

## CURRICULUM VITAE

**KRISTEN ALICIA GURDAK, Ph.D., LCSW**

### **CURRENT APPOINTMENT**

---

**Visiting Assistant Professor**

Phyllis & Harvey Sandler School of Social Work, Florida Atlantic University

### **EDUCATION**

---

**Doctor of Philosophy** in Social Work **2023**  
New York University  
Silver School of Social Work, New York, NY  
Dissertation: *Stigma in the Context of Communities for Individuals with Serious Mental Illnesses: Unpacking the Why, What, How, and Who*  
Committee Chair: Rohini Pahwa, PhD  
Committee Members: Deborah Padgett, PhD and Ana Stefancic, PhD

**Master of Social Work** *Summa Cum Laude* **2014**  
Barry University  
School of Social Work, Miami Shores, FL  
Concentration: *Clinical Track*

**Bachelor of Social Work** **2013**  
Florida Atlantic University  
College of Design and Social Inquiry, Boca Raton, FL

### **RESEARCH INTERESTS & SPECIALIZATION**

---

- Community Psychology
- Mental Illness & Stigma
- Health Disparities
- Community Engaged Research
- Qualitative Methodology
- Cross-Cultural & Global Perspectives

### **FELLOWSHIPS, HONORS, AND AWARDS**

---

**Applied**                      **SCRA Scholar Award:** Society for Community Research and Action

**2018-2022**                    **Ph.D. Program Research Fellowship:** New York University, Silver School of Social Work

### **FUNDED RESEARCH**

---

**Pending**                    **Youth Homeless Study**  
Project: Examining health equity among youth experiencing homelessness  
Principle Investigator: Dr. Kristen Gurdak  
Co-Principle Investigator: Dr. Dani Groton  
Funding: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Amount: TBD

Description: A pilot study examining the intersection of various factors on health equity among youth experiencing homelessness. Using quantitative and qualitative measures to gain an in-depth understanding of community and social factors while participating in a housing program.

## **RESEARCH EXPERIENCE**

---

**2020-2022**

### **Dissertation Research**

Project: Community Integration of Individuals with Serious Mental Illness: A Network Perspective from India and United States

Principle Investigator: Dr. Rohini Pahwa

Title: *Influences on Internalized Stigma: Exploring Community Integration Factors and Social Networks.*

Description: Conducted a secondary analysis using quantitative and egocentric social network data to 1) explore the relationship between different types of community integration and internalized stigma, and 2) to explore the role of social networks in internalized stigma outcomes.

**2020-2022**

### **Dissertation Research**

Project: Community Integration of Individuals with Severe Mental Illness: A consumer perspective with ACT clients in New York

Principle Investigator: Dr. Rohini Pahwa

Title: *“You got it on you” : How the Experience of Community is Influenced by Stigma*

Description: Conducted a secondary analysis using qualitative and egocentric social network data to explore how stigma influences community experiences as it is applied to the SFE model.

**2020-2022**

### **Dissertation Research**

Project: Community Integration of Individuals with Severe Mental Illness: A consumer perspective with clients on FSP and RRR

Principle Investigator: Dr. Rohini Pahwa

Title: *Who is a Source of Stigma: Examining Sources of Stigma for Individuals with SMIs using Social Network Data and Multiple Case Study Analysis*

Description: Conducted a secondary analysis using qualitative and egocentric social network data to quantify proportions of different types of social relationships that contribute to perceived stigma and gain an in-depth understanding of stigma in these relationships using case study analysis.

**2018-2019**

### **Research Assistant**

Project: Effectiveness of Youth Rapid Rehousing Program

Principle Investigator: Dr. Robin Petering

Funding: Point Source Youth

Description: Managed the New York and Baltimore site for a cross-national mixed-methods program evaluation study of the effectiveness and experiences of formerly homeless youth participating in a rapid rehousing program. Engaged in quantitative and qualitative data collection and management for the New York and Baltimore site. Conducted qualitative analysis and curated a first author publication with the project team.

