

Community social work practice and ethnic minority professional coalitions: Addressing the needs of Hmong American social work students and professionals.

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Abstract

Professionals and students of color often report marginalization and lack of mentoring, networks, learning opportunities, and support within their respective disciplines. Ethnic minority professional coalitions (EMPCs) function to improve career mobility among ethnic minority professionals, increase social support and networks, and reduce isolation. This mixed methods study surveyed Hmong American social workers about the role of EMPCs, barriers to professional practice, and educational and professional needs. Additionally, this paper highlights the Minnesota Hmong Social Workers Coalition (MHSWC), an EMPC that was created in 2015 to address the needs of Hmong social work professionals by utilizing three approaches: a pipeline program, networking opportunities, and a learning community. The results of this study can be used to inform the recruitment and retention of Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) students and practitioners in the field of social work.

Keywords: Hmong Americans, ethnic minority professional coalitions, social work, pipeline, mentoring

Introduction

Community social work practice is a form of social work practice that brings together communities to address common concerns, with an eye toward advocacy and empowerment directed at improving the wellbeing of its members. Coalition building, including ethnic minority professional coalitions (EMPCs), is a form of community practice (Mandayam, et. al., 2023). EMPCs exist out of the recognition that mainstream professional groups have failed to meet the needs of Black, Indigenous, and other people of color (BIPOC) professionals and their

communities. Professionals of color often report difficulty in obtaining information and guidance within their respective professions, lack of mentors, and isolation from peers. Professionals of color are often siloed and scattered throughout various agencies; lacking access and connections to other professionals of color. EMPCs increase relationships and bonding among members who share similar ethnicities, backgrounds, interests, and goals by developing a sense of community and belonging within the profession. This increased cohesion among members leads to a deeper sense of investment in the profession, resulting in higher levels of retention (Lau, et.al., 2012).

There has been a failure to meet the needs of professionals of color and their communities due to structural barriers and implicit bias among mainstream professionals and organizations (Sue, 2009). As such, EMPCs serve as networks of advocates and knowledge creators who promote culturally appropriate practice methods to support consumers and professionals alike. Involvement in EMPCs leads to higher levels of professional mobility for professionals and students of color wishing to pursue advancement within their respective fields of discipline (Gonzalez-Figueroa & Young, 2005; Lau, et. al., 2012). EMPCs serve as a source of information sharing among members, provide access to mentorship and professional development and opportunities for leadership development and career pathways for professionals of color (Lau, et. al., 2012).

The purpose of this study is to explore the academic and professional needs of Hmong social workers, especially related to the recruitment of Hmong social work students and practitioners, professional development, retention, and career advancement of EMPC members. This paper highlights the role of EMPCs in addressing the needs of students and professionals of color, specifically the creation and function of the Minnesota Hmong Social Workers Coalition

(MHSWC), which is a networking group that supports Hmong social work students and professionals as they navigate the path from school to career.

Literature Review

Social Work Education and Profession

Social Work Education. Since the 1960s, the recruitment and retention of minority social work students have been the objectives of many social work programs (Berger, 1992). This was a response to social workers of color demanding that the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), the major accrediting body for social work programs across the U.S., improve its policies as it relates to recruiting minority faculty and students. In 1969, CSWE revised its discrimination standard, requiring social work programs “to demonstrate the special efforts it was making to enrich its program by providing racial and cultural diversity to its student body, faculty, and staff” (as quoted in Trolander, 1997). By the early 1970s, recruitment of minority students slightly increased among African American and Hispanic social work students, however, Asian American social work students remained relatively unchanged. In 1969, 1.3% of social work students were Asian Americans, and in 1970, 1.9% of social work students were Asian Americans (Trolander, 1997). More recent statistics show some change among baccalaureate and graduate programs. According to a 2017 CSWE report on social work education in the United States, 2.1% of Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) students identified as Asian American, and 3.7% of Masters of Social Work (MSW) students identified as Asian American (Council on Social Work Education, 2017). A 2019 National Association of Social Workers (NASW) report of social work graduates shows similar results with 3.0% of BSW students identifying as Asian and 5.0% of MSW students identifying as Asian (Salzburg, 2019).

