



SOCIAL WORKERS

leaders. advocates. champions.

2018 SOCIAL WORK MONTH THEME & RATIONALE

Every day the nation's 650,000 social workers act as advocates, champions and leaders who make our society a better place to live.

For instance, school social worker Rochelle Gauthier in New Orleans advocates for children who may have been affected by gun violence and other trauma, helping them get mental health and other services they need to get the best education they can.

In North Carolina social worker John Cowart for decades was a champion for veterans, helping hundreds of people who served in wars dating back to the Spanish-American War recover from post-traumatic stress disorders and the other effects of military service.

And in Congress social workers such as Sen. Debbie Stabenow of Michigan and Rep. Barbara Lee of California are leaders, helping marshal health care and other legislation through Congress that benefits Americans from across our great nation.

WHY THE THEME MATTERS

Social workers are trained to look at situations in a holistic way, bringing people together with others and their communities to find ways to address pressing individual, group and societal problems such as hunger, affordable housing, equal rights for all and making organizations and government accountable.

Social workers also follow the NASW *Code of Ethics*, which calls on members of the profession to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty.

As the nation commemorates Social Work Month in March, it is important for the public to recognize that the need for social workers to be strong advocates, champions and leaders is more important than ever.

Federal and state governments may roll back funding for services that help vulnerable Americans get back on their feet financially.

The Affordable Care Act, a law that has enabled millions of Americans to gain health care coverage for the first time, is under continuous threat and needs to be fixed so that it works more effectively.

Some of the recently hard-fought rights of people who are LGBTQ are under threat. And the Justice Department is seeking to restore draconian policing and sentencing guidelines that unfairly and disproportionately harm people who are African American or Latino.

The 2018 Social Work Month theme “**Social Workers: Leaders. Advocates. Champions**” will inform the public about the past and present role of social workers in helping the most vulnerable people in our society as well as their role in improving the lives of all Americans.

The campaign will also improve the image and respect of the social work profession by educating the public, the media and elected officials about the profession.

2018 CAMPAIGN HIGHLIGHTS

- » **Social Work Month Online Toolkit:** The toolkit will offer social workers and their allies tools they can use to educate others about the positive impact of social workers. The toolkit will include an official proclamation that social workers can have their lawmakers distribute, downloadable logos, and a sample press release and letter to the editor.
- » **Video Storytelling:** The National Association of Social Workers will release a brief video highlighting the stories of several social workers who have proved to be effective advocates, champions and leaders. Social workers can use the video in public presentations and on their websites or on social media as an educational tool.
- » **Podcast Storytelling:** NASW will invite social workers to do brief audio clips to describe how they are advocates, champions and leaders. The audio links will be posted online and social workers and their allies can use them as an educational tool or share them via social media. The best podcast will receive a 2018 NASW Media Award.
- » **Media Tour:** NASW will do a nationwide radio tour to share news about the theme and highlight legislative and other issues of importance to social workers in 2018.
- » **Social Media Campaign:** NASW will host a Twitterstorm on Thursday March 1 to promote the Social Work Month theme and highlight social workers who have acted as leaders, advocates and champions.
- » **Public Service Announcement:** Social Work Month Public Service Announcements will be aired around the nation.
- » **Merchandise:** Social Work Month merchandise will be used to promote the “**Social Workers: Leaders. Advocates. Champions**” theme. Jim Coleman LTD is our official vendor.
- » **Media Awards:** NASW will honor news and magazine articles, TV shows, films and other media that show how social workers are effective advocates, champions and leaders.

For more information on the 2018 Social Work Month “Social Workers: Leaders. Advocates. Champions.” Campaign contact NASW Public Relations Manager Greg Wright at gwright.nasw@socialworkers.org.