

NorthwesternTM
OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY

IMPACT



Spring 2026



FACULTY



A Message From the Department

On behalf of the Department of Social Work, we welcome you to the Northwestern Oklahoma State University's Social Work Program newsletter. This newsletter is updated bi-yearly and includes the most recent news from the department of social work throughout all of our campuses. Here you will see our most recent projects, upcoming events, student spotlights and more! We would like to thank those whose efforts assist us in preparing competent, effective Northwest Oklahoma generalist practice social workers. We are so grateful to our field agency partners, field instructors, adjunct instructors, and Social Work Advisory Board Members for enhancing and improving social services in our region. We look forward to all the new developments in the department and are excited to see the benefits these developments bring to our social work students.



DR. KYLENE REHDER, LCSW
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Social Work Program Director
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Uplift. Defend. Transform. - Ride Rangers Ride

DeSERVING Award Recipient

Alana Shotpouch

“I am deeply honored to receive this award,” Shotpouch said. “Serving my university and giving back to a community that has given me so much is truly a privilege. Thank you for this recognition.”



The deSERVING Ranger Award is awarded once a year to a qualified Northwestern student, who is nominated by a Northwestern faculty or staff member. The award started in 2015 and has been awarded to students from a variety of majors.

The
Department of
Social Work
was proud to
participate in
the Spring
2026
Showcase.



Spring Showcase

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE SOCIAL WORK SENIORS ON COMPLETING THEIR PRACTICUM ASSIGNMENTS!

10 Northwestern Oklahoma State University senior social work majors entered their field practicum assignments at agencies throughout Oklahoma and Kansas this spring semester.

Students must complete 420 contact hours, demonstrate 20 behaviors and master the program's nine core competencies as outlined by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). Field Education is a signature pedagogy for social work that instructs and socializes students to the fundamental dimensions of professional practice.

During field education, students are able to immerse themselves in practice and apply the skills and knowledge they have attained.

"Each student in field education is assigned a volunteer field instructor who dedicates their time to guiding student learning and reinforcing essential social work concepts, behaviors, and competencies," said Codi Harding, director of field experience and assistant professor of social work. "We are grateful for all of our past and present field instructors."

Listed below are the students currently in their field practicums, hometowns, and their practicum agency placements:

Itzel Castillo



Itzel Castillo of Laverne at
the Circle of Care in
Woodward

Mattie Gore



Mattie Gore of Taloga at Bent
Creek Counseling Services in
Woodward

Kaydence Decker



Kaydence Decker of Blair at the
Department of Human
Services in Oklahoma City

Karly Green



Karly Green of Newton, Kansas,
at Great Plains Health Center in
Cherokee

James Fanning



James Fanning of Enid at
Department of Human
Services in Enid

Tyra Hostetler



Tyra Hostetler of Harper,
Kansas, at the Patterson Health
Center in Anthony, Kansas

Jenna Maier



Jenna Maier of Alva at Bill
Johnson Correctional
Facility in Alva

Guadalupe Melchor



Guadalupe Melchor of
Glenville, Georgia, at
Shamrock Counseling
Services in Enid

Nicole Posada



Nicole Posada of Guymon
at the Western Plains Youth
and Family Services in
Woodward

Alana Shotpouch



Alana Shotpouch of Jay at
Delaware County
Children's Special
Advocacy Network in Jay

SWAT's Dignity Drive Collects Personal Hygiene Products

The most recent "Compassion in Action" Dignity Drive sponsored by the students in the Social Workers Association of Tomorrow (SWAT) chapter at Northwestern Oklahoma State University successfully gathered several personal hygiene products for the Youth and Family Services Family Court Systems.

Pictured on the left:

Isabella Burden



Pictured on the right:

Alana Shotpouch

The student-led organization, advised by Codi Harding, director of social work field education and assistant professor of social work, works to enhance students' educational experience through service projects and community engagement. "Each year, this event provides SWAT members with a meaningful way to help meet the basic needs of people in their local and nearby communities," Harding said. This year's drive gathered a variety of essential items, including toothbrushes, toothpaste, body wash, shampoo and conditioner, deodorant, laundry detergent, feminine hygiene products and other hygiene supplies. These donations will assist individuals receiving services through the Youth and Family Services of North Central Oklahoma Family Court Systems. "Access to basic hygiene is a foundation of human dignity," said Alana Shotpouch, a senior social work major from Jay who serves as SWAT secretary. "By coming together as a community, we can ensure that no one is left without the essentials of care. Every contribution strengthens the health, confidence, and unity of our neighbors."