The increased diversity among social work clients necessitates a diversity of social worker practitioners. In a 2010 report, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration noted that the Asian American population is expected to nearly double over the next 40 years from 5.4% to 9.3%, resulting in an increase in the diversity of those who may need social services (Pfefferle & Gibson, 2010). The authors argue that “aligning demographic characteristics of staff and clientele has many positive elements, including having the potential to enhance the quality of care received by clientele, improve access to care, and improve communication and trust between historically underserved groups and the medical field overall” (Pfefferle & Gibson, 2010, p. 14).

Social Work Profession. According to a 2006 study of licensed social workers, NASW, the largest membership organization of professional social workers in the world, found that there is a need for Asian American social workers. Of licensed social workers, only 1.4% of respondents identified as Asian American. Compared to the U.S. population at the time, 4% of the population identified as Asian American (Center for Workforce Studies, NASW, 2006). More current data from the Census Bureau’s 2015 American Census Survey support these statistics. Among social workers in 2015, Asian Americans made up 2.9% of the profession (“Social Workers: Demographics,” 2015). Additionally, the NASW report found that of all social workers surveyed, only 1% reported having a predominantly Asian American caseload; comparatively, among Asian American social workers, 18% of Asian American social workers had predominantly Asian American caseloads (Center for Workforce Studies, NASW, 2006). These percentages indicate that there is a need for social work professionals who reflect the community they serve.

There is also a need to support Asian American social workers in the profession. High turnover in the social work profession has been studied for a number of years (Barak, Nissly, & Levin, 2001). A number of factors contribute to high turnover, including large caseloads, increasing paperwork, and low pay. While there is an overall high turnover rate in the profession, of all of the racial/ethnic groups, Asian Americans leave the profession sooner than any other group (median 7 years) (Center for Workforce Studies, NASW, 2006).

The Need for Hmong Social Workers

Minnesota is home to over 94,000 Hmong individuals, the highest concentration of which is in the Twin Cities (Minneapolis/St. Paul and surrounding suburbs) (Minnesota Compass, 2024). In a meta synthesis of the academic literature on mental health among Hmong Americans, Lee (2013) found that there is a high prevalence of mental health concerns among Hmong Americans, particularly depression, anxiety, and adjustment issues. A report by the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation, a nonprofit organization that provides social services in St. Paul, Minnesota [St. Paul], found that the Hmong community in St. Paul, compared to the total U.S. population, is at least twice as likely to experience some form of mental health issue (Thao, Leite, & Atella, 2010). A number of factors were found to contribute to the high prevalence, including war-related trauma, poverty, and issues related to acculturation, including stress as a result of discrimination and other cultural barriers, lack of English proficiency resulting in psychological stress related to language and cultural barriers, and lack of education leading to difficulty navigating mainstream institutions (Thao, Leite, & Atella, 2010).

Despite the high rate of mental health concerns, Hmong Americans are less likely to seek mental health services and treatment from mainstream providers (Lee, 2013; Thao, Leite, & Atella, 2010). In St. Paul, the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation noted that seeking Western mental

health services was often a last resort for Hmong Americans. The authors found a number of barriers for Hmong Americans seeking social services, including language barriers, cultural differences, and a lack of culturally relevant services (Thao, Leite, & Atella, 2010). As a result, there is a need for culturally appropriate social services, including Hmong American social workers.

Ethnic Minority Professional Coalitions

There is a paucity of literature about ethnic minority professional coalitions (EMPCs). Historically, coalitions were created out of common interest and common identity to address problems faced by members of the group or to address problems recognized by members of the group. Coalitions composed of professionals of color from within specific disciplines were not only formed out of the recognition that their respective communities had cultural and community-specific needs that could not be met by mainstream professional associations (Carastathis, 2013), but also as acts of resistance to institutionalized racism experienced within their own professions (Phillips, 2007).

