

# DENISE YOOKONG WILLIAMS, MSW, LCSW, CFLE

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Pronouns: She/They

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## AREAS OF TEACHING & RESEARCH INTEREST

Suicide prevention; suicidal ideation and behavior; depression; trauma and mental health; intersectionality; LGBTQ+ and BIPOC populations; adolescent youth; school social work; therapeutic art-based modalities

## EDUCATION

<b>University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill</b> , Chapel Hill, NC Doctor of Philosophy in Social Work	Anticipated 2025
<b>University of Maryland School of Social Work</b> , Baltimore, MD Master of Social Work in Clinical Mental Health The Trauma Education Connections Initiative	2015
<b>Towson University</b> , Towson, MD Bachelor of Science in Family and Human Services; Art Minor	2012
<b>Payap University</b> , Chiang Mai, Thailand Education Abroad Network	Summer 2011

## AWARDS & HONORS

Maryland State Senatorial Scholarship Recipient (2013-2015)  
Maryland State Delegate Scholarship Recipient (2013)  
Towson University Graduated with Summa Cum Laude Honors (2012)  
Towson University Dean's List Recipient (2008-2012)  
Towson University Human Services & Community Development Academic Excellence Award (2012)  
Nonprofit Leadership Alliance Service Award (2012)  
Nonprofit Leadership Alliance Excellence Award (2011)  
Next Generation Nonprofit Leaders Program Scholar (2011)  
Nonprofit Leadership Alliance Career Development Award (2010)  
Asian & Pacific Islander American Scholar (2008)  
Maryland Distinguished Art Scholar Honorable Mention (2008)  
Howard County Maryland Art Department Senior Showcase Speaker & Presenter (2008)

## CERTIFICATIONS & LICENSURES

Licensed Clinical Social Worker (North Carolina Social Work Certification and Licensure Board)  
Certified Family Life Educator (National Council on Family Relations)  
Certified Nonprofit Professional (Nonprofit Leadership Alliance)

## PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

The American Association of Suicidology  
The Society for Social Work & Research

## RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

**Research Assistant**, UNC School of Social Work, Chapel Hill, NC 2021 - Present  
*Principal Investigator*: Dr. William J. Hall

Analyze data, interpret results, and write manuscripts based on a R21 grant from NIH on stress, internalized stigma, and mental health among LGBTQ+ adults; assist in the development of recruitment materials, design of data collection methods, and collection of quantitative and qualitative data for a R01 grant from NIH on identity development and mental health trajectories for LGBTQ+ youth

**Co-Investigator**, School of Social Work, University of Michigan 2020 - 2021  
*Principal Investigator*: Dr. Lisa Wexler

Collaborated in formulating, planning, and implementing systematic research on suicide prevention and postvention in the school setting; authored a manuscript and provided information that supported a R01 funded research project by NIH on community postvention best practices.

**Research Assistant**, Family Studies Department, Towson University 2010 - 2012  
*Principal Investigator*: Dr. Sharon Jones-Eversley

Analyzed data and conducted research on minority groups in the nonprofit leadership sector; conducted a review on health disparities and comorbidities affecting African American individuals and families to present at the Nonprofit Leadership and Management Institute conference in January 2011.

## PUBLICATIONS

### *Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles*

**Williams, D. Y.**, Wexler, L., & Mueller, A. (in press). Suicide postvention in schools: What evidence support our current national recommendations? *School Social Work Journal*.

Dawes, H. C., **Williams, D. Y.**, Klein, L. B., Hirst, L. E., Forte, A. B., Gibbs, D. J., & Hall, W. J. (in preparation). Experiences of queer people of color in mental health services and substance abuse services: A systematic review.

### *Edited Book Chapters*

Hall, W. J., Merino, Y. M., Adams, L. B., **Williams, D. Y.**, & Dawes, H. C. (in preparation). Implicit attitudes and implicit bias in mental health. In H. S. Friedman, C. N. Markey, & W. Lu (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of mental health* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Elsevier.

## PRESENTATIONS

### *Peer-Reviewed Research Presentations*

Jones-Eversley, S., **Williams, D. Y.**, & Fennell, A. (2011, January). *Promotion of nonprofit opportunities to underrepresented groups*. Peer-reviewed presentation at the Nonprofit Leadership and Management Institute conference, Orlando, Florida.

### ***Teaching Experience***

- LaFountain, S. E., Salapata, C., **Williams, D. Y.**, & Matthews, J. (2020, November). *Let's get it done: Executive function support during remote learning*. Presented virtually to the faculty of Winfield Elementary, Baltimore, MD.
- Salapata, C., Matthews, J., LaFountain, S. E., & **Williams, D. Y.** (2020, September). *The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) competencies*. Presented virtually to the faculty of Winfield Elementary, Baltimore, MD.
- Williams, D. Y.** & LaFountain, S. E. (2019, October). *The brain architecture game: Trauma and early childhood development*. Presented to the faculty of Winfield Elementary, Baltimore, MD.
- Williams, D. Y.** (2019, August). *Trauma-informed practices for school staff*. Presented at the faculty pre-service orientation for Winfield Elementary staff, Baltimore, MD.

