

# Kayla Whaley

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## Education

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**Doctor of Social Work (Candidate)**

**Expected May 2026**

University of Kentucky

**Master of Arts in Social Work**

**2017**

San Diego State University

**Bachelor of Arts: Double Major in Sociology and History**

**2014**

University of California, Santa Cruz

## Awards and Fellowships

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**Course Equity Fellowship**

**Awarded 2024**

Part of selected faculty awarded funding to support the implementation of the Course Equity Portal for California State University, addressing educational equity gaps. Contributed to the development of a campus action plan and user guide for San Diego State University. Facilitate ongoing faculty learning communities to promote inclusive teaching practices and educational excellence.

**Inclusive Excellence Faculty Fellowship**

**Awarded 2023**

Part of selected faculty awarded funding to develop learner-centered syllabi that integrate anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion (ADEI) principles. Designed course materials that center inclusive learning environments, promote critical engagement with ADEI concepts, and support equitable student success.

## Research Interests

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- Disparities in mental health care
- Participatory action research
- Community-based trauma care
- Education reform

## Peer-Reviewed Publications

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**Whaley, K.,** Paule, S., & Keeney, A. J. (in press). Licensure: Client protection or practitioner gatekeeping? Policy and practice recommendations for social work education programs. *Advances in Social Work*.

## Manuscripts Under Review/In Preparation

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**Whaley, K.** & Willner, L., (2025). *The cost of being heard: Social work research and the ethics of representation* [Manuscript submitted for publication]. School of Social Work, San Diego State University.

**Whaley, K.,** Paule, S., & Willner, L. (2025) *Leveraging the 2022 EPAS to strengthen ADEI in social work education: Advancing equity through symbolic capital and epistemic justice* [Manuscript in preparation]. School of Social Work, San Diego State University.

Paule, S., **Whaley, K.,** & Cosio, J. (2026) *Does it matter who teaches us? MSW student perceptions of faculty education, licensure, and clinical experience* [Manuscript in preparation]. School of Social Work, San Diego State University.

## Direct Practice Experience

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**February 2024 – Present**  
San Diego, CA

### Director of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility

DayDream MD

Develop and implement DEIA strategies to promote inclusive and equitable mental health care. Design and facilitate training on DEIA, and trauma-informed care tailored to mental health and health care professionals. Conduct quarterly equity audits to identify systemic barriers that impact patient access to services and staff development.

**July 2023 – February 2024**  
San Diego, CA

### Licensed Clinical Therapist

Daydream MD

Provided individual psychotherapy to adults with PTSD integrating holistic therapeutic techniques and Cognitive Processing Therapy. Guided patients through post-ketamine assisted psychotherapy, assisting them in exploring their experiences and incorporating new insights into daily life. Provided individual clinical supervision to graduate level interns.

**July 2022 – Present**  
San Diego, CA

**Licensed Clinical Therapist**

Enlightened Vibrations

Provide individual psychotherapy to adults seeking support with various psychosocial stressors. Incorporation of integrative evidenced based modalities of mental health care. Specializations include trauma, PTSD, spirituality, intersectionality for historically marginalized communities and military population.

**July 2020 – July 2022**  
San Diego, CA

**Licensed Clinical Social Worker**

Sharp Mesa Vista Psychiatric Hospital

Provided psychoeducation, individual and group therapy in an intensive outpatient setting to those experiencing PTSD and other trauma related diagnoses. Focus on neuroscience of mental health and client skill building using evidenced based interventions.

**May 2020 – May 2022**  
San Diego, CA

**Clinical Supervisor**

Sharp Mesa Vista Psychiatric Hospital

Provided individual clinical supervision to undergraduate and graduate level interns weekly. Developed training materials for use with new hires/interns on diverse topics including self-care, trauma-informed psychotherapy, and mindfulness/self-compassion

**September 2017 – July 2020**  
San Diego, CA

**Psychiatric Social Worker**

Sharp Mesa Vista Psychiatric Hospital

Conducted psychosocial assessments and developed treatment plans. Provided therapy, crisis intervention, and discharge planning. Collaborated with interdisciplinary teams and connected patients to resources. Maintained documentation in compliance with hospital policies and HIPAA.

