Challenging Minds, Leading Change, Transforming Lives

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FROM THE DEAN

Social workers focus on the “person in the environment,” but the interchange of peoples, products, ideas and cultures that is occurring through globalization raises complex questions about what the “environment” is and how it can best be encountered. Consistent with its 21st century agenda, the Wayne State University School of Social Work is promoting social and economic justice through teaching, research and partnership within a global context. This requires careful attention to both challenges and opportunities that emerge in our field as the peoples of the world become more interconnected. This issue of Visions explores the critical question that social workers must increasingly address: How is social work advancing in a global society?

At the School of Social Work, we believe the answer can be found in varied opportunities for domestic and international engagement, not just within our discipline, but with all agents of positive change and empowerment. This may entail practice or research in other countries, international comparative research and analysis, or collaborations and exchanges between researchers from different parts of the world. It can also involve a macro exploration of the societal problems that are occurring between people and nations, some of which are the direct result of our world growing smaller through globalization. All of these endeavors require open-mindedness, cultural competence, and a willingness to learn lessons from the “field” that is our whole planet.

As we consider the complexities of social work in a global society, we also consider what unifies all peoples who are served by social workers: the need for personal, social and economic security and the freedom this security provides. All individuals, families and communities want to achieve their full potential, and social workers, seeing their clients at the intersection of factors that affect well-being, are uniquely trained to help them. This commitment to helping clients achieve the highest possible outcomes remains constant even as the environment evolves through globalization.

In this issue of Visions you will see some excellent examples of social work in the global environment. You will learn about efforts by our faculty to study breast cancer in Israel, decrease perinatal death in Ethiopia, counsel garbage dump-dwellers in Mexico and introduce psychotherapeutic tools in Greece. You will read about School of Social Work alumnae advocating for disabled children in Tajikistan and investigating the well-being of working women in Germany. And you will enjoy insights from M.S.W. students who applied their social work skills in exciting capacities while studying abroad.

The world is changing, and the School of Social Work seeks to be a leader in helping society transition to a global landscape. There are age-old challenges to address even as we encounter the challenges of a new age. As we educate world-class practitioners and identify best practices through research and collaboration, our goal is not to help society merely adapt – but flourish.

I hope you enjoy this issue of Visions.

Sincerely,

Cheryl E. Waites
Dean and Professor
Distinguished social work professor teaches storytelling therapy to Greek practitioners

“Reciprocal storytelling” is a powerful psychotherapeutic tool in child psychotherapy, permitting children and therapists a simple though highly effective and creative means through which emotional conflicts, disturbing fantasies, and other anxiety-laden material can be explored, a veteran practitioner and School of Social Work faculty member told mental health professionals in Greece.

Jerrold Brandell, distinguished professor of social work and a widely published expert on psychoanalysis and psychodynamic psychotherapy, presented clinical workshops on reciprocal storytelling at the Technological Educational Institute in Heraklion, Crete and the Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at Aghia Sophia Children’s Hospital in Athens. Following a time-honored tradition that goes back to the pioneering child clinician and psychoanalyst Hermine Hug-Hellmuth, as well as later writers such as Richard Gardner and Nathan Kritzberg, Brandell developed “reciprocal storytelling” as a therapeutic framework in which client and therapist take turns creating imaginative stories. Through this process, the child expresses disturbing wishes, fears, and defensive adaptations, while the therapist, having discerned the dynamic meaning of the child’s story, responds with a different version offering therapeutic insights and more adaptive solutions.

Brandell’s contribution to therapeutic storytelling comes from his use of this specialized technique with diverse and severely disorders clinical child populations. While earlier research largely involved children with neurotic disorders, Brandell has applied reciprocal storytelling to the treatment of posttraumatic cases and disorders of attachment, as well as children suffering from self object, borderline, and other personality disorders. These types of children, he noted, “are much more commonly seen by social workers in the trenches.”

During his workshops in Greece, Brandell shared with clinicians various assessment tools to discern which clients are good candidates for storytelling, case studies from his own clinical practice, and information on how to interpret children’s stories and construct therapeutic responses. Though child clinicians in Greece may not approach storytelling in a systematic way, Brandell observed, he nevertheless believes its use as a therapeutic tool has a unique cultural resonance there.

