

Week in Review

DEPT. OF SOCIAL WORK

14 April, 2025



Social workers to stage one-hour walkout over working conditions



In this newsletter you can expect:

Weekly Local and National Updates

Policy Highlights

Resources

Weekly Self-preservation & Somatic Practice

Action Corner

Share you feedback with us?

Joy is a radical act!

Welcome!

Welcome to our weekly informational newsletter! We are living in what is often described as “interesting” times. In general, the world is moving at warp speed. News reports coming out of the new administration has the potential to impact our community in broad terms. From those we serve, to our own personal and professional experiences, and the field of social work.

Because of the fast pace of news and our belief that this pace is an intentional tactic to keep us dysregulated, confused, and in fear. Our intention is to resist this temptation by becoming a hub for information sharing that highlights weekly happenings, connects them to the multitude of spaces we occupy, and clarify where our energies are needed.

Each week you will find updates regarding what’s happening in politically both locally and nationally, what policy implications these have, and what we understand to be possible. In addition, you will find multiple resources, ways in which you can get involved and take action, care practices, and encouragements to continually seek moments of joy and peace.

*Critical Response
Team x*



Department of Social Work
College of Health and Human Sciences





What's Happening?

This is the third story in the three-part series on immigration and deportations, and we will continue to talk about our concerns in subsequent issues. To wrap up this series this week the focus is on the impacts of the courts and what this might mean moving forward. By this time, many of us know the name of Kilmar Armando Abrego Garcia, the father of three who had been granted asylum status due to credible threats against his life in his home country of El Salvador. However, due to an administrative error was taken to the now notorious terrorist prison in El Salvador. Anger over this case was swift and the courts were involved, and Judge Paula Xinis required the government updates on the Abrego Garcia case, in particular when and now he would be returned to the United States. The administration has all but stated that they are not interested in bringing him back, despite their admission of it being a mistake. They are holding strong to the falsehood that he is a suspected member of MS-13 because during an interaction with police where Abrego Garcia was wearing a Chicago Bulls jersey and hat. The Trump administration asked the Supreme Court to step in and block the judge's order to facilitate and "effectuate" Abrego Garcia's return, and Chief Justice Roberts said yes. Fortunately, the court did take this case up quickly and in a surprising 9-0 vote, the court did order that the administration facilitate the return. While the ambiguity of the order is concerning to many legal scholars, it does appear to be a win for due process and that despite the assertions of the administration, due process and the rights of those on American soil still matter. How this is handled moving forward is yet to be seen and we will continue to provide updates.



What's Happening?

As we watch this unfolding, it is important that we stay vigilant and pay attention. While it would seem ridiculous that they would begin to send American citizens to foreign prisons and then declare a sense of powerlessness to right a wrong, this was said out loud this week by the president and his press secretary, as a solution. As reported by Joyce Vance this week, “Trump said when asked if it would be permissible. “Well, I love that,” Trump **continued**. “If we could take some of our twenty-time wise guys that push people into subways and hit people over the back of the head, and purposefully run people over in cars, uh if he would take them, I would be honored to give them,” he said. Make no mistake about it; it is illegal to deport U.S. citizens. It is illegal to deport anyone without due process.” Hopefully, on this matter our judicial branch holds, the rights of the people will still be centered and grounded in the precedence of due process. Even though this news is a bright light in difficult times, it makes me think about those individuals who ended up in an El Salvadorian prison who are also innocent, who just had a tattoo or wore a sports jersey and were promptly accused of being a violent gang member, talked away by the administration as if they are violent, they just haven’t been caught yet, who don’t have a citizen partner, family member, or friend who can be their advocate. If you’re entire community is also undocumented people who are also at risk, who is going to stand up for them, who is going to shine a light on their story, who is going to let us know that another innocent person is sitting in a prison away from everyone and everything that they know. The only reason we know Abrego Garcia’s story is because his wife is a citizen and has protections other folx don’t have, who is the voice for those who do not have a voice today. Those of you who know me know that I often scoff at the idea of speaking for the voiceless, because we all have our own voices, I don’t want to speak for people, I want to make space for them to speak for themselves. However, this feels different, this is a voiceless community right now, using their voice comes with great threat of harm. This is a time that our privilege matters and we are called to use it.





