We Want To Stay In Touch!

We’d love to know what you’re up to these days, and we want you to know what we’re doing. Please take a moment to give us your preferred email address and send us some news about yourself. Keeping your contact information current means you’ll continue to get Visions as well as our annual report, which provides a great overview of faculty, enrollment, programs and developments. So please stay connected, and we’ll tell you everything you need know to spread the word about your alma mater!

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Your current position (title and employer) ____________
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Your news ________________________________________
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It is with a profound sense of gratitude and expectation that I write my first message for Visions: gratitude for the tremendous honor of leading this diverse and competitive School of Social Work, and expectation for the many milestones on the horizon. My vision is to affirm this school’s position as a premier, 21st Century School of Social Work devoted to addressing complex challenges, promoting social justice, and fostering individual, group and community well being. I feel privileged to provide direction as our talented faculty, staff and students tackle ongoing and emerging issues through engaged teaching, learning, research, and partnership with the community in our urban context.

On this page you will see a photograph taken recently of school staff and faculty at the Detroit Institute of Arts. Surrounded by the famous Rivera frescos telling the powerful story of our city’s industrial empire, we have gathered to look out at you: the alumni and friends who, through the myriad ways you apply your degrees to improve the human condition, tell the story of social work at Wayne State University. You are invaluable ambassadors of Wayne’s unique tradition of social work wherever you go, and our legacy is richer and broader because of the contribution each of you makes in your corner of the world.

We are, to repeat, a 21st Century School of Social Work. Our position as a leader in theory, research, education and practice is not luck or the result of being in the right place at the right time. Rather, it is the wholly anticipated result of decades of strategic planning and investment, of understanding where our field is heading and staying ahead of the curve. It’s impossible to overstate the leadership in this endeavor of Dean Phyllis Vroom, who when stepping down last year left us with outstanding BSW, MSW and PhD degree programs, an indispensable Center for Social Work Practice and Policy Research, and a viable Continuing Education and Professional Development Program. Because it cannot be said enough, I must once again thank her for her service on behalf of the entire university. By enriching and strengthening our school, she exemplified the very mission of social work.

As you read this issue of Visions, you will see specific illustrations of the ways we are affirming our strong position in the field. We are operating on many “fronts” as we bring on new faculty, hire new staff, harness the skills of administrators through promotions, honor our faculty and students, and watch proudly as they are honored by others. You will read, for example, about Heather Edwards, Angelique Day and Jamie...
Waites Named Interim Dean

Cheryl Waites last year assumed the top leadership position in Wayne’s School of Social Work. WSU Provost Ronald Brown named Waites interim dean of the school upon the retirement of Dean Phyllis Vroom, who was appointed dean in 2002 and retired in the summer of 2011.

A leading scholar in social work education and practice, particularly in the areas of child welfare, aging, intergenerational relationships and African American communities, Waites joined the School of Social Work faculty in 2007 as an associate professor and associate dean. She was promoted to full professor in 2011. Prior to coming to WSU, she was associate professor in the Department of Social Work at North Carolina State University (1999-2007). While at NCSU, she also served as the department’s associate head (2005-2007) and director of graduate programs (2004-2007).

Waites has received more than a dozen honors, awards and appointments at the national, state and university level, all recognizing her outstanding teaching, scholarship, academic and administrative leadership. She has written a book, “Practice With African American Families: An Intergenerational Perspective” (2008), authored or coauthored dozens of book chapters and articles, and engaged in numerous editorial and peer review activities. She has also spoken extensively on her areas of study around the country.

Waites received her BA in sociology from Hunter College, her MSW from Fordham University, and her EdD in counselor education from North Carolina State University. She has been a fellow with the Institute on Aging and Social Work Research, St. Scholastica College and the National Institute on Aging, National Institutes of Health.

To read Dean Waite’s reflections on her new leadership role, please see the Dean’s Message page 1.

MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

Mitchell, new faculty who are expanding our understanding of child welfare issues and minority health behaviors. You will learn that Jerrold Brandell, a valued member of our faculty, has been appointed Interim Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. And you will see that we have promoted or hired staff members in advising, alumni relations and communications. I am particularly pleased to announce that Julie Alter-Kay, my new special assistant, will serve as liaison and staff support to the school’s Alumni Association, and I encourage you to reach out to her with your news, ideas, and observations.

I am particularly pleased to update you on the success of two programmatic enhancements, both of which are the only programs of their kind in the state of Michigan. The first is BSW Where Online Works! (WOW!), which is our online option for students interested in pursuing a Bachelor of Social Work degree. Our first cohort of BSW WOW! students will obtain their degrees this spring. (Our BSW program consistently posts graduation rates that are among the university’s highest.) WOW! perfectly demonstrates our innovation and willingness to step beyond preconceived notions of social work and social work education by helping our students navigate the complexities associated with work, family life, and commuting to campus. The students in our second WOW! cohort, which is almost 45% larger than the first, were admitted this winter and are off to a great start.

