mejia is a second-year NSW student at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Social Work. Her first-year placement was with Juntos North Carolina, a nonprofit that supports Latinx high school students and families while they make their way through the U.S education system and prepare for higher education. As part of her end of year gift, Mejia assisted with the publishing of a bilingual book titled “The Roots of Our People: From One World to Another, Juntos!” in which her students expressed their experiences as children of immigrants and Latinx students in North Carolina. This year, she is placed with El Futuro, a local mental health clinic. El Futuro is a bilingual mental health clinic that supports Latino immigrant families through evidence-based interventions. As part of her work, she will work at the walk-in clinic, managing her own caseload and re-engaging the client population. Following graduation, Mejia plans on working towards her LCSW and working with Spanish speaking populations, as well as LGBTQ, immigrant and refugee populations.
Hector Miramontes - Consuelo W. Gosnell Scholar
California State University - San Marcos

Hector Miramontes is a second year MSW student at California State University (CSUSM). A prior gang affiliate, the announcement of his daughter’s birth inspired him to overcome the obstacles he had faced and reform his life. Miramontes endured the impacts of drugs and violence on an impoverished community, much like the youth he has dedicated himself to serving. In 2010, he graduated from CSUSM with his BA in Human Development, with an emphasis in Child Services. Miramontes diligence is highlighted by his accomplishment of making the Deans’ List, while working two part-time jobs and parenting his daughter. For the last nine years he has worked in nonprofit agencies where he has been devoted to providing services for underserved populations through mentorship, counseling and collaborative case management. Currently placed at North County Lifeline, Miramontes extends his passion of promoting the advancement of individuals who are viewed as being “at-risk”, facilitating psycho-educational groups, individual and family therapy, parenting classes, individual and interdisciplinary group supervision, collaborative case management, and a variety of workshops. Upon completion of this degree, his ambition is to become a school social worker.

Nancy Ramirez Hernandez - Consuelo W. Gosnell Scholar
California State University - Los Angeles

Nancy Ramirez Hernandez is a second year MSW student California State University Los Angeles. This year, she will be an intern at the Greater Los Angeles Veterans Affairs, where she will provide services for veterans with addictions, such as alcohol and drugs, as well as mental health treatment. Following graduation, Ramirez plans to continue working with the veteran population.
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**Lillian Saldana - Consuelo W. Gosnell Scholar**  
*California State University - Los Angeles*

Lillian Saldana is currently a second year MSW student at California State University Los Angeles. She obtained her undergraduate degree in Psychology with a minor in Nonviolence studies. Saldana has always been passionate to work with the undocumented population. As an undergraduate she was involved in several grassroots organizing work advocating for undocumented students. As Saldana moves into her second year in the program, she will work as an intern in a hospital in Los Angeles, California. During this time, she will work with a multi-ethnic population in several rotations assisting in discharge planning and other services. After graduation Saldana hopes to continue her work with marginalized communities.

**Samantha Steinmetz - Consuelo W. Gosnell Scholar**  
*University of Chicago*

Samantha Steinmetz is an MSW student in the School of Social Services Administration at the University of Chicago, focusing her studies on youth and adolescent mental health policy. Prior to beginning her studies in Chicago, she worked for six years for the non-profit organization, Simply Smiles, on the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Reservation (CRST) in South Dakota, and in Oaxaca, Mexico. Steinmetz was the volunteer coordinator for the organization and focused on youth development programming on the CRST Reservation. She helped lead youth summer camps and programs for at-risk teenagers. In 2012, Steinmetz graduated from Saint Michael’s College with a dual degree in History and Global Studies, and a minor in Spanish. When she started her graduate program, Samantha also completed a public internship with the Obama Foundation in Chicago. Steinmetz will graduate in June of 2020 with an MSW, and plans to work in Native policy to improve mental health services within reservation communities.
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Sara Zavaleta - Consuelo W. Gosnell Scholar
University of Texas at Austin

Sara Zavaleta 4th year dual masters candidate in the Teresa Lozano Long Institute of Latin American Studies and the Steve Hicks School of Social Work at the University of Texas at Austin and a first-generation Salvadoran. Prior to her graduate studies, she graduated from Vanderbilt University in 2013 with a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and a minor in Spanish. Zavaleta looks forward to providing counseling services in English and Spanish once she is placed in her final field placement for the Spring 2018 semester. After graduation, she plans on working as a clinical social worker with Latinx populations, especially with folks from Central America. Zavaleta is driven to work with individuals and families who have socio-behavioral issues stemming from or exacerbated by trauma regarding immigration, racism, gender-based violence, violence against queer and trans people, and other issues.

