

In response to the harassment that occurred at CSWE's Annual Program Meeting, November 10 - 14, 2022 in Anaheim, California- we, the undersigned, extend comfort and solidarity to the individuals who were sexually harassed at the recent CSWE-APM. We also send our thanks to those faculty and students who responded with care and concern, helping these women navigate an untenable situation, highlighting the significance of community care.

Despite being a professional organization that espouses equity and justice, and has conference attendees agree to a zero-tolerance policy regarding harassment, we are deeply concerned that CSWE did not step up and address the multiple reports of harassment in ways that protected those harmed and sanctioned those who were committing harms. **CSWE must be held accountable for its failure to act. It cannot hide [behind a statement](#) that essentially includes lofty sound-bites, but little to no remedies.** Of note, this statement was widely criticized on Twitter and has since been removed from the CSWE website.

We demand that CSWE immediately:

- Issue apologies for its failure to act to those who came forward and reported this abuse
- Provide compensation to the people who essentially withdrew from the conference for fear of continuing harassment or reprisal; this compensation could be waiving future APM fees or reimbursement for this year's conference
- Given that at least one of the people who committed sexual harassment is known, CSWE needs to apply sanctions to that individual in the form of banning the individual(s) from future events and revoking membership. CSWE should contact that individual's Dean and report this unacceptable behavior. If the names of other harassers are known, then similar steps should be taken.

Going forward, CSWE and, as prevention Society for Social Work Research (SSWR) and other professional organizations, need to **revisit their protocols for rapidly and swiftly responding to reports of intimidation, harassment, and assault included but not limited to sexual, racial, gender identity, and dis/ability status.**

We recommend the following:

- A careful internal audit of the current procedure that holds people accountable for their failure to act in ways that affirmed and protected these individuals.
- Training of all CSWE (and SSWR, National Association of Social Workers (NASW), other professional organization) staff to understand the ramifications of and appropriate responses to sexual and other forms of violence.
- The designation of ombudspersons at conferences and other events who are responsible for addressing reports of exclusion such as intimidation, harassment, and assault.
- The designation of safe spaces for people who need sanctuary and support.
- The affirmation of a zero-tolerance policy that goes beyond talking to the person(s) responsible for harm and asking them to stop. Clear sanctions need to be delineated and followed.
- Only hold conferences at hotels that are inclusive with all-gender bathrooms and accessible access to all spaces.

Failure to act by CSWE and other professional organizations will be met with actions including (but not limited to):

- Boycotts of future events
- Demands for new leadership
- Withholding of membership

Should such steps be necessary, we invite others to join us in sending collective messages, through our actions, that the status quo is not acceptable.

We suggest that CSWE leadership engage with the appropriate Commissions and Councils to seek member expertise to carry out these and other recommendations. All steps should be transparent and shared with membership throughout the year. Waiting until the next APM to “take action” is too late and not acceptable.

It is not possible to overstate the damage done directly to these individuals. Most were women and/or people of color, early in their careers or doctoral students, seeking networking and mentoring opportunities – that is, they were particularly vulnerable and that vulnerability was exploited. That they endured further trauma because of CSWE’s failure to center their stories and experiences, and instead essentially privileged the experiences of the people responsible for harm, is unconscionable. **Further, this failure sends a message to other groups that their concerns will not be taken seriously. Indeed, such was the case with people seeking all-gender bathrooms (there were none), people who were nursing (no dedicated space so bathrooms had to be used to pump or breast/chestfeed), people of color contending with endless racial microaggressions, and people with disabilities who had to navigate inaccessible spaces (as well as those who could not attend due to the lack of both masking/testing policies and online options for attendance). These aren’t separate, distinct concerns but rather a pattern that underscores exclusionary practices by CSWE.**

Inclusion isn’t a slogan or motto. It is a living, breathing process that demands from all us more than just saying “the right thing.” CSWE needs to act. Anything short of internal change and external accountability will only maintain systems and procedures of power that many of us are committed to dismantling. This is a time of reckoning regarding our leadership bodies, our accountability, and our strategies for moving forward in the months to come.

