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The University at Buffalo School of Social Work proudly presents our 2008/09 annual faculty report. While the format of this year’s report has changed, we continue to spotlight our entire faculty, including research interests, recent scholarship, teaching/clinical accomplishments, and community activities. We trust that you will find this report as diverse, relevant, and interesting as those of previous years.

This year, the Buffalo Center for Social Research provided funding for four projects: (1) Living in Fear: Exploring the Effects of Anticipated Trauma, Principal Investigator: Lisa Butler, (2) A Head Start on Healthy Families: Does Providing Enhanced Dental Services in a Head Start Program Translate into Improved Oral Health for Young Children Living in Poverty? Principal Investigator: Joan Doris, (3) Evaluating a Native Specific HIV Intervention: “Heating in Volume”: A New Approach to HIV, Principal Investigator: David Patterson, and (4) Caregivers Peer Mentoring: A Community-Based Participatory Research Approach to Developing and Implementing a Training Curriculum, Principal Investigator: Adjoa Robinson. These projects and others are possible because of the generous support of Les Brun, through the Les Brun Endowment Research Fund Pilot Program, one of our most supportive alum.

During the past academic year, we welcomed two new members to our faculty, Associate Professor Lisa Butler and Assistant Professor Kelly Patterson. Both have an interdisciplinary perspective in their research, and are featured in this report.

On March 25, 2009, the UB School of Social Work hosted its second international film festival with a screening of the award-winning film “Flow: For the Love of Water by Irene Salinas. The event coincided with Social Work Month, and World Water Day, March 22. Consistent with the School’s focus on both international issues and human rights, the film explores the increasing privatization of the world’s dwindling fresh water resources, focusing on politics, pollution, human rights, and the emergence of corporate control.

The faculty continue our push into the digital frontier with a number of new technology initiatives that enable greater opportunities for creating connections between the School and current and prospective students, as well as prominent professionals in the field of social work. As ever-growing numbers of individuals embrace the social networking capabilities of Web 2.0, it is important that we establish a strong, positive presence within these increasingly influential spheres. During the 2008/09 academic year:

We launched our Living Proof Podcast Series. In August the series celebrated its one-year anniversary, and there have been over 10,000 successful downloads! We thank all of our listeners, subscribers, and supporters, and we encourage you to become a fan of Living Proof on Facebook, follow us on Twitter, and visit our website at http://www.socialwork.buffalo.edu/podcast/.

We created Youtube channel for the UB School of Social Work where we offer original video content, featuring notable social work researchers and professionals.

Clinical Associate Professor Charles Syms began exploring the online world of Second Life, and developing new ways for the School to reach out to students and others in the online community.

Once again, welcome to the faculty—living proof that the University at Buffalo School of Social Work makes a difference.

NANCY J. SMYTH, PHD
Dean

HOWARD J. DOUECK, PHD
Associate Dean for Faculty and Project Development
The Vision and Mission of the School of Social Work

VISION

The diverse community of UB’s School of Social Work is unified by our vision of a better society achieved through the generation and transmission of knowledge, promotion of social justice, and service to humanity.

MISSION

In our teaching, research, and service we strive to:

- Educate future social workers who will lead the profession regionally, nationally and internationally;
- Facilitate critical inquiry into and analysis of the causes and consequences of social problems and injustice;
- Produce innovative, theoretically-based and empirically-sound means of alleviating and rectifying such problems and injustices through policy and practice;
- Provide professional leadership in resolving critical social, economic, and political challenges;
- Be responsive and responsible members of our university, regional, national, and global communities; and
- Honor the inherent dignity, rights, and strengths of all individuals, families, and communities.
Aggressively promoting research informed by practice, the Buffalo Center for Social Research (BCSR) advances faculty and graduate student research programs that identify real-world solutions for local and global social problems impacting individuals, families, and communities.

We strive to develop reciprocal community partnerships that link practice and research through various BCSR institutes, centers, and projects such as our newly established Native American Center on Wellness Research, The Institute for Nonprofit Agencies, the Program Evaluation Center, the New York State Office of Mental Health and the New York State Schools of Social Work Deans’ Consortium Project on Evidence-Based Practice, the NIDA funded Annual Interdisciplinary Conference on Clinical Supervision, as well as our ongoing Distinguished Scholar Series.

As a training ground for graduate students and new investigators, the center promotes externally funded interdisciplinary research that builds on faculty strengths and UB 2020 strategic initiatives. Established in 2005, the center assists faculty in submitting millions of dollars in grant proposals each year in a broad range of research areas. As we continue to expand our impact, we expect to grow substantially in terms of the scope of research conducted and the value of funded grants awarded.

