

# VOL. 5, ISSUE 3 | DECEMBER 2025

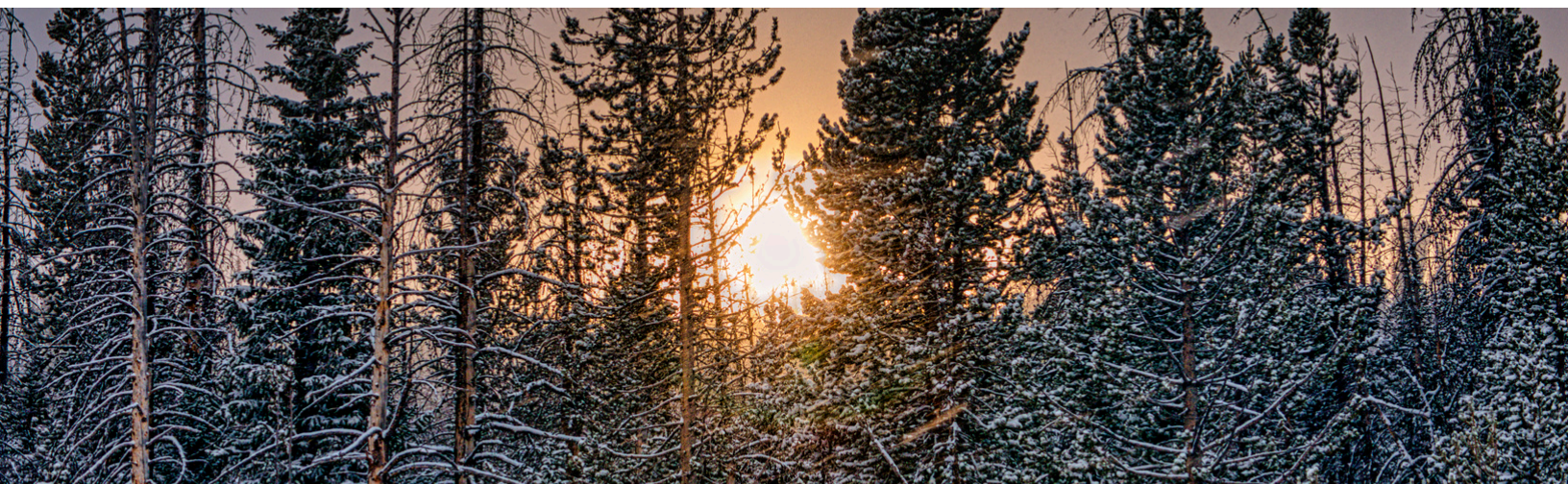
# IN THE LOOP

PhD in Social Welfare, The Graduate School and University Center  
City University of New York

@gcsocialwelfare



<https://socialwelfare.commonscs.cuny.edu>



## Winter 2025

Fall 2025 has been another outstanding semester for our Social Welfare community! We are proud to share that we've had a record number of PhD students presenting at conferences, which speaks to the depth and impact of our research (see [Page 4](#) for some photos). Our students continue to excel through publications, scholarships, and meaningful contributions in and across Social Welfare. I invite everyone to join us for our End-of-Semester Celebration on December 17th, from 6:00–8:30 p.m. We will celebrate our collective achievements, connect with colleagues, and close out the year together. As we look ahead to a new year, let's carry forward the spirit of curiosity, collaboration, and compassion that defines our community. May the coming break bring you rest, inspiration, and renewed energy for the meaningful work we do!

- Barbra Teater, Executive Officer

## Social Welfare Represented at CSWE's APM



## FEATURING:

- DSRG Applications
- Student Achievements
- Conference Recaps:
  - CSWE, EMES, & ARNOVA
- End of Semester Celebration
- SSWR 2026
- Graduate Center Digital Research Institute
- The Virtual Town Square
- Student Spotlight: Cristian Cosey

## DSRG Applications Due January 31, 2026

Round 21 of the Doctoral Student Research Grant (DSRG) is now open for PhD students in their 2nd - 6th year. The grant covers the spending period from June 2026 through May 2027. A new cohort of awardees will be selected by the Social Welfare Program in February 2026. Guidelines are [here](#). Applicants can submit a budget between \$250 - \$1500.