“The Greeks of course draw from an ancient storytelling tradition, and I think storytelling has retained a strong appeal among the clinicians I worked with in Crete and Athens, and in contemporary Greek culture, more generally.”
WSU health disparities expert seeks to increase breast cancer screening among Arab women

Arab women in the United States and Israel can hope to experience higher rates of breast cancer detection and recovery thanks to research by a health policy expert at the Wayne State’s School of Social Work, who is embarking on the first comparative study of cultural barriers to breast cancer screening in the two countries.

Possibly because of lower utilization of mammograms, Arab women are disproportionately afflicted by breast cancer both in the United States and in Israel. Kim Jaffee, associate professor of social work at Wayne State, has received funding from the Center for Social Work Research and the Dearborn, MI-based nonprofit ACCESS to study psychosocial factors in Arab women that may be creating barriers to breast cancer detection.

Working with ACCESS, the largest Arab American human services nonprofit in the United States, Jaffee is gathering survey data from 200 Arab women in metropolitan Detroit assessing medical mistrust and barriers to breast screening. Among other things, this data will measure fear of the screening process and negative results, embarrassment and stigmatization, language barriers, lack of knowledge, and transportation, economic, cultural and religious barriers. Jaffee will also spend two months at the University of Haifa in Israel working with researchers who have gathered the same data for a sample of Israeli Arab women.

After comparing the U.S. and Israeli data sets, Jaffee and her colleagues hope to develop culturally sensitive interventions that can be used to increase screening among Arab women in both countries. Jaffee said the study illustrates the important perspectives that social work brings to epidemiological research.

“Social workers are acutely aware of the ways that cultural competence creates a context in which people within oppressed groups can be healthier,” Jaffee said. “Looking at the ways cultural barriers impede people from accessing health care services is a critical first step in improving their outcomes.”
Continuing education director **brings comfort** to Mexico’s poorest

Lauree Emery, director of the School of Social Work’s Office of Continuing Education and Professional Development, travels to Mexico several times a year, but she doesn’t head to the golden beaches or the verdant jungles. She goes to the unlikeliest of places: a foul-smelling, sprawling garbage dump in the state of Oaxaca, where some of the most destitute people on earth make their home.

Comprised mostly of Triqui Indians, the residents of this bleak place survive by salvaging anything they can sell. The emotional and physical stress of this life is overwhelming for these stigmatized people, among whom illness, depression, grief and domestic violence are common. Children, many of them orphans, get one meal a day and cling to older children for protection.

Emery, who is fluent in Spanish, finds fulfillment as a social worker in this parcel of land, where she provides talk, music, art and play therapy. Having been introduced to the community by a missionary couple she met 25 years ago in Mexico City, she feels a deep connection to a people who, despite everything, play and laugh as well as work and cry.

“These people have an innate connection with the land and with life,” said Emery, who worked with the couple in two other garbage dump communities before coming with them to Oaxaca.

“It’s the opposite of what you’d expect. It’s spiritual – their joy in being alive even in the most horrific of situations.”

Over the past decade, Emery has brought doctors, dentists and students to the dump to volunteer, collected medical supplies for the community, and found Detroit-area adoptive families for six orphaned children. She’s often frustrated she can’t do more, but she prefers to focus on what she can do.

“What I provide them is a drop in the ocean,” said Emery, “but it’s something rather than nothing.”
Maternal health expert develops low-cost, culturally competent intervention for safer birthing in Ethiopia

Durrenda Onolehemhen

Infection claims the lives of millions of new mothers and babies throughout the developing world, but a researcher at Wayne State’s School of Social Work has shown that expectant moms can greatly improve their chances of survival with just a few dollars and a trip to the local market.

Earlier this year, Associate Professor Durrenda Onolehemhen presented the Ethiopian Public Health Association with her findings on perinatal infection rates among 300 pregnant women in the East African nation, roughly two-thirds of whom were presented with $2 birth kits assembled from locally available goods. Containing pictorial instructions and just a few new items – a clean plastic sheet, tie cords, a razor blade, and a bar of soap – the kits appear to have provided users with a powerful degree of protection over members of the control group. In fact, women who did not use the kit were 10 times more likely to have puerperal infection than kit users, while the newborns of mothers who did not use the kit were five times more likely to have tie cord infection than the babies of kit users.

