



# 2022-2023 Year in Review



**FACTOR-INWENTASH**  
FACULTY OF SOCIAL WORK  
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

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# Dean's message

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On January 1, 2023, after a year as Interim Dean, I was officially appointed Dean of the Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work for a five-year term. I was tremendously excited to step into leadership at a school of social work that means so much to me.

Over the past year, my focus has included laying the vital groundwork needed for our community to work together to further strengthen social work education and research. Efforts have included hiring new staff; stewarding faculty promotions; taking action to infuse equity, diversity and inclusion into our recruitment processes and curriculum; connecting with our stakeholders in the community; and strengthening support for our students with help from our generous alumni and donors.

Throughout all of this, we have also increased efforts to build public awareness of the important work that social workers do and their growing role as leaders in addressing the challenges that impact health and well-being.

The Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work has earned a top international ranking based on research that informs innovations in practice and policy; exceptional learning experiences; and important service to the profession, our communities, and the world. Over the past decade, the core elements of FIFSW's 2012-2022 strategic plan – to mobilize knowledge; promote wellbeing



and equity; foster innovative learning; and collaborate locally, nationally and globally – have become embedded in everything that we do. In the coming year, FIFSW will start the process of creating a new strategic plan, and I look forward to working with our faculty, students, alumni, staff and community partners to determine our priorities for the years ahead.

This work takes place at a time of incredible transformation for the field – one that challenges us to consider the way we think about social work, who we include, and how we can better represent and be responsive to the communities we serve. Equally important, given the years we have just had, is charting the path toward ensuring the health and well-being of social workers who are meeting those challenges. It is my hope that we will become a leader in this area.

It gives me immense pleasure to share this report, which provides a glimpse into the amazing things that are happening at this Faculty. As I look back on the 2022-2023 academic year, I am incredibly proud of how our faculty, students, alumni, and staff continue to both challenge and strengthen the profession, build ties with communities and across disciplines, and lead advocacy for change at local and global levels. In the years that follow, we will continue to build on FIFSW's stellar international reputation as a leader in social work education, innovation and research. This is truly a collaborative effort because our Faculty's achievements would not be possible without our alumni and friends who support us.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to our success over this past year. I look forward to sharing stories of how your efforts contribute to Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work impact in the months and years to come.

With best wishes,



Charmaine C. Williams  
Dean and Professor  
Sandra Rotman Chair in Social Work  
Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work  
University of Toronto

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## FIFSW at a glance



**37**  
Faculty

**31**  
Sessional  
Faculty

**14**  
Status Only Faculty

**7**  
Postdoctoral  
fellows

**2**  
Degrees

**491**  
MSW Students  
(2023 winter term)

**50**  
PhD Students

**6**  
Fields of Study

**2**  
MSW Combined  
Degree Programs

**11**  
Collaborative  
Specializations

**3**  
Massive Open Online  
Courses (MOOCs)



*Alumni Association President Andria Allen addressed Fall 2022 graduates at a reception held in FIFSW's 7th floor lounge*

## — Alumni Engagement

# Staying connected

In 2022-2023, **Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work Alumni Association** planned and hosted five online events, including a reading club. It also welcomed the return of its annual in-person Distinguished Speaker Series. Created in 2014, the Distinguished Speaker Series brings leading thinkers to the Faculty annually to foster debate and dialogue on crucial societal challenges. This year's featured speaker, Dr. Robert Maunder spoke about the lifelong impact of childhood adversity and trauma-informed care and prevention in healthcare, and received high praise for his talk from both our in-person and online audiences.

The academic year also boasted three in-person convocation celebrations, including a long-awaited ceremony and reception for those who graduated during the pandemic in 2020 and 2021. It was wonderful to be able to come together in person to celebrate the accomplishments of this particular group.

In addition to participating in and attending events, members of FIFSW's alumni community have contributed time and expertise as field instructors, speakers, mentors, and members of committees focused on admissions; field instruction; and diversity, equity and inclusion. The Faculty is incredibly grateful for our alumni's continued engagement and support.

“

After you graduate, it's very easy to get caught up in your career. Coming back feels like a reunion. It has been such an honour to meet people who graduated 20 or 30 years before me and find out that they are still motivated to be involved with the Faculty.”

—**Andria Allen,**  
*U of T Magazine, 2022*

## Miss an event? Join us online!



Visit [FIFSW's YouTube channel](#) to view our public lectures on demand.

**Somatic Experiencing® & Indigenous Ways: Strengthening Trauma-informed Care & Practice**, with Anita Charleson-Touchie

**Critical Conversations: Working with Parts and Ego State Therapy, Practical Tools to Boost your Mental Health this Winter**, with Jennifer Shields

**Harm Reduction: Not What I Thought**, with Candice Bremner, Joanna Dickinson, Michelle Lewis and Hope Ramsay

**Clinical Conversations: A Guide to Clinical Hypnosis for Mental Wellbeing**, with Jennifer Shields

**The Effects of Early Trauma on Brain Development: Relevance in 2023**, with Geraldine Crisci

Distinguished Speakers Series – **Revolution through Relationship: Caring for Adult Survivors of Childhood Trauma**, with Robert Maunder (pictured below.)



## The Janis Rotman Distinguished Lecture on Mental Wellness

On October 6, FIFSW presented the inaugural **Janis Rotman Distinguished Lecture on Mental Wellness** at Innis Town Hall. The event featured an engaging talk by Dr. Monnica Williams (pictured above with Prof. Lin Fang). Dr. Williams' lecture "**Racial Trauma: How Racism Can Cause PTSD**," is among the featured videos on FIFSW's YouTube channel.

## Did you know?

**The Institute for Life Course and Aging (ILCA)** – U of T's hub for interdisciplinary collaborative specialization in Aging, Palliative and Supportive Care across the Life Course – delivered **9 online workshops for health professionals** in 2022-2023 and has an impressive **143 educational videos available on its [YouTube channel](#)**.

