School’s 75th Anniversary Celebration Opens with Panel Discussion: “Social Workers and the Great Depression: Past is Present”

The Community Arts Auditorium saw a large crowd as the School of Social Work’s 75th Anniversary celebration began with a panel discussion on September 24 featuring three WSU faculty members, Faith Hopp, MSW, PhD, Ruth Ray, DA, Wayne State University, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences; and Tom Jankowski, PhD, Institute of Gerontology. Also participating were Hannan Foundation representatives Cheryl Bukoff, MSW, and Rachel Hewitt, MSW.

The establishment of the Wayne State University School of Social Work 75 years ago was a critical time for both the profession and City of Detroit. During this time, social work was a new profession, focused on solving real-world problems using a systematic and comprehensive approach. For early social workers, often referred to then as “visitors”, the Great Depression was a cataclysmic event that presented challenging, perplexing, and often overwhelming situations. Money was scarce, both for those providing assistance and for those in need, and the relationship between visitors and those they served were forged within this environment of meager resources. These early social workers laid the groundwork for the development of social work practice.

Continued on page 2
Welcome to the Fall 2009 Edition of Visions. Once each year we gratefully take the time and space in your alumni newsletter to thank the previous year’s donors. You will find the full list within this issue. We are always very appreciative of the financial support the school receives each year, but in today’s difficult economic climate it is even more welcome… dare I say necessary… more so as state support dwindles as well.

Continuing in the gratitude mode…the school has several other reasons to be thankful in this season. Our Center for Social Work Practice and Policy Research continues to thrive with many activities and staff improvements, including a key new appointment and a report on an event held a few weeks ago. We have also begun our year-long celebration of the school’s 75th Anniversary with some stellar events, including a September panel discussion led by faculty member Faith Hopp and two others in October, the Harris Lecture and the Scholarship Reception. All three are covered in this issue.

As another part of our Anniversary Celebration, we are endeavoring to be in touch with as many alumni as possible to learn about their current activities. Two such updates are included here: a profile of alumnus Galen Duncan and a story about an award won by alumna Kimberly Merrier. I hope you, too, will let us know what you are up to.

And still another anniversary-related program will hold a lasting major benefit for your school and its current and future students. As our part of the university’s “Arm Higher for Students” scholarship fund-raising goal, the school’s Board of Visitors has set a goal of $200,000 in donations or pledges during the anniversary year. In these pages you will find an article announcing this campaign and giving you several suggestions of ways to contribute. I can’t think of a more fitting way to pay tribute to the school’s illustrious past and to assure a strong and healthy future.

So, in this season of Thanksgiving, I find much to be grateful for, and, on behalf of the faculty and staff, I send along best wishes for a wonderful holiday season and a happy new year.

Dean Phyllis Vroom

School Alumnus Galen Duncan Directs Player Development for NFL’s Detroit Lions

In 1997, Galen R. Duncan earned his MSW from Wayne State University with a focus in Substance Abuse and Mental Health Counseling. Today he is the Senior Director of Player Development for the Detroit Lions professional football team, a post he has held for 3 years. He also holds a Ph.D. from Wittenberg University, where his course of study was Health Psychology and his focus has been on athletic counseling. He wrote his dissertation on “Effects of Coaching Styles on the Motivation of College Athletes”.

Before joining the Lions’ staff, Duncan worked at WSU in the Counseling and Psychological Services Department, where he counseled a broad range of students including athletes, fraternity members, engineering students and minority students. He is also an adjunct professor in the school, supervising students during their field education practicums. Duncan is also a captain in the 322 Medical Company Neuropsychological Unit of the U.S. Army Reserves.

Between 2000 and 2006, Galen Duncan also served as part-time consultant with the National Football League Program for Substances of Abuse. In addition, he was a consultant for the National Basketball Association and the NBA Players Association, training future and current professional athletes in education and life skills. In 1994, Duncan obtained his bachelor’s degree from Lake Superior State, where he also played four years of varsity basketball.

EDITOR'S NOTE: As this issue was going to press, Duncan informed the Visions staff that, in his Army Reserve role, he will be deployed to Afghanistan for military duty on December 12.

