



**CONGRATULATIONS  
2024 SOCIAL WORK GRADUATES**

# BLAIRE BUFFALO

TREATY NO. 6 TERRITORY; SASKATOON, SK

Tansi, my name is Blaire Buffalo. I am from Day Star First Nation in Saskatchewan's Treaty No. 4 Territory, I am Nêhiyaw (Cree).

I am a mother to two daughters Adawnis and Mikaiah, who are twelve and fourteen years old. For the past eight years, I have been living in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, which is located on Treaty 6. My goal is to work as a counsellor and consultant for our First Nations communities and organizations, offering programs and services that promote family wellbeing and healing, especially for women and children. My love for research has grown as a result of my research and thesis work at UVic, and I intend to continue Indigenous research for our First Nations communities.

Kinanāskomitin (Thank you, I am grateful)



# TYLER COLBOURNE

PUNAMU'KWATIJK, NS

I am grateful to work in adult education and social work while living as a settler Canadian on the lands of the Mi'kmaq. I live in Punamu'kwatijk and work in Kjipuktuk in Mi'kma'ki as the Nova Scotia College of Social Workers Professional Development Consultant. I believe my future as a social worker will continue to blend advocacy, adult education and facilitation, social innovation, evaluation, and creative projects. Aside from being a social worker, I am also a photographer, advocate, facilitator, and volunteer. I am grateful to my partner Matt and my friends and family for supporting me in my educational journey.



# FERDILEN MAE AUSENA

## BURNABY, BC

My name is Mae Ausena. I was born and raised on the unceded territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleill-Waututh nations.

I am happy to have completed my BSW with the child welfare specialization through the distance program.

I am grateful to my family and friends who have supported me during this journey. I intend to get my MSW in the future.

Congratulations, everyone!



# ALEAH GRIER

VICTORIA, BC

My goals within this field are to work alongside individuals in our community in many different capacities. Currently working in mental health and addictions in a hospital setting and throughout the community in outreach has incredibly helped me grow as a social worker and personally. My future goals are to get my masters in counseling and become a registered early childhood therapist as well as continuing working with individuals struggling with addiction and mental health as a counselor.

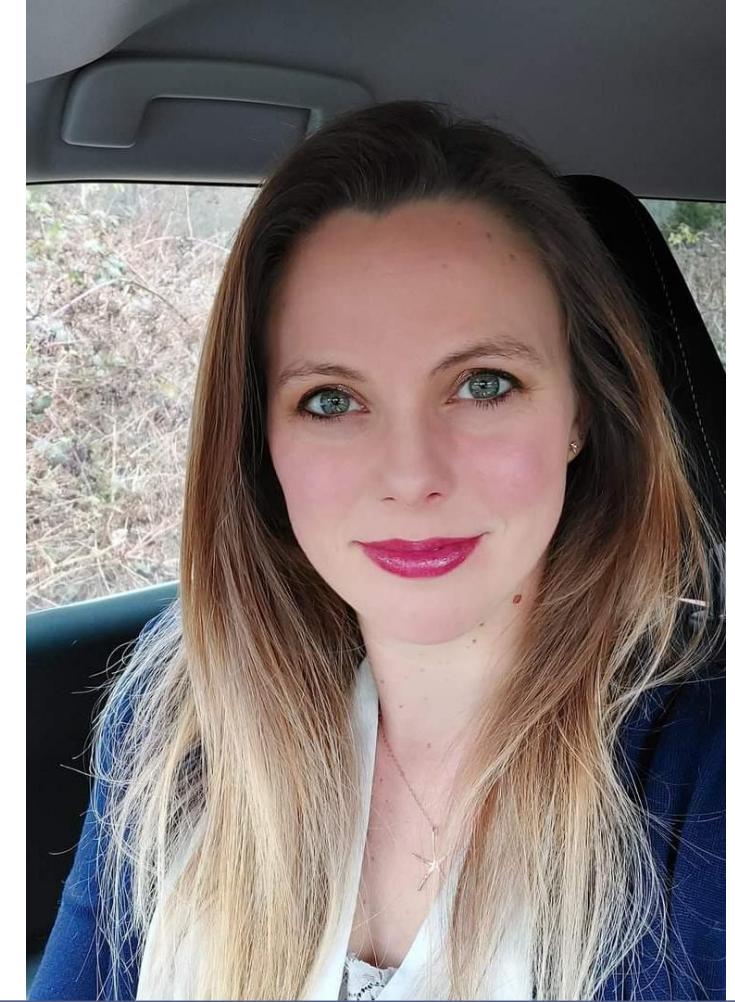


# KAIJA GRIFFITHS

## SOOKE, BC

My name is Kaija Griffiths. I live, work, and play on the traditional territories of the T'Souke Nation, colonially known as Sooke, BC.