The following three pages provide highlights of various center research projects and activities. We hope as you view them you will think of ways to become involved in the center, as we strive together to make a difference in people’s lives through research that translates into real-world impact.
ADVANCING RESEARCH

The Buffalo Center for Social Research assists faculty and graduate students in securing extramural support for their scholarly research, teaching and community service activities through individual, collaborative and interdisciplinary grant proposal submissions. The center provides a full in-house grant submission process, assisting with all phases of grant development, from project design to fiscal analysis. Other resources include our 4,000 sq.-ft. office and interview space for project utilization as well as a state of the art data analysis laboratory for doctoral students and faculty.

CURRENT PROJECTS

Dean Smyth and faculty are united in building the Buffalo Center for Social Research enterprise. All are successful scholars engaged in important research in a variety of areas, including addictions, aging, child welfare, evidence-based practice, gender issues, trauma, and violence. Current funding sources for center research and projects include the Buffalo Public Schools, Erie County Juvenile Court, EPIC, Fahs Bech Fund, Hillside Family of Agencies, National Institute of Alcoholism and Alcohol Abuse, National Institute of Drug Abuse, New York State Department of Education, New York State Office of Mental Health, and Transportation Research Board.

BCSR AND HILLSIDE FAMILY OF AGENCIES ESTABLISH RESEARCH PARTNERSHIP

The Buffalo Center for Social Research has entered into a 5-year contract to provide research expertise to Hillside Family of Agencies, a children and family human services non-profit headquartered in Rochester, NY, with a $134M annual budget spanning 154 programs delivering services to over 7000 children and families annually. The contract between BCSR and Hillside, under the direction of Dr. Catherine Dulmus (PI), represents an innovative partnership aimed at overcoming the challenges and barriers associated with the development and implementation of the most effective treatments for children and families facing a wide range of behavioral and emotional challenges. Through the partnership BCSR will assist Hillside in program development and evaluation, and Hillside will provide BCSR with a wealth of recommendations and opportunities to research cutting-edge issues and problems that affect children and their families.

BCSR PILOT FUNDING PROGRAM

The Buffalo Center for Social Research administers a pilot funding program established through the generous financial donation by UB School of Social Work alum, Mr. Les Brun. The purpose of the Les Brun Endowment Research Fund Pilot Program is to provide financial support for pilot research which will subsequently strengthen future external grant proposal submissions. Each year the BCSR solicits proposals and a peer-review process provides project funding recommendations. Congratulations to Dr. Lisa Butler, Dr. Joan Doris, Dr. David Patterson and Dr. Adjoa Robinson, each recipients of this year’s funding for the following pilot projects:

- Living in Fear: Exploring the Effects of Anticipated Trauma (PI: Butler)
- A Head Start on Healthy Families: Does Providing Enhanced Dental Services in a Head Start Program Translate into Improved Oral Health for Young Children Living in Poverty? (PI: Doris)
- Caregivers Peer Mentoring: A Community-Based Participatory Research Approach to Developing and Implementing a Training Curriculum (PI: Robinson)

DISTINGUISHED SCHOLAR’S SERIES

Consistent with the Buffalo Center for Social Research mission of disseminating research findings and facilitating technology transfer, the Distinguished Scholar’s Series was initiated in 2005. Twice annually we underwrite the cost of bringing to Buffalo outstanding scholars to present their research findings to our community and university stakeholders. Our 2008-2009 Distinguished Scholars were:

**Fall 2008**

**SARENA D. SEIFER, MD**

Senior Consultant

Community-Campus Partnerships for Health

**Spring 2009**

**LORI S. WIENER, PHD**

Coordinator

National Cancer Institute

Pediatric Psychosocial Support and Research Program

Pediatric Oncology Branch
The Native American Center for Wellness Research (NACWR) was established in 2007 under the umbrella of the Buffalo Center for Social Research. Dr. David A. Patterson, the NACWR director, is an active tribal member, and has worked within an array of Native American and First Nations communities including both urban and reservation settings. The NACWR works with Native American, First Nation, American Indian, and Indigenous Peoples world wide, conducting culturally sensitive research on a variety of concerns at the tribal, local, state, national, and international levels.

**AIMS OF THE CENTER:**

- Develop and implement respectful Native community-based research projects;
- Bridge research to practice that is useful for Native communities;
- Build collaborations with Native American Tribes, Native American Casino Projects, Native American Urban Centers, organizations doing work with Tribes or Native peoples, Native owned business ventures, Native based projects, and Government agencies working with Tribal entities;
- Work with Native students in order to create a community of learning and helping.

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The Program Evaluation Center (PEC) was established in 2005 as part of the Buffalo Center for Social Research. Under the direction of Dr. Mansoor Kazi, its aims include the development of evaluation strategies to investigate what interventions work and in what circumstances with human services. PEC forms an engaging and interactive partnership with the agencies they are working with to help determine the approach used. They educate collaborators from around the globe on evaluation methods, and promote the credibility of social work interventions by providing a practical way to evaluate the methods being used.