One of SWAT's ongoing goals is to partner with local agencies and support the needs of the individuals they serve. The dignity drive is a key initiative that allows students to make a direct and meaningful impact. "The small act of participating in the Dignity Drive truly does make a huge difference in the community," said Kaydence Decker, a senior social work major from Blair, who serves as SWAT vice president. "It is great to see community members come together and provide others with everyday essentials."

Primp for Prom



The Northwestern Oklahoma State University Department of Social Work gave away more than 350 dresses to students representing 30 high schools from Oklahoma, Kansas and Texas at the 11th Annual Primp for Prom event at Woodward High School.

This year more than 500 dresses and 50 pairs of shoes were donated to the Northwestern Social Work Department that co-sponsors the event with Woodward High School.

Dr. Kylene Rehder, chair of the Northwestern Department of Social Work, social work program director and professor of social work, expressed appreciation for those who helped with this event's success.

"Please understand this event is about more than dresses," Rehder said. "We see it as a means to embody our university and professional commitment to serve. This community event provides financial support to families, builds a sense of community, celebrates inclusion, models service, and promotes positive self-images, confidence and empowerment to young people."







March is Social Work Month, and the NWOSU Department of Social Work was proud to join the celebration. This year's theme, "Uplift. Defend. Transform." reflects the core mission of social workers across the country. According to the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), there are more than 810,000 social workers in the United States, and the profession is among the fastest growing in the nation.

Social workers serve in hospitals, schools, mental health facilities, child welfare agencies, veterans' centers, hospice programs, and in public policy at every level of government. Dr. Kylene Rehder, put it this way: "Social workers stand alongside individuals and communities with an unwavering belief in their strength. To uplift is our calling, to defend is our duty and to transform is our promise – because every person deserves the chance to thrive."

SWAT Raises Awareness for Sexual Assault Awareness Month

The NWOSU Psychology Club and Social Workers Association of Tomorrow (SWAT) partnered to raise awareness about sexual assault in recognition of Sexual Assault Awareness Month in April.

Students created chalk writings around campus and set up resource tables and a support wall in the Student Center from April 6-10. These efforts aim to highlight the importance of prevention, support services, and awareness.





Wear Blue in Support of Survivors



Social work students Itzel and Neiliko are proudly wearing blue to support sexual assault survivors!

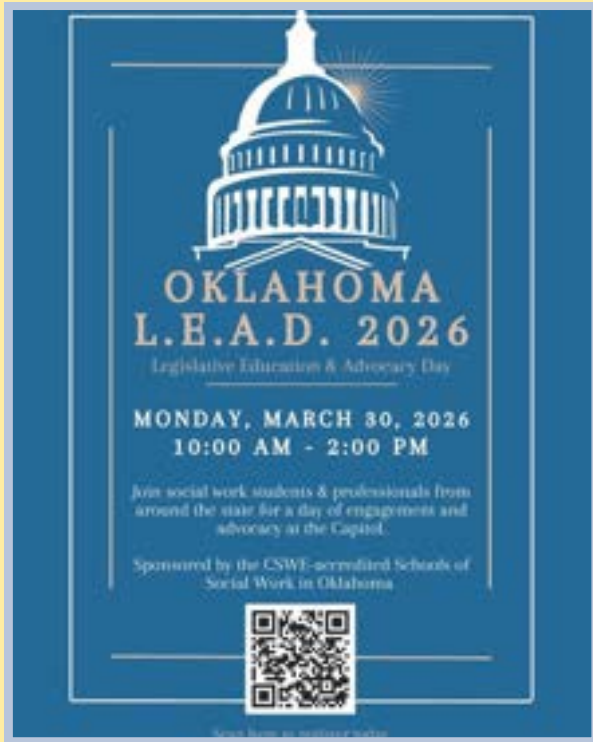
Social work students Isabella, Haylee, and Alana are proudly wearing blue today to show their support for children across Oklahoma in recognition of child abuse prevention and awareness month!



