“In the end, anti-black, anti-female, and all forms of discrimination are equivalent to the same thing: anti-humanism.”

― Shirley Chisholm
As I write this column, my second to last, I am stunned that 2021 has just about come and gone. Every December, I reflect on the past year – the good times and the bad and think about what I am hopeful for in the new year; something that feels particularly poignant as we embark on a third year of pandemic living. The holiday season is in full swing, and I know that this time of year can be difficult for a lot of people; in light of that, I want to dedicate this column to the important of self-care.

As I am sure most of you know, there is very little consensus around what self-care actually is. A lot of likely picture bubble baths and massages and although it is important that we do those things for ourselves if we enjoy them, self-care is a whole lot more than that. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines self-care as “the ability of individuals, families and communities, to promote health, prevent disease, maintain health, and to cope with illness and disability with or without the support of a healthcare provider.” They purport that self-care is a broad concept, encompassing the following:

- General and personal hygiene
- Nutrition
- Lifestyle (sports and leisure activities)
- Environmental factors (living conditions, social habits)
- Socioeconomic factors (income level, cultural beliefs)
- Self-medication

What does this really mean in practice though? When you look at the WHO’s list, it looks like just about every aspect of human life is part of self-care. To make such a big topic more easily digestible, *Everyday Health* (Lawler, 2021) breaks self-care down into three practicable categories:

1. Emotional self-care: this includes positive self-talk, regular bubble baths, setting boundaries and saying “no” to things that may cause you unnecessary stress, giving yourself permission to take time for yourself, and ensuring you set up regular check-ins with members of your support system.

2. Physical self-care: this includes prioritizing sleep, adopting an exercise routine that works for you, and choosing healthy and nourishing foods as often as possible.

3. Spiritual self-care: this includes attending a religious service, spending time in nature,
practicing meditation, incorporating regular acts of kindness into your day, or keeping a gratitude journal.

You can read more about what Everyday Health has to say about health care here: https://www.everydayhealth.com/self-care/.

But where do you start? Knowing how to begin practicing self-care can be intimidating for a lot of us. We are often told that we need to practice self-care but given very little guidance on how to ensure we have the resources to actually do it. Below, is a list of simple and free activities that I have used to kickstart my own self-care when I am feeling like I’m in a rut and if none of these feel right for you, just remember that the key to self-care is in your own heart – it’s whatever makes you feel happiest and most at peace and always remember…it doesn’t need to cost a thing!

Download a meditation app: insight timer and headspace are two of my favorites.

- Feed your body: practice yoga, go for a walk, do some stretches, or even take a nap.
- Complete a task: clean out your closet, make a list, or learn a new skill.
- Enjoy yourself: take yourself out on a date, go for a drive, watch your favorite movie, meet up with a friend, read, or do a craft project.
- Get in touch with your emotions: allow yourself to cry, write down your feelings, and laugh whenever you can.
- Get back to the senses: take a hot shower or bath, burn your favorite candle, cuddle with your pet, or listen to music.

However, you slice it, self-care is wildly important for everyone and particularly important for social workers and others in the help profession who take on the stressors of others in addition to their own. I hope I’ve inspired you to take a little time for yourself today and the day after today, too. In the spirit of self-care, I’m closing with one of my favorite poems. Best wishes for a wonderful holiday season and happy new year.

The Guest House
This being human is a guest house.
Every morning a new arrival.

A joy, a depression, a meanness,
some momentary awareness comes
as an unexpected visitor.

Welcome and entertain them all!
Even if they’re a crowd of sorrows,
who violently sweep your house
empty of its furniture,
still, treat each guest honorably.
He may be clearing you out
for some new delight.

The dark thought, the shame, the malice,
meet them at the door laughing,
and invite them in.

Be grateful for whoever comes,
because each has been sent
as a guide from beyond.

- Jalaluddin Rumi
With crisis comes opportunity. With crisis comes a moment in time to get things done. The pandemic has brought the social work profession possibilities for change that pre-pandemic we had not thought possible. In 2022, the moment in time will be children’s mental health. News reports of children in crisis sitting in hospital emergency rooms, without placements available and being unsafe to return home, led to multiple legislative forums on the crisis in children’s mental health. Major legislation is sure to be introduced in February and with social workers making up approximately two-thirds of all mental health providers, together we can make our voices heard. Policy makers often hear from agency administrators, now is the time for them to hear from the field. It is the responsibility of all of us to make that happen. Here are some ways that you can immediately make an impact:

- Tell your story. Tell it through letters to the local paper, by writing an email to your state senator and representative, and by social media posts. Your story is what you are experiencing as a social worker and what your clients are experiencing (yes, this is ethical as long as you leave out identifiers).
- Make suggestions to your administrators based on what you are experiencing in the field. Advocate for what you see as needing to be done.
- Speak up as to what you deserve in compensation and working conditions. Social workers are the best client advocates but we fall short on self-advocacy. If we do not have the resources necessary the clients suffer. When there’s procedural inefficiencies the clients suffer. When our work becomes too much to continue, the clients suffer. Speaking up for ourselves is another way for speaking up for the people we work with. In fact, this may be a good time to ask for a raise – employers need us now more than ever, and with federal dollars coming into many settings at least some of that money should go into the wages of the workers!
- Once the Legislature goes into session in February, for three months, take action when we send you NASW/CT legislative alerts. All of NASW/CT’s many legislative
successes are directly because legislators heard from you, their constituent.

- This is a good time for the Chapter to re-establish our Children’s Committee. If you are interested in being on the ground floor of restarting the committee let me know at skarp.naswct@socialworkers.org

- Tell us what you are seeing “on the ground” and what recommendations you have. Our Chapter’s advocacy is as only good as the information we receive from members. Don’t think we probably know already, tell us!

NASW/CT has put together an initial position paper on the crisis in children’s mental health that included 12 recommendations [http://naswct.org/nasw-ct-has-issued-a-comprehensive-statment-on-the-crisis-in-childrens-mental-health](http://naswct.org/nasw-ct-has-issued-a-comprehensive-statment-on-the-crisis-in-childrens-mental-health). It has been distributed to key policy makers in the Lamont administration, the Legislature, and mental health advocates. Additionally, an opinion piece was printed in the CT Mirror that was a distillment of the paper (reprinted in this newsletter). Our emphasis is on policy makers listening to social workers in the field.

