

Mosaics

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News from the University at Buffalo School of Social Work

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Pass it on!

Professors and students 'pay it forward' with
their skills, knowledge and commitment

Mosaics

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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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Cover photograph of Deborah Waldrop with her students: Douglas Levere

Our News

SUNY Chancellor's Award

Erin Danna-Bailey, senior grants manager in the school's Buffalo Center for Social Research, received a 2011 SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Professional Service for her extraordinary efforts to support grant applications and management. Danna-Bailey continually demonstrates the kind of dedication that had her driving for miles to find a



Erin Danna-Bailey (left) with Catherine Dulmus

venue with electricity so she could submit Deborah Waldrop's grant application during the devastating "October Surprise" storm of 2006.

Heard speaking out

Kelly Patterson, assistant professor, gave a compelling interview this summer on WUFO 1080 AM about fair housing in the suburbs and the subtle—and not-so-subtle—discrimination that occurs. The interview was part of the Partnership for the Public Good radio series and can be accessed at <http://www.archive.org/details/ThePublicGood7511FairHousing>. **Dean Nancy Smyth** was quoted in late January in the www.CtPost.com about the good side of snow unlike other natural "disasters."

"People start helping each other out," she said. "There's a sense of a shared connection because they're really all in it together. It can do a lot to promote a sense of community." Read more at <http://tinyurl.com/good-side-of-snow>. In an interview with WBFO, **Deborah Waldrop** talked about her 12-year research partnership with Hospice Buffalo. She spoke about how the health care industry has shied away from discussion about the last stage of life, and the myriad misconceptions about palliative care. See page 4 for our feature article on this very topic.

Regional, national and international recognition

Lisa Butler, associate professor, along with her co-authors, received the Herbert Spiegel Memorial Award for Research on the Efficacy of Hypnotic Interventions at the 53rd annual scientific meeting of the American Society for Clinical Hypnosis. **Robert Keefe**, associate professor, has received the prestigious Insley/Evans Social Worker of the Year Award (2011) from the American Public Health Association. The award is named in honor of Virginia Insley and Juanita Evans, both social work pioneers in the field of public health. **Charles Syms** has been appointed to the New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services for a three-year term.

National honor society

At Buffalo's Twentieth Century Club on April 28, 2011, the School of Social Work inducted 34 foundation and advanced-year students as charter members of the Rho Kappa Chapter of Phi Alpha National Social Work Honor Society. Inductees maintained a minimum GPA of 3.95 while demonstrating the ideals and values of social work. For more details and a video of the ceremony, go to <http://www.socialwork.buffalo.edu/scholarships/rho-kappa.asp>.





Field educators' reception

The Field Education Reception was held May 5, 2011, to honor the significant contributions of our field educators who supervise students in their field placements as part of the MSW program. This year's Field Educator Awards were given to Kristina LaMendola (MSW '99), Hamburg High School; Cari Malcolm, Canandaigua VA Medical Center; and Connie Ackerman, Resource Center Counseling and Psychiatric Services in Dunkirk.

CSWE leadership

In attendance at the March 2011 meeting of the CSWE board of directors and commissions were **Diane Elze**, associate professor and director of the MSW program, as a member of the Commission on Professional Development; and **Hilary Weaver**, professor of social work, with the Commission for Diversity and Social and Economic Justice. **Barbara Rittner**, associate dean for external affairs and director of the PhD program, was also present as chair of the Leadership Forum and a member of CSWE's board of directors, as well as a member of the newly formed Commission on Research.



From left: CSWE Executive Director Julia Watkins with Barbara Rittner and Diane Elze of UB and Mildred "Mit" Joyner of West Chester University.

Harvard program

Diane Elze, MSW program director, under the sponsorship of the School of Social Work and CSWE, attended the Harvard Institutes for Higher Education for a two-week education training and mentoring program at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Ninety-eight educational leaders from 30 states (including schools of social work) and 14 countries (from Asia

and the Pacific Rim, Middle East, Europe, India, South America, Africa and Canada) engaged in learning models coherent with social work—synthesizing research and experiential learning to integrate different perspectives. Elze returned with enthusiasm for how lectures and dynamic dialogues can be enriched using rigorous case studies (political, human resources and structural). This experience also armed her with new leadership skills needed to confront higher education's challenges during tough economic times.

The dream lives on

Dean Smyth and **Sue Green**, clinical associate professor, were recognized at VIVE Inc., a refugee services organization in Buffalo, for the DREAM project, now in its sixth year. DREAM student volunteers serve in the women's shelter where they create opportunities for mutual support and transitions to Western culture. In addition, volunteers spend time with the children residing at VIVE, engaging them in arts, crafts and family activities.

Lifetime Achievement Award

Shirley Reiser, staff associate and coordinator of the Rochester Extension Program, received the 2011 Lifetime Achievement Award from the Genesee Valley Division of NASW's New York State chapter, April 5, 2011, at the organization's awards dinner in Pittsford, N.Y.