EMPCs are communities of practice. A community of practice is a group of people who share a common interest, concern, or problem, and who come together to learn and improve their skills (Wenger, 1998). The concepts of membership and participation are informed by Ife (2013) and Adams, Dominelli, and Payne (2009). Membership varies depending on the membership structure of each EMPC. Membership in community social work refers to an individual's sense of belonging and inclusion within a community, as well as the mutual responsibilities and benefits that arise from being part of that group. It encompasses both the formal recognition of individuals as part of the community and the emotional connection they feel toward it (IFE, 2013). Some membership structures are formal involving membership fees, nomination, or

induction. Some membership structures are informal whereby attendance is the only requirement for membership. Participation is the involvement of community members in identifying, planning, implementing, and evaluating the efforts of the group. It ensures that individuals have a voice in decision-making processes and fosters a sense of ownership over community outcomes. Participation emphasizes collaboration and shared responsibility, which are fundamental to effective social work practice (Adams, Dominelli, & Payne, 2009). Participation is not limited to a specific criteria. It can vary from simply following the group's online announcements, attending meetings in person or virtually, to holding leadership positions. Participation can be both virtual and in person in today's environment (Adams, Dominelli, & Payne, 2009). Leadership structures in EMPCs vary as well and can include formal hierarchical structures, flat leadership structures, to team based models and cross functional committees.

EMPCs also serve as incubators of knowledge where professionals of color can come together to discuss and build knowledge for culturally specific practice with members from their own community. Their insider perspective, knowledge, and lived experiences in culturally specific domains of practice are legitimized and recognized as expert knowledge (Carastathis, 2013). Mainstream practitioners may have limited cultural knowledge about a specific community. For example, in the United States, the Association of Black Psychologists (ABPsi) was created in 1968 out of the recognition that Black psychology remained unrecognized and consumer specific needs were unmet by mainstream psychological associations and providers (ABPsi, 2024). ABPsi was created to address the issues facing Black psychologists themselves as well, including the need to organize and gain skills to influence change within the profession. Similarly, the National Latinx Psychological Association (NLPA) was formed in the 1970s and was formally reorganized in 2002, with an interest in the mental health needs of Latinx

individuals, addressing clinical work, research, teaching, training, and policy making (NLPA, 2024).

Within the social work profession, there have been similar developments of racial and ethnic minority professional coalitions. The National Association of Black Social Workers was formed in 1968 with the common goal of liberation, racial equity, self-determination, improved social work practice delivery, and educational curriculum to effectively educate and inform ethical and culturally competent practices. They also focus on recruiting, training, and retaining Black social workers in the field and in academia (NABSW, 2019). The National Association of Puerto Rican and Hispanic Social Workers was formed in 1983 to organize social workers and other human service professionals to strengthen, develop, and improve the resources and services to meet the needs of Puerto Rican/Hispanic families with objectives to advocate, establish resources and connection, disseminate knowledge for professional growth and recruit and encourage social worker professionals and students in their professional aspirations (NAPRHSW, 2019). The Latin Social Workers Association was formed in 2010 to provide continuing education and mentorship to professionals and students and training focused on providing culturally responsive services to the Latinx community (LSWA, 2019). In 2000, the New York Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers collaborated with the Puerto Rican Family Institute to form the Latino Social Work Task Force out of the recognition of the shortage of Latino social workers needed to serve the Latino community (NASW New York City Chapter, 2019).

Several EMPCs were created out of common interest and mission specific to Asian American professionals. The Asian American Psychological Association (AAPA) was formed in 1972 with an interest in Asian American psychology and culturally specific mental health issues,

with a focus on providing training and education for Asian American health professionals and collaboration among peers (AAPA, 2024). For example, the Congressional Asian-Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC) was created in 1994 by influential Asian American leaders involved in politics to promote the well-being of the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community. This EMPC is chaired by Asian American congresspersons and seeks representation of Asian Americans in politics and policy development impacting Asian Americans. The National Association of Asian American Professionals and the Coalition of Asian American Leaders are organizations that surfaced to support and nurture Asian American leaders and promote leadership development, networking, and professional support of Asian American professionals from all disciplines.

The Asian and Pacific Islander Social Work Educators Association (APISWEA), a national organization that represents Asian and Pacific Islander (API) social work educators, discusses issues of concern to social work educators and students and promotes social work education and research of API in the social work context. This EMPC is a Northern California entity under the California Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers. Other social work EMPCs include the Asian Pacific Islander Social Work Caucus out of the University of California, Berkeley, and the Asian Pacific Islander Social Work Caucus out of the University of Southern California.

