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## West Chester University Master of Social Work Program

~ in West Chester & Philadelphia ~

The MSW Program at WCU is proud to introduce our 14 new faculty members with expertise in human rights, AIDS/HIV advocacy, complex clinical assessment and treatment, medical social work, oncology, program evaluation, and co-occurring disorders.

Our trauma-informed curriculum based in the tenets of *Recovery, Resiliency and Capacity-Building* prepares graduates to work with individuals and families in a variety of interdisciplinary settings. Check us out online [here!](#)

[Christina M. Chiarelli-Helminiak, MSW, PhD](#)

[Terrence O. Lewis, MSW, PhD, LICSW](#)

[Ginneh Akbar, MSW, DSW, LSW](#)

[Pier Cicerelle, MSW, LSW](#)

[Kathleen Coyne, MSS, LCSW](#)

[Laura DeRiggi, MSW, LSW](#)

[Allison Gonzalez, MSW, DSW, LSW](#)

[Stephanie Newberg, MEd, MSW, LCSW](#)

[Tracie Purnell, MSW, LCSW, CADC](#)

[Noel B. Ramirez, MSW, LCSW, MPH](#)

[Alexandra Redcay, MSW, LSW](#)

[Michelle Sanchez, MSW, MPH](#)

[Jacquelyn Warr-Williams, MSW, DSW, LCSW](#)

**Christina M. Chiarelli-Helminiak, MSW, PhD**  
**Assistant Professor**



Dr. Chiarelli-Helminiak recently completed a PhD in social work at the University of Connecticut, where she was recognized as an Outstanding Woman Scholar.

Her dissertation focused on organizational factors affecting job satisfaction and burnout among forensic interviewers. Dr. Chiarelli-Helminiak has extensive practical experience with survivors of interpersonal trauma. Her greatest professional achievement was leading the development of a children's advocacy center providing community-based services in rural north Georgia. Dr. Chiarelli-Helminiak received her MSW from Marywood University, where she was the first social work student awarded the Sister M. Eva Connors Peace Medal.

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**Terrence O. Lewis, MSW, PhD, LICSW**  
**Assistant Professor**

Dr. Lewis has more than a dozen years of clinical practice experience and nine years of research and teaching experience. He has worked in clinical practice at a psychiatric crisis house, family preservation programs, community mental health centers, and private practice with individual adults and couples. As a community-based researcher, he has focused on the relationships between churches and marginalized populations, including LGBT and ethnic minority communities. As part of his work for an interdisciplinary Ph.D. in sociology and social work at Boston University, Dr. Lewis wrote a dissertation on LGBT-affirming Black churches and their responses to the HIV/AIDS crisis. Before coming to West Chester, he spent three years as an Assistant Professor of social work at Augsburg College. Dr. Lewis was recently appointed to a three-year term on the Council on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity and Expression, an organization within the Council on Social Work Education.

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**Ginneh L. Akbar, MSW, DSW, LSW**  
**Adjunct Faculty**

Dr. Akbar's experience reflects her commitment and passion for child welfare social work. Her work has primarily focused on children and families, providing services in various settings including community mental health, early intervention, and child welfare agencies. Currently she is a psychotherapist on an intervention team of a federal research grant, providing Child-Parent Psychotherapy to families affected by drugs or alcohol and involved with the child welfare system. Dr. Akbar received her MSW from Temple University and her DSW from the University of Pennsylvania, where she is also an adjunct faculty member. Her doctoral dissertation explored the challenges child welfare professionals face promoting client self-determination.



**Pier Cicerelle, MSW, LSW  
Adjunct Faculty**

Ms. Cicerelle has 10 years of experience as a hospital social worker, practicing primarily at Level 1 trauma centers with acute-care trauma patients and their families. She has also trained and worked as an independent donor advocate for people pursuing living kidney donation. Her areas of interest include the social work role within hospital trauma centers, the effect of trauma on health behaviors, and interventions for female victims of community violence. Ms. Cicerelle is a 2006 graduate of West Chester's MSW Program and is pursuing her DSW at the University of Pennsylvania, where she received the Dr. Ram Cnaan Award in 2014.

**Kathleen Coyne, MSS, LCSW  
Adjunct Faculty**

Ms. Coyne is currently acting as a community moderator for BreastCancer.org, a nonprofit organization that provides information about breast cancer and breast health. Previously she was the program director for The Cancer Support Community of Philadelphia, where she developed clinical programs for cancer patients, survivors, and caregivers. Before that she worked for the Fox Chase Cancer Center as the assistant director of the department of Social Work Services. She has supervised graduate social work students and field instructors since 1986. Ms. Coyne has taught post-graduate



courses at the University of Pennsylvania and Bryn Mawr College, and has trained health care professionals around the country around issues and skills related to health and illness. Her master's degree in social work is from Bryn Mawr College.

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**Laura DeRiggi, MSW, LSW**  
**Adjunct Faculty**

Ms. DeRiggi is director of Integrated Clinical Consultation Services for the departments of Human Services and Community Behavioral Health for the City of Philadelphia. She is responsible for program development, integrated service planning, training and clinical consultation. Before coming to Philadelphia, she was responsible for planning and program development for behavioral health services, assisted in developing a unified system of care for clients with serious mental illness and mental retardation, directed a drug and alcohol managed care program, and worked in private managed care. Ms. DeRiggi earned her MSW from the University of Pittsburgh. She was chosen Citizen of the Year in the City of Pittsburgh in 1989, and in 2007 won the Distinguished Advocate Award from the Support Center for Child Advocates in Philadelphia. She also teaches at Alvernia University.