FROM DEAN NANCY J. SMYTH




One of the joys of being a social work educator and researcher is to see the impact of your work: Master's students develop into remarkable social workers; doctoral students become independent researchers and educators. It's also gratifying to see the research of faculty and graduates fill in missing puzzle pieces to help alleviate critical social problems. This is the richness of the educational process, as graduates "pay it forward" with the knowledge and skills we give them.

As we congratulate our most recent class of graduates, we know that each new alumnus will go out and pay forward what he or she has learned from instructors, classmates, field educators and clients. We offer special recognition to our Jamestown and Rochester graduates, since this is the last graduating class from those "place-based" extension programs.

This issue focuses on a sampling of the myriad ways that members of our School of Social Work community pass on what was given to them: A recent graduate who took what she learned to pay it forward on a global level; an adjunct faculty member who is teaching community social work in action; and a full-time professor who with her students is helping to develop a new model for serving older adults.

The wonderful thing about paying it forward is that it indefinitely extends our reach, like the ripples emanating from a pebble tossed into a pond. As we take a close look at the stories in this issue, one can only wonder how far our reach can extend.


Nancy J. Smyth, PhD, LCSW



“MY LEAST FAVORITE PHRASE IS,
‘THERE IS NOTHING MORE WE CAN DO FOR YOU.’”

DEBORAH WALDROP, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

DEBORAH WALDROP HAS BEEN TALKING
WITH OLDER ADULTS AND THEIR FAMILY
MEMBERS ABOUT A SUBJECT THAT MOST
OF US AVOID: THE END OF LIFE.
ACTUALLY, SHE HAS BEEN TALKING WITH
PEOPLE WHO ARE DYING AND WITH
THEIR FAMILY MEMBERS ABOUT THE
DECISIONS THEY HAVE MADE, OR ARE
MAKING, ABOUT THEIR DYING PROCESS
AND DEATH.

Despite changes and improvements in health care, she contends that we're still living in a "death-denying society" where conversations regarding end of life are not encouraged. The advance directive and health care proxy were intended to facilitate such conversations, but have not. Moreover, last year's political focus on "death panels" illustrated societal avoidance of discussions about goals for care at life's end.

For nearly two years, the associate professor in the School of Social Work has been conducting, with support from a grant from the National Institute of Nursing Research, an exploratory descriptive study on how people and their families make decisions about end-of-life care.

Waldrop is the principal investigator; co-investigators are Mary Ann Meeker, associate professor, UB School of Nursing; and Jean Kutner, professor, University of Colorado School of Medicine. Each has previous research experience in decision-making at the end of life.

Waldrop and her research team have conducted some 200 very personal interviews with older people and/or their family members, listening to the highly individual experiences of dealing with the decisions that accompany advanced cancer, including whether or not to seek hospice care. Many were in their homes, at the bedside or seated across kitchen tables. Others were conducted in hospice facilities.

(continued on next page)

AGING MATTERS

NEW CONVERSATIONS ABOUT THE END OF LIFE

STORY BY JIM BISCO

PHOTOS AT HOSPICE BUFFALO BY DOUGLAS LEVERE

'PROFOUND OPENNESS' OCCURS

The interviews are emotional. There are tears, but at the same time a profound openness occurs, according to Waldrop. "One of my favorite interviews was with a woman who said, in regard to her dying husband, 'As death approaches, the natural guardedness that people have disappears. When I look into his eyes now, I'm looking right into his soul.'"

"I've seen this dynamic expressed by hospice patients and their caregivers who are willing to tell me what it feels like in the moment in incredibly genuine and authentic ways," Waldrop says. "It's truly the last stage of growth in people's lives."

All of the interviews illustrate how cancer is life-changing in a multitude of ways and how dramatic the changes become in the last year of life, Waldrop explains. People illustrated the cumulative loss they experienced of control, independence and changes in relationships. One of the most difficult issues for people with cancer is becoming dependent on help with the activities of daily living.

Family caregivers of older people with cancer are spouses, partners, adult children, extended family members and friends. The transition to becoming a caregiver is often done as an extension of a loving relationship, but it brings with it a tremendous shift in the nature of a relationship. Because caregivers often focus centrally on the needs of the person who is ill, there is a lost sense of mutuality in a relationship, Waldrop points out.

"Hospice has been able to 'give back' that relationship," notes Waldrop. "With expertise and available guidance 24/7, caregivers are reassured that their questions will be answered and their loved ones' needs addressed so they can often begin to do the important work of having final conversations and of achieving 'closure' in an important, primary relationship."

The factors influencing the decision to use or not use hospice motivated the research goals of the project. "I wanted to learn from people as close as possible to the time they made that choice without being intrusive or invasive so that we can understand hospice decision-making in real time," Waldrop says.

Hospice care is available to people in the comfort of their homes, as well as in facilities, but a curious statistic prevails. Although the Medicare benefit covers six months of hospice care with extensions, most people use it only for very short periods of time. The median length of stay in 2009 was only 21 days, and 34.4 percent of all people who enter hospice die within seven days. What contributes to that very short utilization has been the driving question for Waldrop.