As part of the school’s 75th Anniversary celebration, Visions plans a year-long feature of “Alumni Profiles” like this one… so we hope you will join the party. Please help us keep our alumni records current and update us on your career. Complete as much of the following information as you wish (or add additional page) and return to Loren Hoffman, Room 211, WSU School of Social Work, 4756 Cass Avenue, Detroit, MI 48202

We Want to Profile You, Too

Name ____________________________  City ________________________

Address __________________________  State ______ Zip ______

WSU Degree(s) and Year(s) ____________

Career Milestones and News ____________

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On Thursday October 29th, the School of Social Work honored the students who are receiving scholarships and the donors whose thoughtfulness makes that financial support possible. In greeting the school’s guests, Dean Phyllis Vroom said, “Your presence honors two key constituencies of our school: the generous donors who provide much needed financial help for many of our students and the students who are the beneficiaries of that support and who have earned it through their achievements and hard work. All of those who are being honored today deserve our recognition and gratitude.” Following the format developed over the past several years, the program was highlighted by three speakers. BOW member and Governor Emerita Jacqueline E. Washington, spoke on behalf of the scholarship donors. Two student speakers represented those who received scholarships: Shardae Baskin, who represented BSW recipients and Corey Faulkner, who spoke for MSW scholars. Scholarship recipients historically strive to make the most of their educational opportunities and to use what they learn to better the lives of others in the community as they move from academia into the profession. These contributions are key reasons why the programs of the School of Social Work continue to be highly ranked.

2008 School of Social Work Donor Honor Roll

The administration, faculty, staff and students of the Wayne State University School of Social Work gratefully acknowledge the generous contributions of the following individuals and organizations during the 2008 calendar year. If you wish to make a contribution, or have a comment on this honor roll, please contact our development director, Marguerite Carlton, at (313) 577-8807 or a28206@wayne.edu

Gifts of $5,000 or greater

The Gerontological Society of America
Mr. and Mrs. William E. Fisk

Gifts of $50,000 or greater

Ms. Ethel Hyman

Gifts of $10,000 to $44,999

Ms. Charlene L. McGunn

Gifts of $5,000 to $14,999

New York Academy of Medicine

Gifts of $1,000 to $4,999

Ms. Sharon McMillan and Ms. Patsy Cowart

Gifts of $500 to $999

Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Friedman

Continued on page 10
Alumna Kimberly Mercier honored by Association of Oncology Social Work

Oncology social worker Kimberly Mercier, LMSW, DSW-C, who works at the St. John Health System’s Webber Cancer Center in Warren, has received the 2009 Oncology Social Worker of the Year Award, from the Association of Oncology Social Work (AOSW). The criteria for this award are: professionalism, integrity, and commitment to oncology social work; well-developed clinical expertise in the delivery of patient care services; knowledge of community resources and skills in advocating for the fulfillment of patient and family needs; collaboration skills, which facilitate the development and implementation of programs, services, or policies impacting patient care; the ability to communicate psychosocial issues and interventions to others through educational presentations and/or supervisory activities; active membership and commitment to the goals and activities of the organization and a BSW or MSW degree.

Reacting to the honor bestowed on her, Mercier says, "I have been a member of AOSW since I was a student at Wayne State University. It is a wonderful organization that has provided me professional support and guidance over the past 20 years. Since I am the only social worker in my clinic setting, AOSW is a very important professional resource for me. It is through the organization’s many conferences that I have been fortunate to form some wonderful friendships as well. When I was chosen as the Oncology Social Worker of the Year by my peers, I was overwhelmed."

Mercier works with adult cancer patients and their families from the time of diagnosis, throughout treatment, and even after treatments are completed. "The best part of my job," she says, "is the relationship I develop with a patient from the start." The breadth of her involvement includes personal or family counseling, assisting with financial and insurance matters, providing helpful literature on relevant topics, and connecting patients to national or community resources such as Golda’s Club, an outpatient support program. The needs of cancer patients often extend beyond the medical: these individuals may have financial difficulties, social and emotional issues, as well as logistical challenges associated with everyday living. "Helping them make the transition to end of life is humbling and gratifying. I also continue to counsel families, if requested, after their loved one has died," she says. Readers with sharp memories (are there any other kind?) may remember that Mercier was one of the people involved with Ana Vasquez, the MSW graduate and cancer patient whose story we featured a couple of issues ago. In a recent newsletter article, Mercier’s colleagues wrote, “It’s no surprise to us that Kimberly was singled out for the AOSW honor. We’re proud to have her as a member of the St. John Health System team.”

Assistant Professor Stella M. Resko joins faculty in joint appointment with Merrill-Palmer Skillman Institute

S tella M. Resko joined the faculty of Wayne State University earlier this year as an assistant professor with the Merrill-Palmer Skillman Institute and the School of Social Work. She received her M.S.W. and Ph.D. in Social Work from the Ohio State University. Resko completed a two-year post-doctoral fellowship at the University of Michigan Addiction Research Center (UMARC) that was funded by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA).