**AIMS OF THE PROGRAM EVALUATION CENTER:**

- Build collaborations with practitioners, academics, students, non-profit organizations, and other providers of social services;
- Provide a practical way to utilize evaluation practices and methods;
- Encourage service providers to evaluate their own practices by training them;
- Increase the use of evaluation in the social service profession to help establish the credibility of the interventions being utilized;
- Demonstrate the effectiveness of evaluation practices in social work interventions.
“I am currently developing the Sexual Life History Calendar, an innovative approach for studying young women’s sexualities. The method’s strengths lie both in what it yields for researchers (i.e., reliable, contextually embedded data), and in what it offers participants: an opportunity to chart their sexual histories and literally see trends and connections between sexual and nonsexual life domains. In this way, I hope to both study and promote young women’s sexual subjectivity and critical consciousness.”

RESEARCH INTERESTS
Construction of adolescent sexuality, cultivation of young women’s sexual subjectivity, gendered power, youth empowerment, feminist theories and methods.

PUBLICATIONS


PRESENTATIONS


LAINA Y. BAY-CHENG
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR
PhD University of Michigan, MA University of Michigan, MSW University of Michigan, BA Wellesley College
“My current research and other work are concentrated in the areas of child welfare and the well-being of women and children, including immigrants. Years of social work experience in New York City, one of the most global cities in the world, helped broaden my interests to the international arena. My next project is a study of violence against women in Pakistan. This research will involve interviews with women who reside at DASTAK, a refuge for women in Lahore, Pakistan, as well as staff and the founders of the organization who are working on behalf of human and women’s rights.”

FILOMENA M. CRITELLI

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

PhD University at Albany, The State University of New York, MSW University at Buffalo, The State University of New York, BA Buffalo State College

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Child welfare policy and practice, family policy, youth development, immigration and human rights issues.

PUBLICATIONS


PRESENTATIONS

Critelli, F. M. (2009, May). Claiming the right to freedom from violence in Pakistan. Fifth International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.


“As a former child protection social worker and trainer in Washington State, I have been interested in how CPS workers make decisions, especially around the issues of child risk and safety, and, more generally, how child protection involvement with a family impacts upon clinical practice. Much of my research has focused on these two issues. More recently, I have looked at programs designed to facilitate transitions towards independence for young adults with developmental disabilities.”

HOWARD J. DOUECK
ASSOCIATE DEAN FOR FACULTY

PhD University of Washington, MSW University of Washington, MA Brooklyn College, The City University of New York, BA Brooklyn College, The City University of New York

RESEARCH INTERESTS
Decision making in child protection, child abuse and neglect, assessment of risk, mandated reporting, child welfare.

PUBLICATIONS


PRESENTATIONS


“Bridging the seventeen year gap between research and practice is a principle focus of both myself and our research center. Creative applications of community-based participatory research through university/community research partnerships to this challenge, as well as expanding the use and understanding of evidence-based practice is currently the major focus of my work.”

CATHERINE N. DULMUS
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, ASSOCIATE DEAN FOR RESEARCH AND RESEARCH CENTER DIRECTOR

PhD University at Buffalo, The State University of New York, MSW University at Buffalo, The State University of New York, BSW Buffalo State College

RESEARCH INTERESTS
Child mental health, violence, prevention.

PUBLICATIONS


PRESENTATIONS


"My research has been inspired by my long-standing commitment to, and years of social work practice with, vulnerable populations of adolescents. My scholarship has focused primarily on the well-being of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender youths, and the development of HIV prevention interventions for adolescents in foster care. Currently, I am investigating service needs, service access, and service utilization among transgender youths and adults, including policies and practices that facilitate appropriate service delivery to this population."

DIANE E. ELZE  
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR AND DIRECTOR OF THE MSW PROGRAM  
PhD Washington University in St. Louis, MSSA Case Western Reserve University, BS University of Maine

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Risk and protective factors for sexual minority youth; gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered issues in service utilization; HIV prevention interventions with adolescents; adolescent health and mental health.

PUBLICATIONS


PRESENTATIONS


Elze, D. (2008, May). Community mobilization and agenda building to eliminate health care disparities among lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex populations. Invited presenter, Maine LGBTI Health Summit sponsored by the Maine Department of Human Services, Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Augusta, ME.

Elze, D. (2009, June). Addressing the needs of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender youth. Western Michigan University, School of Social Work, Kalamazoo, MI.

“My interests include the evaluation of the effectiveness of social work and other human service interventions and in particular the development of real-time evaluation approaches and methodologies to investigate what interventions work and in what contexts. The methodologies include statistical methods to investigate the patterns and interconnections between the interventions, outcomes, and contexts, that is, the use of binary logistic regression alongside experimental or quasi-experimental designs, drawing upon both the epidemiology and effectiveness traditions.”