The second enhancement is a new scholarship track in our PhD program that was approved by the university in January. This track, which will admit students beginning in fall 2012, is designed to address the relative scarcity of social work PhDs who join faculties to teach clinical practice as well as to conduct clinical research. Our program should appeal to those going into higher education as well as to clinicians seeking leadership positions in agencies or organizations. Because our school has traditionally been recognized throughout the region for its strengths in the area of direct practice, the clinical scholarship track signals an exciting and important affirmation of our roots.

There is much more news inside this issue, so please take some time to look through the pages and reconnect with your alma mater.

This month is Social Work Month, and I would like to end by encouraging each and every one of you to take a moment to reflect on your vocation. Appreciate the difference you make. Savor how special you are. In bringing balance where there is instability, peace where there is unrest, understanding where there is confusion, you help to heal the world and leave it better than you found it. Yes, the challenges we face are greater now due to the economic and societal unrest in our nation. But greater challenges lead to greater accomplishments. I am once again drawn to the Rivera frescos in the DIA, which show a vigorous, committed and disciplined work force, retooled and ready to create a prosperous and exciting new age of prosperity. We, too, are trained and focused and eager to bring about change. The future is ours.

Sincerely,
Cheryl Waites, Interim Dean.

Visions
Retiring Dean Phyllis Vroom’s Leadership Celebrated at McGregor Center Event

On September 27 the university community gathered at the McGregor Memorial Conference Center to celebrate the accomplishments of retiring Dean Phyllis Vroom.

Interim Dean Cheryl Waites served as mistress of ceremonies, welcoming guests and ending the formal program. President Allan D. Gilmour offered greetings on behalf of the university, and Detroit City Council Member Saunteel Jenkins presented Dean Vroom with a Testimonial Resolution on behalf of her council colleagues and the City of Detroit. The Resolution read, in part, “Whereas Phyllis Vroom is a highly distinguished member of the community… Resolved that the Office of Council Member Shaunteel Jenkins and the entire Detroit City Council congratulates Professor Phyllis Ivory Vroom on her lifetime achievements and encourages the continuation of her academic pursuits.”

The reception, during which reflections were shared by Vroom as well as her family, friends and colleagues, was planned by a school committee whose members included Waites, Cassandra Bowers, Kathy Burnett, Juanitta Hill, Beverly Hunter, Janet Joiner and Marilynn Knall.

Entertainment was furnished by the Jerry Brandell Quintet, comprised of Al Armstrong on trumpet, Ed Wells on piano, Jerry Brabenec on bass, Andy Conlin on drums and Jerry Brandell, the school’s Interim Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, on reeds.

The program for the reception contained the words used by Provost Ronald Brown upon announcing Vroom’s retirement to the university community: “Dean Vroom’s name is synonymous with Wayne State as well as the School of Social Work. Under her leadership, the school has been recognized internationally for the quality of its research, and as a force for social change and community transformation.”

MSW Graduate Megan Pennefather Wins Brehler Scholars Award

Megan Pennefather has received the Brehler Scholars award for submitting the winning manuscript in the 2010-2011 year competition. Her award-winning essay was entitled “Different views on physical discipline: Toward a cultural understanding.”

Asked what her feelings were after winning, Megan Pennefather replied, “It’s difficult to describe how meaningful it was to receive the Brehler award. I am deeply humbled to be honored for something that was such a fulfilling and rewarding experience for me. I thank the Brehler committee and my mentor, Dr. Brandell, without whose guidance and support this would not have been possible.”

Pennefather received her MSW from the school last May and is now a Research Assistant working with Professor Debra Patterson.

The Elizabeth N. Brehler Scholars Program was established in 1991 by Richard Brehler in memory of his wife. This annual manuscript competition gives students the opportunity to produce a scholarly work. The primary goal of the program is to encourage students to explore their personal and professional values, and difficulties they have experienced applying those values in social work practice.

The Brehler Committee, which includes members of the Brehler family and past winners of the competition, is chaired by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and receives the papers and judges them objectively without knowing the author’s name or having any identifying information about the author. The winning paper (or papers) is chosen at a Committee meeting each March. The winner is honored at an April reception.
On November 17 last year, Gail Steketee, Dean of Boston University’s School of Social Work, provided a fascinating look at hoarding as the university’s 24th Annual Edith Harris Endowed Memorial Lecturer. Steketee, who has published more than 180 articles, chapters and books on anxiety, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) and related disorders, provided compassionate insight into the widely misunderstood condition, which is debilitating and inflicts emotional, financial and physical suffering on those who struggle with it.