Resko previously worked at a community-based drug and alcohol treatment program on several national multi-site studies that were part of the NIDA Clinical Trials Network. Her research interests and experience are in substance abuse treatment and prevention, youth violence, adolescent dating violence and domestic violence, sexual risk behaviors, and community based prevention and intervention research. She is particularly interested in adolescents and adult women in urban, low-income communities. Her expertise is in community-based intervention and prevention research, as well as advanced quantitative methods. She also is proficient in these substantive areas: substance abuse prevention and treatment; youth violence and adolescent dating violence; intimate partner violence; sexual risk-taking behaviors and motivational interviewing and brief interventions.

In the next edition of Visions, look for an in-depth profile of Resko.

DATES for School of Social Work 75th anniversary events in 2010

Fourth Annual Dean’s Diversity Lecture: “The Legacy of Redl and Wineman—Best Practices in Child Welfare, Then and Now” Dr. Larry Brendeford, Thursday, March 11, 2010, 2:00 pm–4:00 pm, Community Arts Auditorium (2 social work CE hours). Registration $10; contact the School of Social Work 313-577-4464 or aa2851@wayne.edu

School of Social Work Alumni Association Annual Luncheon recognizing the Association’s Alumna/Alumnum of the Year and Citizen of the Year Friday, March 26, 2010, Alumni House, 11:30 am. Registration $25; contact the School of Social Work 313-577-4464 or aa2851@wayne.edu

“Neuroscience and Social Work Practice” Dr. Rosemary Farmer, Thursday, April 15, 2010, 9:00am–3:30pm, on campus at Community Arts Auditorium (3 social work CE hours) Registration $75; contact 313-577-4463

SSW Alumni Association’s Theater Party. A performance of "Two Point Oh" by Jeffrey Jackson at the Detroit Repertory Theater, Sunday, April 25, 2010, Ticket $25, includes champagne and hors d’oeuvres reception at 1:00pm, curtain at 2:00pm. For tickets contact 386-838-0121 or 313-577-4464 or aa2851@wayne.edu

School of Social Work 75th Anniversary Celebration, Thursday, June 10, 2010, 6:00 pm–9:00 pm, Detroit Golf Club, Tickets $75; for reservations contact 313-577-0300

For more information about all events contact Loren Hoffman 313-577-4464 or email aa2851@wayne.edu
Dr. Joanne Smith-Darden joins Center Staff

The Center for Social Work Practice and Policy Research recently announced that Joanne Smith-Darden has joined research team. Dr. Smith-Darden will help the Center fulfill its mission to expand the research portfolio of the School of Social Work and to serve the greater Detroit area through a comprehensive approach to research, consultation, and information dissemination. When asked what drew her to the Center, she responded, “My interest in continuing research with urban populations makes WSU and the Center a natural fit.”

Smith-Darden has over fifteen years of research experience, driven by twenty-five years of experience working with underserved children and youth in a variety of capacities. Her primary area of interest is the interface between childhood maltreatment, attachment, and cognitive processing. This work investigates the complex interplay of neurology, attachment, relational trauma, cognitive processing, and development through a research agenda that challenges the current state of service delivery with maltreated children and youth.

Smith-Darden has served as an evaluator and consultant with the Michigan Department of Juvenile Justice for the past twelve years and has also served as Adjunct Faculty at the University of Michigan in both the psychology and social work departments. Along with courses in psychology, Dr. Smith-Darden taught classes in the “Detroit Initiative Series,” which helps students learn about diversity through academic service learning in an urban environment. Classes offer students direct experiences working in a multicultural community, along with classroom discussions that explore the larger issues of social justice and social policy.

Rachel A. Lathrop promoted to Center’s Manager of Research Support

The Center for Social Work Practice and Policy Research recently announced the promotion of Rachel A. Lathrop to the position of Manager of Research Support. Drawing from an early interest in research, Lathrop enrolled in the Community Practice and Social Action masters degree track of the school. During her time in the program she established two community practice internships during which she gained experience in staff development, needs assessment, survey research, program design and development, program evaluation, focus group facilitation, as well as data collection and statistical analysis. Initially employed by the Center as a Research Technician, Lathrop further developed both her research skills and knowledge base. In her role as Manager of Research Support she will be managing the student research assistants and helping to facilitate the development of faculty research agendas, and assist with internal evaluations.

When Visions asked why she accepted this new assignment, Lathrop said, “Social science research is my sincere passion and the area in which I believe I can best serve the profession.”

Contacting the Center for Social Work Practice and Policy Research...

