

Ms. Jessica Lira is a first-generation college graduate and a veteran of the United States ARMY. She is from Galveston, TX and has always dreamed of being a soldier and traveling the world looking for new experiences and a chance to meet new people. With the help and support of her family, Jessica has learned the value of volunteerism and the importance of serving her community. Ms. Lira is completing her social work internship in the SMART Cougars program at UH's Graduate College of Social Work (GCSW) where she has realized a passion for HIV/AIDS awareness and research. Jessica graduates in May 2018 with a Bachelor of Social Work degree from the University of Houston-Clear Lake and plans to attend the GCSW to earn her Master's Degree in Social Work and apply for licensure. With a graduate degree, Jessica plans to continue working in the community health arena and focus on behavioral science research to help create community-based programs that serve vulnerable populations. Jessica is receiving the UHCL BSW Social Justice and Service award.