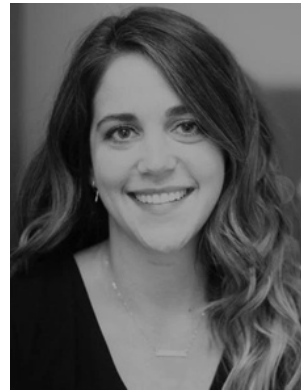
# Student Achievements: October & November



**Evelyn Bautista-Miller** presented a workshop, "The Power of Story: Supporting Immigrant Youth Mental Health Through Literature" at the 2025 NYSSWEA 58th Annual Conference along with Dr. Cindy Bautista-Thomas (CUNY Graduate - PhD in Urban Education).

**Becca Cadoff** published an article, co-authored with Dr. Mayra Lopez-Humphreys (Silberman School of Social Work at Hunter College) and Dr. Anna Ortega-Williams (Silberman School of Social Work at Hunter College):

Lopez-Humphreys, M., Cadoff, B., & Ortega-Williams, A. (2025). Unearthing Belonging: A Multifaceted Exploration of Community Resilience and Spatial Justice Through Participatory Action Research. *Journal of Progressive Human Services*, 1-22. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10428232.2025.2567742>



**Mickey Correa**, LCSW, M.Div., served as panelist at the Spiritually Integrated Psychotherapy retreat titled "Weaving Our Roots: Deepening Connection with Self, Colleagues, and Clients" on September 27 in Decatur, Georgia.

Mickey also presented a workshop on Mental Health at the Facing the Future Conference in Los Angeles, where cross-cultural, cross-racial faith leaders gathered.



**Cristian Cosey** and **Juan Diaz** published an article, co-authored with Dr. Seon Mi Kim (Silberman School of Social Work at Hunter College) and Dr. Rong Zhao (Silberman School of Social Work at Hunter College):

Kim, S. M., Cosey, C., Diaz, J., & Zhao, R. (2025). Precarious work, intersectionality, and worker cooperatives: rethinking work and life balance. *Community, Work & Family*, 1-23. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13668803.2025.2584094>



## Record-setting 12 students presenting at CSWE APM 2025

Evelyn Bautista-Miller, Shermira Busby, Michael Clements, Kristen Csaby, Acanthus N. Fairley, Weldon Lam, Kathleen McKenna, Patrick Schelle, Carla Silva, Haein Son, Shola Thompson, and Ian G. Williams all had presentations at the 71<sup>st</sup> Council on Social Work Education Annual Program Meeting in Denver this October. It's so many we don't have space to list all the details for each presentation here. Check out some photos of fall conferences on [Page 4](#), and keep your eyes peeled on our [CUNY Academic Commons site](#) for an in-development archive of student conference presentations.

# Student Achievements: October & November

**Bobbie L. Justin** published two book chapters; one solo-author and one with Dr. Sabretta G. Alford (PhD Program in Social Welfare alumna):

Watkins, B. L. (2025). International community development. In H. McLaughlin & B. Teater (Eds.), *Research handbook on social work and societies* (pp. 279–291). Edward Elgar Publishing.

Alford, S. G., and Watkins, B. L. (2025). Social work practice with older adults. In H. McLaughlin & B. Teater (Eds.), *Research handbook on social work and societies* (pp. 254–265). Edward Elgar Publishing.

Bobbie was also awarded the Association for Gerontology Education in Social Work (AGESW) and Gerontological Society of America (GSA) Pre-dissertation Fellowship for her project: “Improving hospital-based care for older adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).” <https://agesw.org/awardees>



**Ashleigh Washington** published the following essay, based on her dissertation research:

Washington, A. (2025). Biomedical Surveillance in the Child Welfare System. Just Tech. Social Science Research Council.  
<https://just-tech.ssrc.org/articles/biomedical-surveillance-in-the-child-welfare-system>

Ashleigh will present her dissertation, which she successfully defended this October, at SSWR 2026 in Washington, DC.



