



A Message from the Social Work Leadership Forum

The Social Work Leadership Forum is comprised of the leadership of the following organizations:

- The Association of Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors (BPD)
- The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE)
- The Group for the Advancement of Social Work Doctoral Education (GADE)
- The National Association of Social Work Deans and Directors (NADD)
- The Society for Social Work and Research (SSWR)
- The St. Louis Group

The recent killings in Ferguson, Cleveland, New York, Phoenix, and elsewhere bring to the forefront the persistent problems that face our society and infiltrate our systems in regards to racism, disparities and injustice. Individual social workers, schools/programs, associations and agencies have spoken out strongly and eloquently on the need for change. The Social Work Leadership Forum adds our voices to these. At a meeting on December 5, 2014, we moved to speak in one voice and to work collaboratively to raise the profile of social work education in finding solutions. We applaud the efforts that our members are making to address this crisis and hope we can be useful to adding to the energetic and impassioned voice of social work education.

Let us join together to dismantle the structures of racism, educate for activism, and agitate for justice. As social workers, social work educators and researchers, we have a responsibility to speak up, act, and inspire our students to do the same.

Some of the organizational activities currently under way or planned include:

- At the upcoming BPD Conference (March 4-8, 2015 in Kansas City, MO) there will be a series of workshop presentations on social justice and civil unrest (a call for proposals is currently open on the [BPD Website](#)).
- Students are being actively engaged in this work in order to develop leadership in this area.
- BPD members are actively sharing curriculum resources with the social work education community through its e-list which is open to the public.
- A section of the CSWE website is devoted to examples of how programs are preparing students to address issues of racism and social and economic inequality.
 - **Programmatic Responses to Current Examples of Social Injustice**
 Today let us renew our commitment to justice. Let us use the power of our positions as educators, researchers, and scholars to advocate for just policies and practices. Our students are watching.
- The CSWE Center for Diversity and Social & Economic Justice has resources to assist faculty in teaching about race, racism, oppression, resilience and numerous related topics. Of particular note are an upcoming webinar and a call for manuscripts by the Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment. (<http://www.cswe.org/CentersInitiatives/Diversity.aspx>).
- CSWE is currently searching for its inaugural director of the Center for Diversity and Social & Economic Justice (a joint appointment with the University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work). This appointment will strengthen the Center and its resources.
- At the GADE annual conference in April, there will be a session on preparing doctoral students for research in racial justice and supporting students during this time of social upheaval.
- A full day of the NADD spring conference is devoted to the theme “Race and Racism,” which will be led by Dr. Larry Davis, Dr. Martell Teasley, the deans from Ferguson, Missouri area, and Sue Perlmutter.
- At the same meeting, Darlyne Bailey will organize the leadership topics to address issues of race (how do we make our programs attentive to these issues, hiring, supporting tenure, support for faculty of color, etc.).
- The St. Louis Group is supporting research in the interests of social work's commitment to social justice.
- The St. Louis Group is focused on increasing national capacity for research addressing problems of disparities and inequities.