

School Social Work Association of America

Summer Symposium

Speaker Brochure



Dr. J.R. Bullard-Batiste, DSW, LCSW-BACS

Dr. JR works full time as the Professional Development Coordinator for SSWAA and has worked as a School Social Worker, Coordinator of Special Education Social Work Services, School Social Work Supervisor, and Trauma-Informed Schools' Specialist for many school districts within the greater New Orleans area over the past 15 years. Dr. Bullard-Batiste has worked to provide supervision to MSW Interns and LMSW supervisees working towards clinical licensure for the past few years, and he also is a school district Trauma-Informed Schools Trainer of Trainers.

Dr. Bullard-Batiste is a Contributing Faculty Member in the Masters of Social Work degree program at Walden University. In his spare time Dr. Bullard-Batiste also has a private practice where he provides individual, couples, and family therapy, as well, he is a Journal Reviewer for the Journal of Social Work in the Global Community. He is passionate about LGBTQIA2S+ issues, grief and trauma, PTSD, working with children and families, educating MSW students, and providing training on the importance of self-care.



Dr. April Duncan, DSW, LCSW, RPT-S

April Duncan (DSW, LCSW, RPT-S) obtained her Bachelor's in Arts & Science from the University of Missouri-Columbia (2006), Masters of Social Work from Saint Louis University (2012) and Doctorate of Social Work from the University of Southern California (2021). She is the founder of BMH Connect, an organization focused on Black youth empowerment through the use of play therapy. Dr. April is a racial trauma expert and leader in her field in advocating for the mental health needs of Black children.





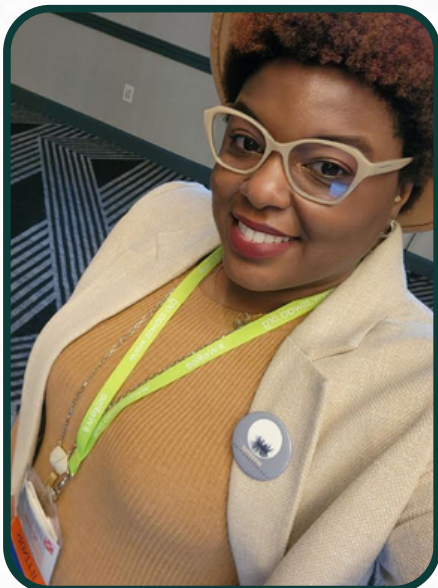
Emily Fleming, MAT, RYT500, RCYT

Emily Fleming is a certified educator with over a decade of classroom teaching experience, a certified yoga instructor and the founder of Yoga In Classrooms And Schools Consulting (YCSC). Emily spent 8 years teaching yoga and mindfulness as a daily enrichment class at a middle school in Baltimore, MD. After developing a 3-year curriculum focused on using yoga and mindfulness as a means of exploring SEL competencies, and incorporating Project Based Learning and Arts Integration into the curriculum, Emily founded YCSC in early 2022. She now works with schools, districts, and other youth serving organizations to help them develop and implement customized yoga and mindfulness programming.



Sonja Ford, LCSW

Sonja Ford is a dedicated professional whose career has been marked by a strong commitment to advocacy and inclusivity in education. She has a notable background in collaboration with the Colorado Department of Education, where she played an integral role in establishing federal funding initiatives aimed at supporting students with disabilities. Her contributions in this regard have had a significant positive impact on the educational opportunities available to this student population. As a member of the National Association of Black Social Workers, Sonja is actively engaged in promoting social justice and equity, particularly within the field of social work. Currently, Sonja serves as a school social worker within the Cherry Creek School District, where she actively facilitates Diversity, Equity, and Inclusionary (D.E.I.) practice training. Her role as an Equity Liaison underscores her commitment to fostering an inclusive educational environment that values diversity and ensures equitable access to resources and opportunities for all students. Furthermore, Sonja has also been involved in conducting Early Childhood Educational Trainings, contributing to the development of the next generation of educators who play a critical role in nurturing the growth and development of young learners. Her career reflects a deep-seated dedication to making a difference in the lives of students and communities by advocating for inclusivity, equity, and social justice.



Tynisha Jinter LCSW, M.Ed

Tynisha Jinter is the Founder and Architect of Healing for Invested Consultant Firm, whose mission is to provide solution-base planning and education to organizations seeking to create spaces that promote healing. As a former District Administrator for Chicago Public Schools as well as a school social worker, Ms. Jinter bring a wealth of knowledge and experience from the micro to macro level. Moreso, Ms.Jinter's unwavering commitment to exploring complex topics in an approachable way, invites participants to center themselves while allowing curiosity to guide solution planning sessions. In her personal life, Ms.Jinter enjoys getting lost with her husband, traveling and enjoying delicious food with amazing people.



Jamie Lynn Langley, LCSW

Jamie Lynn Langley has been a child and family therapist for over thirty years in her home state of Tennessee. Her background was in community mental health before entering private practice in late 2016. She began teaching as an adjunct professor for two universities, transitioning to a full-time teaching position at Middle Tn State University in the Dept. of Social Work in 2021. She has served on various boards and in leadership positions, including being a Cub Scout leader for fifteen years. She is an advisor to the Healthy Parks Healthy Person TN program representing children and mental health, participating in their 2023 documentary that has been aired on PBS stations throughout Tennessee. After nearly twenty years of incorporating nature as part of her play therapy and other therapeutic services, Jamie formally completed her Level One certificate in Ecotherapy last year. She integrates expressive arts, creativity, nature, and play in the therapy she provides as well as in supervision, teaching, and trainings. Jamie has written several articles and chapters on play therapy, more recently focusing on Nature Play Therapy. She co-edited "Nature-Based Play and Expressive Therapies for Children, Teens and Families" which was published in March 2022. Jamie enjoys offering training experiences about creativity, nature, and professional self-care, and facilitates "Sanctuary & Self-Care" retreats for social workers, therapists, and other mental health professionals.



Diana Rarich, MSW, LCSW

Diana Rarich is a school social worker of twenty years. Previous to school social work, she has served and supported youth and families in residential, foster care, and child protection services. She is a previous adjunct professor at the University of Denver Graduate School of Social Work, and an ongoing volunteer with the American Red Cross Disaster Mental Health Services. Additionally, Diana is a Certified Daring Way™ facilitator (based on the research of Dr. Brené Brown), and has trainings and credentials in yoga and bodywork, supporting ongoing integration of mind and body in somatic practices. Diana is a past conference coordinator for the Colorado School Social Work Association and board member of NASW Colorado, and currently serves students, staff and families in Cherry Creek Schools (CO) as the Social Emotional Learning Coordinator.



Vicki Robinson, LCSW

Vicki Robinson loves working with children and feels grateful for the knowledge and tools we have at our disposal as Social Workers. New evidence persuades us to believe that past trauma, past mistakes, and/or post-traumatic stress do not have to be life sentences and can even become steppingstones to post-traumatic growth. While she uses interventions from a variety of modalities, teaching the principles of happiness using positive psychology provides the framework, direction, and glue of her social work practice. Vicki's experience includes seven years child protective services for the State of Utah, youth in custody teacher specialist for Jordan School District, sex abuse treatment therapist for perpetrators and victims of sexual abuse. She is currently a full-time school social worker in an elementary school and a part-time therapist for clients of all ages, specializing in trauma, addiction, grief, and couple counseling. She serves on the Board of Directors for the newly formed Utah School Social Work Association and on the Standards and Practices Committee for the School Social Work Association of America.