Representative William Petit, ranking member of the Public Health Committee, who is part of a House working group on children’s mental health emailed me that he wrote the following to his colleagues “I suggested we invite folks with front-line knowledge!” Our message is getting across and your actions will amplify it.

In all of my years with CT NASW I have never experienced such a high degree of interest in, recognition of and support for expansion of social work positions. It is happening in nursing homes, police departments, libraries and municipalities. At a forum in mid-December sponsored by the Governor’s Task Force on Police Accountability and Transparency a panel of presenters mentioned social workers over and over again, and none of them were social workers!

Without question, we are in a moment of time for social work to shine. Families hold us in highest of esteem because we have made a positive difference in their lives. School teachers and administrators are turning to the school social worker at a time when students are fearful, angry and stressed in ways even long-time educators have never experienced. I hear police chiefs saying our officers are not social workers and we need social workers to respond to non-criminal, social issues calls. Even in the hierarchical health care system there is talk of the social determinants of health, and who has worked on social determinants for over a 100 hundred years? Who is best prepared to successfully address social determinants? Social workers!

It is our moment in time. Social workers are recognized for the quality services and solutions we bring to the table. Employers and policy makers are seeking us out. This is social work’s moment – together let’s make the potential opportunities a reality.
NASW/CT Calls for Action on Children’s Mental Health Crisis

This first appeared in the CT Mirror, December 8, 2021. Authored by Stephen Wanczyk-Karp, LMSW, NASW/CT Executive Director

Covid-19 has brought on a behavioral health tsunami, a crisis in the brewing even before the pandemic. The effects on children’s health and mental health will be long-term. Children who have had Covid may become long haulers with both physical and behavioral health problems lasting years, or a lifetime. The solutions being sought must address both the immediacy of the crisis and the long-term needs. Here are some recommendations:

**School social workers**: School social workers provide prevention, early identification, crisis intervention, counseling, and working to connect students with needed services. School social workers address drug use, conflict resolution, self-esteem, child neglect and abuse, losses, and the list goes on. These services benefit the student, the student’s family, teachers, and administrators.

The **NASW Standards for School Social Work Services** call for a ratio of 1 school social worker for every 250 students. Regretfully, CT schools are not required to have school social workers and, in those schools that do the social worker may split their time between multiple schools. Expansion of school social work services is critically needed.

**School Based Health Centers (SBHC)**: Children today have more stress than ever before that place increasing numbers of children at risk. For many of these children mental health services are not available due to cost, lack of insurance coverage, myths and stigma of mental health services, lack of accessible care in the community, lack of transportation, long wait periods, lack of culturally appropriate services, and parent’s that are struggling with multiple jobs and schedules that leaves no time to bring their children to a mental health program. SBHCs addresses all of these obstacles to care. SBHCs must be expanded throughout the state, from distressed communities to affluent municipalities.

Not all schools have the space necessary for a full SBHC, however the vast majority of schools should be able to accommodate a **mental health school-based clinic** that consists of a behavioral health clinician within the school. The necessary space consists of a private office and costs are much reduced compared to a full services clinic.

**Student Loan Forgiveness and Cost of Education**: At one time Connecticut had a student loan forgiveness program through DPH. Loan forgiveness is an excellent way to recruit and retain behavioral health providers to serve in practice fields that have shortages of qualified professionals. Such a program must include clinical social workers given that social workers are the largest group of mental health providers.

Thinking in the longer term, Connecticut must make it more affordable to attain the degree in the first place. A MSW degree can cost upwards of $70,000 in tuition, leaving many qualified individuals unable to enter a program, especially individuals from communities of color. Tuition waivers, tuition reimbursement and scholarships should all be considered.

**Compensation**: Salaries are another obstacle to attracting and retaining social workers and other behavioral health professionals. This is a pre-pandemic problem that has been made far worse due to Covid-19. Reimbursement rates for providers in independent practice is woefully inadequate and the non-profit sector has been so poorly funded that they struggle to offer competitive salaries. If we expect to have qualified professionals taking on some of the most difficult work in the health care field, in a pandemic and post pandemic, salaries and provider reimbursement rates must significantly
increase. This must include increased state funding for community based non-profits salaries. Private health insurers (who get annual rate increases approved by the CT Department of Insurance), must be called to task for stagnant and insufficient reimbursement rates.

**Self-Care:** Behavioral health providers are in need of self-care. Support services and programs are needed to assure behavioral health providers can continue their stressful work. Students can take off 2 mental health days. How about behavioral health providers being given 2 paid mental health days annually?

**Integrated Health Care:** It is undisputable that physical health and mental health are intertwined. Now is the time to incentivize and expand integrated health care within pediatric services. Clinical social workers who are trained in addressing social determinants, can provide assessment, consultation, case management, referral and follow-up services. Utilizing a warm hand-off from physician to social worker creates a fuller care model for children and parents.

**Medicaid Provider Status:** Providers should be allowed to work at their highest level of Scope of Practice. For social work this means Medicaid giving provider status to Licensed Master Social Workers (LMSW) practicing within an established independent practice. There are many independent practices that are employing LMSWs, however they are not currently Medicaid eligible providers in such settings. This inclusion would increase the availability of qualified clinical social workers to serve the Medicaid population.

Policy makers must engage those professionals who are directly providing children’s mental health services. Social workers, who are essential workers, are ready to be at the solutions table.

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**Member in the News**

Shazia Chaudhry, LCSW has been appointed by National NASW to co-chair a taskforce to revise the *NASW Standards for Social Work Standards in Long-term Care Facilities*. The current Standards were adopted in 2003. Shazia is the co-chair of the Chapter’s Aging Committee and has many years of experience in long-term care facilities, both in direct services and administration. Shazia Chaudhry is the Director of Community Relations, Dementia Friends CT Program Lead at LiveWell in Southington.
Pat Hartman Receives National NASW Award

On December 10, 2021 Pat Hartman, Coordinator of Professional Development for NASW/CT received the NASW Council of Chapter Executive Directors Gilman/Wells Award. This award is given to one Chapter staff person each year who has demonstrated exemplary work in a specific aspect of Chapter operations.

Pat has been a steady and superb employee who has overseen the Chapter’s continuing education programs for the past 15 years. If this was an award for everyday wonderfulness, Pat would have been its recipient sooner. These past two years however has challenged the Chapter in ways we never anticipated and Pat has stepped up and met the continuing education needs of social workers in Connecticut as well as the programmatic and non-dues revenue needs of this Chapter during this ongoing pandemic.