Steketee said the field is beginning to see hoarding as a condition separate and distinct from OCD. "Seventeen percent of people with a hoarding problem will also have OCD, but it represents a very small portion of people who hoard," Steketee said. "Most of them have no other evidence of OCD-related issues."

It is estimated that 5 percent of the population has a problem with hoarding. Steketee said, adding that hoarding is more common in people over the age of 40 and in people with lower incomes. Depression, neurotism, anxiety, indecisiveness, perfectionism, vulnerability, impulsiveness and self-consciousness are commonly associated with hoarding, as are low marriage/partnering and high divorce rates. Hoarders typically feel overwhelmed by how to sort things, which they hoard because the objects have a sentimental attachment, an instrumental use or an intrinsic beauty.

"Often people have tremendous problems categorizing things. They’re unable to organize in a logical way because they have trouble putting things together in categories that make sense," Steketee said.

And while “memory is not a problem for most people who hoard,” she said, hoarders do have “trouble with perception in that they see multiple reasons for things and multiple reasons for hanging onto things.”

Steketee said cognitive behavioral therapy is the most common treatment for hoarding.

Aleta Runey, a social worker and an alumna of the WSU School of Social Work, said the “lecture was excellent, one of the best there has been.” She works at the VA Medical Center and said she found Steketee’s information valuable because she has been “coming across more hoarders.”

Edith Harris was a graduate student in the School of Social Work from 1966 to 1968. Her memory is honored annually by the presentation of the Edith Harris Memorial Endowed lecture, featuring a prominent speaker and expert on the mental health of individuals and families. This yearly event is made possible through the generous support of the Harris Foundation.
Alter-Kay Named Special Assistant to the Dean

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ean Waites selected Julie Alter-Kay to fill the position of Special Assistant to the Dean effective January 1. Alter-Kay, who has served in the role of Academic Advisor in the School of Social Work since 2005, replaces Loren Hoffman, who retired last summer.

Alter-Kay, who completed an Education Specialist Certificate in Education Administration & Leadership through the WSU College of Education in 2006, said she “looks forward to working closely with the dean toward development and implementation of the vision, mission, and goals of the school. As a proud graduate of the School of Social Work [BSW 84’ and MSW 97’]” Alter-Kay adds, “I’m particularly excited that my new responsibilities include serving as liaison and staff support to the Alumni Association. Our alumni are not only dedicated to the field of social work and the populations they serve, they are committed to their alma mater.”

Alter-Kay, who worked for the School of Business before moving to the school, has been an academic advisor at WSU since 1998. Since joining the school she has been responsible for the academic advisement of graduate students. Her duties and responsibilities have included recruitment activities, course scheduling, planning and facilitating registration meetings and orientation programs yearly, and advising for the graduate certificate program: “Social Work Practice with Families and Couples”.

In addition, she has served on several university and school committees: Academic Staff Tenure and Promotion Committee, Academic Staff Professional Development Committee, MSW Program Committee and the Retention Committee.

Alter-Kay’s interest areas include mental health and stress management, particularly as it relates to student development and success. She volunteered to serve as faculty advisor to the student organization group, Student Fitness and Wellness Organization (SFWO), which offers students opportunities to learn and participate in activities which promote mental and physical health.

Brandell Becomes Interim Associate Dean for Academic Affairs

D

istinguished Professor Jerrold Brandell has been appointed Interim Associate Dean for Academic Affairs for the 2011 – 2012 academic year. His official appointment began last October.

Brandell has taught at the school since 1992. He previously held faculty appointments at Boston University and Michigan State University, and has been a visiting professor at Lund University School of Social Work, Lund, Sweden, and The University of Canterbury, in Christchurch, New Zealand.

He has led workshops and lectured widely on clinical topics in the United States, as well as in China, France, Israel, New Zealand, and Sweden. Jerry is a past recipient of Wayne State University’s Distinguished Faculty Fellowship Award, and has also received The University of Chicago’s Edith Abbott Doctoral Teaching Fellowship.

A practicing child, adolescent, and adult psychotherapist, and psychoanalyst, he is the author, coauthor, or editor of nine books, including Of Mice and Metaphors (Basic Books, 2000 and University of Sichuan Press, 2006); Psychodynamic Social Work (Columbia University Press, 2004); Attachment and Dynamic Practice (Columbia University Press, 2007); and Theory and Practice in Clinical Social Work, 2nd Edition (Sage, 2010). He is currently preparing a co-edited book on the clinical and theoretical dimensions of trauma (with Shoshana Ringel), which will also be published by Sage Press.

