

# Breana Alysse (McHugh) Bietsch, MSW

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## Education

Ph.D. Student, University of Connecticut, 2020-Present  
Social Work

M.S.W., Rutgers University, 2012-2014  
Social Work; Certificate in Aging

B.A., Rider University, 2008-2012  
Psychology; Health Administration

## Publications

**Bietsch, B.** (2022) Second Time Overlooked in Crisis: Examining How HIV/AIDS Health Policies in the United States Connect with Policy Implications Today for Aging LGBTQ Adults During The Covid-19 Pandemic. *Journal of Human Rights and Social Work*. 7(3). 246-255

Iacono, G., Holle, L., **Bietsch, B.**, Smith, J., and Watson, R. (under review) Swallowing Away the Stress: Exploring the Relationship Between Stress, Binge Eating, and Exercise Habits Among Sexual and Gender Minority Youth. *Journal of Homosexuality*.

Iacono, G., **Bietsch, B.**, Holle, L., Watson, R. J., O'Leary, B., and Chadukiewicz, M. (under review). Exploring the intersections of minority stress, physical activity, and resilience among sexual and gender minority youth of color. *Journal of Gay and Lesbian Social Services*.

**Bietsch, B.**, Parekh, R., and Kurz, B. (in progress) A Formative Evaluation of a Virtual Social Work Field Placement Using Reminiscence and Life Review Therapy with Older Adults During the COVID-19 Pandemic. Unpublished manuscript, School of Social Work, University of Connecticut, Hartford, United States.

Jurczak, E., Champagne, L., and **Bietsch, B.** (in progress)  
Professors-in-Training: A Collaborative Autoethnography of  
a Doctoral Student Pedagogy Peer Support Group.  
Unpublished manuscript, School of Social Work, University  
of Connecticut, Hartford, United States.

## Presentations

Iacono, G., **Bietsch, B.** (2021). Exploring Mental Health Practice  
and Policy Approaches Among Vulnerable Young and Older  
LGBTQ+ Communities [Oral Presentation]  
Rainbow Symposium 2021, Hartford, CT.

**Bietsch, B.** (2021). A Web-Based and Phone Intergenerational  
Intervention Using Reminiscence and Life Review Therapy  
To Decrease Loneliness Among Older Adults During the COVID-19  
Pandemic [Oral Presentation] International Center for Life Story  
Innovation and Practice Conference (ICLIP) 2021, Hartford, CT.

## Honors and Awards

AGESW Pre-Dissertation Fellows Program, 2021-2022

## Employment

University of Connecticut, School of Social Work, 2020-Current  
Graduate Research Assistant

Home Instead Senior Care, Tolland, Connecticut, 2017-2019  
Family and Community Liaison

Blair Manor, Enfield, Connecticut, 2017-2017  
Director Social Services

Woodbine Rehabilitation and Healthcare, Alexandria, Virginia, 2016-2017  
Social Worker

Hospice of Charles Country, Waldorf, Maryland, 2015-2016  
Medical Social Worker

Jewish Family and Children Services of Mercer County, Princeton, New  
Jersey, 2014-2015  
Senior Services Care Manager

Jewish Family Service, Somerville, New Jersey, 2012-2014  
Intern

Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey, 2012-2014  
Research Assistant

Richard Hall Community Mental Health Center, Bridgewater, New Jersey,  
2012-2013  
Intern

Rider University, Lawrenceville, New Jersey, 2011-2012  
Research Assistant

## Research Projects

### Social Isolation and Loneliness and Intergeneration Program (S.L.I.P.)

This program connects MSW and BSW students who are in their social work internships with older adults in the community who face increased isolation due to COVID-19. My responsibilities on this project include recruitment, matching participants with students, conducting pre and post-test interviews, conducting qualitative interviews with employees at community agencies that work with participants, assisting with student training, cleaning data, and conducting data analysis.

### Tuned In!

Tuned In! is a mindfulness-based affirmative program to virtually address the mental health needs of sexual and gender minority youth. The program is an 8-week long group intervention that teaches sexual and gender minority youth coping skills in a way that affirms their identities. My responsibilities on this project were as the project coordinator. I assisted the primary investigator in all recruitment, onboarding, and retention of the participants. I assisted in developing the training for the facilitators that delivered the mindfulness-based intervention. I implemented all the surveys via the survey server Qualtrics, including a pre-screener, pretest, and posttest survey to collect data for the intervention. Other tasks involved follow up with participants, facilitators, community supporters, and general coordination of the program.

## Research Interest

Older Adults

Health Disparities

Healthcare policy

Medical Social Work

Social Isolation and Loneliness

LGBTQ+ populations

## Community Involvement

Services and Advocacy for GBLT Elders (SAGE) Connect Volunteer , 2022-Present

## Additional Skills and Qualifications

Technological Skills:

SPSS, Word, Excel, PowerPoint

Licensed Social Worker in Connecticut

## References

Rupal Parekh, Assistant Professor  
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Scott Harding, Associate Professor and Co-Director PHD Program  
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