Website: HYPERLINK “http://www.research.socialwork.wayne.edu/” (t _blank) http://www.research.socialwork.wayne.edu/


Agency on Aging to Strengthen Provider Network

When the Detroit Area Agency on Aging (DAAA) wanted to enhance its provider network, the agency came to the School’s Center for Social Work Practice and Policy Research. Center Director Joanne Sebeck and Associate Dean Cheryl Wailes, working with Elizabeth Agius, Manager of Community Partnerships, developed a multifaceted approach to assisting DAAA providers in building their capacity to serve seniors. Faculty members Faith Hopp and Fayetta Martin, along with Victor Wooddell from the Business School are also engaged in the project.

The process began with focus groups, surveys and interviews to determine needs and perceptions of agencies providing adult day services, senior centers and core services to seniors. The enhancement project includes seminars and working sessions on evidence-based practices, strategic alignment planning, business planning, roundtables on resource development and technical assistance. It is our hope that these efforts will position DAAA service providers for facing the challenges of changing demographics of older adults, system changes including limited resources and unique entrepreneurial funding opportunities.

Publications (in print)


Continued on page 6
Publications
Continued from page 5


Join the Wayne State Alumni Association
Membership is available to alumni and friends of the university. Call (877) WSU-ALUM for additional information or School of Social Work Alumni Association.

Clip and return this form, completed, with payment to: WSU Alumni Association, P.O. Box 02308, Detroit, MI 48202-0308

Join an affiliate group? Your dues include membership in up to three affiliate alumni associations:

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Additional tax-deductible contribution $500 $500 $500

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Visions
MESSAGE FROM

Phyllis Edwards
Alumni Association President

It has been exciting for members of your alumni board and me to attend events celebrating the school’s 75th anniversary during the fall term. We have collaborated with Dean Vroom and the school in planning these events which have offered free continuing education hours to licensed social workers and alumni. The School of Social Work Alumni Board looks forward to continuing this partnership in service to the school throughout the 2010 anniversary year and beyond.

We also worked with community-based agencies to sponsor a Domestic Violence Candlelight Vigil on campus on October 1st, and currently we are cooperating with the Wayne Center to help provide Thanksgiving dinners for needy families in the area. These types of activities demonstrate that, during these challenging economic times, social workers continue to be resourceful and always, working from a strengths perspective, can creatively do more with less.

Please plan to attend other planned 75th anniversary events in 2010. Mark your calendar to attend the Dean’s Diversity Lecture on March 11, which will recognize the legacy of professors Fritz Redl and David Wineman. Dr. Larry Brendtro, former executive director of Starr Commonwealth, and now president of Reclaiming Youth International, will speak about contemporary best practices in child welfare.

We are now accepting nominations for the 2010 Social Work Alumnus/Alumna of the Year and Citizen of the Year. We will honor both award winners at an annual luncheon meeting on Friday, March 26, 2010 at Alumni House.

Here are the award criteria for Alumnus/Alumna of the Year: be an alumnus or alumnina (BSW, MSW or PhD), demonstrate a commitment to the profession, exemplified in the pursuit of social work knowledge, practice, leadership and/or research; a demonstrated outstanding achievement in one or more of the following areas: the profession, service to the community, service to the school. For Citizen of the Year, these criteria apply: demonstrated outstanding record of public/private sector or voluntary service to vulnerable populations, impacting the quality of life in metropolitan Detroit or Michigan communities; exemplify social work values and ethics; demonstrate outstanding compassion, teamwork and leadership. You can obtain a nomination form from the school’s website, www.wayne.socialwork.edu. The deadline is December 15, 2009.

In closing, please consider renewing your alumni association membership during this anniversary year. We welcome your participation on our planning committee as we continue celebrating the school’s anniversary, culminating with the 75th Anniversary Celebration at the Detroit Golf Club on June 10, 2010. Watch my future messages for details on this event.

I wish everyone the best for the coming holidays, and I look forward to meeting you at an upcoming event in the New Year.

Sincerely,
Phyllis Edwards, President

22nd Annual Edith Harris Endowed Memorial Lecture delivered by Dr. Sue Levkoff

In the second in a series of events marking the 75th anniversary of the School of Social work, Dr. Sue Levkoff delivered the 22nd Annual Harris lecture entitled “The Mental Health Needs of Caregivers” on Thursday, October 22, 2009 in the WSU Community Arts Auditorium.

Levkoff, the Director of the Positive Aging Resource Center at Harvard Medical School is also an associate professor in the Department of Social Medicine at Harvard Medical School. Dr. Levkoff’s presentation stressed several key points: caregiving is a major growing public health concern; evidence-based interventions and /promising practices exist; interventions must include an assessment of caregiver needs and they must match specific needs/problems, but, at the same time, must incorporate socio-cultural values and beliefs. Perhaps most importantly, she concluded that social workers could, and should be part of the solution to ensuring optimal caregiver outcomes.

