

# Mosaics

VOLUME 5, NUMBER 2  
SPRING 2011

News from the University at Buffalo School of Social Work

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## Mosaics

Mosaics, the newsletter of the UB School of Social Work, is produced twice a year by the Office of University Communications, Division of External Affairs. May 2011.

10-SOC-003.

[www.socialwork.buffalo.edu](http://www.socialwork.buffalo.edu)

The University at Buffalo is a premier research-intensive public university, the largest and most comprehensive campus in the State University of New York. UB's more than 28,000 students pursue their academic interests through more than 375 undergraduate, graduate and professional degree programs. Founded in 1846, the University at Buffalo is a member of the Association of American Universities.

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# Our News

## Reaffirmation of MSW program

The exciting work begun in 2009 to frame the shape and direction of the innovative, trauma-informed and human rights perspective for the MSW program curriculum has been submitted in final report form as part of the Council on Social Work Education's (CSWE) "alternative reaffirmation" project. Alternative reaffirmation "is designed for programs that have well-articulated and stable curricula and would like to commit some of the resources they would normally use in the self-study process to different program improvement activities," according to a CSWE statement on its website. Members of the school's project team are **Charles Syms, Kate Kost, Howard Doueck, Laura Lewis, Tom Nochajski, Sue Green, Lisa Butler, Rob Keefe, Shirley Reiser** and doctoral students **Molly Wolf, Bincey Wilson, Whitney Mandel** and **Nancy Kusmaul** under the able leadership of **Diane E. Elze**, director of the MSW program; **Laina Bay-Cheng**, chair of the MSW curriculum committee; and **Deborah Waldrop**, associate professor and the project's principal investigator. The revamped curriculum clearly reflects the school's commitment to training social

workers who are attuned to real issues; delivering cutting-edge, empirically supported interventions; and advocating social justice for the communities, organizations, families and individuals it serves. At Mosaics press time, the school was anticipating the Council on Social Work's site visit in April 2011.

## Research that changes lives

Faculty and students continue to demonstrate a commitment to making a difference through their practice and research. **Yunju Nam**, along with four colleagues from Washington University in St. Louis (WUSTL), recently published their findings in WUSTL's Center for Social Development Research Report concerning the impact of savings accounts for children in Oklahoma. Emeritus Dean **Larry Shulman** received an \$88,145 grant from the New York State Department of Education for a school violence prevention program. Doctoral student **Rebecca Eliseo-Arras** (MSW '08) and **Barbara Rittner** are working across the border in St. Catharines, Ontario, at Princess Elizabeth School on a \$35,100 grant to reduce acting-out behavior in a subset of children. **Denise Krause** and **Sue Green** have received a two-year, \$30,000 award from the New York State Unified Court System as part of their innovative child welfare improvement project. **Filomena Critelli** last fall shepherded a group of mostly undergraduate students to Brazil through Health in Brazil. The course is part of an exchange program with the Universidade Presidente Antonio Carlos (UNIPAC). Critelli was later awarded a grant from the Faculty Internationalization Fund to enhance her "International Social Work" course using contacts that were developed at UNIPAC.

## ERRATUM

Family Voices Network of Erie County won a SAMHSA Gold Level award in Data Use in Dissemination. Joan Kernan (UB Department of Family Medicine) and Brian Pagkos submitted the award for acceptance. The award was incorrectly attributed in our last issue.



FROM DEAN  
NANCY J. SMYTH

### Distinguished speaker— biculturalism and functioning

In his Visiting Distinguished Faculty lecture on March 1, Paul Smokowski (MSW '95) began by asking how a “Polish guy from Lackawanna” becomes interested in biculturalism. Smokowski and his wife, Martica Bacallao, MSSW, who is Cuban-American, are raising bicultural children. Moreover, their innovative and creative research challenges audiences to think differently about the protective and risk factors for Latino youths in North Carolina and Arizona who are living in two worlds. Moving elegantly beyond the concepts of immigrants living with frozen cultural identities (little acculturation) or fully assimilated to the norms, language and customs of the host community, Smokowski analyzed the protective factors when Latino adolescents move seamlessly between two cultures without loss of cultural identity integrity in either community, and the protective/risk factors when their parents achieve or fail to develop these bicultural identities. Bicultural youth displayed less

aggressive behavior, anxiety and depression. Furthermore, they had less conflict with their parents and higher levels of family cohesion and school engagement. Among his more unexpected findings are that youth in the older immigrant community in Arizona were less likely to hold bicultural identities and therefore confront higher levels of alienation. Smokowski's 2009 podcast on this topic is among the most frequently downloaded in the school's catalog of 65 podcasts.

