

# Wenqing (Emily) Li, MSW, ASW

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Associate Clinical Social Worker (ASW #139762), California Board of Behavioral Sciences

Member, National Association of Social Workers

Bilingual (Mandarin and English) clinical social worker whose practice is organized around a single commitment: reaching the people the system has not reached yet. Across two clinical placements, a student-founded Mandarin-language mental health program, institutional advocacy for graduate students, community-based research on home care for Asian American elders, and an award-winning clinical technology project, she has consistently identified gaps in access and then built the structures to close them. Her work centers older adults, immigrants and refugees, monolingual Mandarin speakers, and survivors of complex trauma, and reflects the profession's core values of service, social justice, and the dignity and worth of the person.

## EDUCATION

### University of California, Berkeley, School of Social Welfare

August 2024 to May 2026

Master of Social Work | GPA 4.0/4.0 | Graduate Certificate in Aging

- Recipient, 2026 Excellence in Social Work Practice Award, UC Berkeley School of Social Welfare.
- MSW Thesis: *Six-Month Psychiatric Outcomes Following Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP) Discharge at Kaiser Permanente South San Francisco: The Role of an IOP-Grad Support Group.*

### East China Normal University, Shanghai, China

September 2020 to July 2024

Bachelor of Science, Applied Psychology | WES GPA 3.8/4.0

## LICENSURE, CERTIFICATION, AND PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATION

- **Associate Clinical Social Worker (ASW #139762)**, California Board of Behavioral Sciences.
- **Certified Kaiser Permanente Bilingual Clinician** (Mandarin), qualified to deliver clinical services in Mandarin without an interpreter.
- **Member**, National Association of Social Workers (NASW), California Chapter.
- **Member**, Asian Pacific Islander Social Work Council (APISWC).
- Becoming ACEs Aware in California, ACEs Aware (2025); Wellness in Action Embedded Wellness Program, Certificate of Completion.
- Basic Life Support (CPR/AED), American Heart Association (valid 02/2028); Adult and Pediatric First Aid/CPR/AED, American Red Cross (valid 06/2027).

## HONORS AND AWARDS

- **Excellence in Social Work Practice Award**, UC Berkeley School of Social Welfare, 2026.
- **First Place and SkyDeck Grand Prize**, 2026 Cal AI Hackathon, for TheraCat, a proactive AI wearable for panic intervention; earned guaranteed admission to the Berkeley SkyDeck Pad-13 incubator.
- **First Place, Health Track**, HackMerced, for TheraCALL, an AI-assisted between-session clinical outreach and suicide-risk-screening tool, March 2026.
- **National Innovation Fund** (China), 2022, for the Family Psychoeducation Project; project acknowledged by China's Ministry of Education and the Shanghai Psychological Association.
- **Outstanding Graduate**, East China Normal University; Supreme Scholarship (2021, 2022); Excellent Student Award (2021, 2022).

## CLINICAL PRACTICE EXPERIENCE

### Mental Health Trainee (MSW), Department of Psychiatry

September 2025 to May 2026

Kaiser Permanente South San Francisco, Daly City, CA

- Carry a caseload of adult and older adult patients presenting with MDD, bipolar disorder, GAD, OCD, PTSD and complex trauma, perinatal mood and anxiety disorders, substance use, adjustment disorders, grief, DV/IPV, dementia, chronic pain, and LGBTQ+ related concerns; provide diagnostic psychosocial assessment, collaborative treatment planning, and short-term psychotherapy.
- Deliver evidence-based, recovery-oriented interventions including Motivational Interviewing, CBT, DBT, ACT, Solution-Focused Brief Therapy, exposure-based work, and mindfulness; document in Epic and track outcomes in Lucet.
- Conduct crisis assessment and intervention for suicidal and homicidal ideation using structured tools (C-SSRS); develop collaborative safety plans with means restriction, engage family and caregivers, and coordinate urgent psychiatric evaluation and medication with triage and the on-call physician.
- Serve as a Kaiser-certified bilingual clinician for monolingual Mandarin-speaking patients, providing all clinical services in Mandarin and reducing linguistic and cultural barriers to care for older adults who would otherwise go unserved.
- Identify and report elder, dependent adult, and child abuse concerns; file APS reports and explain the process in a culturally responsive, shame-reducing way that preserves the therapeutic alliance.
- Co-facilitate Intensive Outpatient Program psychoeducation and processing groups and contribute to curriculum development; develop aftercare and discharge plans linking patients to community resources, peer support, and ongoing services.

