Our Mission

The legislature declares that, in order to safeguard the public health, safety, and welfare of the people of this state against unauthorized, unqualified and improper practice of social work, it is necessary that a proper regulatory authority be established and adequately provided for.

News

Louisiana State Board of Social Work Examiners

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From The Chair

Dr. Hyacinth McKee LCSW-BACS, ACSW Chair, LABSWE

Greetings, I wish to first start this letter by taking a moment to acknowledge the land that we all stand, work, and live on as land that first belonged to Indigenous People. Fully acknowledging their lives and the sacrifices that they endured during times of extreme colonization as a place to begin this letter is of importance. In this great state of Louisiana, we acknowledge Opelousas, Choctaw, Chawasha, Chitimacha, Houma, Adai, Natchez, Acolapissa, Caddo, Tioux, Tunica-Biloxi, Cherokee, Natchitoches, and many other indigenous people who lived on this land and whose descendants continue to live in our state. This action is not to minimize any other group or people who have endured oppression or colonization it is just taking a moment to acknowledge those, as history tells us, who occupied this land we now call Louisiana, first. With this, as social workers, we stand firmly on our core values of service, social justice, integrity, competence, building human relationships and dignity and it starts with acknowledgement. In recent times, within the last two years, as social workers, regardless of our practice area, we firmly held true to our core values as we have endured and witnessed our communities experience a pandemic, inequities, biases, injustices, and disparities impacting race, ethnicity, gender, identity, orientation, sex, religion, age, abilities and shifts in our lifestyles. As chair, I invite each of you to continue to embrace the values of social work, by introducing courtesy in your speech and actions to others. By remembering the reason and decision that led you to choose this profession. By extending grace and work to develop solutions to ensure that the social work profession is the rule and not the exception that continues to evolve in our global society. This in no way suggests that rules should not be challenged as we know that as change agents this is what we do, as social workers in ensuring equity and justice in systems. However, it is my intention that by extending this invitation, it will serve as a catalyst to reimagine our mindsets to embrace collectiveness, collaboration, community, openness, and systems change.

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Welcome Trinity George

Trinity George was appointed by the governor July 22, 2022, to serve as the RSW member of the Board.

Trinity is the Early Childhood Guide Facilitator for the Rapides Parish School Board, where he manages the Child Care Assistance Program and recruits eligible families to apply for publicly funded seats in licensed care centers. Prior to accepting this role, he worked in child welfare, mental health, and at a local nonprofit organization; where he supervised and managed the Wraparound Program to provide intense and comprehensive home-based services with the goal of diverting youth from residential placement in child serving systems.

Trinity served on the DCFS Internal Advisory Board Committee at the invitation of the agency secretary, Marketa Garner Walters. While employed with the Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services, he advocated for and voiced the needs of his clients, worked with stakeholders to serve children and families, while also promoting the need for social justice and equality for all families served. Additionally, Trinity serves on the executive board of Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG - Alexandria) in the role of Advocacy Coordinator; while also continuing to volunteer at Central Louisiana Aids Support Services (CLASS), a nonprofit organization that helps those who have been infected and affected with HIV; to improve their quality of life.

Trinity graduated from Stephen F. Austin State University in 2018, with a Master of Social Work degree, and from Grambling State University with a Master of Science in Criminal Justice degree, in 2013. He earned a Bachelor of Art in Political Science degree, a Bachelor of General Studies with a Concentration in Social Sciences degree in 2011, and an Associate of General Studies degree in 2008, from Northwestern State University. Trinity is a veteran and served his state and its citizens in the Louisiana Army National Guard for eight years. He proudly served the nation abroad in Support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2010. Trinity is a former foster child who has become a certified foster/adoptive parent. He lives in Pineville, LA.

STAFF HIGHLIGHT

ACT No. 103 of the 2022 Regular Legislative Session sets forth new requirements that aim to ensure consistent administration of the Americans with Disabilities Act across all executive branch as follows:

- Mandatory Agency Policy Requirements • Mandatory Training Requirements
- Mandatory Annual Reporting • State As a Model Employer

We like to extend a huge thank you to Regina Dewitt, our Administrative Assistant for her 20 years of dedication to the board. Regina has volunteered to serve as the ADA Coordinator for our office. We appreciate her for taking on this role and look forward to working closely with her as we work to ensure compliance with ADA standards.

We extend well wishes to Maddy Andras and Kelly Sicard on their next journey in their career. Thank you both for your service to the board.

