

SELECT NOTABLE ALUMNI IN LEADERSHIP ROLES ACROSS MULTIPLE SECTORS

CASE WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY
Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel
School of Applied Social Sciences

OCTOBER 2023

NOTABLE ALUMNI

2016 - 2011



Sarah R. McNelis, (MSSA ‘15)
National Preparedness Directorate
FEMA
U.S. Department of Homeland Security



Matthew Fieldman (MNO ‘11)
Senior Advisor for Workforce Development
American Manufacturing Communities Collaborative (AMCC)



Katrice Williams (MSSA '16, MNO '16)
Senior Criminal Justice Fellow
The Cleveland Foundation

Katrice was recently named a fellow with the American Bar Association’s Legal Education Police Practices Consortium, serving as one of 39 individuals across the country who are doing deep dives into public data related to local and state law enforcement agencies. She has advocated for the rights of women and children through work with the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and in work adjacent to her time at the Cleveland Foundation.



Ryan Clopton-Zymler (MSSA '15)
Assistant Vice President of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging
OhioGuidestone

His career foundation is in community mental health and he has a rich history of working with youth and young adults. Actively involved in the Cleveland social justice community, Ryan is on the board of directors for Preterm. He was awarded the 2022 LGBTQ Heritage Day Award for Advocacy and Activism by the City of Cleveland and the LGBT Community Center of Greater Cleveland.



Jazmin Long (MSSA '15, MNO '15)
Chief Executive Officer
Birthing Beautiful Communities (BBC)

Jazmin Long is a dedicated community development, birth and fundraising professional with a special interest in maternal-newborn stabilization and life-long care. A Cleveland transplant, her background includes community development, fundraising, perinatal support, economic and workforce development.



Bethany Studenic (MSSA '14)
Co-Founder, Managing Director
Enlightened Solutions

Bethany has over a decade of experience in community change initiatives and has served as a leader in prominent social and research-based advocacy movements. Additionally, Bethany has worked in direct practice with diverse groups, including survivors of domestic violence, community police reform movements, and families experiencing poverty.

NOTABLE ALUMNI

2009 - 2006



Hannah Delis (MSSA ‘09)
Chief Human Resources Officer
Swagelok



Marcella Brown (MNO ‘07)
Vice President, Development & Communication
Lutheran Metropolitan Ministry



Alesha Washington (MNO '07)
President and CEO
Seattle Foundation



Thomas Mulloy (MSSA ‘06)
Director of Government Relations
Jesuit Conference Office of Justice and Ecology (OJE)



Shoshana Mitzman (MNO '09)
Chief Development Officer
MAKOM

Under Shoshana's leadership, MAKOM has built a network of 240 diverse communities to improve the residents’ lives through education, arts and culture, jobs, and more. About a third of the MAKOM communities were founded by women who saw a need in their communities and stepped up to fill that need. Now, over half of the next generation’s leaders are women. She turned small, unaffiliated, but successful programs into compelling stories to gain presence and support throughout the region. MAKOM will soon become the largest organization to improve the lives of Israelis on the peripheral areas.



Melody J. Stewart, PhD (GRS ‘08)
Justice
Supreme Court of Ohio

Melody Stewart was elected in November 2018 to a full term as the 161st Justice to serve on the Supreme Court of Ohio. Justice Stewart is the first African American woman elected to the Ohio Supreme Court.

Prior to joining the Supreme Court, Justice Stewart served on the Eighth District Court of Appeals — elected to an unexpired term in 2006 and twice reelected to full terms. She served as the court’s Administrative Judge in 2013. Justice Stewart has more than 30 years of combined administrative, legal, and academic experience.

NOTABLE ALUMNI

2005 - 2001



Lee Fisher (MNO ‘05)
Dean and Joseph C. Hostetler-BakerHostetler Chair in Law
Cleveland-Marshall College of Law at Cleveland State University

Fisher’s diverse career has spanned the private, public, nonprofit, and academic sectors. In addition to serving as Dean, he is Senior Fellow, Cleveland State University’s Levin College of Urban Affairs, and Urban Scholar, College of Urban Planning and Public Affairs and the Great Cities Institute, University of Illinois at Chicago. Fisher served as President/CEO of CEOs for Cities, nationwide innovation network for city success, for six years.