## An intimate conversation with Delores Mullings

During Black Mental Health Week, FIFSW hosted a talk and Q&A with **Delores V. Mullings**, Professor and Vice-Provost, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Anti-Racism at Memorial University. Mullings is also lead editor of the book *Africentric Social Work*. Her talk "**E(Racing) the Masters' tools: Africentric Social Work by and for People of African Descent**," took place on March 9.

Pictured, left: Delores V. Mullings and Dean Charmaine Williams



## Introducing the Social Work in Global Context Lecture Series

Many factors affecting individuals, families and communities extend beyond borders, with solutions that require a global understanding and approach. FIFSW's new Social Work in Global Context Lecture Series convenes multidisciplinary discussions on the complex issues that arise in our globalized world. The series launched on June 12, 2023 with a talk by **Amal Elsana Alh'jooj** (pictured, right) who spoke about growing up as an Indigenous Bedouin Palestinian woman in Israel and the role that social work can play in empowering the most marginalized among us to lead social change. Stay tuned for more talks in 2023-2024.



Stay informed about future public events via FIFSW's online event calendar or by subscribing to our **Monthly Newsletter**.

## — *Alumni impact*

# Learn how our alumni are making a difference in their communities and transforming the field

Read about our alumni's impact as clinicians, advocates, teachers, policy-makers, researchers and more.

Find their stories at [uoft.me/FIFSWalumni](https://uoft.me/FIFSWalumni).



**Sajedeh Zahraei**  
MSW 1996, PhD 2014  
Improving mental health support for immigrant, refugee and racialized women



**Kaitlin Schwan**  
PhD 2016  
Leading researcher on homelessness and national advocate for the right to housing



**Terry Cheng**  
PhD 2010  
Developed a program to help Chinese women navigate cancer recovery



**Kennes Lin**  
MSW 2019  
Co-authored report on anti-Asian racism during the COVID-19 pandemic



**Rebecca Detje**  
MSW 2020  
Social Worker in the acute care unit at Mount Sinai Hospital



**Jheanelle Anderson**  
MSW 2020  
Researcher, policy development officer and advocate for Black people with disabilities



**Ellen Sue Mesbur**  
MSW 1967  
Internationally recognized expert in social group work and a leader in social work education



**Lisa Robinson**  
MSW-ITR 2017  
Using western and Nuu-Chah-Nulth healing practices to address the impact of sexual abuse and assault



## Arbor Awards

The University of Toronto's Arbor Awards recognize exceptional and longstanding volunteer service. Congratulations to FIFSW's 2022 recipients:

- Reem Abdul Qadir
- David Brownstone
- Dale Kuehl, and
- Terese Weisberg.

Our 2022 recipients have shown an incredible commitment to FIFSW students, programs and outreach. The volunteer activities of this group include roles such as preceptors and education practice leaders who help increase FIFSW's capacity to offer field education placements, Association of Teaching Centres members, and FIFSW Alumni Association board members and fundraisers. We are thankful for their continued contributions.

## Field Instructor appreciation

On May 16, FIFSW's Practicum Office hosted a **Field Instructor Recognition and Knowledge Exchange** event. FIFSW Field Instructors mixed and mingled with staff, faculty members and each other in FIFSW's seventh floor lounge. After some words of appreciation from Dean **Charmaine Williams** and **Eileen McKee**, Assistant Dean, Field Education, the Field Instructors broke out into groups with faculty Field of Study Coordinators for a knowledge exchange that will help inform course content in the future.

"Field Instructors play a vital role in our students' education by providing them with opportunities to develop social work competencies that prepares them for professional practice" says McKee. "We are extremely appreciative of their dedication and support."

**Interested in becoming a practicum Field Instructor?** Contact [practicum.fsw@utoronto.ca](mailto:practicum.fsw@utoronto.ca) to learn more and apply!

*Pictured above (left to right, top): Tracy De and Eunjung Lee; Lisa Sutherland and Jessica Rochman-Fowler. Bottom photo (left to right): Sana Rizvi, Nidhi Bedi, and Cathy McDonald.*

## — Donor support

# Your generosity makes a difference

FIFSW is truly grateful to everyone who has contributed to the success of our research, education and outreach. Your support makes our programs more accessible to students, helps build public understanding of social work issues, and strengthens our ability to produce research for and with communities that is informing important changes to policy and practice.

## Three new student awards

**The Marion Bogo Award** assists students who show great promise and commitment to clinical social work in their field education.

**The Dr. Mary A. Wright Scholarship** supports incoming Master of Social Work students on the basis of financial need, with preference given to Black and/or Indigenous students.

**The George and Iris Brown Social Work Bursary** supports Master of Social Work students on the basis of financial need, with an emphasis on community development.



# 214

students indicated that they had financial need

# 223

students benefitted from one or more donor-funded awards

Donor support has benefitted students such as **Titus Chan** (left) who is working towards a career focused on policy and health systems change for the benefit of older adults across Canada. Read our Q&A with Chan at [uoft.me/TitusChan](https://uoft.me/TitusChan)

## Making social work research accessible to all

The **Sophie Lucyk Virtual Library (SLVL)** is an ongoing strategic partnership between FIFSW and the University of Toronto Libraries. Its goal: to make FIFSW research freely available to the public.

The open access virtual library honours alumna and social worker **Sophie Lucyk** and was created through the vision of alumna Rosemary Slivinskas, executor of her estate.

Over the last year (June 2022 to May 2023), the SLVL TSpace collection averaged **1,517 views** and **2,499 downloads** per month. A total of **32,492 downloads** occurred over the last year. The library now boasts **624 items**, up from 554 last year.