MANSoor A. F. Kazi
Research Associate Professor and Director, Program Evaluation Center
PhD University of Huddersfield, MA University of Hull, BS London School of Economics

RESEARCH INTERESTS
Program evaluation, including investigating what interventions work and in what circumstances; “clear box” evaluations of social work, health, education, and other human services; experimental and quasi-experimental research designs combined with binary logistic regression.

PRESenTATIONS


“My research focuses broadly on factors that inhibit the provision of, and access to, health and mental health care services. I am particularly concerned about individuals from traditionally oppressed backgrounds who have limited financial means to access quality health care and the federal government’s use of various mechanisms (such as managed care) that partition people out of care. My current research efforts focus on people of color living with HIV and racial and ethnic disparities in birth outcomes.”

ROBERT H. KEEFE
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR
PhD University at Albany, The State University of New York, MSSA Case Western Reserve University, BA Ithaca College

RESEARCH INTERESTS
Health disparities, HIV, evidence-based approaches to mental health treatment, and health and mental health care access.

PUBLICATIONS


PRESENTATIONS


“Throughout my career as a social work researcher, I have been interested in the ways in which culture plays a role in mental health symptoms and behaviors among minority groups, especially Asian-Americans. These days I am focusing on how immigrants change (or do not change) their drinking behaviors in a new environment and why. Current projects include a focus group study on drinking culture among Korean-Canadian elders.”

WOOKSOO KIM
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR
PhD University of Washington, MSW The Ohio State University, BA Seoul National University

RESEARCH INTERESTS
Culture and mental health/substance use, minority mental health, Asian-American immigrants, methodology.

PUBLICATIONS


PRESENTATIONS


“The distribution of services and support by public and nonprofit organizations and their effects in reducing the problems associated with poverty has always been a concern of mine. My research has focused on the impact of poverty and its associated conditions and events on individuals such as noncustodial fathers, organizations, and communities. Recent work examines the role of social networks and its influence on a community’s response to both natural and human disasters.”

KATHLEEN A. KOST
ASSOCIATE DEAN FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS
PhD University of Wisconsin-Madison, MSSW University of Wisconsin-Madison, MA University of Wisconsin-Madison, BA University of Wisconsin-Madison

RESEARCH INTERESTS
Poverty, substance abuse, employment, organizations.

PUBLICATIONS


REPRESENTATIVE EARLIER PUBLICATIONS

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS


“My interests range from development of screening and assessment instruments for substance use problems to consideration of primary, secondary and tertiary prevention for the substance use and criminal justice areas. One current project is focused on development of a screening instrument for substance use utilizing implicit cognitions. Other projects focus use of brief interventions, youth court, juvenile treatment courts, drug courts and family treatment courts.”

THOMAS H. NOCHAJSKI

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

PhD University at Buffalo, The State University of New York
BA University at Buffalo

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Prevention for alcohol and other drug problems with children and families; screening, assessment, and treatment of the criminal justice population; program and practice evaluation; and research methodology.

PUBLICATIONS


PRESENTATIONS


Dulmus, C. N., Nisbet, B. C., Patterson, D., Nochajski, T., & Manning, A. (2008, October). University/community research partnerships: Applying the CBPR model to the grant writing process. Paper presented as panel discussion at the 54th CSWE Annual Program Meeting, Philadelphia, PA.


“My past work focused on retaining special, hard-to-reach populations in alcohol and drug treatment services, such as HIV-infected and those living in extreme poverty. Although I continue pursuing this agenda, I have developed a growing body of research pertaining to organizational barriers (e.g., culture, climate, and worker attitudes) to implementing evidence-based practices throughout mental health agencies. A remaining, ongoing effort is strengthening the Native American Center for Wellness Research along with working in Native and Tribal communities regarding health and wellness.”

DAVID PATTERSON SILVERWOLF
(ADELV UNEGV WAYA)
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR
PhD University of Louisville/University of Kentucky, MSSW University of Louisville, BSW Spalding University

PEER-REVIEWED JOURNAL PUBLICATIONS

Patterson, D.A., McKiernan, P.M. (Accepted). Organizational and clinical implications of integrating an alcohol screening and brief intervention within non-substance abuse serving agencies. *Journal of Evidence-Based Social Work*.


Patterson, D.A., Hall, M., & Golder, S. (2009). Beliefs and Behaviors Regarding Substance Use and HIV Risk among Men Who have Sex with Men (MSM) in a Mid-Sized U.S. Community. *Journal of HIV/AIDS and Social Services*, 8(2), 188-201


BOOKS


PRESENTATIONS AT PEER-REVIEWED PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCES


“My research over the past ten years has largely focused on child welfare practices. Social work has deep roots in practice with at risk children and their families and at the present time I am focusing on research on alternate models of transition into foster care including factors that facilitate functional adaptation in foster children to delimit disengagement from foster care and adoptions. My current projects also include research on outcomes in therapeutic day school programs, and moral disengagement in juvenile delinquents. Previously I examined differential uses of BSWs and MSWs in child welfare settings, placement, and replacement patterns in child welfare, and the uses of group work with children as well as adult survivors of abuse and neglect. School outcomes.”