The Minnesota Hmong Social Workers Coalition

The Minnesota Hmong Social Workers Coalition (MHSWC) is an informal networking group for both Hmong social work students and professionals. The MHSWC was founded in 2015 by three Hmong women social workers. The MHSWC uses a flat leadership structure where leadership is organic and flexible, with self-nominated rotating chairs who oversee

logistics to support volunteers who work on self directed committees who cross collaborate.

Participation ranges from attending regular meetings virtually or in person, subscribing to announcements from the coalition, serving on committees, ad hoc work, and attendance at annual conferences. The vision of the coalition is to create a network of Hmong social workers to respond to the community's needs by harnessing the talent of Hmong social workers in Minnesota. Its goals are to share resources, provide networking opportunities, provide consultation and support, and provide leadership, training, and education opportunities; encourage and support self-care; identify personal and professional growth opportunities; and discuss current trends and areas of need within the Hmong community. Its stated purpose is: To bring together Hmong social workers in Minnesota to network, discuss current trends and community needs, share resources and best practices, reflect, and provide peer-to-peer support and consultation.

The first meeting of the coalition in 2015 brought together 32 attendees, consisting of students and practicing social workers interested in networking, knowledge building, and resources for working with Hmong clients. Since 2015, the group has expanded to over 510 members encompassing different rates of participation. Members range from high school students interested in the profession to current social work students to young professionals and long-term career social workers.

The MHSWC uses three approaches to engage its members: pipeline programming such mentoring, coaching, and advice sharing (Cooper, et. al., 2005); networking such as referrals and job recruitment/openings (Campbell & Campbell, 2007; Crisp & Cruz, 2009; Strayhorn & Terrell, 2007); and 3) learning communities (Treisman, 1992) through free continuing education workshops and hosting an annual conference.

While the MHSWC has been able to provide a space for networking and to serve as a platform to discuss current issues and needs affecting Hmong social work professionals and their clients, there is still great potential for the group as an ethnic minority professional coalition. The MHSWC receives annual financial funding and in-kind support from local universities and nonprofit groups in the Midwest. There may be a need for more formalized leadership structures and protocols in the future to mirror the white hierarchical social structure in which the MHSWC operates. Acculturation to the mainstream culture tends to increase a group's ability to advocate, mobilize individuals and resources, and advance critical issues impacting the group and its communities within the mainstream dominant social structure (Lau, et. al., 2012).

This mixed method study aims to explore the academic and professional barriers and needs of Hmong social workers, especially related to recruitment, retention, and career advancement. Additionally, it examines the current role that the MHSWC plays as an EMPC in addressing Hmong social workers' academic and professional needs.

Methods

This study was approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of a small private university in the Midwest. Selection criteria included a minimum age of 18, identified as Hmong, and experience in the field of social work. Participants ($N=54$) were recruited from MHSWC's private Facebook group consisting of only MHSWC's members. Additional participants were recruited via snowball method. Data was collected using an online survey administered via Qualtrics. Participants signed a consent to participate form before beginning the survey. The survey included 11 demographic questions and 11 open-ended questions. The open-ended questions were analyzed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis identifies, analyzes, and presents themes and patterns within qualitative data. Thematic analysis

is useful when attempting to “capture something important about the data in relation to the research question” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 82). The research question for this study was “Do EMPCs affect the academic and career trajectories of students and professionals of color?” The results of this study can provide researchers and professionals with important data related to the academic and professional needs of Hmong social workers. Additionally, these results could be applied to other professionals of color.

Results

Demographics of Respondents

All respondents self identified as being of Hmong descent. Of the participants, 64% identified as female, 95% were from Minnesota, one participant resided in Wisconsin, and one resided in California. Seventy-seven percent of respondents held a Masters in Social Work degree and 24% held a Bachelor's Degree. The degree majors of participants included social work (n= 48), business management (n=1), family social sciences (n=2), and public safety (n=2). Additionally, 44% held a Graduate Social Work license (LGSW) (recent Masters of Social Work graduate) (n=16), 33% held no license (n=13), 10% held a Licensed Social Work (LSW) (Bachelor of Social Work level) license (n=4), and 7.6% held a Licensed Independent Clinical Social Work (LICSW) (Masters of Social Work level) license (n=3). The range of years of practice was from six months to 20 years. The mean age of participants was 31 years old, and the range of ages included 33% of participants between the ages of 20-29 (n=17), 30% between the ages of 30-39, and 37% between the ages of 40-49 (n=20). No respondents were older than 45 years of age. Respondents' reported annual incomes ranged from \$12,000/year to \$130,000/year. Respondents' fields of practice are provided in Table 1.

