

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK NEWS

Spring/Summer 2017



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Celebrating social work in **challenging times**



Dr. Steve Anderson

Dear Friends,

At the Social of Social Work, we are privileged to celebrate another great group of graduating students. For the academic year ending in May 2017, the School expects 55 BASW and 230 MSW graduates. In our annual School Recognition Ceremony on May 5, we will honor their accomplishments and wish them well as they begin or enter the next phases of their social work careers. We are especially proud that these graduates come from all across Michigan and beyond, due to our program options in East Lansing, Flint, Saginaw, and Oakland County, as well as our Statewide Blended and Weekend programs at other sites. Extending access in this way is critical to fulfilling our role in MSU's mission as a land-grant university, as well as in assuring that we are leaders in educating future social workers who will practice wherever needed.

This year has been challenging on many levels in the broader environment in which we live and work. Issues such as the continuing crises in Michigan communities, often tense racial relations across the country, and a national election and aftermath with serious implications for many of the vulnerable groups that social workers serve have stimulated high levels of debate and calls for action.

In this challenging environment, I have had students and others raise many questions about the future of our field and the people we serve. While I appreciate this apprehension and the accompanying uncertainty, I remain extremely optimistic about social work and the roles it will play. In particular, attacks on vulnerable groups such as immigrants, those with limited health care coverage, and other diverse groups outside the mainstream call out for social work advocacy and direct service support, consistent with our Code of Ethics that emphasizes serving and standing up for vulnerable groups. The rising idealism of students reinforces this optimism—this coming generation of social workers is committed to tackling complex social issues in often contentious environments. Together with improving skill sets that are formed through participation in high quality social work educational programs and community activities, our field is poised to respond to the many challenges facing those with the greatest needs.

It is in this spirit that we send our graduates into social work practice and express our confidence that they will do

great things. Our faculty members and staff in the School of Social Work likewise accept these challenges and are prepared to respond in many ways to assure that the rights and well-being of those we serve are protected. Our faculty members have established an ad-hoc committee, Forums on Social Justice and Positive Change, to engage our community in the exploration of current social issues, with the assistance of outside experts and community members. Similarly, our Diversity Committee is developing programming to highlight the importance of social justice and social action, as well as to reinforce and celebrate the importance of diversity. We invite our community partners and friends to bring forth other ideas that you might like the School to collaborate in or lead. You can stay updated on these and other activities of interest to social workers by following us on our rapidly growing Facebook page, which now has nearly 3,000 followers (see facebook.com/msusocialwork), as well as by visiting our website (socialwork.msu.edu).

As we complete another academic cycle, I want to recognize the great work done by our faculty members and staff on a daily basis to make the School of Social Work a special place. This dedicated and talented group works throughout the year to provide the best education possible for our students, and together with our students provides high levels of service in our communities through field placements and other engaged learning activities. The research our faculty members conduct on real problems facing individuals, families, and communities plays a vital role in continuing to move our field forward as well.

Our community partners also deserve our continuing gratitude. We have hundreds of agencies that work with us to provide hands-on education through field placements and many others that collaborate on research projects or engage in continuing education. Our donor base is growing, with the contributions supporting new scholarships as well as research and service projects.

The School could not be making so many positive contributions without the ongoing creativity and commitment of so many stakeholders. Thank you for all that you are doing!

Best regards,

Steve Anderson
Director and Professor, School of Social Work





Steve
Anderson



Lynn
Nee



Ann
Ripberger



Anissa
Chitwanga

School faculty members develop resources for family caregivers

With the help of grant support from the Michigan Health Endowment Fund (MHEF), School of Social Work Director **Steve Anderson** and faculty member **Lynn Nee** are engaged in a project to develop online health-related training and information resources for kinship caregivers serving children who are not living with their parents. These caregivers, most of whom are grandparents, often face challenges in responding to health issues, not only for the children in care but also for themselves related to the challenges of caregiving.

The project team, which also includes School PhD student **Ann Ripberger** and MSW student **Anissa Chitwanga**, began by reviewing previous work on health issues for these children and their kinship caregivers. To obtain more direct perspectives of caregiver issues, the project team then conducted focus group interviews with a total of 27 kinship caregivers in four Michigan areas (Detroit, Pontiac, Kalamazoo, and Cadillac). Nearly all of these caregivers were grandparents, and most had low incomes and challenging caregiving situations. Results from these focus groups have been used to identify priorities for needed health-related training. Topics include:

- Children's ADHD/ADD and learning disabilities
- Children's behavioral issues
- Children's asthma and other breathing disorders
- Caregivers' physical self-care and well-being
- Caregivers' stress
- Access to children's health care services

In the current phase of the project, six health-related training webinars led by subject area experts are being developed for planned release April through June. Because of the support from the MHEF, the School is able to provide all of the webinars at no cost to caregivers. Once the webinars have been presented, they will continue to be available for viewing online on a webpage being developed by the School in conjunction

with the project. The webpage also will include other resources for kinship caregivers, as well as a project report on health-related issues that commonly are problematic in these caregiving situations.

All project team members were involved in conducting the focus groups, and they were struck both by the difficult situations facing caregivers and their resilience in providing care. As expressed by Dr. Anderson, "Our experiences in conducting these focus groups were both heartbreaking and inspiring. These caregivers typically are caring for children who have experienced considerable trauma and are doing so in the face of chaotic formal and informal support systems, limited resources, and their own health challenges. Yet, they show amazing determination and grace in assuring that their grandchildren and other related children overcome the difficult circumstances they have faced and become successful.... Our experience with these groups really has reinforced our project goal of improving the resources available to these caregivers."

While this particular project has focused on kinship caregivers serving children away from their parents, there also is considerable School interest in other forms of kinship caregiving. In particular, kinship caregivers are playing critical roles in serving elderly persons with both mental and physical problems, as well as children with disabilities and returning military veterans. School faculty members have expertise in all of these areas, and the School is seeking to develop research, training, and services for each of these population groups. According to Dr. Anderson, "Family members are providing tremendous amounts of services to relatives facing a wide array of challenges. They do so due to love and other altruistic motives, often at great tangible and emotional costs. We as a society have to figure out how to better support these efforts, and our School can play an important role in such efforts." **S**

The Flint water crisis: Growing leaders and facilitating community change

Let's begin by saying, the Flint water crisis is not over. There has been progress, but the tap water is still not safe to drink, and it is estimated to take at least three years before all lead service lines will be replaced. Until then, residents rely on water filtration systems and bottled water for cooking, drinking, and other basic needs. For the past year, **Monica Villarreal** (2017 MSW graduate) has been intimately weaving together clinical and macro social work perspectives to address the needs of Flint residents and to facilitate community change.