According to Onolehemhen, unsanitary conditions for birthing present an enormous obstacle to safe delivery among women in rural Ethiopia, where most births occur at home without access to clinicians or trained attendants. Women frequently birth on unhygienic surfaces, after which the newborn’s cord is cut with a dirty implement, secured with unsanitary cords, and/or treated with unsanitary ointments. While “clean delivery kits” have proven successful in reducing infection rates, Onolehemhen notes, they are frequently assembled by aid organizations using materials that are not local or affordable.

“This research is important because it demonstrates that birth kits assembled at the local level with readily available and affordable materials can greatly reduce perinatal infection rates and save countless lives,” said Onolehemhen, noting that Ethiopia’s infant mortality and maternal mortality rates are among the world’s highest. “Even where prenatal care and maternal vaccinations are available, it’s critical to address immediate sanitation needs through cost-effective innovations that are tailored to the culture and customs of the communities where they will be utilized. Only if birth kits are affordable and accessible will their use become routine.”
Ph.D. recipient examines uneven impact of German social policy reforms

A School of Social Work alumna is seeking solutions to employment parity problems in the United States by studying the wellbeing of working-age women in Germany following a series of national changes to family and labor market policy.

Jessica Camp, Ph.D. ’14, worked with the late Professor Eileen Trzcinski and Assistant Professor Stella Resko to examine the impact of the German government’s “Hartz reforms,” which were enacted in response to low birth rates and an unemployment crisis that peaked in 2005. Using a national dataset called the German Socioeconomic Panel, Camp and her advisors examined the policy changes, which introduced increased child care options and more flexible job types and have been deemed positive for women who work or want to work. But not all women have benefited from the changes.

While rates of employment among German women have increased since the policy changes, Camp said, women are more likely than men to engage in part-time work that does not offer the same protections or economic benefits. Women working part-time report high levels of satisfaction with life and overall wellbeing – possibly because part-time work makes it easier to juggle work with home and family – however positive effects are greater among privileged women than women without educational degrees, women with disabilities, women who are immigrants, and poor women with children. Among these vulnerable groups, overall well-being is lower and has declined since the implementation of the new policies, possibly because these women are less likely to be hired and may no longer be aided with the types of social welfare support that existed prior to the reforms.

“If left unchanged, some of the policy changes in Germany could have the unintentional effect of widening the gap between privileged and non-privileged women in Germany in the coming years,” Camp observed, adding that the research could help identify policy solutions to help working women in the United States.
Social Work alumna champions rights of disabled persons in Tajikistan

A School of Social Work alumna has brought hope to disabled persons halfway around the world through her work on a U.S. State Department initiative to foster greater awareness of disabilities in Tajikistan.

A staff member at Wayne State’s Developmental Disabilities Institute, **Angela Martin, M.S.W. ‘00**, in August 2013 spent seven days in Dushanbe educating key stakeholders about the unique needs of disabled persons. Martin met with representatives of IRODA, an organization promoting equal rights for disabled children, and Equal Opportunities, an organization protecting the rights and interests of vulnerable populations. She also gave presentations to clinical and administrative staff at three of six major child care institutions that serve as homes for disabled children.

Martin’s visit to Dushanbe comprised the first half of a two-part international exchange between DDI and IRODA and Equal Opportunities. For the second half in October, DDI hosted representatives from the Tajikistan organizations during their visit to Detroit.

The exchange was part of a program sponsored by the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs that pairs disability rights advocates from around the world with U.S. counterparts so that jointly they can promote worldwide inclusion, access, and greater awareness of the rights of the disabled.

Families in Tajikistan are just beginning to mobilize around greater rights and independence for their disabled loved ones, Martin noted, adding that families in the United States launched a similar movement in the 1950s and ‘60s. As Tajikistan families work to dispel myths about disabilities, obtain accurate diagnoses for their disabled children and increase their access to education, Martin said, they can benefit from techniques that have worked in America – and even enhance them through technology and social media.