**Ian G. Williams** published the following article, the introduction to a special issue he guest edited along with fellow Social Work Innovation Network leaders Dr. Marissa Kaloga (University of Auckland), Dr. Monica Nandan (Kennesaw State University) and Dr. James M. Mandiberg (Silberman School of Social Work at Hunter College & PhD Program in Social Welfare at the CUNY Graduate Center):

Kaloga, M., Nandan, M., Mandiberg, J. M., & Williams, I. G. (2025). Social Innovation, Entrepreneurship, and Enterprise in Social Work and Human Services: Recasting the Historical Evolution of a Global Phenomenon. *Human Service Organizations: Management, Leadership & Governance*, 49(5), 429–450. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23303131.2025.2567086>

Ian gave the following conference presentations:

Mandiberg, J.M., and Williams, I.G. (2025, November 5). *Reframing Service Users As Economic Agents: Lessons from Art Ateliers and Peer-Led Research*. 10th EMES International Research Conference on Social Enterprise. [Conference presentation]. Utrecht and Rotterdam, Netherlands.

Muhlbauer, Z, Williams, I.G., Zhang, H., Pan, S., and Najm, H. (2025, October 31). *Read-Write-Prompt: A Focused-Inquiry Group Model for AI Literacy and its Discontents*. Open Education Conference 2025. [Conference presentation]. Denver, CO







## The Council on Social Work Education 71st Annual Program Meeting in Denver, CO



## EMES International Research Network 10th biennial conference in Rotterdam and Utrecht, Netherlands



## The Association For Research On Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Associations (ARNOVA) 53rd Annual Conference in Indianapolis, IN





SSWR 2026 Annual Conference

# Leading for Transformative Change: Aligning Social Work Science with Policy and Practice

January 14-18, 2026

Washington, DC, USA

SSWR  
Celebrates  
**30<sup>th</sup>**  
Annual Conference

**Congratulations to our students  
presenting at #SSWR2026!**



*Vanassa Bishop*



*Jamie Borgan*



*Cristian Cozey*



*Acanthys N.  
Fairley*



*Haein  
Gon*



*Ashleigh  
Washington*



*Ian G.  
Williams*

View the full schedule online at [sswr.org/2026-conference-home](https://sswr.org/2026-conference-home)

PH.D. PROGRAM

**SOCIAL WELFARE**

[gc.cuny.edu/socialwelfare](https://gc.cuny.edu/socialwelfare)

**GRADUATE CENTER**



**SSWR**

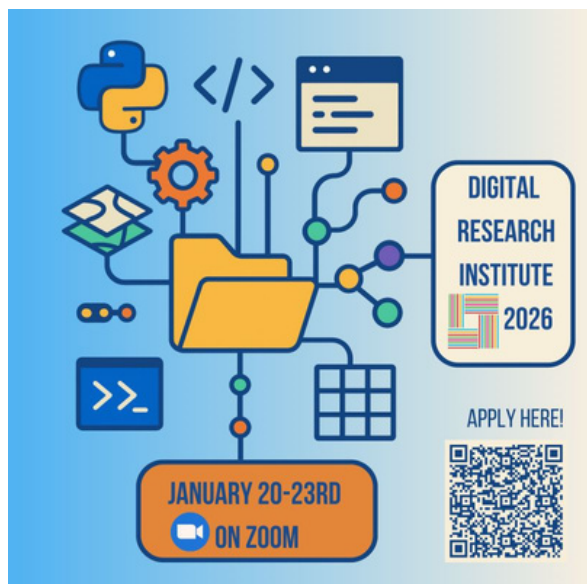
Society for Social Work and Research



@gcsocialwelfare







Want to learn more about digital research skills?

The Graduate Center Digital Research Institute will be held from 9am-1pm on January 20-23, 2026. Led by doctoral student fellows with GC Digital Initiatives, this program will offer an overview of digital research skills including command line instructions, data literacies & ethics, HTML/CSS, Intro to Python, Text Analysis, & Mapping. Students from all disciplines and programs are welcome and encouraged to participate.

Space is limited.

Applications are due by December 8, 2026.