Caregiving experience, whether for a child with a chronic illness or a family member with a persistent mental illness, or dementia or Alzheimer’s, can be extremely stressful because it affects many areas of the caregiver’s life. Providing long-term care can profoundly affect caregivers’ lives, and caregivers’ capacities to cope with the needs of family members are challenged as the demands for care increase. Dr. Levkoff stressed the need to be sensitive to the diversity of values and expectations that can affect caregiver experiences. The increased prevalence of mental health needs among caregivers must be acknowledged and met by social work intervention to establish appropriate and accessible support services.

Edith Harris was a graduate student in the School of Social Work at Wayne State University from 1966 to 1968. An outstanding student, Mrs. Harris was deeply committed to the profession. Her untimely death in 1968 cut short a very promising career. These annual lectures in her memory carry forward her concern for the mental health of individuals and families. The annual lecture is made possible through the generosity of the Harris Foundation.

Levkoff was introduced by Dean Vroom.
Congressional Earmark Approved for Second Year of Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Program in Wayne... Kernsmith Heads Evaluation Component

The School of Social Work, under the direction of Associate Professor Poco Kernsmith, PhD, is beginning the second year as the evaluator of the Wayne County, Michigan Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) program. Funded by a Congressional Earmark through Congressman John Dingel, the program provides sexual assault victims with access to free services in a safe environment. These services include forensic evidence collection and crisis intervention services, as well as referral for additional counseling and advocacy.

The program, under the auspices of First Step, the only out-Wayne-county agency providing comprehensive services to support victims of domestic and sexual violence, has resulted from collaboration of the agency with local hospitals, police, prosecutors, the Detroit SANE program and the State Police crime lab.

The school’s role is to evaluate program effectiveness in two key areas: 1. breadth and depth of coordination among collaborating agencies and 2. effectiveness of the program, in terms of both legal outcomes and ability to meet victims’ emotional needs in a safe, supportive manner. In addition, the school has assisted First Step in preparing grant applications for both years of funding.

“Aim Higher for Students” Campaign to raise $200,000 as Part of 75th Anniversary Celebration

It isn’t exactly news that these are difficult times. And it’s particularly true for Michigan and its state universities. As the legislature and governor struggle to balance the state budget, education funding has suffered, which means both the university and the School of Social Work also struggle to make ends meet. Yet both the university administration and the school’s leadership believe that Wayne State students deserve every chance to reach their highest academic and personal potential. If given this chance, each will make meaningful and even profound contributions to society. In these difficult times, it is a ray of hope that one major focus of the school’s 75th Anniversary celebration will be to bolster the scholarship funding for the growing numbers of students who require financial assistance to achieve their goals.

The university has launched the Aim Higher for Students campaign to raise money for scholarships and other educational resources that will enhance student success. As the university of opportunity for students from the city of Detroit, the state of Michigan and countries around the world, a major goal is to assist and encourage men and women from all walks of life hoping to earn a Wayne State degree.

Aim Higher for Students will increase Wayne State’s ability to fund both need-based and merit-based scholarships, as well as other student opportunities through internships and service-learning. The goal for both the school and the university is to increase annual scholarships and new endowed funds, creating resources that will have a significant and direct impact on Wayne State students. The need is particularly acute now because federal student aid limitations in the current economic environment, combined with rising tuition rates are causing a widening gap between cost of attending college and students’ ability to afford it. Plus 70% of WSU students expect to cover their educational expenses with grants, scholarships or military funding.

There are many ways to help

While Aim Higher for Students is primarily a scholarship campaign, you may support other initiatives that benefit students directly, including fellowships, grants, internships and service-learning opportunities. You can make a gift to the campaign in any number of ways. Outright gifts made immediately or pledges given over several years are two immediate ways to help. Most planned gift options will benefit the school through your estate.

Another option is to create a named fund with your gift, which enables you to honor, memorialize or recognize an individual or organization. You may have your name, or the name of someone close to you, associated with a scholarship, fellowship, or other special fund that will benefit students of the school. Such gifts acknowledge individuals’ commitment and dedication to the School of Social Work.

What your gift could provide:

$100 Scholarship: covers a book or course-related supplies

$500 Scholarship: covers nearly all fees, along with part of tuition, or books, or course-related supplies

$1,000 Scholarship: covers books and related course supplies or part of tuition

President Noren joins students as “Aim Higher” campaign is kicked off
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