
EDUCATION

Ph.D.	University of Connecticut, School of Social Work <i>Dissertation: The Architecture of Precarious Belonging: How Asylum Law and Institutional Practice Shape the Structural Conditions of Belonging for LGBTQ+ Asylum Seekers</i> Dissertation advisors: Kathryn Libal, PhD, and Gio Iacono, PhD; committee members: S. Megan Berthold, PhD, and Anita H. Fábos, PhD	May 2027 (anticipated)
M.S	Justice Studies , Arizona State University Thesis: <i>Exploring belonging and identity formulation among youths from refugee backgrounds through social activism during the Making Worcester Home Youth Participatory Action Research.</i>	August 2022
MAT	Specialization: Studies and Geography , The University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica, W.I. Thesis: <i>Teach us true respect for all: An evaluation of the school suspension programme use of restorative justice principles for behaviour modification among at-risk students to prevent school violence.</i>	September 2013
M.Sc.	Governance and Public Policy , The University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica, W.I. Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies (S.A.L.I.S.E.S.) Thesis: <i>Challenges in housing the Jamaican poor: An evaluation of low-income housing policies in Jamaica</i>	November 2010
B.Sc.	Public Sector Management , The University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica, W.I.	September 2008
Associate degree	Legal Studies , Crown Professional College, Jamaica, W. I.	May 2005

RESEARCH INTERESTS

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Forced migration, asylum, and refugee resettlement▪ U.S. asylum law and policy▪ Asylum among sexual and gender diverse populations▪ Belonging and integration among forcibly displaced LGBTQ+ populations across intersecting identities | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Trauma, Resilience, and Well-being of Forcibly Displaced Individuals▪ Structural and precarious belonging▪ Representation and Storytelling of Queer Displaced Individuals▪ Social welfare policy and human rights▪ Transcultural social networks among displaced people▪ Refugee health and service access▪ Community-engaged research |
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ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Adjunct Instructor, University of Connecticut School of Social Work | *2024-Present*

- Teach graduate courses in social welfare policy, human oppression, macro foundation practice, social work and human rights across in-person, synchronous online, and asynchronous online formats.

Adjunct Instructor, Urban Studies Department, Worcester State University | *August 2020-May 2024*

- Developed learning materials, facilitated course activities, assessed student learning, and taught community-engaged coursework focused on youth participatory action research and newcomer belonging.

RESEARCH /TECHNICAL EXPERIENCE/ FIELDWORK EXPERIENCE

Graduate Research Assistantship, University of Connecticut, School of Social Work, 2022 – 2026

- Student Investigator for Refugee Perspectives on Community Sponsorship Initiatives in the United States and Canada. (Principal Investigator: S. Megan Berthold) – 2025-2026
 - Conducted and coded qualitative interviews with community service providers and contributed to qualitative analysis of refugee integration, community sponsorship, and access to health and mental health services.
 - Developed analytic memos and organized demographic and interview data to support cross-case synthesis, collaborative interpretation, manuscript development, and conference dissemination.
- Student Investigator for New Approaches to Community-Based Refugee Resettlement: Exploration of U.S. and Canadian Approaches (Principal Investigator: Kathryn Libal) – 2022 – 2025
 - Supported qualitative data management, coding, memoing, and analysis of interviews with community sponsors, service providers, and other stakeholders in refugee resettlement.
 - Contributed to research translation through conference presentations and collaborative manuscript development on community sponsorship, social work, and refugee integration.

Research Assistant, T. Denny Sanford School of Social and Family Dynamics, Arizona State University, 2021.

- Coding and qualitative data analysis with Dedoose a qualitative data software for the Arizona Youth Identity Project (A.Z.Y.I.P.).

Research Assistant, Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies (S.A.L.I.S.E.S.)-The University of the West Indies, Mona, 2011-2012.

- Planned and supported research projects, prepared research summaries, and analyzed Caribbean housing policies and programs for the SALISES 50/50 Project-Housing Cluster.
- Collected, coded, and analyzed housing data and interviewed government and housing-policy professionals.

