

CRISP Social Work Day on the Hill Award Nominees
Nominator Comments

Congressional Social Worker of the Year

Rep. Karen Bass (D-CA-37)

Rep. Bass is the current Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus and serves on the House Committee on Foreign Affairs where she is Chair of the Subcommittee of Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights and International Organizations. A MSW graduate of the Suzanne Dworak Peck School of Social Work at the University of Southern California, she was the co-founder of the bipartisan Congressional Caucus on Foster Youth.

Rep. Sylvia Garcia (D-TX-29)

In her first term in Congress, Rep. Garcia has already made her mark. She has a long history as an elected official in Texas; her State Senate office was a safe and supportive space for members of marginalized groups speaking up in vulnerable, intimidating legislative situations. As one of the first 2 Latinas to represent Texas in Congress, she has already sponsored 12 pieces of legislation in her first term. Garcia is a social worker and provided critical testimony in Nov. 2019 in support of the Workplace Violence Prevention for Health Care and Social Services Workers Act (H.R. 1309). She was just 1 of 7 members of Congress selected to serve as an impeachment manager.

Rep. Barbara Lee (D-CA-13)

As the only African American female in leadership in the Democratic Caucus, Congresswoman Lee has set an outstanding example for women in Congress and the broader society. She has provided leadership and support to the social work profession as Chair of the Congressional Social Work Caucus.

Senator Kyrsten Sinema (D-Arizona)

Senator Sinema not only embodies social work values but has courageously stood for issues impacting community members who are underserved and oppressed like the LGBTQ community and immigrants. She fiercely stands up against the status quo and understand the value of social workers by hiring social workers.

Congressional Social Work Staffer

Michael Collins

As the longtime Chief of Staff for iconic Congressman John Lewis, Michael Collins has been a steady influence for the office for more than two decades. A graduate of Boston College School of Social Work with an MBA from the Goizueta Business School at Emory University, he is a great example of political social work.

Jacqueline Fonseca-Roman

Jacqueline Fonseca-Roman is the Community Liaison for Military and Veterans Affairs for U.S. Senator Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) engaging with veterans and their families to help advocate for their needs. A veteran of the U.S. Marines, Jacqueline provides the senator with recommendations on policy matters related to veterans' issues and maintain relationships with businesses, governments, and community organizations. She served in Iraq and in active duty from 2005 to 2009 and completed her MSW at University of Connecticut School of Social Work in 2014.

Emma Mehrabi

Emma Mehrabi is the Legislative Director for Congresswoman Barbara Lee (D-CA-13) responsible for all legislation emanating from the office. She began her career on the Hill as an intern while earning her MSW from Virginia Community Wealth University School of Social Work. Emma also oversees the Congressional Social Work Caucus among other responsibilities and works closely with social work organization to facilitate their access to Congress.

Outstanding Individual in Academia

Margaret Clancy

Margaret Clancy is the Policy Director and College Savings Director at the Center for Social Development where she has led the research testing, policy design, and U.S. policy impacts of universal child development account (CDA) policy. She regularly advises State Treasurers and testifies, leading to universal CDA policies in several states (ME, RI, NV, PA, CA, IL). CA and IL were enacted in 2019. She advised the White House office of the Vice President and Council of Economic Advisors. As a result of this policy work, CDAs have been "put on the table" with notable federal policy progress in the U.S. She also directly advised in the design of universal CDAs implemented in Israel in 2017, which now include all citizen Israeli children plus Palestinian children in East Jerusalem. Her policy design work has also informed CDA policies in Taiwan and Korea.

Angelique Day

Dr. Angelique Day is an Associate Professor at the University of Washington where she focuses much of her research on foster care youth. She was awarded a year-long Congressional Fellowship by the Society for Research on Child Development and the American Association for the Advancement of Science which she completed in the office of Congressman Danny K. Davis. In February 2019, Dr. Day organized and moderated a briefing on the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) where she brought together tribal leaders and policymakers to explore child welfare matters involving Indian children.

Jennifer Greenfield

Dr. Greenfield is an Associate Professor at the University of Denver Graduate School of Social Work. She leads scholarship in paid family leave and family economic security. Her scholarly work has positioned her to be intensely involved in the state FAMLI Act, garnering national attention. She disseminates her work to advocates, journalists, and legislators through social media, academic journals, media appearances, op-eds, and legislative testimony. She integrates this work into her teaching, winning awards for excellence and inspiring students to pursue social policy careers.

Anthony Hill

Dr. Anthony Hill, an Associate Professor at Winthrop University, is the Chair of the Department of Social Work and Graduate Program Director. Dr. Hill goes above and beyond his call of duties. He has become a mentor to many of the students he has taught. His teachings have had a multiplier effect on the community as many of his students have become fierce advocates. Dr.

Hill represents the social work profession to the highest standards, ethically and with care and compassion.