In addition to his service as an Editorial Board member of Clinical Social Work Journal and the Bulletin of the Michigan Psychoanalytic Council, Brandell is the (Founding) Editor-in-Chief of Psychoanalytic Social Work, now in its 17th year of publication. In 2001, he was recognized as a distinguished practitioner by the National Academies of Practice.

He balances his academic and clinical interests with a life-long passion for musical performance. A former student of both Oliver Nelson and Joe Daley, Brandell plays tenor with a big jazz band in the Ann Arbor area, and periodically leads his own jazz quartet.
Center for Social Work Practice and Policy Research Issues Progress Report as its 4th Year Begins

As it begins its fourth year of operation, the School of Social Work’s Center for Social Work Practice and Policy Research has issued a progress report on its activities and a look at its future plans. The Center’s goals are to support faculty research through a variety of ways, build collaborations with community partners to engage in research that is meaningful to both partners, provide services for planning and evaluation, and advance social work knowledge and practice through these methods.

Each summer the Center staff meets to review the progress of the school and engage in strategic planning for the year to come. Here are key results from that meeting.

Grants & Projects
Of 23 grant proposals submitted for funding in 2010-2011, 39% were funded, 39% rejected and 22% are still pending. This represents an increase in the percentage of proposals that were funded compared with the previous year.

Since it was established in 2007, the Center has brought in $3,867,254, averaging almost $1 million dollars per year, a total which includes grants from federal, state and local government sources, as well as internal dollars and non-profit contracts.

Through its consultation and technical assistance services, the Center realized a 96% increase in income from the previous year. Clients from 2010-2011 include Oakland Family Services, Reaching Higher Inc., Community Care Services, Brandeis University, and the Jewish Family Education Exchange.

Faculty Feedback
Each year the Center staff asks its primary consumers, the SSW faculty, to tell them how the Center is doing and how its services might be improved. In general, the responses have been positive. Assistance with grant writing and submission, budget and IRB development were the most highly rated services. Faculty uses Center support most frequently for literature searches, data retrieval, and manuscript editing and transcription services. Some faculty members would like a more active role in Center planning, additional help in developing cross-disciplinary connections, and preparing research for use by practitioners and policymakers as goals for the future.

Looking Ahead
In an effort to improve the Center’s performance and its value to the faculty and community, the staff held a strategic planning session, which determined four core areas that the Center will seek to improve upon. First, there is a plan for an Advisory Board of both faculty and external representatives to help shape the Center’s efforts. Second, the Center will expand its professional development offerings to provide more support for faculty writing and research. This will be paired with additional access to students who are trained and mentored to work with faculty as research support. Third, the Center will undertake a pilot project to disseminate policy briefs in the area of child welfare. Finally, Center staff will explore the development of creating communities of practice on a subject matter or methodology that will foster faculty research.

Check out the research website for more Center news at www.research.socialwork.wayne.edu and be sure to “like” us on Facebook! In reflecting on our work over the past, we are pleased about the progress we have made and excited to think about where we are heading.

Publications (in print)


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Publications in Print  Continued from page 6


Professor Durrenda Onolemhemhen was honored for her role as a social work mentor by the Council on Social Work Education’s Commission on the Role and Status of Women in Social Work Education at an October networking breakfast in Atlanta. The Commission is part of the Center for Diversity and Social & Economic Justice, which is an arm of the Council on Social Work Education in Alexandria, Va.

Onolemhemhen was nominated for mentoring Denise Davis-Maye and Tonya E. Perry, two doctoral students she trained in international health research through a five-year grant she received from the National Institutes of Health in 1997. Onolemhemhen, who was at the University of Alabama at the time, prepared Davis-Maye and Perry to conduct HIV/AIDS research in Uganda and Ghana, respectively. Both have since become tenured social work faculty: Davis-Maye at Auburn University and Perry at Alabama A&M University.

The Mentor Recognition Fund “was created to honor those mentors who increased the visibility of women in social work education and made a difference in our lives, as well as to support the Women’s Council’s efforts to further women in social work education,” according to the council. Onolemhemhen, who went to Ghana during Perry’s research on the experience of women living with HIV/AIDS, said mentoring in the area of international social work is “modeling the behavior and skills necessary for successful research. There are many nuances that can’t be taught, but by being in the field in a foreign place with your students, they can see how you interact with others and the postures you assume.”

Dr. Onolemhemhen said she thinks Davis-Maye and Perry had mentoring experiences “that enriched their academic careers and life experiences and opened their eyes to a lot of possibilities they would not have had without the opportunity to travel abroad.”

A specialist in women’s reproductive health in Africa and international social work and a former commissioner on the Council on Social Work Education, Commission on Global Education, Onolemhemhen has taught at a number of universities worldwide, including Ahmadu Bello University in Zaria, Nigeria, The National University, Butare, Rwanda, and the American University, Les Cayes, Haiti. She is currently conducting research on women’s health issues in Ethiopia.