OK Wears Blue

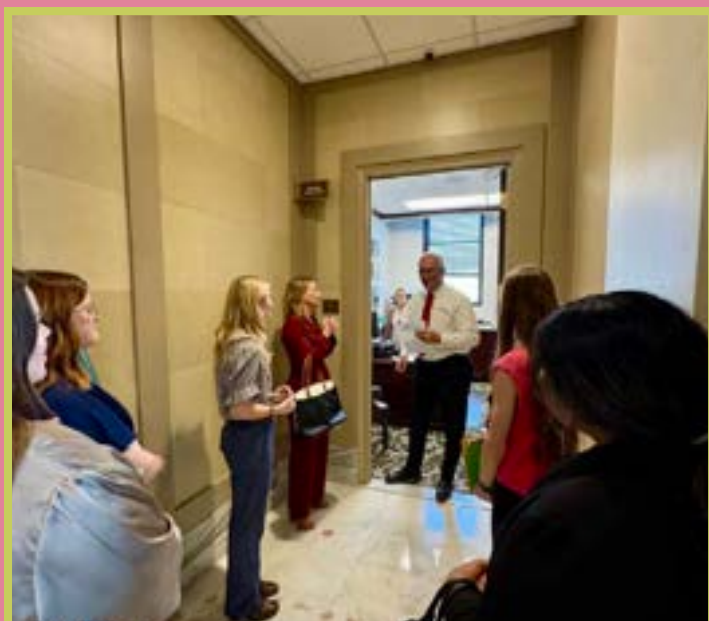
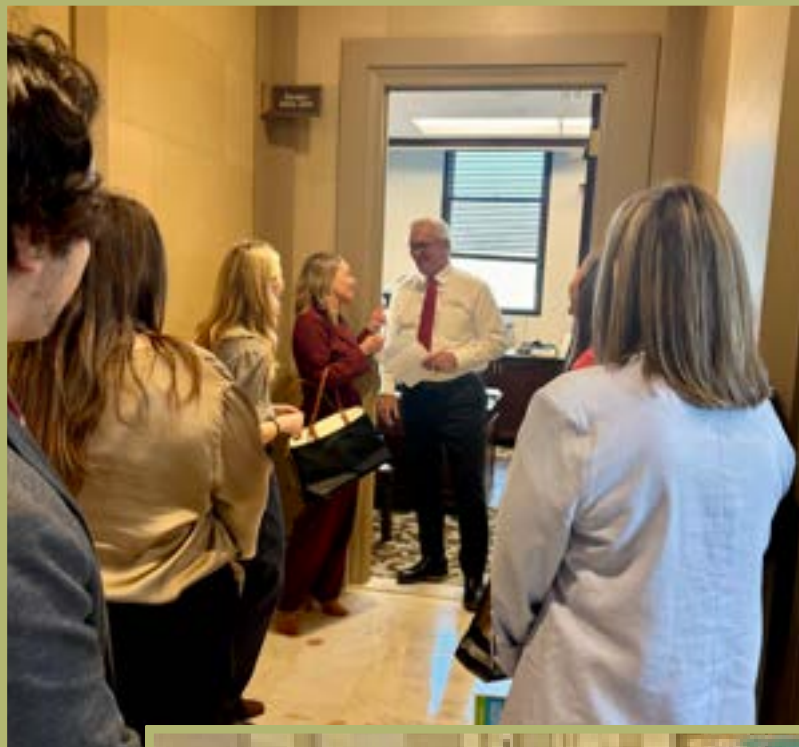


Legislative Education & Advocacy Day



LEAD provides an opportunity for social work students and professionals to gather to learn about the legislative process and advocate for key issues by engaging with lawmakers and their staff. The day was filled with talks from several senators and representatives, a visit with Lt. Governor Matt Pinnell and concluded with a dome tour arranged by Rep. Carl Newton.

“Legislative Education & Advocacy Day provides an opportunity for participation in public policy issues and social justice advocacy, both key components of social work education and practice,” said Dr. Kylene Rehder, professor of social work and chair of the department of social work. “Social workers are the bridges that connect people with resources to thrive and foster systemic change.”