Pat has responsibility for the annual conference, the provider approval program, the annual awards dinner, continuing education workshops and members inquiries related to continuing education. She also handles a variety of member inquiries outside of continuing education that finds their way to her, works closely with the administrative assistant and bookkeeper, and edits the chapter newsletter. Her position is 25 hours per week but in reality, it’s whatever it takes to get the work done right.

Just prior to the start of the pandemic, after completion of all the steps needed for the annual conference, a one-day conference that offers 32-35 workshops, a keynote speaker, a bookstore, sponsors, and 30 plus exhibitors, we awoke to news that the hotel we have used for years had been closed due to non-payment of state taxes. Pat had written the brochure that details each workshop, keynote and registration information, and it had just been printed. We were 4 months out of the conference date. Pat proceeded to hunt for a new hotel that is no small matter in a state that has few hotels that can accommodate 500 plus attendees and at least a dozen breakout rooms, all within our budget. Pat located and negotiated for a facility, arranging for a lower than usual cost given our circumstances but it meant a different day. So, Pat then had to confirm the new date with over 35 presenters, 30 plus exhibitors and when the keynote said she could not present on the new date, Pat successfully searched for a keynoter keeping in mind that time was ticking to get out the new date/location. We were set for a short while until Covid-19 shut down the state. After much deliberation we reluctantly postponed the conference into 2021.

When Covid-19 hit the CT Chapter literally had no experience with online education and virtual webinars. Continuing education is 40% of the Chapter’s budget with the majority of it being the annual conference and in-person trainings. Pat was tasked with creating an online continuing education program. Despite her having never planned online/virtual continuing education (CE), Pat learned the basics and had the Chapter’s online CE programming up and running in late spring. Since than we have typically offered 2-3 webinars per month, on a range of topics, with almost 100% donation of time by presenters.
The other major aspect of Pat’s work is overseeing the provider approval program. This program authorizes outside organizations to issue continuing education units. Our program is recognized for social work, marital & family therapy, professional counselors and psychology CEUs. In 2019 we processed 719 applications. In 2020 we saw a temporary drop after Covid-19 hit, yet Pat still managed well over 500 applications. In 2021 we are seeing a resurgence of applications that Pat must handle. Pat recruits and trains volunteer reviewers, works with applicants and coordinates the database with the administrative staff and bookkeeper. As Covid-19 disrupted our program, Pat had to pivot to handling of applications for virtual trainings, which had been a small portion of the business prior to the pandemic. This required great patience by Pat as she worked with providers to help them in converting their programs and the CE approval application to meet our requirements.

Chapter leadership often receive praise for Pat from the CE providers who work with her on their approval applications. Pat goes out of her way to get even late applications through our process. Likewise, our volunteer reviewers praise Pat and they stay with us for many years as a volunteer, usually longer than the typical lifespan of a volunteer.

With a small staff we depend on each staff person to handle their aspect of the Chapter operations with minimal supervision. Pat always has taken on her work with gusto and has delivered top results. These past two years were not typical years and Pat’s work has shown how much can be done, in many ways starting from scratch. It is for all of these reasons and more that Pat Hartman is the 2021 Gilman/Wells Awardee.

Congratulations Pat! An award well deserved! The Chapter is proud to have you onboard!
Out of State College Students and Continuity of Therapy

At a time when telehealth has dramatically opened the availability of mental health care barriers still exist for continuity of care due to state licensing requirements. The vast majority of states require the licensed health care provider to be licensed in the state where the client is located, even if the client is in our state for a temporary period, such as attending school in Connecticut. While some states did loosen these restrictions at the start of the pandemic, many of the states, including Connecticut, have returned to restrictive practices.

NASW/CT receives numerous inquiries from licensed social workers both from out of state and in state who would like to continue treating existing clients who are out of state for school. We know that DPH and other professional provider associations also get inquiries. Unfortunately, we cannot effect changes in other states but we can in our own.

NASW/CT has been lobbying key legislators on the Higher Education and Public Health Committees of the CT Legislature to pass continuity of care legislation that would create an exemption from CT licensure for out of state licensed behavioral health providers who have an existing therapeutic relationship with a student attending a college or university in Connecticut. Such an exemption could, depending on how it is written, be extended to younger students in private schools and persons visiting Connecticut on a temporary basis.

We are pleased to announce that we have a commitment from Representative Josh Elliott, co-chair of the Higher Education Committee to raise a bill for public hearing and the Ranking House member, Irene Haines (minority party leader in the committee) is in support, offering us bi-partisan support. Other legislators that we have spoken to have given us positive feedback too. Passage of such a bill could become a model law for other states to enact.

The 2022 Legislative Session starts in February and runs for 3 months. It is “short session” that means lots of work will be needed to accomplish legislation. Watch for legislative alerts and updates once the session gets started.

Recorded Trainings Now Available

Some of the trainings we have been doing via Zoom were recorded and are now available on the CE Institute. These would count towards the 10 CECs you can have via web based (pre-recorded) media and because they are approved by NASW/CT, they are accepted in Connecticut. Thanks again to the presenters who helped make this possible!

“Mindfulness for Social Workers” by Dana Schneider, PhD, LCSW, ACC, CMT-P, RYT 200

“Zooming into Mindfulness; Telehealth with Children” by Rose-Ann Wanczyk-Karp, LCSW, BCD, DCSW, ACSW

“Screening, Assessment, Support, and Intervention for Victims & Survivors of Domestic Violence During the COVID-19 Pandemic” with Kai Belton, LCSW, Linda Blozie, and Sharlene Kerelejza, LMSW
NASW/CT 2022 Legislative Agenda

Advancing Racial, Economic, Environmental, and Social Justice

NASW/CT supports legislation that specifically promotes elimination of inequities and disparities relating to race, class, gender, and ethnicity. We seek actions that promote anti-racist policies and culturally responsive practices in all aspects of community life, including but not limited to social services, health care, mental health and addiction services, child care, education, affordable housing, employment, and equitable access to capital and justice; that address the feminization of poverty through the lens of intersectionality; and that address the inequitable impact of Covid-19.

NASW/CT supports legislation that bans child marriage and criminalizes genital mutilation.

NASW/CT supports the Transportation and Climate Initiative.