Table 1

Field of Practice

Resource	Percent	<i>n</i>
Policy/Planning	11.11%	6
Housing	5.56%	3
Financial/Income maintenance	5.56%	3
Child protection	9.26%	5
Education/Schools	11.11%	6
Management/Supervision/Director	14.81%	8
Mental Health	16.67%	9
Other	25.93%	14

Other fields of practice included: after school programs, long term services and supports, developmental disability services, legal and government, elderly services/nursing home, care planning, healthcare, non-profit, and waived services.

Academic needs

Academics to profession is a pipeline through which a discipline supports individuals. Participants were asked to share barriers and needs as related to social work education. Some expressed not having enough information about the process of applying to graduate school. One participant shared the following about training and preparation in their social work education, stating, “Graduate school (and school in general) doesn’t teach and prepare their students to do ‘therapy/social work’ in Hmong [communities].” This shed light on a flaw in the academic program to support students’ progression into their profession.

Similarly, others also expressed that the transition between school and professional work was very difficult. One participant wrote, “It would have been helpful to have all the licensing information we need while we are in school. Graduating and transitioning to the real world was hard because of lack of job resources and mentors to help guide the way.” Another participant expressed the need for mentorship in education and early career, stating, “With a mentor, I would be able to learn about exam prep courses/studying, gain resources about further continuing education training, and help me further develop as a professional social worker.”

Professional needs

When respondents were asked to describe the barriers they experienced as they navigated professional practice, themes included cost of licensing, cultural barriers, lack of supervision and licensing support, and lack of affordable continuing education opportunities. This indicated that participants lacked the support and learning necessary to excel in their profession. One participant shared a list of challenges in professional social work spaces, including “working in a white dominant culture, lack of cultural competence with coworkers and management, work environment not caring about workers, and Caucasian dominant management makes it difficult to advance.” Another respondent wrote, “Getting my [social work] supervision plans approved are very difficult. Sometimes the people working at the board of social work provide you with wrong information as well. The exam is also difficult and expensive. It uses language that is difficult for a person who speaks English as a second language, and some of the questions on the exam are things I’ve never even heard of during my schooling or in my current job or past jobs.” Other participants provided comments about the lack of mentorship from an individual with a shared identity, sharing, “Receiving mentorship from a Hmong social worker can help me learn about how to navigate a white dominant workforce and continue to have a voice to shift systems

to support communities of color, particularly the Hmong community,” and lastly, “I think mentorships and support groups would be good in navigating not just career but space as a Hmong social worker. [There are] struggles specific to being a social worker as it relates to our identity.” These comments exemplify the need for ethnic-specific mentorship and learning resources that can be provided by an EMPC.

Lastly, many participants, especially early career social workers, expressed how expensive continuing education courses can be; the lack of culturally-relevant training; and the need for safe spaces for Hmong social workers to share their experiences. One participant shared that spaces to learn from each other promote “networking, exchanging knowledge and learning more resources, helping retention of Hmong social workers, and engaging new aspiring Hmong folks into the field.” Another wrote that the learning community allows an opportunity to be “able to safely vent and receive support for areas I’m struggling with in my workplace or with clients without judgment.”

Familiarity with the MHSWC

In addition to the academic and professional needs and barriers participants experienced, respondents were asked about their participation with the MHSWC and their familiarity with the Coalition’s three approaches: pipeline programming, networking, and learning communities. These questions help to gauge the level of participation and exploration related to the potential of MHSWC as a formalized EMPC. When asked how they became aware of the group, 53% said they found the group searching on Facebook, and 47% said through word of mouth from friends or family. When asked how participants engage with the MHSWC, the top three responses included following the group on Facebook (34%); creating posts and commenting on posts on

Facebook (17%); and attending the coalition annual conference and meetings (12%). Meaningful participation is defined by the participant.