MYTHS ABOUT HOSPICE

"One of the most prevalent myths is that hospice overmedicates people who are having symptom crises and that exacerbates death," Waldrop relates. "In fact, symptoms that are physically distressing

cause people to be unable to sleep and that often leads to delirium. What people often need is the relief from pain or other distressing symptoms so they can rest but this is not well understood."

Another prevalent myth, according to Waldrop, is that hospice starves people to death when, in fact, people stop eating because they are dying. The dying process involves the body shutting down as both intake and output decline.

Many participants discussed the substantive change that accompanies the transition into hospice as an identity change. People move from living with to dying from an illness and the label "hospice patient" can bring negative connotations. One caregiver participant described the hesitancy he and his wife experienced about enrolling in hospice: "We didn't want to get in [hospice] too early because first of all we're using their resources unnecessarily and second of all... I mean let's face it, when you tell people your wife is being cared for by hospice, there's that immediate reaction, 'I'm sorry to hear that.' So you don't want to go too early for a variety of reasons."

"We are not born into this world knowing how to die or how to care for someone who is dying. The process can be daunting and frightening," Waldrop observes. "Hospice provides relief from physical symptoms of advanced illnesses and support, guidance and reassurance for families who are learning how to be caregivers with their loved one's decline."

AS DEATH APPROACHES, THE NATURAL GUARDEDNESS THAT PEOPLE HAVE DISAPPEARS."

WOMAN BEING INTERVIEWED ABOUT HER DYING HUSBAND



LAST YEAR'S POLITICAL FOCUS ON "DEATH PANELS" ILLUSTRATED
SOCIETAL AVOIDANCE OF DISCUSSIONS
ABOUT GOALS FOR CARE AT LIFE'S END.

year's health care debate, the bottom line, according to Waldrop, is the importance of meaningful communication about and respect for people's wishes at the end of life.

The Palliative Care Information Act, which became law in New York State in February 2011, was an important step. It requires health care providers to ask terminally ill patients whether they wish to continue aggressive treatment, or if they would rather receive palliative care. "That conversation is essential for families and in provider-patient-family interactions, but is often avoided," she says.

Waldrop worked with Hospice Buffalo to locate study participants. The interviews began with open-ended questions about the person's medical history, followed by questions about quality of life and activities of daily living, social support and caregiver well-being. At the end, participants were asked for advice they would offer another family. The most common answer, Waldrop says, was not to be afraid to call hospice to find out how they can help.

RESEARCH IS RELEVANT FOR ALL

"So often when one no longer seeks aggressive treatment, the door closes. My least favorite phrase is, 'There is nothing more we can do for you.' There are a multitude of possibilities to help people through these last phases of life," Waldrop says. Her research, when disseminated, will reach an interdisciplinary audience that cares for older people—physicians, nurse practitioners, social workers and nurses. "Their experiences are relevant for all of us," she says. She hopes the voices of the participants will contribute to a better understanding of the needs of the aging population and inform the conversations of health care providers.

Waldrop, before arriving at UB in 1999, spent 25 years as a social worker in health care settings helping families make difficult decisions among less-than-optimal choices at the time, and before hospice and palliative care became well established in the U.S. These experiences fed the passion she has for her research. "It's not one-size-fits-all—people have unique and individual needs and wishes," she says. "It's important to identify and support different ways that people face death."

Over the past six years, Waldrop has played a prominent role in making the study of aging a priority in the school—including a much-listened-to podcast series, teaching a course on aging and developing

unique student opportunities through the Hartford foundation (Mosaics, Summer 2006; Spring 2008). The result is more students entering careers in aging.

"[Training students] is important because the issues of aging, functional decline, advancing chronic illness and advance care planning for the end of life are universally important to growing numbers of older people and their families—all of us and the people we love," Waldrop maintains.

She notes that Western New York is an area that "ages in place." People grow older and stay here while family members—including those who might act as caregivers—often move away. Projections indicate that the dependency ratio—the number of older people who need assistance with one or more activities of daily living—will continue to get larger while the number of people who are available to be caregivers will shrink.

The projections, Waldrop notes, indicate a growing need for social workers in the interdisciplinary field of geriatrics.

"Aging touches everyone," she says. "I think there is growing recognition of the substantive shift in society—there will be more people over the age of 65 than under the age of 18 by 2050. This significant change influences health care decisions we will all make for ourselves and our loved ones. We need to get ready for that." ■

MOVING THE CLASSROOM OUT INTO THE COMMUNITY

By Lauren Newkirk Maynard

DIANE BESSEL, LMSW, is one of Buffalo's hardest-working and most highly accomplished social workers, and she's not yet 40. Her fast-rising career has made her adept at untangling Western New York's web of city, county and state social services to alleviate poverty among disadvantaged populations. And she does it with a smile—that rare blend of modesty, optimism, professionalism and intelligence that inspires students and colleagues alike.