NASW/CT supports zoning reforms which include diverse housing options.

Protecting Safety Net Services

NASW/CT holds the position that every Connecticut resident and family should be able to meet their basic human needs and opposes cuts to safety net programs that serve Connecticut’s most vulnerable populations and supports programs that prevent individuals from falling into poverty.

NASW/CT promotes actions that advance Medicaid expansion within the state, including dental care; and that protect and provide families with economic stability regarding the benefits cliff.

Expanding Access to Comprehensive Medical and Behavioral Health Care

NASW/CT believes that every Connecticut resident has the right to accessible, comprehensive health care. Specifically, we support public options for health coverage, expansion of Medicaid/HUSKY eligibility to 201% of the federal poverty level, and Medicaid coverage for undocumented immigrants.

NASW/CT supports encouragement of integrated health care that provides a continuum of care and applies "no wrong door" practices and procedures.

NASW/CT supports legislation that addresses the tsunami of behavioral health needs brought on by Covid-19, focusing on the needs of children. We support expansion of school-based mental health clinics and employment of school social workers, school psychologists and school counselors in every school.

NASW/CT supports legislation allowing continued behavioral health treatment from out-of-state therapists while their clients are attending school in Connecticut.
Policing, Justice, and Prison Reform

NASW/CT supports legislation that specifically promotes youth justice reform, elimination of solitary confinement, reallocating funds from incarceration to decarceration, police accountability, and programs that offer community-based crisis interventions — including peers, treatment, and alternatives to arrest and incarceration.

NASW/CT supports legislation that raises the age of child arrest from 10 to 12 years old; automatically erases youth records at age 18; bans the use of chemical agents on youth; and establishes differential response programs for children under the age of 12.

NASW/CT supports legislation that promotes community-based sentencing for specific offenses by low-risk primary caregivers.

NASW supports inclusion of licensed clinical social workers to the a) list of providers eligible to perform mental health assessments of law enforcement officers and b) new 988 crisis response system.

Voting and Election Reform

NASW/CT supports encouragement of voting by all eligible residents. We support mail in voting and restoration of voting rights for parolees.

Tax Reform

NASW/CT supports tax reform that promotes economic justice. We support increased income taxes on the wealthy, expansion of the estate and gift tax, and establishment of a surcharge on investment income and a sunset on corporate tax breaks. To address the growing inequity, we support a state Child Tax Credit to supplement, and supplant, the temporary relief of the federal credit.

Protecting and Strengthening the Profession

NASW/CT supports legislation that allows social workers to practice at their highest level of scope of practice. We support measures to assure workplace safety, inclusive of physical and emotional trauma and personal protective equipment. We recommend reducing tuition costs for behavioral health degrees and addressing loan forgiveness for behavioral health professionals in practice fields experiencing shortages of personnel and/or serving communities of greatest need, including social workers as an eligible profession.

NASW/CT promotes inclusion of social workers on relevant statutory advisory committees, task forces, commissions, and working groups.
DCF Succeeding On Hiring BSW/MSW Applicants

It was 2012 when NASW/CT gained data that only 28% of the social workers at DCF held a social work degree. We used this figure as part of a campaign to require the State of Connecticut to give preference in hiring to candidates with a BSW or MSW degree. The campaign had begun in March 2011 when the Chapter’s Board of Directors authorized a multi-year campaign to achieve preference in hiring for the State of Connecticut.

In December, 2012 than DCF Commissioner Joette Katz issued an administrative order that DCF would begin to give preference in hiring to BSWs and MSWs for the position of social worker. It took two more years, until February 2014 for the State of Connecticut to institute preference in hiring for executive branch agencies.

At the end of 2021 we have data from DCF that in a review of 487 social work hires, 55% hold a BSW or MSW degree. This increase in professional social workers is a major improvement that is a direct result of the State Social Work Jobs Campaign. DCF also reports that of their most recent applicant pool of 200 there is a strong contingent of degreed social workers. Plus, DCF’s internship program of social work students have provided a steady pipeline for new hires.

On July 1, 2019 the preference in hiring of BSWs and MSWs for all social worker classifications in state service became law, as part of the Social Work Title Protection Act. This was a direct result of the State determining that state social work services improved with the increasing number of qualified, degreed social workers.

The professionalization of the State of Connecticut’s social work workforce is ongoing. Progress to date has been amazing and puts Connecticut far ahead of most states. Those interested in social work employment with the State should go to https://portal.ct.gov/DCF/Human-Resources/Employment

Choosing NASW Continuing Education Programs a Great Choice

We know that when it comes to continuing education (CE) programs you have lots of choices. The CE field has blossomed with providers, especially online and virtual programming. So why choose a NASW CE program or a program approved by NASW/CT? Here’s why:

- You never need to wonder if the program qualifies for licensure renewal. If it has the NASWCT approval it is recognized by DPH for renewal of your license.
- NASW/CT reviews each program the Chapter approves for relevance to social work, qualifications of presenters and value of content. That is not true of all CE approving bodies – some just give the providers a blanket approval without individual program review.

- NASW members receive a special member rate on almost all of our CE offerings.
- NASW/CT uses the revenue from CE programs to support the Chapter’s advocacy for the profession and Chapter operations that benefit our membership and the larger social work community. Attending a NASW/CT CE program is a great way to get your required education units while supporting your Association. Our programs are not run for the purposes of making a business profit.

So, when you are looking at CE programs consider the above. We may not always be able to compete on price with the national for-profit CE industry but for a little more money your dollar will go a lot further with NASW/CT.
Chapter Leadership

Have you thought about taking on a leadership role in your chapter?

Or perhaps you know someone who would make a terrific chapter leader?

*If so, now is the time to let us know!*

Being an elected leader on the Board of Directors of the NASW/CT Chapter provides you with the opportunity to have a direct say in the chapter’s programs, policies, use of resources, and future directions. It’s also a terrific way to meet colleagues from throughout the state and to gain a feel for the pulse of social work practice in Connecticut. You will be providing the Association with your expertise and in turn making networking connections that will help in your own career advancement. Truly it is a win, win situation that’s enjoyable too!

In developing the ballot, the chapter seeks to successfully meet the chapter’s diversity plan, geographic representation, and representation from diverse fields of practice. All nominees are given full consideration and while we may not be able to offer all nominees a place on the ballot these individuals are often considered for other leadership appointments within the Chapter.