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**Allison Gonzalez, MSW, DSW, LSW**  
**Adjunct Faculty**



Dr. Gonzalez has experience ranging from intensive care and emergency room work, to outpatient work with patients across the lifespan, and inpatient medical/surgical and maternity work. She works at St. Francis Hospital in Wilmington, Del., as its manager of program development and social services, as well as the primary lead for the development of the hospital's palliative care program. Dr. Gonzalez also leads the Transitions in Care Program to reduce the rate of re-admissions and promote patient utilization of their primary care physician. She has established two MSW internship programs and has supervised MSW and BSW students in the field. Dr. Gonzalez received her MSW and DSW from the University of Pennsylvania.

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**Stephanie Newberg, MEd, MSW, LCSW**

## Adjunct Faculty



Ms. Newberg is a licensed psychotherapist working with individuals, couples and families. She specializes in family and couples therapy, grief/loss, children and adolescents, bullying and cyberbullying, and the implications of divorce on families. She is also a trained family and divorce mediator/co-parent counselor and has received intensive training in sand tray play therapy for adolescents and children. In addition to teaching at West Chester University, she teaches graduate social work students at Bryn Mawr College and is a consultant for the Council for Relationships. Ms. Newberg holds a Master of Education degree in organizational and counseling psychology from Columbia University and an MSW from the University of Pennsylvania.

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## Tracie Purnell, MSW, LCSW, CADC Adjunct Faculty



Ms. Purnell is a clinic director for an outpatient drug and alcohol treatment facility. Her primary specialty has been working with individuals diagnosed with co-occurring disorders. She has expertise in program administration, with experience in resource management and budgeting, program planning and development, training and staff development, case management, and clinical supervision. Through her private practice work, she has utilized trauma-focused techniques with adults who have experienced victimization. She teaches in the BSW and MSW programs at West Chester University. She earned her MSW at Widener University, where she later earned a certificate in health care management.

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## Noel B. Ramirez, MSW, LCSW, MPH Adjunct Faculty

Mr. Ramirez is a program coordinator for a young men's health program for gay and bisexual men of color who are impacted by HIV, as well as a therapist with a psychoanalytic project for homeless adults and families. A great deal of his professional career has focused on LGBTQ youth communities of color, HIV/AIDS and at-



risk youth. His professional background has largely been in medical social work, program development, community planning, and group process. Mr. Ramirez is also a trained kickboxing instructor and has incorporated fitness in public health programming. He earned his master's degree in public health at Drexel University and his MSW at the University of Pennsylvania.

**Alexandra Redcay, MSW, LSW**  
**Adjunct Faculty**



Ms. Redcay is executive director of Serise, Inc., which provides trainings, research and program evaluation services. She also works as a primary therapist at Princeton House Behavioral Health. She has more than 18 years of experience in direct practice, management, and training, working primarily with adolescents. Ms. Redcay is a former treatment foster parent to LGBT youth and the former co-chair for the LGBTQI youth committee for the New Jersey Department of Children and Families. She is working toward her PhD in social work at Rutgers University, which she expects to complete in 2015. Her dissertation is examining the impact of attraction and identity fluidity on depression. She also teaches at Rutgers and Kaplan universities.



**Michelle Sanchez, MSW, MPH**  
**Adjunct Faculty**

Since 2009 Ms. Sanchez has worked at the Maternal and Child Health Consortium of Chester County, where she oversees the evaluation of programs and a children's health insurance grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Before that she was a direct-service social worker, working with children facing life circumstances such as HIV/AIDS, the Philadelphia child welfare system, and international adoption. Ms. Sanchez has master's degrees in social work and public health from the University of Pennsylvania. She currently serves on the board of directors at La Comunidad Hispana and as co-chair of one of the United Way of Chester County's Community Investment Teams. She is an adjunct professor at Immaculata University and a Field Instructor at West Chester University.

**Jacquelyn Warr-Williams, MSW, DSW, LCSW Adjunct Faculty**



Dr. Warr-Williams has more than 16 years of clinical experience working in a variety of social work settings with adults, children, and families. Her private practice consists primarily of providing in-home clinical services to children and families dealing with trauma, abuse, school issues, mental illness, Asperger syndrome, foster care/adoption, and behavioral issues. She is trained in EMDR, sandplay therapy, and holistic treatment methods such as reiki. Dr. Warr-Williams has been a clinical supervisor for MSW and post-master's students, and teaches at West Chester, Temple and Rutgers universities. She earned her MSW at Smith College and her DSW from the University of Pennsylvania. Between her graduate degrees, Dr. Warr-Williams completed a fellowship at the Yale Child Study Center.



**S. Michelle Worrall, MSW, DSW, LCSW Adjunct Faculty**

Dr. Worrall has more than over 15 years of experience in diverse clinical settings. She is currently the clinical director for Fellowship Health Resources, a nonprofit behavioral health organization in Phoenixville with the mission of partnering with individuals in their recovery from mental health and co-occurring issues. Dr. Worrall's previous teaching experience includes undergraduate and graduate courses in behavioral health, social work, and community leadership at Alvernia University. She has also served on Alvernia University's social work advisory panel and as a faculty field liaison for its BSW program. Dr. Worrall earned her MSW from Temple University and DSW from the University of Pennsylvania.



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