**2017-2018**

### **Research Assistant**

Program: Pathways Housing First Institute  
Supervisor: Dr. Sam Tsemberis & Dr. Ana Stefancic  
Description: Assisted Dr. Tsemberis with the dissemination of Housing First research in the form of collaboratively researching, writing, and editing a book chapter. Conducted abstract reviews and assisted with coordination of the Housing First Partners Conference.

**2017-2019**

**Research Assistant**

Project: Peer-led Group Lifestyle Balance Effectiveness and Implementation  
Principle Investigator: Dr. Leopoldo Cabassa & Dr. Robert Fernandez  
Funding: National Institute of Health R01 Grant  
Description: Conducted quantitative and qualitative data collection, cleaning, and management for a community-engaged mixed-methods evaluation of a peer-led healthy lifestyle intervention for individuals with serious mental illness. Engaged in formal analysis and reporting of findings in several publications. Managed ongoing community engagement and relationships with stakeholders for this multi-wave study.

**PUBLICATIONS**

---

1. Fogel, S., Groton, D., & **Gurdak, K.** (R&R). Understanding what makes them stay: Retention in the front-line homeless workforce. *Journal of Social Service Research*.
2. **Gurdak, K.**, Pahwa, R., & Thorning, H. (R&R). "You got it on you". How the experience of community is influenced by stigma. *American Journal of Community Psychology*.
3. Modani, A., **Gurdak, K.**, Al Neyadi, L., Smith, M., Kelly, E., Thorning, H., Brekke, J., & Pahwa, R. (2024). "Because I am a female": Stigma and safety perspectives from racially/ethnically diverse women with serious mental illness. *Community Mental Health*.
4. **Gurdak, K.**, Bond, L., Padgett, D., & Petering, R. (2022). Transitioning to independent living: Experiences of homeless young adults in rapid re-housing. *Evaluation and Program Planning*, 92, 102076. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.evalprogplan.2022.102076>
5. Padgett, D., **Gurdak, K.**, & Bond, L. (2022). The "high cost of low living": Substance use recovery among older formerly homeless adults. *Substance Abuse*, 43(1), 56-63. <http://doi.org/10.1080/08897077.2020.1734713>
6. Stefancic, A., Bochiccho, L., Tuda, D., **Gurdak, K.**, & Cabassa, L. (2021). Participant experiences with a peer-led healthy lifestyle intervention for people with serious mental illness. *Psychiatric Services in Advance*, 72(5), 530-538. <http://doi.org/10.1176/appi.ps.202000311>
7. **Gurdak, K.**, Tiderington, E., & Stefancic, A. (2020). Community integration when moving on from permanent supportive housing. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 48(6), 1913-1928. <http://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.22389>
8. Padgett, D., Bond, L., **Gurdak, K.**, Henwood, B. (2019). Eliciting life priorities of older adults living in permanent supportive housing. *Gerontologist*, 60(1), 60-68. <http://doi.org.10.1093/geront/gnz040>
9. Bochiccho, L., Stefancic, A., **Gurdak, K.**, Swarbrick, M., & Cabassa, L. (2018). "We're all in this together": Peer-specialist contributions to a healthy lifestyle intervention for people with serious

mental illness. *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research*, 46(3), 298-310. <http://doi.org/10.1007/s10488-018-0914-6>

## BOOK CHAPTERS & REVIEWS

---

1. Bond, L. & **Gurdak, K.** (in progress). Assessment & treatment of unhoused individuals with SUDs. In L. Straussner & S. Steen (Eds.), *Clinical practice with clients with substance use disorders* (4<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Guilford Press.
2. Tsemberis, S. & **Gurdak, K.** (2019). Housing First: From streets to homes to the world. In Christian Laval (Ed.), *Housing First: Beyond homelessness and psychiatry*. Paris, France: University Press of France.
3. **Gurdak, K.** (2018). Housing, citizenship, and communities for people with severe mental illness. [Review of the book *Housing, citizenship, and communities for people with severe mental illness*, by Sylvestre, J., Nelson, G., & Aubry, T.]. *Journal of Evidence-Informed Social Work*, 15(1), 95-97. <http://doi.org/10.1080/23761407.2017.1389328>