AWARDS, HONORS AND FELLOWSHIPS

2026	Dissertation Research Fellowship, Gladstein Family Human Rights Institute, University of Connecticut, June 2026
2026	Dissertation Writing Fellowship, University of Connecticut School of Social Work, June 2026
2026	Research, Inspire, Support, and Excel (RISE) Fellowship, Society for Social Work and Research, January 2026
2025	JPMorgan Chase Foundation (JPMC) Doctoral Scholars Program at Washington University in St. Louis
2025	UConn Graduate School Conference Participation Award, January 2025
2024	PhD Student Professional Development and Konover Pre-Dissertation Travel Scholarship, Sterling pre-dissertation travel, UConn School of Social Work, November 2024
2023	Sterling Pre-Dissertation Travel Scholarship, UConn School of Social Work, April 12, 2023
2022	Harriott Fellowship

PUBLICATIONS

Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles

- Iacono, G., Holle, L., **Mortley, C.**, & Lin, H.-J. (2026). *Tuned In!:* 12-month longitudinal outcomes of an affirmative mindfulness intervention for sexual and gender diverse youth and young adults. *Journal of Affective Disorders*, 399, 120895 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2025.120895>
- Berthold, S. M., Hall-Faul, M., **Mortley, C.**, Mbewe, Y., Harding, S., & Libal, K. (2025). Community sponsorship of refugees and asylum seekers: Why social work should care. *Advances in Social Work*, 25(3), 823–843. <https://doi.org/10.18060/28713>
- Fábos, A. H., **Mortley, C.**, Ramirez, H., & Saltsman, A. (2021). When consensus falters, we co-create: Attending to power in a practitioner–scholar partnership to amplify newcomer belonging. *Gateways: International Journal of Community Research and Engagement*, 14(2), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.5130/ijcre.v14i2.7791>

Publications – In Press / Forthcoming

Articles In Press / Accepted

- Moynihan, L., **Mortley, C.**, & Mbewe, Y. (in press). Devolution as a small step forward to address the individual cost of being uninsured and undocumented in the United States. *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved*, 38(2). Forthcoming May 2027.

Book Chapters In Press / Accepted

- Mortley, C.**, Aguilar, J. P., & Iacono, G. (in press). Ethical dilemmas and transgender care. In E. P. Congress, E. Levine, & K. Schendel (Eds.), *Resolving ethical challenges in social work practice: Ethics, oppression, and human rights*. Springer Publishing.

Manuscripts Under Review

- Benavides, J., **Mortley, C.**, Kirsch, J., Osborn, P., & Williams, K. (Under review; submitted April 20, 2026). Navigating violence across borders: How African forced migrant mothers make meaning of trauma, safety, and parenting in the United States. *Transcultural Psychiatry*.
- Mortley, C.** and Saltsman, A. (Under review; submitted July 10, 2025). Making Worcester home: Youth participatory action Research, Newcomer Belonging and the Politics of Navigating Urban Space. *Journal of Community Practice*.

Book Chapters Under Review

- Mortley, C.** (under review). Dialogical human rights education: Teaching and practicing anti-racism. In S. G. Russell & S. Sirota (Eds.), *Handbook of Human Rights Education* (under contract). De Gruyter.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS AND INVITED LECTURES

- Mortley, C.** (2026, January 15). Legal evolution of “membership in a particular social group” in U.S. asylum law: Implications for queer asylum seekers [e-poster presentation]. Society for Social Work and Research (SSWR) 30th Annual Conference, January 14–18, 2026. Washington, DC.
- Iacono, G., Holle, L., **Mortley, C.**, Lin, H.-J., & Paceley, M. (2026, January 16). Tuned in! 12-month longitudinal outcomes of an affirmative mindfulness intervention for sexual and gender diverse youth and young adults [paper presentation]. Society for Social Work and Research (SSWR) 30th Annual Conference, January 14–18, 2026. Washington, DC.