To that end, Martin helped IRODA and Equal Opportunities identify opportunities for public relations campaigns and public service announcements promoting access and independence for the disabled. She also facilitated the translation of DDI’s “Possibilities” video series, which consists of four-to-seven minute videos focusing on the lives and accomplishments of individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities, into Tajik and Russian. Martin said she hopes the series will help the people of Tajikistan appreciate the contributions disabled person could make to the country with increased support from society.
Through a partnership with Case Western Reserve University, the School of Social Work is giving M.S.W. students an opportunity to explore how other countries are tackling society’s toughest problems.

During Spring Break study abroad trips, students enjoy a concentrated curriculum combining foreign language instruction, readings, tours of social services agencies, and visits with service providers and their clients.

“Things that we would view as neglect in America cannot necessarily be seen as neglect in Guatemala,” said Jenneatta Mitchell, who studied the strengths and weaknesses of social policies and human services in the Central American country compared to those in United States. “These people are just trying to survive. If there’s a lack of food, it’s because they don’t have the means. If their children are not attending the free schools, it’s because they can’t afford the uniform and textbook and supplies or because they need help at home to make ends meet.”

Michele Tomaszewski studied child welfare, social services, and indigenous community development while in Guatemala. Touring agencies and schools and visiting with Guatemalan professionals, Tomaszewski came to better understand the socio-political factors that influence the design and delivery of services such as reproductive health counseling. “When westerners attempt to talk to indigenous peoples about family planning it goes horribly, because often the men find it controlling. But when locals are recruited to do this, they gain the people’s trust and the results are much better.”
While studying mental illness and substance abuse in the Netherlands, **Elizabeth Culberson** was struck by the hope and enthusiasm expressed by some of society’s most traditionally marginalized populations. Touring Amsterdam’s prisons, homeless shelters and psychiatric hospitals, Culberson saw people getting a second chance.

*The focus of the Dutch is on recovery, rehabilitation, and independence. Everything we saw spoke to that.*

While in Poland, **Mica Roby** saw how the country’s political and economic transformation following the fall of communism has disproportionately affected marginalized groups. Through structured program tours and her own “off the beaten path” exploration of Poznan, Roby witnessed a struggle for assimilation by gays and lesbians, the homeless, and those with mental illness. *Poland was oppressed for so long and now it’s adapting to being free, and its point of reference is still Communism. There are groups who are still trying to assert their identity and find their place.*

**Jennifer Coons** spent two weeks in Ecuador visiting hospitals and social service agencies to observe approaches to poverty alleviation, child welfare, public health education and other issues. While there, she observed how entrenched cultural perspectives determine how a society responds to various populations. *In the United States our approach is ‘safety first,’ and we use greater caution about returning women to environments where they have experienced violence. But Ecuador is a very Catholic culture, where divorce is strongly discouraged and greater emphasis is place on keeping the family together. I had to remember that these are cultural values that have been engrained since childhood and respect them.*
Located in Michigan’s only public urban research university, the Wayne State School of Social Work is engaged in high-impact research to address the complex societal challenges facing one of America’s largest metropolitan centers. Its success lies in forging partnerships that leverage the vast expertise found throughout the university and Greater Detroit.

Leading Change THROUGH Research

**WSU University Research Grants**

Assistant Professors Suzanne Brown, Angelique Day and Jamie Mitchell have received funding from the Wayne State Division of Research to pursue studies that should improve outcomes for mothers struggling with addiction, Michigan foster youth, and African American men with cancer. The 2014-15 University Research Grants will advance the faculty members’ existing lines of research and promote evidence-based interventions with these vulnerable populations.
Brown, whose work focuses on mental illness and substance abuse, is undertaking a study of perceptions of parenting competence among women with substance abuse disorders. Specifically, Brown hopes to identify the social conditions or personality traits that cause many of these women to perceive themselves as highly capable mothers, even when their children have been placed in foster care as a result of their substance abuse.