BARBARA A. RITTNER

CHAIR OF THE GROUP FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF DOCTORAL EDUCATION (GADE)
AN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR DIRECTORS OF DOCTORAL PROGRAMS IN SOCIAL WORK.

PhD University at Buffalo, The State University of New York, BA University at Buffalo

RESEARCH INTERESTS
Child welfare, interventions, group work.

PUBLICATIONS


PRESENTATIONS
Rittner, B. A. (2009, March), Keynote Presentation, Branding and Marketing to Potential Faculty Presented at the Association of Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors 2009 BPD Conference, Phoenix, AZ.


“My research and writing focuses on family involvement in children’s mental health services with an emphasis on planning and decision-making and family-professional partnerships, as well as community-based interventions to reduce health disparities and build organizational capacities in African-American communities. Currently, I am principal investigator of a SAMHSA grant examining the influence of caregiver involvement in service planning and provider cultural competence on child and caregiver functional outcomes.”

ADJOA ROBINSON
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR
PhD Washington University in St. Louis, MSW Howard University, BS University of Maryland

RESEARCH INTERESTS
Family caregivers, community based participatory research, health disparities, mental health, cultural competence.

PUBLICATIONS


PRESENTATIONS


“My current research interests are in the intersection between mental health, trauma, and substance use disorders especially related to complex trauma, a condition that involves affect dysregulation, impulse control problems, interpersonal problems, substance abuse, self-harm, and dissociation. I’m also interested in alternative clinical interventions (e.g., EMDR, mindfulness meditation), especially as they relate to mental health, trauma, and addiction. Finally, because my own work includes both research and practice, I am interested in identifying effective strategies for integrating, blending, and bridging social work practice and research.”

NANCY J. SMYTH
DEAN
PhD University at Albany, The State University of New York, MSW University at Albany, The State University of New York, BA University at Albany, The State University of New York

RESEARCH INTERESTS
Interventions, including alternative interventions; alcohol/substance abuse; co-occurring disorders; psychological trauma including complex trauma; blending and bridging practice and research; technology transfer.

PUBLICATIONS


PRESENTATIONS


The University at Buffalo School of Social Work

DEBORAH P. WALDROP
Associate Professor
PhD Oklahoma State University, MSW Syracuse University, BA Pennsylvania State University

My research focuses on aging and end-of-life care, particularly in how terminally ill older adults and their families face an approaching death, make decisions about how to manage increasing needs for care, how caregivers adapt to loss and how formal service utilization affects their adaptation. I am exploring the differences in how end-of-life care is delivered in urban and rural areas with particular attention to the interrelationship between formal (health and social service) and informal (family and support system) caregivers.

RESEARCH INTERESTS
Aging, health care, end of life, and human development.

PUBLICATIONS


PRESENTATIONS


“The focus of my work is primarily on Native American and other indigenous populations with a secondary interest in refugee populations. I am currently funded by the National Cancer Institute for the project ‘Healthy Living in Two Worlds.’ This project began with an assessment of the health behaviors of urban Native American youth ages nine to thirteen in Buffalo and Niagara Falls with a particular focus on recreational tobacco use, dietary practices, and active versus sedentary lifestyles. We are also gathering information from caregivers for a subset of these youth. This information informs the development of a culturally specific wellness curriculum that was pilot-tested with Native American youth in Buffalo from July 10 to August 10, 2006.”

HILARY N. WEAVER
PROFESSOR

DSW Columbia University, MS Columbia University, BA Antioch College

RESEARCH INTERESTS
Culturally competent social work practice, indigenous peoples.

PUBLICATIONS


PRESENTATIONS


Clinical faculty at UBSSW foster a unique balance between teaching, scholarship and service. Connecting research and theory to all levels of practice helps to anchor our students in their academic pursuits and community engagement. In the eleven years since the senior clinical faculty were hired, they have cultivated a rich tradition of mutual exchange between the SSW, community stakeholders, and the profession of social work.

As Master’s-level expert clinicians, the clinical faculty at UBSSW are outstanding teachers and trainers, and have earned a position of respect and trust amongst our colleagues. Because of these positive relationships, we are able to build bridges and initiate projects in an environment of mutual trust and reciprocity, which is particularly valuable in under served communities.

A stellar example of collaboration between faculty and the community is a project with the Chautauqua County Department of Social Services. Primarily a rural area, Chautauqua County is a small region (about 60 miles south of UB) that frequently encounters inadequate funding for training and state-of-the-art-practice. In 2005, I began a series of solution-focused practice training sessions with the Department of Social Services. Together, we developed a model to create “experts” in solution-focused practice that encompassed several units and departments. Crucial to this endeavor is sustain ability within the organization, and as a part of this project, the Department wanted to evaluate the effectiveness of the new model. I referred them to Mansoor Kazi, Research Associate Professor at the SSW, who then developed a model to evaluate the efforts to provide solution-focused interventions with families. He acquired grant funding for this project from the New York State Office of Child and Family Services. The Chautauqua County DSS is proud of this model, and considers UBSSW an important stakeholder in their small rural community.