Michael Lindsey

Michael Lindsey, PhD, MSW is Professor and Director of the McSilver Institute for Poverty Policy and Research at the New York University Silver School of Social Work. He recently chaired a Congressional Black Caucus Taskforce on Black Youth Suicide and Mental Health. Access the report here: <https://mcsilver.nyu.edu/cbc-report-release/>

Michael Sherraden

Dr. Michael Sherraden is the George Warren Brown Distinguished University Professor and the founding Director of the Center for Social Development at the Brown School of Social Work at Washington University in St. Louis. Dr. Sherraden has made incredible contributions to social welfare policy through his work with Individual Development Accounts and Child Development Accounts both nationally and internationally. He is the heart and soul of the 12 Grand Challenges for Social Work initiative.

Student of the Year

Yasmin Campos-Mendez

As a Columbia University School of Social Work Fisher Cummings Policy Fellow, Yasmin Campos-Mendez has been doing outstanding work in her field placement with the National Network to End Domestic Violence. In addition, she has been a driving force for the CRISP Student Advocacy Day Student Leadership Team, taking on multiple leadership roles within the team. She has been a strong voice for students with disabilities and other considerations to ensure full inclusivity for the day on the Hill. Yasmin is an active member of the Columbia University School of Social Work policy caucus.

Donisha Cotrone

A lecture about social work and political justice on Donisha's first day as a student at the University of Houston Graduate College of Social Work led to a passion for voting rights policy. Within two weeks, she had become "deputized" to register voters in five counties (a HUGE challenge in Texas). She worked with multiple organizations to register voters, then applied for a legislative internship where she developed an expertise in election policy. She is now a student AND district staff for a state representative who she is helping to develop a voting rights legislative agenda.

Emily Hopkins

A student at the University of Michigan School of Social Work has racked up many accomplishments. To name a few, she joined the CRISP Student Leadership Team to support Student Advocacy Day on the Hill, conducted a state by state analysis of legislation to inform a bill being developed in Michigan aimed at protecting vulnerable children, serves as Research Director for a county commission campaign, and was selected as a finalist for the Presidential Management Fellowship Program out of more than 4,000 applicants nationwide.

Nora Simmons

Nora Simmons is a recent MSW MPH graduate from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. She is currently applying her macro social work training to a prestigious series of fellowships on Capitol Hill; one in the office of Congressman Chris Pappas (D-NH-1) and the other on the Senate Finance Committee's Human Services portfolio. Nora completed her MSW MPH field placement at the NASW National office under Policy Director Sarah Butts.

Michelle Webb

Michelle Web is a DSW student at the Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work at the University of Southern California who clearly understands the dynamic relationship between national advocacy and progress on the ground to improve the mental health and wellbeing of students from K-12. She has been extremely effective in her Hill advocacy and she also has been very effective in generating grants for her local work. Clearly, the best student I taught in 2019!

Outstanding Individual in Government

Cicely Burrows-McEwain

Cicely Burrows-McEwain is an outstanding policy and programs social worker at SAMHSA. She works as the Military and Veterans Affairs Liaison Public Health Analyst and has created several innovative initiatives to serve communities serving military, veterans and their families. She is also an adjunct professor at a school of social work.

Kylie McNaught

Kylie is Legislative Director for a freshman state representative in Texas who won in a highly competitive district. She led his policy agenda during Texas' 2019 legislative session and has remained in this position while also taking on campaign leadership positions with this state rep and with another candidate running in a nationally targeted special election runoff. She consistently promotes policies and candidates that seek to promote social and economic justice in Texas.

Jody Olsen

Dr. Judy Olsen was sworn in as the 20th Director of the Peace Corps on March 30, 2018 after a long and distinguished career with the agency that began as volunteer—serving in Tunisia from 1966-1968. She served as Country Director in Togo from 1979-1981; Regional Director in North Africa, Near East Asia, and the Pacific from 1981-1984; Chief of Staff from 2002-2009; and Acting Director in 2009. She received her MSW and PhD in human development from the University of Maryland, Baltimore.

Dr. Carla Thornton

Dr. Carla Thornton completed her DSW at the Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social at the University of Southern California while campaigning for city council in Moreno Valley, California and securing a faculty position at California Baptist University in Riverside, CA. Within one year of her transition to the faculty, Dr. Thornton developed the first Social Work in Political Office course and published a chapter on political social work. She is a force, emerging in the field to carry the next generation of social work professionals.

Outstanding Individual in Business or Philanthropy

Karina Jimenez Lewis

Karina Jimenez Lewis is a Senior Policy Associate at the Annie E. Casey Foundation, a national philanthropic organization devoted to developing brighter futures for children at risk of poor educations, economic, social and health outcomes. A first-generation American with oral, reading, and written fluency in Spanish, Ms. Lewis brings her lived-experience perspectives into race, ethnicity and equity issues and their implications for child and family public policy within the larger context of changing demographics in the United States. She earned a MA degree in Social Work with a focus on Policy Practice at the University of Connecticut School of Social Work after completing her undergraduate studies at Elms College in Massachusetts.

Carla Meyers and Vin Ryan

Carla Meyers, a social worker, and her husband Vin Ryan are trustees of the Schooner Foundation which supports organizations that focus on civil rights, peace, and security. The couple demonstrated their commitment to the social work profession and solving societal problems through their support that help create the Center for Innovation in Social Work and Health at Boston University.