

RAMPED

February/March 2025 | Volume 06

RURAL AREA MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL
ENHANCEMENT & DEVELOPMENT



LIVE WELL TO LEARN WELL

This month's "Live Well to Learn Well" component of thinking and living is "financial wellness." Being secure in your finances plays a role in your mental health and wellness because it can lead to a better quality of life, can help you achieve your goals, can reduce stress and worry, and help you make more sound financial decisions. Financial wellness equips us with the knowledge and skills we need to manage money effectively. Tips in practicing financial wellness include being aware of how much you have in all accounts, make a spending plan, wait 48 hours before you buy something, know your spending limits, and recognize spending triggers. We hope you consider making financial wellness part of your daily routine. Look out for the newest wellness component of the month in the next newsletter and discover why we and our students must live well to learn well.

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BE KIND TO YOUR MIND
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Social Work Spotlight

Frances Ehrlich, LMSW



March 2nd-8th is School Social Work Week

School social work involves providing support to students, families, and the school community to promote academic success, emotional well-being, and social development. Social workers in schools address a variety of issues, such as bullying, mental health challenges, family problems, and general hardships. They collaborate with teachers, administrators, and parents to create a safe, supportive environment that helps students thrive both in and out of the classroom. Additionally, school social workers offer counseling, crisis intervention, and help connect families with necessary resources. Their goal is to remove barriers to learning and ensure all students have the opportunity to succeed.

This past month, I was able to attend the 34th Annual Texas School Social Work Conference. Although school social workers are not currently a defined scope of service in the Texas Education Code, this conference is well represented with 900 individuals in attendance. With one in five Texas Social Work students completing practicums in school settings, this proves to be a growing field. This conference allows me to connect to the field, gather updates on current legislation, and sharpen my skills and tools to better support our residents.

The social work residents on our campuses continue to support students through individual and group counseling, guidance lessons, truancy support, DAEP transition support, substance abuse support, and crisis intervention. It is great to see the collaboration with campus staff to serve students.



Heart & Mind Connection

Patricia Huber, MSC



Happy March! We hope the turn in the weather inspires you to get outside and enjoy something beautiful in nature as things are slowly starting to come back to life after a couple of cold months. This month, the RAMPED grant team completed and submitted our Annual Performance Report and are excited to have accomplished several goals. Additional mental health professionals are proving to be a benefit to students. In early February, I attended the Annual Professional School Counselor Conference where I learned so much about the newest trends in school counseling as well as how to use new strategies and tools to help students during their academic years and beyond. New residents have been quickly acquainting themselves to campus staff and preparing to serve students. They have been doing a great job of building rapport with others as well as creating engaging activities and lessons for students. February also marked "School Counselor Appreciation Week." A huge thanks to all the counselors in the RAMPED cohort! Spring is always a busy time. RAMPED is here to help if you need anything.

Meet Our New Spring 2025 School Counselor Residents



Hi! I am Sheriffa Dennis and I hold a Bachelor's degree in Psychology from the University of the West Indies, Jamaica, and am currently pursuing a Master of Arts at Texas A&M University-San Antonio. With over eight years of professional experience in probation and planning in the government services, I have developed strong analytical and problem-solving skills. I am currently exploring different counseling specialties, including school counseling, to better understand its impact on students and families.

I am passionate about mental health advocacy and am committed to helping individuals navigate challenges and achieve personal growth. I aim to integrate my academic knowledge and professional experience to provide effective and compassionate counseling in diverse settings, whether in schools or private practice. Through my work, I hope to offer meaningful support to students, helping them develop resilience, cope with challenges, and thrive both academically and personally.



My name is Luis Lezama, and I am excited to introduce myself as I complete my counseling internship through the RAMPED program. I currently teach 3rd grade at Pleasanton ISD and have been in education for 8 years. My journey in education started as a bus driver, then as a teacher's aide, and now as a teacher. In addition to my passion for education, I have also had the honor of serving in the Army Reserves. As I continue my journey toward becoming a school counselor, I look forward to working with you and supporting the social, emotional, and academic needs of our students. My goal is to create a safe and supportive environment where every student feels valued and heard. Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions or if there's anything I can do to support you and your students. Looking forward to a great semester!



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