Fisher clerked for Judge Paul C. Weick of the U.S Court of Appeals for the 6th Circuit. He has decades of experience in legal practice, most extensively with Cleveland-based Hahn Loeser as Of Counsel from 1978-1990 and Partner from 1995-1999. He served as Ohio Attorney General and was the first Ohio Attorney General to personally argue cases before the Ohio Supreme Court and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 6th Circuit.

In addition to serving as Attorney General, Fisher has served as Ohio Lt. Governor; Director, Ohio Department of Development; Chair, Ohio Third Frontier Commission; State Senator; and State Representative. He also served as President and CEO of the Centers for Families and Children. Fisher is a graduate of Oberlin College and served on the Oberlin College Board of Trustees for 12 years.



Phyllis Harris (MNO ‘05)
Executive Director
LGBT Community Center Greater Cleveland

Phyllis "Seven" Harris has nearly two decades of leadership experience in local nonprofits, includes program management and development, fundraising, and senior-level executive positions. For many years, she also has played a strong role as an advocate in Cleveland’s LGBT community.

Previously Ms. Harris worked at Planned Parenthood of Northeast Ohio, where she oversaw youth engagement programming. She has served as director of education and advocacy with the Cleveland Rape Crisis Center, was vice president of programs and interim CEO with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Cleveland, and capital campaign director at the Cleveland Sight Center. Her involvement with Cleveland nonprofit leadership includes roles on the governing boards of the LGBT Center, SPACES, and Community Shares of Greater Cleveland.

NOTABLE ALUMNI

2005 - 2001



Jennifer Hawkins (MNO '02)
Corporate Secretary and Chief of Staff
American Red Cross

Lisa Purdy (MNO '02)
President and CEO
Council of International Programs USA



Benjamin Nichols (MNO '02)
Director of Business Development
Bellwether Enterprise
Real Estate Capital, LLC



Scott Ryan, PhD (GRS '01)
Dean and Professor
School of Social Work
The University of Texas at Arlington



India Pierce Lee (MSSA '05)
Executive VP, Chief Strategy Officer
Cuyahoga Community College

Former Senior Vice President
Cleveland Foundation (2006-2022)

A graduate of CWRU's Louis Stokes Fellowship in Community Development, Pierce Lee received a Distinguished Alumna Award in 2014 for outstanding contributions to the social work profession, the community and the Mandel School. She completed a prestigious Loeb Fellowship at the Harvard Graduate School of Design in 2009, where she studied neighborhood revitalization with a focus on sustainability.

Pierce Lee serves on several boards and committees and has received numerous awards for her leadership and service in the community.



Christa Sharpe (MSSA '05)
Regional President of Asia Pacific
International Justice Mission

Christa joined IJM in 2005 as IJM Cambodia's Director of Aftercare where she led a team of social workers to provide crisis care, trial preparation and case management support for over 250 sex trafficking survivors. Christa then served as a Director of Church Mobilization in the U.S. where she engaged thousands in local and global efforts to seek justice and end violence committed against the most vulnerable. Christa returned to IJM Cambodia as Program Office Director where her team partnered with Cambodia's justice and social service systems, as well as a network of civil society partners, to successfully decrease the prevalence of child sex trafficking and increase local rule of law protections and trauma-informed support to the most vulnerable communities.

NOTABLE ALUMNI

1998 - 1990



Charles Emlet, PhD (GRS ‘98)
AASWSW Fellow
Professor Emeritus of Social Work
University of Washington Tacoma



Ralph Belk (MSSA ‘96)
Deputy Executive Director
The National Center for Children and Families



Jennifer Madden (MNO ‘95)
Dean
Linfield University School of Business



Sonia Minnes, PhD (GRS ‘98)
Verna Houck Motto Professor of Social Work, **Mandel School**
Research Director, **Schubert Center for Child Studies**

Her research interests are in the study of child development, the multiple factors that affect cognitive and mental health outcomes, and the development of problematic substance use. Dr. Minnes studies risk and protective factors, both biological and environmental, that interact to affect developmental outcomes.

Dr. Minnes was the Principal Investigator of a longitudinal study of prenatal cocaine exposure funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse. This study has now completed its fifth phase of data collection after 21 years.



Celia Williamson, PhD, MSW, FGSA (MSSA ‘94)
Distinguished Professor of Social Work and Executive Director of the Human Trafficking and Social Justice Institute
University of Toldeo

The majority of Williamson's research is on sex trafficking and prostitution. Her research has focused on examining victims’ experiences, as well as working to create promising practices and evidence-based models of prevention for high-risk youth and quality intervention with victims.