Addressing the challenges of the Flint water crisis is no small task. The Organization and Community Leadership (OCL) concentration has afforded Villarreal the education and tools necessary to engage in skilled social work practice as a community leader striving for social justice. The project-based internship placement made it possible for her to integrate the curriculum into her work and develop new programs to address community needs created by the Flint water crisis. Completing the OCL program has increased confidence in her voice for justice, challenged her to grow as a leader and in her identity as a social work professional, and provided her with tools to facilitate change in social service delivery models responsive to the ever-changing context of crisis and recovery work.

One of the most exciting projects that Villarreal is involved with is the Flint Community Help Centers. The uniqueness of this project is the collaborative approach and holistic framework used to deliver social services. It's an experimental model based on other approaches developed in communities that have experienced crisis. Located at three churches, the Help Centers serve nearly 500 families daily and are open four days per week. The Help Centers offer lead-mitigating foods and produce, physical health services, mental health services, personal care items, and bottled water. With no income limitations, the Help Centers are mobile "one

stop shops" for residents to receive assistance and referrals for additional support.

Many local and national organizations were involved in planning the Help Centers. The Food Bank of Eastern Michigan serves as fiduciary for the \$2.2M project. Villarreal is privileged to serve as chair of the Advisory Board which oversees the project. The Help Centers are a testament to the strength and resilience of the Flint community, which has pulled together to develop collaborative solutions to a problem that no one organization could solve alone.

This crisis is an opportunity to improve the lives of Flint residents and change systems of injustice that led to the contamination of Flint's water. What is learned from Flint and how Flint recovers will tell a story about the role and impact of the social work profession.

Villarreal stated, "Flint is a resilient city with resilient people. With crisis, there is opportunity. Seeing people in Flint civically engaged gives me hope." **S**

Monica Villarreal, MSW, with Flint children picking up clean drinking water (photo by Kathy Weinberg).



The Help Center, funded in part by PepsiCo Foundation, has provided much-needed assistance to Flint residents (photo courtesy of PepsiCo Foundation).





Students and faculty gather with the painted sheet in front of Baker Hall.

MSW students spoke of upcoming events and what has inspired them to become social workers.



School's Diversity Committee hosts **#SocialWorkersWill Rally**

On March 27, the Diversity Committee within the School sponsored the #SocialWorkersWill Rally at the Rock event. The intent was to paint the Rock on Farm Lane, but upon arriving at 7:00 a.m. to secure the Rock, it had already been claimed for Mental Health Awareness Week. Committee member **Amanda Dubey-Zerka** thought quickly, and the rally was moved to the steps of the Auditorium nearby, and a sheet was painted instead. While listening to several speakers, visitors of the rally were encouraged to write inspirational messages of what social workers will do.

Faculty members **Glenn Stutzky**, **Julie Navarre**, **Pilar Horner**, and **Daniel Velez-Ortiz** were among the speakers and told stories of what inspired them to become social workers and instructors, as well as shared messages of the unique role of social workers in creating social change.

Several students spoke of their projects for Dr. Horner's Topics in Policy Practice and Advocacy master's-level course. Among the projects mentioned were:

- By Invitation Only: Drug Trafficking Simulation
- Letters for a Dream—Political Advocacy Relating to Immigration
- Immigrants in the Education System: What Are the Barriers?
- Refugee Health and Wellness Fair
- Voices of Muslim Immigration From Then Until Now
- Fashion Revolution—A Day of Advocacy Looking at Globalism, Conscious Consumerism, and Environmental Impacts

On a chilly and overcast day, many people took time to listen and leave their messages of social work inspiration. Dubey-Zerka said, "Today we did what social workers do: we were present in our community; we provided education on social issues; we provided a safe space for all to gather; we listened and promoted a culture of action. What will you do?" **S**

FACULTY
RESEARCH

Carrie Moylan

After assessing all 21 campuses in their counties, staff used the results to guide their coalition-building efforts.

Dr. Moylan's research is evaluating sexual violence prevention programming

Dr. Carrie Moylan is working with three anti-sexual violence organizations in Western New York (Crisis Services, in Buffalo, YWCA in Niagara County, and RESTORE in Rochester) to evaluate sexual violence prevention programming focused on increasing the use of community-level sexual assault prevention strategies, such as coalition building, social norms change, and policy advocacy. Funding is provided by the New York State Department of Health and supports staff at all three locations and Dr. Moylan as an evaluator.

In the first year of this five-year grant, program staff prioritized strengthening coalitions with college campuses to build on the growing commitment to address sexual assault on college and university campuses. Staff wanted to think systematically about how to approach the many campuses in their region, to assess strengths and opportunities for coalition building, and to find a way to track and measure the outcomes of their efforts to harness momentum with campuses.

Building on their expressed need, Dr. Moylan worked with the staff to develop a tool to Assess Campus Readiness for Coalition Building. After assessing all 21 campuses in their counties, staff used the results to guide their coalition-building efforts. Their efforts have since led to:

- formalized partnerships with campuses
- establishment of contracted services
- invitations to join existing campus committees
- establishment of a new campus-community group
- partnerships with campuses to provide prevention programming to students

Dr. Moylan also assisted with a community needs assessment of the three-county region. Staff interviewed 97 community stakeholders about their understanding of risk and protective factors related to sexual violence, as well as their perspectives on the challenges and opportunities in the prevention of sexual violence. Findings revealed a rich picture of community-specific risk and protective factors, and revealed 11 different opportunities for sexual violence prevention that are being used to guide ongoing prevention efforts.

