

# VISION

'17/'18

I am glad to count you as a friend of the Graduate School of Social Work (GSSW) at the University of Denver (DU). I would like to share a glimpse into our past year, forecast important engagement opportunities for the fall, and ask that you help me advance the school.

The past year has been an exciting one. We engaged about 750 community and university partners, alumni, students, faculty, and staff in our strategic planning process. Our plan has been approved by the DU Board of Trustees, and we will launch it later this year, outlining important initiatives that will ensure we connect with community, mobilize our resources, and transform systems for equity.

We launched MSW@Denver, our online MSW program, and are now partnering with 2U, Inc. to expand our reach and impact across the country. World-renowned behavioral health scholar, Professor Lena Lundgren, was recruited from Boston University to lead our Butler Institute for Families. We leaned into the profession's social justice mission by sponsoring a "Civic Education for Civic Engagement" skills-development series, with more than 600 community members participating. Our Catalyst for Social Justice series, which featured national speakers addressing critical issues of race, ethics, and community, also drew large numbers from across the Denver metro area.

As we begin this next academic year, we hope to see you engage at our events. The Civic Education series continues, turning now to critical areas of policy—from immigration to health care. The Catalyst series continues the much needed focus on race with our first speaker, Dr. Robin DiAngelo, on White Fragility. GSSW is also inaugurating the "Social Work Grand Challenges: Science for Action Series." This series will focus on the 12 grand challenges facing the profession and discipline, and the role of research and evidence in shaping policy and practice that will chip away at those challenges. The series will be livestreamed to promote maximum participation with the first event focused on prevention and youth development. Please visit our events page for more information: [du.edu/socialwork/events](http://du.edu/socialwork/events).

Finally, I must share that my predecessor, Dean Emeritus James Herbert Williams is returning to Arizona State University to take up a new opportunity as Director of the School of Social Work, Interim Director of the Southwest Interdisciplinary Research Center, and Arizona Centennial Professor of Social Welfare Services. James Herbert's legacy as dean is distinguished by the school's growth in faculty and students, excellence in scholarship, and national and international renown. The school increased dramatically in national rankings during his tenure, from 38th to 17th according to the US News and World Report.

During his years at the school, James Herbert initiated the 1931 Legacy Endowed Scholarship Fund for deserving students, who otherwise would not be able to pursue a degree due to financial barriers. Increasing the diversity of our school and generating scholarship support is the focus of the school's new strategic plan. As we celebrate his leadership, please join me in supporting his legacy by making a gift in his honor to the scholarship fund.

Here's to GSSW's continued leadership and impact with your engagement and support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Amanda', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Amanda Moore McBride, PhD  
Morris Endowed Dean and Professor

*To view this letter or make a gift online please visit [advancing.du.edu/vision](http://advancing.du.edu/vision).*