### India and sustainable development

The partnership between the School of Social Work and Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, the Department of Social Work at Amrita University in India, has led to the First Annual International Conference on Society, Technology and Sustainable Development. The conference, to be held at the Amrita Institute of Medical Sciences, Kochi, India, on June 3-5, 2011, will focus on the crucial interfaces and dynamics of sustainable development with respect to indigenous practices and technology. *See page 8 for full story.*

### UB shines at Tampa meeting

In January, social work deans Nancy Smyth, Richard Barth (University of Maryland), Lorraine Midanik (University of California-Berkeley) and James Herbert Williams (University of Denver) met at the Society for Social Work and Research conference in Tampa. The conference line-up included **Tom Nochajski** and **Mansoor Kazi**, who conducted a workshop on applying binary logistic, multinomial logistic regression models and receiver operating curves to investigate practice patterns. **Mansoor Kazi**, **Savra Frounfelker** (doctoral student) and Binahayati Rusyidi (University at Albany) presented on the evaluation of a scholarship program for undergraduate social work degree holders in New York state. **Kelly L. Patterson** and student **Katie Cotter** looked at racial implications in Section 8 with elderly populations.


**Mansoor Kazi**, Paul Buchanan (Erie County Family Court), **Savra Frounfelker** and Ronjonette Harrison (Erie County Juvenile Justice Model Court) presented on how underlying issues can contribute to improved outcomes for a juvenile delinquency model court.

(From left) James Herbert Williams, Richard Barth, Nancy Smyth and Lorraine Midanik.



Many years ago, I was having a debate with a colleague in psychology about a strange-sounding treatment method, Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR). He commented that we didn't know the mechanism of change and that concerned him. I acknowledged this truth, but pointed out that the research on EMDR's effectiveness was still indisputable. "While I love theory and basic science as much as anyone," I told him, "ultimately, as a social worker, what I am most concerned about is 'does it work?' I can accept that there are things that we don't yet understand, but if they are effective, then I will still use them, even as I work on trying to understand mechanisms." Ultimately social work is concerned about the consequences in people's lives—we subject all of our work to the "so what?" test. The "so what?" test, for me, is the place where the proverbial "rubber meets the road."

This issue of Mosaics is all about the rubber meeting the road; that is, those moments of truth where taking action or making a difference starts to happen. Sometimes the rubber hitting the road is about an immediate change that happens. Other times, it's about a partnership that transforms everyone involved so that all parties subsequently do their work in a very different way. And sometimes it's about doing the hard work so the next key step can happen. However, in all cases, it's clear that the rubber meets the road; it's clear that the work matters.

  
Nancy J. Smyth, PhD, LCSW



# VITAL CONNECTIONS

VISION OF COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH LEADS TO HUB MODEL

BY JIM BISCO

D

EAN NANCY SMYTH'S VISION IS THAT SOCIAL WORK SHOULD MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN PEOPLE'S LIVES.

Furthermore, practice should be evaluated to determine if it's meeting this goal. Smyth made her vision a reality when she created the Buffalo Center for Social Research (BCSR) and hired Catherine Dulmus (PhD '99, MSW '91) to run it. Six years later, BCSR is busily engaged in community-based projects that actively translate research into practice. Moreover, BCSR aims to close the average research-to-practice gap of 17 years as reported by the National Institutes of Health.



“This is where the rubber hits the road,” Smyth says. “Our researchers and students test evidence-based practices in real time, in the real world, to help agencies make shifts in practice that matter.”

*(continued on next page)*



## WHEN TWO VISIONS ALIGN

Smyth's vision has proved an exact match for the ambitious strategy of the Rochester-based Hillside Family of Agencies (HFA) to be a leader in translating research into effective practice solutions. With a 174-year history and a staff of more than 2,200 within six affiliate organizations (located in 40 sites in New York and in Prince George's County, Md.), HFA provides services to individuals from birth to age 26 in more than 9,000 families each year. Categories of service include child welfare, mental health, juvenile justice, education, youth development and developmental disabilities/mental health.