As promised last week, we are providing an update to what we know about the proposed Voting Rights policy that is being proposed, the SAVE Act (Safeguarding American Voter Eligibility Act). There have been a lot of concerns about this bill specifically and how it will disenfranchise millions of Americans, with a lot of rumors regarding married women who changed their names and do not have an identification that matches their approved documents. I am not going to dive into all of the details in the SAVE Act here, I recommend this article to learn a little bit more about the possible impacts and concerns. A few important notes, that anyone who is currently registered to vote would not be impacted by the passing of this legislation. There does not seem to be an retroactive expectation that all registered voters must reregister under this law. However, if you move to another state you could be impacted by a lack of consistency in documentation, even for married women. This is not that this is “intentional,” so they say, it is due to the ambiguity in the law around what is acceptable forms of verification, no exceptions written in for alternative forms of verification in special circumstances, and so on. While the messaging is that this is about preventing undocumented, non-citizen people from voting, such laws are already in place. Rather the SAVE Act will create a large impact of disenfranchisement for those who don't have easy access to documents, who are disabled, and in particular the transgender community, particularly in the case of a name change. According to [FactCheck.org](https://factcheck.org), in a 2023 survey they found that over 9% of voting-age American citizens do not have easy access (defined as being able to “quickly find” such documents if people “had to show it tomorrow”), and that this percentage was higher almost 11% for those who identify as non-white. In 2005, Maricopa County in Arizona passed a similar law to the SAVE Act which was struck down in 2013 as unconstitutional due to the impacts, such that more than 10,000 people were prevented from registering to vote due to not having access to the named sources of identification (i.e. passport, birth certificate, or naturalization papers). Most of those who were prevented from registering were US citizens whose married names differed from their birth certificates or who had lost documentation. Many already marginalized voting blocs will likely be further marginalized, and this has the impact of having a much larger overall impact on voter access. This legislation did pass the House this week; however, it has been reported that it is unlikely to pass the Senate, as a 60-vote super majority would be required, and the Republican majority is 53, meaning at least 7 democrats would have to support this legislation to pass. And we will keep an eye on it's progress through legislation.

Policy Highlights

We have some new resources regarding policy for you all this week. The following updates provide tracking sites and webinars that you can engage with and attend to get updates from those following these stories from a Higher Education perspective.

The Democracy Index

Each week of this new Trump administration is a fresh onslaught against democracy, full of new measures damaging lives, institutions, public services, and civic life. It is a constant deluge that leaves people feeling overwhelmed and barely able to keep up. It's important to remember that this is deliberate. One of the most revealing statements about the Trump movement came from one of its founding champions, Steve Bannon, when he spoke about how they must intentionally "flood the zone." At the time, he was talking about disorienting the media with an endless barrage so that they couldn't report effectively on the administration. That is something Trump continues to do effectively. Individual people feel the impact of this approach too, aware that something is terribly wrong but sucked into one outrage, then the next, like being pulled under again and again by waves in heavy surf. It's hard to keep track of everything, let alone reckon with each incident, when you're just trying to stay afloat.

Chronicle of Higher Education

President Trump's administration has swiftly sought to advance major changes across higher education, such as eliminating diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts on campuses; punishing individuals and institutions over allegations of antisemitism; and laying off thousands of employees in the Education Department. The Chronicle is tracking executive orders, statements from Trump, and agency actions that affect higher education, plus legal challenges directed at those measures. The tracker focuses on four areas: civil rights, research, policy, and immigration.



Resources

When life is moving fast, and it feels like we are facing crisis after crisis, our bodies learn to stay in a heightened state of vigilance and anxiety. When faced with a threat the body prepares to confront that threat; however, when the threat feels omnipresent our ability to regulate our response to the environment is disrupted. Somatic perspectives tell us when our body is unable to complete the regulatory process and release excess energies or emotions, we become dysregulated, leaving a memory in the with ongoing glimpses [reminders] of the threat, even after it has dissipated. When we are regulated, we are more able to ask questions, rather than trust the inflammatory headline. We are more able to organize and act, not give into the sense of powerlessness. Each week you will find resources intended to provide you access to different ways to care for yourself, including somatic practices, intended to help you move dysregulating emotions through the body, and stay regulated.

Here are some new resources. A few articles, podcasts, and newsletters we recommend.