An example of faculty-community collaboration in an urban setting is the Community Action for Prenatal Care Project of the Buffalo Prenatal-Perinatal Network (CAPC). It has been over a decade since I served as a founding member of the steering committee of this endeavor. The project’s design uses existing community resources to reach out to women with very high-risk pregnancies, engaging them in prenatal care and other services. Since its inception, I have introduced this project to some of my SSW colleagues, many of whom have since developed relationships and projects with CAPC. Rob Keefe presented several of his research projects to various audiences and constituencies of the project. Adjoa Robinson is the field liaison for a MSW intern at the organization. Diane Elze has contributed to multiple grant-writing projects. Sue Green and I have presented at community forums hosted by the CAPC project, and we are currently collaborating on the integration of solution-focused practice and trauma-informed care; the end-results of this work will be presented at a community forum in Spring 2010.

Above are just a few of a myriad of examples of the balance of academic teaching, evidence-based practice, and community engagement. The UBSSW continues its commitment to strengthening and enhancing its role as a center of academic excellence and living proof of the power of social work.

RESEARCH INTERESTS
Families, interventions, education.

PUBLICATIONS


PRESENTATIONS


I have been working on a research project sponsored by the Center for the Development of Human Services (CDHS) with three different MSW students and a Doctoral student between August of 2007 – present. Phase I & II of the project is titled: Trauma in the child welfare system: Recognition, assessment and treatment. Currently, Phase III of the project, titled: Integrating brief solution focus strategies and trauma informed care (TIC) within the child welfare system, is underway. Professor Denise Krause and a JD/MSW student are working with me and CDHS on this endeavor.

Over the past five years, I have had the privilege to serve in a community engagement program as a faculty advisor. In the Fall of 2004, several students expressed their wishes to get the school (and themselves) “more involved” in the community. Some students and I met with the Director of Gerard Place, an agency that provides transitional housing for homeless single parents and their children, and discussed what volunteer opportunities were available for students who wanted to assist the agency in providing support services for families. The students created a proposal for Dean Smyth that detailed our plan for volunteer involvement at Gerard Place. Both the Dean and the School supported our efforts in developing the UB DREAM Program. The DREAM Program’s initial mission was “to provide families support for short-term success in the environment and long-term success in our greater community.” The acronym DREAM stands for: Developing Relationships through Empowerment, Advocacy and Motivation.

The UB DREAM Team, comprised of student volunteers, originally held “DREAM Night” every Saturday evening from 6:00 pm to 10:00 pm. These events consisted of sharing movies, games, food and warm conversation with the residents of Gerard Place. The purpose of these evenings was to give residents a communication outlet in a comfortable setting, and to foster the development of community spirit. In February 2006, based on changing needs at Gerard Place, the DREAM Night events ended and “Phase 2” of our involvement was initiated. The UB DREAM Team provided a bi-weekly education enrichment program at Gerard Place. This endeavor was designed to assist residents with GED attainment and other educational goals.

Today, the UB DREAM Team is working with the Girls Sports Foundation (GSF), which serves girls ages 4-18 who are under served in the city of Buffalo. The GSF seeks to promote the importance of academic achievement, respect, self confidence, healthy lifestyles, team work, and good sportsmanship through sports participation. The DREAM Program assists the Foundation with mentoring, role modeling, and tutoring. The DREAM Program’s continued mission is “to provide individual girls and families with support for short and long-term success in their own lives and in our greater community”.

I have also had the opportunity to work collaboratively with an interdisciplinary team at the Jacobs Neurological Institute (JNI) in Buffalo. In 2006, I was asked to provide consultation in developing a social work position at the JNI. We created a job which is now called “The Single Point of Accountability” (SPA). I have continued my voluntary involvement and have witnessed this social work position grow and expand, from initially working only with adults with MS, to working also with children diagnosed with MS and other neurological disorders. Several presentations on this integrative model and the SPA position have been accepted at national conferences in the MS Field.

RESEARCH INTERESTS
Children and families, trauma, resiliency, community.

PUBLICATIONS

PRESENTATIONS

Karpinski, M., Cornelia, M., Bennett, S., Weinstock-Guttman, B., Green, S. A., Teter, B. & Munschauer, M. (2009, May). Jacobs Neurological Institute, State University of New York (SUNY) at Buffalo (NY, USA); School of Social Work, SUNY Buffalo (NY, USA) A proposed model of intervention to keep disabled multiple sclerosis patients in a home-based environment. New York State Multiple Sclerosis Consortium. Buffalo, NY.
Social work is a discipline that fundamentally acknowledges the importance of community and environment in improving the social functioning of individuals. It was this focus on the social environment and context that led to my choice to pursue Social Work as a profession. As a faculty member at the UB School of Social Work, I’m fortunate to have the opportunity to connect my teaching and service activity in ways that ideally enriches our school and our community.