"The interventions that we provide to our consumers vary in terms of effectiveness," says Maria Cristalli, HFA's chief strategy and quality officer. "We thought that to make a big impact in the field, we really need a better connection to what's going on in research because of that 17-year gap between when research interventions are proven and when they're implemented in practice settings. We felt as an organization that was unacceptable from the point of view of our consumers. Our youth and families deserved better than that."

## FORGING THE PARTNERSHIP

In 2009, a five-year contract was signed to implement a research partnership with one overarching goal: The BCSR would assist the HFA in establishing and implementing a sustainable research program building on the strengths of both partners. The collaboration led to the creation of HUB, an appropriate acronym that refers to a partnership that develops, implements and tests the most effective treatments for children and families who face a wide range of behavioral and emotional challenges.

The HUB model consisted of the HFA "purchasing" from the BCSR a research team that includes statistician, grants administrator, office manager and one PhD student, with Dulmus, associate dean for research in the School of Social Work, serving as principal investigator on the contract. Early on, Hillside had sought a "bilingual" individual fluent in practice and research, and Dulmus, with her background in social work practice, was ideal for the role. "I'm able to maneuver both worlds," Dulmus explains.



"When we started talking about the mission and goals of the BCSR, they were really congruent with what we were trying to do at Hillside with translating research into effective practice solutions."

—Maria Cristalli





“That’s very progressive for an agency to do...There’s some risk-taking to examine yourself at that level, but I think it speaks well of Hillside’s ego strength and commitment to the children and youth they serve.”—Catherine Dulmus



## MORE THAN JUST DATA

Two years into the relationship, the partnership exceeds the original expectations and is yielding unintended outcomes. For example, survey data collected on HFA’s direct care staff helped to assess organizational climate and culture, as well as the workforce’s readiness to implement evidence-based practice. In time, HUB added four Social Work faculty and seven doctoral students on various projects.

“This project has been a great learning experience,” says Nicole Fava, PhD social welfare student. “I’ve had the opportunity to help develop research studies, collect data, run advanced statistical analyses, collaborate on manuscript preparation, and create and give presentations at Hillside.”

Among recent projects, HUB examined HFA’s youth court in Livingston County—recognizing the difficulty in obtaining consistent funding for this program and many other youth courts around the country. Student volunteers hold dispositional hearings for first-time, nonviolent offenders ranging in age from 7 to 16. Cristalli says the program’s “recidivism rates for kids going through the youth court/community service program was lower than what was found in the literature in terms of recidivating back into group-care settings or showing up again at probation.” The youth development workshop was found to be a significant contributor to youth staying out of trouble and building resiliency.

“Because very little is known about the effectiveness of interventions, for those that are effective we need to share that information with our peers and our families and children, and we need to stop doing those interventions that are ineffective,” Cristalli says. “That’s a primary goal. Also, we want to be able to share the model with the BCSR—what works and what doesn’t—

because we want to create a big impact, not just for the youth and families we’re serving, but to help other youth and families being served around the country.”

## THE LONG-TERM VIEW

In July, the partnership will embark on a unique post-discharge, follow-up evaluation to determine how and where the HFA has made a difference in the lives of children it’s served. “That’s very progressive for an agency to do,” affirms Dulmus. “There’s some risk-taking to examine yourself at that level, but I think it speaks well of Hillside’s ego strength and commitment to the children and youth they serve.”

While human service organizations have outcomes when children are enrolled in services and at the close of service, the sticking point is funding for programs having a long-term impact, Cristalli points out. “It’s not just an impact that kids are well and functioning, but that they can actually contribute,” she says. “What we’re hoping to do in working with UB is to determine how far out do we want to look at some of our selected programs. What do we really want to know about these kids to make sure that they’re not only surviving, but that they’re thriving? The important factor is that they find their niche in their communities and that they can work and go to school and be productive. That’s what we’re hoping to learn.”