### ***Community Presentations***

- Williams, D. Y.**, LaFountain, S. E., Salapata, C., & Matthews, J. (2021, January). *Building emotional resilience during a pandemic: Self-care strategies presented by the Social Emotional Learning Team*. Presented virtually to the faculty of Winfield Elementary, Baltimore, MD.
- Salapata, C., Matthews, J., LaFountain, S. E., & **Williams, D. Y.** (2020, September). *Self-care during the COVID-19 pandemic*. Presented virtually to the faculty of Winfield Elementary, Baltimore, MD.
- Salapata, C., Matthews, J., & **Williams, D. Y.** (2020, August). *Social emotional learning in the virtual setting*. Presented virtually to the faculty of Winfield Elementary, Baltimore, MD.
- Williams, D. Y.**, Salapata, C., & Matthews, J. (2020, January). *Mindfulness for parents and children*. Presented to the families and students of Winfield Elementary during family engagement night, Baltimore, MD.
- Williams, D. Y.** (2019, October). *Introduction to the incredible 5-point scale: Social-emotional regulation in the classroom*. Presented to educators at Winfield Elementary, Baltimore, MD.
- Williams, D. Y.**, & Matthews, J. (2019, August). *Positive behavior interventions and supports*. Presented at the faculty pre-service orientation for Winfield Elementary staff, Baltimore, MD.
- Williams, D. Y.**, & LaFountain, S. E. (2019, March). *Self-care strategies to prevent burn-out*. Presented to the faculty of Winfield Elementary, Baltimore, MD.

### ***Invited Lectures & Panels***

- Williams, D. Y.** (2017, March). *Towson University Family Studies Panel of Professionals*. Invited Return Panelist to discuss professional experience and human services careers with undergraduate Family Studies senior students, Towson, MD.
- Williams, D. Y.** (2016, April). *Towson University Family Studies Panel of Professionals*. Invited Panelist to discuss professional experience and human services careers with undergraduate Family Studies senior students, Towson, MD.
- Williams, D. Y.** (2014, April). *Basic counseling, motivational interviewing and stages of change strategies*.

Presented to volunteers at Notre Dame Mission Volunteers AmeriCorps staff meeting, Baltimore, MD.

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

**Freelance Artist**, Self-Employed, Various locations 2010 - Present  
Creating various artworks (drawing, painting, and mixed medias) to raise awareness and funds for various social justice causes and Baltimore City community-based nonprofits; tabling and networking at various venues and community events; painting community murals and other commission-based artworks

**School Social Worker**, Baltimore County Public Schools, Baltimore, MD, 2018 - 2021  
Supervised an undergraduate social work intern and collaborated with other mental health individuals as a Signs of Suicide (SOS) Ambassador; co-led the Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and Threat Management Teams for tiered interventions

**Therapist**, Catholic Charities, Dundalk, MD 2016 - 2018  
Engaged in individual and family therapy across the lifespan, including crisis intervention; specialized in trauma treatment and monitored client progress with monthly evidence-based scales including the Columbia Suicide Severity Rating Scale, SCARED Brief Assessment, UCLA Adolescent PTSD Index, and the Pediatric Symptom Checklist-17

**Therapist**, Positive Changes Counseling Center, Towson, MD 2016 - 2017  
Specialized in family and individual counseling, diagnosing, and creating treatment plans; safety planned and specialized in treating individuals with trauma, Major Depressive Disorder and suicidal ideation or self-injurious behaviors

**Family Life Educator**, The Children's Guild, Baltimore, MD 2015 - 2016  
Provided crisis support and clinical case management for youth with severe mental health diagnoses within child welfare treatment foster care; supervised, trained, and supported an average of 10 foster parents using trauma-informed care

**Residential Counselor**, Mosaic Community Services, Cockeysville, MD 2013 - 2015  
Worked with transitional age youth ages 17-21 years at an independent living program; led group and individual sessions on coping and independent living skills

**Graduate Intern**, Catholic Charities, Baltimore, MD 2014 - 2015  
Administered individual, family and group therapy, risk assessments and safety planning with a focus and specialization in Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT) for children; partnered with a community organization to bring an LGBTQ+ training session to the school for staff and students to proactively address bullying and other behaviors for the at-risk population

**Art Instructor**, Columbia Art Center, Columbia, MD Summer 2014  
Taught multiple classes of 10-25 students aged 5-14 in various art subjects during summer camp; engaged in crisis intervention and behavioral management

**Graduate Intern**, Baltimore City Public Schools, Baltimore, MD 2013 - 2014  
Facilitated individual and group therapy and engaged in crisis intervention and home visits; created a crisis intervention pamphlet for staff and families for psychoeducational purposes