New Faculty Member Jamie Mitchell Studies Health Behaviors Among African-American Men

Jamie Mitchell joined the SSW faculty as assistant professor this fall. Mitchell received her doctorate in Social Work from The Ohio State University. She is an interdisciplinary applied researcher with experience examining social and environmental correlates of unmet health needs and preventive health behaviors among African-American men and other underserved individuals.

Since beginning at the school at the end of June, Mitchell has hit the ground running. She has already become closely involved in The Michigan Area Health Education Center (MI-AHEC), which was established in 2010 to improve access to clinical education in primary care urban and rural settings for all Michigan residents. The national AHEC program was created by Congress in 1971 to recruit, train and retain a workforce of health professionals committed to medically underserved populations, and MI-AHEC was specifically established to address the lack of primary care providers in many areas of Michigan.

Mitchell has surveyed over 1,400 African-American men about their health status, health needs, and healthcare access in recent years in order to build upon a conceptual model of how social-ecological factors predict engagement in cancer and chronic disease-related preventive health behaviors. She is currently engaging in work to probe the relationship between patient navigation, interpersonal support, and cancer screening completion among African-American men. In addition, a second line of inquiry into the preventive health behaviors of African-American male college students is currently underway.

She earned her BA in social behavior sciences from The Ohio State University, and her MSW from the University of Tennessee.

Mitchell’s research focuses on investigating the underlying social, ecological, biological, and behavioral determinants of cancer and chronic disease-related health disparities affecting African American men across the life span. Social determinants of prostate and colorectal cancer disparities are a primary area of interest. This work helps inform community-based preventive health studies and practice with African American males and other underrepresented minority male communities.
Trzcinski Appointed Research Professor at German Institute for Economic Research

Eileen Trzcinski has been appointed a Research Professor at the German Institute for Economic Research. The professorship has a three-year term that is customarily renewed. The Institute is comparable to U.S. institutions such as the Brookings Institution or the National Bureau of Economic Research. In reacting to her appointment, she said, “We can learn a lot about social and economic justice by looking at how countries in Europe treat the issue. Poverty levels are lower and there are well-developed family support mechanisms and similar mechanisms for the unemployed. Despite the often negative treatment these counties receive from U.S. media outlets, some European countries, such as Germany, now have rates of unemployment that are several percentage points lower than rates in the United States. If we follow their examples, there’s no need to reinvent these policies.” She sees her appointment as an opportunity to promote and support cross-national research activities.

A specialist in family economic policy, and labor and feminist economics, Dr. Trzcinski’s current research interests include how family and medical leave and other family economic policies affect the relationship between maternal employment and child and adolescent development. She also focuses on the link between mental and physical disabilities and income and access to the labor market. Her work has a strong cross-national component, with particular emphases on the United States, Canada, Poland and Germany. She is also collaborating with her colleague Dr. Royce Hutson on research examining social and economic conditions in Haiti before and after the earthquake. She has worked as a visiting scholar at the German Institute for Economic Research in Berlin, the Institute for the Study of Labor in Bonn, the Warsaw School of Economics in Warsaw and the Institute of Sociology and Social Work at Jagiellonian University in Krakow.

Trzcinski earned her MA in Economics, MSW in Program Evaluation and her PhD in Social Work and Economics, all from the University of Michigan.

Western Michigan University PhD Graduate Angelique Day Joins Faculty as Assistant Professor

Angelique Day has joined the School of Social Work faculty as assistant professor. She graduated from Western Michigan University with a PhD in Interdisciplinary Health Sciences. Her dissertation, “An Examination of Post-Secondary Educational Access, Retention, and Success of Foster Care Youth,” was awarded the prestigious dissertation award in August 2011 by the Section on Child Maltreatment from the American Psychological Association, and she has recently published the findings in the top-ranked Children and Youth Services Review.

Prior to her appointment here, Day founded Michigan State University’s Foster Youth Alumni Services Program, a college access and retention program for students who have aged out of foster care and desire a post-secondary credential. She was also formerly employed with Michigan’s Children, a statewide, private, non-profit children’s advocacy organization for which she helped develop the agency’s child welfare policy agenda and led the Youth Policy Leadership Program. This program provided youth, many of whom were in foster care, a voice in public policy debate.

In addition to her work with young people aging out of foster care, Day has worked for the Michigan Department of Human Services as a child protective services worker. She has had extensive experience in research, and her training has included services in tribal communities across the state. Her professional experience in research, policy development, child welfare practice, and her personal experiences as a former ward of the court, make her uniquely qualified to provide leadership in training, research, and consultation in the field of child welfare.