Bessel has taught at UB in various departments for more than 10 years. Since she became an adjunct instructor in the School of Social Work in 2003, students have been lining up to try their hands at her rigorous, yet compassionate, brand of community organizing, policy and program development, grant writing and nonprofit consulting.

Bessel relishes the chance to be a field educator at UB and over the years to teach a range of courses in the MSW program, including interventions, policy, theory, and scientific methods and evaluation. She also serves as a member of the school's field advisory board. Backed by her love for research, her special topics courses—Social Action for Community Change, Community Social Work and a special topics seminar called Community Social Work in Action—are designed to blur the lines between teaching, learning and professional practice.

Specifically, Bessel believes that teaching matters because there are not enough social workers currently trained in community practice and systems work—understanding the big picture. “We have a lot of great resources, but they are disorganized and uncoordinated, causing people to get shuffled from agency to agency,” she says, adding, “In the classroom, I talk a lot about being change agents, how to see linkages and use different lenses in order to find solutions to social issues.”

IMPACT OF FORMER STUDENTS

DIANE BESSEL'S INFLUENCE in the community also can be seen in the work of her former students. A few years ago, then-MSW students Joyelle Tedeschi, MSW '08, and Brooke Densing, MSW '10, helped launch two neighborhood-based financial assistance “Hope Centers”—one on Main Street in Buffalo and



A NEW MODEL FOR AGING

One of those issues is aging, and Buffalo has one of the fastest growing populations of frail elderly in the country. With help from a cohort of MSW students enrolled in her two-semester special topics seminar, Community Social Work in Action, Bessel coordinates the Town Square for Aging (TSA) project. The TSA is an innovative university-community partnership to develop a “one-stop service center” model that could one day be used across the country to help ease the burden of caring for an aging population. Each TSA center will become a “one-stop” hub for all social services that a very old and frail person might need as he or she ages: physical therapists, medicine, estate planning, hospital transportation and more.

The first center is being built on the Weinberg Campus, a senior residential community in Amherst. Bessel’s students serve

of the Weinberg Campus and one of the original collaborators on the TSA model, said he knew “the minute I met her” that Bessel would become the project coordinator. “Diane is a person who can do anything,” he says. “I look for strong people who will drive ideas forward, and she’s very analytic and clear.” Social workers are ideal for this type of project, he adds, “because they’re trained to work with people and groups.”

FOCUS ON ECONOMIC SELF-SUFFICIENCY

In addition to her teaching and many volunteer leadership roles, Bessel, who earned a PhD in sociology from UB in 2006 (she also holds an MSSW from Case Western Reserve University), serves as director of community impact for the United Way of Buffalo and Erie County. In charge of the agency’s investments in education, income,

“IN THE CLASSROOM I TALK A LOT ABOUT BEING CHANGE AGENTS, HOW TO SEE LINKAGES AND USE DIFFERENT LENSES IN ORDER TO FIND SOLUTIONS TO SOCIAL ISSUES.” —DIANE BESSEL

as consultants, conducting program assessments and literature reviews, determining best practices and collaborating with a task force of local seniors. They say that the seminar is an incredible networking opportunity; they get to meet leaders from area social service organizations, colleges and universities, and the architects of the proposed Town Square building. “Diane’s expertise and knowledge filter all the literature into practical language,” says Abigail Unger, a part-time MSW student at UB who works as a program director at the Center for Hospice and Palliative Care in Cheektowaga, N.Y. With a passion for integrating arts and inter-generational social opportunities, especially for older adults, Unger jumped at the chance to take Bessel’s seminar. “She takes her own enthusiasm in her work and sparks it in her students,” Unger says. “Now I want to keep taking these community courses and keep growing,” she says, embracing an individualized course of study that allows her to focus on macro issues. David Dunkelman, CEO

and health and wellness, she develops strategies to improve community access to services in those areas. One of Bessel’s biggest successes at the United Way was working with its Creating Assets, Savings and Hope (CASH) Coalition, a group of more than 60 local agencies that provide financial workshops and other programming to help low-income and other disadvantaged citizens gain economic independence. In her time with CASH Buffalo, she helped secure \$3.2 million in local, state and federal funding to reach needy constituents.

Whether in the classroom or on the job, Bessel leaves an impressive example to follow, says Katie Lyons, MSW ’10, who was an advanced student in a field placement with Bessel at the United Way before Bessel hired her to coordinate the CASH Coalition. “She always finds a way to get things done, whether that’s raising money or working on a project or signing on a new partner—she gives everything to her work.” ■

one on the city’s predominantly low-income East Side. Tedeschi now coordinates homeless outreach services and Housing First programs, including a community café she founded, at the Lt. Col. Matt Urban Hope Center. Densing develops and leads financial-literacy workshops and other programming at the Main Street center.

