

Child Welfare Education Project

27th Anniversary

Celebrating CWEP

Graduation Class 2026

April 30, 2026
6:00 pm to 8:00 pm
Rockwell Pavilion, UH Main Library



Welcome from
GCSW

Dean
Yarneccia D. Dyson



Graduate College of Social Work
UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON

Welcome from
DFPS

Tyheshia Parker, MSW

TEXAS
Department
of Family and
Protective Services





CWEP 2026 Honorees:

❖ Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, Ginger Lucas



Dr. Ying Ma

Welcome from
CWEP

Dr. Renita Laury



Keynote Speaker: Dr. Juliet London

Introduced by: Dr. Renita Laury

- ❖ If not for the coaxing of a very intuitive Supervisor, who directed Juliet to complete the CWEP application and the MSW program at UH. Subsequently, having Juliet garner amazing and life-changing experiences, afforded through the CWEP and the UH experience, Juliet would not have been able to communicate effectively in the different areas of CPS that she has been fortunate enough to grow in. Having an MSW has meant that Juliet can empathetically 'see' and 'experience' where the client is and can actively listen to refer or recommend the services and resources needed to achieve successful outcomes for everyone. Of course, those outcomes must prioritize the safety and well-being of the children involved. Through the various classes attended at UH under the MSW program, and by interacting with the outstanding faculty met during her time at UH, Juliet has amassed and keeps collecting a wealth of approaches in her toolbox. These tools not only assist Juliet in her professional life but also have been very successful in her personal relationships as well. People listen more effectively and will be more cooperative when they know that you genuinely want to hear their stories, so that everyone can collaboratively find solutions.



Keynote Speaker: Dr. Juliet London

- ❖ Juliet has worked in various stages of CPS. She started in 2014 in Investigations, then Conservatorship a few months later. In 2017, she transferred to Kinship, then was promoted to Conservatorship Supervisor over Liberty, Chambers, and Montgomery Counties in 2022. In 2024, Juliet transferred to Family Based Safety Services' Supervision, and then back to Conservatorship Supervision in Harris County, a year later. Juliet has a Master's in Social Work from the University of Houston, and a Doctorate in Leadership Studies from Our Lady of the Lake University. Juliet also volunteers as a Practicum Instructor, assisting students interning for their MSW with the University of Houston. In addition, Juliet also volunteers with several Honor committees to assist students in obtaining scholarships to complete their programs.



Keynote Speaker: Dr. Juliet London

❖ I fondly remember the friendships I had during my years in the program, and those friends are there for me even now, to help guide and support me even though it has been 6 years since I graduated. That is what the CWEP Program did for me! Thank you. Dr. Juliet London Ph.D.



Presentation of CWEP Cords and Graduation Awards to Graduates

Dr. Monit Cheung
PI of CWEP

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Class of 2026

- ❖ Myrissa Colleen Hutchison
- ❖ Alexandra E. Brown
- ❖ Yesenia Robles
- ❖ Tyheshia Parker
- ❖ Yolanda Doucet
- ❖ Lawrence F. Crawford
- ❖ Ashley Adanna Amadi
- ❖ Whalenniel Grant-Billy
- ❖ Cassandra Sampson

Myrissa Colleen Hutchison, MSW

I have a paralegal degree from Lone Star College and a BS in psychology from Sam Houston State University.

I am a single mom to an amazing 16 years old named Hannagrace. I was Hannagrace's foster mom. She was placed with me at 7 weeks old. We finalized our adoption when she was 2 yrs old

I've been with the state for almost 24 years. 6 mins with DPS, 16 years with TDCJ and I've been with DFPS since 2018.

I love attending basketball games for both SHSU and UH.

I love crafting and reading and photography. I've recently started walking and love taking photos of things I see on my walks.



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Alexandra E. Brown, MSW

I am from Houston, TX originally. I received my Bachelors of Science in Psychology and Business Administration from University of Houston.

I have been employed with Child Protective Services since 2015. I worked as a Conservatorship Worker for 6.5 years, then moved to Supervisor for 2 years. I am currently the Program Director for the Harris County court liaison team and the Preparation for Adult Living Team for Harris and surrounding counties and have been in that role for almost 3 years.