Assistant Professor Day Selected for Career-Building Violence Prevention Program

Assistant Professor Angelique Day has been selected as a trainee for “Building Careers for Research in Child Maltreatment and Intimate Partner Violence: Early Career Scholar Interdisciplinary Training Program,” hosted by the George Warren Brown School of Social Work at Washington University in St. Louis.

Day is one of 15 careers scholars trained in economics, neuroscience, genetics, clinical medicine and public policy who will participate in an intensive three-day seminar, followed by mentored research experiences in the field hosted by experts doing work in child maltreatment and intimate partner violence. Program participants, whose expenses will be paid as part of the award, will then develop a six-page research plan to be reviewed and critiqued by leading scholars in the field.
Interview with Charlie Cavell, Creator of Pay It Forward

When you’re one of 32,000 students, it’s not easy to get noticed by the president of your university. But we weren’t at all surprised during a Jan. 19 Town Hall Meeting to hear WSU President Allan Gilmour praise the community service of Charlie Cavell, who will receive his bachelor’s degree from the School of Social Work this spring. Cavell, who with Wayne’s Blackstone Launchpad in 2010 created the nonprofit Pay It Forward to match unemployed and under-skilled Detroiters with prospective employers via internships, is bridging the city’s nonprofit and business sectors by melding entrepreneurial instincts with philanthropic ambition. He’s also challenging assumptions about the limited role of youth in our community: At the age of 21, Cavell wears a dizzying array of civic and student hats that entails running of a 501c(3), sitting on the board of directors of Detroit’s New Paradigm Loving Academy, taking 14 credit hours, devoting 10 hours a week to work-study, and interning 16 hours a week at Grandmont Rosedale Development Corporation. He took time out of his busy schedule to talk to Visions about social work, the city, his newest project to help young mothers, and what it means to create a legacy.

**Visions:** How does Pay It Forward work?  
**CC:** My team [of three Wayne peers] and I place unemployed Detroiters in internships with a variety of partner organizations, which include Vanguard Community Development Corporation, Coalition on Temporary Shelter, Cleaners Food Bank, Central Detroit Christian Community Development Corporation, and Matrix Human Services. The interns work 20 hours a week, attend classes in financial management, business communication and entrepreneurship every other Saturday, and attend a weekly session with a guidance counselor who helps them set goals. Our interns are typically 18-to-24 years old and are referred to us by Michigan Youth Opportunities Initiative, The Youth Connection and the Greater Detroit Centers For Working Families. We interview them and match them with partners based on their skills and interests. It’s a win-win, because these young people get jobs that in turn help improve our community.

**Visions:** Has Pay It Forward been successful?  
**CC:** We placed 16 people in internships during the first two rounds of funding, six of whom ended up getting jobs where they interned. But we identified problems with the program. First, our community partners were so large that hiring interns required several levels [of bureaucracy]. Also, our second round was too short: it was a summer program lasting only eight weeks. The five interns did not have enough time to shine and only one got hired. What we learned was that we need to give interns more time to become part of the family – to learn a skill and become valuable – and to work with some smaller organizations where hiring decisions are less complicated. We have raised $55,000 of the $80,000 we need for the third round of internships, and this round will last four months and place 17-20 interns.

**Visions:** Can you share with us a particularly moving experience you’ve had?  
**CC:** Christine was one our first interns. We came to find out that she had a daughter in St. Louis that she hadn’t been able to see for several months because she couldn’t afford to travel. Her internship led to a job, and she saved up enough money to take the bus to St. Louis to be reunited with her daughter. I remember where I was when I got the call from her saying she’d been hired. It was great!

**Visions:** You recently obtained a grant from Wayne to launch Parent U. Tell us about the program.  
**CC:** The program is a six-week parenting class that will be offered this spring at Catherine Ferguson Academy [a charter-operated high school in Detroit for teen mothers]. But these are not your typical parenting classes. The curriculum was developed by Jan Windemuth, a professor with the WSU School of Education, and it focuses on the parents as individuals – as people who had a life before parenthood and still have personal needs. The classes will be devoted to stress management, communication, relationships, activities and community resources.

**Visions:** How did you come up with the idea for Parent U?  
**CC:** I completed a social work internship at [Detroit’s] Priest Elementary/Middle School where I was involved with young children. When I talked to the parents, I saw that they were really stressed out. They had a lot on their plate and seemed like they could use some help!

**Visions:** Why did you choose social work as your area of study?  
**CC:** I get out of bed in the morning because I have a passion to help people. I want to give people better opportunities to get them where they want to be. I moved around a lot as a kid, and I’ve learned from my own experiences that when people have problems, it’s because opportunity is hard to come by. And I know that we’re all in this together, and we have to build each other up.