We warmly welcome Sara Banks and Seleana LaChapelle as part of the board’s staff. Sara is filling the position of Licensing Analyst 1 and will oversee the licensing process from the time someone applies for a license to the time they are issued the license. Seleana has accepted the Administrative Coordinator 3 position. She will be the friendly face you see when visiting the board office and will oversee many of the administrative duties necessary to run the board office.
MEET The Board Members

We introduce two of our newly elected executive board members.

Dr. Jaime Barney,
DSW, LCSW-BACS Vice Chairperson

Dr. Jamie Barney is the Vice President of Behavioral Health at Open Health Care Clinic, a Federally Qualified Health Center in Baton Rouge, LA. In this role, she oversees the provision of mental health services to persons who reside in underserved areas. She is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker – Board Approved Clinical Supervisor. Dr. Barney serves on the Louisiana State Board of Social Work Examiners as the Secretary/Treasurer. She obtained her Doctor of Social Work degree from Tulane University in New Orleans where she received honors through the Outstanding Student Achievement Award. She obtained a Master of Social Work degree from Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge. She also obtained the Bachelor of Arts degree majoring in sociology and minoring in psychology at Louisiana State University.

Dr. Barney has experience providing social services as a foster care worker with Department of Children and Family Services, as the Director of Social Services in a nursing facility, a case manager and a counselor in a medical clinic for people living with HIV, and a Director of Social Services managing the case management, housing, and behavioral health staff. Her passion lies in policy evaluation, program development and advocacy for high quality and culturally competent services, particularly for persons living with HIV. She published an article in the Social Work in Public Health Journal, “Louisiana’s Intentional Exposure to HIV Policy: The Social Construction of Target Populations” (2020). She is originally from Plaquemine, LA and graduated from Plaquemine High School.

Bora Sunseri,
LCSW-BACS Secretary/Treasurer

Bora Sunseri has been a Licensed Clinical Social Worker for over 28 years and has over 30 years of service as a State of Louisiana employee. She has served in various Child Welfare field positions as well as management and administrative roles with the Department of Children & Family Services (DCFS). Bora has also served as a Critical Incident Stress Management/Debriefing (CISM/CISD) facilitator for over 20 years. Bora is currently the Child Support Enforcement Modernization Project Director and has a part-time private practice working with individuals and couples. Her clinical experiences also include working with clients at the Department of Corrections and the US Air Force. She has been a Board Approved Clinical Supervisor (LCSW-BACS) for over 22 years. Bora has also served in various capacities with the Association of Social Work Boards’ (ASWB) clinical exam process for over 12 years as a passing score panel member, clinical exam item writer, clinical exam committee member, clinical exam committee chair, ad hoc exam committee chair, and all levels of exams’ forms reviewer for North American jurisdictional board exams, including all levels of LABSWE exams.
BOARD COMMITTEE OPENINGS
ATTENTION SOCIAL WORKERS

Policy Ad Hoc Committee
LABSWE has formed an ad hoc committee to focus on the policies and procedures of LABSWE. The Policies and Procedures Ad Hoc Committee will provide specific advice and suggestions to the LABSWE regarding a comprehensive text that details every aspect of company policy, and the procedures for following those policies.

In accordance with the Louisiana’s Open Meetings Law, all meetings will be conducted face to face and available for the public to attend virtually. Meetings will be held at the LABSWE Office, 18550 Highland Road, Suite B, Baton Rouge, LA 70809. Meetings will be held each Thursday evening prior to the scheduled board meetings at 5pm. It is anticipated that all committee members will be required to spend approximately five hours of time outside of meetings to review and write drafts of policies and procedures. Mileage for travel will be reimbursed.

All persons who have insight to offer to this process and are interested in applying should send a resume to: socialwork@labswe.org before 4pm on October 31, 2022. Subject Line: POLICY COMMITTEE

Rules Committee
The Rules Committee is responsible for proposing rules changes to the Board for promulgation. The Committee receives referrals from the Board and prepares drafts of proposed rules for Board consideration. The Committee generally meets quarterly for about 2-3 hours in person at the Board office in Baton Rouge, but the meetings may be longer and more frequent based upon business before the committee. Pursuant to the Louisiana Open Meetings Law, all meetings must be in person and open to the public. Mileage for travel will be reimbursed. All who are interested in serving on the Rules committee, please submit an email of interest to: socialwork@labswe.org before 4 pm on October 31, 2022. SUBJECT LINE: RULES COMMITTEE