Williamson has also been active in advocating for legislation surrounding sex trafficking on a state level. She supported and advocated for all of the anti-trafficking bills passed in Ohio. Under the direction of Representative Teresa Fedor and the Ohio Attorney General, Williamson became a founding member of the Ohio Human Trafficking Commission and currently serves as the Chair of the Research and Analysis Committee of the Commission.

NOTABLE ALUMNI

1998 - 1990



Suzanne Walsh (MSSA ‘94)
President
Bennett College



Lucinda Lavelli (MNO ‘91)
Professor and Dean Emerita
University of Florida
College of the Arts



Lisa Pape (MSSA ‘90)
Senior Advisor
US Department of Veteran Affairs



Diane Elze (MSSA ‘94), NASW Pioneer 2023
Associate Professor Emerita
University at Buffalo School of Social Work

Throughout her 45-year career as a clinician, advocate, educator and researcher, Elze has made enduring contributions in support of LGBTQ+ youth. Elze’s social work practice experience included direct services, administration and community organizing in areas of sexual assault and domestic violence, runaway and homeless youths, HIV prevention and case management, crisis intervention, disability rights advocacy, and community-based services for LGBTQ+ youths.



Flavio Marsiglia, PhD (GRS ‘91), AASWSW Fellow
Regents Professor
School of Social Work in Arizona State University

He is the founder and director of the Global Center for Applied Health Research. The Global Center conducts intervention health research in partnership with universities and communities in Burundi, China, Guatemala, Israel, Kenya, Mexico, Spain, Taiwan and Uruguay.

Marsiglia is the principal investigator of the Specialized Center (U54) grant on health disparities research at the Southwest Interdisciplinary Research Center (SIRC). Marsiglia’s research on cultural diversity and youth substance use is widely recognized, highly influential in the prevention field, and credited with a measurable reduction in drug use and other high-risk behaviors among youth in Arizona, across the US and in other countries. He has developed and tested culturally grounded interventions to prevent substance abuse especially among Latino and other minority populations of the Southwest, including the school-based “keepin’it REAL” substance-abuse model prevention program. He is the principal investigator of a Mexico-based R01 NIDA/NIH funded study to culturally adapt and test the efficacy of Keepin’it REAL in Mexico.

NOTABLE ALUMNI

1987 and prior



Lynn D. Heemstra (MSSA ‘84)
Former Executive Director
Our Community's Children



Lowell Arye (MSSA ‘82)
President
Aging and Disability Policy and Leadership Consulting LLC



Darlene Grant (MSSA ‘82)
Senior Advisor to the Director
Peace Corps



Amy Main Morgenstern (MSSA‘80)
President
Main Stream Enterprises



Susan Sternad-Basel (MSSA ‘87)
President
S&B Solutions, LLC

Sternad-Basel's career journey from social work to the armed forces is notable—she was the former deputy chief data officer of the United States Defense Intelligence Agency. She is currently the president of S&B Solutions, LLC.

A devoted volunteer, Sternad-Basel received the Mandel School's 2021 Distinguished Service Award. One of the Dean’s Discretionary Awards, this award is not issued every year—only when there is a clear individual who shines and embodies the criteria. It is presented to a social worker for outstanding contributions to the social work profession, the community and the Mandel School.



Gautam N. Yadama, PhD (GRS ‘90, MSSA ‘85), AASWSW Fellow
Professor and the Dean of Boston College School of Social Work
Boston College

His research is focused on understanding poverty and environment dynamics, and interventions to address the attendant social, economic, environment, and health outcomes. He has implemented a randomized control trial to study the sustainability of new and efficient energy technologies in rural India to reduce household air pollution and improve health and wellbeing of women and children.

He is using social network analysis and community based system dynamics to study how interventions to reduce pollution are adopted and sustained by the poor in rural India. He is a member of the Implementation Science Network on Clean Cooking at the Fogarty Institute of the National Institutes of Health, USA.

