

## Helen Bader School of SOCIAL WELFARE

*Improving lives & strengthening communities through research, education & community partnerships*



### Welcome!

This year, UW-Milwaukee once again received [R1](#) status from the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education. Here in the Helen Bader School of Social Welfare, our contributions to this ranking are extensive. Our social work researchers explore issues such as youth caregiving, loneliness and aging, early childhood trauma, substance misuse and brief interventions, health disparities, and post-adoption outcomes, to name a few.

UWM also holds the Carnegie community engagement classification, which reflects our deep community/university partnership. As an urban research university, our borders are porous. The depth of social work research and the applied nature of our work stretches beyond the walls of UWM and into the surrounding Milwaukee community.

I'm so proud of the research produced by the Social Work Department. While it's always rewarding to receive acknowledgement for the work we do, it's worthwhile to recognize that this research ultimately helps people in our community. Thank you for reading and I invite you to learn more about our social work researchers below.

#### **David J. Pate Jr, PhD**

Chair and Associate Professor  
Helen Bader School of Social Welfare

## RESEARCH AND IMPACT



### Galambos appointed to editorial board of the Journal of Health and Human Services

**Colleen Galambos**, Helen Bader Endowed Chair in Applied Gerontology, has been appointed to the [Editorial Board of the Journal of Health and Human Services Administration](#). The journal is affiliated with the American Society for Public Administration's (ASPA) Section on Health and Human Services Administration (SHHSA). She was sought out based on her expertise in aging and long term care.

Dr. Galambos' research interests include care transitions and advance care planning, aging in place, health and long term care systems quality improvement, gerontechnology, and interprofessional practice.



### Kavanaugh awarded two-year R21 NIH award

**Melinda S. Kavanaugh** has been awarded a two-year R21 NIH award, through the National Institute on Aging. The project seeks to identify informal caregivers (youth and adult), and formal care providers' perceptions of early warning signs and crisis points in African American and Latino elders with Alzheimer's disease. The total award is \$410,963. It is a community collaborative project with the United Community Center, Alzheimer's Association and the Milwaukee County Department on Aging.

[\[Read more.\]](#)

## ACADEMIC SUCCESS



### Zhang accepts tenure-track assistant professor position from University of Northern Iowa

**Lixia Zhang**'s research focuses on child maltreatment and other childhood adversities that undermine health and well-being across the life course. Additionally, she is interested in programs and policies that prevent childhood trauma or mitigate its effects, and improve the health and well-being of disadvantaged children and families.

[\[Read more.\]](#)

## IN THE NEWS



### **From trauma to healing:** *How tools developed by UWM researchers are helping families and communities*

Social work researchers [Joshua Mersky](#) and [Dimitri Topitzes](#) have developed tools to help children and families build resilience.

[\[Read more.\]](#)



### **Infant sleep study**

[Trina Salm Ward](#) researches disparities in infant and maternal health, specifically, infant sleep practices and risks for sleep-related infant deaths. She has published in *Maternal and Child Health Journal*, *Journal of Community Health*, *Archives of Women's Mental Health*, and *Health Education and Behavior*.

[\[Listen to podcast.\]](#)

## SOCIAL WORK RESEARCHERS

### [Lisa Berger](#)

**Research area:** Substance use interventions in medical settings

**Example:** [SBIRT](#) (Screening, Brief Intervention & Referral to Treatment)

### [Michael Brondino](#)

**Area of expertise:** Methodological consultation and investigation on grant projects

**Example:** Test development

### [Colleen Galambos](#)

**Research areas:** Care transitions and advance care planning; aging in place; health and long term care systems quality improvement; gerontechnology

**Example:** Investigator on several research projects aimed at improving health practices and long term care

### [Colleen Janczewski](#)

**Research area:** Child maltreatment and examining how public systems interface with vulnerable children and families

**Example:** Principal investigator of the [Evaluation of Alternative Response in Wisconsin](#)

### **Melinda S. Kavanaugh**

**Research area:** Translational research that informs the development of targeted caregiving interventions

**Example:** [UWM looks at children who are caregivers](#)

### **Yura Lee**

**Research area:** Risk factors for dementia and cognitive impairment among older adults

**Examples:** Life transitions (e.g., retirement, widowhood) and social isolation later in life; preventive role of cognitive, physical, and social activities

### **ChienTi Plummer Lee**

**Research area:** Promoting positive human and family development across cultures, with an emphasis on adolescent psychosocial outcomes and quantitative analysis.

**Example:** [Well-being and Substance Use in Emerging Adulthood: The Role of Individual and Family Factors in Childhood and Adolescence](#)

### **Gwat-Yong Lie**

**Research areas:** Homelessness; child welfare; multicultural competence; women's issues — particularly Asian-American women

**Example:** Board member of [Milwaukee Continuum of Care](#) — organizes people and resources to end homelessness in Milwaukee

### **Steve McMurtry**

**Research areas:** Child Protective Services and foster care

**Example:** Wisconsin Co-Director, [Child Welfare Training Program](#)

### **Joshua Mersky**

**Research area:** Adversity, trauma and resilience; prevention and intervention; translational science

**Example:** Founding co-director of the [Institute for Child and Family Well-Being](#)

### **Laura Otto-Salaj**

**Research area:** Intersection of substance use with other risk issues (e.g. HIV sexual risk, trauma, mental health issues)

**Example:** Principal investigator of the YOSAT training program

### **David J. Pate Jr.**

**Research areas:** Services for formerly incarcerated men; non-custodial fathers; violence prevention; infant mortality; child support

**Example:** [Research of societal re-entry of released prisoners](#)

### **Nancy Rolock**

**Research areas:** Post-adoption and post-guardianship outcomes; intervention research; child welfare practice and policy; kinship care and foster care

**Example:** [A comparison of post-adoption placement stability for former foster youth in two large U.S. states](#)

### **Susan J. Rose**

**Research areas:** Incarcerated women with substance use disorders; Rapid Assessment Measures; intervention research; training for public child welfare and adoption practice

**Examples:** PI of Improving the Transition from Jail to Community for Impoverished Women and the [Training for Adoption Competency](#) studies; Co-director of Title IV-E Child Welfare Program

### **Dimitri Topitzes**

**Research areas:** Causes and consequences of early childhood trauma; programs and policies designed to prevent early trauma or mitigate its effects; trauma-informed justice programming

**Example:** Co-Founder of [Institute for Child and Family Well-Being](#)

### **Trina Salm Ward**

**Research areas:** Infant and maternal health; infant mortality; health disparities; health and social work; public health social work; community engaged research

**Example:** [Evaluation of a crib distribution and safe sleep educational program to reduce risk of sleep-related infant death](#)