- Mortley, C.,** Berthold, S. M., Harding, S., Klicheva, E., Mbewe, Y., & Libal, K. (2025, October 25). Mutual Aid and Interdependence: The Role of Community Sponsorship in Refugee Integration and Belonging [Paper presentation]. Council on Social Work Education (C.S.W.E.) 71st Annual Program Meeting. October 23 to 26, 2025. Denver, CO.
- Berthold, S. M., **Mortley, C.,** Mbewe, Y., Harding, S., Klicheva, E., Libal, K., & Rezaieifar, P. (2025, October 25). Social Work Practice with Forced Migrants with Disabilities and/or Other Chronic Health Conditions [Workshop]. Council on Social Work Education (C.S.W.E.) 71st Annual Program Meeting. October 23 to 26, 2025. Denver, CO.
- Iacono, G., Holle, L., **Mortley, C.,** Phillips, J., Carolan, K., Su, Z., & Harrington, K. (2025, October 25). Preparing Social Workers for Affirmative Practice with LGBTQIA+ Populations: Recommendations for MSW Programs [Paper presentation]. Council on Social Work Education (C.S.W.E.) 71st Annual Program Meeting. October 23 to 26, 2025. Denver, CO.
- Mortley, C.,** Saltsman, A., Fabos, A., & Kahn, L. (2005, January 22). Innovative approaches to belonging in urban spaces: Reframing the debate on integration, migration, and inclusion from a multidisciplinary perspective [Panel discussion presentation]. IASFM20 Conference. January 21-23, 2025, at UGM, Yogyakarta, Indonesia.
- Libal, K., Mbewe, Y., Berthold, S.M., **Mortley, C.,** Hall-Faul, M., & Harding, S. (contributor) (2025, January 19). Community Sponsorship and Accessing Health and Mental Health Services for Newly Arrived Refugees in the United States. Paper at the 29th Annual Conference of the Society for Social Work & Research (SSWR). January 15- 19, 2025. Seattle, WA.
- Berthold, S.M., **Mortley, C.,** Klicheva, E., Libal, K., Harding, S. (moderator), & Mbewe, Y. (contributor) (2024, October 25). The limits of U.S. asylum law and policy: Social work education and practice implications [Panel discussion presentation]. Council on Social Work Education (C.S.W.E.) 70th Annual Meeting. October 24 – 28, 2024. Kansas City, MO.
- Libal, K., Berthold, S.M., Mbewe, Y., **Mortley, C.,** Hall-Faul, M., & Harding, S. (contributor). (2023, October 29). Community sponsorship of refugees and asylum seekers: Why U.S. social work should care [Panel discussion presentation]. Council on Social Work Education (C.S.W.E.) 69th Annual Meeting. October 26-29, 2023. Atlanta, GA.
- Mortley, C.,** & Mbewe, Y. (2023, October 28). Cultural competence training in social work education: The undocumented LGBTQ+ immigrant youth perspective [e-Poster presentation]. Council on Social Work Education (C.S.W.E.) 69th Annual Meeting. October 26-29, 2023. Atlanta, GA.
- Mortley, C.,** & Saltsman, A. (2023, August 19). A space to belong: An exploratory study of belonging and social activism among young people from a refugee background [Presentation]. The Society for the Study of Social Problems Annual Meeting. August 18-20, 2023. Philadelphia, PA.
- Mortley, C.** (2023, April 23). A place to belong—An exploratory study of belonging among young people from a refugee background as a factor of well-being. [e-Poster presentation]. ResilienceCon 2023, April 16–18. Nashville, Tennessee.
- Fabos, A., **Mortley, C.,** Ramirez, H. & Saltsman, A. (2021, November 17). Power in Community-Engaged Scholarship [Panel discussion presentation]. I.A.R.S.L.C.E. 2021 Virtual Gathering. November 15-17, 2021.
- Fabos, A., **Mortley, C.,** Ramirez, H. & Saltsman, A. (2021, July 27). Collaboration in the time of COVID: A dialogue on how pandemics--and other sudden crises--impact participatory approaches in contexts of forced migration [Panel discussion presentation]. IASFM18 Online Conference. July 26-30, 2021.
- Adams, H., Babo, A., Fabos, A., Kahn, L., & **Mortley, C.** (2021, July 29). Share the platform initiative: Best practices for promoting refugee knowledge and expertise [Panel discussion presentation]. IASFM18 Online Conference. July 26-30, 2021.