## MANUSCRIPTS IN PREPARATION

---

\*-Student Mentorship

1. **Gurdak, K.**, \*Rood, G., & Bond, L. (in progress). *Community participation among youth experiencing homelessness: A scoping review*. Unpublished manuscript.
2. **Gurdak, K.**, Pahwa, R., Smith, M., Kelly, E., Thorning, H., & Brekke, J. (in progress). *Who is a source of stigma: Examining stigmatizing social network members for those with serious mental illness using multiple methods*. Unpublished manuscript.
3. **Gurdak, K.** & Pahwa, R. (in progress). *Influences on internalized stigma: Exploring community integration factors and social networks*. Unpublished manuscript.

## DOMESTIC PRESENTATIONS

---

Modani, A., **Gurdak, K.**, Al Neyadi, L., Smith, M., Kelly, E., Thorning, H., Brekke, J., & Pahwa, R. (pending). *“Because I am a female”: Stigma and safety perspectives from racially/ethnically diverse women with serious mental illness*. Submitted to the Society of Social Work Research Conference 2025.

**Gurdak, K.**, Pahwa, R., Smith, M., Kelly, E., Thorning, H., & Brekke, J. (pending). *Who is a source of stigma: Examining stigmatizing social network members for those with serious mental illness using multiple methods*. Submitted to the Society of Social Work Research Conference 2025.

**Gurdak, K.**, Pahwa, R., & Thorning, H. (2024, January). *“You got it on you”: How the experience of community is influenced by stigma*. Accepted to the Society of Social Work Research Conference.

**Gurdak, K.**, Tiderington, E., & Stefancic, A. (2020, April). *Community integration and moving on from supportive housing*. Presented at the Housing First Partners Conference.

Padgett, D., **Gurdak, K.**, & Bond, L. (2020, January). *Life course perspective on substance use recovery among formerly homeless older adults*. Presented at the Society for Social Work Research Conference.

Padgett, D. & Gurdak, K. (2019, June). *Implementing community-driven research and evaluation in youth programs*. Presented at the National Symposium on Solutions to End Youth Homelessness.

Cabassa, L., Stefancic, A., Bochicchio, L., & Gurdak, K. (2019, April). *Clients' experiences with a peer-led healthy lifestyle intervention in supportive housing*. Presented at the Schizophrenia International Research Society.

## **INTERNATIONAL PRESENTATIONS**

---

Bond, L., Dean J., & Gurdak, K. (2019, May). Plenary co-speaker at the Ending Homelessness conference in Amsterdam, Netherlands.

Bond, L., Dean, J., & Gurdak, K. (2019, May). *Social Action Through Social Media to End Homelessness*. Presented at the Ending Homelessness conference in Amsterdam, Netherlands.

## **TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

---

- |                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Spring 2024 – present</b>         | <b>Visiting Assistant Professor</b> , Florida Atlantic University, School of Social Work <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• SOW7757 – Theories &amp; Epistemology of Advanced Clinical Practice</li><li>• SOW6105 – Human Behavior &amp; the Social Environment I</li><li>• SOW6106 – Human Behavior &amp; the Social Environment II</li><li>• SOW6348 – Advanced Theory &amp; Practice with Adults</li><li>• SOW6618 – Clinical Social Work Groups</li><li>• SOW3232 – Social Welfare Policy</li></ul> |
| <b>Fall 2020 – Spring 2021</b>       | <b>Adjunct Lecturer</b> , New York University, School of Social Work <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Human Behavior &amp; the Social Environment III: Assessment &amp; Diagnosing (MSW)</li></ul>  |
| <b>Spring 2020 &amp; Spring 2021</b> | <b>Invited Guest Lecturer</b> , New York University, School of Social Work <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Qualitative Inquiry – “<i>Qualitative Coding</i>” (PhD)</li></ul>   |
| <b>Spring 2020</b>                   | <b>Teaching Assistant</b> , New York University, School of Social Work, <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Human Behavior in the Social Environment III: Assessment &amp; Diagnosing (MSW)</li></ul>  |
| <b>Summer 2019</b>                   | <b>Invited Guest Lecturer</b> , University of Strathclyde in Glasgow <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Social Policy – “<i>Genesis and Dissemination of Housing First</i>”(MSW)</li></ul>  |
| <b>Spring 2019</b>                   | <b>Invited Guest Lecturer</b> , Hogeschool van Amsterdam, Social Work <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Social Work Outreach – “<i>Translating Advocacy into Policy: The Use of Media in Homelessness Activism</i>” (MSW)</li></ul>  |