As for the relationship with UB, complementary core competencies are the foundation for success, Cristalli states. “We are practice experts. UB faculty, staff and students are research experts, so we are bringing together these skill-sets that are very diverse in order to impact lives. I think it really is a nice mix. We’re learning from each other and that’s the most important thing.” ■



# Pursuing global research

Partnership established with India's Amrita University



Maria Cristalli, Hillside Family of Agencies, and Catherine Dulmus, UBARI, in a village classroom in South India.

The School of Social Work has extended its “where the rubber meets the road” credo across the globe, continuing its mission to find practical applications for the profession by establishing the UB/Amrita Social and Behavioral Sciences Institute (UBARI) in India. A collaborative partnership between the Buffalo Center for Social Research and Amrita’s Department of Social Work, UBARI was created to give professors and researchers from both universities an opportunity to work together on research projects and to share their academic expertise.

By Charles Anzalone



THE JOINT RESEARCH and academic association is planning a conference June 3-5 on the Amrita University campus, located in the Indian state of Kerala. What is being billed as “the first annual international conference on society, technology and sustainable development” will bring together School of Social Work scholars and researchers and their counterparts at Amrita University, as well as other scholars from around the world.

“The conference is an example of how our School of Social Work is looking to find research and community projects that help promote development in India, with individual families and in their communities,” says Catherine N. Dulmus, associate dean for research, director of the Buffalo Center for Social Research and co-director of UBARI with Sunil D. Santha, assistant professor of social work at Amrita.

The conference is the first step toward launching research projects using the expertise of social work professors from UB and Amrita. It’s an opportunity as well to address some of the severe needs of the communities surrounding the Indian university, which is located in a rural area with strong tribal traditions and a high rate of alcoholism and suicide among farmers.

The conference and ongoing exchange also allow the School of Social Work to realize its goal of using its knowledge and expertise to make a practical difference in the world.

“This semester, Natalie Bartone is the first UB student doing a field placement at our UBARI offices in India,” says Laura Lewis, MSW ’94, director of field education. “Natalie is working alongside Amrita faculty and students on a number

of community development projects, and learning the skills of social work research and practice at the same time.

“These are skills that will be essential for her as she prepares for a career of helping individuals both around the globe and here at home, too,” Lewis adds.

Other UB schools and departments have established academic partnerships with Amrita University in recent years, but the School of Social Work is the first to establish a partnership anchored in research, in particular research that has hands-on, practical applications. The School of Social Work also intends to expand faculty and student exchanges, as well as to possibly launch alumni exchanges down the road.

Indeed, the exchange program is consistent with the long-term goals and philosophy of the school’s curriculum, according to Dean Nancy J. Smyth.

“A global perspective is the only one that will lead to the development of solutions to the social and economic problems that are facing our world,” says Smyth. “UBARI brings together the expertise of East and West to develop sustainable communities in India. And what we learn in this process will help guide us in creating sustainable communities everywhere, including the U.S. We are very excited about the opportunities for learning that this will provide to the students and faculty at both institutions.”

Dulmus says the exact details of the research projects are still being deter-

mined. But she said the emphasis within the School of Social Work on trauma and mental health will fit well into the needs of this rural Indian community.

Dulmus, who has visited Amrita University twice since the partnership was established, says the research projects will focus on projects that are “sustainable,” or ones that allow the Indian communities to continue the work begun by the cooperative research teams.

And for the UB faculty who will be participating in the June conference (six to eight faculty members will be traveling to India for the event), the difference between higher education in the U.S. and India will be notable.

“The difference is that the need is high and the resources are low,” Dulmus says. “Although the research projects are still in the developmental stage, mental health as well as disaster management and ways to build infrastructure to develop community response are initial priorities.” She adds that UBARI will work to involve a variety of disciplines and technologies to move this important research forward.

“Sustainable communities’ means ones that can build capacity to be self-sufficient. That’s the overall goal in our research.”



A local tribal village in South India welcomes the UB delegation.



Faculty meet with grade school administrators and teachers at a school where the 2005 tsunami hit.

A photograph of a man with short, light-colored hair, smiling and looking towards the camera. He is wearing a dark suit jacket over a light blue collared shirt. He is standing in a field of corn plants. Some corn plants are supported by white stakes. The background is filled with rows of corn plants under a bright sky.

# Corn, beans and squash are inseparable sisters,

according to the teachings of the Six Nations, also known as the Haudenosaunee. They grow, thrive and sustain each other—depending on each other for health and support. Such symbolic connectivity is the basis of UB’s Native American Center for Wellness Research (NACWR), and it is also the core of center director David A. Patterson’s research.

