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## Springfield Social Worker Honored for Work Help in Survivor Recovery

**SPRINGFIELD, IL**— Now more than ever, social workers are being called upon to turn their compassion into action—helping communities navigate the urgent challenges of our time. From mass deportations of migrants and continued attacks on LGBTQIA2+ individuals to threats to reproductive rights and diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts, social workers stand at the forefront of change. Across Illinois and the nation, they are leading the response to the mental health and substance use crisis and addressing the chronic income inequality that contributes to rising homelessness.

In alignment with the 2025 National Professional Social Work Month theme, “Social Work: Compassion + Action,” the National Association of Social Workers, Illinois Chapter (NASW-IL) is proud to recognize two outstanding Illinois social workers whose leadership and dedication exemplify the values of the profession.

One of this year’s honorees is **Franshandra Owens, MSW, LCSW** (she/her), recipient of the **2025 NASW-Illinois Chapter Statewide Social Worker of the Year Award**. Owens, a graduate of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (MSW, 2018), brings over a decade of experience in mental health to her practice. She currently serves as clinician in the SIU School of Medicine’s Survivor Recovery Center where she supports individuals who have experienced recent crime-based trauma, helping them to reduce or eliminate PTSD symptoms and rebuild their lives.

In support of their nomination of Owens, colleague Sicely Kluge, instructor at the SIU Survivor Recovery Center, wrote: “Fran’s dedication and unwavering commitment to her community has created an increase for evidence-based treatment for these individuals, improvements in their healthcare, advocacy for improvements in housing efforts, and ultimately increasing the need for anti-oppressive work and promoting minority mental health.”

The NASW-Illinois Chapter celebrates Owens and all of this year’s honorees whose leadership, compassion, and advocacy strengthen the social work profession and the communities they serve.

Owens is one of two statewide awardees recognized by the chapter this year. To learn more about all 2025 award recipients, visit <https://www.naswil.org/chapter-awards>, or contact NASW-IL Executive Director Joel Rubin at [jrubin.naswil@socialworkers.org](mailto:jrubin.naswil@socialworkers.org).

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*The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) is the largest membership organization of professional social workers in the world. The NASW-Illinois Chapter is one of the association's largest chapters and advocates for over 20,000 social workers in Illinois alone. NASW strives to advance social work careers, grow social work businesses, and protect the profession while seeking to also enhance the well-being of individuals, families, and communities through advocacy.*