Day, who as director of the School of Social Work’s Transition to Independence Program oversees Wayne State’s various supports for students aging out of foster care, will be conducting the first systemic examination of a 2010 policy impacting the provision of health care to foster youth under Medicaid. The policy changed many services from a fee-for-services scenario to a managed care system as a cost-cutting measure, and Day’s research will determine the impact these health care services are having on this population and to identify areas for improvement.”

Mitchell, who has researched the social and environmental correlates of unmet health needs and preventive health behaviors among African American men, will focus her study the underlying dynamics of communication between African American men, their oncologists, and companions who may accompany these patients to their visits. As part of her project, Mitchell will review video footage of patient-provider-companion interactions during oncology visits and consider these patients’ post-interaction, self-reported ratings of levels of trust, confidence, partnership and relationship status with regard to their doctors. Mitchell hopes the work will lead to the development of training materials for oncologists on tailoring their patient-centered communication for underserved minority male patient populations.

**Strengthening the child welfare workforce**

The Wayne State University School of Social Work this spring was named one of 11 recipients of federal funds dedicated to advance the preparation and support of an expert, culturally responsive workforce that can effectively deliver high quality child welfare services. Over five years, the school will receive more than $730,000 from the National Child Welfare Workforce Institute to fund “Wayne Together – Child Welfare Learning and Leadership Collaborative,” a program to create a sustainable education and training exchange addressing child welfare career awareness and workforce development. Through a partnership with the Michigan Department of Human Services (DHS), the School of Social Work will train 75 prospective child welfare workers within Southeastern Michigan.

The Wayne Together Collaborative has three objectives: to increase the number of competent M.S.W. graduates specializing in practice with child welfare populations, to increase DHS workforce retention rates through coaching and workshops; and to provide robust continuing education programming.

continued
“We know that many of our graduates stay in Southeast Michigan to practice after completing their advanced training,” said Joanne Sobek, principal investigator and associate dean of research for the School of Social Work. “By selecting the best students, integrating learning opportunities and creating connections between faculty, students, graduates and welfare workers, Wayne Together will launch the next generation of regional leaders improving outcomes and fostering success among Michigan’s most vulnerable children.”

Youth mental health first aid

The Wayne State University School of Social Work and the Michigan Area Health Education Center (AHEC) are placing themselves at the forefront of a national movement to train individuals and communities in Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA), a potentially life-saving intervention for minors in crisis situations.

With the WSU College of Nursing, the Wayne State partners have entered their second year of participation in a federal grant-based initiative to implement YMHFA with various AHEC sites across the country. AmeriCorps National Direct funding from the Corporation for National and Community Service was awarded to Northwestern CT AHEC to administer the national campaign for YMHFA, a priority of the Obama Administration that gained momentum after the tragic shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newton, CT. Michigan AHEC and the School of Social Work were selected by Northwestern CT AHEC to serve as one of 14 host sites in 13 states where full-time AmeriCorps members will provide YMHFA certification classes in the community. Both are contributing substantial funding and in-kind staff hours to this endeavor.

As part of the initiative, host-site supervisor Rachel Lathrop (M.S.W., ’08) and a full-time AmeriCorps volunteer teach YMHFA certification classes throughout Southeast Michigan to individuals who routinely work with youth, including educators, foster parents, juvenile justice workers, community health workers, camp counselors, and college students. Classes comprise a nine-hour program that teaches participants to identify the warning signs of mental health problems in adolescents and interact with them until help from a mental health professional is available. Specifically, the certification process teaches individuals how to assess for risk of suicide or harm in youth; listen nonjudgmentally; give reassurance and information; encourage appropriate professional help; encourage self-help; and other support strategies.