Visit the library at: [uoft.me/SLVL](https://uoft.me/SLVL)



Fu Hui Education Foundation members (left to right) David Leung (Vice-President), Judy San (President), and Wesley Kam (Secretary) with Dean Charmaine Williams (second from the left) and Professor and past Dean Faye Mishna (centre) at FIFSW's Spring 2023 convocation reception

## Champions of student success

The **Fu Hui Education Foundation** is a dedicated and generous supporter of FIFSW's unique **Indigenous Trauma and Resiliency (ITR)** field of study. Ensuring that the program is accessible to Indigenous students from communities across Canada, including those that are remote, has been essential to the field of study's success.

Grounded in the North American Indigenous values and inspired by Indigenous traditions from around the globe, the ITR field of study is dedicated to preparing social work professionals to work with individuals, families and communities who have been affected by historical and generational trauma. FIFSW is deeply grateful to the Fu Hui Education Foundation for the vital role it has played in helping sustain this important program and its students.

**Interested in supporting FIFSW students and research?** Learn more by visiting: [uoft.me/GivetoFIFSW](https://uoft.me/GivetoFIFSW) or contact [fund.fifsw@utoronto.ca](mailto:fund.fifsw@utoronto.ca).

“

The Fu Hui Education Foundation has a distinguished record of supporting and empowering communities through education, and we are deeply grateful for their incredible support of our program and its students.”

—**Charmaine Williams**  
Dean & Professor

# Research that counts

FIFSW research is reshaping policy and practice, informing advocacy, engaging and empowering communities, enhancing wellbeing and equity, and addressing issues that extend beyond our borders.

2022-2023 research by the numbers

5

Canada Research Chairs

11

Endowed chairs

75

Percentage of faculty members holding grants as Principal Investigators

21

Projects funded by SSHRC

5

Projects funded by CIHR

22 faculty members received funding for **57 projects** totalling over **\$5 million**

**\$106K**

Average amount of funding received per project

**238**

Conference presentations and invited talks

**199**

Publications  
2 books  
11 Book Chapters  
186 peer-reviewed journal articles



## Top scholars

FIFSW researchers **Cheryl Regehr, Faye Mishna, Ramona Alaggia** and the late **Marion Bogo** are among the top 100 most impactful global contributors to social work journal scholarship, according to a study published in the journal *Research on Social Work Practice*. U of T placed second in the number of social work scholars in the top 100.



## Reshaping policy and practice

# Building a foundation of truth

When the first Ontario Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect (OIS) was published in 1993, province-wide knowledge of child welfare investigation rates and outcomes was scarce.

Researchers have since produced a new Ontario study every five years, with the seventh iteration – led by Professor **Barbara Fallon** – launching later this year. Fallon stepped into the role of principal investigator of OIS after serving as project manager on the 1998 study. The remarkable 30-year research undertaking, which includes four Canada-wide studies

and two studies specific to First Nations, has revealed hard truths related to racism and deep inequalities for First Nations as well as Black, Latin American and other racialized communities.

“This type of data allows us to push for change at those systemic levels often held within government policies and legislation,” says **Cindy Blackstock**, executive director of the Caring Society and a professor at McGill University’s School of Social Work. Blackstock earned a PhD in social work from U of T in 2009.

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“You have to remember that data represent children and families,” says Fallon. “That’s a child and a parent who are really struggling and can be very symptomatic of what is structural inequity, that I think we, as Canadian citizens, have the power to change.”

Read the full article, "*A bitter truth: 30 years of child welfare data collection reveals deep systemic inequities, racism and harm,*" on FIFSW's website.



Above: Barbara Fallon and Cindy Blackstock, who received an honorary degree from U of T in 2018

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## Studies informing structural change

Evidence-based research informs the policies and practices that support the health and wellbeing of our communities

### Strengthening Health Canada policies

Increasing our understanding of eating disorders, body dissatisfaction and how healthcare providers, including social workers, can better screen for potential risks is what drives Assistant Professor **Kyle Ganson**'s work. He's now developing policy recommendations to address the lack of Health Canada regulations around muscle-building and performance-enhancing substances.

### Confronting elder mistreatment

RISE is an evidence-based, community-based elder mistreatment response program that operates at Relational, Individual, Social, and Environmental levels. The program works in partnership with other systems (such as adult protective services and healthcare) to support and respond to cases involving older adults who are at risk of or experiencing elder mistreatment or self-neglect. Developed by Professor **David Burnes** and colleagues, RISE has been scaled throughout the entire state of Maine and was written into the annual state operating budget. It is also now being implemented and tested in Toronto, New Hampshire, and Washington State.





## Increasing primary care capacity

Professors **Keith Adamson** and **Rachelle Ashcroft** (pictured left) are leading a project that aims to strengthen the integration of social workers in primary care across Canada. Their work will contribute to a national vision and further the capacity of social workers in patient care.

## Strengthening practice for under-resourced 2SLGBTQI+ populations

In 2022, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) – part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services – featured AFFIRM in its resource guide on research supporting adaptations of evidence-based practices for under-resourced populations. AFFIRM is a CBT intervention created by Professor **Shelley Craig** that focuses on reducing depression and improving coping and sexual self-efficacy for 2SLGBTQI+ youth and adults.



## Improving culturally appropriate services for Muslims in Ontario

A study initiated by FIFSW MSW and PhD students is exploring the social service needs of Ontario's Muslim population. The research will help social workers better understand the barriers Muslim people face in accessing culturally appropriate support. Supported by a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Partnership Development Grant, the much-needed investigation will ultimately inform recommendations on how to improve services for this diverse population.

“All the partnership relationships were established by our graduate students and we have seen overwhelming support from the Muslim community,” said Professor **Ka Tat Tsang**, the project's principal investigator.

*MSW graduate, Mishal Dar, left, is a co-founder of the Muslim Human Service Alliance.*





Advocates for change

# Leading evidence-informed calls to action

A new report published in March by the Chinese Canadian National Council Toronto Chapter (CCNCTO) and FIFSW highlights the anti-Asian racism that members of Toronto’s Asian communities experienced before and during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The study fills a gap in community-based research and clearly outlines Calls to Action – for governments, for schools, for those in the social work and human services fields,

and others – to address anti-Asian racism on the ground.