Both of these activities illustrate how community-driven evaluation can generate data that guides efforts to solve pressing social problems. Dr. Moylan stated, "Serving as the evaluator for this project has been an opportunity to merge my research and practice background. I love seeing how the staff have been able to use the evaluation projects to both showcase and expand their amazing work to prevent sexual violence in their local communities." **S**

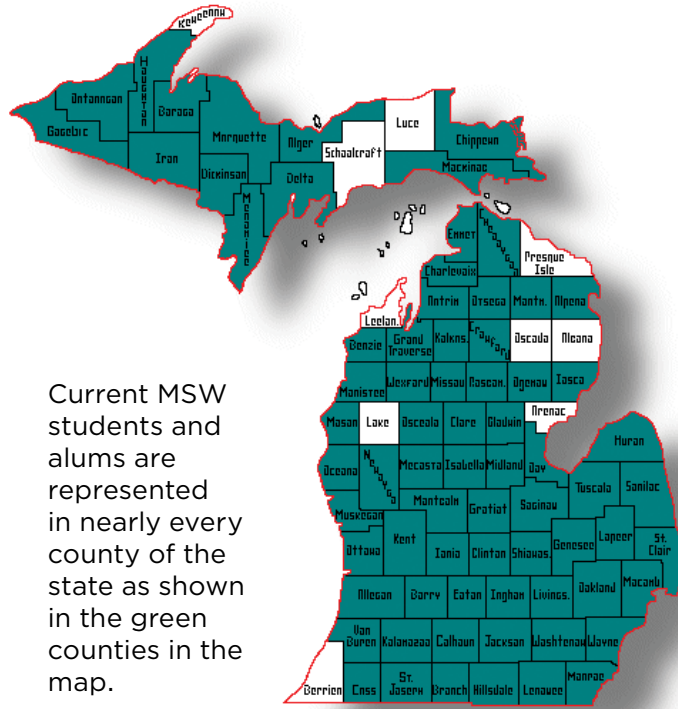
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MSW Program reaches across the state and beyond!

Embracing Michigan State University's land-grant mission, the School of Social Work has been committed to providing access to the MSW degree for students across the state for over 20 years. With traditional campus-based programs in East Lansing, Flint, Oakland, and Saginaw, as well as the Statewide Blended and Weekend programs that offer the degree in a largely online format, our current MSW students and alums represent 73 out of Michigan's 83 counties—an impressive 88%!

In addition to the MSW Program being delivered across the state, the School has also welcomed students from Kosovo, Malawi, Namibia, Nigeria, Tanzania, and Uganda, who are on track to graduate this year or next.

Over the last 10 years, the accessibility of our MSW degree has prepared more than 1,700 graduates to provide public service throughout the state of Michigan and beyond! **S**



Current MSW students and alums are represented in nearly every county of the state as shown in the green counties in the map.

Scenes from the MSW Statewide Blended Program's Summer Institute held each June on MSU's East Lansing campus.



9th Annual Great Lakes Summer Institute offers sponsorship opportunities

The Great Lakes Summer Institute (GLSI) is one of the leading statewide annual training events, providing a wide variety of continuing education opportunities for Michigan social workers and other human service professionals. The goal of GLSI is to offer attendees the most up-to-date, current workshops for professional skill development in both clinical and macro settings.

The GLSI takes place in beautiful Traverse City, Michigan at Great Wolf Lodge Resort on July 12-14, 2017.

- Courses are open for registration now! Visit socialwork.msu.edu/ceu/catalog.php to learn more.
- Earn up to 18 CECHs! Courses include topics on pain, ethics, human trafficking, substance abuse, death and loss, trauma treatment, clinical and macro practice, and more.
- Offering three full days of trauma as part of our newly developed Professional Trauma Certificate Program!

New developments within the School's Continuing Education Program

- ▶ The Continuing Education Program now offers **more opportunities for learning to better meet the needs of busy professionals.** Our online, on-demand courses can be accessed 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.
- ▶ Our new and improved **registration system is up and running.** Register for courses at socialwork.msu.edu/ceu/catalog.php; under Topics of Interest select "Online Courses."
- ▶ Currently, we have **over 70 online courses** available, addressing topics such as **Pain Management, Ethics, Human Trafficking, and Child Welfare.** More are added regularly.
- ▶ In Michigan, social workers can **earn one-half of the required continuing education contact hours in person using live, synchronous contact.** The remaining continuing education contact hours may be completed in any other approved format, including online courses.

Sponsorship opportunities

The MSU School of Social Work is excited to announce sponsorship opportunities for the 9th Annual Great Lakes Summer Institute. Your organization can reach over 250 professionals from across Michigan that include a variety of social workers, clinical directors, supervisors and caseworkers, as well as public mental health and child welfare organizations.

We invite you to be a sponsor this event! For more information, contact Events Specialist **Gina Van Horn** at vanhorn@msu.edu. **S**

Institute Sponsor: \$7,500

- Signage displaying your organization/agency name and logo in the registration area
- Acknowledgment announcement at each breakout session
- Organization/agency ad in the institute registration packet, on our website and social media and in our 2017 Summer/Fall Catalog (distributed to over 18,000 social workers)
- Free registration packet insert
- Two complimentary full institute registrations

Technology Sponsorship: \$2,000

- Acknowledgment announcement at each breakout session
- Signage displaying your organization/agency name and logo at breakfast station
- Organization/agency ad included in the institute registration packet and social media
- One free full-day registration

Breakfast Sponsor: \$1,500

- Acknowledgment announcement at each breakout session
- Signage displaying your organization/agency name and logo at breakfast station
- Organization/agency ad included in the institute registration packet and social media
- One free full-day registration

Snack Break Sponsor: \$1,000

- Acknowledgment announcement at each breakout session
- Signage displaying your organization/agency name and logo at snack stations
- Organization/agency ad included in the institute registration packet and social media

Purchase an Ad: \$500

- Organization/agency ad included in the institute registration packet and social media

YELL grant focus: Developing a **culture of inclusion and disability pride** in Michigan high schools

In collaboration with Michigan Disability Rights Coalition (MDRC), faculty member **Michele Brock** and the School of Social Work received the Youth Engaged in Learning and Leading (YELL) grant from the Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council (MDDC). Together, MDRC and the School will pilot youth clubs dedicated to creating a culture of inclusion and disability pride. Participating high schools will create teams of key decision makers, faculty advisors, youth with intellectual or developmental disabilities who have high and complex support needs, and youth without disabilities.



Michele Brock

The goal of YELL is to pilot a model that will change the culture of high schools in Michigan by giving participants the tools they need to create change in schools and eventually in communities. YELL began in April 2017 and ends in December 2019.

Many benefits have been found to be associated with embracing disability pride, including:

- higher self-esteem and self-confidence
- a sense of belonging and community with others with similar barriers
- increased independence and advocacy for accommodations

All three of these build the foundation for successful post-high school transitions and a higher quality of life. Disability advocates argue that individuals who experience disability pride are more likely to be included in the community and to be successful in their lives, housing situations, places of employment, educational settings, personal relationships, and communities.

The National Collaborative on Disability Guideposts for Successful Youth Transition has found these concepts (disability history and pride) to be critical factors in creating successful outcomes for youth after high school. Incorporating these concepts into the everyday practices

Incorporating these concepts (disability history and pride) into the everyday practices of the education system, as well as in the lives of both students with disabilities and their parents, has a positive effect on student success.

of the education system, as well as in the lives of both students with disabilities and their parents, has a positive effect on student success.