### MSW Intern, Alameda County UELP Program

September 2024 to April 2025

*Center for Empowering Refugees and Immigrants (CERI), Oakland, CA*

- Provided Psychosocial Evaluation and Intervention to Southeast Asian refugees and immigrants, including Khmer Rouge genocide survivors, under Alameda County's Unserved/Underserved Ethnic Language Populations program; delivered individual and group therapy, therapeutic case management, and social advocacy.
- Treated clients presenting with PTSD, complex PTSD, prolonged grief, DV/IPV, substance use, probation involvement, MDD, and GAD using Internal Family Systems, DBT, MI, CBT, mindfulness, and art therapy; partnered with interpreters to deliver linguistically accessible care.
- Delivered intensive, longitudinal case management: SSI/SSDI applications and appeals, Medi-Cal, CalFresh, housing, employment, and legal services linkage, working across benefit systems and with attorneys and on-site psychiatry to secure resources for clients with repeated denials.
- Completed mandated APS reporting and collaborative safety planning for clients experiencing elder abuse and intimate partner violence; explained processes through a trauma-informed, culturally responsive lens.
- Co-facilitated a weekly trauma-processing group for adults with severe trauma histories; independently proposed, designed, and led art therapy sessions addressing immigration-related anxiety.

**Mental Health Intern, Adult Psychiatry**

**May 2023 to April 2024**

*Shanghai Mental Health Center, Shanghai, China*

- Co-facilitated an eight-week Mandarin-language group CBT/ERP protocol for OCD alongside licensed therapists; supported graded in-vivo exposures and tracked distress using the Subjective Units of Distress Scale.
- Conducted psychosocial intake and Y-BOCS assessments pre- and post-treatment for individuals with OCD; provided psychoeducation on Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy and CBT and connected underrepresented patients with community resources beyond the scope of medical care.

**PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT, LEADERSHIP, AND COMMUNITY ADVOCACY**

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**Founder, Project Lead, and Group Facilitator, Mental Health Wellness Group**

**March 2025 to July 2025**

*University of California, Berkeley*

- Identified the absence of Mandarin-language mental health support for international students and scholars at Berkeley and built the program herself, from needs assessment and curriculum design through facilitation, evaluation, and outreach.
- Designed and led participant-centered groups ranging from single sessions to eight-week series (4 to 10 participants) on trauma theory and grounding, emotional regulation, interpersonal effectiveness, self-compassion, and boundary setting.
- Achieved 100 percent participant satisfaction, with attendees reporting improved mood, stronger coping skills, and greater confidence managing academic, occupational, and personal stressors.
- Built and managed a WeChat official account for ongoing outreach, reaching more than 1,400 views and extending the program's reach beyond the room.

**Graduate Financial Wellness Coach, Center for Financial Wellness**

**August 2025 to May 2026**

*University of California, Berkeley | First graduate student coach in the center's history*

- Stepped into a structural gap: the center had historically served undergraduates, leaving graduate students largely absent from its programming and advocacy. Her work made the case for the role, and the center has committed to continuing to hire graduate student coaches.
- Served as a delegate to the Student Advisory Council on Financial Aid and Education (SACFAE), bringing graduate student financial need into campus-level policy conversations.
- Initiated and facilitated focus groups on graduate student financial needs and authored a report to inform future program design; led the content team in producing the center's first Financial Wellness Handbook for graduate students.
- Delivered internal staff training on Motivational Interviewing, translating clinical skill into institutional capacity, and facilitated a transition course on budgeting, student loans, savings, and investment.

**Director of External Relations, Chinese Graduate and Postdoc Student Association**

**August 2025 to May 2026**

*University of California, Berkeley*

- Serve as primary liaison between the association and external professional and academic partners, organizing guest lectures, professional development events, and career fairs tailored to Chinese international graduate students and postdocs, a community that faces distinctive barriers navigating U.S. professional pathways.

**Project Lead, Family Psychoeducation Project**

**September 2021 to April 2024**

*East China Normal University, Shanghai, China*

- Co-produced psychoeducational animated videos for children ages 4 to 12 on emotion awareness, expression, regulation, and interpersonal skills, reaching more than 210,000 views; developed companion lectures and videos strengthening caregivers' understanding of child mental health.
- Built and coordinated a cross-disciplinary team of animation designers, developers, and psychology students and established academic and corporate partnerships to expand reach and quality.

**Direct Service with Children and Families**

**June 2025 to May 2026**

*Safe & Sound, Early Childhood Mental Health Program, CA; Blue Camp, Recreation and Wellbeing, UC Berkeley*

- Volunteer with families in the Early Childhood Mental Health Program, supporting children ages 0 to 8 while caregivers receive services; use arts, sensory-based activities, and age-appropriate calming strategies to support emotional regulation and strengthen parent-child relationships.
- Led arts, dance, and drama programming integrating social-emotional learning for groups of approximately 20 children ages 7 to 12; provided behavioral and emotional support for children with ADHD and ASD and supported program evaluation during the 2025 American Camp Association accreditation review.

