



NC Public Service Leadership Program

Empowering Learners to be Public
Service Leaders: NC's Public Service
Leadership Program

June 10, 2026 • Amanda Hubbard, LCSW
and Nina Muller, LCSW

Empowering Social Workers • Preparing Leaders • Strengthening NC Communities

Agenda



- Presenter Introductions
- PSLP Program Introduction
 - Origin
 - Goals & Timeline
- PSLP Pre-BSW Certificate
 - Format
 - Contents
 - Benefits
 - Student fit
 - School role/Getting involved

Amanda: Presenter Introductions



Wake County Public School System

UNC-Chapel Hill

Qualified Professional (I/DD, MH)

Child Welfare Education Leadership Scholar

Licensed Clinical Social Worker

NCDHHS DSS (Child Welfare)



Child Welfare Education Collaborative



Nina: Presenter Introduction



Chapel Hill/Carrboro City Schools



Carleton

Carleton College – BA in Psychology, Minor in Spanish

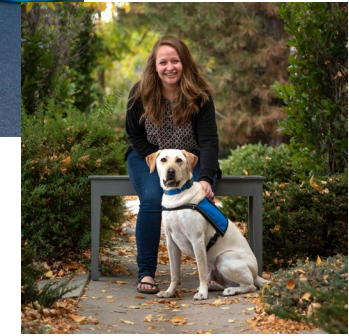
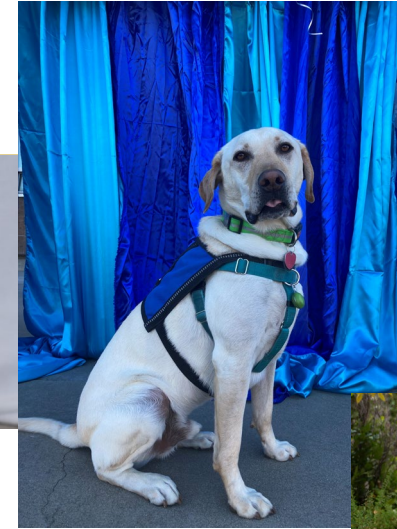
University of Denver – MSW, Concentration in Children and Youth, Certificates in School Social Work and Animal Assisted Social Work

Denver Public Schools – Bilingual Animal-Assisted School Social Worker & School-Based Therapist

Licensed Clinical Social Worker

UNC-CH School of Social Work Behavioral Health Springboard – SBH Program Specialist

PSLP Secondary Education Program Manager



Our goal today



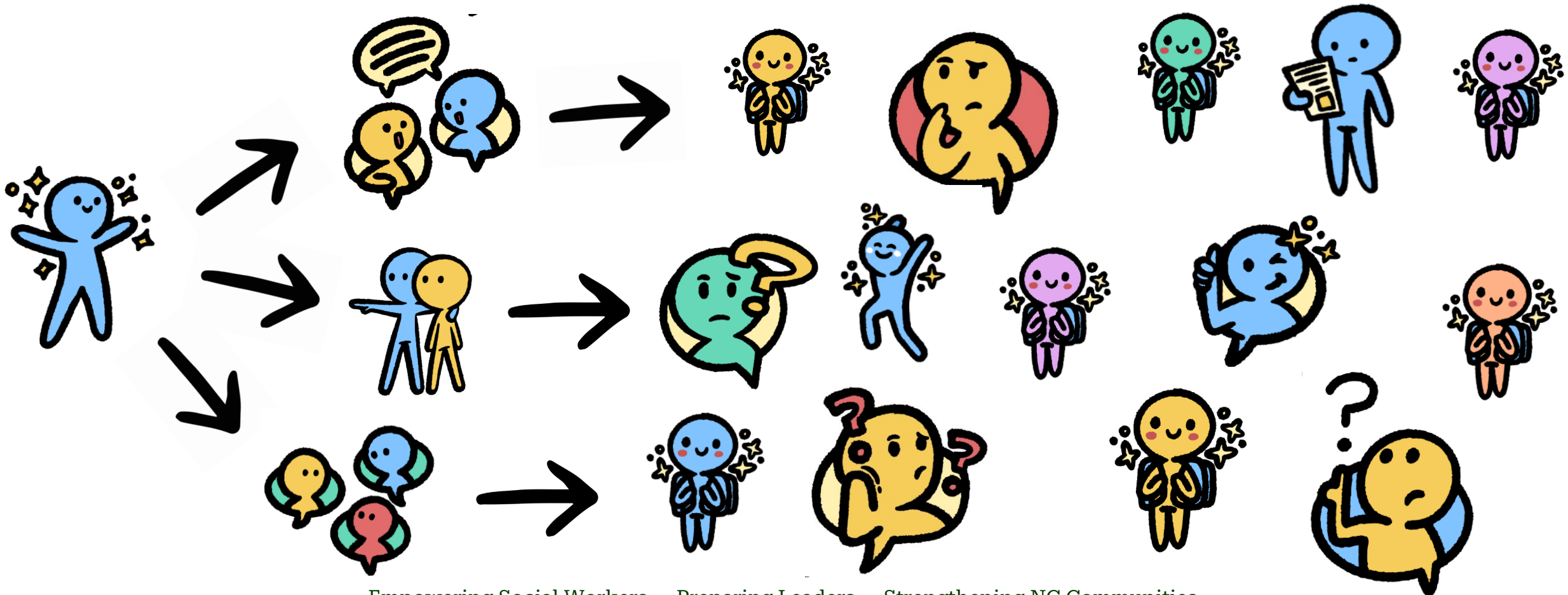
How we imagine this recruitment going without the support of school staff and faculty who work directly with high school juniors and their families:



Our goal today



How we imagine this recruitment going with the support of school staff and faculty who work directly with high school juniors and their families:



Social Work



- According to the National Association of Social Work, the main goal of social work is: “to **enhance human well-being** and help meet **basic and complex needs of all people**, with a particular focus on those who are **vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty.**”

Social work focuses on understanding:

- People
- Their environment

Social workers are driven by a desire to:

- Improve lives
- Support communities
- Decrease suffering
- Fight for social justice

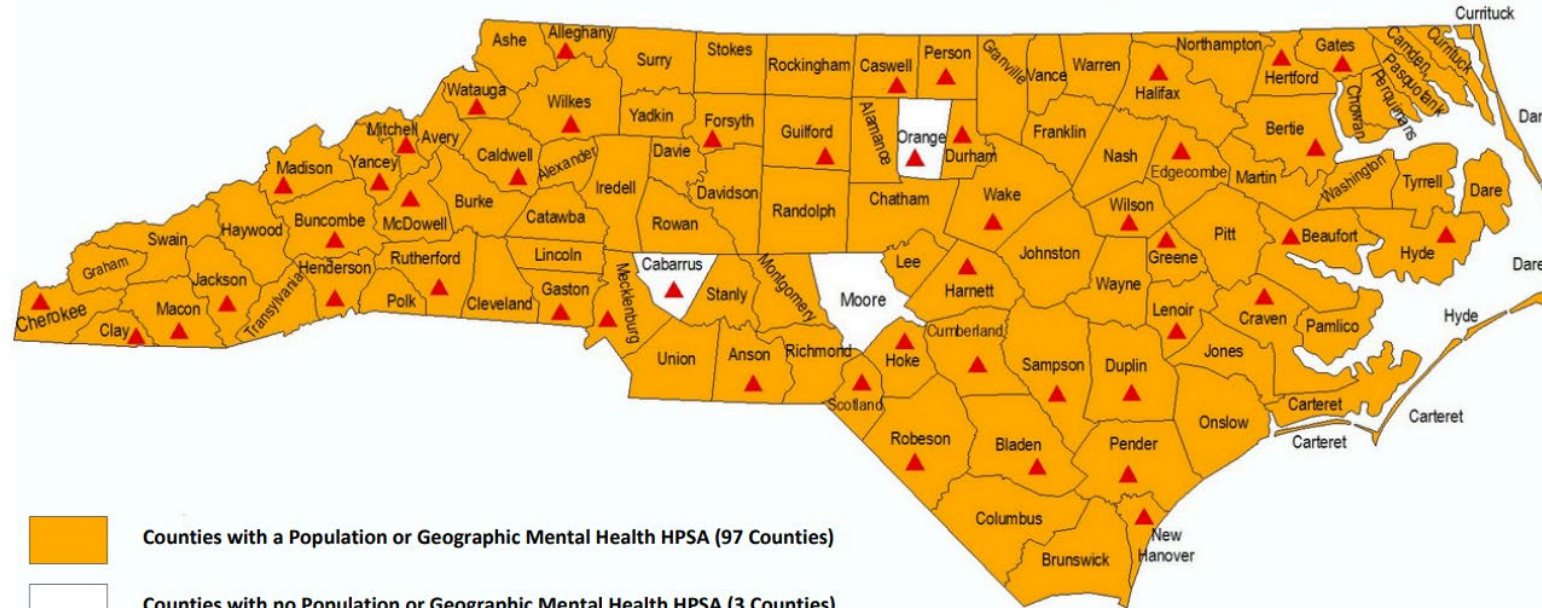
Social workers can work...