The Kentucky-born Patterson, a Cherokee descendant known as Silver Wolf (Adelv unegy Waya), arrived at UB in 2006 as assistant professor in the School of Social Work, attracted to a region he considered to be the heart of the Six Nations. Seeing an opportunity to fill a gap in academic and health support for the Native American community, he proposed a center under the Buffalo Center for Social Research banner that would address his deeply felt concerns. by Jim Bisco

“**B**ECAUSE THE NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITY has such poor overall health in a lot of areas, we thought that the research center should really focus on a connected, overall health and wellness approach,” Patterson explains.

The NACWR represents indigenous peoples in three approaches aligned with the three sisters’ connectivity. The first is called “keeping the promise,” which promotes and enhances the educational experiences of Native American students so they can aspire to have positive impact in their communities. This is both Patterson’s focus and his passion as he keeps the promise he made to make a difference in Native American communities.

He knows Native American communities have some of the highest rates of cancer, alcohol and drug addiction, and suicide, and considers it vital that universities support students who are interested in working within these communities. Last year, Patterson developed the Wolf-Fire Scholarship to help support UB students because few indigenous students are enrolled at UB (and of those who are enrolled, many drop out before graduating), encouraging these scholars to focus primarily on issues core to Native American communities throughout Western New York and the Northeast. Scholarship winners, honored at a celebration in January, are student fellows within the NACWR and receive not only financial assistance for their studies but mentoring as well.

Meanwhile, Patterson has approached the challenge of retention and graduation creatively by encouraging UB’s indigenous students to study abroad. “The unfortunate thing is that if Native American students make it out of high school and into the university, 75 percent of them drop out of college. They’re considered high-risk. The idea is how to retain students once they arrive here.” Even though it seems counterintuitive, the research suggests that at-risk students come back stronger and are more focused after being exposed to different cultures and geography in study abroad programs.

Patterson is seeking funding and relationships to begin building this study abroad program, exploring opportunities in Ireland and India. He hopes to have a program in place by the summer of 2012. “Students would be able to study abroad for four weeks, earn six credit hours and come back with different perspectives and be better students,” he says.

NACWR’s second goal is to advance community health and wellness through scientific inquiry and research. To this end, Patterson has worked with Native American Community Services Inc., which serves the urban population. He is also in the beginning of a two-year fellowship with the University of Washington’s Indigenous Wellness Research Institute, at the end of which he hopes to obtain a National Institutes of Health (NIH) grant for a study on HIV, mental health, or health and wellness for the community.

Last September, the NACWR, along with Theresa McCarthy, assistant professor in UB’s Department of American Studies; and Dawn Martin-Hill, academic director of the Indigenous Studies Program at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario, staged the region’s first conference to find solutions to the health care problems of indigenous peoples. The conference, supported in part with funding from the NIH-affiliated National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities, was also the first of its kind to be held in the Haudenosaunee territory for Native Americans who reside and work in Western New York and Southern Ontario. “There was great attendance and response,” says Patterson. “We’d like to keep this an ongoing gathering.”

**N**ACWR’S THIRD GOAL is to promote peace and social justice, Patterson says. “Our plan is to do certain things on- and off-campus that really support peace and social justice in the community, like a social event on Columbus Day that re-focuses that day on indigenous rights, and health and wellness issues.”

Patterson also is involved in a Buffalo Center for Social Research partnership with Amrita University in India. His research work there focuses on the displaced tribal communities in remote bush regions and their health, wellness and knowledge. He notes that Amrita has a large hospital with a unique alcohol and drug treatment center where a family member must accompany the affected individual throughout treatment. “I’m interested in how successful that is,” he says.

According to Patterson, there is a vast amount of indigenous knowledge around the world. His work, therefore, concentrates on preserving and promoting the inherent qualities and benefits of that knowledge.

LEFT: David Patterson (back row, second from left) with Wolf-Fire Scholarship winners and NACWR board members. CENTER: Lloyd Elm, a member of the Onondaga Nation and associate professor of elementary education and reading at Buffalo State College, with his wife, Grace. RIGHT: Patterson addresses Wolf-Fire Scholarship award gathering.