Signed,

*The Social Work Activist Collective*

*Association of Community Organizing & Social Action (ACOSA)*

*Social Worker Equity Campaign (SWEC)*

*Social Welfare Action Alliance (SWAA)*

*Social Service Workers United (SSWU)*

*Abolitionist Social Change Collective (ASCC)*

*Pilipina/o/x Social Work Scholars (PSWS)*

*LGBTQ Caucus of Faculty & Students in Social Work*  
*Minority Fellowship Program (MFP) Fellows*  
*Doin' The Work: Frontline Stories of Social Change Podcast*  
*Social Work Podcast*  
*The Social Work Routes Podcast*

**This statement was developed collaboratively by the above groups. We invite individuals and/or groups to join us in solidarity and sign [at this Link.](#)**

In Solidarity,

Matt DeCarlo – Open Social Work  
Cheryl Hyde - Acosa  
Rosemary A Barbera – Social Welfare Action Alliance  
Barbara Kasper – Professor Emerita, SUNY Brockport  
Melanie Sonsteng-Person - Social Worker Equity Campaign  
Danielle Littman  
Cristina Mogro-Wilson – Families in Society Journal  
Shanna K. Kattari – University of Michigan School of Social Work  
The [Sexuality|Relationships|Gender] Research Collective  
Gabrielle Witte LCSW  
Lorraine Gutierrez – University of Michigan  
Sarah Richards-Desal  
Alysse Loomis  
Melissa Murphy Thompson  
Anthony Verdina – LGBTQ Caucus  
Grace Pappas – Portland State University  
Sal Ryman – NC A&T/UNC Greensboro  
Alicia Mendez  
Caroline Sharkey, LCSW  
Emma Kay  
Mandi Koba  
Patricia Joyce – Adelphi University  
Suzanne Marmo, PhD, LCSW – Sacred Heart University  
Annelise Mennicke  
Matt Chorpenning, MSW  
Hillary K. Hecht – University of North Carolina Chapel Hill  
Terri Friedline – University of Michigan  
Dr. Antonia R.G. Alvarez  
Patricia Shelly – University at Buffalo School of Social Work  
Michel A Coconis, PhD, MSW  
Ann Marie Yamada  
Kyria Brown  
Diane R. Bessel

Camielle. Howard  
Shawn Parra – University of Illinois at Chicago  
Will Doyle, LICSW – Pathways to Housing DC  
Dennise G. Moreno  
Christopher R. Larrison, PhD, MSW  
Stephanie Robert - UW-Madison Sandra Rosenbaum School of Social Work  
Carmen Aponte  
Anindita Bhattacharya  
Dr. Jenny King - Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences, CWRU  
Lauren Bishop - Sandra Rosenbaum School of Social Work, University of Wisconsin-Madison  
Christina Autry - UGA School of Social Work  
Tara Maguire - United Human Services Workers  
Autumn Asher BlackDeer - University of Denver  
Jean Brookbank, MSW MHP  
Robert M. Bennett, PhD, LISW  
Beatriz Rivera, MSW  
Emily Halling  
Rev. Ryan Kemp-Pappan, LSCSW, LCAC  
Mariah Cowell Mercier - University of Utah  
Gortrell, Cox, MSW, LCSW  
Meredith Cann, LMSW  
Cassandra Simmel  
Daniel Baslock  
Jane McPherson  
Barbra Teater - College of Staten Island, City University of New York  
Carla Silva - The Graduate Center, CUNY  
Andrew Fultz  
Nadia Neimanas  
Layla Khayr  
Ashley Palmer, PhD, LMSW  
Allison Carrington  
Becky Thomas  
Gabrielle Aquino-Adriatico  
Jin Yao Kwan  
Tova Walsh  
Jennifer Allen, MSW - Michigan State University  
Sharon Borja  
Melissa Ambrose, LCSW - Jefferson Union High School District  
Andrea Mora  
Dr. Melissa Bird - CEO - Dr. Melissa Bird  
Leah Topek-Walker  
Stephen Cummings, MSW, ACSW, LISW  
Nada Elias-Lambert - Texas Christian University  
Dr. Lara Gerassi - University of Wisconsin-Madison  
Center for LGBTQ+ Research and Advocacy  
Rick Barinbaum

