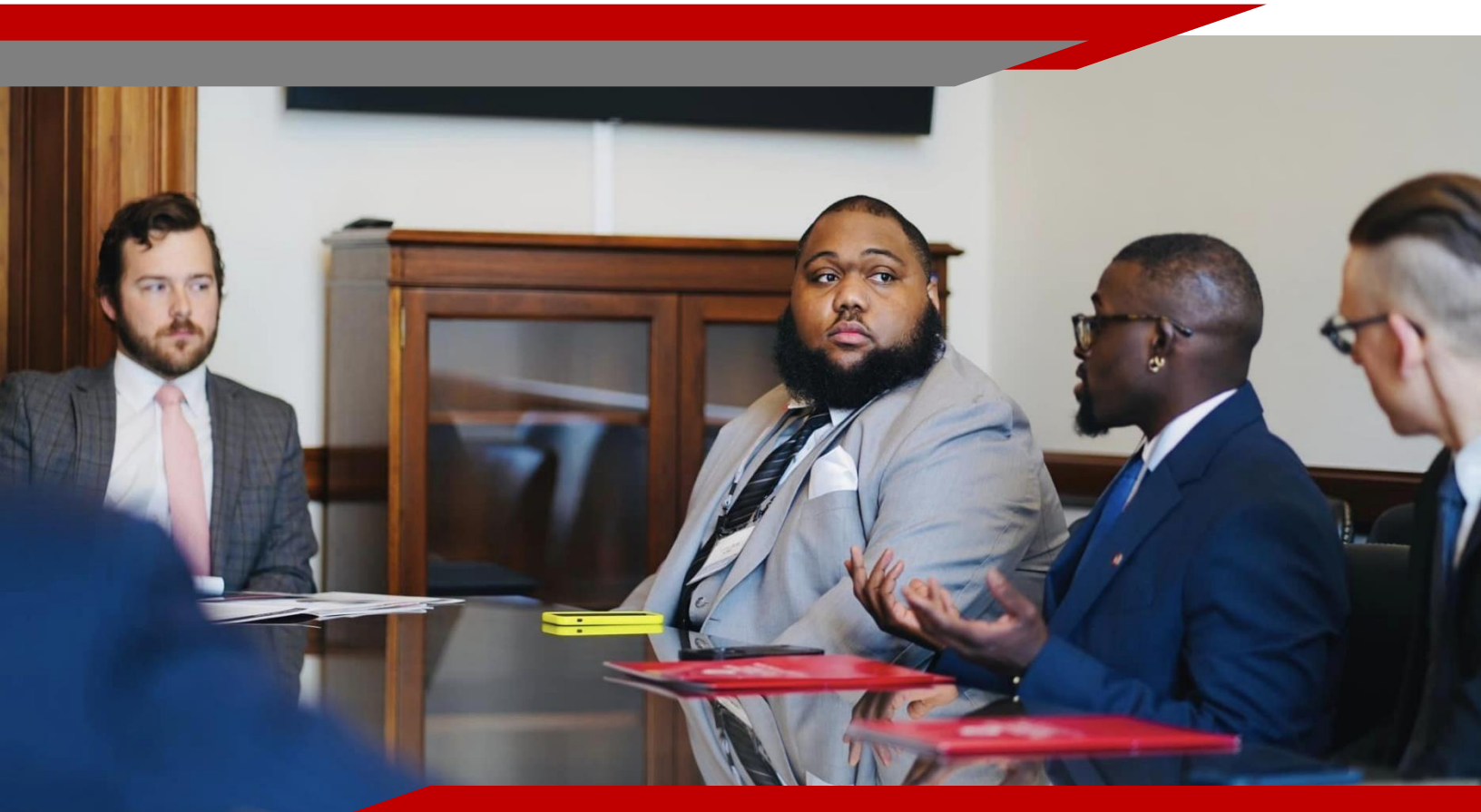


ADVOCACY

at the College of Social Work

Annual Report



2023-2024 Academic Year



**THE OHIO STATE
UNIVERSITY**

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK

2023-2024 Advocacy Overview

56 events and presentations

534 voter contacts

1388 total attendees

209 community meetings

4 students supervised in practicum placements

5 democracy fellows in pilot cohort

22 one-to-one student meetings

24 students in DC Advocacy Immersion

300+ additions to CSW Advocacy email list



CSW Advocacy

Advocacy at the Ohio State University College of Social Work offers opportunities for students, practitioners, and community partners to participate in civic engagement and political action for the advancement of social work values.

Through nonpartisan voter engagement, advocacy training, community and university partnership and student mentorship, students connect their passions to the political process. The College of Social Work is a leader across campus and alongside community members to strengthen democracy and train the next generation of political social workers.

In the 2023-24 academic year, CSW Advocacy launched the new Democracy Fellowship program, established new campus partnerships and build on the success of our signature programs.

