The School of Social Work seeks to recognize the distinguished accomplishments of extraordinary alumni who personify the meaning of the title "social worker" and have achieved excellence in human and public services, in higher education, or in the alleviation of the conditions that threaten the human condition, and whose achievements embody the highest standards of our profession.

**Selection Criteria**

**Practice/clinical excellence**
Practice/clinical excellence is defined as exemplary social work practice that involves those activities with and on behalf of clients. This designation of excellence reflects the selection of the most appropriate intervention for the client’s situation informed by an ecologically based bio-psycho-social assessment process. These activities may take place in an individual, family, group or community setting. Practice/clinical excellence can refer to those social workers whose work has had a significant impact on the provision of client care and services and on the leadership and oversight of social work practice.

**Community development**
Community development refers to the nominee’s potential as a role model, the time and energy the nominee devotes to serving the community, the nominee’s efforts to promote social work through community service.

**Advocacy**
Advocacy refers to the nominee’s potential to excel as an advocate for others and demonstrate a strong passion to broker for the needs of the social work profession and/or policy issues. This nominee must be a champion in impacting policy both for the social work profession and the clients served by social workers.
**Education**

Education refers to the nominee’s potential as an educator in the field of social work, the time and energy the nominee devotes to educating individuals, families, organizations, and communities, the nominee’s efforts to educate others on the field of social work and generating interest about social work through innovative educational strategies.

**Innovation**

Innovation refers to the nominee’s potential as an innovator in the field of social work, the nominee’s ability to recognize and capitalize on areas of growth in the field, the nominee’s leadership and management skills that led to growth and expansion of the social work practice, the impact of the nominee’s practice in the community, demonstrated by increased positive outcomes for clients, and the nominee’s contributions to the growth of the social work knowledgebase. The nominee must have demonstrated an ability to generate new and innovative ideas for improving the quality and processes of social work practice. The nominee must have encouraged and supported innovation from co-workers. The nominee must have demonstrated appropriate risk-taking.

**Administration**

The nominee must have promoted a positive image of social work and the profession within the organization and the community. The nominee must have demonstrated how the mission, vision, and values of their work allows for effective delivery of social work services. Administration refers to the nominee’s administrative role as a social worker in clinical management and/or community practice. Administration recognizes one who best exemplifies adherence to the social work ethics and values. Determination of the award is based on outstanding and exceptional contributions to social work management in the context of administration.
Awards

**Distinguished Alumni Award**
Awarded to an alumnus or alumna for exceptional professional achievements, initiatives, or leadership in one or more of the following areas: Practice/clinical excellence, community development, advocacy, education, innovation, or administration. Only one award may be presented annually. Only one award may be presented annually.

**Rising Star Alumni Award (graduated within the past 10 years)**
Awarded to an alumnus or alumna who graduated within the past ten years whose accomplishments exemplify outstanding professional achievements, initiatives, or leadership in one or more of the following areas: Practice/clinical excellence, community development, advocacy, education, innovation, or administration. Only one award may be presented annually.

**Nomination Process**
Anyone may nominate an ECU Social Work graduate deserving of recognition; self-nominations are welcomed. The nomination form should be completed and an explanation of how the nominee meets the criteria for the award should be included as an attachment on a separate sheet of paper. The nominee’s resume is required and supplemental documentation to support the nomination is encouraged (examples include letters of support, newspaper clippings, magazine articles, etc.).