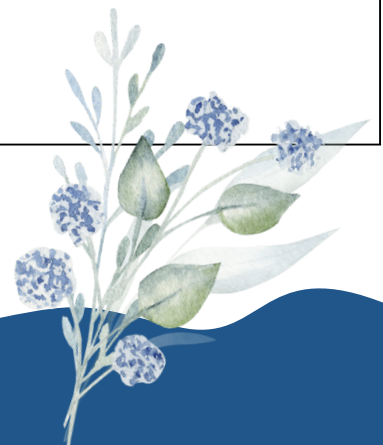
The New Social Worker Online — the professional social work careers magazine - [SocialWorker.com](https://socialworker.com)

This is a cool podcast with Dan Harris (10% Happier) and Van Jones about staying centered when we're dealing with the news:

<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/are-you-letting-politics-make-you-bitter-or-better/id1087147821?i=1000702161858>

Letters from an American, Heather Cox Richardson

<https://heathercoxrichardson.substack.com/>




Self-Preservation & Somatic Practice

This week as we continue to encourage you, the students, to consider how you get involved, what action to take, and to organize yourselves around what matters to you all the most. As stories continue to unfold, as injustice comes to us every day on whatever screens we engage, as our discomfort rises and our need to move, to act becomes more present, it also matters that you act with self-preservation. Caring for yourself is part of the story, it's not selfish, it's necessary. Please consider these resources as you make a plan for safety and well-being, particularly if you have been engaging in recent protest and action.

Regardless of context and role, social workers are ethically compelled to engage in activism. See **NASW Code of Ethics**, explicitly Standard 6. Likewise, self-care is an ethical imperative. **Activism is a necessary part of self-care!** Especially in this era, we must attend to self-care and activism as complementary in crucial and intentional ways. Here, I share ten pointers. Erlene Grise-Owens, EdD, LCSW, MSW, MRE, lead co-editor of The A-to-Z Self-Care Handbook for Social Workers and Other Helping Professionals

1. Switch from "Somebody needs to do something" to "What can I do"?
 - "Action is an antidote to anxiety." —Gretchen Rubin
 - Take action. Call a legislator. Participate in a protest rally. Connect with an advocacy group. Link up with your local political party's activities. Sometimes, resting—doing nothing—is doing something.
2. Be in community and solidarity—and care for yourself, as part of community.
 - "I always try to remember that I'll be the best me I can be, if I prioritize myself." —Michelle Obama
 - Self-care is not just a solitary endeavor; it includes seeking solidarity. Don't act alone. Connect with others engaged in mutual causes. However, the collective ubuntu of "we" is comprised of a bunch of "me"s! Attending to self-care is one of our most important responsibilities in community care/activism.
3. Attend to connections and boundaries.
 - "When people show you who they are, believe them." —Maya Angelou
 - Healthy relationships engage both connections and boundaries—personally and on the larger scale. Sometimes, we must let some relationships go—or set strong boundaries—in order to free up energy for other commitments.
4. Access/Reclaim POWER.
 - "The most common way people give up power is by thinking they don't have any." —Alice Walker
 - Self-care and activism are both all about power! Oppressive forces want us depleted, defeated, disengaged, and disempowered. Self-care keeps us re-filled and empowered. Claim your power—through self-care and social action!
5. Stay informed, but limit "news."
 - You don't have to know everything in order to do the right thing.
 - Information is a form of power. But, too much "news" can lead to analysis paralysis. Start with what you know to be the right thing in this moment.

Self-Preservation & Somatic Practice

6. Use rage as fuel; access full range of human emotions.
 - “If we make space for joy alongside our fury, then we are cultivating a deep well of power.” —Ingrid Fetell Lee
 - Don't apologize for your rage; use it. Likewise, don't concede your full humanity of joy, grief, humor, creativity, and more! Foundationally, attending to our full humanity is the primary purpose of self-care, just as it's the aim of activism.
 7. Watch your Words.
 - “Be kind to our language....Listen for dangerous words.”—Timothy Snyder
 - The above statements are from Snyder's compact, compelling book *On Tyranny*, an essential read. Of Snyder's 20 lessons, two of them (# 9 & #17) explicitly relate to use of language. Part of (re)claiming our power is being intentional with our language. Focus on nurturing justice/building up, not just dismantling/tearing down; flourishing, not just fighting. And, let's convey self-care as integral to activism. Change our words, change our world.
 8. Integrate activism as a lifestyle.
 - “Every moment is an [activism] opportunity, every person a potential activist, every minute a chance to change the world.”—Dolores Huerta
 - Don't wait for big action. Pay attention. Everyday interactions and activities can be forms of activism. Build community. Be an upstander. Are you protesting on the streets, but not advocating in your office? Practice conscientious consumerism. Be intentional about where you shop and expend resources. Contribute to/engage with good causes. Support public spaces, such as parks and libraries. Practice gratitude! Saying thank you—including to politicians doing good—is a form of activism. Value alignment is a form of self-care and a form of everyday activism.
 9. Gauge “success” by effort and contribution, not necessarily changing others or the outcome.
 - “Don't judge each day by the harvest you reap but by the seed you plant.”— Robert Louis Stevenson
 - Sustained activism is encapsulated in the mantra “Keep your eyes on the Prize.” Oftentimes, we may not see the ultimate outcome. Celebrate small wins. Define success by “Did I do everything I could—including practicing self-care?”
 10. Prioritize self-care as foundational and essential to activism.
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Getting Involved