LB Klein - Caucus of LGBTQ Faculty and Students in Social Work  
Sara Plummer – Rutgers University  
Kris Clarke, PhD – University of Helsinki  
Mary Milnamow - University at Buffalo School of Social Work  
Charles LaBarre - University at Buffalo School of Social Work  
Jackie Pereira  
Nicole Fordey, LCSW – Fordey Counseling, PLLC  
Gabrielle Lee  
Mallory Visser  
Claire Parker  
Tenley Nordstrom – Dual MPH/MSW Graduate Student  
Brent A. Satterly, PhD LCSW – Widener University  
Carrie Casady, LCSW  
Jeremy Springer – Walla Walla University  
Agnes Halarewicz - SWEC  
Kathleen Garito  
Erin D. Carreon – University of Chicago  
Eric Levine, DSW  
Anastasia Aguda  
Adam D. Brown, LMSW - Rockland Children's Psychiatric Center  
Allison Stersic - NASW-NC, Legislative Committee member and PACE committee member  
Kari Tabag  
Vincent Ornelas, MSW PhD  
Dr. Saliwe Kawewe - Southern Illinois University, Carbondale  
Blanca Alvarado – ACOSA and SWEC  
Marion Wade  
Jamy Shelton, PhD  
Carrie Moylan, PhD Michigan State University School of Social Work  
Jonathan Carruthers  
Jen Hirsch, LMSW, APHSW-C  
Marisa Jones – Boston University School of Social Work  
Ali Croft  
Ronna Banada – USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work  
Dr. Michelle Fortunado-Kewin, DSW, LCSW, PPSC  
Melissa Bitalvo – University at Buffalo School of Social Work/Doctoral Candidate  
Amy Trabert  
Resha Swanson  
Erin Hipple, MSW, MA, LCSW, PhD  
Candra Skrzypek  
Hannah Korn-Heilner  
Christina Chiarelli-Helminiak – Former CSWE Women's Council Co-Chair  
Naomi Forsberg, ASW  
Becoming an Anti-Racist Social Worker  
Naris Barmaksezian – San Diego State University Payments for Placements  
Melissa Yost – Buffalo Road Therapy & Coaching LLC  
Hannah Ginn – University of Denver

Carrie Faraone – NASW  
Erik Ulrich, LCSW-R, ACSW  
Jennifer Manuel – University of Connecticut  
Jessica J. Mitchell, LMSW, MA – Stony Brook University  
Beth Tripi  
Deanna Dixon, MSW – Student at university of Denver  
Adriana Silva – Student at SUNY Buffalo  
Josal Diebold – PhD Candidate at University at Buffalo  
Nakini Negi – University of Maryland Baltimore  
Brianna Suslovic  
Alexis Kuerbis – Hunter College and the Graduate Center at CUNY  
Allison P. Smith  
Mary Senn  
Anais Mahone  
Lisa Colon, PhD  
Chrisula Tasiopoulos – Empowered Harts & Minds Counseling & Psychotherapy  
Jullie Munoz-Najar  
Gina Grosso – North Jersey Recovery Center  
Sharon E. Pratt  
Brigitte Petrie  
Kile McClean - UW Madison doctoral candidate  
Talyahana Costello  
Meera Nair  
Dominique Aisha Mikell Montgomery  
Stefani N. Baca-Atlas - UNC Chapel Hill School of Social Work  
Jeannette Lukas  
Goutham Menon, Professor – Loyola University Chicago  
Social Service Workers United Chicago  
Brenna Cowardin  
Janelle Hawes - University of Washington Tacoma  
Walker Tisdale  
Katya Cerar, PhD, LICSW - Smith College SSW  
Arianne Napier-White - Smith College School for Social Work  
Elisha-Rio P. Apilado  
Maureen Brookes, MSW  
Alexis David, LCSW  
Steve Burghardt - Silberman School of Social Work, Social Worker Equity Campaign  
Elizabeth Bowen  
Amanda Moore McBride  
Lujuana Milton-  
Pilar O. Bonilla  
Karin Wachter  
Ingrid Mapanao - Temple University  
Sid Jordan  
Alexandra Armanino - Student at Silberman School of Social Work  
Darius Green, PhD

Latinx in Social Work

Emily Quiñones-Visot

Jeannie E. Celestial, Ph.D., M.S.W.

San Diego State University Chapter of Payment 4 Placements

Payments 4 Placements (P4P)

Susan Welk - School of Social Work and Criminal Justice CWTAP

Rosaura Romero

South Asian Social Work Educators' Association

Pilar O. Bonilla - P4P Silberman

Annalisa Enrile, Ph.D., MSW - USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work

Dale Maglalang, PhD, MA, MSW - Pilipina/o/x Social Work Scholars; Brown University

Kristin Lurie - University of Cincinnati

Vy Cornett

Jordyn Matthews

Jocelyn Hermoso - San Francisco State University

Allison Tambornini

Shelsey Jimenez

Whitney Iparraguirre