# Bringing worlds

Clinical faculty bridge the gap between theory and practice

# together



Sue Green, MSW '88

As a social worker, Sue Green, MSW '88, experienced unforgettable moments helping people recover from trauma, stay sober or sort out their problems in the workplace.

Today, as clinical associate professor and a member of the school's four-member clinical faculty, Green draws on her firsthand knowledge of social work practice to enliven instruction and expand student learning with vivid, real-world examples.

By Ann Whitcher-Gentzke

"I'M TRAINED IN CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS MANAGEMENT, which is a specific framework and modality on how to interact with people who have been in a disaster or crisis or event that we would call traumatic," Green explains. "I had to learn about that in my training, practice it in the in vivo setting and then actually go out. One of the first events I responded to occurred when an individual was crushed in a paper mill and killed. I had to interact with the workers who were on the scene when this occurred—they had witnessed the actual tragedy. I also had to be available to the rest of the business folks, as well as to the family.

"So I could speak to my experience with my students: what it felt like to be in that spot, doing that kind of work. I have several of those kinds of examples, fortunately or unfortunately—somebody who is 12 hours from their last drink, or still under the influence of the drug that is bringing them into treatment. I also have examples of what it's like to write case notes in a regimented time frame when interacting with the county worker,

or [dealing with] the state policy telling you what you can and cannot do."

Green and her fellow clinical faculty members—Denise Krause, Peter Sobota and Charles Syms—were all recruited to UB precisely because of their professional standing and what this can mean for an enlarged student experience. Most continue to provide clinical services on a limited basis in community agencies, or offer supervision, training and consultation to area practitioners.

"Our clinical faculty members bring the richness of their clinical experiences

**"Students feel as though they are part of cutting-edge projects and have the opportunity to think through real-life scenarios."**

—Denise Krause,  
clinical professor

and the depth of their clinical expertise to their teaching," says Diane E. Elze, associate professor and director of the MSW program. "They are able to demonstrate for students the application of research, theory and social work values and ethics to practice situations that they, themselves, may have encountered just that week. They are particularly gifted at teaching students clinical intervention skills."

"Clinical faculty are able to provide a dynamic approach to learning, enhancing the subject matter through discussion of its application to clinical practice," adds Andrew Wilton, an MSW student now taking Krause's Interventions II course. "Through firsthand experience using many of those clinical techniques with clients, Professor Krause is able to thoroughly discuss the real-world application of the technique and give recommendations on how to make it work well within a particular type of session," Wilton says. "Her diverse clinical experience is reflected through her vast knowledge and expertise in clinical interventions at multiple levels of practice."

(continued on next page)

**“I share with students my experience learning how powerful the impact of the agency or organization that I worked for was on my direct practice.”**

**—Peter Sobota,**  
*clinical assistant professor*



**FOR HER PART, GREEN TEACHES**

several practice courses that capitalize on her skills as a clinician, focusing on theory and how it can be applied. “My job is to help students think about whom and what is in front of them, how is it that they can be of best assistance to the person or persons. It could range from a hospital setting or business setting, to a family setting or a residential setting. Each person comes to us at any point in time with a very unique story, let alone a unique opportunity in front of them. It’s our job to sift through what it is they’re saying to help them determine for themselves what they need most.”

“We do a lot of hands-on, group work and role-playing—things of that nature,” says Hope Tuck, an MSW student taking Interventions II with Green. “Professor Green has a way about herself that not only engages the students, but also shows us how to work in professional group settings, how to lead discussions, and she gives us insight on what we’ll be doing in the field ourselves some day.”

Before joining the school’s full-time faculty in 2001, Green practiced in the social welfare field, was a clinician-therapist and supervisor in residential treatment for children, worked in an outpatient drug/alcohol clinic, and served as an EAP counselor for both a not-for-profit agency and a

corporation. She also taught as an adjunct at two area colleges. With her clinical background, Green understands what students might experience and how they might feel when doing their field practice. “Obviously, for some of them, it might be their first time going to court, or making that home visit, or their first time having to meet with the school superintendent. I remember all that,” she says.

“Because each of us on the clinical faculty has had several years of practice experience—we’ve sat with the client, we’ve done the outreach, we’ve done the home visits in the community—we have experienced the reality of being ‘in the moment’ with people in time of both distress and joy.”

