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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Xavier University of Louisiana Names Dr. Steven Byrd New Director of Counseling and Wellness

Steven Byrd, DBH, LCSW officially joined the Xavier University of Louisiana family as the Director of the Counseling and Wellness department this month. As the Director of the Counseling and Wellness Department, he will provide leadership in the development, implementation, and evaluation of all aspects of the department's mission and goals while managing the day-to-day operation of the subunits.

Dr. Steven Byrd is an experienced licensed clinical social worker whose treatment goal is to assist students in changing their behaviors to improve their lives. As a doctor of behavioral health and social worker with more than two decades of experience providing mental health services in the Greater New Orleans area, Dr. Byrd looks forward to providing a space for students and the entire Xavier University community to express their thoughts and emotions with competent licensed professionals.

"We are proud to have Dr. Steven Byrd join the Xavier team," said **Virginia Pellerin, Associate Dean of Students at Xavier University of Louisiana**. "Dr. Byrd's background as a licensed clinical social worker and adjunct professor at Southern University at New Orleans combined with his experiences working with youth in the public school system make him a great fit for Xavier. Our work in Center for Health and Wellness is essential to the health, success and overall well-being of our students, faculty, and staff.

Before entering private practice, Dr. Byrd worked as a school social worker and case manager for New Orleans Public Schools and learned to be a strong advocate for students and families. His other positions have included supervising mental health professionals and serving as a clinical director of an outpatient mental health rehabilitation program.

"Xavier is an institution of excellence. My hope is to continue Xavier's legacy of excellence by connecting students to services and resources to maintain and improve their mental health," said Dr. Steven Byrd. "Xavier students are at a critical age in developing their identities and future careers while managing relationships and academic work. My role is to assist them with navigating their journey mentally."

Dr. Byrd pledges to offer students an open, accepting environment to explore their mental health and work on any behavioral changes they seek for themselves. He believes the therapeutic relationship is the most critical aspect of counseling.

"My goal is to develop a safe space in which students feel comfortable sharing some of their most intimate experiences, thoughts and feelings. Having someone who is confidential and nonjudgmental to listen is priceless," said Dr. Byrd.

Dr. Byrd earned a Doctorate of Behavioral Health from the Cummings Graduate Institute and a Master of Social Work from Southern University at New Orleans. He also received a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice from Louisiana State University. In addition to his new role as the Director of Health and Wellness at Xavier, Dr. Byrd also serves as an adjunct professor at Southern University at New Orleans.



Steven Byrd, Ph.D.
Director of Counseling and Wellness

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About Xavier University of Louisiana

Xavier University of Louisiana, America's only historically Black and Catholic University, is ranked among the top three HBCUs in the nation. Recognized as a national leader in STEM and health sciences, Xavier produces more African American students who graduate from medical schools each year than any other university in the United States. Additionally, Xavier's College of Pharmacy is also among the top producers of African American pharmacists in the country.

*Established in 1925 by Saint Katharine Drexel and the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament as a place for African Americans and Native Americans to receive a quality education, Xavier has since expanded its programs in art, business, education, biological sciences, chemistry, pharmacy and political science. More recent additions in robotics, bioinformatics, engineering, data science, neuroscience and genetics, in addition to new STEM-based master's programs, have provided Xavier students (2815 undergraduates and 787 graduates) an unbeatable combination of traditional classroom study, hands-on research, service-learning opportunities and life experiences. Xavier students collaborate with world-renowned faculty, who are experts in their fields, to produce award-winning research and notable work. **The winning Xavier formula provides students with a well-balanced curriculum and an environment that nurtures their intellect and feeds their souls, thereby facilitating a more just and humane society for all.***

For more information about Xavier University of Louisiana, visit us online at www.xula.edu or follow us on Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, or Twitter @XULA1925. To book interviews and/or to speak with our experts in the field of pharmacy, education, premed, public health, science, technology, math, business, English, communications, and the arts, contact Chelsea Cunningham at (504) 520-5425 or ccunnin5@xula.edu.