Learn more and apply at [gcdri.commonsgc.cuny.edu](https://gcdri.commonsgc.cuny.edu)

## The Virtual Town Square

Ian G. Williams, Social Media Fellow

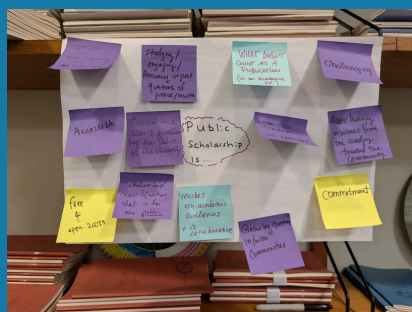
Fall 2025 was busy! Enjoy these recaps of events on and around campus that we covered on [our social media](#).

**October 27<sup>th</sup>-November 6<sup>th</sup>:** The CUNY Public Interest Technology (PIT) Lab and BetaNYC hosted the [NYC PIT Pop-Up](#) in The Oculus World Trade Center, livestreaming each day's events on Twitch. Ian G. Williams helped host the first three days of the pop-up. The full video archive will be up on YouTube soon; in the meantime, check out [the sizzle reel](#).



**October 29<sup>th</sup>:** The PhD Program in Social Welfare hosted a conversation with faculty member and alumnus **Dr. Benjamin H. Shepard** about his latest book, *On Activism, Friendships, and Fighting: Oral Histories, Strategy, and Conflict*. The discussion ranged from his time as a student at The GC, inspiration for the book as a follow-up to earlier work, experiences of conflict and repair within activist communities, writing habits, and academic traditions of oral history. We had a full house and a very engaged audience.

**November 12<sup>th</sup>:** The Graduate Center hosted an expert panel about the outcome of NYC's Mayoral election (featuring Social Welfare alumna and City Council Member Dr. Nantasha Williams). The video of the expert panel is up on [The Graduate Center's YouTube account](#).



**November 13<sup>th</sup>:** The Early Research Initiative and Public Scholarship Practice Space (PS2) hosted a sip'n chat with Summer 2025 Public Research Fellows, including PhD Program in Social Welfare Students Jaclyn Reyes and Ian G. Williams. You can read about everyone's summer research projects at the ERI/PS2 blog, [Distributaries](#). [The 2026 cohort application is now open, and due February 10, 2026.](#)

In case you missed it, The Graduate Center released a short video of Social Welfare alumna Dr. Melva Miller's journey. [Watch it here](#).



# Student Spotlight: Cristian Cosey

## Let's Have a Conversation with Cristian!



### Why did you apply to the PhD in Social Welfare?

*I was interested in finding a program that would help me better understand how to create meaningful change in people's lives. I believe Social Welfare offers holistic training that centers the individual while maintaining a clear perspective on the institutions and policies that shape the assistance they receive. Although transitioning from accounting and finance to Social Welfare has been a significant shift, I have come to see how the two fields complement each other.*

### What has been your favorite course so far as a student? Why?

*Social Welfare Policy and Planning II with Dr. Bryan Warde was a particularly impactful course. The content was interesting, but more*

*importantly, Dr. Warde is someone who is not afraid to disrupt the "echo chamber" and challenge us to think in the opposite direction. When dealing with policy, it is important to accept that we will not get everything we want, but that does not mean we cannot win anything at all. Dr. Warde helped us understand this through dialogue and debate.*

### What do you want to do after you graduate?

*I am still not sure. When I started the program, my plan was to work in a high-level role at a large nonprofit, where I could help create meaningful change. However, I am now tempted to continue on the academic path.*

### What's something that people would be surprised to know about you?

*For anyone who has not spent more than 5 minutes with me, it may be surprising to learn that I own a collection of more than 200 board games, have run 2 marathons, and have seen over 150 Broadway shows.*

### What is the focus of your research?

*Currently, I am studying how executive orders impact nonprofits, with a focus on their financial capacity and the ways these organizations adjust to policy changes.*

### What are you currently reading, watching or listening to?

*Currently, I am watching Stranger Things, reading Co-operative Enterprise in Comparative Perspective by Dr. Jason Spicer, and listening to the Today, Explained podcast.*

### What's something we should ask you? What's your answer?

*I think a good question would be: What is some of the best advice I have received about the PhD? The answer is to stay focused. I have heard this from older cohorts and faculty. It is tempting to study many different things, but that only makes it harder to choose a dissertation topic. It is best to find something you are genuinely passionate about and develop it enough to complete your degree. Once you earn the degree, you can study anything you want.*