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TO: Boston University Faculty and Staff

FROM: Jean Morrison, University Provost and Chief Academic Officer 

DATE: June 13, 2023

SUBJECT: Appointment of Dr. Barbara Jones as Next Dean of the Boston University School of Social Work

Last fall, we [announced](#) a national search to identify the next dean of the School of Social Work (SSW). We sought candidates who would bring a record of distinguished scholarship; dynamic clinical, academic, and administrative leadership; and the energy and vision essential for guiding SSW's continued growth as a destination for social work research and practice. Following a competitive process that considered top scholars from across the country, President Brown and I are very pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. Barbara Jones as dean of the Boston University School of Social Work, effective August 1.

Dr. Jones comes to BU from the University of Texas at Austin, where she has served on the faculty since 2004 and is University Distinguished Professor, Lockhart Memorial Professor in Direct Social Work Practice, founding director of the Institute for Collaborative Health Research and Practice, and associate dean for health affairs in the university's Steve Hicks School of Social Work. She is additionally Distinguished Professor and the inaugural chair (since 2017) of the Department of Health Social Work at UT Austin's Dell Medical School – a department she has helped grow to over 50 professionals as a bridge between the social work and medical schools. Dr. Jones is recognized among the nation's top scholars in the field of psychosocial oncology and palliative care. Supported by major grants from the National Institutes of Health, the American Cancer Society, and the Soros Foundation, among others, her research focuses on improving care for children, adolescents, and young adults with cancer and their families. Her more recent work addresses palliative care, pediatric oncology social work interventions, and adolescent and young adult cancer survivors, as well as social work leadership in health.

Dr. Jones has served in a variety of national leadership roles in social work, including as past president of the Association of Pediatric Oncology Social Workers (APOSW) and as founding board member and secretary of the Social Work Hospice and Palliative Care Network. She is a Distinguished Scholar and Fellow of the National Academies of Practice and past vice-chair of the Social Work Academy. She is a Fellow of both the American Psychosocial Oncology Society and the Association of Oncology Social Work. She has mentored dozens of students, faculty, and colleagues across the fields of social work and health, co-edited three acclaimed books in oncology and palliative care, published over 120 articles in top field journals

including *Cancer* and *Social Work in Health Care*, and delivered over 250 presentations nationally and internationally on her research and social work leadership. Dr. Jones is a past APOSW Social Worker of the Year, was inducted in 2020 into the American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare (AASWSW) and was elected to the AASWSW Board in 2022, and last year became the first ever social worker to receive the American Cancer Society's Pathfinder in Palliative Care Award.

Dr. Jones received her PhD and MSW in social welfare from the University at Albany (NY). In addition to her work at UT Austin, she served from 2004-2011 as core faculty on the Initiative for Pediatric Palliative Care at Boston Children's Hospital and is currently on the national advisory boards for the Cambia Health Foundation Sojourns Scholars Leadership Program and the American Cancer Society's Center for Diversity in Research Training. She also serves on the national steering committee of the Coalition for Social Work and Health. Throughout our extensive discussions, it was quickly evident that Dr. Jones's energy, impressive track record of cross-disciplinary collaboration and innovation in teaching and research, and unique ability to listen and bring people together around common goals were the ideal characteristics we seek to lead the School of Social Work to further excellence. Dr. Jones will officially join Boston University on August 1. In addition to her decanal title, she will hold an appointment as a tenured professor in the department of clinical practice in the School of Social Work. I hope that you'll join me in congratulating her and welcoming her to our community.

In the meantime, I want to thank the members of the Search Advisory Committee for the Dean of the School of Social Work, chaired by Prof. Catherine O'Connor, for their excellent work over the last nine months in fielding candidates and helping enable a successful outcome. As noted last fall, the search for the dean of the School of Social Work has run in parallel with the search for the next director of the Center for Innovation in Social Work & Health, which is similarly near completion. News about the outcome of that search will be available shortly.

Finally, I'd also like to give special thanks to Dean Jorge Delva for his willingness to serve through the completion of our dean search and for his exceptional direction over these last five years. The School of Social Work he leaves is stronger and positioned, both internally and externally, for growth and greater relevance as a premier producer of influential scholarship and as a training ground for dynamic and diverse social work practitioners, leaders, and scholars.

Cc: Robert A. Brown, President

Search Advisory Committee for the Dean of the School of Social Work

Chair:

Catherine O'Connor, Professor of Education and Linguistics, Wheelock College of Education & Human Development

Members:

Dina Castro, Director, BU Institute for Early Childhood Well-Being; Professor of Early Childhood Education, Wheelock College of Education & Human Development

Ellen DeVoe, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs; Professor of Clinical Practice, School of Social Work

Jennifer Greif Green, Associate Professor of Special Education, Wheelock College of Education & Human Development

Hope Haslam Straughan, Clinical Associate Professor of Clinical Practice, School of Social Work

Eileen O'Keefe, Clinical Professor of Health Sciences, College of Health & Rehabilitation Sciences: Sargent College

Sujin Pak, Dean, School of Theology

Linda Sprague Martinez, Associate Professor of Macro Social Work Practice, School of Social Work

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