NASW/CT is seeking members to serve on the Board of Directors as **Secretary**, **BSW & MSW student representative**, **At-Large Member**, **Region 1 Representative (North & Central CT)** and **Region 2 (Southcentral CT)**. Terms of office for the Board are for three years, except for students who serve one year.

The Board of Directors meets virtually on alternating months on the second Tuesdays of the month from 6 – 8 PM.

If you are interested in being nominated for a chapter leadership position, would like to know more about available elected opportunities or would like to recommend a colleague please contact Steve Wanczyk-Karp at the Chapter Office – 860-212-4054 or skarp.naswct@socialworkers.org
Stop, Look, and Listen! *Recent Federal Changes*

The Cures Act and The No Surprises Act
Practical Steps for Clinical Social Work Compliance

February 10, 2022, 9:30 to 11:30
via Zoom

Join NASW/CT and Robert Madden, LCSW (CT), LICSW (MA), JD for this two-hour overview of recent federal regulation changes that are essential for your practice.

The Cures Act came out in April of 2021 and is a federal regulation granting patients more access to their medical records that are in online data bases including case notes/progress notes produced by social workers. This has led to some problems with clients reading what their therapists are writing about them or not being able to access their records because social workers have not made the required changes. Social workers have expressed concern about access to records by parents of minors and those who may be involved in intimate partner violence so it is critical that clinicians consider carefully how they need to structure their documentation and record keeping.

The No Surprises Act went into effect on January 1, 2022 and has immediate implications for clinical social workers (CSWs) and many other health provider types as well as healthcare facilities, insurers, and health plans. Enacted by Congress in late 2020 the No Surprises Act is intended to prevent consumers from receiving unanticipated medical bills. The new regulations apply broadly to all clinical social workers who are licensed, certified, or approved by the state and provide services to patients who are uninsured or wish to self-pay (e.g., are insured but do not intend to file a claim). Under this regulation, providers are now required to furnish good faith estimates (GFEs) to current/future patients of these types.

This workshop will review the new regulations and outline the specific actions that should be made by your practice to comply with the changes. The session will include time for a questions and answer period. For more information and to prepare for the workshop, please review these Social Work Blog articles.

Update: Federal Rule to Prevent Surprise Health Care Billing - Jan 5, 2022
How the Rule Applies to Clinical Social Work Services – Dec 21, 2021

Cost for the workshop is $20 to NASW Members, $60 to Non Members, Approved for 2 CECs

Click here to register.
The NASW/CT 2022 Advocacy Fund Drive

*Out of crisis comes opportunity. This is Social Work’s Time!*

**Our Legislative Agenda Includes:**

**Social Justice Issues**
- Protecting the safety net for Connecticut’s most vulnerable citizens;
- Acting on the crisis in children’s mental health;
- Addressing access to comprehensive health and behavioral health;
- Expanding mental health services in schools;
- Furthering criminal justice reforms;
- Advancing racial, economic, and environmental justice;
- Increasing funding for community non-profit providers;
- Banning child marriage and criminalizing genital mutilation;
- Promoting progressive revenue sources to pay for human services.

**Social Work Legislation**
- Reducing annual licensing fees;
- Increasing compensation by employers and insurers;
- Passing paid mental health days and other support services;
- Adding LCSWs as mental health providers for workers compensation and police officer’s assessments;
- Instituting student loan forgiveness and tuition reimbursement;
- Stepping up the appointments of social workers to state task forces;
- Defeating any bills that infringe on social work practice.

100% of your donation goes to the costs of NASW/CT’s legislative and administrative advocacy. Donating today means that NASW/CT is best positioned to have maximum policy impact.

All donations of $35 or greater received by February 11, 2022 will be entered in a drawing on Valentine’s Day for restaurant gift certificates.  

**YES I AM BUILDING SOCIAL WORK POLITICAL POWER!**

|$500____  $250____  $100____  $50____  $35____  $25____  $10____  Other____ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
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Donate Online [http://naswct.org/donate-to-advocacy-fund/](http://naswct.org/donate-to-advocacy-fund/) using this form:

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Credit Card Type:_________________ Card No.______________________________

Expiration Date:__________________ 3 Digit Number on Back of Card:_________

**Send Checks To:** NASW/CT Advocacy Fund, 2139 Silas Deane Hwy. Ste. 205, Rocky Hill, CT 06067

Contributions are an investment in your profession but regretfully not tax deductible.
Politics got you down? Want to be more involved but don’t know where to start? The Campaign School for Social Workers is for anyone who wants to be more politically active as a volunteer, activist, career path or candidate! You will learn from political social workers and national experts why you belong in politics! You will also gain valuable skills; hear what it’s like to serve, support diverse representation and power; and why the Code of Ethics is our superpower in these politically challenging times.

**Topics include:**

- Running a winning campaign
- Fundraising
- Leadership
- Using the Code in politics, social media and your opposition
- Digital and mail communications
- GOTV and vote by mail
- Supporting diverse power and representation
- What’s it really like to serve
- Social work and Democracy

**Day One** is led by Kate Coyne-McCoy, MSW who is a trained social worker, advocate, coalition builder, organizer, recruiter and former candidate for Congress. Kate has trained more than 9,000 candidates and directly assisted with hundreds of successful elections from school board to U.S. President and around the world through the Oval Office program at Harvard University.

**Day Two** is led by Tanya Rhodes Smith, Director of the Humphreys Institute for Political Social Work, and features conversations with elected officials, powerful discussions on race and representation and interactive workshops.
NASW/CT Call for Improved Salaries, Mental Health Days, Lower Licensing Fees, Tuition Reimbursement and Loan Forgiveness

**Compensation:** Insufficient salaries are an obstacle to attracting and retaining social workers. Reimbursement rates for providers in independent practice is woefully inadequate and the non-profit sector has been so poorly funded that they cannot keep the workers they employ. To keep qualified professionals that are being asked to take on some of the most difficult work in the health care field, in a pandemic and post pandemic, NASW/CT calls for salaries and provider reimbursement rates to be significantly increased. This includes private health insurers (who get annual rate increases approved by the CT Department of Insurance), who we call to task for high corporate profits on the backs of providers doing the care.

**Mental Health Days:** State law now allows students to take up to two non-consecutive days of excused absence for mental health days. The Chapter calls upon the Legislature’s Labor Committee to require employers to offer the same, though paid, for behavioral health workers.