Participants were also asked what they have gained from their participation in the MHSWC. Networking skills, job opportunities, and licensing information were the highest rated areas gained from the MHSWC consistent with the approaches of EMPCS which are networking opportunities and learning community. The following table describes knowledge gained.

Table 2

New Knowledge Gained from the MHSWC

Resource	Percent	<i>n</i>
Licensing information	16.67%	19
Networking skills	26.32%	30
Resources of supervision	11.40%	13
Job opportunities	21.05%	24
Social work theory and concepts	6.14%	7
Social work practice models	5.26%	6
Skills for my social work practice	3.51%	4
Social work licensing exam information	7.89%	9
Other	1.75%	2

Discussion

Despite its stated commitment to anti-racism (CSWE, 2022; NASW, 2022), social work education and the profession continue to perpetuate racism and center whiteness (Perez, 2021; Wright, et. al., 2021), and BIPOC social work students and practitioners continue to experience

microaggressions and marginalization in the classroom and the workforce (Davis & Francois, 2021). These experiences highlight the importance of EMPCs—associations that address the needs not met by education systems and mainstream professional associations. The results from this study and the work of the MHSWC provide some important insights for social work education and organizations for recruiting, retaining, and advancing Hmong and other social workers of color.

Social work education

While Hmong American students do seek and utilize academic support structures (Xiong & Lee, 2011), the vast majority of current academic support structures in higher education may not adequately address the challenges that students face (Hernandez & Lopez, 2004), may not be culturally-relevant or appropriate (Chang, 2005; Suzuki, 2002), and may lack faculty and staff who reflect the diversity of the student population (Maton, et. al., 2006). Social work education programs can enhance their recruitment efforts and support of BIPOC students by partnering with EMPCs and associations. These groups often have established networks of experienced professionals who can serve as mentors, who provide guidance, encouragement, and insights into navigating social work education, the internship process, and the profession. Collaborating with such groups can create opportunities for students to access culturally-specific and grounded professional development opportunities and build a sense of community. These types of partnerships can ultimately help build a more representative workforce that better reflects and serves diverse communities.

Social work profession

Social work organizations can foster retention and advancement of early career BIPOC practitioners by connecting staff with ethnic minority professional organizations and

associations, or by creating organization-based affinity groups. Similar to social work education programs, these types of partnerships provide access to job advancement opportunities, culturally-specific referrals, and professional mentors who can help early career practitioners navigate workplace dynamics and address systemic challenges unique to BIPOC social work practitioners.

Additionally, organizations can establish affinity groups or employee resource groups within their workplaces, creating safe and supportive spaces for BIPOC practitioners to share experiences, build networks, and advocate for equitable policies (Welbourne, 2016). These initiatives not only promote professional growth and job satisfaction but also demonstrate a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Potential for EMPCs

While preliminary research suggests that ethnic specific professional coalitions like MHSWC are meeting the needs of Hmong social work students and professionals, who are not finding similar resources within education and work spaces, there is still a need for more research on EMPCs' effectiveness related to recruitment and retention of BIPOC professionals (Lau, et. al., 2012).

Currently, the MHSWC addresses Hmong social workers' challenges through three approaches: 1) a pipeline program, which recruits and nurtures Hmong social work students while in higher education; 2) a network that provides academic and professional guidance, mentorship, and opportunities for engagement; and 3) a learning community, which allows Hmong social workers to engage in peer to peer learning. There is potential for the MHSWC to grow and consider a more formalized structure in order to organize and advocate for Hmong social work students and professionals and the communities they serve.

Conclusion

There is a great need to have a diverse social work workforce that reflects the increasing diversity within our communities. Social work education and professionals have tried to address this need, however, institutional racism persists in academia and within the profession. EMPCs serve the unmet needs of BIPOC professionals, who often do not find support and resources to navigate academic and professional spaces, leading to high rates of burnout and turnover among social workers of color. The MHSWC is an ethnic minority professional coalition specifically created for Hmong social work students and professionals and aims to serve as a pipeline program, a network for academic and career mentorship, and a learning community for Hmong social work students and professionals. Like other EMPCs, the MHSWC was created to address the challenges experienced by Hmong social work students and practitioners throughout their academic and professional careers. The approaches undertaken by EMPCs like the MHSWC provide a model for recruiting, retaining, and advancing students and practitioners of color.

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