As part of the Community Social Work course, Bessel guided Tedeschi through a needs assessment of what would become the center’s soup kitchen—now a sit-down “urban diner.” Bessel taught Tedeschi how to effectively engage with the community and prepared her for the complicated

logistics and paperwork involved. Growing up in the Polish section of Buffalo’s East Side, Tedeschi had wanted to open a soup kitchen and community center in her neighborhood since she was a young child. “I’m doing what I always dreamed of doing,” she says.



PROGRAMS HAVE AN IMPACT FAR AND WIDE

UB'S PROGRAMS, INCLUDING THOSE IN ROCHESTER AND JAMESTOWN, HAVE HAD A CONSIDERABLE IMPACT ON REMOTE AREAS—AREAS SERVED BY SOCIAL WORK GRADUATES. FOUR GRADUATES CONTINUE TO PAY IT FORWARD ACROSS SYSTEMS OF CARE BY SERVING LOCAL AND GLOBAL COMMUNITIES.

LOCAL TRAINING GOES GLOBAL

Going far beyond where she began, **HANNAH EAST, MSW '10**, who did her fieldwork in Rochester, is now doing valuable work in Cambodia. Midway through a two-year U.S. Peace Corps commitment, East works at Bright Hope Institute, an associate's and bachelor's degree-granting institution that serves rural students with a focus on female empowerment. She integrates youth development activities into the institute's action plan and serves as its temporary NGO coordinator.

Wanting to earn her MSW, East chose the advanced standing program, taking courses in both Buffalo and Rochester. She was intrigued by the trauma-informed human rights perspective and an individualized curriculum she couldn't find in other social work programs. "UB faculty really challenged me to think about post-vicarious traumatization and how I would deal with this in the field. And UB empowered me to confidently assume motivation and optimism toward pursuing a career as a macro social work practitioner," she says.

In addition to her responsibility with Bright Hope Institute, East and two other Peace Corps volunteers are planning a provincial-wide domestic violence training with the Department of Women's Affairs. It will be the first Peace Corps volunteer-initiated domestic violence training at a provincial level in Cambodia with almost 130 participants from health centers, governmental departments and the police. East also serves as a member of the Peace Corps' Cambodian program advisory committee, as well as a resource volunteer for cross-cultural training.



APPROACHING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE DIFFERENTLY

When **JEFFREY BROWN, MSW '11**, began his career as a program manager in a residence for chronically homeless adults, he realized he was not sufficiently equipped to deal with those living with mental illness, or who were chemically addicted. Wanting to stay in the field, he decided the best way to obtain the education and training he needed was to enroll in the extension program in Jamestown.

Brown is now a domestic violence counselor at Catholic Charities of Cattaraugus County and was recently hired as an assistant director of the Higher Education Opportunity Program at St. Bonaventure University. As facilitator for the men's domestic violence group at Catholic Charities, he approaches his clients differently, integrating components of solution-focused therapy and cognitive-behavioral therapy, while

looking at the men from a trauma perspective rather than seeing them only from a punitive view. "My MSW education has given me this ability to step back and think about how the experiences these men have faced shaped them into who they have become, instead of approaching them simply as criminals," Brown says.

CREATING MENTALLY HEALTHY ENVIRONMENTS

MARY SCHWEITZ, MSW '08, drove more than 50 miles from her home in Seneca Falls, N.Y., to attend classes at the Rochester extension program. Before graduating with her MSW, Schweitz was a program manager with Lakeview Mental Health Services serving Seneca County.

With her MSW, Schweitz has been able to advance within the organization, first as interim program director for all residential programs in Tompkins County, and currently as a program manager for a drop-in program for Ontario and Yates counties. She oversees a staff of five who provide rehabilitative services to adults having difficulties because of severe mental illness, helping them return to work, school and community activities. In addition, she has begun staff training on DBT (Dialectical Behavior Therapy) principles and how these principles can be used in residential programs.

Schweitz says she pursued an MSW because she knew the versatile degree would best serve at-risk populations, adding, "Many of the instructors were also working in the field and this allowed them to use their current clinical experiences as a tool to guide us and help us better understand theory and application of therapeutic modalities."

HELPING HIGH-RISK STUDENTS

A program administrator at East High School in Rochester, **DENISE QUAMINA, MSW '11**, chose the Rochester extension program to enhance her current position overseeing a small learning community, working with high school students, supervising teaching staff and collaborating with outside partners and agencies. As assistant principal for student management, Quamina realized students needed more than the usual detentions and suspensions for inappropriate behavior. She had a particular concern for a core of students with high recidivism rates. "Too many of our students were misunderstood; too often we assigned consequences without trying to understand what was really going on," she says. "I needed to change that."