Mental Health Professional Shortages





Mental Health—Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA)



-  Counties with a Population or Geographic Mental Health HPSA (97 Counties)
-  Counties with no Population or Geographic Mental Health HPSA (3 Counties)
-  Counties with at least one Auto-HPSA Facility (47 Counties)

Disclaimers:

-  Primary site only, does not include Correctional Facilities or Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) satellite sites
-  Shortage area may be a whole county, a population group or a geographic area within a county
- Counties in white do not have a geographic or population HPSA designation. Those counties either do not meet the criteria for HPSA designation or have not been reviewed.

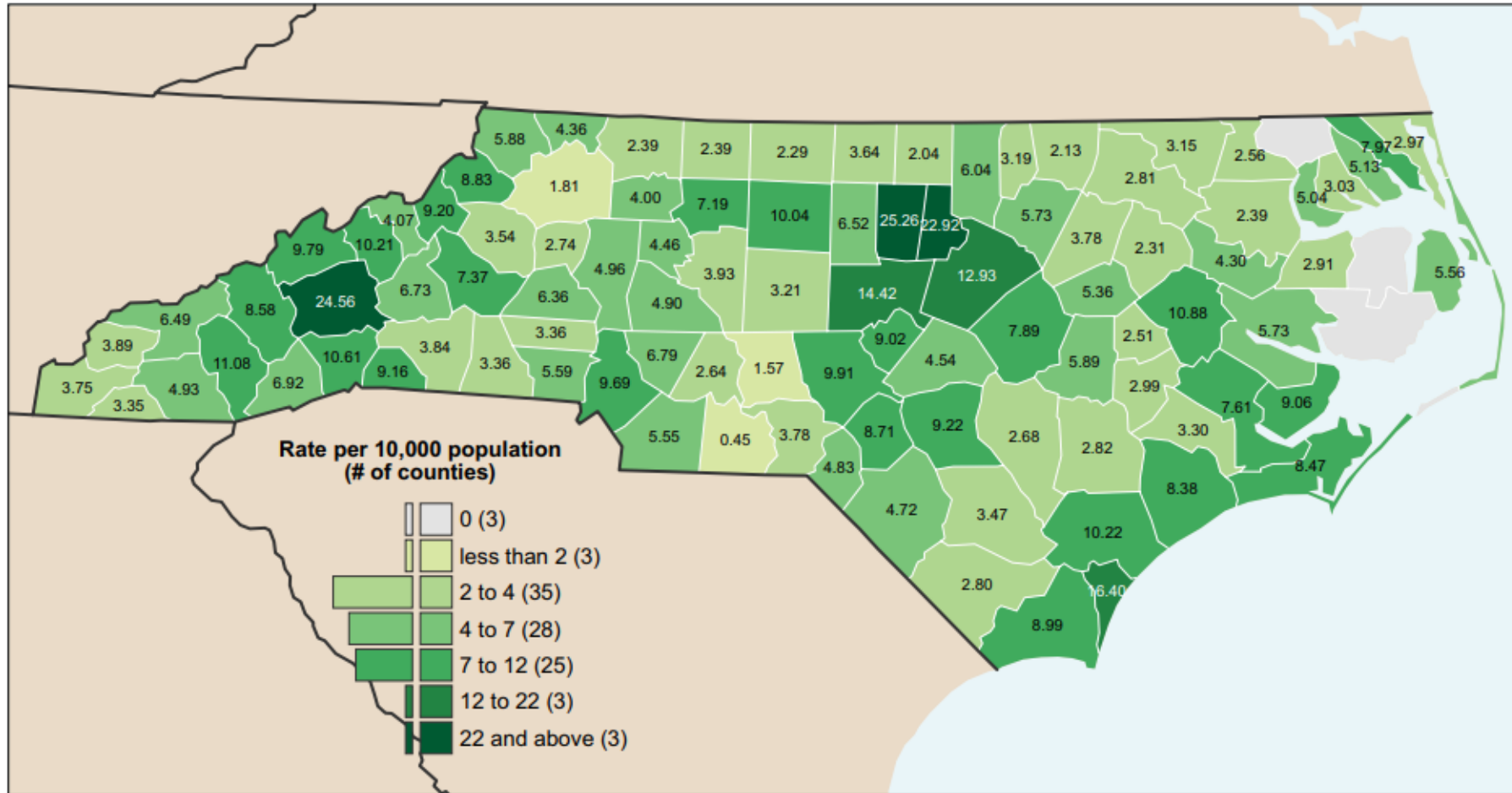


NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**
Office of Rural Health

Data as of March 5, 2025

N.C. Department of Health and Human Services. (2025, March 5). North Carolina Office of Rural Health Mental Health—Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA). <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/mh-scores/download>.