Youth without disabilities will learn about disability through a social justice framework. The intent of this approach is to encourage these youth to view their peers with a disability as equal and less likely to only engage in polite, time-limited, individual, or token acts of kindness. When youth without disabilities understand disability as an aspect of diversity, they can see youth with disabilities as having human needs rather than special needs.

After training, each school's youth club will identify goals, develop proposals, and implement activities related to inclusion and disability within their school community. The project team will engage in evaluation, communication with stakeholders, and modeling of the principles of self-determination to support the efforts of participating schools. Each demonstration site will engage in projects and activities unique to the needs of its school, and sites will have opportunities to learn from one another.

The grant cycle began in April 2017, when the project team developed and refined a work plan and created an advisory group of key stakeholders to offer input and feedback on tasks, activities, processes, and tools. Full community participation for people with disabilities continues to be a major barrier. The YELL project, hopefully, will illuminate what factors contribute to successful inclusive practices for schools to replicate. For more information, contact Michele Brock, brockm@msu.edu. **S**



COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

Chance at Childhood Legal Self-Help Center seen as **viable model for replication**

Since 2011, the Chance at Childhood (CAC) Program has operated a Legal Self-Help Center in collaboration with the Family Division of the Ingham County Circuit Court. In the center, social work and law students help patrons understand the court process and help them review legal documents and prepare their own documents to file with the court. The center is operated during both the fall and spring semesters and is open to anyone without an attorney who has child welfare concerns. During the course of each semester, students serve an average of over 100 families. The most common feedback from patrons is that the students “were the first people to listen and actually help me. I never could have done this without your help.”

The center is a crucial community resource. In recent years, increasing numbers of people have found legal representation beyond their financial means. At the same time, federal funding for legal aid services has been dramatically reduced. Throughout the nation, Legal Aid offices have been forced to close or consolidate. Given this circumstance, both the National Association of Social Workers and the American Bar Association recognize access to justice as a pressing social need. A justice system, no matter how well-functioning, becomes irrelevant if those who seek justice lack access to that system. This is the very threat facing many Michiganders today.

In March 2017, CAC staff attended the national conference of the Self-Represented Legal Network (SRLN), and made a presentation about the operation of the Legal Self-Help Center. The SRLN exists to seek innovative ways to provide meaningful access to justice for the majority of the US population who cannot afford to hire a lawyer. Newer techniques include online access to volunteer lawyers,

computer programs designed to answer basic legal questions, and the use of GIS technology to better deliver outreach legal services

However, the preferred method for helping unrepresented litigants remains direct service in some form of legal self-help center, which was the focus of the CAC staff presentation. The CAC Legal Self-Help Center is unique in two ways. First, the center is staffed entirely by University students. Second, the center is staffed by both law and social work students. The vast majority of center patrons have a variety of needs beyond the immediate legal questions they raise. For instance, patrons often are dealing with domestic violence, health and mental health challenges, and housing insecurity. Social work students conduct a holistic intake evaluation that goes beyond the immediate legal issue to identify these needs. The students are then able to make appropriate referrals to help patrons address these concerns.

The CAC presentation focus on the interdisciplinary approach as well as the use of University students as a resource to meet the demand for self-help services was well received. Conference attendees were particularly interested in the role of social work students in the center. Attendees recognized the need for social work services in their own centers, and CAC’s center presented a viable model for them to replicate. Through this conference, CAC staff were able to share on a national stage innovations made possible due to the School’s partnership with the MSU College of Law. Staff also benefited from hearing about the practices and experiences of other self-help centers throughout North America. Staff look forward to incorporating lessons learned from the conference and seeking new ways to ensure that all Michiganders have meaningful access to justice. **S**



The Chance at Childhood faculty and students showing their festive spirit.



COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

FAME expands campus and community partnerships

The FAME Program hosted two spring events focused on cultivating new and existing relationships with partners and stakeholders across campus and within the community. On Monday April 10, the 2nd Annual FAME Summer Send-off took place at Cowles House on the MSU campus. Hosted by the College of Social Science, this event brings MSU alumni who have supported the FAME Program together with FAME students and School of Social Work faculty and staff to celebrate another successful year of partnership.

Graduating FAME student **Justin McElwee** spoke about his experience transitioning to MSU and how supports provided by the FAME Program contributed to his educational success. FAME sophomore **Kiara Marshall** shared her experience of receiving crucial supports from FAME in her first year at MSU, including receiving a “freshman starter kit,” which provided her with all of her essential move-in items for her dorm. FAME donors **Lynn and Dean Fiegel** spoke about their decision to create an endowed Summer Scholarship Fund for FAME students.

Through their and other crucial donor funds, the FAME Program plans to award \$25,000 in scholarships to FAME students enrolled in summer courses.

On April 11, FAME hosted a Campus Champion Network Meeting, inviting current, new, and potential campus partners to an informational session in an effort to strengthen and expand the supportive network on campus for MSU students who have experienced foster care, kinship care, or homelessness.

A total of 14 faculty and staff representatives from various departments and units across campus learned about the barriers former foster youth experience in their higher education journey and the resources and supports FAME provides to assist them. Guests had the opportunity to hear from current FAME Campus Champions about ways they have incorporated their role as MSU staff or faculty into the supportive network for foster youth and explore ways they can contribute to the mission to support some of MSU’s most vulnerable students in achieving Spartan Success. **S**



Students, faculty, and donors gather for the 2nd Annual FAME Summer Send-off on campus at the Cowles House.



Kiara Marshall, incoming social work undergraduate student



FAME donors **Dean and Lynn Fiegel** receive recognition from College of Social Science Associate Dean **Joe Messina**



Justin McElwee, James Madison College, International Relations graduating senior



L-R: Tina Blaschke-Thompson, Keesa Johnson, Glenn Stutzky, and Emily Brozovic at the Meet-the-Veterans event hosted at the MSU Hub for Innovation in Teaching and Learning

New course focuses on challenges of combat veterans

Combat Veterans: The Physical, Emotional, and Social Costs of War has been awarded *Honorable Mention for Best Fully Online Course* in the 2016–2017 MSU AT&T Instructional Technology Awards Competition (atawards.msu.edu).



First offered in fall 2016, this course requires students to embark on an immersive 15-week journey through the military deployment cycle, designed to deepen empathy and understanding of the challenges our combat veterans face. Led by Tina Blaschke-Thompson, the instructional design team (Glenn Stutzky, Social Work; Emily Brozovic and Keesa Johnson, IT Services) presented this innovative approach to teaching and learning at the Online Learning Consortium Innovate Conference in New Orleans, as well as the Social Work Distance Education Conference in San Antonio in April of this year. Blaschke-Thompson also was honored at an MSU awards luncheon on April 19 related to this work.