“The alarming upsurge of anti-Asian racism during the pandemic has brought global attention to the violence facing the Asian diaspora, and thrust members of the Asian Canadian community to speak out against racial injustice like not been seen before,” said Associate Professor **Izumi Sakamoto** one of the authors of the report.

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The report was covered by the *Toronto Star*, CBC television and radio programs, **CTV**, **CP24** and **Fairchild TV**. Co-author and recent MSW graduate **Hogan Lam** published an opinion piece in the *Toronto Star* titled "How many reports do we need to prove that anti-Asian racism exists?"

Read the full report *2020 in Hindsight: Intergenerational conversations on Anti-Asian Racism during the COVID-19 pandemic* and find links to media coverage on FIFSW's website.

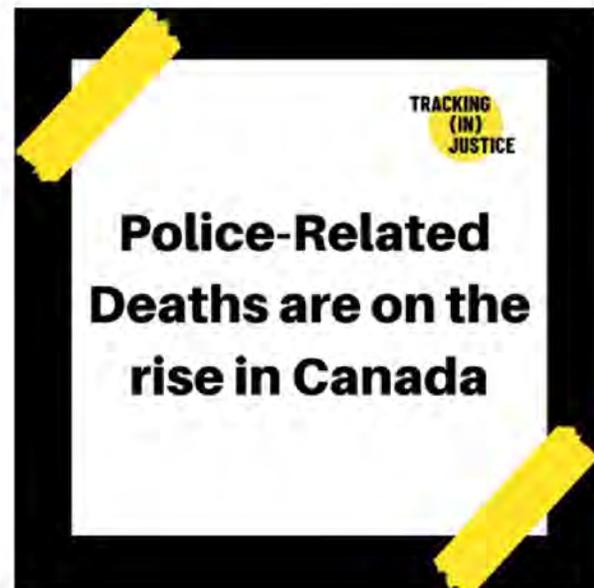
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## Campaigns for change

FIFSW faculty are speaking out and raising awareness about issues that impact diverse communities

### Advocating for strong support for families affected by mental health

In any given year, 1 in 5 Canadians experiences a mental illness and 1 in 2 adults over the age of 40 has a history of mental illness. For each person, there is a family doing their best to support and care for their loved one. In February, the Family Caregiving Project, a multi-year research study led by Dean & Professor **Charmaine Williams**, launched a petition to urge provincial leaders to create a strategy to increase family-centered services, improve access to mental health care for families, and support equitable distribution of funding by directing targeted resources to families who care for Ontarians living with serious and persistent mental illnesses.



### Tracking police-involved deaths

"A historic and persistent lack of transparent data is one of the key factors that have prevented researchers, policymakers, advocates, and communities most impacted by police violence from effectively calling attention to police use of force and police-involved deaths," says Associate Professor **Tanya Sharpe**. Sharpe helped lead the **Tracking (In)Justice** project – a publicly accessible online database launched in February 2023 that tracks police-involved deaths in Canada. The project received nation-wide media attention.





Community-engaged, community-driven

# Empowering community members as peers in research

On May 1, Carolyn Bennett, Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health came to FIFSW to announce \$2.8 million in funding for the Community-Based Research Centre. The funding supports CBRC's **Investigaytors program** — a 2SLGBTQI+ focused initiative that equips participants to be peer researchers.

In Toronto, Investigators runs in partnership with **CRUISElab**, led by Professor **David Brennan**.

“The focus on community-engaged mental health initiatives is a critical lifeline for 2SLGBTQIA+ people,” said Brennan, who spoke at the announcement.

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"We know there is a greater possibility of better mental health outcomes if researchers, policymakers, service providers, and governments work together for and with the 2SLGBTQIA+ communities."

The Investigaytors program addresses a national and provincial need to engage youth in sexual health calls for action.

The initiative develops community capacity in queer people's health research, helps participants develop transferable research skills, and provides meaningful connections with other organizations in the field.

Read "*The Government of Canada announces \$2.8 million to support 2SLGBTQIA+ Mental Health*," on FIFSW's website.

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## Working *for* and *with* communities

Engaging, empowering and partnering with people and groups is key to research throughout the Faculty

### Empowering Asian youth and families

Led by Associate Professor **Lin Fang**, **My Script My Voice** is a university-community-based research project that empowers youth and their families to share their experiences of anti-Asian racism. In partnership with Asian communities across the GTA, the project aims to build participants' capacity to talk openly about the racism in their lives. The project's new website showcases past and current studies and serves a hub for its creative youth-based initiatives. Visit [myscriptmyvoice.com](http://myscriptmyvoice.com) to learn more.



### Addressing barriers to abortion access

On May 9, the Canadian Government announced more than \$4.2 million in funding to strengthen access to abortion services. A portion of the funds is allowing Associate Professor **Stephanie Begun** to lead a project with the University of British Columbia's Contraception and Abortion Research Team (CART) to address barriers for underserved populations. Her work involves the **Youth Wellness Lab**, a research collaborative she co-founded and co-directs that engages youth as partners and leaders in research. "Youths' intersectional perspectives are essential to building optimal approaches to care," says Begun.





## Connecting queer researchers

During Pride Month, the **International Partnership for Queer Youth Resilience (INQYR)** hosted **Rainbow Rendezvous**, a Queer Research Mixer, organized to highlight the voices and experiences of queer academics and scholars and provide them with opportunities to connect.

PhD student **Kaitrin Doll** and **Dane Marco Di Cesare**, Chair, Canada Regional Network for INQYR, pictured left, co-organized the event, which included a panel on intersectional queer research, roundtable discussions and a networking session.