I am currently employed as the Youth Outreach and Navigator with the Sooke Family Resource Society. I plan on using my BSW to continue in this role, walking alongside families and youth in my community.



# KENNEDY GURYN

## LONDON, ON

My future goals is to get a Master of Social work degree and then specialize in family and couple therapy.



# ANGELA LEE

## VICTORIA, BC

I live on the traditional territories of the Lekwungen peoples, also known as the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations.

I am grateful for the knowledge gained in this program and I wish to thank my professors, friends and family who supported me throughout my studies. I am committed to practicing social work with a strength-based, compassionate, and social justice-approach.

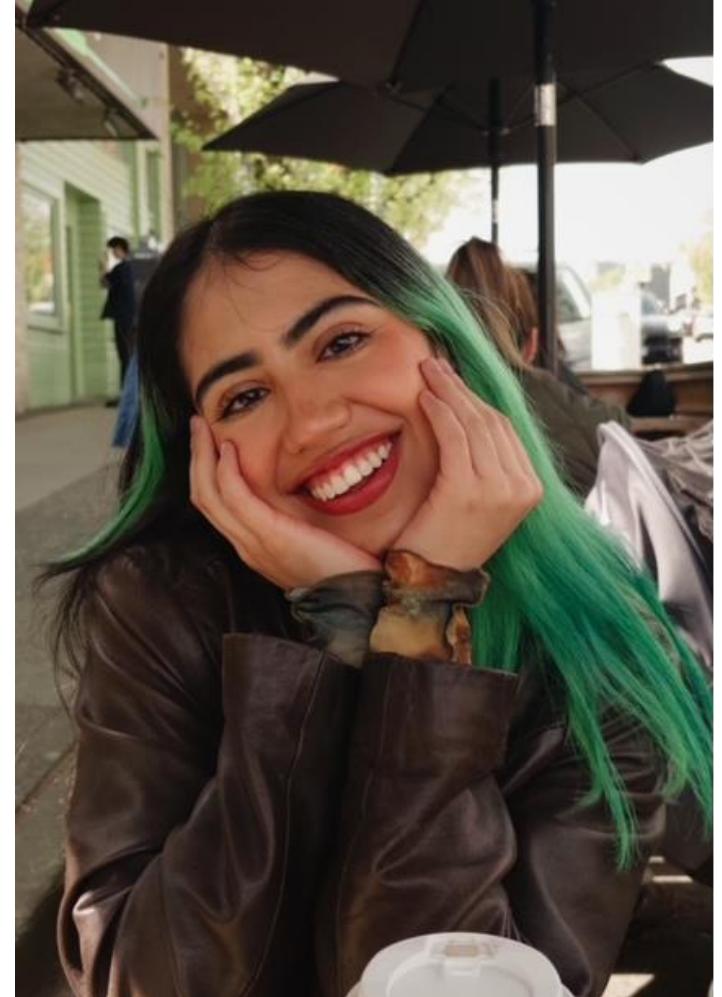
Congratulations graduates!



# KERSTIN LINARES HERRERA

NORTH VANCOUVER, BC

I am a Latina born and raised in Mexico, and I am grateful to call the lands of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səlilwətaɬ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations home for the past seven years. I currently work with unsheltered youth and plan to continue in this role for some time. However, my long-term goal is to get my MSW, become a healthcare social worker and work in hospitals. My parents, both doctors back home, are my greatest inspiration and the reason I am here today. I am passionate about decolonizing my practice by addressing both micro and macro levels, shifting the focus from blaming individuals to recognizing and understanding the multiple oppressive systems that impact a person's life due to their social positionality.



# CORY MAPSON

## VICTORIA, BC

Congratulations fellow graduates on finishing the program!

I was raised in 100 Mile House and moved to Victoria to complete my degree.

I currently work as a residential youth care worker, and in Government at the organization I did my 4th year practicum with. My long-term aspiration is to do more therapeutic one-on-one work.