Once Quamina enrolled in the program and began applying her MSW training, she noticed a marked difference in how she interacted with students and how they conducted themselves in the classroom. "My internships created other opportunities for more in-depth learning and understanding, and the ability to apply my classroom education to real-life situations under a trained professional," Quamina adds. Students are now more willing to talk to her openly; she, on the other hand, is better able to negotiate with their teachers. Quamina can identify other factors that may be at play and so facilitate early intervention, referring students to different agencies that may be better able to assist them before things get out of control. ■



BY JULIE WESOLOWSKI



2010-2011 STUDENT AWARDS

ANDREW J. LAUGHLIN AWARD

Alexis Luttrell

ARCHIE W. SWANSON HONORARY AWARD

John Hider

BERTHA S. LAURY AWARD

Terence Askew

DENA P. GOLD MEMORIAL AWARD

Brittany Brooks

DOROTHY LYNN HONORARY AWARD

Jilian Accurso

DREAM AWARD

Brittany Brooks

Carolyn Drury

Veronica Ivey

Whitney Lashomb

Amanda Nobrega

HASELTINE T. CLEMENTS MEMORIAL AWARD

Paul Tucker

JULIAN SODJA MEMORIAL FUND

Rosella McCabe

KRISTOPHER L. BRASELTON MEMORIAL AWARD

Molly Corsi

LOUISA CIELEN AWARD

Audrey Brady

NASW AWARD

Alecia Morrow—Western New York Division

Paul Tucker—Genesee Valley Division

NILES CARPENTER AWARD

McKenzie Mattison





OUTSTANDING STUDENT AWARD

Ahlea Howard—Buffalo
Stephanie Bielecki—Jamestown
Lynn Ringholz—Rochester

ROSE WEINSTEIN SCHOLAR AWARD

Amy Alonzo

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK ALUMNI ASSOCIATION AWARD

Leah Mastorilli

TERESE EUSANIO MEMORIAL AWARD

Brienna Hill





From left: Elaine Maccio, Leah Olson-McBride and Jandel Crutchfield.

PAYING IT FORWARD

Doctoral program graduates Elaine Maccio (PhD '04, MSW '98), now assistant professor of social work at Louisiana State University, and Shawn Lawrence (PhD '03, MSW '98), associate professor of social work at the University of Central Florida, were paying it forward by mentoring their own doctoral students at the 2010 CSWE APM. Maccio was with her students, Leah Olson-McBride, PhD, and Jandel Crutchfield; while Shawn Lawrence was with Rebekah Hazlett-Knudsen. Also on hand was Barbara Rittner, associate dean for external affairs of the UB School of Social Work and director of its PhD program.



From left: Shawn Lawrence, Barbara Rittner and Rebekah Hazlett-Knudsen.

People People

Alumni Association News

My fellow alumni,



Greetings! Membership in the UB Alumni Association certainly brings a sense of togetherness based on a common bond. The University at Buffalo is New York's premier public center for graduate and professional education. Moreover, our School of Social Work plays an integral role in the university's

mission of outreach to the community, the state and the nation, as well as in maintaining our international connections. Indeed, our common bond is our great university—we are UB alumni and we emphatically belong to this distinctive “club.”

Being a UB alumnus brings different benefits, some tangible and some intangible. If you belong to the UB Alumni Association, you are contributing to its strength. This is because your dues go to support our abundance of programs, services and events across the country and abroad. As more graduates join the UB Alumni Association, the breadth and scope of what can be offered to you and fellow “club” members can only be enhanced.

It is important for alumni to recognize that UB's reputation directly corresponds to the value perceived in our degrees. UB is a leading center for learning, research and discovery—our school and alumni are an important part of who we are as a university. I therefore encourage you to become a member of the UB Alumni Association if you are not one already, or to renew your membership if it has lapsed or will soon expire. Please visit www.socialwork.buffalo.edu/alumni or www.alumni.buffalo.edu/join to help further this vital mission of outreach and growth.

Rita M. Andolina,
Chair, School of Social Work Alumni Committee
GovGirl55@aol.com

Attention alums,



Congratulations to the Class of 2011! We welcome you in your new role as alumni of the School of Social Work. The determination, hard work and desire that carried you through your graduate education have prepared you well for the rewarding career

that awaits you. Whether you were drawn to the School of Social Work based on personal experiences, a sense of social responsibility, a thirst for knowledge, a passion for research or a desire to influence the next generation of social workers, you made a commitment that will last a lifetime.

And ... you know that your commitment to the profession was not a solitary venture. You have been afforded the privilege of the role of alumnus of the School of Social Work because of the support, mentoring, guidance and sacrifice of others. That well-timed encouragement, the unnoticed helpful deeds and the tangible acts of kindness that lightened the load have added up. Those who put their needs aside so that you could do well have not kept a tally. Yet because of each small gesture, your goal became more reachable.

Now you are a social worker with an opportunity to pay it forward—to pass on the gifts afforded to you. In your career, endless opportunities will emerge to impart wisdom, to listen without judgment, to act even when exhausted and to commit energy to helping others. As you are making your mark, passing on your gifts and finding excitement in your work, please stay in touch.

Denise Krause,
Clinical Professor and Associate Dean for
Community Engagement and Alumni Relations
dkrause@buffalo.edu

Classnotes

Veronica Ivey (MSW '11)

Veronica is working as multi-systemic therapist at Catholic Charities and recently contacted Dean Smyth to tell her that she is "so thankful for the wealth and quality of education I received in the UB MSW program."