Said Blaschke-Thompson, “The creation of this course has been an emotional journey for everyone involved, especially the veterans who were willing to be vulnerable and candid in the sharing of their stories for the purpose of student learning. On a personal level, this course has allowed me to more fully understand and appreciate the challenges my husband has endured as a result of his combat experience. These veterans now know that they aren’t alone and someone (many people, in fact) cares.” This course will be offered again fall 2017. **S**

At Uconn-Humphrey’s Institute Campaign School MSU Advocacy Scholars learn about elected office

As part of the MSU School of Social Work’s Advocacy Scholars program, Frances Jackson and other Advocacy Scholars attended the Humphreys Institute Campaign School at the University of Connecticut School of Social Work. This learning opportunity gave Jackson a greater understanding about affecting policy on a macro level through the legislative process. Prior to arriving in Connecticut, Jackson had no specific expectations regarding the conference. She just knew that she wanted to have more information about running for office.

On Day 1 of the conference, the group learned about the possibilities and benefits of holding an elected position. Jackson learned how to prepare for running her own campaign by accepting her past experiences and mistakes. Students were taught how to create a personal box of moments that made them who they are, including both happy moments and challenging times. Additionally, best practices were reviewed in choosing the right volunteers, a campaign manager, fundraising, and many other aspects of running for office. The training stressed that elections on local, state, and federal levels are all important in getting bills passed for the populations that social workers serve.

Jackson noted, “This experience has enriched my education as a graduate student at Michigan State University. I interviewed those who are currently holding an elected position to gain knowledge from their perspective as it relates to their work in their career. I am more equipped with the tools to start my own campaign. Humphrey’s Institute is an amazing resource for those who are considering public office to address the disenfranchisement of some populations. I feel this is an attainable career whether one is a clinician or an OCL major.”

“I will educate my clients and community about researching candidates, voting, and supporting candidates they believe will fight for them. I’ve been empowered to follow my professional goals of being a champion for systemic change for oppressed minorities. I plan to run for State Representative within the next two to six years.” **S**



L-R: Tanya Rhodes Smith, director of the Nancy A. Humphreys Institute for Political Social Work, Frances Jackson, Kenneth Stetson, Algeria Wilson, Haley Hildebrand, and Dr. Sacha Klein

BASW students' scholarly research strengthens critical thinking, reasoning skills

The BASW Program is in its seventh year of matching BASW students with School of Social Work faculty and PhD students to engage in scholarly research as part of the University Undergraduate Research Arts Forum. This year, nearly 25% of our BASW students participated and were able to build upon the knowledge they gained through their academic coursework in statistics and research methods and be an active member of a “real world” research team. Students increasingly report that this mentorship has not only increased their interest in research and further academic studies but that it has strengthened their critical thinking and reasoning skills. At the forum, they had the opportunity to share their research via an oral or poster presentation, have their presentation judged by an MSU faculty member, and compete to win up to \$500.

The wide range of research methodologies and topics shared by the BASW students speaks to the breadth of social work practice across the life span, social issues, and communities. This year, social work had two first-place winners. Congratulations to **Ryan Kunz** and **Alyea Williams** for their research poster, *Intimate Partner Violence and Help-seeking Strategies in College Student Relationships* (faculty mentor

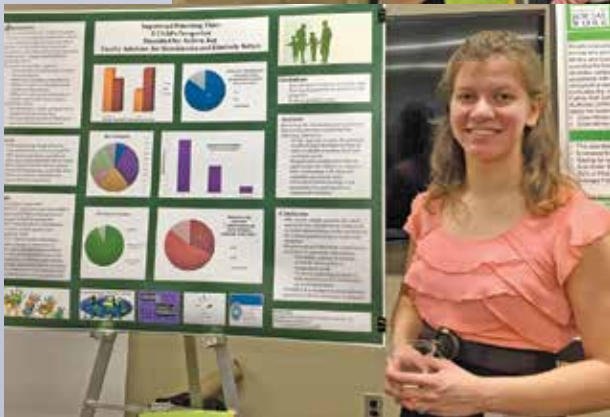


First-place winners **Ryan Kunz** and **Alyea Williams** with their poster *Intimate Partner Violence and Help-seeking Strategies in College Student Relationships*

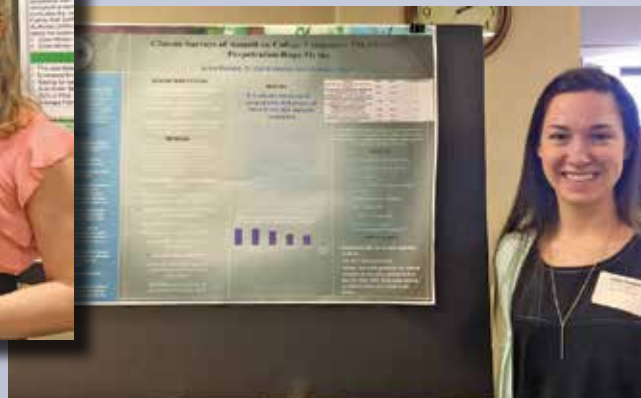
Dr. Hyunkag Cho) and **Christina Calton** and **Emily Rau** for their research poster, *Using the Geographic Information Systems Maps to Illustrate the Implications of CIT Training* (faculty mentors Dr. Sheryl Kubiak, Edita Milanovic, Daria Shamrova). **S**



Kenneth Wirth, Chloe Hiner, and Kayla Schindler with their poster *Barriers and Facilitators to Type 2 Self-Management in Older African American Men: Moving Towards a Pilot Intervention*



Sydney Kay with her poster *Supervised Parenting Time: A Child's Perspective*



Jenna Randall with her poster *A Review of Campus Climate Survey Reports*

International students and spouses: Telling photo stories to make a change

How can we make the MSU community more inclusive for international students and spouses? This was the main question that School of Social Work doctoral students **Dasha Shamrova** and **Cristy Cummings**, along with undergraduate researchers **Rachel Schwartz** and **Christina Callton**, set out to answer by giving cameras to 18 international students and spouses from 13 countries. Photovoice, a participatory qualitative research methodology, was used to empower the participants as they shared their adaptation experiences, stories of struggle and resilience, and dreams for the MSU community. Participants met several times to discuss their photos, creating shared narratives and powerful adaptation stories.