NOTABLE ALUMNI

1987 and prior



Mark Singer, PhD
(GRS '83, MSSA '79)
AASWSW Fellow
Leonard W. Mayo Professor in Family and Child Welfare
Mandel School



Margaret Kennedy (MSSA '78)
Provincial Director of Community Mental Health and Addiction Services
Prince Edward Island Department of Health



Phyllis Solomon, PhD (GRS '78)
AASWSW Fellow
Professor in the School of Social Policy & Practice and Professor of Social Work in Psychiatry
University of Pennsylvania



Richard L. Jones, PhD
(GRS '81, MSSA '75)
NASW Pioneer 2019
Nonprofit Consultant
Former President and CEO
Metropolitan Family Services (1998-2011)



Héctor Luis Díaz, PhD (MSSA '81)
Director and Professor School of Social Work
New Mexico State University

He has published and presented widely in the areas of socio-economic development, social welfare policy, cultural issues, and international social work education.



Georgia J. Anetzberger, PhD, ACSW, FGSA (GRS '86, MSSA '80),
NASW Pioneer
Consultant
Private Practice

She has authored over one hundred scholarly publications on such subjects as home and community-based services and health care innovations. Her special interest and expertise is in elder abuse, where she has spent over forty years addressing the problem, initially as an adult protective services worker then administrator and most recently as a researcher and educator, conducting approximately two dozen related research projects.



Elaine Nichols (MSSA '80)
Senior Curator of Culture
Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture

She helped to develop the inaugural collections of the museum. Her work at NMAAHC includes responsibility for curating costumes, textiles and decorative arts at the museum, which includes the Black Fashion Museum collection founded by Lois Alexander Lane and the Ebony Fashion Fair collection created by Eunice Johnson.

NOTABLE ALUMNI

1987 and prior



Claudia Coulton, PhD (GRS ‘78), **NASW Pioneer, AASWSW Fellow**
Distinguished University Professor and the Lillian F. Harris Professor
Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences,
Case Western Reserve University

She is founding director of the Center on Urban Poverty and Community Development. Under her leadership, the Center has built a model capacity to provide data for community initiatives and research, including a dynamic neighborhood indicators portal (NEO CANDO), a parcel-based collaborative action platform (NST) and a longitudinal multi-agency record linkage system (CHILD).

Coulton is a founder of the National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership and has served as research adviser to many community change programs including Aspen Institute’s Roundtable on Comprehensive Community Initiatives, Annie E. Casey Foundation’s Making Connections program and the Invest in Children initiative.



Wilma Peebles-Wilkins, PhD, DPNAP (MSSA ‘71), **NASW Pioneer, CWRU Trailblazer 2019**
Dean Emeritus
Boston University

Dr. Peebles-Wilkins has more than 40 years of experience as a social work practitioner, administrator, and educator. She has worked both in the public and private sectors as well as in an acute care hospital in pediatrics. In 2000, she was inducted into the National Academies of Practice as a Distinguished Practitioner because of her health care advocacy work. In 2002, she received the "Greatest Contributions to Social Work Education" award from the Massachusetts Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers.



Geneva B. Johnson (MSSA ‘57), **NASW Pioneer, CWRU Trailblazer 2022**
Former President and CEO, **Family Service America (1983-1994)**

Johnson led a long and distinguished career in social work and nonprofit management. Starting as program director with the YWCA in Houston, Texas, she became a successful nonprofit leader. She then served United Ways in Pennsylvania, Delaware and New York before joining the United Way of America in 1978 as a senior vice president responsible for strategic long-term planning and public policy—she was United Way's first female and African American senior vice president at a time when there were few visible African American women leaders.

An inspiring alumna of the Mandel School, she was nominated as a CWRU Trailblazer in 2022, awarded the Grace Longwell Coyle Award in 2021 and was inducted into the school's Hall of Achievement in 2015. Johnson was given the highest alumni honor at her undergraduate alma mater, Albright University, when she was awarded an honorary doctor of humanities. She also received an honorary doctor of humane letters from Alvernia University.

THANK YOU



"Many segments of society are eager to advance more just and inclusive change. At the Mandel School, our alumni are the catalysts to the transformation our society needs.

Thank you for being one of our most important partners as we continue to advance the fields of social work and nonprofit organizations."

Dexter R. Voisin, PhD, LCSW
Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel
Dean in Applied Social Sciences

Prepared by:

Nada Di Franco
Executive Director, Alumni & Donor Relations
ngd2@case.edu - Email
(216) 368-2281 - Office

Andrea Ehasz
Director, Alumni Engagement & Stewardship
axe303@case.edu - Email
(216) 368-5349 - Office

Together, we are elevating
Equity. Innovation. Transformation.

CASE WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY
Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel
School of Applied Social Sciences