Working with the CWEP program to obtain my masters has helped me think of more hands-on intervention and supportive strategies to implement with not only my staff, but with the young adults that we are serving to try and set them up for a more successful exit from care to independent living.

My long-term goals are to work in the children's hospitals providing services to patients and families that are hospitalized long term and to eventually work with DFPS clients as a service provider in rural areas where services are lacking.

Words of Wisdom:

"Never underestimate your ability to make someone else's life better - even if you never know it."

-Greg Louganis

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Yesenia Robles, MSW

I was born and raised in Houston Tx. I am the second oldest of 5. Although I received a Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice at University of Houston-Downtown, I am now pursuing a Masters in Social Work at University of Houston.

I previously volunteered at the Children's Assessment Center and at Santa Maria Hostel, which prompted a change in career goals.

I am employed with DFPS as a Conservatorship Specialist and have been with the Department for 5 years where I have been able to gain knowledge and the experience to better serve and advocate for those in need.

Words of Wisdom:

"With God all things are possible" Matthew 19:26

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Tyheshia Parker, MSW

Tyheshia Parker began her career with the State of Texas in 2009 and now serves as a Conservatorship Supervisor, where she leads and supports work focused on the safety, permanence, and well-being of children and families involved in the child welfare system. Tyheshia is known for bringing both leadership and heart to her work and is especially grateful for the Child Welfare Education Program (CWEP), which strengthened her clinical training and deepened her commitment to serving families in the public child welfare system.

Outside of her career, Tyheshia's greatest joy is her family. She is the proud mother of two daughters, a devoted daughter, a sister, and a fun-loving aunt her niece and nephews. Whether at work, in school, or with family, Tyheshia is known for her outgoing personality, strong sense of humor, and ability to connect with people from all walks of life. Her personal and professional experiences continue to fuel her passion for strengthening systems that support children and families.

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Yolanda Doucet, MSW

I am a native of Ville Platte, Louisiana. I earned both my Bachelor of Science and Master of Science degrees in Criminal Justice from Southern University and A&M College in Baton Rouge. Since 2013, I have been employed with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. I currently serve as a Kinship Specialist IV and previously worked as a CPS Investigator. Through these roles, I have developed extensive knowledge and hands-on experience in child welfare practice, family engagement, assessment, and advocacy.

My ultimate professional goal is to become either a travel social worker or a healthcare social worker, where I can broaden my impact, serve diverse populations, and continue growing both personally and professionally.

One principle I live by is that growth requires courage. Every step forward whether in education, career, or life, demands faith, discipline, and resilience. Never allow your starting point to limit your destination. Stay committed, stay humble, and remember that purpose is often found in service to others.

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Lawrence F. Crawford, MSW

I have been employed with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services for 12 years, dedicating my career to strengthening safety, stability, and long-term wellbeing for children and families in Conservatorship. I began my professional journey as a sixth-grade reading teacher, where I learned the power of relationship-building, patience, and culturally responsive communication. When I transitioned into child protection work, I discovered a deep passion for advocacy and systemic change—work that has continued to shape my purpose and professional identity.

Throughout my CPS career, I have had the honor of serving in Conservatorship as both a caseworker and a supervisor. These roles have allowed me to support youth through some of the most challenging transitions of their lives, collaborate with caregivers navigating complex systems, and mentor staff committed to high-quality, trauma-informed practice. My work centers on uplifting kinship caregivers, strengthening family networks, and translating complex policies into accessible tools that empower families.

Words of Wisdom :

"Service is the rent that you pay for room on this earth."- Shirley Chisolm

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Ashley Adanna Amadi, MSW

I am from Missouri City, TX and received my bachelor's degree from Spelman College, a HBCU in located Atlanta, Georgia.

I have been employed with Child Protective Services since 2016. I began as an Investigator Trainee for three months but quickly realized my passion was in adoption, I have now served as an Adoption Preparation Caseworker for the past nine years, where I support children and families throughout the permanency process.

I am grateful for the opportunity to participate in the Child Welfare Education Project. It allowed me to connect with colleagues across different programs within the department while balancing work, school, and personal responsibilities.