## Support for survivors of homicide victims

On September 13, **The Centre for Research & Innovation for Black Survivors of Homicide Victims (The CRIB)** presented **Invisible Wounds: Stories of Survivorship** at Innis Town Hall. The Invisible Wounds project engaged African, Caribbean, and Black (ACB) survivors of homicide victims in digital storytelling in order to better understand the impact of murder on their wellbeing, their coping strategies and the unmet needs of ACB Canadian survivors of homicide victims in Toronto.



Invisible Wounds project participant DeShawn Hibbert said that **being a part of the Invisible Wounds project allowed him to not just identify what he was experiencing as grief but to 'deal with it on a deeper, healthier level'** with the support of project participants and team members.





Enhancing wellbeing and equity

# Marrying mental and physical health

It's Friday morning and the Jane/Finch Centre is rocking to the soca groove of Kevin Rougier and Mr. Legz. Inside, the revelers, all of them seniors, are up out of their chairs. One 83-year-old woman, encouraged by a livewire program worker named Sandra Anderson, is leading a dance of joy. "A lot of these people live alone," says Anderson, a senior herself. "This is their escape."

And then something magical happens. Gradually, organically, the participants

doing exercises begin to sync up. What had started as a roomful of individuals, each in their own bubble, has become one thing, a team, a troupe. Anderson is a little in awe. "I've seen so many seniors who couldn't move, wouldn't move, and now I look at them and oh my goodness," she says.

"The stretching, the rubber-band work. That is a tribute to the **Talk It Out, Work It Out** team that came and showed them the techniques."

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Talk It Out / Work It Out is a groundbreaking pilot project partnering two U of T brain trusts: the Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work and the Faculty of Kinesiology and Physical Education. Students from each contributed to the curriculum that clients at the Jane-and-Finch seniors enjoyed. Associate Professor **Lin Fang** spearheaded the creation of the program with KPE Professor Catherine Sabiston.

The third point of the triangle is the community partner, in this case the Jane/Finch Centre, which delivers the clients to the academics with a “warm handoff” of earned trust. People have synced up not just physically but emotionally. Real friendships have been made.

Read "*Talk It Out, Work It Out marries mental and physical health*," on FIFSW's website.

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## Mobilizing mental health knowledge

Understanding the factors that affect our wellbeing is vital to improving the support that social workers can offer



### Family violence

An expanded and updated third edition of the book *Cruel But Not Unusual* examines the latest research, thinking and strategies to address family violence in Canada. Co-edited by Professor **Ramona Alaggia** and social worker Cathy Vine, the publication includes new chapters and a broader exploration of the many forms of violence that persist within relationships and families and how the systems charged with responding and helping can respond in trauma-informed ways.

### Social worker health and wellbeing

A study led by Professor **Ramona Alaggia** found that Social workers experienced depression, PTSD, and anxiety at alarming rates during pandemic, with 40% of the Ontario social workers sampled reporting depression. The rate of reported depression among social workers was four times higher than the general population and substantially higher than other health care professionals working in COVID-19 related conditions, 24% of which reported depression. Co-authors included Professor **Esme Fuller-Thomson** and PhD students, **Carolyn O'Connor** and **Keri West**.



## The power of social connections

Research by Professor **Esme Fuller-Thomson** and Assistant Professor **Harry Taylor** point to the importance of social connections and the impact of loneliness on our health. "Loneliness is related to almost every health outcome you can think of," Taylor told *Zoomer* magazine, who wrote about his research in its April/May issue. Fuller-Thomson's research was featured in the *Toronto Star* in January. In one study, Fuller-Thomson found that "People with COPD, who had even one confidant, were seven times more likely to be in excellent mental health compared to people who didn't." A *CBC* syndicated radio story highlighted both Taylor and Fuller-Thomson's work.



A publication based on research from the **Social Work Speaks Out** project received the 2022 award for **Best Qualitative Article** from the *Journal of Social Work Education*.

## Creating positive learning environments for LGBTQ+ social work students

The **Social Work Speaks Out** project, developed by Professor **Shelley Craig** and collaborators, including alumnus **Gio Iacono** (pictured left), surveyed more than 1,000 LGBTQ+ students in 126 social work programs across 44 states and seven provinces. Overall, one-third of the respondents said they encountered homophobia in their programs. The project has led to the development of best practices for affirmative social work education. Craig co-developed a tool to help educators effectively address microaggressions against LGBTQ+ students in their classrooms and co-authored guidelines for the Council on Social Work Education on enhancing the climate for transgender and LGBTQ+ social work students.





**Social work in global context**

# Community-based art interventions for prevention and care

As the Canada Research Chair in Global Health Equity and Social Justice with Marginalized Populations, Professor **Carmen Logie** (who is also an Adjunct Professor at the United Nations University Institute for Water, Environment & Health) leads global research focused on sexual health and rights. After discovering there was a scarcity of research on post-rape care for forcibly displaced youth in refugee

settlements, she and her collaborators received a Grand Challenges grant to test an intervention using comic books in Uganda's Bidi Bidi refugee settlement.

To start, they used qualitative data to develop a comic book series that addresses issues , such as sexual violence, stigma, support for survivors, and forced marriage. They then provided youth with a blank

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version of the book to fill out so they could share their own perspectives and solutions.

"After the workshop, we found reduced sexual violence stigma and depression, increased bystander practices and resilient coping strategies among other benefits," said Logie. "We are now using comic books in a new HIV testing study in Bidi Bidi."

The comic book intervention is just one example of arts-based methods that Logie

has been exploring. Past projects have included a digital storytelling project and virtual reality intervention. More recently, she has been testing a multi-media participatory mapping tool to identify interconnections between social, health, and environmental well-being among young adolescents in climate-affected regions of Kenya.

Read our "*World AIDS Day Q&A*" with Professor Carmen Logie on FIFSW's website.

