



Grand Challenges for Social Work

2024 Western Consortium for the Grand Challenges for Social Work Toolkit



Grand Challenges
for Social Work



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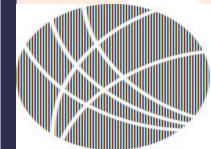
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Event Overview and Process

The 4th Western Consortium for the Grand Challenges for Social Work was a virtual event that took place on the 1st of March, 2024, focused on Grand Challenge collaborations between academics and community partners. Please view the event planning process document for more information on how this event was put together, including event materials.

- [\[2024 Event Planning Process Document\]](#)
- [\[2024 Event Agenda\]](#)
- [\[2024 Community and Academic Partner bios\]](#)
- [\[2019 ACSW Grand Challenges History Document\]](#)
- [\[2024 Initial Invitation Email\]](#)
- [Grand Challenges for Social Work Media Materials](#)



The Homelessness Policy Research Institute: A Collective Impact Collaborative Model for Social Change

Presenters: Director: Saba Mwine-Chang, Community Partner: Millie Brown

Homelessness Policy Research Institute



Key Points:

- HPRI values shared learning and creates spaces where researchers, policymakers, service providers, and people with lived experience can come together to learn from each other.
- Homelessness is its own traumatic experience, but can additionally exacerbate trauma from the past and present.
- Supportive housing and other services that currently exist for unhoused people are not enough to meet the existing need. Many of the services that do exist have barriers that make them difficult to access.

- **“We want to be mindful of creating a culture that is grounded in principles of healing” - Saba Mwine-Chang**
- **“In addition to working on several projects, the HPRI race-equity committee did quite a lot of work to develop the ad hoc report on Black people experiencing homelessness. Those are 67 recommendations that I would invite everyone here to utilize on how to address Black homelessness.” - Saba Mwine-Chang**
- **“My experience so far with HPRI has been a wonderful, amazing experience being able to really get in on the inside...you know, I used to be that person that was on the outside looking in, now I’m on the inside looking out.” - Millie Brown**

Mass Decarceration: Starting with Women in Mind

Presenters: *Emily Salisbury, Felisa Bryant*

Key Points:

Gender-responsive approaches are critical in criminal justice systems, as women have different needs and pathways to crime and rehabilitation than men.

The Women's Risk Needs Assessment (WRNA) looks at a combination of gender-neutral needs, and gender-responsive needs and strengths. So far, the WRNA has been implemented in 37% of Departments of Corrections

The If Project provides relational and gender-responsive training to police recruits before they begin academy as part of their Before the Badge program.



"It's not a secret that the criminal justice system is built by men...All programming is for men. And then we wonder why women are recidivating at a higher rate. Well, let's look back at the programming" - Felisa Bryant

"We really are one of the only risk-needs strengths assessments in the criminal justice domain, to even ask about trauma. Not only do we ask about trauma and victimization, but also PTSD and complex PTSD. These are things that you typically don't see on most risk assessments that are working with offending populations. We're also one of the few that also includes strengths." - Emily Salisbury

Panels 1 and 2

Facilitators: Benjamin Henwood, Phillip Osteen

"I'm hopeful because I know people can change. And, people can change under the right conditions, the right environment, the right people, the right relationships being put in place. Quite frankly, the women are my North Star who I answer to. If they're telling me what I'm doing is good stuff, then I know it's good stuff."

- Emily Salisbury

There are three questions that also popped into my mind when I'm looking at collaborations or partnerships. One of them is: who's sitting at the table? Who is your intended audience? Are they also sitting at the table? - Felisa Bryant

"We don't live in a society that's focused on prevention. It's really hard to see the outcomes of many, many years of not doing that. But we really lean on our relationships. It would be really hard for me to consume that knowledge by myself. And so to do it together, it gives me hope. It helps me to be able to look at the hard things if I have a community to do it with." - Saba Mwine-Chang



Key Points:

True relational work and partnerships take time and require investing in a foundation of mutual respect, care, and collaboration.

Academic work can have challenges and barriers to participation. Work to create accessible spaces, celebrate the success of one another, and focus on creating respectful and collaborative partnerships. Invite those with lived experience to the table and continue to make space.



Please write a one or two word reaction to our morning panels:

42 responses



Utah Criminal Justice Center

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THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH



with the land, water, salmon and people for healing, restoring and transforming

Stevey Seymour, Myra Parker, Maya Magarati

Key Points:

Colonization caused forced displacement, loss of food sources, and disconnection from traditional practice for the Colville people.

Canoe journey as a healing mechanism: The canoe journey provides a platform for youth leadership and cultural learning, allowing kids to reconnect with traditional cultural practice and the world around them.



"And we had this really just complete loss of our culture. Because we had a river culture and all of a sudden we didn't have a river. We had a lake, Lake Roosevelt. And all of our salmon, our entire food source, was wiped away from us." - Stevey Seymour

"Research comes with a lot of concern from tribal communities, because of the harms that have been perpetuated against Native people and in the name of research." - Myra Parker

"When there's so much...love, respect, kindness and trust in relationships...we are talking about our community and academic partnership- I think showing up becomes easy. And helping and contributing becomes easy. And learning and keeping being

Solving Youth Homelessness in Nevada: A collaboration between Nevada Partnership for Homeless Youth and the Greenspun College of Urban Affairs

Presenters: Arash Ghafoori, Robert Ulmer



Key Points:

Nevada has one of the highest rates of youth homelessness in the country

The partnerships created to target the issue of youth homelessness in Nevada allow a broader focus on the issue of youth homelessness and include policy and research, as well as community work.