Mortley, C. (2012, May 10). Challenges in housing the Jamaican poor: An evaluation of low-income housing policies in Jamaica [Presentation]. S.A.L.I.S.E.S. 50/50 Conference May 9-12, 2012. Kingston, Jamaica, W.I.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Adjunct Instructor

Courses Taught, University of Connecticut School of Social Work | 2024-2026

Spring 2026

BASC 5350 (MSW–Level): Analysis of Social Welfare Policy and Social Delivery Systems. This foundation course provides a basis for examining the historical and current contexts of social welfare programs and policies in the United States, with attention to global comparisons.

BASC 5300 (MSW – Level): Human Oppression: The African American and Puerto Rican Perspective

Fall 2025

BASC 5350 (MSW–Level): Analysis of Social Welfare Policy and Social Delivery Systems. This foundation course provides a basis for examining the historical and current contexts of social welfare programs and policies in the United States, with attention to global comparisons.

BASC 5390 (MSW – Level): Macro Foundation Practice, a foundation-level course that introduces students to the historical and contemporary context of social welfare programs and policies in the United States.

Summer 2025

SWEL 5385 (MSW – Level): Human Rights and Social Work. This interdisciplinary course provides the theoretical, conceptual, and practical foundation for social workers and allied professionals to engage in a human rights-based approach to social work.

Spring 2025

SWEL 5385 (MSW – Level): Human Rights and Social Work. This interdisciplinary course provides the theoretical, conceptual, and practical foundation for social workers and allied professionals to engage in a human rights-based approach to social work.

BASC 5350 (MSW–Level): Analysis of Social Welfare Policy and Social Delivery Systems. This foundation course provides a basis for examining the historical and current context of social welfare programs and policies in the United States.

UNIV 1800-704: University Learning Skills. The course fostered self-awareness, academic and personal growth, and global citizenship through open discussion of college transition issues.

Fall 2024

BASC 5300 (MSW – Level): Human Oppression: The African American and Puerto Rican Perspective

Instructor, Worcester State University | 2019, 2020, 2023

Spring 2023

Fall 2020

Spring 2019

UR191CDU (Dual enrollment course) Special Topics: Making Worcester Home, Worcester State University, Worcester, MA. This Introductory course introduces dual enrollment students to Youth Participatory Action Research as a method to amplify the voices of youth from refugee backgrounds on urban belonging.

AREAS PREPARED TO TEACH

Social welfare policy; social policy analysis and advocacy; immigration, asylum, and refugee policy; forced migration and refugee resettlement; human rights and social work; human oppression, anti-racist practice, and social justice; LGBTQ+ communities, migration, and policy; gender-based violence; law, public policy, and institutional systems; community organizing and social change; community-based participatory action research (CBPAR); community-engaged research; qualitative research methods; program and policy evaluation; human behavior in the social environment; global social work.

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

- Design and facilitate equity-centered professional curricula for YWCA Central Massachusetts staff and community partners, including anti-racism and racial justice, human rights, equity, inclusion and belonging, gender equity, gender-based violence prevention and response systems, cultural humility, and organizational equity, LGBTQIA+ inclusion, and community engagement, supporting organizations in advancing culturally responsive and socially just practices.
- Develop and adapt synchronous and asynchronous course activities, case-based exercises, policy-analysis assignments, and applied learning experiences for MSW and undergraduate students.
- Use current policy developments, community examples, and experiential activities to connect structural analysis with policy implementation, advocacy, and organizational change.

UNIVERSITY SERVICE

PhD Student Representative, Research Development & Policy Committee, University of Connecticut School of Social Work | *September 2024-Present*

- Represent doctoral student perspectives in committee discussions concerning research development, policy, and School priorities.

Member, International Advisory Committee, Center for International Social Work Studies, University of Connecticut School of Social Work | *September 2023-Present*

- Contribute to advisory activities and programming that advance international and comparative social work engagement.