Initially, it wasn’t easy for Green to transition from her social work “calling” to an academic career, but she now embraces her role as a scholar and educator. She has made numerous presentations before the Council on Social Work Education and the school’s Continuing Education Program,

**“I try to help students understand how complex a problem is by offering the differing perspective—say clinician and administrator—to the same problem.”**

**—Charles Syms,**  
*clinical associate professor*

and is a key contributor to ensuring a trauma-informed and human rights perspective in the school’s curricula. In the mid-2000s, Green trained with and became a consultant with the internationally known Ricky Greenwald, PsyD, and his Child Trauma Institute in Greenfield, Mass. Though no longer with the institute, Green does extensive trauma training at the local and state level, and with Krause recently received a federal grant to train court personnel in Chautauqua and Erie counties on “Integrating Trauma Informed Solution Focused Strategies in Family Court.”

Like other clinical faculty, Green gets satisfaction from witnessing and contributing to the school’s strong ties with the Western New York community. It happens that all four clinical faculty members “are local folks, meaning we did our clinical work here. There is a familiarity and a recognition,” she says. And, too, Green stays connected with clinical social work by providing counseling a few hours a week to families and children at an area agency, and spends a few hours a week providing consultation and supervision with a local foster care agency. She also serves as faculty adviser to the DREAM program, a student-led initiative offering voluntary services to several Western New York agencies—at this writing those helping the elderly, young women in need and refugees.

As with the full array of her trauma-related teaching and research, the DREAM program speaks to the essence of her profession and the school’s mission as well, Green says. “It matters that we’re in a relationship with people and conveying the message: ‘you matter.’ This is something I try to teach my students. There’s no greater message we can give folks—especially if they’ve had any trauma history—than to always remind them that they matter to us.” ■

# To our alumni family, friends and supporters:



Within our society it's often acknowledged that education is the key to economic success. It is also true that if we want more good news on the job front, we must make more of an investment in education.

AS SOCIAL WORKERS, we like to think that our work transcends mere monetary considerations. But as professionals operating in the real world, we know that money—like any other resource—often can help us make a bigger difference.

Our faculty are a diverse community, with equally diverse areas of interest that include aging, children and youth, multiculturalism, domestic violence, gender, mental health, poverty, substance abuse and trauma. Our faculty and students, meanwhile, are activists for change, with interests that span the globe. And we all share a common passion for community—we are a university partnership, both in research and in practice.

Consider the role of our students, who train in areas that interest them. They are out in the community doing field placements, providing countless hours of volunteer service. Indeed, the education and training they receive happen both inside and outside the classroom. Whether on campus or in the community, our students build on their strengths, support growth in the school and community, help prevent problems, advocate for change, develop innovative interventions and unravel the causes of complex social problems.

However, with continuing state budget cuts to education and more on the horizon, our resources are shrinking steadily as our challenges mount commensurately. It, therefore, becomes more difficult to recruit and retain faculty and students. Moreover, field placements for our students—and the training opportunities they represent—are more limited when the agencies themselves are experiencing budget cuts.

Yet, at the center of our economic situation is a single incontrovertible truth: Higher education in its current format isn't sustainable. The gap between traditional funding sources and institutional needs is widening throughout U.S. higher education, whether public or private. Clearly, we must look to private philanthropy to help bridge this gap of providing an education to the next generation of social workers.

We also must change our approach to how we view an education at a public institution of higher learning like ours. Financial support, no matter how great or small, will help to bridge the gap we're currently experiencing. We must accept the responsibility—as social workers, as alumni and as friends.

MANTHA SALEH-WYSE  
DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

# Honor Roll of Support

JULY 1, 2009—JUNE 30, 2010

**Leadership Society**  
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# Housing made unequal

Study of suburban housing practices yields sobering conclusions

The right to fair housing in Western New York remains inconsistent, rife with barriers and impediments that include a shortage of services for those facing discrimination, an inadequate supply of suitable apartments and a lack of transportation, according to Kelly L. Patterson, assistant professor of social work and co-author of a far-reaching study of fair housing in suburban Erie County. **By Charles Anzalone**



Kelly L. Patterson

**P**UBLISHED IN THE JANUARY 2011 issue of *Housing Policy Debate*, a quarterly journal on social policy, housing and community planning issues, the study addresses the “highly fragmented system for circulating information about affordable housing.” The study and its implications for Western New York resulted in a front-page story in the March 7, 2011, issue of *The Buffalo News*.

