Dear GCSW Community and Friends,

As social workers, we encounter many policies, each and every day that we strive to change for the benefit of social justice for all. In the past we have spoken out on systems and policies that run counter to our social work values. Some of these policies have existed for decades, and we, GCSW’s faculty, staff, and students along with our social work colleagues around the world strive every day to reform old policies and to create new policies that reflect the worth and dignity of all people. We know that injustices exist in our nation and all over the world. And social workers, often silently and always tirelessly work to achieve social, racial, economic, and political justice for all. It is what we do. This is what social work is.

While social workers may not always speak out about every injustice we encounter in our work and our lives, there are injustices that challenge the very core of our values and threaten the very fabric of all that makes us who we are, and who we aim to be.

And now is such a time to speak out. Now when there is a chilling practice of separating children from their parents, detaining children and locking them in warehouse-like facilities, of jailing parents and criminalizing the act of asylum seeking. It is time to speak out against the inhumane treatment of men, women, and children under the guise of protecting American borders. It is time to say no to the rapid uptick in policies that treat others as less than human, as less than worthy of the humanity we all deserve.

As social workers, as human beings, we believe in the inherent dignity and worth of all people within our borders and beyond. At the Graduate College of Social Work, we will continue to raise our voices against inhumane policies such as these. I hope you will join us and share your ideas for sustainable action.

We are better together than apart. And together, only together, will we create a world where there is justice for all.

Alan Dettlaff, Ph.D., MSW
Dean and Maconda Brown O’Connor Endowed Dean’s Chair