Social Work Shortages



Lombardi et. al. (2026, March). State of North Carolina’s Mental Health and Substance Use Services Workforce: Need, Supply, and Distribution Landscape Assessment.

https://nchealthworkforce.unc.edu/pdf/DMH%20Workforce%20Report_Mar1_2026_Updated.pdf

Source. NCSWCLB Licensure Data.

Social Work



Quick Facts: Social Workers

2024 Median Pay 	\$61,330 per year \$29.49 per hour
Typical Entry-Level Education 	See How to Become One
Work Experience in a Related Occupation 	None
On-the-job Training 	See How to Become One
Number of Jobs, 2024 	810,900
Job Outlook, 2024–34 	6% (Faster than average)

There is work to be done, in lots of realms, and students can make a livable wage doing it.



U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2018, July 11). Social Workers : Occupational Outlook Handbook : U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Bls.gov. <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/community-and-social-service/social-workers.htm#tab-1>

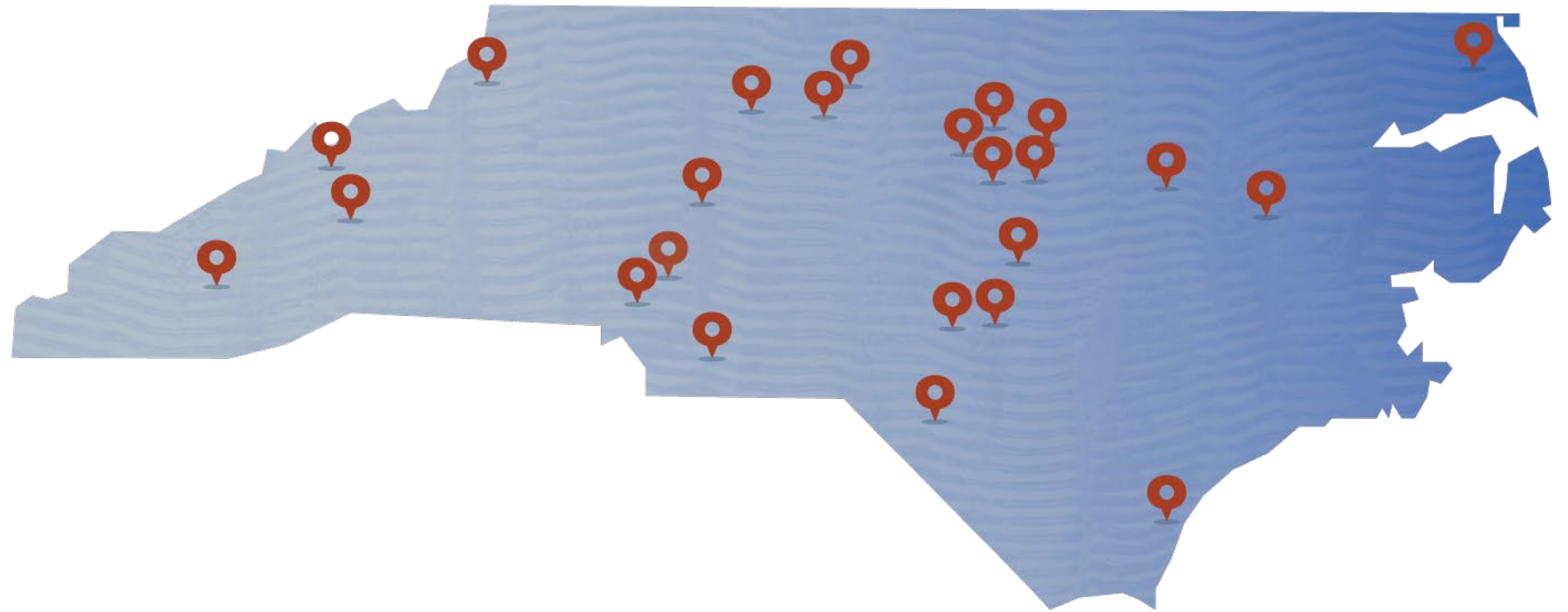
Social Work Coalition



Social Work Coalition
ON NC WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

