

Dr. Toya Jones, LCSW, EdD
2108 Cathedral of Learning
University of Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh, PA 15260
412-648-9306
toyaj@pitt.edu

EDUCATION

Doctorate in Education, University of Pittsburgh, August 2021

Dissertation: Trauma Reactions in Social Work Students: Increasing Awareness of PTSD and Self-Care Through the PTSD Coach Application, 2021

Master's Degree in Social Work, University of Pittsburgh, May 2007

Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, June 1997

QUALIFICATIONS AND SKILLS

- More than 20 years of social work experience and 18 years of post-MSW clinical practice with trauma survivors and clients with mental health diagnoses.
- 10 years of teaching experience at the postsecondary and secondary levels, working with students of diverse ages, abilities, and cultural backgrounds.
- Research focus on the effects of trauma on individuals and communities, burnout with MSW BIPOC students, and integrating faith and CBT to treat mental health concerns in the Black church.
- Areas of teaching competence include social work, trauma, groups, CBT, and various treatment models.
- Training expertise includes best practices and treatment methods for children, adolescents, families, and the justice-involved population affected by trauma, secondary trauma, and self-care.

ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

The University of Pittsburgh, School of Social Work

BASW Program Director/Assistant Professor, June 2020–present

- Chair BASW committee
- Led curriculum review for BASW and co-led process for MSW and practicum programs
- Collaborated with Frederick Honors College to create BASW honors distinction and BASW honors dual degree
- Supervise staff and BASW instructors
- Faculty advisor for BASW Club Executive Board
- Created new recruitment and retention strategies for BASW admissions
- Reformulated advising process and graduation certification review protocol through University AAR academic student reports
- Negotiated new articulation agreements with six community colleges

- Co-created and received approval for Africana Studies and BASW dual degree program
- Facilitated policy change through the Vice Provost Office to reduce university dual degree required credits from 150 to 120
- Brought trauma-informed structure to student supports and BASW program curriculum
- Co-lead global initiatives and research opportunities for School of Social Work study abroad in Uganda, Kenya, and South Africa
- Career advisor and mentor to undergraduate students
- Practicum instructor and practicum liaison for practicum students

Teaching Experience

Instruct BASW and MSW students in the School of Social Work; prepare curricula for robust student engagement and learning through classroom activities, critical thinking exercises, class discussions, and experiential learning

Courses Taught

- Social Work Practicum Seminar and Lab I and II
- Practicum I and II
- Social Work with Groups
- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
- Introduction to Social Work
- Diverse Populations
- Social Work Practice and Traumatic Stress
- Models of Intervention
- Generalist Social Work Practice

Directed Studies

- BASW students and Linguistics Professor with three students, University of Pittsburgh, 2024
- Pitt in Tanzania BASW students' social work course and learning experience 2023, 2024
- Independent Research in South Africa collaboration with the Global Experiences Office, University of Pittsburgh, University Center for International Studies

Previous Roles

- Lecturer, August 2016–June 2020
- Adjunct Professor, August 2015–August 2016

Operation Amani, Pittsburgh, PA

Co-Founder and Clinical Director, May 2023–present

Mission: Operation Amani (Swahili for “Peace”) provides comprehensive support to individuals affected by the criminal justice system by helping them reintegrate into society, heal from trauma, and build positive relationships with family and community.

- Create and administer clinical assessment tools for clients
- Design intake tools for program participants
- Created multilevel trauma-informed process for returning citizens
- Coordinate and supervise clinical team and life coaches
- Train staff and volunteers
- Supervise two therapists and five staff members

Freedom Indeed LLC, Pittsburgh, PA

President, June 2012–present

- Professor of CBT and trauma for therapists in South Asia, October–June 2021
- Provide therapy for inmates and returning citizens, crime victims, and mental health clients
- Conduct trauma assessment interviews for inmates and returning citizens using evidence-based therapeutic assessment tools
- Write trauma assessment reports for the US Federal Public Defender
- Lead crisis response groups and organize community outreach initiatives
- Facilitate trauma-informed trainings and educational courses for juveniles and adults
- Provide clinical consultations for clinics and agencies
- Create curricula for therapy groups and trainings with measurable outcomes for community organizations
- Provide individual and group crisis therapy for Western PA School for Blind Children
- Lead trauma-informed courtroom trainings for US Federal Court attorneys and Federal Court, Supreme Court, and State Court judges

Vision Towards Peace Counseling Services, Wilkinsburg, PA

Therapist, March 2016–September 2020

- Assessed, diagnosed, and conducted individual, group, and family therapy for victims of crime and general mental health disorders
- Co-supervised group therapy for the therapist team