"Not one sector of government, not one funder and not one nonprofit, can solve the issue of young people experiencing homelessness in our community." - Arash Ghafoori

"It's a pretty cool, multifaceted partnership that extends to helping young people on the ground, to also impacting the systems that either negatively or positively impact those youth." - Arash Ghafoori

The relationship is really key to what we're talking about...All relationships are a challenge. But, there's something bigger that we're trying to accomplish together... When things are really challenging we can look at each other and say.. We have something we want to accomplish together, we're going to move past it. - Robert Ulmer



Panels 3 and 4

Facilitator: Carlton D. Craig

"As institutions who are training the next generations of researchers, we have an obligation to ensure that people are going to do that in a way that's respectful and informed and not repeat past harms that have been perpetuated against indigenous people." - Myra Parker

"We always say that when we talk about this generational trauma and all this pain that we bring, but more importantly, we bring strength, we bring survival, we bring grit, that just doesn't quit. And we also bring community...there's so many positive and beautiful things about about our journey, even though it's a hard journey."- Stevey Seymour

"These are challenging situations. And I think we need people being willing to stick to it and develop solutions, not move on to the next thing or not let someone else or some new innovation, take the money and move it that way. So we have to stick to it. These young people deserve a solution, even though even though the solutions are challenging and difficult." - Robert Ulmer



Grand Challenges
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Welcome to the 2024 Western Consortium for the
Grand Challenges for Social Work!

We will get started in just a moment!

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Key Points:

Language and cultural revitalization programs work to connect new generations of people, and youth, with their culture. These programs are created and led by, and for, the indigenous community.

Working towards solutions for the Grand Challenges for Social Work is an ongoing and difficult process. Research and community must work in tandem to create thoughtful and effective solutions.





Please write a one or two word reaction to our afternoon panels:
23 responses



UW Medicine

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHIATRY
AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES



UNLV | GREENSPUN College of URBAN AFFAIRS



Community Partner Discussion

Saba Mwine-Chang, Millie Brown, Felisa Bryant,
Stevey Seymour, Arash Ghafoori

Facilitated by: Illima Ho-Lastimoso, Michael S. Spencer

Panel Highlights:

Positionality and Elevating Lived Experience: Community voices are a powerful source of knowledge and insight. When engaging in community work, engage in anti-racist practice, acknowledge personal positionality and work to center community voices and lived experience.

Embracing Strength-Based Approaches: Create space for joy and engage with art, education, and language. Often, these practices can be an equalizing force, while attending to trauma. Prioritize teaching and learning about inherent strengths and cultural practice within our communities.

Navigating Challenges: Partnerships come with challenges as well. Issues such as navigating funding dynamics, addressing systemic barriers, and ensuring equitable collaboration require ongoing dialogue, transparency, and a commitment to mutual respect.



"We can't do a lot of the work and the things that we want to achieve alone...So we have to be smart with our coalition building... We have to build not just one hit wonder relationships, but sustained deep relationships that have a long term outcome." - Arash Ghafoori

"I think with building relationships, a level of transparency is also needed...recognizing your strengths and your limitations, that may also be recognizing that maybe you're not that person that needs to sit at the table, and you need to bring somebody else to the table, and you step back." - Felisa Bryant

"Now that I think about it...I am a partner...I never thought that I would be in the position where I came from being homeless on the street and living in shelters, living anywhere that I possibly could, to sitting at the table, and sharing this with the people that I never thought that I would even be able to get to listen to me. So now that I think about it, I am a partner and you are partnering with me. What better way to understand that - to hear it from a person that has walked in those shoes. I'm telling you what I experienced." - Millie Brown

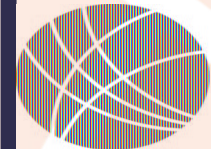
Next Steps

We are so grateful to our speakers who shared their knowledge and lived experience with us during this event! We hope that you learned from them, and are inspired to incorporate these teachings into your own work.

Getting Involved:

If you'd like to stay up to date with Grand Challenges news and information, please check out the [Grand Challenges Newsletter](#)

If you are interested in being involved with the planning of future Grand Challenges events, please reach out to your university, connect with community partners and researchers to see what Grand Challenges work is being conducted, and learn about current initiatives such as the [Go grander campaign](#) from the [national Grand Challenges](#)



Thank you for viewing this toolkit!

Thank you to our presenters & moderators:

Carrie Pettus
Kira Silk
Saba Mwine-Chang
Millie Brown
Emily Salisbury
Felisa Bryant
Ilima Ho-Lastimosa
Myra Parker
Maya Magarati
Stevey Seymour
Arash Ghafoori
Robert Ulmer
Benjamin Henwood
Carlton Craig
Philip Osteen
Michael Spencer

Thank you to the planning committee:

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Ron Manderscheid, *Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health*
Philip Osteen, *University of Utah College of Social Work*
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