Kianna Goodwin – Verne LaMarr Lyons Scholar
University of Wisconsin - Madison

Kianna Goodwin is in the accelerated MSW program at the University of Wisconsin-Madison focusing on mental health. She decided to pursue her degree after several years of working in crisis intervention as an advocate for victims of sexual assault and domestic violence in Madison. Before that, Goodwin lived abroad for three years in Vietnam, India, and China. One of her most memorable experiences was doing research on laws and protections for women and minorities experiencing violence and discrimination with a non-profit that focused on participatory media in Goa, India. Goodwin’s second-year advanced placement will be at Anesis Center for Marriage and Family Therapy. Although she will be working largely with families, she looks forward to the opportunity to incorporate her victim services skills into her work with survivors of trauma in their teen and prisoner re-entry program groups. Goodwin is passionate about contemplative research and practice, harm-reduction, and social justice. She looks forward to integrating these passions into her clinical practice in the future.
Leigh Green - Verne LaMarr Lyons Scholar
Case Western Reserve University

Leigh Green is a candidate for a Masters in Social Service Administration degree at Case Western Reserve University. For 18 years, she was the Director of Social Services for an African American owned and operated Skilled Nursing Facility whose residents were predominantly African American. In 2014, Greene became the director of the Youngstown Office on Minority Health in Ohio. The office gives a considerable amount of time informing, educating and empowering the minority populations to take a more preventative role in their health. Recently she has focused on educating the community on the high rates of black infant mortality in the Greater Youngstown community. Greene is a core team member of the Mahoning Youngstown (MY) Baby 1st Coalition and sits on many of the coalitions sub-committees. She is the co-chair to the Greater Youngstown Community Dialogue on Racism and with members of MY Baby’s 1st Coalition recently released the video “Dads Do Matter” that is targeted to fathers in the at-risk community. After graduation, Greene plans on continuing her work with the Youngstown Office on Minority Health bringing knowledge from course work and field study to enhance the work of the office with a concentrated effort to health equity.

Change Kwesele - Verne LaMarr Lyons Scholar
University of Michigan

Change Kwesele is a dual MSW/PhD student at the University of Michigan where her research will focus on youth holistic wellness, quality of life outcomes and youth civic engagement in the US and sub-Saharan Africa. Before graduate school she completed a White House Internship and U.S. Fulbright Program to Zambia. Change is interested in pursuing a Post MSW fellowship to strengthen her interpersonal practice skills with older youth and college students. At her field placement with Girls Group she has had the opportunity to work with various programs including the organizations Middle School, High School, and the College Prep programs. In these different programs she assists with executing lesson plans, developing relevant activities and events, and engaging with students and their parents. Her goal is to support the work of Girls Group to encourage the young women in their academics, health, and overall well-being.
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Ayanna Robinson - Verne LaMarr Lyons Scholar
New York University

Ayanna Robinson is an Advanced Standing MSW candidate at New York University. She has 2 years of case management experience working for Equitas Health (formerly AIDS Resource Center) in Ohio. The LGBTQ organization focuses on comprehensive care. Ayanna works alongside medical providers and behavioral health specialists forming a team model of care to address the full needs of patients. In addition to concentrated medical care, focus is also placed on HIV/STI prevention and advocacy specifically within the African-American and other marginalized communities. In addition to her studies, she is interning at NYU Langone Hospital in the department of Inpatient Medicine. At NYU Langone, Ayanna will gain experience as a discharge planner, connecting clients to resources following their hospital stay. Following graduation she would like to work in the mental health field and advocate for changing the stigma of seeking mental health specifically in minority communities.