## **PEDAGOGICAL TRAINING**

---

**Fall 2024**                      **Inspiring Inquiry & Preparing Lifelong Learners**

Association of College and University Educators

**Fall 2024**      **Creating an Inclusive & Supportive Learning Environment**  
Association of College and University Educators

**Summer 2024**    **Promoting Active Learning**  
Association of College and University Educators

**Spring 2024**    **Designing Learner-Centered & Equitable Courses**  
Association of College and University Educators

---

#### **ACADEMIC & COMMUNITY SERVICE**

---

**2024**            **FAU Center for Peace, Justice, and Human Rights**  
Faculty Affiliate

**2024**            **FAU Scholarship Review Committee**  
Daniel A. and Martha F. Mica Scholarship - Florida Atlantic University

**2024**            **College Representative – FAU Commencement**  
Florida Atlantic University College of Social Work & Criminal Justice

**2024**            **Contributor – NAMI Walks Greater Orlando**  
National Alliance on Mental Illness

**2024**            **Community Psychology & Mental Health Contributor**  
Mental Health Television Network

**2019-2020**    **PhD Student Representative**  
PhD Program Committee - New York University Silver School of Social Work

**2019-2020**    **Doctoral Student Association - Secretary**  
New York University Silver School of Social Work

**2018-2019**    **Doctoral Student Association - Cohort Representative**  
New York University Silver School of Social Work

**2018**            **National Symposium on Solutions to End Youth Homelessness - Volunteer**  
Point Source Youth

---

#### **PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS**

---

**Member**, Society for Community Research and Action (SCRA)

**Member**, Society for Social Work and Research (SSWR)

---

#### **AD-HOC REVIEWER**

---

**2024- present**    *Social Sciences*

2024- present *Journal of Social Distress and Homelessness*  
2024- present *Substance Use & Addiction Journal*  
2023- present *International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health & Well-being*

## **CLINICAL EXPERIENCE**

---

2016-present **Owner & Therapist** - Seeking Self, LLC- Private Practice  
2022-2023 **Director of Clinical Services** - Lifeskills South Florida - Residential Program  
2021-2022 **Associate Clinical Director** - Lifeskills South Florida - Residential Program  
2016-2017 **Director of Outpatient Services** - Lifeskills South Florida - Outpatient  
2015-2016 **Primary Therapist** - Lifeskills South Florida - Outpatient  
2014-2015 **Assistant Clinical Director** - Millenium Clinic - Community Mental Health  
2013-2014 **Primary Therapist** - Third Step Behavioral Health - Community Mental Health  
2012-2013 **Graduate Intern** - Ft. Lauderdale Behavioral Health Hospital - Psychiatric In-patient

## **CLINICAL LICENSURE & CERTIFICATIONS**

---

**Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW)** – Actively registered through March 2025  
Florida Board of Clinical Social Work, Marriage & Family Therapy and Mental Health Counseling

**Qualified Supervisor for Clinical Social Work Interns**  
Florida Board of Clinical Social Work, Marriage & Family Therapy and Mental Health Counseling

**Intensively Trained in Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT)**  
Behavioral Tech – A Linehan Institute Training Company

**Eye Movement Desensitization & Reprocessing (EMDR) Trained Therapist**  
EMDR International Association

**Bereavement in the context of COVID-19**  
Zelda Foster Studies Program at NYU Silver School of Social Work