



2017 Candidate Profiles

VICE PRESIDENT

Eric McKnight, LICSW – MSW from Boston University; BA in Psychology and BA in Religious Studies from Arizona State University. Mr. McKnight is in private practice and has served on the NASW-RI Board from 2014-2017. Member of NASW since 2009.

The Rhode Island chapter of NASW provides critical support to all people in Rhode Island by creating a organizational presence of social work values in Rhode Island. I'm running for Vice President to continue supporting those values to enhancing human well-being while encouraging Rhode Islanders to empower and meet the needs of those who are vulnerable, oppressed and living in poverty. In private practice I have worked to live out these values and would like to continue this as Board Vice-President.

BOARD-AT-LARGE MEMBER

Marissa Bain Mello, LICSW – MSW from Rhode Island College; BA in Psychology from the University of Rhode Island. Ms. Bain Mello is the Clinical Director and therapist at Anchor Counseling Center since 2009. Member of the NASW-RI Addictions Committee since 2016. Member of NASW since 2013.

I have been working in the field since graduating with my BA in psychology in 1999. I hit the ground running and started working immediately after graduation. I have not stopped since and obtained my MSW in 2003 and my LICSW in 2005. I could not wait to be a licensed social worker. In the first decade of my career, I focused my clinical attention on the severe and persistent mentally ill population and worked at a community mental health center for 12 years. My dream of being in a more private practice setting came true in 2009, and in 2011, I left the mental health center setting to devote my attention full time to another population. This small private practice quickly grew and I am now the Clinical Director. Although management and leadership is in my core I never stopped doing direct service. I am passionate about my work, particularly with women who are victims of domestic violence or in unhealthy and unfulfilling relationships. My core values of empowering women and anyone who is disenfranchised or taken advantage of shines in my practice. I feel all humans should be afforded the opportunity to grow and develop in a healthy way and not be victimized or oppressed. This is also demonstrated in my work with addiction. My empathy and compassion for people is what allows me to specialize in this challenging area. I also believe that social workers have a duty to uphold the values of our profession and be well for our clients. To ensure this, I would be interested in exploring or expanding upon the chapter's support for impaired professionals.

BOARD-AT-LARGE MEMBER

Jamila Allouane, LICSW – MSW from UCLA School of Social Work 2008; MA from University of Bordeaux in France 1998; BA from University of Algiers in Algiers 1994. Ms. Allouane is a psychotherapist at Brown University CAPS. Ms. Allouane also specializes in working with international students on acculturation and adjustment. Member of NASW since 2017.

My vision for the RI-NASW chapter is to mobilize our efforts to ensure equal access to services with an emphasis on mental health to all Rhode Islanders. As an experienced social worker with an educational and professional background

in cultural competency, I will dedicate all my efforts to develop and promote excellence in cultural competency trainings for social workers and social work students. I have a particular interest in assisting the Rhode Island refugee population.

Throughout my career, I have embraced social work core values of social justice, service, dignity and worth of the individual, integrity and competency. I have had the privilege to serve in a variety of clinical settings including hospitals, a political asylum program focusing on trauma recovery, a local government, a historically black college (HBCU), and an Ivy League University. While all these settings appear very different, my social work values specially integrity, service, and competence allowed me to adapt and meet the needs of each population.

I am a proud social worker. Being a board member of our RI chapter would be a privilege, and great opportunity to ensure the excellence of our profession.

MSW STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

Diana Farinho (Rhode Island College) – Presently in the MSW program at Rhode Island College; BA in Psychology from the University of Rhode Island and General Studies at Community College of RI. Ms. Farinho is currently working at Fuller Hospital as a Therapeutic Mentor and was an intern at NASW-RI in 2015 and represented NASW on several coalitions.

I would like to be considered as a candidate for the MSW Student Representative position of the NASW-RI Chapter. In my current job as Therapeutic Mentor, I am reminded every day to treat everyone in a caring and respectful manner regardless of any differences. My goal is to become a licensed social worker. I am currently attending Rhode Island College to obtain my MSW where I will strive to incorporate the six social work core values in my social work career. In an effort to expand my understanding of social work, I pursued an internship at the NASW-RI chapter where I completed 320 hours of internship. Interning at the RI Chapter gave me the opportunity to meet skilled social workers and also exposed me to a variety of aspects of the field. This internship reinforced my commitment to social work, and with every assignment that was given to me, the experience piqued my interest in continuing my involvement in the NASW-RI Chapter.

My vision for the chapter is that it will continue to address the issues surrounding immigration to ensure equal protection from discrimination for all immigrants, refugees and undocumented individuals who live in the United States. I also envision the Rhode Island Chapter finding unique and productive way to advocate for oppressed groups which would be a privilege to be a part of.

NOMINATION & LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE MEMBER

Barbara Chadwick, LCSW – BSW and MSW from Rhode Island College; Family & Community Outreach Specialist at Tri-County Community Action Agency Head Start. Past MSW Student Representative on the Board in 2015 and current NASW PACE RI member. Member since 2015.

I have enjoyed the work I have done with the NASW-RI and would like to continue to support the chapter whenever possible. I hope to continue to share my experiences with fellow RI College Alumni and new incoming students to help boost membership. Working on the Nomination & Leadership Committee would allow me to stay active in the chapter.