While my long-term career goals are still evolving, I hope to use the knowledge and experience I have gained to work as a hospital social worker for children and help families navigate difficult situations while supporting children during critical moments in their lives.

Words of Wisdom:

Prioritize what matters, take opportunities when they come and never be afraid to grow into the next version of yourself♥️.

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Whalenniel Grant-Billy, MSW

I was born and raised in New Orleans, Louisiana, and relocated to Houston, Texas, in August 2005 following Hurricane Katrina. That season of my life was one of the reasons that shaped how I show up more for individuals, families, and the community today with understanding, compassion, and a steady presence during difficult times. I earned my Bachelor's degree in Social Science with a minor in Biology from Southern University at New Orleans and began my career with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services in October 2006.

Over the years, my journey with CPS has allowed me to grow through several roles, including Conservatorship Caseworker, Supervisor, Program Director, and currently Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) Facilitator. Each role has strengthened my commitment to supporting families, making sure they are heard, and advocating for children's safety and well-being.

My overall goal is to lead with integrity, serve with compassion, and use my voice and experience to help others find strength, stability, and hope during life's challenges.

Words of Wisdom:

The work we do with families is more than a profession; it's a calling. When you lead with compassion, patience, and faith, you plant seeds of hope that can impact generations. Never underestimate the power of listening, showing up, and believing in a family's ability to heal and grow.

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Cassandra Sampson, MSW

I have been employed with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services since 2004. After receiving my Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice from the University of Houston–Downtown, I began my career with Child Protective Services as a Generic Caseworker. Over the years, I transitioned into Investigations and later served as an Investigations Supervisor. I currently serve as a Kinship Specialist, supporting relative and fictive kin caregivers in providing safe and stable placements for children.

In addition to my undergraduate degree, I earned a Master of Arts in Sociology/Criminology from the University of Houston–Clear Lake and a Master of Arts in Religion with a concentration in Discipleship Ministries from Liberty University. My academic training has shaped my understanding of systemic inequality, family systems, and the social and spiritual dimensions of resilience.

My faith is central to who I am and informs my commitment to serve families with dignity, compassion, and integrity. While maintaining professional boundaries, I view the work of child welfare as both a professional calling and a moral responsibility. Through the CWEP program, I am pursuing my Master of Social Work to strengthen my clinical competence and deepen my capacity to walk alongside children and families during some of the most vulnerable moments of their lives. My long-term goal is to integrate child welfare experience, clinical practice, and faith-informed resilience to promote healing and generational transformation.

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Presentation of Mentor Awards

Dr. Renita Laury

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2026 CWEP Mentors

Graduate: Myrissa Colleen Hutchison

Mentor: Dr. Juliet London



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2026 CWEP Mentors

Graduate: Alexandra E. Brown

Mentor: Talisha Griffith



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2026 CWEP Mentors

Graduate: Yesenia Robles

Mentor: Mariana Robles



2026 CWEP Mentors

Graduate: Tyheshia Parker

Mentor: Cyntleria Parker & Jenesis Parker



2026 CWEP Mentors

Graduate: Yolanda Doucet

Mentor: Lisa Doucet



2026 CWEP Mentors

Graduate: Lawrence F. Crawford

Mentor: Debra Page



2026 CWEP Mentors

Graduate: Ashley Adanna Amadi

Mentor: Dr. Debbie Richards



2026 CWEP Mentors

Graduate: Whalenniel Grant-Billy

Mentor: Jamal Billy



2026 CWEP Mentors

Graduate: Cassandra Sampson

Mentor: Tristan Baldwin



Welcoming
Alumni

Ann Liberman
Director of GCSW
Alumni Relations

GCSW welcomes you to our Alumni Relations website:



2026 Honoree
Leshia Fisher



CWEP Staff Awards



Dr. Trish Taylor, LCSW-S



Dr. Renita Laury



Dr. Monit Cheung, LCSW



Dr. Patrick Leung



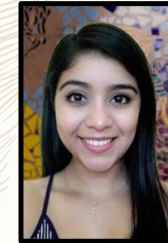
Bella Alex, MSW

CWEP Team



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Thank you
Graduates & Alums
Families & Friends
Faculty & Staff

See you in
Celebrating CWEP 2027!

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