NWOSU Social Work & HARUV USA



Free Infant Mental Health Training Provided to Practitioners



HARUV USA
at OU - Tulsa



GUEST SPEAKER



Senior BSW
student,
Jenna Maier,
spoke to
Professor Kailie
Martin's Child
Abuse & Neglect
class.



Faculty Professional Conferences



Dr. Rehder attends the
National Technology &
Social Sciences
Conference

Dr. Rehder &
Professor Harding
attend the
Heartland Social
Work Conference



Woods County Coalition & OSU

Extension

Poverty Simulation Workshop



Isabella
Burden

Haylee
Durrence

Woods County Coalition & OSU Extension present:

POVERTY SIMULATION

Experience what many individuals and families face every day and gain a deeper understanding of the challenges of poverty. Join us for this powerful, eye-opening simulation that brings our community together to learn, reflect, and take action.



March 5, 2026
Registration 12:30 pm
1:00-4:30 PM

Northwestern Oklahoma State University
Student Center, Ranger Room
709 Oklahoma Blvd.
Alva, OK



Student Activities

**Baseball, hot dogs, &
apple pie event at the
David Allen Memorial
Ballpark in Enid**



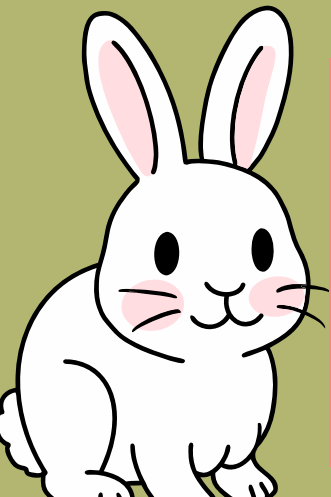
NWOSU CARNIVAL

**S.W.A.T. hosted a
booth featuring a
lollipop pull game.**



**Isabella Burden and
Haylee Durrence**

Family Fun Fair



Student Activities



Basketball Food Drive

Haylee and Isabella volunteered at the Basketball Food Drive for the Campus Cabinet.



Glitz and Glamour

S.W.A.T. students volunteered at an event hosted by Beadles Nursing home for nursing homes all across NW Oklahoma and Kansas.

Pictured: Isabella Burden and Haylee Durrence





CONGRATULATIONS



Bachelor's of Social Work Class of 2026!



Your dedication and hard work have led you to this significant milestone. As you step into the professional field of social work, remember the profound impact you can make in the lives of individuals and communities.

Best wishes as you embark on this rewarding journey!



GRADUATION



Bachelor's of Social Work
Class of 2026!





**Kevin Evans,
Executive
Director**

Western
Plains Youth
and Family
Services



**Kailie Martin,
BSW, MSW
Outpatient
Therapist**

Western Plains Youth
and Family Services



**Isabella Burden,
BSW Student
SWAT: Student
Organization
President**

Northwestern Oklahoma
State University

Board Members

The Social Work Program Advisory Board is comprised of social workers, practitioners, and leaders in our local communities that foster and support the continued development of social work education in the region. While members come from different communities, the committee is seen as one functional unit and focuses on the overall development of the program. The primary purpose of the board is to maintain active communication between the social work practice community and the program to ensure continued improvement.

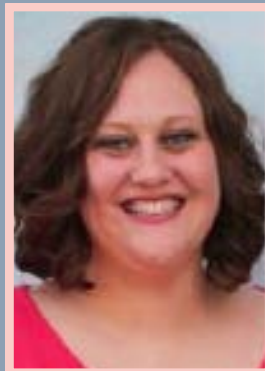
The Social Work Program Advisory Board addresses the following: student preparation to meet community and agency needs, expectations for students in field education, program assessment outcomes, input on educational policies, student recruitment and retention, job placement, research initiatives, and identifying agency needs that the social work program can address to contribute to community betterment.



**Amy Whitson,
MSW, Child
Welfare Deputy
Director**
Region I,
Oklahoma
Department of
Human Services



**James Marks,
MSW, LCSW
Executive
Director**
Oklahoma State Board of
Licensed Social Workers



**Raquel Razien,
BSW, MSW,
Woodward
CarePortal
Community
Coordinator**