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## Work grounded in global awareness

FIFSW is engaged in work throughout the world and addresses issues that extend beyond our borders



### Supporting the mental health and resilience of gender and sexual minority youth

Led by Professor **Shelley Craig**, INQYR brings together over 50 academic and community partners from Canada, the US, Latin America, and the UK – and is the first international partnership to explore how information and communication technologies impacts the resilience of gender and sexual minority youth (GSMY). With a 7-year \$5.5 million Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Partnership Grant, INQYR supports a growing need for collaborative international approaches to GSMY wellbeing.

### LGBTQ+ inclusion in Asia

With support from a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Partnership Grant, Professor **Peter Newman** is leading a project addressing crucial research and knowledge gaps in LGBTIQ inclusion in Asia. The multidisciplinary partnership includes 5 core research teams and 26 community partners in Bangladesh, Hong Kong, India, Thailand, and Taiwan, as well as the Asia Pacific Forum and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).



# FIFSW in the media

FIFSW research and initiatives received **over 200 media hits** in the 2022-2023 academic year. Notable coverage included features in *The New York Times*, *Maclean's* and *Time* magazine on research by Professor **Shelley Craig** on the benefits of social media for 2SLGBTQI+ youth.

Assistant Professor **Kyle Ganson** (pictured top right) appeared on CTV's *Your Morning* and CBC's *Fresh Air* to talk about his research on body dysmorphia among boys and young men.

Research on the importance of social connections by professors **Esme Fuller-Thomson** and **Harry Taylor** (pictured right) was featured on CBC radio stations across Canada. More recent research by Fuller-Thomson that found a relationship between warmer weather and poor eyesight received coverage in more than 15 publications.

*National Public Radio (NPR)* in the U.S. covered research by Professor **Carmen Logie** on the relationship between food insecurity sex work and increasing HIV risk.

The Tracking (In)Justice project co-lead by Associate Professor **Tanya Sharpe** (pictured right) received more than 15 media hits after its launch, including coverage in the *Globe and Mail*, *The Toronto Star* and *CBC* radio.

A report on anti-Asian racism co-authored by **Izumi Sakamoto** received coverage from *CBC* radio and television, *CTV*, *CP24* and the *Toronto Star*.

Professor **David Hulchanski** (pictured bottom right) was interviewed about affordable housing for feature stories reported by *The Toronto Star*, *The Globe and Mail*, *The Walrus* magazine and the *CBC*.



# Faculty News

## Promotions

**Rupaleem Bhuyan** and **David Burnes** were promoted to the rank of full professor on July 1, 2023.

Bhuyan is the Director of FIFSW's PhD program. Her research explores how temporary and precarious immigration impacts immigrants' access to social and health care services, including immigrants' response to gender-based violence.

Burnes is the Canada Research Chair on Older Adult Mistreatment Prevention. His research includes the design, evaluation and measurement of interventions to prevent and respond to elder mistreatment.

**Stephanie Begun** received tenure promotion to the rank of Associate Professor. A co-founder and co-director of the Youth Wellness Lab, Begun's research focuses on improving the health and wellness of marginalized youth, with particular attention paid to youths' reproductive and sexual health access, education, and outcomes.

## Leadership

**Keith Adamson**, Assistant Professor, Teaching Stream, was appointed a Deputy Director of the University of Toronto's Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation (CTSI). In this role, he will work to help CTSI better support the diverse needs of teaching staff and teaching assistants across U of T and provide guidance on creating accessible and inclusive learning environments and transformative educational experiences.

Professor **Barbara Fallon** was appointed the University of Toronto's Associate Vice-President, Research in the spring of 2022. In this role, Fallon works to boost the quality, impact and resourcing of research across U of T's three campuses.

"Research must be informed by both service and community impact and teaching," says Fallon. "Helping to support vast and varied programs of research across U of T is something that I'm really excited about."

## Retirement

On July 1, **Associate Professor Susan Stern** officially retired from FIFSW. "I have learned so much from the students, faculty, and staff of FIFSW and amazing community collaborators and would like to thank everyone for how they have enriched my career and life," wrote Stern in FIFSW's monthly newsletter. Stern wrote the opening message to mark Jewish Heritage month in May.

View past newsletters at [uoft.me/FIFSWnewsletters](https://uoft.me/FIFSWnewsletters).

## Farewell

**Toula Kourgiantakis**, Associate Professor, Teaching Stream, accepted a new position as Associate Professor, Tenure Stream at Université Laval. FIFSW bid farewell to Prof. Kourgiantakis at the end of July 2023. "Her departure will unquestionably be felt, but her contributions and her legacy as a respected academic and mentor will endure," said Dean Charmaine Williams.



## Awards

**Notisha Massaquoi**, received a **2023 YWCA Toronto Woman of Distinction Award** celebrating women who further gender equity in their field. Massaquoi is an Assistant Professor in Health Education and Promotion with the Department of Health and Society at the University of Toronto Scarborough Campus, An FIFSW alumna, she also holds a graduate cross-appointment at FIFSW. In 2022, Massaquoi was also listed as one of **Toronto Life's 50 most influential people** for her work to expose racism in policing. Rounding out her awards for the 2022-2023 academic year is a **2023 FIFSW Teaching Excellence Award**, presented each year to a faculty member for their outstanding contributions to education through the development and advancement of innovative teaching approaches, experiential and inclusive learning, and student support.

Professor **Barbara Fallon**, received FIFSW's **2023 FIFSW Supervision Excellence Award**. This award recognizes a member of the Teaching Faculty for outstanding contributions in supervision that inspires, guides and empowers students to achieve excellence in scholarship by fostering a strong sense of academic integrity and by enabling students to develop expertise in social work knowledge, theories, research methodologies, and dissemination.