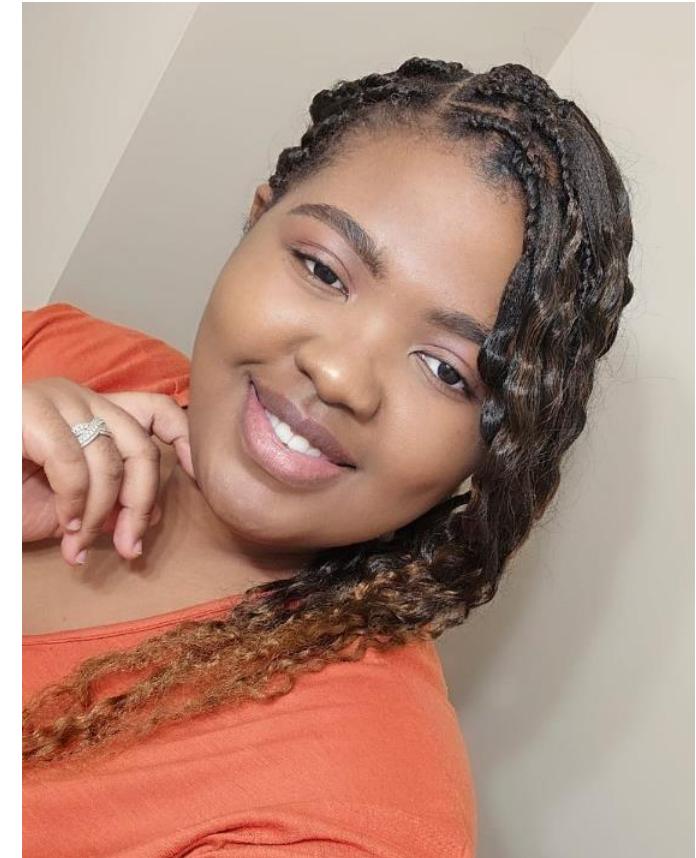
# NOBUKHOSI (KHOSI) MHLANGA

DAWSON CREEK, BC

Congratulations to all my fellow graduates!

My name is Nobukhosi (Khosi) Mhlanga. I've finally made it to the finish line, and I couldn't have done it without the support of my wonderful husband and my beautiful family friend, Dolores. I am deeply grateful for the BSW program because it has helped me grow tremendously in every area of my life. For instance, I have learned to think critically and constantly push myself to greater heights. This program has shown me that in social work, every day presents an opportunity to learn, and it's vital to keep expanding my knowledge.

In the future, I plan to enroll in an MSW program and eventually open my own private practice as a counsellor, or work as a geriatric social worker in a medical setting.



# LAUREL NIELSEN

## ANISHINAABE ALGONQUIN LAND IN OTTAWA

Hey! My name is Laurel (he/they). I grew up in Lax Kxeen [Prince Rupert] and am a nonbinary settler currently on Anishinaabe Algonquin land in Ottawa.

Currently, I am hoping to work in the outreach or queer community, and help people navigate the system with what I've learned, alongside my own lived experience. I aim to make the world a more accessible and kinder place.



# SHAUNA ROBERTSON

## SLOCAN VALLEY, BC

I am located in the traditional and ancestral unceded territories of the Sinixt, Ktunaxa, Syilx, and Secwépemc Peoples, also known as the Slocan Valley, BC.

I am pursuing graduate studies and clinical work in healthcare settings, where I can bring my social work framework to affect change in the biomedicalized systemic approaches to health and wellbeing. I am passionate about working collectively, facilitating group work, and fostering empowerment and connection through transformative action.

Congratulations Graduates!



# EMILY WALMSLEY

VANCOUVER, BC

I am blessed to live and work as an uninvited settler on the unceded and traditional territories of the *xʷməθkʷəy̓əm* (Musqueam), *Sḵwxwú7mesh* (Squamish), and *səlilwətaɬ* (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

I am so grateful for all I have learned in the BSW program, as this knowledge has been instrumental in shaping my lens and approach to social work practice. Currently, I work as a Mental Health Professional for a mental health and substance use crisis response team, operating as a trauma-informed, culturally safe alternative to emergency services in my community. I intend to continue to pursue my passions for social justice and mental health in my career, with future goals of completing my MSW. Congratulations to my fellow graduates, wishing you all the best in your social work journeys!