**Lower Licensing Fees:** CT is consistently in the top three states for the highest cost of licensing. We are also one of only 7 states that have an annual license. The Chapter supports licensing fee relief by making the license bi-annual at the current fee schedule.

**Student Loan Forgiveness and Cost of Education:** At one time Connecticut had a student loan forgiveness program through DPH, though social workers did not qualify. Loan forgiveness is an excellent way to recruit and retain behavioral health providers to serve in practice fields that have shortages of qualified professionals. We call upon the State to have a State Loan Forgiveness Program that includes social workers.

Loan forgiveness is a near term solution. Thinking in the longer term, Connecticut must make it more affordable to attain the degree in the first place. A MSW degree can cost upwards of $70,000 in tuition, leaving many qualified individuals unable to enter a program, especially individuals from communities of color. NASW calls for state funded tuition reimbursement, scholarships and other steps to lower the tuition costs for attaining a social work degree.

**Self-Care:** The clients get to speak to the providers, but who do the providers get to speak to? NASW/CT supports services and programs to assure behavioral health providers can continue their stressful work.

In the 2022 legislative session and going forward thereafter we will be advocating with state policy makers to institute the above reforms.
The Julio Morales, Jr., Scholarship

Scholarship Details:
- This is a one-time $250 scholarship awarded to a limited number of applicants.
- Scholarships will be awarded March 2022.

Application Requirements:
1. Identify as Latinx, Latina, Latino, or Hispanic
2. Current BSW or MSW student

How to Apply:
Submit your application at https://tinyurl.com/JMScholarship

If you have any questions please reach out to your Network co-chairs:
Alberto Cifuentes, Jr. & Celaura Estrada at LSWCTnetwork@gmail.com
Spotlight on Ethics

NASW CT Ethics Committee is launching Spotlight on Ethics! Each newsletter will feature a deidentified scenario related to social work ethics and include responses from Ethics Committee members. Members interested in participating in Spotlight on Ethics by submitting scenarios or responses or joining the committee can send an email to Yvette.tyndale2020@gmail.com.

Committee meets 1st Thursday of each month from 6:30pm-7:30pm.

Title: Show me the Evidence

A clinical social worker has been providing family therapy for a mother, Allison, and her five-year-old son, Max, in an outpatient setting for one month. Allison walks in session with Max and thrusts her phone towards the social worker. She tells the social worker “Look at how he behaved last weekend when I told him I had to leave him with his father because I had to go to work. He broke my valuable things and I have the proof to show you. I recorded him for five minutes because no one believes me.” Max held his head down and began to cry in session. He has difficulty separating from his mother and will often cry, scream, and bang his head on items when he becomes dysregulated. Should the social worker allow the video to be played in session?

Take a look at committee members’ thoughts and share your own by emailing Yvette.tyndale2020@gmail.com or through the survey link that will be sent to your email!

The video should not be played in session. The ethical principle “Social workers respect the inherent dignity and worth of the person” applies here. Max is an individual who is vulnerable and obviously disturbed by the video. Showing the video can negatively impact Max's self esteem and encourage his mother to record him when he is dysregulated. This may cause emotional harm to Max and as social workers, it is our ethical duty to protect clients from harm.

Yvette Tyndale, LCSW, ACSW
Committee Chair
Value: Importance of Human Relationships
Ethical Principle: Social workers recognize the central importance of human relationships.

The video should not be played in session. The social worker should continue treating the family unit as a whole and continue to process Max’s difficulty separating from his mother as he clearly views her as his safe place. Showing the video would cause him further distress and could potentially damage their relationship and make him more vulnerable. Continuing to work within the family unit to strengthen their relationship, assist Max with emotional regulation and find additional support and coping skills would be the ethical solution.

Amber Borges, LCSW, ACHP-SW, CCTP, Committee Member

The therapist should respectfully decline to view the video. The principle underlying our value of service is “to help people in need and to address social problems.” Watching the video does not help either client and can be seen as violating the overarching health care ethical principle of “do not harm” as well. There is limited (if any) potential benefit to either client of having the video viewed by the therapist. There is clear evidence of potential for harm through a) reinforcement of the mother’s negative perception of her child and her making recordings of his distress and b) further humiliation and emotional harm to child who is already quite vulnerable.

Suzanne Rosenberg, LCSW
Committee Member

The emotional reactive way in which the mother presents the video to the therapist is informative of the strength of the mother’s fear of not being believed. The tears of her son are informative of the stress the young boy carries in not being able to manage his emotions and not have a good relationship with his mother. It becomes ethically important for the social worker to prevent further emotional harm and address the worries of both the mother and the son attached to this video. By relating immediately to the emotional reactivity of each family member, the social worker strengthens her own connection to them. The social worker might then ask the mother to send the video to her and delete it from her phone. The social worker can tell the mom she will put the video in a holding file and not look at it. By holding the video in a file, the social worker demonstrates that she trusts the mother’s verbal descriptions. It also decreases access to the video that might be used in a harmful way. If the mother cannot delete the video, then prioritizing the mother’s feelings may take several individual sessions. The social worker would work with the mother to delete the video which can have further emotionally disruptive effects on the child, and to create the trust the mother needs for family therapy to be effective.

Catherine Hogan, LCSW
Committee Member
Latino/a Social Workers Network
Presents....

Highlighting Research
ON/WITH LATINX COMMUNITIES

Isabel Logan, LCSW, EdD
Assistant Professor, ECSU
"Experiences of Bilingual Professionals in the Court System: A Microaggressions Lens"

Loida Reyes, LCSW, PhD
Chair & Assistant Professor, SCSU
"Cultural Sacrifices: Latinx Youth Engaged in Public School Choice"

Madeline Perez De Jesus, LMSW, PhD
Associate Professor, UCI
"Sociologist Pierre Bourdieu on Social Workers Assisting Latino Clients in Navigating Systems"

Monday, January 31 1 6:30pm-8pm EST
via Zoom (Approval for 1.5 CEUs Pending)
Register for FREE at https://forms.gle/KsHWgFc4KwLDJLkCA
Licensing Application and Renewals
Common Questions & Concerns We Hear

The Chapter receives many inquiries on licensing, both initial application and renewal. Here are some recent emails and calls we have handled with tips on what to do and expect.