Assistant Professor **Harry Taylor** received a **2023 Connaught New Researcher Award**, established to foster excellence at U of T. Taylor joined FIFSW as an assistant professor in 2021. His research addresses the prevalence, risk factors, and associative health outcomes of social isolation and loneliness among older adult Black Americans.

Associate Professor **Tanya Sharpe** received the **2023 Aaron Rosen Lecture Award from the Society for Social Work Research**. The annual award is presented to a scholar who has accumulated a body of significant and innovative scholarship relevant to practice. Sharpe presented the public lecture for SSWR "Beyond a Seat at 'the table': Building a Legacy of Research for Black Survivors of Homicide Victims" on April 19th.

**Samantha Anthony**, Health Scientist and Associate Professor, Status Only, received the 2023 Beverley Antle Leadership Award from the Ontario Association of Social Workers. Anthony is the first and only Canadian Health Clinician-Scientist in social work.

Professor **Carmen Logie** was presented with the CAHR-CANFAR Excellence in Research Award in the social sciences category at the 32nd Canadian Conference on HIV/AIDS Research (CAHR 2023). A leader in HIV research, she has been shining a much-needed light on understudied populations.

*Pictured above, left to right: Notisha Massaquoi, Barbara Fallon, Tanya Sharpe, Harry Taylor, Samantha Anthony, Carmen Logie*

## Research Chairs

Associate Professor **Stephanie Begun** was appointed by Provostial approval to the RBC Chair in Applied Social Work Research (2023-2028). Provostial approval was also received for the re-appointments of Professor **Lin Fang** to the Factor-Inwentash

Chair in Children's Mental Health, Professor **Tanya Sharpe** to the Factor-Inwentash Chair in Social Work in the Global Community, and Professor **Michael Saini** to the Factor-Inwentash Chair in Law and Social Work for five-year terms.

On January 1, 2023, Professor **Charmaine Williams** became the Sandra Rotman Chair in Social Work, which supports research on emerging social work trends that will ultimately inform continual improvement of the social work curriculum.

## In Memoriam



**Winnifred Anne Herington**, a professor at the University of Toronto's Social Work Faculty from 1965 to 1989, passed away peacefully on November 17, 2022. "Professor Herington was a very gracious person and a leader in our faculty, in our field, and in the community," says Dean Charmaine Williams. "It was clear how much she was respected and beloved."

Professor Herington graduated from the U of T with a Bachelor of Science in Social Work in 1947 and worked in practice for 20 years before returning to the university as a teacher in 1965. Professor Herington's career and contributions have been an inspiration to students, alumni and colleagues, alike. She will be greatly missed.



**Donald Meeks**, a Professor Emeritus at the University of Toronto's Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work, passed away peacefully on January 17 at 92 years old. Dr. Meeks' impact both locally and abroad was remarkable. In 2006, he was awarded the Order of Canada in recognition of his career as a social work professor, a groundbreaking and internationally renowned addictions expert, and a leader in human rights and race relations.

As described in Martin L. Friedland's *The University of Toronto: A History*, it is likely that Dr. Meeks was the first Black person at the University of Toronto to receive a tenure-stream appointment. He was also the first Black professor to attain the rank of full professor at U of T's social work Faculty. While at U of T, he introduced courses on drug dependence into the social work curriculum and helped create the collaborative graduate program in Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Psychotropic Drugs (now the Collaborative Specialization in Addiction Studies).

At his family's request, donations in Dr. Meeks' memory, can be made to FIFSW's Dr. Daniel G. Hill Sr. Scholarship. Contact [fund.fifsw@utoronto.ca](mailto:fund.fifsw@utoronto.ca) to learn more.

# Spotlight on students

Learn how FIFSW students are making a difference and achieving their goals through awards, research, outreach and practice.

**Yiwei (Patricia) Quan's** MSW research on the experiences of international students received a 2022 Clara Mayo Grant.

**Travonne Edwards** was named a 2023-2024 Connaught PhDs for Public Impact Fellow.

**Sly Sarkosova's** PhD research includes intergenerational trauma, legacies of colonial violence and its impact on 2SLGBTQ identities and mental health.

PhD student **Amina Hussain**, Co-founded the Muslim Human Service Alliance.

Fall 2022 MSW-ITR graduate **Charlotte Sampson-Elliott** helps Indigenous children and families struggling with intergenerational trauma.

Spring 2023 PhD graduate **Ran Hu** explores structural and epistemic inequities contributing to trafficking and gender-based violence against sex workers

Spring MSW graduate **Frances Li** is dedicated to supporting better educational experiences for students, particularly those from abroad.

Spring 2023 MSW graduate **Ayse Kumsal Tekirdag-Kosar** supports women as a counsellor at the Jean Tweed Centre for Women & Their Families.

Fall 2022 MSW graduate **Ava Bowen**, is building a career in gerontological social work to improve care for older adults



Read their stories at  
[UofT.me/FIFSWstudents](https://uoft.me/FIFSWstudents)

## 7 PhD dissertations examining critical issues

### **Gwendolyn Fearing**

Understanding Caregivers' Help-Seeking for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Through the Lens of Mental Health Literacy

### **Christina Hyland**

The Lived Experience of Street-Involved and Homeless Youth who have Eating Struggles while Living in Situations of Food Insecurity

### **Andrea Geenblatt**

Meaning-Making and Mental Health: Capturing Youth's Voices

### **Ran Hu**

Leveraging Twitter Data and Activists' Lived Experiences to Explore Digital Advocacy for Sex Work Decriminalization in the United States

### **Shani Kipang**

Retooling Social Work Education: New Applications for Collaborative Knowledge Creation, Experiential Learning and Engagement of Experts by Experience

### **Wing Leung**

Cultural Socialization Among Chinese Parents in Canada and the United States: Role of Racism, Co-ethnic Social Capital, and Regional-level Characteristics

### **Aaron Turpin**

Supporting Social Work Management Practice: The Critical Role of Social Entrepreneurial Orientation

## PhD student research highlights



Current PhD students **Ali Pearson**, **Sly Sarkisova** and **Kaitrin Doll** are pursuing research focused on trans health and rights. Each shared insight into their work during Trans Awareness Week in November.