Gwen’s Girls, Pittsburgh, PA

Clinical Coordinator, 2020–2022

- Supervised clinical staff and interns
- Prepared clinical reports for coordinating teams
- Created learning plans for interns
- Conducted evaluations and developed improvement plans for therapist and interns

The Center for Victims, Pittsburgh, PA

Child and Family Therapist, May 2008–August 2016

- Conducted individual, group, and family therapy for victims of crime
- Facilitated psycho-educational trainings for professionals and residents in the community
- Held role of lead therapist; evaluated and assigned therapy cases to five therapists

Supervisor, September 2004–May 2008

- Supervised Juvenile Court legal advocates and community advocates
- Chaired trauma-informed meetings with Juvenile Court judges, attorneys, and probation officers
- Evaluated client files for state and government audits
- Wrote quarterly reports for continued state and government funding
- Trained probation officers and advocates in the Victim Awareness Curriculum

Victim Advocate – Juvenile and Adult Court, April 2000–September 2004

- Legal advocate for victims of crime in juvenile and adult courtrooms
- Accompanied survivors of crime to forensic hearings
- Answered hotline calls and community crisis responses
- Led NOVA crisis response teams for community homicides and bank robberies

Auberle Girls Group Home, McKeesport, PA

Counselor, March 1997–April 2000

- Provided individual and group counseling for adolescent girls
- Conducted life skills groups for residents
- Implemented conflict resolution techniques for adolescent boys and girls
- Served as counselor and teacher in therapeutic day school

PUBLICATIONS

Wallace, J., Moon, D., **Jones, T.**, Hyunglik, J., Counts, J., Powe, P., & Faruque, L. (in press). Renew your mind: A cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT)-based and spiritually integrated mental health training for African American faith leaders. *Journal of Psychology and Theology*.

Jacobs, L., Gupta, P., & **Jones, T.** (in press). Acting as the face of a broken system: Challenges experienced by mobile crisis workers. *Community Mental Health Journal*.

Johnson, A., Durham, A., Robinson, D., Betru, Y., **Jones, T.**, & Rauktis, M. (2024). It's way too much; Exploring the factors associated with BIPOC graduate student burnout [Manuscript submitted for publication].

Jones, T. (2021). *Trauma reactions in social work students: Increasing awareness of PTSD and self-care through the PTSD Coach application*. Dissertations Publishing.

Jones, T. (2016). Dirty Laundry: African-Americans and therapy. *The Mount Magazine*.

Jones, T. (2015). Healing from injustice. *The Mount Magazine*.

INVITED PRESENTATIONS AND TRAININGS

Peer-Reviewed Presentations

Wallace, J., **Jones, T.**, Moon, D., & Lee, D. (2026). *The Congregational Healers United to Restore Community Health (CHURCH) Project: A community-partnered participatory research*. Society for Social Work and Research Conference (SSWR).

Jones, T. (2024). *How racialized trauma takes root: The neurological and emotional*

Jones, T. (2024). *Impact of racism on BIPOC students*. Association of Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors Conference (BPD).

Betru, Y., Slawinski, T., & **Jones, T.** (2024). *Moving beyond statements: Transforming curriculum for an antiracist and anti-oppressive social work education to shape the next generation of transformational social workers*. Association of Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors Conference (BPD).

Huguley, J., **Jones, T.**, Betru, Y., Slawinski, T., & Petracchi, H. (2023). *Antiracism and curricula review: Challenges, strategies, and outcomes for schools of social work session*. Council on Social Work Education Conference (CSWE).

Jones, T. (2022). *How racialized trauma takes root: The neurological impact of racism*. NASW–PA Conference.

Jones, T. (2022). *CBT and faith research and modalities*. NACSW Conference.

Jones, T., & Coghill, L. (2016) *Bridging the unspeakable: Using expressive art approaches to trauma focused cognitive therapy*. NASW–PA Conference.

Jones, T. (2014). *The impact of sexual assault on adult and children survivors*. National Sex Assault Conference (NSAC).

Plenary Speaker and Keynote Addresses

Keynote address: *The gift of social work*. Social Worker Appreciation of Greatness (SWAG) Awards, 2025.

Plenary speaker: *Vicarious trauma in the courtroom setting*. Pennsylvania Conference of State Trial Judges (PCSTJ) and Supreme Court statewide conference, 2025.

Moderator and keynote speaker: *From theory to practice: Cultivating flourishing across sectors*. Human Flourishing Symposium, 2025.

Keynote address: *Nurturing the health of the superhero social worker*. Social Worker Appreciation of Greatness (SWAG) Awards, 2024.

Plenary speaker: *Trauma-informed courtroom*. Pennsylvania Conference of State Trial Judges (PCSTJ) and Supreme Court statewide conference, 2024.