One of the participants commented, “It felt like finally being able to break my heart free and watch many other people share very similar feelings and experiences, and it made me feel in peace, because I was finally not alone anymore. It was incredible to have my eyes opened to such different points of view that in the end all lead to the same direction, to the same feelings. I think together we all had the chance see how strong we are, but we also saw that we want to be seen as part of the MSU community.”

The participants’ stories and pictures were compiled in a traveling exhibit, which has been shown both on campus and in the wider community. The exhibit was launched at Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum at Michigan State University and



Cristy
Cummings



Dasha
Shamrova

has also been presented to community stakeholders, including the Global Festival, a Linking All Types of Teachers to International Cross-Cultural Education (LATTICE) monthly session on immigration, a Community Volunteers for International Programs (CVIP) board meeting, a Volunteer English Tutoring Program (VETP) meeting, and a brown bag presentation at the School of Social Work. In addition, the MSU library is hosting

this project as a temporary exhibit until the end of May.

Qualitative analysis of the project data, including transcripts and photographs, was presented in a poster presentation at the Society for Social Work and Research (SSWR) 2017 annual meetings. A manuscript is in development, with the intent to illustrate the complex relationship between community resources and adaptation outcomes for this population.

If you are interested in seeing the pictures, reading the stories of participants, or getting more information, please email Cristy Cummings (cummi205@msu.edu) or Dasha Shamrova (shamrova@msu.edu). Based on the participants’ experiences of supportive places for their adaptation, a community map was created and can be requested using one of the above emails.

This project was supervised by **Dr. Deborah Johnson**, professor in Human Development and Family Studies, and was sponsored by the Office for Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives through a Creating Inclusive Excellence Grant. **S**

“This project has been a representation of what we both believe social work research needs to be: timely, actionable, and empowering. Through the privilege of experiencing the construction of participants’ stories firsthand, we were able to better understand their lives and make our community change efforts more targeted.”

—Cristy Cummings and Dasha Shamrova



Photovoice project members and participants at the debut event at the Broad Museum.



San Sebastián University in Santiago, Chile

Undergrad David Havens travels to **Santiago, Chile**, for field placement

David Havens is an undergraduate senior in MSU's School of Social Work. He was recently selected to be the first social work student to travel to Santiago, Chile, and conduct a field placement with San Sebastián University (USS). He was offered this opportunity by **Dr. Pilar Horner** after working together to do research for the Provost's Undergraduate Research Initiative (PURI). Dr. Horner assisted Havens with his Spanish and mentored him on the application of qualitative research methods. While it might be said Haven's Spanish proficiency was slightly overestimated, he stated, "I am eternally grateful for everyone who has worked to provide me this experience."

As of this writing, Havens has been in Chile three of the eight weeks of the program, and he is fully engaged in the work, culture, and people of this beautiful city. His field placement, which coincides with the course Social Work 494B, consists of three primary roles in USS's social work program.

First, he works as a teaching assistant for the social work program's **Director Fernando Fuenzalida** in his Fundamentals of Social Work course for first-year students. Havens assists with facilitating conversation in the class, along with bringing a North American viewpoint on social issues in class discussion.

Second, he assists **Professor Guillermo Sanhueza** and his research team in his project exploring the moral performance of Chilean prison systems. This project is considering the effects of corruption, abuse, and mistreatment of inmates, and in turn how such effects may influence greater communities. Through

literature reviews, prison visits, and interviews of prison staff and inmates, the research team hopes to be able to start a professional dialogue for both North and South American prisons concerning the benefits of rehabilitation-focused prison reform and greater accountability by prison officials and staff.



The final project, led by Havens, is a student workshop entitled "Social Work in the United States." In weekly meetings, he facilitates a conversation with a number of USS social work students regarding North American social work and US social issues and realities. He also discusses US universities in the hopes that these students might be able to travel to MSU to study in the future. This chance to broaden student horizons and study in an American university would create great scholarly and professional opportunities for them in the future, and this workshop hopes to begin that process.

During the initial stage of his field placement, Havens has been able to experience something that would never have been possible without the hard work and dedication of MSU's School of Social Work. Havens said, "I have plenty of crazy stories and amazing pictures already, and I'm not even half-way through my time here. Because of this, I am forever grateful to the tremendous faculty and program with whom I have been lucky enough to study and work. So, all the way from Santiago, Chile, GO GREEN!" **S**

PhD student Carlson's *Violence Against Women Act* op-ed published in *The Hill*



Prior to entering the School of Social Work PhD Program at Michigan State University, Melanie Carlson worked for nearly five years in domestic violence programs. Carlson stated, “The frontline experience of serving victims

in a shelter will indelibly inform my research for the duration of my career.”

The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) was initially passed in 1994. The passage of VAWA was an historical moment in the movement to prevent and assist victims of violence against women. VAWA was the first piece of federal legislation that prioritized addressing violence against women, and it was passed with overwhelmingly bipartisan support.

Ever since VAWA became federal law, it has been continually reauthorized by Congress, with increasing scope and effectiveness. VAWA has greatly increased the quality of services to survivors and has enabled advocates against domestic and sexual violence to have access to better training and education. Without VAWA, many advocates may have never been able to enter the profession.

Based on Carlson's past experience, she was prompted to write an editorial in January to advocate for continued VAWA funding. Her op-ed was published in *The Hill*. She wanted to speak to the widest audience possible to maintain the precedent of VAWA funding being a nonpartisan issue. As she states in the essay, “When people in need call our hotlines, we don't ask their political party affiliations. We only want to help people get safe. Domestic violence shouldn't be a partisan issue.”

See the story at <http://origin-ny1.thehill.com/blogs/pundits-blog/the-administration/315427-how-will-president-trump-handle-violence-against-women>. **S**

“When people in need call our hotlines, we don't ask their political party affiliations. We only want to help people get safe. Domestic violence shouldn't be a partisan issue.”

Have you ever considered earning your PhD in social work?

- Does it sound exciting to become an expert on a topic that's important to you?
- Are you interested in research that can be used to address practice issues or social problems?
- Do you think you might enjoy teaching and mentoring students?

If you would like to learn more about a PhD in social work, including coursework, financial support, and working with a faculty mentor, please contact **Dr. Angie Kennedy** at kenne258@msu.edu.

MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

School of Social Work

A Mission of Social Justice and Positive Change: The MSU School of Social Work is dedicated to educating students for ethical, competent, responsive, and innovative social work practice, and to conducting and disseminating high quality research that improves the well-being of the most vulnerable in society. Our teaching, research, and outreach synergistically promote social justice, positive change, and solutions to the problems facing diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities.