Here are the upcoming events we are aware of. if you have information on upcoming events or actions, please share those with the CRT team or on the Student Discord. No faculty or staff are members of the discord. The CRT team and a team of your classmates are collaborating to share information to ensure messages are being shared in multiple places for increased access.

Solidarity Vigil

Mondays from 6pm-8pm

3130 N. Oakland (GEO Detention Facility)

Hosting Org: Shoes Off Collective, Ft. Taiko Drumming & Traditional Filipino Dance

American Association of University Professors

April 17: Day of Action to Defend Higher Ed - 3 - 4:30 pm at the Tivoli Quad

Rachel B. Noel Visiting Professor Events

Van Jones is the Rachel Noel Visiting Professorship this year:

<https://www.msudenver.edu/noel-professorship/>

On Monday, April 14 the **MSU Denver Immigrant Services Program** is hosting an information seminar, in partnership with a local immigration attorney, on the USCIS registration requirement and the current state of DACA and Temporary Protected Status. [Click here to register.](#)


**SAVE THE DATE! April 26,
10 - 2 pm**

SAVE THE DATE

It's hard to believe we are close to the end of the semester and getting ready to graduate so many of you to go out into the world and get into good trouble. Your classmates and CRT student representative are planning an event for April 26th, that will bring you together with faculty and staff to engage in community building and learning together and will provide an opportunity for a townhall style discussion where you can ask your student representatives and faculty and staff questions. Keep an eye-out for more information next week in the newsletter, around campus, and on Discord. This event is focused on both building and strengthening a coalition among students, faculty, and staff and will have a theme centered on organizing and action in 2025. If you are about to graduate in a month, we hope you will also choose to join us. The CRT student group will remain an open group that welcomes our entire community to the table, including alumni. If you were thinking about how you might stay connected to the MSU community post-graduation, come join us and help us define how you will engage with this team.

Please meet your CRT student representatives:

Mariana Pascual-Miranda, Chris Tyler, Kat Goodman, Lindsay Nelson, and Sophia Morris next week we will share short bios for everyone so that ya'll know who you can connect with.



EXPERIENCE JOY

**April is National
Poetry Month**

**Dualities - by Sabrina Sullenberger, BASW, MSW,
PhD**

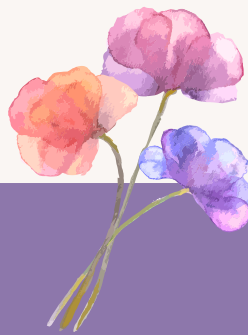


The sweetness of baby cheeks and
Sending my daughter to school the day after a
shooting and
The inability of our state lawmakers to grasp that it is,
in fact, the guns
We are all vulnerable here and
There is so much beauty
“Two can be true,” they say.
I believe in dignity and worth of all and
Some days I just (kind of) don’t like people and
There are systems of oppression I don’t have the
right language to speak to
I have seen the heavy burdens laid on people and
I have seen people walk extra miles for others, real
and metaphorically
“Two can be true,” they say.
I am a person of hope and
There are days I (temporarily) lose my way.
“Two can be true,” they say.

One good thing

Each week we will start sharing a story of the good that continues to happen in the world. Highlighting the people and actions that are making a difference. Here is this week’s story from New Orleans, LA

New Orleans youth take the mic in powerful new audio series | Every Child Thrives



“Love takes off the masks that we fear we cannot live without and know we cannot live within. I use the word “love” here not merely in the personal sense but as a state of being, or a state of grace - not in the infantile American sense of being made happy but in the tough and universal sense of quest and daring and growth.”

— James Baldwin, The Fire Next Time

Voting comedy-
Scroll through

