

## Day in the Life of MSSA Members

MSSA members come from all parts of Minnesota and work in all areas of the health and human services field. We caught up with MSSA members Chris, Miranda, and Jennifer to see what a typical day looks like in their work.

### Chris Schwagerl, Founder and CEO, Chris Connects

#### Describe the work you do:

I run a company that helps others seamlessly invest in real estate. After 15 years of direct practice, I witnessed many of my colleagues leave the field because they felt disenfranchised, burned out, or cynical. There's a lot of education about self-care (and for good reason), but financial health is often neglected. Money is real, and financial matters are closely tied to our emotions. We help everyday people experience the power of passive income.



#### Chris's Daily Schedule:

6:00 a.m. – Start the day with a to-be list that includes journaling, affirmations, goal setting, meditation, daily reader, and writing an email to my seven-year-old daughter about how great she is  
6:30 a.m. – Exercise and walk the dog  
7:00 a.m. – Coffee, breakfast, family time  
8:00 a.m. – Read  
8:30 a.m. – Review today's task list and highlight the most important item  
9:00 a.m. – Create financial education content  
11:00 a.m. – Business administrative work and portfolio management  
12:00 p.m. – Lunch and Jeopardy  
1:00 p.m. – Call prospective investors  
3:00 p.m. – Chocolate break  
3:15 p.m. – Social media engagement  
4:00 p.m. – Write down tomorrow's task list  
4:30 p.m. – Meal prep  
5:00 p.m. – Cook dinner  
5:30 p.m. – Chow time  
6:00 p.m. – FFT (Family Fun Time)  
7:45 p.m. – Bedtime routine for the kiddo  
8:30 p.m. – Evening time with wife, reading, or having a stogie with a friend  
10:00 p.m. – Bedtime

#### What keeps you motivated and passionate about your work?

I love helping people, and I love sharing my abundance with others. There's a huge need for improved financial health in our field. I'm beyond excited to leverage the many ways that real estate investing has blessed my family in hopes of creating a more purposeful future for others as well. ■

### Miranda Spry, Lead Agency Evaluator, Minnesota Department of Human Services

#### Describe the work you do:

The Lead Agency Review team monitors and evaluates county and tribe compliance in the administration of Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) programs. As an evaluator, I conduct a multi-source analysis of the lead agency. This analysis is accomplished by completing an on-site case file review, a facilitation of case manager and assessor focus groups, and interviews with lead agency leadership. The goal is to monitor compliance, share measure and outcome performance, and identify best practices.



#### Miranda's Daily Schedule:

7:00 a.m. – Wake up and get ready for the day  
7:45 a.m. – Get some snuggles in with my basset hound, Bunyo, before logging into work  
8:00 a.m. – Log in to work (currently working remotely so I get to skip the commute), check calendar, and make my daily to-do list  
8:15 a.m. – Respond to any new emails  
8:30 a.m. – Begin case file review tasks for assigned role during lead agency reviews  
12:00 p.m. – Lunch break  
12:30 p.m. – Resume case file review tasks for assigned role during lead agency reviews  
3:45 p.m. – Check and respond to emails  
4:00 p.m. – Team meeting to discuss the day's case file review findings and discuss any themes  
4:30 p.m. – Log off work and find my husband/pup in the next room  
5:00 p.m. – Cook dinner  
6:30 p.m. – Watch Wheel of Fortune  
7:00 p.m. – Clean up around house/chores  
8:00 p.m. – Play a game of cribbage or rummy with my husband  
9:00 p.m. – Snuggle up in bed with either a book or show on Netflix with my husband and our dog

#### What keeps you motivated and passionate about your work?

The collaborative and strengths-based approach we use throughout our reviews both internally and externally. I am very driven when I feel I am contributing to a team and we are all working together toward a common goal. ■

### Dr. Jennifer Gervais, EdD, LICSW (Minnesota & Utah), Assistant Professor/Lecturer, University of Utah

#### Describe the work you do:

The beauty of being a social worker is the versatility of what we can do. In my 22 years in the field, I have served as a community outreach worker, elementary school social worker, partial hospitalization therapist, outpatient clinician, clinical supervisor, and educator. After eight years in higher education, in 2016, I returned to the practice world and was an elementary school social worker for the South Washington County School District. In July 2022, I returned to higher education as I realized my passion is being able to facilitate learning for adults. I enjoy being able to share my experiences with adult learners aspiring to join the field of social work. I currently work for the University of Utah in the College of Social Work as a faculty member teaching for the BSW and MSW online programs. I work remotely from my home in Hudson, WI. In addition to teaching online, I support curriculum development for their online programs.



#### Jennifer's Daily Schedule:

9:00 a.m. – Log in, check email, and return messages  
9:30 a.m. – Let the dog out  
9:45 a.m. – Begin grading student assignments  
11:00 a.m. – Faculty meeting via Zoom  
12:30 p.m. – Lunch with husband, who also works from home  
1:00 p.m. – Host online office hours  
1:30 p.m. – Meeting with the Washington County Local Advisory on Mental Health's administrative team  
2:30 p.m. – Resume grading  
4:00 p.m. – Take the dog for a walk  
6:00 p.m. – NAMI Washington County (National Alliance on Mental Illness) board meeting  
7:00 p.m. – Finalize notes from the NAMI meeting and shut down the computer for the day  
7:30 p.m. – Dinner with the hubby  
8:00 p.m. – Respond to an email from a student having technical difficulties  
8:30 p.m. – Watch the latest episode of Yellowstone I missed the night prior  
9:45 p.m. – Let the dog out  
10:00 p.m. – Get ready for bed to start my day all over again

#### What keeps you motivated and passionate about your work?

Many things keep me motivated and passionate about being a social worker. I have always said what I do is part of my life, not just a job. When it becomes a job, it is time to move on. One thing that brings me joy is seeing students make connections between what they are learning in class and applying it in the field. That "light bulb" moment will never get old. The second thing that keeps me motivated and passionate about being a social worker is running into previous students in the field and seeing them practicing the craft. I have been teaching in higher education since 2008 and have encountered many of the students that have passed through the courses I have taught, and it is always a joy to run into them in the field and see them living out their dream. ■

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