

NYU Professor Pia Hargrove Incorporates Storytelling Art into Academic Discipline

By featuring new artwork, the Silver School of Social Work faculty member continues to engage students and business professionals with public speaking.

NEW YORK CITY, NY, UNITED STATES, August 11, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- New York University (NYU) adjunct assistant professor [Pia Hargrove](#) is preparing for the fall semester to begin Sept. 2. In the meantime, she reflects on putting the finishing touches on a busy spring semester. The licensed master social worker, affectionately known as "Professor Pia," demonstrated her artistic talent in two art exhibitions.

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Pia Hargrove, LMSW, SIPI

She debuted a mixed-media collage, titled "From Bootstraps to Stilettos," at NYU's Conversations Toward Change Student Art Exhibition on March 6. The artwork, taking the same title as her forthcoming scholarship, combines images, objects, and words printed on

parchment paper to represent the textures and patterns of her own life as a woman of African and indigenous heritage.

According to Hargrove, it chronicles six generations of family history through photography, storytelling, and the adornment of genealogical ornaments such as cowrie shells.

"Our history carries pain and yet carries profound purpose," she said. "From Bootstraps to Stilettos" represents the African American collective journey of black excellence in labor and entrepreneurship."

The three-dimensional piece is a continuation of Professor Pia's artistic journey. On Feb. 1, Johns Hopkins University honored her wall-hanging patchwork quilt, "Wise Hearted Hands," at the seminar "Collaboration, Creative Citizenship, and the Collective Lyric 'I'" held in Baltimore, Maryland.

Hargrove presented a creative historical narrative essay about the artwork during the event. Both works were previously published in [The Hopkins Review](#).

From scholarly artist to public speaker, Professor Pia addressed multiple audiences on and off campus. NYU speaking engagements included the keynote at the Langone Medical Center Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry's Black History Month event, and guest facilitator for the Richie Jackson Service fellows at the NYU LGBTQ+ Center.

On April 7, Hargrove delivered the keynote address for the NYU Silver School of Social Work Pi Pi Chapter Phi Alpha National Honor Society induction ceremony. Her speech encouraged students to document their narratives, tribulations, and triumphs as social workers and welcomed new members into the chapter.

"The purpose of the Phi Alpha Honor Society is to provide a closer bond among students of social work and to promote humanitarian goals and ideals," Hargrove said. "Phi Alpha fosters high standards of education for social workers and invites into membership those who have excellence in scholarship and achievement in social work."

She facilitated a conversation on the live podcast launch recording of 94A6325 with NYU clinical associate professor and director of social work, Kirk "Jae" James on April 22 and interviewed him about his forthcoming book of the same name. The Silver School faculty member also hosted events for the student-led group NYU End Overdose and participated as a panelist for the Black Care Collective earlier in the semester.

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Outside of NYU, Hargrove demonstrated her role as a community advocate and entrepreneurial leader. The 2024 Presidential Volunteer Service Award recipient added new accolades to her repertoire, receiving the 2025 Mentorship Award as a mental health expert from The Reset Talk Show.

Each year, the radio program hosts a gala to honor trailblazers, educators, leaders, and



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organizations that have transformed lives and communities through activism and advocacy. Professor Pia was also honored with the 2025 Appreciation Award for her passion and commitment to social work and student success by a host of New York University students and student groups that she advises.

On April 30, she facilitated a workshop for Goldman Sachs' One Million Black Women in Business initiative. "Advocating for Small Business: Making Change for Business Growth," covered identifying and strategizing business advocacy and stakeholder engagement.

The NYU professor additionally connected with another New York-area academic institution in May. In collaboration with the College of Staten Island Office of Accessibility Services, she presented the keynote speech for Disability Awareness Month and a workshop on her academic work highlighting intersectionality and disability justice.

"In ancient times, it was believed that if people wanted to enjoy the artistry of the day through the Greek plays and tragedies, the community would support them. Whether they were guided or literally carried, people were invested in ascending together," Hargrove said. "In 2025, how are we intentional about ascending together? Especially in New York City, where we celebrate individuality and achievement, the challenge of our humanity in creating accessibility is that much greater."

About Professor Pia Hargrove: New York-licensed master social worker, Pia J. Hargrove is an award-winning educator, speaker, activist, and entrepreneur with over two decades of experience serving diverse communities. She is a 2024 recipient of the President's Volunteer Service Award, the highest civic award for service in the United States. As an adjunct assistant professor at New York University's Silver School of Social Work, she mentors and advises on the needs of immigrant communities and those reflective of the African diaspora. Outside the lecture hall, over 800,000 listeners tune into her monthly segment "Mental Health and Wellness Wednesdays" on Caribbean Power Jam's radio show, "The Reset." Hargrove's other speaking engagements include voicing the film "Semata," for the international exhibit, "An Archaeology of Disability," in addition to appearing as a guest on podcasts and other online platforms. In 2012, she founded the non-profit organization Creating Legacies, which inspires community building through nurturing entrepreneurs and offering families diverse social and educational experiences. The following year, Hargrove became a children's author, publishing the book Celebrate Smiles.

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