**Vivian Leung's** research on immigration and anti-Asian racism is supporting families and social work practitioners. The PhD graduate is now a researcher with the Toronto Catholic District School Board.



**Kedi Zhao**, received an Outstanding Student Proposal Award from the Canadian Association for Social Work Education for a project on identity building within Chinese communities in Canada.



**Yu Lung** received an Emerging Scholars Grant from the Canadian Research Data Centre Network (CRDCN), which will support Yu's research on the impact of precarious employment on immigrants' mental health.

# Fostering innovative learning and student success



International students and staff (left to right) Franki (Tsan Wing) Li, Frances Li, Megan Davies (Simulation Coordinator), Mai Truong King (Registrar), Chidinma Okafor, and Lydia (Tin Wing) Tam

## International students

Improving support and programming for international students was a key priority this past year. Initiatives included a series of events for incoming international students to support their transition, as well as ongoing co-curricular and social events throughout the academic year. A community-based practitioner was engaged to host an International Student Practice Consultation Group for MSW students to receive mentorship. Meanwhile, an International Student Faculty Advisor provided focused academic advising.

## New courses

The 2022-2023 academic year marked the launch of two new courses as part of FIFSW's commitment to increased EDI integration. The courses included **Anti-Black Racism and Transformative Social Work Practice**, taught by Notisha Massaquoi, and **Critical Social Work Analysis with Indigenous Peoples**, taught by Ashley Quinn. The course **Social Work with Immigrants and Refugees** was also relaunched with a newly updated curriculum.

*Pictured right: Professor Faye Mishna and Eva Philipp*

## EDI Lunchtime Speaker Series

Lunch and learn lecture series, organized by the Office of the Associate Dean, Academic, offered students the opportunity to hear from speakers with different perspectives, lived experiences and insights. Speakers from the past academic year included **Eva Philipp**, who shared her experience as a young Jewish girl growing up in Hungary during the Nazi occupation; **Shaheen Azmi**, who spoke about an Islamic faith-based approach to social work; **Msenwa Oliver**, a social worker and practitioner of change management and diversity, equity and inclusion, and **Christina Hyland**, who discussed eating struggles and body image challenges experienced by food-insecure youth enduring homelessness and/or street involvement.





## New staff supporting students

FIFSW welcomed new staff to its practicum office this year, increasing the support and expertise provided to students. In the fall, **Samar Hossain** and **Matthew Cho** joined the team as Practicum Coordinator and Practicum Assistant, respectively. They joined **Alexandra Sparaggis**, who came on board as a practicum coordinator in August 2022 and **Leah Potash**, whose role as Practicum Coordinator became permanent in 2023. The new practicum staff are all Master of Social Work graduates. Hossain, Sparaggis and Potash are alumni of FIFSW.

Drawing from their own experiences as students who completed practicums in the

past and their subsequent professional experience in the field, the new practicum staff are passionate about supporting accessible, diverse, and meaningful opportunities for FIFSW students.

In spring 2023, FIFSW welcomed **Lauren Akbar** to FIFSW as Acting Coordinator, Indigenous Trauma and Resiliency field of study for a year-long term. In this role, Lauren provides both practicum and academic program support and is a first point of contact for students with general questions.

**Mai Truong King** joined FIFSW in October as Assistant Dean, Student Services & Registrar – a key leadership role that supports MSW and PhD students from application to graduation in the areas of registration, course enrolments, program progression, student finances, and student life.

King is an enthusiastic advocate of lifelong learning with over 20 years of higher education experience supporting students in awards, financial aid, registrarial and student services.

As FIFSW's new PhD Program Assistant, **Constance Chan** supports PhD Director Professor Rupaleem Bhyuan in the administration of the PhD program. Her work includes managing the PhD student digest, supporting events and facilitating efforts to strengthen the program.

**Jenny Wang** is a new Administrative Assistant in FIFSW's Main Office and the face of the Faculty's Office of Student Services and the Registrar. She is the first point of contact for general inquiries from current and prospective students and maintains student and course information on ROSI among other key duties.

## Fast facts

FIFSW offered **673** remote, in-person and hybrid Practicum 1 and Practicum 2 opportunities across the GTA, Ontario and beyond in 2022-2023. Of these, **451** were matched with MSW students at U of T

In May 2023, *The Advocate* listed FIFSW among the best colleges and universities in the world for clinical/medical social work.

# The Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work aspires to create a brighter tomorrow by shaping a second century of social work that is inclusive, anti-oppressive, anti-colonial and culturally contextualized.

To achieve this goal, FIFSW together with the University of Toronto is embarking on an ambitious campaign as part of Defy Gravity – the largest alumni engagement and fundraising effort in Canadian history.

By harnessing the leadership, generosity, and compassion of U of T's worldwide community, the Campaign will strengthen the University's commitment to inclusive excellence and accelerate its work to address the biggest challenges facing our world. In addition to setting an historic fundraising goal, the campaign calls on alumni to get involved as volunteers, mentors, donors, and leaders and encourages them to contribute their time and talent to the University one million times collectively.

Learn how you can contribute to FIFSW's success at [uoft.me/GivetoFIFSW](https://uoft.me/GivetoFIFSW)

## Meet FIFSW's Advancement team



**Daniel Downey**, Advancement Coordinator, supports our community of alumni who wish to stay connected, informed and get involved.



**Jijo Quayson**, Leadership & Annual Giving Officer, works with our donors, helping them discover how their generosity can benefit our Faculty's programs and students.



**Seerat Siddique**, Director of Advancement, builds relationships with individuals and organizations to help fuel the Faculty's bold ambitions as part of the Defy Gravity campaign.



# Connect with the Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work

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