Keynote address: *All eyes on social work*. Social Worker Appreciation of Greatness (SWAG) Awards, 2023.

Keynote address: *The qualities and characteristics of a barrier-breaking social worker*. NASW Conference, 2023.

Plenary speaker: *Trauma-informed courtroom*. Pennsylvania Conference of State Trial Judges (PCSTJ) and Supreme Court statewide conference, 2023.

Keynote address: *Self-care and the artist*. NYC Grantmakers in the Arts Conference: Converge/Transform, 2022.

Keynote address: *Cognitive impact of violence on offenders*. United States Federal Court Judges and Attorneys, 2022.

Keynote address: *The impact of trauma on learning*. Pennsylvania Association of Social Work Education (PASWE), 2020.

Keynote address: *Trauma in the Community*. South Side Coalition for Peace, 2017.

International Presentations

Jones, T. (2025). *BASW program and director overview*. University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa.

Jones, T., & Betru, Y. (2025). *Social work in the United States*. University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa.

Jones, T. (2025). *BASW program and director overview*. KwaZulu-Natal University, Durban, South Africa.

Jones, T. (2025). *Trauma-focused social work with children and adults*. Durban Coastal Mental Health, Durban, South Africa.

Jones, T. (2021-2022). Guest lecturer for Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and Effects of Trauma course, South Asia Psychiatric Hospital.

Community Presentations and Trainings

- *How racialized trauma takes root: The generational and systemic impact of racism*. National Organization for Victims Advocacy forum (NOVA), 2025.
- *Being a person of faith in the therapy and counseling profession*. Jubilee Student Conference, 2024.
- *Trauma aware pedagogy*. University of Pittsburgh Teaching and Learning Center and Pitt campus, 2023.

- *Mothers healing together*. Hear Foundation retreat for mothers who lost loved ones to homicide, 2023.
- *Integrated behavioral health care*. Baker Fellowship, 2023.
- *Grief in children*. Tri-State Area School Study, 2022.
- *The impact of trauma on the Black community*. Rashad Birdsong Community Empowerment Association, 2022.
- *MH with Black college students*. 1Hood Media, 2022.
- *Emotional literacy discussion*. 1Hood Media, 2022.
- *Trauma aware pedagogy, part II*. University of Pittsburgh Teaching and Learning Center, 2022.
- *Women's empowerment: Health forum*. Discussion hosted by state Rep. Emily Kinkead, 2022.
- *Mentoring African American and Black students*. Panel moderator, 2022.
- *UPMC crisis management: A summit for preparing for and healing from a crisis*. 2022.
- *Effects of trauma, vicarious trauma and self-care in East Africa*. 2022.
- *Cognitive impact of violence on offenders*. United States Federal Court Judges and Attorneys, 2021.
- *Trauma and returning citizens*. Department of Corrections, 2021.
- *Social work in nursing*. Pitt School of Nursing, 2021.
- *Minority health equity and inclusion*. American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), 2021.
- *SUDs and trauma*. University of Pittsburgh COAL, 2021.
- *Best practices to maintain good mental health in the pandemic*. Pittsburgh Public School District, 2020.
- *Identifying and managing stress in a pandemic*. STAR Center Conference, 2020.
- *Trauma-informed care in Allegheny County*. Pittsburgh Task Force and Initiative, 2020–present.
- *Community trauma and Christian care*. East Minster Presbyterian Church, 2019.
- *Mental health and intersectionality*. FEM (Feminist Empowerment Movement) at the University of Pittsburgh's annual Mental Health Awareness Month, 2019.
- *Exploring the impact and healing of trauma through ethical practice*. Children's Hospital of Greater Pittsburgh, 2019.
- *Cognitive impact of violence on inmates and ex-offenders, trauma-focused therapy and best practice interventions*. United States Federal Court Probation Officers, 2019.
- *Cognitive impact of violence on offenders*. United States Federal Court Judges, 2018.
- *Using CBT and expressive arts in trauma treatment*. University of Pittsburgh, 2015–2019.
- *Workplace cohesion and self-care*. University of Pittsburgh, University Counseling Services, 2017.
- *Equipped to respond to crisis*. Valley View Community and Outreach Team, 2017.

- *Multicultural competence in counseling*. Annual Counseling Director Meeting, University of Pittsburgh, University Counseling Services, 2017.
- *Cultural awareness for practitioners*. Robert Morris University, 2017.
- *Member engagement and retention: Incorporating the social determinants of health*. UPMC Hospital, 2018–2023.
- *Trauma-informed approach to parenting*. Beaver County CYF: Foster Parents, 2014.
- *Early life trauma and the impact later in life*. Area Agency on Aging, 2013.
- *Treatment for inmates and staff at state correctional institutes in PA*. 2012.
- *Healthy relationships*. Six-week curriculum, Gwen’s Girls Group Home, 2012.
- *The impact of victimization, PTSD symptoms, unresolved trauma, and methods of*. 2013.
- *Impact of crime on the urban community*. Macedonia Baptist Church, 2012.