MSW grad Jason Cross oversees construction of the **Next Generation Learning Center** in Manistee

Jason Cross, who recently earned his BASW and MSW degrees from the MSU School of Social Work, was named the Director of Family Services for the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians in August of 2015. In this position, Cross is responsible for social work program development and implementation across all age ranges, from elders to children.

Recently, Cross has also been responsible for overseeing the construction of the Next Generation Learning Center located next to the Little River Casino and Resort in Manistee, MI. The \$1.4 million center has been made possible through financial contributions from the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians Tribal Council and over \$872,000 in grants from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Frey Foundation, Consumers Energy Foundation, and the Michigan Children's Trust Fund. Construction began last year and was completed in April of this year.

Cross emphasizes that the center is available not just to children of the Little River Band members but to all residents of the community. Before the center opened, early childhood education options in the area were limited and could not

offer the wide array of services now available. The center will be open seven days a week from 6:00 am to midnight, which will help to meet the needs of area residents. Other features such as indoor and outdoor classrooms and playgrounds, a greenhouse, aquariums, and other active learning tools will be available for children ages 0–12.

The center would not be possible without strong community partnerships and collaboration. One partner is the Child Advocacy Center that works with abused children. Northwest Michigan Health Services will also have a small medical/dental clinic on site. These agencies will be located in separate spaces in the building, but each will benefit from the effort put forth by Cross and others. “The goal of the Next Generation Learning Center is to create a space that benefits the children and families of the area. Working collaboratively and building community partnerships with other local agencies is the best way to accomplish this goal.”

If you would like to learn more about the center, please see their Facebook page at facebook.com/nextgenerationlearningcenter or call (231) 398-6718. You can also visit them on the web at NextGenerationLearning.org. **S**

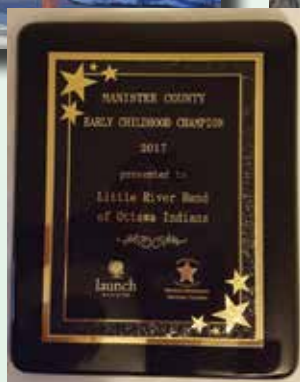


Construction of the Next Generation Learning Center is nearly complete.



Director Jason Cross discusses the plans for the Center.

The Center was awarded *Early Childhood Champion* from Manistee County.



Two of the traditional shawls created by Dr. Suzanne Cross (photos by Marcella Hadden, Niibing Giizis Photography)



Shawl creations of Dr. Cross raise awareness of cardiovascular disease

Dr. Suzanne L. Cross, MSU School of Social Work Professor Emeritus, served as a faculty member for 12 years. She is a member of the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe, and through her artwork she is bringing awareness to American Indian women on the topic of cardiovascular disease (CVD). She has created an exhibit entitled, “Healing Through Culture and Art Shawl Collection” to bring mindfulness of CVD, including the different symptomologies experienced by women and men. Dr. Cross stated, “Women need to be aware of the fact that CVD is the number one cause of death in the United States for not only men, but also women.”

Dr. Cross is a survivor of a cardiac incident and open heart surgery. During the healing process to combat pain, she sought out traditional teaching, which is to focus on what may be helpful to others. She was inspired to create 13 shawls in recognition of the 13 moons from the Creation Story. The artwork allowed her to focus away from the pain and to focus on artwork to inspire American Indian women and all women who view the exhibit to improve their heart health.

Dr. Cross, an experienced traditional shawl maker, created the shawl collection as a catalyst to increase American Indian women’s knowledge of CVD. Culturally, the shawl is an important aspect of traditional regalia. The shawl is carried over the left arm, which is closest to the heart. Shawls have served American Indian women for generations not only for warmth, but during ceremonies and celebrations.

Dr. Cross now serves as a consultant, sharing knowledge of the effects of CVD on American Indian women, issues of American Indian pain management, the significance of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), and the adverse impact of the Bureau of Indian Affairs Boarding Schools.

Dr. Cross will be exhibiting her collection at Art Reach of Mid-Michigan in Mt. Pleasant, MI, from July 1 through July 26. A public reception will be held on July 6, 5:00 pm to 6:30 pm. **S**

School of Social Work news **when, where, and how you want it**

The MSU School of Social Work is expanding its social media presence in order to reach more people with more relevant information in less time. We are expanding not just our content, but the places where you can be connected to that content. More of our faculty will be involved in posting content as our online presence grows.

The School will be posting upcoming events, such as continuing education offerings, guest lectures, and special advocacy opportunities. When there is a need to widely disseminate information, such as with responses to the Flint water crisis or announcing a new program, social media is the most effective way to keep people up to date or steer them to pertinent information on our website. Currently, our Facebook fans exceed 2,500, Twitter followers are over 1,600, and both are growing every month.

Our Facebook content has been reorganized onto one main School site, and Continuing Education and the Community Programs (see pp. 8–11) also have their own Facebook sites. The School and the FAME Program also have Instagram and Twitter accounts. It is our intent to expand content on all of these media sites. We hope to “see” you all online! **S**



On Facebook look for:

MSUSocialWork
MSUVSW
MIKinship
MSUSocialWorkContinuingEducation
MSUChanceatChildhood
MSUFAME



On Instagram look for:

MSU_SocialWork
MSU_FAME



On LinkedIn look in “groups” for:

MSU School of Social Work



On Twitter look for:

MSUSocialWork
MSUFAME

Dripchak brings **wealth of experience to advisor role**



Paul Dripchak graduated with a BS in psychology from MSU in 2006. From there, Dripchak entered the MSU School of Social Work MSW Program in the full-time clinical track and earned his MSW along with a Certificate in Clinical Social Work with Families.

Dripchak went on to work for the Community Mental Health Authority of Clinton, Eaton and Ingham Counties for seven years. During the first two years, Dripchak was a home-based therapist working with children ages 5–18 and their families. He was trained in TF-CBT as well. He later worked as a crisis intervention therapist, completing intake assessments to initiate therapy services,

performing crisis intervention and creating safety plans for families, hospitalizing youth, and coordinating aftercare for youth once they were discharged from the hospital.

Dripchak joined the School as the new academic advisor for the East Lansing MSW Program in 2016. He helps to ensure students are on track for graduation, provides support for classes, connects students to academic resources as needed, and provides career development support. He has helped plan Career Development Days and self-care supports for students in the School of Social Work. Additionally, he is teaching the SW 843 class on the DSM-5 this semester and plans to teach other clinical classes for the MSW Program in the future. Said Dripchak, “I hope to help train new generations of social workers and prepare them for working in their chosen field or interest.” **S**

Pearce passionate about **underserved populations**



Natalie Pearce, LMSW, recently joined the faculty of the School of Social Work as the academic advisor for the BASW Program. She is thrilled to join the team and serve students both as an advisor and as an instructor.

