

**Social Work Month is in March** and this year's theme is **ELEVATE SOCIAL WORK**.

Each day, nearly 700,000 social workers nationwide work to elevate and empower others, giving them the ability to solve life's problems, cope with personal roadblocks and get the services they need.

**(OPTIONAL: WRITE A LITTLE BIT ABOUT A NOTABLE SOCIAL WORKER YOU KNOW OR SOME INITIATIVE YOU HAVE SPEARHEADED. OR USE THE ANECDOTE BELOW ON KIMBER NICOLETTI-MARTINEZ)**

One of these social workers is Social Worker of the Year Kimber Nicoletti-Martinez, who spearheaded an effort to uplift young women and girls who are frequently overlooked in our society.

Nicoletti-Martinez is founder and director of Multicultural Efforts to End Sexual Assault (MESA), an organization that mobilizes farm workers and low-wage immigrant communities in Indiana, California, Pennsylvania and Arizona to prevent child sex abuse.

"Preventing child sexual abuse is our highest calling and priority," Nicoletti-Martinez says.

For generations, social workers such as Nicoletti-Sherman (OR YOUR EXAMPLE) have worked tirelessly to improve our wider society and make our nation a better place to live.

These social workers include Labor Secretary Frances Perkins, who pushed for a minimum wage and Social Security; Nobel Peace Prize winner Jane Addams, who is considered the mother of social work; Civil Rights leaders Dorothy Height and Whitney Young Jr.; and Ambassador Wendy Sherman, who helped broker the Iran Nuclear Agreement.

You may not realize it, but social workers are everywhere. For example, they work in hospitals and mental health facilities and clinics, helping place people on the path to recovery from sickness and mental illness. They support our brave military personnel, veterans and their families. They are in schools, helping students overcome issues that prevent them from getting a good education, and they protect children who have been abused or neglected. They also help children find new families through adoption.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, social work is one of the fastest-growing professions in the United States, with 100,000 more social workers expected to enter the profession in just seven years.

Still, this year's theme – Elevate Social Workers – is not just about discussing the success of the social work profession. Despite the life-affirming, invaluable work that social workers perform, their salaries tend to lag behind that of other helping professions such as nurses, high school teachers and policeman.

Social workers are needed now more than ever as the nation grapples with serious issues such as income equality, preventing suicide, ensuring access to good health care for all, as well as addressing the growing opioid addiction now gripping the nation.

During Social Work Month, we urge you to learn more about the social work profession and how you can help members of this great vocation continue to make this nation better and get the compensation they need to do the amazing work they do.

**(OPTIONAL: INSERT INFORMATION ABOUT LOCAL INITIATIVES OR LEGISLATION THAT SUPPORT THE SOCIAL WORK PROFESSION OR ISSUES IMPORTANT TO SOCIAL WORKERS).**