1. **I applied for my license LMSW online, paid the fee, and have not heard anything from DPH.** Licensing applications for the LMSW are made online and communication from DPH is by email using the email address the applicant supplies the Department. If you have not had a response, check your spam or junk folders.

2. **I have renewed my LMSW online, my credit card was charged and I did not receive my license.** Similar to the above, DPH will issue you the renewed license by email. DPH will process the renewal and send your documents to you within 3 business days. If you do not have your license document by 3 business days search your spam or junk folders.

3. **I have renewed my LCSW and have not heard from DPH.** LCSW renewal is done both online and through the mail. LCSW renewals are sent out by mail once per month on the third week of the following month. For example, if a transaction occurred in November the license is mailed the third week in December. Given the slowdown in mail we suggest you wait at least two weeks after the third week of the month before contacting DPH.

4. **I am working toward my LCSW and am changing employers. When I am ready to apply for the LCSW what happens if I cannot reach my former employer or supervisor.** Ask your employer/supervisor to complete the DPH forms for licensure application and have the employer send them directly to DPH. The Department will open a file and hold onto your forms until you apply. Do not collect the forms and submit them yourself as they cannot be verified as accurate.

Wondering how to get 10 Continuing Ed Online Credits that you know will meet Connecticut’s licensing requirements?

Go to the [CE Institute](http://www.naswct.org) on the NASW/CT website at [www.naswct.org](http://www.naswct.org), then click on Continuing Education/CE Institute. There are dozens of classes on dozens of topics at reasonable prices!

Donna B. Saponaro
Manager

DBWS Professional Medical Billing LLC
Medical Billing/Account Management Specializing in Behavioral Health
74 Arrowhead Drive
Griswold, CT 06351
Phone: (860) 376-6878
Fax: (860) 376-5878
E-mail: dbws@sbcglobal.net

“Your office away from the office specializing in Behavioral Health”
The NASW/CT Diversity Committee Supported IRIS in Welcoming Our New Connecticut Residents

Director Chris George of Integrated Refugee immigration Services (IRIS) sent a newsletter on December 9, 2021 to thank the community for their support. He wrote: “Since October, IRIS has welcomed more than 370 Afghan refugees over a two-month period, more than they usually welcome in a 12-month span. IRIS expects to welcome up to 600 more refugees from around the world in 2022.”

To aid in supporting refugees the Diversity Committee reached out to IRIS. IRIS then provided the Committee with a wish list of toiletries, undergarments, and cleaning supplies; items which will help these refugees get started in their new homes and lives. The committee collected these items from November 10 to December 10, 2021 at schools of social work throughout CT.

The Diversity Committee would like to thank the members of the NASW-CT chapter and individuals who helped make our item drive a success. Main collection bins were set up at Southern Connecticut State University and Central Connecticut State University. Both these school’s office staffs, and the NASW/CT, sent out emails about these donation sites.

As a result, others outside of these schools collected goods for the item drive. A professor at Southern Connecticut State University asked students to bring in donations and canned goods. Social work students and student associations hosted school-based donation bins at Quinnipiac University, Fairfield University, and Western Connecticut State University and some NASW-CT members hosted drives on their own and collected items.

Altogether, we collected over 1,200 items on IRIS’ wish list. Items were dropped off to IRIS on December 13 and December 20, 2021. Food items were given to the Prudence Crandall Center and a local food bank and clothes and toy items were given to Goodwill Industries. Director Chris George sent his appreciation as well as the below information from his newsletter which highlights the two main services that IRIS provides and how individuals may continue to support IRIS.

Service Information:
1. Case Management Services: "Arzoo and other case managers make sure refugee families who have just arrived to Connecticut have access to all of IRIS’ services like job placement, English classes, and legal aid. She also signs them up for food stamps and health insurance and tries to get them on their feet in 90 days." Arzoo had this observation about the refugees and her role: "When they arrive they are so confused, and they have been through so much trauma. You can see that on their faces. With someone else they might not feel comfortable asking where the halal store is or little girls asking if their school will they allow them to wear a hijab. I am there to guide them."

2. “IRIS provides a removal defense legal team who represent individuals who are in immigration proceedings, facing the threat of deportation. The legal team partners closely with IRIS’ SUN team (Services for Undocumented Neighbors), which provides support to undocumented immigrants. Both teams are part of the Connecticut Coalition for Immigrant Freedom. Along with New Haven Legal Assistance and community organizations across CT, they seek to provide assistance for all immigrants in removal proceedings. The team works toward the day where all CT residents in removal proceedings have a right to the free services they need.”

Donation Information:
1. Donations can be made online at irisct.org
2. Send any checks, payable to IRIS, to: IRIS, 235 Nicoll Street, 2nd Floor, New Haven, CT 06511

Donation questions? Contact Julie Davis at 203-562-2095 ext 226 or jdavis@irisct.org.

Volunteer needs: Rally your community for Refugees! IRIS is looking for groups of volunteers to welcome evacuated Afghan families to your community. Co-sponsor groups find housing, enroll refugee children in school, facilitate job searches and help families navigate their new home. For information on co-sponsorship go to https://irisct.org/communitycosponsorship/.
National Association of Social Workers
Connecticut Chapter
LATINO/A SOCIAL WORKERS NETWORK

~2022 MENTORING PROGRAM~

SOCIAL.  CULTURAL.  EDUCATIONAL.  PROFESSIONAL.

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Mentoring for:
Latino/a BSW and MSW Students

A unique opportunity to be mentored by Latino/a senior professional social workers, who volunteer their time to help you succeed!

Spring Mentoring Schedule Includes Four (4) Focused, Structured Meetings:

January 28 - Engagement: New & Resisting Clients
February 25 - Intersection of Latinx and Social Work
March 25 - The Art of Negotiation: Salaries & Making Money
April 29 - Get Licensed: Learn All About the Licensing Process

You will also have the opportunity to be mentored as needed on a one-on-one basis!

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO APPLY TO BECOME A MENTEE
Contact us at LSWCTMentoring@gmail.com
What is Abolition?

What is Abolition Conversation Series for Connecticut Social Workers and Allies: Determining Our Role in this Sociohistorical Moment

Jan-Dec 2022

With the deaths of George Floyd and so many others at the hands of policing and vigilante violence, institutions across the country have begun to grapple with their role in upholding and maintaining White supremacist violence. Social Work as a profession is in the midst of our own reckoning. As we consider this, however, there are few spaces to have conversations about our role in society, in the movements for Black and Brown lives, and for liberation in an equitable and just society.