Voter Engagement

The College of Social Work is a training the next generation of political social workers through a concerted focus on nonpartisan voter engagement.

- Launched CSW Democracy Fellowship by hiring five students to conduct nonpartisan voter engagement in their field placement settings. Through 56 events and individual voter outreach interventions, these students checked and updated registrations of 528 voters, including 74 agency staff and 18 direct client engagements.
 - Building on the success of the pilot, CSW received funding from our partners at All Voting Is Local to continue the program in 2024. We are developing the foundations for research and publications on the impact of this program with a CSW PhD student.
- In an era of high tension in the political system, we collaborated with the Ohio Voter Rights Coalition to offer a “De-escalation for Defending Democracy” training. This workshop drew over 190 attendees and recruited for the Election Protection Peacekeeper program. We are planning a follow up this fall for new campus partners who requested this support.
- Students completing their field placement with CSW Advocacy conducted an investigation of how student vote by mail ballots are processed through the Ohio State mail system, contributing to a report with recommendations to enhance that process.
- CSW hosted its third annual Democracy Promise Unconference, a participatory event that brings together students, social workers, and community members to talk about pressing issues facing our democracy. This intergenerational event builds the skills of our community to have important conversations across different.

“She had felt disenfranchised, and being able to share that she still had a place at the table of democracy made a difference for her and impacted me as well.”

-Kristen, CSW Democracy Fellow

Learn more about the Democracy Fellowship at u.osu.edu/cswadvocacy/fellowship



Advocacy Training

CSW Advocacy trains students to be active participants in their government and communities. The DC Advocacy Immersion continues to grow in popularity and show CSW students that they belong in politics and policy leadership.

- 35 students applied for the 2024 DC Advocacy Immersion – our largest number of applicants yet. We selected 24 students for six advocacy groups who participated in four training sessions including a legislative simulation.
 - Spending four days in DC in March, we conducted 12 legislative visits, visited two agencies and held a panel on DC careers.
- We offered additional training to a sponsored group of 20 students to attend NASW Advocacy Day to meet with Ohio lawmakers about social work issues.
- Subscribers to our email list doubled to 600 people this year. We sent 17 emails to this list connecting students and partners with opportunities to engage in our programming and community events.

“My favorite part was being in the atmosphere of DC and thinking, “wow this is a possibility for me.”

“It was a good experience overall and I am glad I went out of my control zone. This will help me choose bravery in the future and supports my future as an advocate. Thank you for all that you do.”

-2024 DC Immersion Student Feedback



Community + University Partnership

Community and interdisciplinary engagement is a cornerstone of advocacy efforts at the College of Social Work. Research projects, strategic partnerships, and unique student opportunities all come from ongoing relationship building with partners.

- CSW led the partnership work of a community engaged research project funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation evaluating the Mobile Crisis Response co-responder program for the City of Columbus Department of Public Safety. This interdisciplinary study with the College of Public Health and CFAES utilized relationships with Netcare Access, the Columbus CARE Coalition, and other partners to recruit 21 participants to tell their stories about 911 services during behavioral health crisis. Final papers are coming summer 2024.
- CSW was invited to be part of the steering committee for the Columbus CARE Coalition, where we are active in planning the Remembrance Vigil of families who lost loved ones to homicide, and Trauma Informed Awareness Week to promote resilience across the city.
- In collaboration with the Divided Community Project, we hosted a World Café with commissioners serving on municipal truth and reconciliation style racial justice commissions. This gathering provided a point of connection for these public servants across the country to affirm their experiences and inform the work of future commissions.
- Building on our relationship with OSU Votes, CSW launched the Ohio State Democracy Coalition to coordinate student voter engagement efforts campuswide during a critical election year.

“Deeply changed...Today’s session is energizing, building connections, and exchanging ideas.”
– TRC Café Guest



Student Mentorship

Students come to CSW Advocacy with a passion for building a better world. We take this responsibility seriously and provide both short and long term support to those who want to build a career in political social work.

- Two BSSW students and one MSW student completed their field placement in the CSW Advocacy office, as well as another receiving co-instruction through her placement in an advocacy agency.
- Field students played instrumental roles in facilitation of the Democracy Promise Unconference, developed recommendations for universities on handling student vote by mail ballots, conducted an evaluation of CSW sponsorship giving, and building relationships with student organizations.
- Held 22 one-to-one meetings with students seeking guidance on political engagement, activism, and advocacy careers.
- Hosted a monthly Policy + Advocacy Supervision drop in session for students to connect with peers interested in advocacy practice and provide updates on current social work issues.



Acknowledgments

Thank you to Dean David Jenkins for his continued investment in advocacy programs at the College of Social Work. Thanks to Lisa Durham for her steadfast leadership and guidance of these initiatives. Without partners at the Columbus CARE Coalition, the Ohio Voter Rights Coalition, Ohio Voice and OSU Votes, this work would not have been possible.

Photo credits to Stewart Blake.

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