**August 2016 – May 2017**  
San Diego, CA

**Psychiatric Social Worker (Intern)**

Sharp Mesa Vista Psychiatric Hospital

Assisted in psychosocial assessments and treatment planning under supervision.  
Developed and facilitated psychoeducational groups on mental health and substance abuse for individuals with dual diagnoses. Observed and facilitated group sessions  
Assisted in discharge planning.

**May 2016 – August 2016**

Santa Cruz, CA

**Technical Policy Writer (Contracted)**

Homeless Services Center

Developed program manuals and policies and procedures for various programs.  
Trained staff on new and existing information. Collaborated with program management and frontline staff to review, analyze, and summarize information for program use.

**May 2016 – August 2016**

Santa Cruz, CA

**Housing Specialist Supervisor (Contracted)**

Supportive Services for Veteran Families

Supervised case managers regarding case planning, housing stabilization, and community organizing. Trained staff in areas of tenants' rights and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Developed housing training manuals for new hires/interns.  
Worked under Veteran Affairs grant.

**August 2015 – May 2016**

Sorrento Valley, CA

**Medical Social Worker (Intern)**

Lightbridge Hospice and Palliative Care

Provided in-home and facility patient intakes, assessments, and discharges. Educated patients and families on long-term care placement, stages of grief and end of life care. Collaborated with interdisciplinary team.

**December 2013 – August 2015**

Santa Cruz, CA

**Housing Specialist Case Manager**

Supportive Services for Veteran Families

Provided case management, rapid rehousing, and prevention strategies for unhoused veterans. Facilitated intern and volunteer training on client-provider relationships.  
Developed case plans, provided resource referrals, and advocated for clients.

**November 2012 – December 2013**

Santa Cruz, CA

**Housing Navigator (Intern)**

River Street Shelter

Assisted unhoused individuals in accessing housing resources and securing stable housing. Conducted needs assessments and developed individualized housing plans. Provided case management support, including referrals to social services and mental health resources. Collaborated with shelter staff and community agencies to connect clients with housing programs. Assisted in documentation and tracking client progress.

## Teaching Experience

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**June 2024 – Present**  
San Marcos, CA

### Lecturer – Social Work

California State University, San Marcos

Provide instruction on evidence-based direct practice methods and clinical social work interventions to MSW students. Support students in developing core competencies essential for effective client engagement, assessment, and treatment planning.

**August 2021 – Present**  
San Diego, CA

### Lecturer and Field Faculty – Social Work

San Diego State University

Provide instruction on direct practice, clinical social work for MSW students and facilitate practice seminars for undergrad and graduate level interns. Facilitate the integration of theoretical knowledge with practical skills, emphasizing ethical decision-making and cultural competence in diverse clinical settings. Liaison between community field placements and students.

## Teaching Effectiveness

Student Mentoring

**2024 – 2025**

Mai Thao (MSW, San Diego State University, School of Social Work)

Publishable Paper Title: *“Why do we have to make you comfortable to deal with this?”: Lessons Learned from a Racial Justice Program Among County Child and Family Well-Being Managers.*

**Role: Committee Member**

**2023 – 2024**

Amy Isiaho (MSW, San Diego State University, School of Social Work)

Publishable Paper Title: Adverse childhood experiences, protective factors, and resilience among adult children of Hmong immigrants refugees

**Role: Committee Member**

**2022 – 2025**

Served as the faculty advisor for an MSW student organization, guided the development of a proposal emphasizing campus inclusivity utilizing anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion principles. Awarded funds used for an event featuring Dr. Ibram X. Kendi where I served as the faculty liaison.

## **Licenses and Certifications**

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- Licensed Clinical Social Worker – California Lic#95314
- Somatic Experiencing Practitioner Certification – Expected Winter 2026
- Integral Somatic Psychology Certification – Expected Winter 2026
- Cognitive Processing Therapy Certificate – 2019

## **Volunteer Service**

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**January 2023 – Present**

**Facilitator of Black, Indigenous, People of Color and Clinical Support Groups**

California Society for Clinical Social Work, San Diego, CA

**July 2023 – Present**

**Community Outreach Volunteer**

Universal Church of Baba's Kitchen, Los Angeles, CA

**May 2023 – October 2024**

**Facilitator of Somatic Breathwork Groups for Trauma/PTSD**

Conscious Journey Events, San Diego, CA

**August 2022 – Present**

**Trauma-Informed Care Trainer**

Sharp Mesa Vista Psychiatric Hospital, San Diego, CA