PhD Student Representative, Just Community, University of Connecticut School of Social Work | *September 2022-September 2024*

- Represented doctoral student perspectives in School conversations and initiatives related to community, inclusion, and institutional climate.

PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMS

Campaign School for Social Workers, Humphreys Institute for Political Social Work, UConn S.S.W., February 2023

APPLIED SOCIAL WELFARE, POLICY, AND COMMUNITY PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Equity Training Coordinator, YWCA Central Massachusetts | *May 2022-Present*

- Develop and facilitate curricula for employees, community members, and professionals on racial justice, gender equity, inclusive practice, and organizational change, including training for domestic violence and survivor-serving staff.
- Partner with organizational leaders, city leaders, and community-based organizations to translate equity commitments into hiring practices, departmental assessment, staff development, and institutional-change strategies.
- Facilitate seminars, webinars, and public presentations for staff, community groups, organizational leaders, and elected officials; prepare public-facing educational materials responding to racialized incidents, hate crimes, and policy developments.

Supervisor of Intervention Services, Domestic Violence Services, YWCA Central Massachusetts | *April 2017-May 2022*

- Served as liaison among police departments, courts, high-risk teams, the District Attorney's Office, victim-service providers, and other community agencies to strengthen coordinated survivor support.
- Managed court-advocacy staff, schedules, interns, supervision, case review, mentoring, and performance feedback; coordinated program data collection and monthly reporting.
- Developed and delivered community education, prevention, outreach, training, and panel programming focused on domestic violence and survivor services.

Intimate Partner Abuse Education Facilitator, Prevention of Abuse and Violence through Education (PAVE), Spectrum Health Systems | *January 2018-August 2020*

- Conducted participant intakes and co-facilitated psychoeducational groups for men who used abusive behavior using the PAVE curriculum.
- Maintained case documentation and participant goal plans and collaborated with agency staff and community partners to coordinate services.

Case Management Intern / Volunteer, International Rescue Committee, Phoenix, AZ | *November 2021-May 2022*

Refugee & Immigration Services Mentorship Program, Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest | *December 2020-May 2022*

Coordinating Team Member, Safe Communities Coalition Campaign, Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition | *2021*

Volunteer / Community Advocate, LGBT Asylum Support Task Force, Worcester, MA | *December 2013-Present*

- Contribute sustained community-based advocacy and engagement with LGBTQ+ asylum seekers, immigrant-rights advocates, and service-provider networks.

SELECTED COMMUNITY AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Co-Founder, Share the Platform | *2018-Present*

Board Member, The HeartWell Institute, Worcester, Massachusetts | *2025-Present*

Board Member, De Novo Center for Healing and Justice (formerly CLSACC) | *2018-Present*

Member, YWCA Central Massachusetts Public Policy Board Subcommittee | *2017-Present*

Member, City Manager's Coalition Against Bias and Hate, Worcester | *2015-Present*

Co-Chair, CHNA 9 Racial Justice Working Group | *2019-2020*

Co-chair, Steering Committee Community Health Network of North Central Massachusetts (C.H.N.A. 9) | *2018-2020*

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND CERTIFICATIONS

Graduate Certificate in Human Rights, University of Connecticut, Human Rights Institute, May 2027 (anticipated)

Certificate, Campaign School for Social Workers, Humphreys Institute for Political Social Work, University of Connecticut School of Social Work, 2023

Certificate, College Teaching, The Higher Education Consortium of Central Massachusetts, Worcester State University, 2019.

Methodological Expertise: Constructivist grounded theory; semi-structured interviewing; focus groups and qualitative data generation; field observation; qualitative document analysis; qualitative coding and memoing; reflexive thematic analysis; participatory action research (PAR); youth participatory action research (YPAR); community-based participatory action research (CBPAR); critical discourse analysis (CDA); reflexive qualitative inquiry; and Sort and Sift, Think and Shift.

Software: NVivo; Dedoose; SPSS; Stata; Microsoft Office Suite.

Languages: English (fluent); Jamaican Patois (fluent).