



Special Announcement - January 26, 2024

Grand Challenges for Social Work Announces Leadership Transition

The Grand Challenges for Social Work is pleased to welcome **Carrie Pettus**, PhD, as chair of its Leadership Board and Executive Committee. She succeeds **Richard Barth**, PhD, professor and former dean, University of Maryland School of Social Work, and past president of the American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare.

“I could not be more delighted to hand off the duties of chair of the Executive Committee to Dr. Carrie Pettus. She has been deeply involved in shaping the Grand Challenges since the earliest days as a network co-lead and she has the energy, rigor, perspective, and commitment needed to advance this effort,” says Dr. Barth. “I would like to recognize all the network leads for their amazing work to create active networks, several books, and a mentoring structure for Grand Challenge Fellows, and contributed to more than 200 articles in peer reviewed journals—all provided based on their vision for the profession and society. I would also like to give special thanks to our dedicated Leadership Board, past and ongoing Executive Committee, Strategic Communications and Planning, and my colleagues Eddie Uehara, Marilyn Flynn, Michael Sherraden, Lissa Johnson, Sarah Butts, and Kira Silk, who were instrumental in the development and advancement of the Grand Challenges during my tenure.”

Dr. Pettus is a leading authority on the use of data to steer reforms in the criminal justice system. She is president and CEO of [Wellbeing & Equity Innovations](#), an organization that promotes thriving individuals, families, and communities by providing services and

supports to those involved in the criminal justice system and the people and policymakers who serve them. Since 2016, she has been involved with the GCSW as network co-lead for the Grand Challenge to Promote Smart Decarceration.

“I am incredibly honored to follow in the footsteps of Dr. Barth. Building on his foundational work and direction, and the many other thought leaders and partners in the Grand Challenges, we will continue to increase the impact of the Grand Challenges network members, advocates, and visionaries,” says Dr. Pettus. “I am thrilled to work with all of you toward three priorities: Enhancing social work’s translational work to impact social policy, supporting high impact research, and significantly expanding the capacity of the Grand Challenge networks and working groups. Let’s Go Grander together!”

About the Grand Challenges for Social Work

The Grand Challenges for Social Work was launched by the American Academy of Social Work & Social Welfare in 2016 to harness the ingenuity, expertise, dedication, and creativity of individuals and organizations within the field of social work and beyond to champion “social progress powered by science.” The fivefold mission of the GCSW is to identify the nation’s major social challenges; gather evidence-based practice models built on rigorous science; design imaginative, effective, and culturally relevant solutions; promote policies and professional practices that lead to positive change; and advance sustainable initiatives that achieve the positive impacts for all families and communities, tribal nations, and society as a whole. It operates under the fiscal umbrella of the University of Maryland Baltimore Foundation.