I have attempted to broaden the reach of social work values from our graduate school to the University and larger community. Recognizing the important role education plays in the development of informed and active citizens, I have been engaged in a leadership role with UB’s undergraduate school to help students of varied interests understand how research universities contribute to improvements in communities, and the practical ways in which students can make a difference.

Since 2007, I have served as the Academic Director of the Civic Engagement (CE) Learning Academy under the Vice Provost of Undergraduate Education. Responding to UB2020’s strategic planning, and UB’s strategic strength in Civic Engagement, a new option for incoming freshman was established in the form of a Civic Engagement Learning Academy. The CE Learning Academy was envisioned as a scholarly community comprised of faculty, students, and staff sharing a common mission, goals, and interest in learning skills of engaged citizenship (social action, advocacy, leadership) that serve the public good. In collaboration with faculty and staff across the undergraduate school, we created a new opportunity for incoming freshman to affiliate with community-minded peers through curricular, residential, and co-curricular activities. Our mission is to create opportunities for students of all disciplines of study to find an influential and active role at UB, and in their local, national, and global communities.

My role in UB’s strategic planning is not only service to the University, but also creative service to the Social Work profession as I assist various constituencies in areas related to the core values and mission of the School of Social Work and profession. I have developed programming in the CE Learning Academy that reflects the relevance of the work in relation to Social Work core values in the areas of social justice, advocacy, social action, and the empowerment of vulnerable populations. In addition, students of various interests and major courses of study develop relationships with partners and learn skills that encourage them to be active forces for positive change in their communities.

Another area in which my teaching and service has been reflected in the community is the training and lectures I have provided in the treatment community. I have brought my knowledge of the Motivational Interviewing (MI) approach to behavior change to a number of organizations and service providers in the area, including Child and Adolescent Treatment Services, Cazenovia Recovery Systems, and Lakeshore Behavioral Health. MI is a client-centered, collaborative, and empowering approach to behavior change that is evidence-based treatment for helping people address problems with alcohol, other drugs, health-related behaviors, and psychological problems.

Finally, as an academic who attempts to be involved in his community as well, I have been a member of the Springville-Griffith Institute Central School District Board of Education since 2005. Through my service on an elected community board, I attempt to provide leadership and contributions that reflect the core mission and values of social work. The SGI District is located in a relatively poor, rural, and traditionally under served area for many of our students. There is significant poverty and lower socioeconomic status in parts of the district, as well as a shrinking population (and tax base) as agricultural life is lost to changing economic and cultural conditions. The social work perspective that I bring to the BOE is needed and I enjoy support (most of the time) for my advocacy for public education, children and families, and vulnerable groups of students. Issues of social justice, human rights, advocacy, and empowerment for this often marginalized community are raised by my involvement on the board.

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Interventions, addictions, social work applications in nontraditional settings.

PRESENTATIONS

Even though it is often believed that social workers border on computer phobic, in reality social work has, and continues to employ technology regularly. Everything from assessment to record keeping to research is now the utilization of computers in the work. So the question is not whether or not social workers use computers, but how. The Internet has in many ways has been revolutionary for the field. The ability to quickly and easily connect people and act as a vehicle to disseminate information has been important to the education of new social workers, as well as holding significant potential for those already practicing. The arrival of the 21st century has seen the rise of a new set of capabilities and thus new opportunities. The so-called “Web 2.0” and “virtual worlds” offer new possibilities for social work education, practice and research. I am very interested in how these new technologies can find application.

I am currently working with the University’s Teaching and Learning Center to create a presence of the School in Second Life. Second Life is probably the best known of the virtual worlds. I am interested in seeing how it might be used for educational and training purposes, its possibility as a recruitment tool for the School and the social work profession, and also exploring how students might use it in their practice. Currently, the VA is investigating its use as an outreach tool. The CDC uses it for information dissemination, and one can find self-help groups meeting online there.

Many of the students coming into social work today are quite computer literate. They use computers in many ways, including networking with each other. The rise of social networking brings with it new possibilities for application within the School. The use of forums such as Facebook and Twitter are being used by students and are finding their way into use by traditional social work groups and organizations. I am also looking at how we might help students think about employing these in a professional setting.

RESEARCH INTERESTS
Addictions, interventions, child welfare.