**Visions:** Can you describe your experience in the School of Social Work?  
**CC:** I love how great the customer service is. People are friendly and cool, which makes a difference. When I came to them with ideas I got so much help, particularly from Dr. [Janet] Joiner, who helped us with grant writing, and Dr. [Richard] Smith, who helped with organizing and structuring our programs.

**Visions:** How do you balance school with the many other responsibilities you have?  
**CC:** Fortunately, I’m an early riser. I don’t have a TV because I get hypnotized by it. I write lists, and I’m very organized.

**Visions:** What will you do after graduation?  

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Continued from page 10

CC: I’ll get my master’s in social work and I’ll continue to run Pay It Forward and be on the [Loving] school board. I would ultimately like to be a public servant in Detroit.

Visions: You’re an entrepreneur. How has studying social work informed your approach to business in a way that a business degree would not have?

CC: A lot of the business people I meet through Blackstone talk about being moguls and making millions of dollars and having lots of people working for them. They want to show they’re the tough, big, bad boss. I say that having an empire and making a lot of money is not much of a legacy. Lots of people have a lot of money, but you don’t know their names. People will only remember you if you care for people, give them jobs, do something new and creative that makes people’s lives better. After all, everyone’s at the mercy of everyone else in some way or another.

Visions: With respect to its human resources, what do you believe are Detroit’s greatest opportunities?

CC: Detroiter have know-how and grit. People here know how to work hard because they’ve had to work hard. The biggest challenge will be finding enough sustainable jobs to go around, and that’s exactly why we at Pay It Forward have chosen to take on employment in our city.

Doctoral Student Robin Walters-Powell Honored by CSWE as Phi Alpha Outstanding Advisor of the Year

In October, the Phi Alpha Outstanding Advisor of the Year Award was presented to SSW Doctoral student Robin K. Walters-Powell at the CSWE Annual Program Meeting in Atlanta, Georgia. Robin is the Chapter Advisor for the Eta Theta Chapter of Phi Alpha at the University of Findlay. Walters-Powell’s Phi Alpha students submitted the application highlighting her eagerness to encourage her chapter to be active by participating in community service. Her students view her as a role model in the field of social work and appreciate her passion for each student to succeed.

Lucy Ament Appointed to Visions

Lucy Ament, a WSU student, has been appointed editor of Visions, effective immediately, by Dean Waites. Ament founded Iris Communications, a full-service communications consulting business offering writing, editing, and research services to clients such as University Liggett School, The George Washington University, American Hospital Association, PBS and University of California Press.

Ament’s past communications experience includes managing a national newsletter, writing executive correspondence and promotional materials for corporations, contributing articles to print and online news sources, and editing books and other publications.

In reacting to her appointment, Ament said, “I moved back to Michigan to be part of the revitalization of Detroit. I can’t imagine a more worthwhile place to get involved in this endeavor than Wayne State University. And I’m particularly thrilled to be assisting the School of Social Work because of its unique mission to improve people’s quality of life.”

She was awarded her Bachelor of Arts in English and French by Saint Louis University, summa cum laude. After receiving her degree, Ament moved to Washington, D.C. where she spent five years as a reporter and then managing editor of a weekly, independent newsletter focused on domestic and international environmental policy. In 2005, she joined the communications team of the American Hospital Association, also in Washington.

In March 2007, she returned to Detroit and launched Iris Communications. Ament has strong roots at WSU: “I come from a Wayne family. My father chaired the Greek and Latin Department and my mother was in charge of transfer credit evaluation. Meanwhile, my sister is an academic advisor and my brother is in the athletic hall of fame. I’m excited to carry on this tradition and to give my skills and experience to an institution that has always been an important presence in my life.”

Ament is currently pursuing a Master of Arts in Communication at WSU.

She is an avid gardener and an active member of the Grosse Pointe Theatre, where she performs and helps with set development and costuming. She also has acted in independent films produced in Michigan.

Ament replaces Al Acker, who continues with other editing responsibilities for the school.
Former U.S. House Staffer Heather Edwards Joins Faculty

Heather Edwards joined the Wayne State University School of Social Work faculty as an assistant professor last fall. When Visions asked her to share some early observations about the school, she cited the collegiality of her faculty colleagues and the support she has received from the staff of the Research Center. She hopes she will be able to bring to the school a sharper focus on the child welfare aspects of federal policy making.

She draws inspiration for her work from her tenure as a foster care worker in Washington, DC and as a staff person in the office of Congressman Danny K. Davis (D-IL) in the U.S. House of Representatives. As a legislative intern, Edwards prepared floor statements, drafted responses to constituent correspondence, analyzed and proposed legislation for introduction, and recommended legislation for cosponsorship.