“The consensus among focus group participants was that fair housing information was not reaching all target populations,” Patterson says. “It is disquieting to realize that 40 years after the passage of the Fair Housing Act, discrimination remains a mainstay in suburban housing markets in Erie County.”

Co-authored with Robert Mark Silverman, associate professor of urban and regional planning in the UB School of Architecture and Planning, the study was based on research conducted in 2007-08 examining trends related to fair housing, as well as focus group interviews with local public administrators, nonprofit providers and elected officials. It centered on obstacles to fair housing rights in 40 suburban municipalities surrounding the city of Buffalo.

Transportation was the issue most discussed among all focus groups interviewed. “There was general agreement that public transportation was limited in the suburbs,” the study states, “and this constituted a barrier to accessing fair housing, employment and other services.”

The study also concludes that community resistance—or what is commonly known as not-in-my-backyard (NIMBY)—is still pervasive in Erie County. “In some instances, residents heard about a proposed affordable housing development, attended a public meeting and voiced opposition to a project or rezoning issues. In other instances, landlords refused to rent to individuals based on race, familial status, disability or source of income.”

Opportunities to reform fair housing policy do exist, however. The major players of fair housing law—local administrators, nonprofit agencies and elected officials—need new tools to educate those on the front lines of fair housing laws and to better enforce these laws. “Funding for fair housing testing should be expanded in order to identify and correct violations of law before individuals become victims of discrimination,” the study authors state. “Testing should be accompanied by enhanced landlord training to curb discrimination in housing markets.”

From a human rights perspective, Patterson asks “whether it is acceptable for fair housing goals to remain unmet and for individuals to continue to be disenfranchised based on their race, familial status, disability, source of income and other characteristics for another 40 years. If it is not acceptable, then reform is essential.” ■

# Ike Alcabes and Lou Swartz

The School of Social Work lost two icons of the profession in the past six months. Louis “Lou” Swartz, PhD, of Amherst, died June 9, 2010, at the age of 84. Isaac “Ike” Alcabes, PhD, died Jan. 24, 2011, at 81. Both faculty members were seminal figures in shaping many graduates of the School of Social Work.



Swartz

Without Lou, associate professor emeritus in the Law School, the JD/MSW program probably would not have been launched in 1987, nor would it have graduated such outstanding social work lawyers. We all knew that Lou was a fierce advocate for those who are disenfranchised. Possessed of a towering intellect, Lou was an early feminist and he was passionate about law and sexuality.

It has been said that if you want to know the measure of a person, listen to those whose lives he has touched. At Lou’s memorial service, his daughter, Zoe Swartz Koston, and son-in-law, Dennis Koston (MSW ’02) shaped our image of him as a “perfect” parent. And how many of us knew that he was captain of his New York City chess team, had a nursing degree in addition to advanced degrees in law and sociology, and was a special consultant to the American Law Institute Penal Code Project at Columbia? Lou’s legacy lives on through the lives he loved and touched, the social work lawyers he trained and the scholarship fund established to support JD/MSW students.



Alcabes

Ike joined the UB faculty in 1963, coming to Buffalo from New York City with a passion for community organizing and direct, street-level social work. Annmarie “Mimi” Mumm (MSW ’88) observes what almost everyone said of Ike: that he was “a very warm and gentle soul.” Ike had “a story for every occasion, which made learning a much more interesting and organic process,” adds Kirsten Anderson (MSW ’03). Even after retirement, Ike continued to be a social worker as a volunteer at the Food Bank of Western New York, Hillel and NASW, and served on many boards of directors. He taught thousands of students that professional social work values must be lived daily and be reflected in “loyalty to those you care about,” observes Susan (Miga) Schieres (MSW ’72).

Contributions in Ike’s name are encouraged to support students who share his visionary advocacy for those who are marginalized in our society.

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## “The Dissertation: From Beginning to End”

by Peter Lyons and Howard J. Doueck,  
UB professor of social work and  
associate dean for academic affairs.

(Oxford University Press, 2010)