Jenna Moenius (MSW '10)

Jenna is licensed in Maryland and working as a school-based therapist as part of the Expanded School Mental Health (ESMH) program in Baltimore. The ESMH program provides in-school mental health services to Baltimore elementary, middle and high school students in high-need areas. Jenna is the ESMH clinician at Violetville Elementary/Middle School (PK-8).

Elaine Rinfrette (PhD '10)

Elaine has been hired as an assistant professor at the University of Edinboro in Pennsylvania. That makes two social work faculty members at Edinboro who have doctorates from the School of Social Work. See *Roselle Scaggs* classnote.

Melissa Affronti (PhD '09)

Melissa is the proud mother of Jake Affronti-Germain, born April 25, 2011. She continues to be actively involved in research and evaluation on child welfare in Coordinated Care Services Inc. in Rochester, N.Y.

Jo Taylor Ramsey (MSW '08)

Jo Taylor is a licensed family mental health counselor with Child and Family Services in Buffalo and Erie County.

Roselle Scaggs (PhD '04, MSW '94)

Roselle recently stopped by the school to visit and shared that she is director of the MSW program at the University of Edinboro. She was on the search committee that hired Elaine Rinfrette (PhD '10).

Jamicia Davis (MSW '03)

Jamicia is student assistance counselor for the Newport News (Va.) Public Schools, working in Huntington Middle School, where she is part of the school's division-wide crisis team. She is also the lead for Youth Development and Career Pathways.



RALPH DISANTO (MSW '51)

Ralph DiSanto (MSW '51) maintains an active life helping others, caring for his wife, Harriet (also a UB graduate, BA '47), at the couple's home in Hollywood,

Fla., and serving as a volunteer for SHINE (Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders), part of the Florida Department of Elder Affairs. In this role, he receives one or two phone calls a week, mainly from veterans, who seek out his expertise on Medicare and veterans' benefits. This fall, he'll lecture on this topic at the Farquhar College of Arts and Sciences Lifelong Learning Institute at Nova Southeastern University, where he was honored with the 2009 President's Volunteer Service Award and received a personal letter from President Barack Obama. Since retiring as a financial development director at nonprofit institutions, DiSanto has worked extensively as a community volunteer. A four-time recipient of the Bronze Star Medal, he served in Normandy and his unit received the Presidential Unit Citation from President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1944. After the war, DiSanto continued his military service in the U.S. Army Reserve, holding the rank of lieutenant colonel.

ELAINE MEYERSON (MSW '76)

Elaine Meyerson (MSW '76), executive director of Shelter Our Sisters, was recently honored for her 25 years of leadership and service in building the Bergen County (N.J.) domestic violence agency since its fledgling stages. During her tenure, she has expanded transitional housing to six houses across the county and has been creative about ways to integrate women into the community through housing. She also was instrumental in growing the children's programming to include Project CHILD (Confidence, Hope, Independence, Love and Direction) on a state grant.



Elaine Meyerson, left, receiving award from Shelter Our Sisters Board of Trustees President Anita L. Allen.

Prior to working with the school, she was a CPS worker, "which also puts me more as a resource in the building."

Shawn Lawrence (PhD '03, MSW '98)

Shawn was promoted to associate professor at the University of Central Florida, where she teaches in both the graduate and undergraduate programs. She is also a community outreach therapist at Park Place Behavioral Health Care in Kissimmee, Fla.

Denise Perry Akin, LCSW-R (MSW '99)

Denise has been providing outpatient counseling services for 15 years, and has been in private practice in Williamsville, N.Y., for the past four years. She was accepted into the Counselor Education PhD program in UB's Graduate School of Education beginning this fall.

Faith Hoffman-McQueen (MSW '93)

Faith reports that she and Tom McQueen were married in September 2010 in Samburu (a village they adopted and support) in Kenya. It was a traditional tribal wedding ceremony involving the chief and all the villagers, who

painted and dressed the couple for the ceremony. Tom and Faith donated a goat, which is a ceremonial tradition. Tom is retired from the U.S. Air Force and Faith retired from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Faith continues to teach for the School of Social Work and serves as a volunteer LCSW for the International Institute of Buffalo.

Patricia Cramer Denhoff (MSW '87)

Patricia reports that she continues to fully enjoy the field of social work. She is a full-time school social worker in the Webster Central School District near Rochester, N.Y., and has a private practice specializing in adolescent and family therapy in nearby Penfield, N.Y.

Shelley Fox (MSW '76)

Shelley reports that after many years of doing medical social work in the Chicago area, she has moved into hospital administration, marketing and strategic planning. She contracts with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois in marketing communications, primarily writing and editing business newsletters and communications.

To our alumni family, friends and supporters:



The Class of 2011 is remarkable for its size, interests and goals. Our graduates will take the gifts of their mentors into the community as professional practitioners and researchers—today's mentees will become tomorrow's mentors.