Before joining the faculty, Edwards also was a consultant for The State of the African American Male Initiative (SAAM), Office Manager/Continuing Education Coordinator at the DC Metro Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers, and a social worker for Progressive Life Center, Inc. She earned her BSW from the University of Texas at Austin and both her MSW and PhD in Social Work from Howard University in Washington, D.C.

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- Angela B. Wilson
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Greetings and welcome to the New Year! Time really flies when you are busy making a difference in the lives of others, as I know we all are. During this past holiday season, we engaged in community service by “adopting” a family in need from the Karmanos Cancer Institute, where the father was a patient. The board purchased individual gifts for each of the five family members, helping to brighten their holiday season!

Spring is in the air and it symbolizes rebirth, life, and growth. Spring reminds us that we can start over, start anew, and start fresh. As we move into a new season, let us also look to renewing our commitment to our professional and personal development and growth and renewing our commitment to our awesome school! On that note, I would like to update you on recent changes to our Alumni Board. The following board members recently stepped down: Joanne Brogdon, Jerry Caughey, and Tia Cobb. I would like to take this opportunity to thank each of them for their dedication, loyalty and service. Their contributions to the board are very much appreciated!

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In keeping with our established goals, we also encourage you to attend the Sixth Annual Dean’s Diversity Lecture scheduled for Thursday, March 22, 2012 from 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. at the Patrích Auditorium at the WSU Law School. The lecture, titled Culture- and Gender-Sensitive Regulation of Anger, will be presented by A. Antonio González-Prendes, Professor, School of Social Work. González-Prendes is an alumnus from Wayne State University, holding a Ph.D. from the College of Education and an M.S.W. from the School of Social Work. González-Prendes is an experienced social work clinical practitioner with research interests that revolve around the investigation of cognitive, emotional and cultural dimensions of anger. This event is FREE of charge and is being co-sponsored by the WSU School of Social Work and the Office of Continuing Education and Professional Development, and has been approved by the Michigan Social Work Continuing Education Collaborative for two Continuing Education Contact Hours. For further information, please contact Julie Alter-Kay at ae8440@wayne.edu or (313) 577-4464.

Please be on the lookout for our new alumni gear at each of these events that will be available for purchase.

We also have opportunities for current students and alumni to serve on a board committee. You do not need to serve on the board to serve on a committee, and this is a wonderful way to give back to the school and community. The committees include Social, Educational, and Membership.

Finally, we have several board positions open and need dedicated, hard-working people to help us meet our goals of providing support to the school and engaging all alumni. If interested in serving on a committee or the board, please contact Julie Alter-Kay at ae8440@wayne.edu or (313) 577-4464.

I am excited about what is occurring within the School of Social Work and I hope that you reconnect with us if you are not already engaged. Let us hear from you and hear about your professional milestones. I am looking forward to seeing you at an upcoming event or even at an upcoming board/committee meeting!

In your service,

Larmender A. Davis, President
WSU SSW Alumni Association Hosts Candlelight Vigil for Domestic Violence Awareness Month

October is domestic violence awareness month, and one of the goals for the Alumni Association this school year is to facilitate quarterly community-service events in which all social work alumni can be involved.

On October 21, the Association realized this goal by partnering with Walden University; Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. Detroit Alumnae Chapter; and local domestic violence agencies, Sisters Acquiring Financial Empowerment and Serenity Services to recognize domestic violence awareness month and the work being done to end domestic violence in our community.

The vigil was held at Detroit Alumnae Chapter Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. DSTFI Headquarters in Detroit, MI and featured a very encouraging program, which included powerful remarks by State Representative Maureen Stapleton and Piper Fakir from the Wayne County Prosecutors Office; a personal poem by WSU SSW student, Bernadette Richardson; and a moving dance by eight year-old, Miss Rachael.

The program concluded with a powerful candle lighting ceremony in which all participants were able to light a candle in memory of any victim/survivor of their choosing. It was an inspirational mix of education, information, and encouragement.


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| Shardae Baskin ’11 | Phyllis Edwards ’02, Past President |
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BSW Student LaSonya Beaver Honored by Soroptimist International

LaSonya Beaver, an online BSW student at the school, has won the second place Elise Ciokajlo memorial award by Soroptimist International of Oakland County. She will receive a monetary award and will be recognized at an awards banquet on March 13 in Royal Oak.

This year the club offered two annual awards for women who are heads of a household and are enrolled in or have been accepted to a vocational/skills training program or an undergraduate degree program in order to upgrade their employment status. This is the first time that a social work student has won this award.

Soroptimist International is a service club working to improve the lives of women and girls in local communities and throughout the world. The club was founded in 1937. The Oakland County club is a local component of Soroptimist International of the Americas, with 1,447 clubs in 19 countries and 41,875 members worldwide.
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For more information, contact Marguerite Carlton, development director-major gifts, at 313-577-8807

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