This conversation series is an opportunity to have just these conversations, centered around the idea of abolition in its broadest sense. Starting with policing and prisons but moving across institutions where Social Workers find ourselves as we do our work, this series is an opportunity for us to come together and consider our place in this sociohistorical moment and we continue our push towards healthier individuals, communities and society. Please join us as we grapple with this together.

3rd Mondays of every month of 2022, 7:30-9:00 pm

Registration at: https://quinnipiac.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJElc-qupjgoGNFXqrgpvFqxg5MBW5dFDEGR

-or-

https://tinyurl.com/277usv3y

[Participants can register for one or all conversations in the series]

All conversations will be offered at a $0-20 sliding scale. Proceeds will go to conversation framers speaking from their lived experiences of survival of systemic violence.

Sponsors: Connecticut Social Welfare Action Alliance, Quinnipiac University Department of Social Work

Proposed conversation schedule, 2022:

- January 17: What is abolition?
- February 21: Abolition and policing
- March 21: Abolition and incarceration
- April 18: Abolition and education
- May 16: Abolition and healthcare
- June 20: Abolition and child welfare
- July 18: Abolition and intimate partner violence
- August 15: Abolition and mental health systems
- September 19: Abolition and enfranchisement
- October 17: Abolition and immigration
- November 21: Abolition and indigenous sovereignty
- December 19: Abolition and substance use

*CEUs for licensed Social Workers will be provided through Quinnipiac University Department of Social Work
We are pleased to announce the upcoming Virtual Career Fair on January 26, 2022.

Meet and engage skilled professionals curious about or actively seeking new opportunities. NASW has an extensive outreach that will connect your careers with professionals from throughout the region.

Our comprehensive virtual platform is easy to use and provides employers the strong talent pool they’re looking for. Employers can preview registered candidates prior to the event to select candidates for interviews.

NASW is the largest membership organization of professional social workers in the world.

**Pricing for NASW**

**Standard Package:** $1,299

- One Virtual Career Fair Booth
- Unlimited resume database access until the end of the event
- Ability to schedule unlimited 1-on-1 interviews

**Premier Package:** $1,699

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- Ability to schedule unlimited 1-on-1 interviews
- Includes 1 (One) Premium Job Posting
- Exclusive employer profile branding available
Upcoming SWES Exam Prep Courses Now Online Via Zoom!

Due to circumstances around COVID-19, and the closure of venues, SWES has migrated its upcoming exam prep classes to Zoom! Please see the attached flyer for details. Register in advance to receive your Comprehensive Study Guide, included with registration, by mail, www.swes.net or by calling 800-933-8802.

2022 LICENSE EXAM PREP COURSE SCHEDULE

ALL COURSES ONLINE VIA ZOOM!

- February 5-6 — Two-day Course
- March 19 — One-day Intensive
- April 30-May 1 — Two-day Course
- June 4-5 — Two-day Course
- August 11-12 — Weekday Two-day course
- October 15 — One-day Intensive
- November 12-13 — Two-day Course

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Courses have been approved for CEC Hours (9/two-day, 5/one-day) by the NASW/CT and meet the continuing education criteria for Connecticut Social Work Licensure renewal.

All courses are taught in connection with —

- Sacred Heart University, School of Social Work
- Quinnipiac University, Social Work Department
- Springfield College, School of Social Work
- Connecticut Womens Consortium
- NASW Vermont
- NASW New Hampshire
- NASW Maine

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"Very beneficial and interactive..."
Reminders: On Our Website

Seeking Online Education for LCSW Renewal?

Visit the NASW/CT website [www.naswct.org](http://www.naswct.org) and click on the CE INSTITUTE. Here you will find a wide range of online classes and webinars all with continuing education credits. Remember CT LCSW renew allows up to 10 hours of home study including online education. Live webinars count the same as in-person programs.

No matter what practice field you are seeking education on you will find it at the NASW CE INSTITUTE @ [http://naswwa.inreachce.com/](http://naswwa.inreachce.com/)

Seeking LCSW Supervision?

If you are a LMSW seeking supervision for LCSW eligibility check out the NASW/CT [Supervisors Registry](http://naswct.org/supervisors-registry/). Here you will find supervisors that have met the criteria of NASW/CT to offer supervision. Under state law any LCSW can offer clinical LCSW supervision. NASW/CT has a higher standard that we apply to the LCSWs on the **Supervisor’s Registry**. Go to [http://naswct.org/supervisors-registry/](http://naswct.org/supervisors-registry/) to see the full list of available supervisors.

Are you an LCSW seeking to offer supervision? Consider being on the **Supervisors Registry**. For details on qualifications, cost and an online application go to [http://naswct.org/add-new-supervisor-listing/](http://naswct.org/add-new-supervisor-listing/)

Advertising Your Classified Ad on the Web

**NASW/CT ACCEPTS EMPLOYMENT AND CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING ON OUR WEB PAGE**

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Value added feature for advertisers. We will forward your ad to our members who have signed up for our Job Seekers list at no additional cost to you.
Contact Information

2139 Silas Deane Highway, Suite 205  
Rocky Hill, CT 06067

(860) 257-8066
Fax: (860) 257-8074

naswct.naswct@socialworkers.org
www.naswct.org

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National Office, DC  
*Members can make changes online

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www.socialworkers.org

NASW Assurance Services

855-385-2160

LCSW Exam Application—Department of Health

800-509-7603

Ethical Questions
Stephen Wanczyk-Karp, NASW/CT Executive Director

860-257-8066 x202  
skarp.naswct@socialworkers.org

Committee Participation  
NASW/CT Chapter Staff

860-257-8066

Licensing Questions  
NASW/CT Chapter Staff

860-257-8066

Continuing Education Information/Conference Questions  
Pat Hartman, NASW/CT Coordinator of Professional Development

860-257-8066 x204  
phartman.naswct@socialworkers.org

Bookkeeping  
Nicole LePore, NASW/CT Bookkeeper

860-257-8066 x203  
naswbookkeeper.naswct@socialworkers.org

Website, Newsletter, Advertising & Labels  
Meghan Maxwell, NASW/CT Office Administrator

860-257-8066  
mmaxwell.naswct@socialworkers.org