“Mental health crises are all too common in the general public and among youth,” Lathrop said. “Learning to identify the symptoms and signs of a mental health crisis and direct youth toward appropriate assistant is vital to their health and well-being just as having medical intervention is in the instance of a physical crisis, such as a heart attack. Mental health first aid from a trained observer can mean the difference between a positive and a tragic outcome for many youth.”
Collaborative research on aging, substance abuse

Associate Professor Faith Hopp, head of the Gerontology Affinity Group; Assistant Professor Stella Resko and Assistant Professor Suzanne Brown head the Substance Use, Violence and Mental Health Research Collaborative

The Wayne State School of Social Work has implemented a Social Work Research Enhancement Program (SWREP) dedicated to research that promotes the school’s focus on core areas of practice. This year, the program funded two research-enhancing affinity groups promoting greater understanding of issues related to aging and to substance abuse and mental health. These affinity groups will advance the rich body of work being conducted in these areas by helping faculty integrate expertise, secure external funding, and test ideas.

The Gerontology Affinity Group, which will address the diverse needs of older adults in urban areas, has three goals. The first is to develop a core infrastructure of faculty and practitioners with a shared focus on urban aging and health. The second is to identify and apply for external funding opportunities to conduct high-impact research and attract and retain new aging researchers. The third is to enhance the ability of social work students, clinicians, and social service agency personnel to engage with urban aging practice and policy. In view of the challenges faced by urban elders and the need for relevant strategies and interventions this group will broaden their expertise, engage in community outreach, conduct focus groups, mentor students, disseminate findings, and launch a blog to provide information that informs the practice community.

The Substance Use, Violence and Mental Health Research Collaborative seeks to forge stronger partnerships with service providers in the Detroit metro community. Its primary objectives are to develop collaborative journal manuscripts and research grant applications, conduct two collaborative pilot studies, and increase the research productivity and efficiency of group members. Given the importance of associations between substance use, violence and mental health problems, the group will also disseminate pilot study findings through a brown bag lecture for service providers, practice brief, and inform curriculum development.

“The School of Social Work is fortunate to have a devoted body of faculty conducting research and developing interventions in these two areas of profound significance to urban centers like Metropolitan Detroit,” said Dean Cheryl Waites.

“By facilitating collaboration between these researchers, the new affinity groups will speed the delivery of evidence-based practice enhancements to the field for the benefit of countless clients.”
Regina Ann Campbell, M.S.W. ’99, was named as one of 29 Detroit Revitalization Fellows, a Wayne State University project that matches rising professionals in fields related to urban issues with organizations working at the forefront of Detroit revitalization efforts.

Cheryl Coleman, M.S.W. ’80, president and CEO of Northeast Guidance Center, was honored at the Women of Wayne 2014 Headliner Award and Career Conference. The Headliner Awards are presented annually to Wayne State university alumnae whose achievements have made headlines in the media during the preceding year and who make their mark in society.

Kellie N. Crites, M.S.W. ’10, is engaged to David F. Malewski. Kellie is transitioning to a new job as a substance abuse therapist at the Detroit Reentry Center working in conjunction with the Michigan Department of Corrections through Community Programs, Inc. (She had previously worked in assertive community treatment and as an outpatient co-occurring disorders therapist.) David, a licensed pharmacist in the state of Michigan, is a Ph.D. candidate in Social and Administrative Pharmacy at The University of Michigan. Kellie and David will be married on Oct. 24, 2015 in Preston, Missouri.

Larmender A. Davis, M.S.W. ’94, a member of the WSU School of Social Alumni Association Board, was elected as Board Director At Large of the Association of Oncology Social Work (AOSW). Created in 1994, the AOSW is an international organization that is dedicated to the enhancement of psychosocial services to people with cancer and their families. She was elected to a two-year term which started in January 2014.

Jeanette Fallon, B.S.W. ’84, who started her career at Wayne County Juvenile Court in July 1984, retired from the Third Judicial Circuit Court (renamed) in 2012 after 28 years of service. Her last position was a juvenile probation officer in the Supervised Treatment for Alcohol and Narcotic Dependency (STAND) Program.

Kristin Bartley Lenz, M.S.W. ’93, wrote an essay, “Detroit, Michigan: A Slice of Detroit Pie,” that was published by Great Lakes Review in June.

Angela Martin, M.S.W. ’00, of the Wayne State Development Disabilities Institute won the 2012 Leadership in Advocacy Award from the Association of University Centers on Disabilities for her work on behalf of families and individuals.