ASWB - Acknowledgement of the release of pass/fail test data of Louisiana’s Social Workers
Considering the recent release of the pass/fail test data of Louisiana’s Social Workers and the disparities in the rates reported for persons of color, age, ethnicity, and sex, as well as the lack of data to accurately reflect persons with disabilities, LABSWE encourages our social workers to remain informed and visit the Association of Social Work Board website, www.aswb.org where “A Call to Action” has been initiated. The website outlines the following key areas for involvement inclusive of links to access more information on the following:

- Volunteer to participate in a community conversation
- Share your thoughts via aswb.org
- Send a question to exam@aswb.org
- Learn more about how ASWB measures competence fairly
- Learn more about exams for the future of social work
- Access free exam resources for social work educators

We continue to remain actively engaged and involved in this matter, serving as the regulatory board for social workers in Louisiana.

La. R.S. 37:2704 mandates the following qualifications for board members:

- Citizen of the United States
- Resident of the State of Louisiana
- Hold a current and valid social work credential
- Must have three (3) years of social work experience

If you are interested in serving on the Board, you should submit a letter stating your interest, along with a current resume to the Executive Director of the Louisiana Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers by email at astehr.naswla@socialworkers.org.

The submission deadline for the position expires at the close of business on October 31st.

FAQs about serving on the Board:

What is the time commitment for serving?
An appointment to the Board is made by the governor for three consecutive years. Meetings are held approximately every 5 weeks on a Friday at the board office in Baton Rouge. Meetings begin at 8:30 a.m. and carry-over to Saturday, if necessary. Other examples of board activities include, presenting at the NASW-LA Annual Conference and serving on committees.

Are board members paid?
Board members are reimbursed for necessary expenses incurred on board business. For example, mileage driven to and from a meeting is reimbursed. We also reserve a hotel room for board members that are required to travel a significant distance to meetings. We provide breakfast and lunch at the meeting. If you need to stay overnight, dinner can be reimbursed up to the amount allowed by the state’s travel guidelines.

If you have any questions concerning the board’s activities or the time commitment required of board members, please email the board’s Administrator, Emily DeAngelo at edeangelo@labswe.org.

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FROM THE CHAIR
As we move forward in this invitation to reimagine our mindsets, our Board extends gratitude to Ada Nelson, RSW for her years of expertise, commitment, and dedication to the social work profession. Ms. Nelson served on the board for three years as the board’s subject matter expert in substance use and addiction. We thank her for her contribution and her years of service. Ms. Nelson will be missed and always remembered for her work on this board. We look forward to witnessing her future work in our profession. We welcome Trinity George, RSW as a new Board member who has years of service in child welfare, veteran affairs, and policy. We are confident that the board will continue to expand to ensure diversity and inclusion in its composition embracing diverse expertise, practice, and perspectives.

Finally, it is with humility and gratitude that I express in writing this opportunity to serve as the Chairperson of the Louisiana State Board of Social Workers. My goal is to continue to work by embracing a mindset of humility, solution, agency, and integrity. Thank you for your dedication and service to the public. I wish each of you a fall season of Wellness, Gratitude, and Community.
Did You Know?

✓ The continuing education collection period is September 1 – August 31.

✓ The requirement of in-person supervision and continuing education is waived until August 31, 2023.

✓ The website includes a page for supervision that includes links to forms, instructions, and answers to frequently asked questions. https://www.labswe.org/supervision/

✓ The website includes a page for frequently asked questions related to renewal. https://www.labswe.org/renewal-information/

✓ Reporting an arrest to the Board is required within 7 days of the arrest - Rule 117(E) A social worker shall notify the Louisiana state Board of Social Work Examiners within seven business days of any arrests or charges, to include DWI and DUI, regardless of final disposition. Minor traffic offenses such as speeding and parking tickets do not need to be reported.

✓ Rule 503(C) …A new Supervision Contract shall be submitted by the supervisee within 60 days of the change when the supervisee changes employment, changes supervisor and/or there is a change in the agency supervisor…

✓ CSWs and LMSWs, not under BACS supervision, must be supervised by a LCSW in accordance with Rule 505 if they are providing clinical social work services.

✓ Rule 119(E) Mailing Address. A social worker shall file a change of address with the board within 15 business days.

✓ Rule 311(G) It is the social workers responsibility to keep the board informed of his/her current mailing address.

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