IN FACT, many graduates pay forward these gifts in the form of annual donations to support the next generations of social workers. They know that some students—including themselves—would never have made it through school without the support of graduates paying it forward as field educators, adjunct faculty, mentors and donors. Some of the 16 awards we presented this year at commencement to distinguished students were made possible by gifts from friends and families, who recognized the importance of education and mentoring.

The School of Social Work is committed to developing professionals who repay the generous gifts they received by strengthening the global community and by giving back to the school's scholarship funds. It is one of the best ways to repay the gift of your education. Now I invite you—our newest alumni—to pay it forward. Gifting the School of Social Work fund is one of the most important ways to recognize the mentors you had in our program. As always, I remain dedicated to you, the UB School of Social Work and the University at Buffalo.

MANTHA SALEH-WYSE
DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

MENTORING PROGRAM ESTABLISHED

Mentoring matters: Ask many social workers who most helped them, and they will talk about the mentoring they got from a field supervisor, a faculty member or an employer. Each professional has a mentor who made it possible to find ways around barriers. And good mentors resonate with fledgling practitioners by sharing the joy in being a social worker. These mentors share their own experiences and often focus reassuringly as much on their failures as on their successes. Mentors are the guides who foster creative solutions, who effectively garner resources and smooth the way, and who make complex and seemingly insoluble situations manageable.

This fall, the school embarks on an exciting new way for our graduates to “pay it forward” through a program that links alumni with current students. Mentors and students will be matched according to interest. Jenna Witkowski (MSW '09) and Jim Mroczek (MSW '68) were among the first to contact the school to become mentors. Meanwhile, students are responding enthusiastically on our Facebook page to show their interest and support.

Patricia Logan-Greene, PhD

Patricia Logan-Greene, PhD, has joined the School of Social Work from Seattle and is the newest member of our tenure-track faculty.



After graduating from Wesleyan University in Connecticut with an undergraduate degree in biology, she was admitted to the University of Tennessee for her MSW degree and focused her studies in clinical social work. She was the recipient of the prestigious Chancellor's Award for Extraordinary Professional Promise in 2006.

Following graduation, she moved to Seattle, where she was admitted to the

University of Washington social welfare doctoral program. In her first year, she was awarded the Naomi Gottlieb Fellowship Award. She also was the recipient of a NIMH Mental Illness Prevention Fellowship and the Multidisciplinary Predoctoral

Clinical Research Fellowship from the Institute of Translational Health Sciences.

Logan-Greene is anxious to begin her independent research in Western New York. Her research focus on violence and victimization across the lifespan, especially against children and adolescents, is very consistent with the trauma-informed curriculum in the school's master's program. Her research and publications explore the cumulative effects of adversity and trauma on psychosocial functioning, the relationship between victimization and perpetration of violence in adolescence and adulthood, and lifetime effects of victimization. Her newest research endeavors to improve judicial responses to violence and delinquency, particularly for highly traumatized youth, and measures the effects of childhood adversity and victimization on physical health in adults. She uses primarily quantitative analysis, including structural equation modeling, mixture modeling and person-oriented methods.

71 new online workshops offered

The School of Social Work is launching 71 new online workshops in 30 broad topic areas to enable alumni and practitioners to expand their knowledge and skills across a range of practice arenas without having to travel great distances or rearrange schedules or, even more frustratingly, to miss great training because of commitment conflicts.

The online programs promise stimulating and professionally relevant intellectual journeys that professionals can pace to meet their needs over a period of time.

Moving to an online format is consistent with the school's ongoing commitment to reach social workers and other human service professionals through cyberspace. The Office of Continuing Education's course catalog includes courses from top experts, such as motivational interview

ing developer Stephen Rollnick, PhD; trauma expert Bessel van der Kolk, MD; and Bill O'Hanlon, LMFT, solution-focused therapist, along with current online workshops in the Trauma Counseling Certificate Program. The fall schedule will include an eight-week Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction Program, a model developed by Jon Kabat-Zinn, PhD. A new 29-hour Clinical Supervision in Motivational Interviewing Certificate Program has been developed to assist

practitioners in enhancing their MI skills. It will be held September through April.

There also are programs in ADHD, addictions, aging, models of treatment, ethics, risk management, spirituality and, of course, trauma and trauma-informed care, among many others. The previously recorded online workshops allow professionals to watch at home or office. New online workshops will be added on a regular basis.



- Visit our online catalog at www.socialwork.buffalo.edu/conted/online.asp.
- Visit www.socialwork.buffalo.edu/conted for more information or contact the Office of Continuing Education at sw-ce@buffalo.edu.
- You can also find information on Facebook at www.facebook.com/UBSWContEd.

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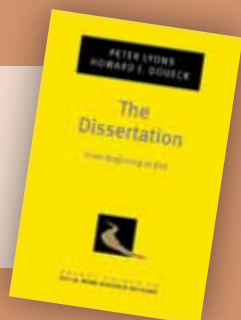
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by Peter Lyons and Howard J. Doueck,
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