PUBLICATIONS


PRESENTATIONS


Sometimes it is a challenge to explain why I study trauma. Many people find it difficult to understand the appeal of investigating the oft-times grim psychological effects of, for example, childhood abuse, life-threatening illness, combat, or terrorism. Indeed, a number of years ago at an academic job interview dinner, a very dear, near-retirement-age professor, clearly baffled by my area of research (and after a glass or two of wine), leaned forward to ask me quietly and kindly, “Did something happen to you as a child? Is that why you study the things you do?” Although his colleagues reacted with visible shock at the apparent (and possibly actionable) inappropriateness of his question, the truth was that I wasn’t offended by it. Incredulity is a common reaction. Additionally, I had to wonder whether this gentleman’s question wasn’t also fueled, at least in part, by something from his own life history – such as WWII combat or something like it – some experience that he had worked hard to leave behind, without looking back. (Those of us who study trauma are also given to generating our own – not dissimilar – attributions for the perplexed reactions of others to our choice of field.)

It is true that to study traumatic experience and its various intrapersonal, interpersonal, and community sequelae is to bear witness to some of the most dreadful things that can happen to people, particularly when those events are at the hands of others. It can be difficult to imagine such senselessness and cruelty and to abide such suffering. It can also be a challenge to maintain the psychological distance necessary to steer clear of one’s own (vicarious) traumatization. But the trauma field involves much more than that. Trauma researchers seek to understand the factors that make some people more or less vulnerable than others, identify qualities that increase or diminish the psychological toxicity of such experiences, and investigate means of ameliorating the distress of trauma survivors. To study trauma is also to marvel, in some cases, at the stunning and surpassing resilience of the human spirit to such assaults, and even to glimpse the extraordinary (and yet wonderfully ordinary) capacity of individuals, families, and communities to find the good in the bad, to quarry meaning from meaninglessness, and then to move forward with living. In my view, to study trauma is to investigate the full spectrum of authentic, life-altering human experience. The work can, of course, be deeply unsettling and challenging, but it can also inspire and sustain.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS


SELECTED PRESENTATIONS


Butler, L. D. (2008, August). Discussant for L. G. Calhoun (Chair), Conceptions and misconceptions of post traumatic growth. Symposium conducted at the annual meeting of the American Psychological Association, Boston, MA.
I joined the faculty of the School of Social Work as an Assistant Professor in the fall of 2008. I came to the School with a background in urban planning and community development, which I believe are very much related to macro social work practice. My research spans the two disciplines.

As a teacher and researcher, I am committed to addressing the problems of persistent and concentrated poverty in urban areas. In the area of advocacy and equity planning, my role was to build relationships between those in power and the vulnerable groups they served. Many times this meant revealing, through neighborhood and regional plans, how decisions regarding distribution of resources resulted in wide disparities which disproportionately hurt vulnerable groups.

This is highlighted in the work I did as co-principal investigator on the Community Outreach Partnership Center grant (2005-2008) from the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The neighborhoods that were the focus of our activities were two of the poorest neighborhoods in Buffalo. For the housing segment of the grant, I worked with colleagues to build the capacity of local community-based organizations and assist them in their efforts to address the affordable housing needs of the neighborhoods. For our work, we received the 2008 Outstanding Program Award from the international Community Development Society.

I was also principal investigator with Robert Silverman on a study that looked at the impediments to fair housing choice in Erie County. We found, among other things, that fair housing was impeded in the inner ring and outer ring suburbs for racial and ethnic minorities, single mothers with adolescents, and the physically and mentally disabled. Among the groups we studied, seniors faced the least obstacles to fair housing choice. We have just revised a paper for publication entitled, “Public Administrators, Nonprofit Providers and Elected Officials Perceptions of Impediments to Fair Housing in the Suburbs: An Analysis of Erie County, New York,” which highlights our findings.

Finally, my work which explores the residential spatial patterns of Section 8 voucher holders and why particular segments of that population remain locked in the most distressed urban neighborhoods is truly promising because it focuses on how these various systems may be working at cross purposes, an issue that has not received much attention. My findings suggest that the dense network of social service agencies which serve the majority of voucher recipients are concentrated in cities on major public transportation lines, and that factor alone has a significant effect on where poor voucher holders live.

While federal housing policy works toward the goals of deconcentrating poverty and housing desegregation, the spatial dynamics of local social service agencies work against those goals by unintentionally influencing the housing choices of their service recipients. This finding raises important implications for social workers whose goal is to assist clients in improving their quality of life.

PUBLICATIONS


PRESENTATIONS


With the support of Dean Smyth, and a production team of faculty, staff, and students, the Living Proof podcast series was the first of its kind nationally. Sponsored by the University at Buffalo School of Social Work, the purpose of the series is to engage practitioners and researchers in lifelong learning and to promote research to practice, practice to research. The series features conversations with prominent social work professionals, interviews with cutting-edge researchers, and information on emerging trends and best practices in the field of social work.

In August, we celebrated our first anniversary. The site has been accessed in over 80 countries worldwide and across all 50 states, and we recently celebrated its 10,000th successful download.

Join us at - www.socialwork.buffalo.edu/podcast