**AmeriCorps VISTA**, Boys Hope Girls Hope, Baltimore, MD 2012 - 2013  
Developed programs and interventions to address and monitor educational needs of youth; recruited and managed volunteers and community-based partnerships for relationship-building

**Undergraduate Intern**, St. Vincent's Villa, Timonium, MD 2011 - 2012  
Co-led therapeutic group sessions in the resident treatment center milieu; lesson planned for children with special needs and created therapeutic art interventions

## UNIVERSITY SERVICE EXPERIENCE

**Student Representative**, UNC-CH Doctoral Program Committee, Chapel Hill, NC 2021 - Present  
Attended meetings; collaborated with faculty; advocated for needs of doctoral students

**Vice President**, University of Maryland LGBTQ+ Union, Baltimore, MD 2013 - 2015  
Co-facilitated group meetings and conducted community outreach and advocacy for LGBTQ+ individuals and organizations, including a community panel on issues within the transgender population to spread awareness; organized with other student organizations to advocate for a racial justice course to be created and mandated for all students at the university level, to explore social work and the history of systemic racism and oppression

**Vice President**, Nonprofit Leadership Alliance, Towson, MD 2009 - 2012  
Served in previous years as secretary, vice president and as a member of the public relations committee; marketed and organized campus-wide events including a guest speaker to address international human trafficking and sex work

## COMMUNITY & CIVIC SERVICE EXPERIENCE

**Still I Run Ambassador**, Still I Run, Grand Rapids, MI 2021 - Present  
Selected to serve as a 2021 SIR Ambassador to combat mental health stigma by raising mental health awareness through running, interviews, fundraisers, blogs, and social media posts

**Fundraiser**, The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, New York, NY 2010 - Present  
Engaged in personal fundraisers over many years' time span, totaling in over \$3,500 for the organization

**Fundraiser**, Baltimore Racial Justice Action, Baltimore, MD Summer 2020  
Raised over \$500 during an individual two-day fundraiser by selling artwork to support this organization

**Fundraiser**, Moveable Feast, Baltimore, MD Spring 2018  
Co-fundraised over \$25,000 for the Moveable Feast nonprofit event "Ride for the Feast"; built community partnerships and sourced donations; planned, organized, marketed, and implemented 4 separate, large-scale community fundraising events (queer karaoke, a bike race, a local artisan market, and a glow-in-the-dark dance party); biked over 135 miles in two days in solidarity for Moveable Feast with the cycling teams

**Volunteer, Students Helping Honduras**, Towson, MD 2011 - 2012  
Fundraised over \$3,500 individually to build a bilingual in rural Honduras, worked as a group to raise over \$50,000 in three months through vigorous fundraising, and helped to construct the bilingual school

**Mentor**, U.S. Dream Academy, Baltimore, MD 2010 - 2011  
Worked with youth with a family history of incarceration and mentored a student for one year; created a resource brochure for families to meet various needs

**Human Rights Volunteer**, Free Burma Rangers, Chiang Mai, Thailand Summer 2011  
Assisted in transcribing documents and filing evidence on human rights violations in Myanmar

**Marketing Volunteer**, The Center for Remarkable Women, Baltimore, MD Spring 2011

Created a social marketing plan for the new non-profit and developed a strategic logic model to align operations, goals, and outcomes for social media and community partnership building

## **OTHER / MEDIA COVERAGE / MEDIA INTERVIEWS**

Heimerman, C. (Host). 2021, September 28. Denise Williams (No. 38) [Audio podcast episode]. In *40,000 Steps*. Apple Podcasts. <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/episode-38-denise-williams/id1542830062?i=1000536865658>

**Williams, D. Y.** (2021, June 13). Pride month: History & allyship for the 2SLGBTQAI+ community. *Still I Run Blog*. <https://www.stillirun.org/2021/06/13/pride-month-history-allyship-for-the-2slgbtqai-community/>

Smith, J. (2021, June 1). Five runners share how medication plays a role in their mental health toolkit: It's time to break down barriers and reduce the stigma around medication, because you're not alone. *Runner's World*. <https://www.runnersworld.com/health-injuries/a36394548/runners-removing-the-stigma-around-antidepressants/>

Wolff, S. (2021, April 21). 2021 Still I Run ambassador spotlight: Denise Williams. *Still I Run Blog*. <https://www.stillirun.org/2021/04/21/2021-still-i-run-ambassador-spotlight-denise-williams/>

**Williams, D. Y.** (2021, April 14). Running & the brain: The neuroscience of running. *Still I Run Blog*. <https://www.stillirun.org/2021/04/14/running-the-brain-the-neuroscience-of-running/>

Rodenburg, M. (2021, March 19). For this Baltimore runner, mental health is like running a marathon: Marathoner Denise Williams has had running come and go in her life, but now sees outdoor recreation as essential to her continued self-care. *Women's Running*. <https://www.womensrunning.com/culture/people/denise-williams-runs-for-mental-health-awareness/>