MEDIA EXPERT GUEST

- *Let’s Talk Social Innovation*. Social work healing overflow and Black mental health, 2024.
- *Black Girl Back Talk*. Mental health in Black girls, 2022.
- UniQ Film Productions. What is trauma in the Black community?, 2022.
- 1Hood Media. Mental health and school-aged children, 2021.
- Our Neighbor’s Keeper, City of Pittsburgh. Trauma-informed initiative, 2021.
- *BEST Radio with Andrew Best*. COVID, mental health, and police brutality, 2020.
- 1Hood Media. Anxiety, panic disorder, depression, and trauma, 2018.
- *The Morning Show*, KDKA-TV2. Mass killings in Wilksburg, Pa., 2016.
- *The Lynne Hayes Freeland Show*. Center for victims services, 2015.
- *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*. The murder of local client’s sons, 2014.
- Bev Smith Syndicated Talk Show. Franklin Regional High School stabbings, 2014.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

- Social Worker Appreciation of Greatness Award (SWAG), 2025
- University of Pittsburgh Provost Award for Diversity in the Curriculum, 2024
- Congregations as Healers Uniting to Restore Community Health, awarded by the University of Pittsburgh Vice Chancellor, 2024
- Passon Meets the Road Peace of Gratitude Award, 2024
- Program Directors Academy, Council of Social Work Education, 2022–2023
- Women of Excellence Award, 2022
- The State of Black Learning, Black Excellence Award, 2021
- Bridges Community Impact Program, Community Impact Award, 2018

CERTIFICATIONS AND LICENSURE

- Certified Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) Practitioner, 2016
- Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW), State of Pennsylvania, 2015

- Licensed Social Worker (LSW), State of Pennsylvania, 2009
- Mediation Specialist, 2008
- Certified Victim Advocate, 2008
- National Organization of Victim Assistance (NOVA) certified crisis response, 2008
- Conflict Resolution certificate, 2007
- Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavior Therapy (TF-CBT) certificate, 2007

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATION/MEMBERSHIPS

- National Association of Social Workers (NASW)
- Council of Social Work Education (CSWE)
- Association of Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors (BPD)
- Society of Social Work Research (SSWR)
- North American Association of Christians in Social Work (NACSW)

SERVICE

- Social Work Practicum Seminar and Lab I and II: Lead faculty
- Practicum I and II: Lead faculty
- Social Work with Groups: Lead faculty
- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy: Former lead faculty

Committee Assignments

- BASW Committee, Chair
- Teaching Team
- Educational Policy Committee
- Deans and Directors Leadership Committee
- Pathways Steering Committee
- Admissions Committee
- Marketing Committee
- Directors of Advising Committee
- Provost's Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Programs (PACUP)
- MSW Direct Practice Committee
- Provost's Advisory Council on Instructional Excellence (ACIE)

Service to the University

- University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine Trauma-Informed Medical Education, needs assessment collaborator and advisor, 2024–present
- General Education Revision Team, Provost Office, 2024–present
- Provost's Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Programs (PACUP), 2020–present

Service to the School of Social Work

- 2025–2026 Practicum Director search committee

- BASW Program, Chair, 2020–present
- Teaching Committee, Co-Chair, 2020–present
- Child Welfare Coordinator search committee, 2023
- Education Policy, 2020–present
- Admission Committee, 2020–present
- Deans and Directors Committee, 2020–present

Service to the Profession

- Podcast host, *Healing Overflow with Dr. Toy*:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OXwp6xwkG0w>
- Federal Defense Attorney’s Office, Pittsburgh, PA; Reno, NV; New Jersey; Detroit, MI; Virginia: Expert trauma witness in more than 100 federal court cases, 2017–present.

Community Service and Executive Board of Directors

- Community Advisory Committee, UPMC Autism Health Disparities, 2023–2025
- Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Pittsburgh Alumnae Chapter, 2024
- Western Pennsylvania School for Blind Children, traumatic grief therapist, presenter, and consultant, 2024–present
- We are the Village Peace Walk, speaker and organizer, 2022–present
- Women’s Center and Shelter Board of Directors, 2020–present
- Trauma-informed care in Allegheny County Task Force and Initiative, 2020–present
- Pittsburgh Mayor’s Office, Pitt and OCH&S planning committee, 2020
- Melanin Mommies of Pittsburgh Board of Directors, 2019–present
- Hammonds Initiative Board of Directors, 2018–present