Sharilynn Robinson-Lynk, M.S.W. ’93, received the University of Michigan’s Honorary Lavender Degree for her commitment to the university lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and ally and similarly-identified community. She also won the university’s Student Union Teacher of the Year Award for the 2013-2014 school year and its Fifth Annual Distinguished Diversity Leaders Award.

Don Soeken, M.S.W. ’66, has spent 40 years as a social worker counseling whistleblowers. He is author of “Don’t Kill the Messenger! How America’s Valiant Whistleblowers Risk Everything in Order to Speak Out Against Waste, Fraud and Abuse in Business and Government.”

Peter Vaughan, M.S.W. ’66, outgoing dean of Fordham University’s Graduate School of Social Service, was bestowed its highest honor, the prestigious President’s Medal.

We want to hear from you! Please let us know about your professional activities and personal milestones. And don’t forget to include a picture!

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The School of Social Work Alumni Association wrapped up National Social Work Month on March 27 with its annual awards luncheon at the McGregor Memorial Conference Center. Alumni Association Board President Corey Faulkner (far left) and Dean Cheryl Waites (far right) are pictured with Alumna of the Year Larmender Davis (M.S.W. ’94) and Citizen of the Year Reverend Dr. Wendell Anthony.

The Alumni Association sponsors and participates in many of the school’s activities as well as events throughout the City of Detroit. Here are some of its recent accomplishments:

- Volunteering to counsel those in need during Domestic Violence Awareness Month
- Co-hosting the 2nd Annual Social Work Survival Camp at our Oakland Center location
- Participating at a Veterans Day Tailgate during WSU football season
- Providing needed holiday gifts and support to families of veterans here in Detroit
- Honoring a Citizen and Alumna of the Year during National Social Work Month
- Supporting the school’s annual Graduation Luncheon at the Detroit Yacht Club
- Co-hosting the annual Dinner with the Dean and Silent Auction event, also at the Detroit Yacht Club, and raising money for direct tuition support and books for deserving social work students

Author’s Corner: Books from School of Social Work Alumni

Ruby J. Bowens (M.S.W. ’97)

An evangelist, pastor, and teacher, Bowens gives young women practical ways to grow and develop spiritually as Christians while navigating important life phases. Drawing from biblical passages, her social work training and her doctor of ministry degree in formational counseling, Bowens gives her readers advice for prioritizing devotional time, maintaining healthy peer relationships, approaching courtship and marriage, heeding the will of God, and embracing freedom.

**Uneven Shadows: Stories and Poems**
Latika Mangrulkar (M.S.W. ’94)

In her third collection of stories and poems, Mangrulkar examines the human experience in a modern, transnational world. Young and old, men and women, first, second, or third generation immigrants – her characters look at the same events through different eyes and derive different truths within their different realities. A resident of Southeast Michigan, Mangrulkar was raised in India, writes in three languages, and draws upon her life’s experiences as she pens narratives reflecting traditions of the East and West.

**How Many Therapists Does It Take? The Wit and Wisdom of Psychotherapy**
Kenneth E. Reid (M.S.W. ’64)

In this book extolling the humorous side of the helping professions, Reid presents a collection of jokes he began amassing 50 years ago as a graduate student at Wayne State’s School of Social Work. Categorized by themes that include pratfalls of practice, marriage and children, aging, institutions, and classic “couch” and “dream” jokes, this collection jovially embraces human idiosyncrasies and underscores the similarities – not the differences – between therapists and their clients.
**Childhood Trauma:**

Studies estimate that 15.5 million children are exposed to domestic violence each year in the United States, while seven million are exposed to severe and chronic violence. Victims of violence are more likely to perpetrate violence themselves, attempt suicide, and abuse drugs and alcohol. The **26th Annual Edith Harris Endowed Memorial Lecture** brought to Wayne State’s campus one of America’s foremost trauma experts, Yale University’s **Steven Marans**, who discussed the impact of trauma on children and community-based interventions that bring healing to victims and their families.