25

**Social Work
Programs
Represented**



Coalition - Five Critical Service Areas



1 CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES / WELL-BEING

2 MENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

3 HEALTH, AGING, AND CAREGIVING

4 INTELLECTUAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES (I/DD)

5 SERVICE TO JUSTICE-INVOLVED INDIVIDUALS

PSLP Dream Team



Alexis Barnes-Scott
Professional Learning Communities Program Manager



Yeeya Cheng
Curriculum Engineer



Felicia Gibson, PhD
Workforce Resilience Program Manager



Amanda Hubbard
Assistant Director of
Enrollment and Operations



Nina Muller
Secondary Education Program Manager



Dr. Sarah Reives-Houston
Assistant Dean of Workforce Development

PSLP Project Goals



GOAL ONE – Fueling the pipeline

Develop a pipeline by **recruiting North Carolinians to enter the field of social work** and increase awareness and knowledge of our public sector system and health and human services programs.

GOAL TWO – Enhancing the Student Experience

Recruit, educate, and place social work students and graduates in public sector positions to develop a specialized workforce that can meet statewide and rural service needs in the five critical service domains.

GOAL THREE – Strengthening the Existing Workforce

Create resiliency to **strengthen the existing workforce** so that they are retained and effectively serve populations with complex needs (e.g., intersection of I/DD and mental and behavioral health; intersection of substance abuse and mental and behavioral health) to develop a specialized workforce that can meet statewide and rural service needs in the five critical service domains.

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PSLP Curriculum Content



5 Curricula:

- Pre-service Certificates (Students):
 - Pre-BSW
 - BSW
 - MSW
- In-service Certificates (Practitioners):
 - BSW
 - MSW

Each comprised of:

- In-person learning experiences
- Virtual webinars and professional learning communities
- Asynchronous online learning modules

More on Pre-BSW specifics momentarily!

PSLP Timeline



Fiscal Year One PLANNING PERIOD

- Hire core project staff
- Determine statewide staffing model
- Conduct employer needs assessment
- Develop training and certificate curricula
- Build community partnerships
- Plan public awareness campaign
- Establish the PSLP website and social media toolkit
- Plan recruitment strategy
- Select evaluation tools
- Recruit BSW/MSW pilot year students

Fiscal Year Two PILOT PERIOD

- Recruit the year 1 High School student cohort
- Launch public awareness campaign
- Begin program implementation
- ★ **Pre-BSW pre-service certificates with a sample of NC High Schools**
- Pilot test pre-service BSW, MSW curriculum
- Launch PLCs
- Establish PSLP Practicum sites and supervisors
- Collect and analyze outcome data
- Finalize articulation agreements and MOAs

Fiscal Year Three-Five TESTING YEAR 1-3

- Adjust programming based on findings
- Continue recruitment and public awareness efforts
- Continue program implementation
- Launch pre-service and in-service certificates (BSW, MSW)
- Maintain continuous improvement processes
- Develop strategy for legislative advocacy

Pre-BSW Program Timeline



Fall 2026

Recruitment for Cohort 1

Summer 2027

Likely 2nd week of June:
Cohort 1 summer intensive, in-person

Early Winter 2027

Cohort 1 closes out
Evaluation team uses Cohort 1 data to improve the program before launching Cohort 2

January 2027

Cohort 1 Begins – monthly webinars/virtual gatherings

Fall 2027

Cohort 1 monthly webinars/virtual gatherings continue- focus on college readiness and BSW programs state-wide
Cohort 2 recruitment begins

January 2028

Cohort 2 begins

Pre-BSW Program logistics



30-36 hours total, from January of Junior year to December of Senior year

One Asynchronous Course

- 4 hours max
- Knowledge acquisition

Monthly Virtual Webinars

- Knowledge acquisition
- Skill application
- 1-1.5 hours/month

Summer Intensive

- 4-days, in-person
- Tentative date: 2nd week of June 2027
- Skill application

PSLP Pre-BSW Topics



- Social Work: The field, opportunities, career pathways, reality of service
 - Introduction to Social Work, Social Work Realms, versatility
 - Social Work Career Pathways and Opportunities & BSW Programs