## **RESEARCH, PROGRAM EVALUATION, AND SCHOLARSHIP**

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### **Program Evaluation and MSW Thesis, Independent Study**

**January 2026 to April 2026**

*Kaiser Permanente South San Francisco, Department of Psychiatry, Daly City, CA*

- Designing and conducting a quasi-experimental evaluation of the post-IOP "IOP-Grad Group," a continuity-of-care support group for adults with severe mental illness, examining whether participation is associated with reduced psychiatric emergency visits, rehospitalization, and inpatient admissions in the six months following discharge.
- Secured formal data authorization from the management team; analyzing Epic administrative data using negative binomial regression and integrating quantitative findings with qualitative patient and provider perspectives.
- Translating findings into actionable recommendations for program improvement, clinical practice, and health policy within adult psychiatric services.

### **Research Assistant, Julian's Lab, School of Social Welfare**

**September 2025 to April 2026**

*University of California, Berkeley | Supervisor: Prof. Julian Chun-Chung Chow*

- Contribute to a worker-cooperative development project for In-Home Supportive Services addressing gaps in access to quality home care for low-income Asian American older adults.
- Research legal and regulatory frameworks for establishing a formal cooperative, benchmark comparable home-care co-op models, and help develop a platform supporting IHSS provider training and fair labor advocacy; preparing semi-structured interviews with older adult community members to bring their voices directly into program design.

### **Research Assistant, CALM Program, Department of Psychology**

**September 2024 to June 2025**

*University of California, Berkeley | Supervisor: Prof. Sheri L. Johnson*

- Contributed to a meta-analysis on mood disorders, constructing database-specific search strings across PubMed, Web of Science, Embase, and PsycINFO and supporting screening; proposed and implemented an R-based workflow automating data visualization and feedback tracking; supported recruitment through outreach to DBSA and NAMI chapters.

### **Publication**

- Zhang, C.<sup>1</sup>, Zhang, X.<sup>1</sup>, **Li, W.<sup>1</sup>**, Zhang, T., Zhang, Z., Lu, L., Didonna, F., & Fan, Q. (2024). Pallidum volume as a predictor for the effectiveness of mindfulness-based cognitive therapy and psycho-education in unmedicated patients with obsessive-compulsive disorder. *Comprehensive Psychiatry*, 131, 152462.

## **INNOVATION: TECHNOLOGY IN SERVICE OF PRACTICE**

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### **Project Lead, TheraCat (First Place and SkyDeck Grand Prize, 2026 Cal AI Hackathon)**

**June 2026**

- Drew on two years of sitting with patients through panic attacks to address a gap she had witnessed firsthand: when a therapist is not in the room, a person who is shaking and struggling to breathe cannot unlock a phone and tap through an app. Built a wearable that intervenes proactively, requiring no action from the user.
- Designed a wristband that detects the physiological onset of a panic attack from accelerometer data and delivers two coordinated interventions: gentle haptic pulses guiding the user's breathing through touch, and TheraCat, an AI voice companion that checks in and walks the user through grounding skills drawn from their treatment plan.
- Led the clinical logic and user experience and contributed to the hardware build and pitch; the project earned first place and the SkyDeck Grand Prize at the 2026 Cal AI Hackathon and guaranteed admission to the Berkeley SkyDeck Pad-13 incubator.

### **Co-Creator, TheraCall (First Place, Health Track, HackMerced)**

**March 2026**

- With no prior technical background, identified a gap seen firsthand in practice: clients, particularly older adults and those with serious mental illness, often go weeks between sessions with no contact, and existing mental health apps ask more of people than they have to give.
- Co-built a platform that places scheduled, clinically grounded phone calls checking in on mood, safety, and action-plan progress; when high-risk signals surface, it follows C-SSRS protocol, alerting the therapist and providing crisis resources including 988. Designed for accessibility rather than engagement: no app, no login, no searching. The client only has to answer the phone.

## **LANGUAGES AND CLINICAL SYSTEMS**

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- **Languages:** English (native); Mandarin (native, Kaiser Permanente Certified Bilingual Clinician); Shanghainese (native); Japanese (basic).
- **Systems and Tools:** Epic, Salesforce, Lucet; Microsoft Office Suite; R, SPSS, MATLAB.
- **Clinical Modalities:** MI, CBT, DBT, ACT, SFBT, ERP and exposure-based work, Internal Family Systems, art therapy, mindfulness-based approaches, grief and bereavement counseling, crisis intervention and safety planning.