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The School of Social Work hosts two annual lectures focusing on issues impacting research and practice.
The Affordable Care Act and Health Disparities:

The Patient Prevention and Affordable Care Act of 2010 has increased the affordability of and access to an unprecedented array of critical diagnostics, treatments and therapies, but it cannot reverse prevailing attitudes and systemic clinical practices that have left disparities unchecked. So concludes James Herbert Williams of the University of Denver, who delivered the 8th Annual Diversity Lecture on the ACA’s potential to achieve health equity for the American people. Williams said this elusive public policy goal will require more minority health care professionals, integrated care by behavioral and physical clinicians, and culturally appropriate, innovative approaches.
Our students benefit immeasurably from your donations to dozens of School of Social Work scholarship funds. Here’s a look at your generosity in action:

2013-14 Scholarships

- Total Awards: $189,687
- Average Award Amount: $3,719
- Number of Award Recipients: 51
- Scholarships Available for Award: 42

For more information on giving, please contact Marguerite Carlton, major gifts officer, at marguerite@wayne.edu or at 313-577-8807.
The 2013-14 Dean’s Scholar, **Kendra Tillman** received her M.S.W. in May 2014. She is a motivational speaker for Diamond Cut Motivational Speakers, which she founded in 2008 to reach women’s groups, college students, the incarcerated, and various other groups. “I motivate audiences to confront obstacles and setbacks by demonstrating how to overcome and achieve what appears to be impossible,” said Tillman. “I inspire others to live the life that they want but have not yet achieved.”

My scholarship made it easier for me to advance my education and career because it gave me peace of mind when it came to the funding of my education. I did not have to concern myself with working a part-time job and was able to use some of my free time to serve the School of Social Work. As I volunteered for various committees and as the dean appointed me to sit on others, I felt like I had the time to serve and I wanted to give back to the School of Social Work to show my appreciation. As a result, the scholarship helped me to develop my leadership skills beyond the classroom.

Supporting the next generation of social workers through scholarships is consistent with the mission of the Wayne State School of Social Work in that it has a vision of creating leaders. Many potential social workers are hindered from furthering their education because of the financial obstacles that they face in their lives. In addition, typically social workers do not make high-end salaries and many are discouraged from pursuing a career in social work because of the student loans which often take years to repay. The scholarships often remove many of these financial obstacles for students and in the process allow them to be transformed by undergoing a comprehensive social work curriculum and workplace internships. In return, the School of Social Work and society benefit from emerging social worker leaders equipped to provide services to their communities.

I am grateful for this prestigious and wonderful opportunity and I will not forget the wonderful experience I had at the Wayne State School of Social Work. I plan to continue serving as a leader and would particularly like to serve on the Wayne State School of Social Work Alumni Board.
NEW FACES AT THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

**Ann Rosegrant Alvarez**, former associate dean and faculty member at the Wayne State University School of Social Work, has returned to the school after an eight-year absence and contributes to the community practice and leadership concentration. Alvarez was a member of the Wayne State Social Work faculty from 1993 to 2005, serving as associate dean from 2002 to 2005. Her scholarship and teaching focus on community practice, intersectionality and social work, social work education, the development of critical consciousness through praxis, community-based participatory research, group work and social action, and feminist social work history.

**Jun Sung Hong**, an expert on bullying, peer victimization, and school violence who has conducted extensive research in the United States and South Korea, joined Wayne State’s School of Social Work faculty as an assistant professor. Hong’s research examines interpersonal violence, child welfare and cultural competence in social work practice. He is particularly interested in bullying that occurs during the transition between elementary school and middle school, and bullying among Latino and Asian American youth.

**Elizabeth (Betsy) Cutscher** joined the Wayne State School of Social Work as associate director of academics, special assistant to the dean, and adjunct professor. An M.S.W., Cutscher came to Wayne State from Northwestern University, where she held the positions of research administrator and organizer for the federally funded Skin Disease Research Center in the Department of Dermatology. Cutscher develops and implements strategic administrative policies, procedures and communications for the school in conjunction with Dean Cheryl Waites. She also assists with major events and lectures, fundraising, community engagement, and school reporting.

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Visions is going electronic! Future issues will be sent out via email only, so please visit alumni.wayne.edu and update your information. You can also send your contact information to Cassandra Bowers, School of Social Work alumni liaison, at aa2083@wayne.edu.