- Professionalism and Communication
 - Social work writing skills
 - De-escalation, conflict management, effective communication
- Advocacy for self and others
 - Cultural humility and social justice

PSLP Pre-BSW Topics



- Social Work: The field, opportunities, career pathways, reality of service
 - Introduction to Social Work, Social Work Realms, versatility
 - Social Work Career Pathways and Opportunities & BSW Programs state-wide
- Intro to Mental/Behavioral Health
 - Basics of trauma, human development throughout the lifespan, ability, and cross-sector interactions
- Resilience
 - Self-awareness, development of resilience skills (including “self-care” or “coping skills”)
- Professionalism and Communication
 - Social work writing skills
 - De-escalation, conflict management, effective communication
- Advocacy for self and others
 - Cultural humility and social justice

Benefits for students



- Student academic, skill, and self-efficacy growth
 - Resilience-building for self and others
- College readiness
 - Priority consideration for all NC-based Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) degree programs
 - Support with social work college and career planning and admissions process
 - In-the-works: public service social work loan forgiveness
- Career readiness
 - Networking opportunities with community and state-level social work leaders
 - Professionalism and communication development

Participation
is free!

Early Colleges and PSLP




- Year 1: NC Early College and Dually-Enrolled students invited to apply
 - Years 2+ will be more broadly open to all NC high school juniors
- Factors:
 - Centralized communication figure
 - College-bound students
 - Considering career path
 - Invested families
- To note:
 - Multiple students/school for community engagement and oversight

What students are a good “fit” for year 1?



- Juniors during the 2026-2027 school year
- Early College & Dual-Enrollment Students in NC
 - Note: year 1 is specific, year 2+ will be open to students in any high school in NC
- Students with an interest in helping people, supporting communities, and/or a passion for social justice
- Students interested in public service, psychology, or criminal justice
- Students who can commit 1 year to this program and have some availability over the summer to attend a “social work summer camp”/4-day summer intensive

 **Could Social Work be a good career fit for you?**
Adapted from the NASW page: "What Are Social Work Values?"
Created by Nina Muller, LCSW

Write each number you choose in this column!

Circle which number best matches your response to each statement. Go with your gut! (Yes, you can choose more than 1 number)

I like learning about people: their interests, their lives, their cultures, their communities, and their challenges.
1= no way! 2= not really 3= maybe...? 4= I think so! 5= absolutely!!

I like thinking through problems to figure out solutions, even if they might be complicated and I might have to be creative.
1= no way! 2= not really 3= maybe...? 4= I think so! 5= absolutely!!

It makes me upset or passionate when I see someone being treated unfairly.
1= no way! 2= not really 3= maybe...? 4= I think so! 5= absolutely!!

I think every person deserves to be healthy and happy, even if they are very different from me.
1= no way! 2= not really 3= maybe...? 4= I think so! 5= absolutely!!

When people have a different opinion or way of doing things than me, I want to learn more about why they approach it their way.
1= no way! 2= not really 3= maybe...? 4= I think so! 5= absolutely!!

People tell me I'm a good listener.
1= no way! 2= not really 3= maybe...? 4= I think so! 5= absolutely!!

It's important to me to be someone people can trust.
1= no way! 2= not really 3= maybe...? 4= I think so! 5= absolutely!!

I like the idea of having a lot of different job types and...
1= no way! 2= not really 3= maybe...? 4= I think so! 5= absolutely!!

Add your total numbers...

What students are a good “fit”?



- These students might say or think things like...

“I want to make the world a better place”

“I find people’s stories really interesting”

“Someone helped me, and I want to be like them”

“Mental health is something I’m passionate about”

- You might notice about them...
 - They have a strong desire to help others
 - They are passionate about social justice, mental health, or the worth of all people
 - They want or need a job in a flexible field
 - They are driven and curious

I have a student in mind... what now?

& how else can I get involved?



- Sign up:
 - to receive more information as it is released
 - for the PSLP Newsletter
 - to be on a committee or workgroup
 - to show interest in being a subject matter expert
 - to chat 1:1



<https://tinyurl.com/PSLPQualtrics>

Closing out



What questions, comments, and suggestions are coming up?



Get involved!



<https://tinyurl.com/PSLPQualtrics>
(this is the same link as the last slide)



Contact Nina at: nmuller@unc.edu