Pearce earned her MSW from Wayne State University in macro practice and her BA from the University of Michigan. Her background includes work with the aging services network at the administrative level, case management and psychosocial rehabilitation for community mental health agencies, and outreach, engagement, and case management for the homeless population with co-occurring disorders. In addition, she has facilitated numerous trainings on behalf of the National Resource Center on LGBT Aging. She is most passionate about serving underserved populations, diversity and inclusion efforts, social justice and advocacy, and the intersectional aspects of identity.

Upon joining the BASW team, Pearce stated, “I had always enjoyed working with the next generation of social workers as a former field instructor. Further, the enthusiasm with which undergraduate social work students approach their learning here at MSU is infectious; I truly enjoy the energy each student brings to the table.” **S**

Spedoske is new program coordinator for **Veterinary Social Work Services**

Megan Spedoske has been named the new program coordinator for the MSU Veterinary Social Work Services program (VSWS). VSWS is a collaboration between the School of Social Work and the College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM) and has been providing emotional support and educational and referral services for clients, veterinarians, medical staff, and support staff of the MSU Small Animal Clinic, Oncology Center, and Large Animal Clinic since 2006.



Born and raised in Lansing, Spedoske is a graduate of Spring Arbor University and received her MSW from Washington University in St. Louis, MO. She returned to Lansing and has worked with St. Vincent Catholic Charities, Ele’s Place, and The Firecracker Foundation as a Licensed Master of Social Work practitioner. In these positions, Spedoske has focused on trauma treatment, therapy for child sexual assault survivors, and grief, loss, and bereavement programs.

Said Spedoske, “I see my primary role at the VSWS to be supporting the staff of the CVM as they navigate compassion fatigue and are regularly interacting with grieving animal owners. Making decisions regarding treatment and quality of life is daunting for many animal owners. I enjoy supporting families through difficult decisions, providing resources and aftercare as well.” **S**

NEW FACULTY

Hayden returns to **FAME** as mentor specialist

Ashley Hayden has rejoined the School of Social Work's Fostering Academics, Mentoring Excellence (FAME) Program as a mentor specialist. FAME provides resources and mentoring for MSU students with experience in foster care. Hayden previously filled this position as a temporary assignment and was excited for the opportunity to return in a permanent role.

Hayden completed her BASW at Christopher Newport University and earned her MSW from Columbia University in New York City. She has extensive experience working with refugee and immigrant populations abroad and at home, and she brings a wealth of knowledge to her new position.

She has worked in refugee resettlement and assistance for unaccompanied refugee minors in foster care and has taught English as a Second Language/Citizenship Classes.

As the FAME Program continues to grow, it is imperative to have experienced and highly competent specialists working with students to help them succeed while in school and life beyond. The School and FAME are fortunate to have Hayden back in this position. **S**

Navarre joins board of directors of **North American Network of Field Educators and Directors**

MSU School of Social Work Field Education Director **Julie Navarre** recently accepted a position on the North American Network of Field Educators and Directors (NANFED) Board of Directors. Navarre is joined by nine other social work field education directors from across the country.

The mission and purpose of NANFED is to "promote and safeguard the wellbeing of field education within the Council on Social Work Education, in schools of social work, and in community agencies."

NANFED does this by:

- Stimulating field education scholarship, fostering the development of suitable field education standards, and promoting the development of local field directors' consortia.

- Sponsoring the annual *Heart of Social Work Award* and hosting NANFED's annual reception at the CSWE Annual Program Meeting.

Upon accepting the position, Navarre stated "It's a privilege to be a NANFED board member. Collectively, we look forward to advancing the mission of field education, strengthening social work education throughout North America and supporting each other through this collaborative effort." **S**

Faculty, PhD students present at annual Society for Social Work and Research event

The School was once again well represented at the Society for Social Work and Research (SSWR) 21st Annual Conference, *Ensure Healthy Development for all Youth*, held in January in New Orleans. The SSWR annual conference offers a scientific program that reflects a broad range of research interests, and this 21st conference offered over 500 symposia, workshops, roundtables, and paper and poster presentations. Specifically offered were research methods workshops designed to enhance methods expertise and grant-writing skills and special sessions on research priorities and capacity building that target cutting-edge topics vital to contemporary social work research.

Founded in 1993, SSWR is a nonprofit, professional membership organization that supports social workers, social welfare professionals, social work students, social work faculty, and researchers in related fields.

Twelve MSU School of Social Work faculty members were accepted for 19 presentations this year:

Steven G. Anderson

Depressive Symptoms and Associated Factors in Older Chinese Americans: A Comparison Between Community-Dwelling and Subsidized Housing Residents

Hyunkag Cho

Help-seeking Patterns Among Female Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence

Differences in Help-seeking Between Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence and Other Interpersonal Violence

Paul Freddolino

Starting Over: Grief and Loss Experienced by Stroke Survivors and Their Spousal Caregivers

Jaclynn Hawkins

The Doctor Never Listens: Older Black Men, Patient-Provider Communication and the Role of Social Workers in Helping Them Feel Heard

A Qualitative Examination of Companion Communication During Cancer Consultations for African American Male Patients

Examining the Content and Context of African American Men's Active Communication During Primary Care Medical Visits

Anne Hughes

Starting Over: Grief and Loss Experienced by Stroke Survivors and Their Spousal Caregivers

Angie Kennedy

A Review of the Role of Stigma Among Female Survivors of CSA, SA, and IPV as a Barrier to Obtaining Effective Services



Sheryl Kubiak

Do Sexually Victimized Female Prisoners Obtain Justice in Litigation?

Countywide Implementation of CIT: Multiple Methods and Alternative Outcomes

Staff Sexual Misconduct of Women on Parole: A Call for Trauma-informed Social Work Action

Gender Differences in Perpetration of Child Sex Crimes: Implications for Practice and Policy

Kyunghee Lee

Coloring the War on Drugs: Arrest Disparities in Black, Brown, and White

Anna Maria Santiago

The Effects of Cumulative Neighborhood Risk and Protective Factors on Substance Use Initiation Among Latino and African American Adolescents

Dierdre Shires

Primary Care Providers' Willingness to Continue Access to Hormone Therapy for Transgender Individuals

Primary Care Providers' Willingness to Provide Routine Care to Transgender Individuals

Fei Sun

Prevalence and Risk Factors of Elder Maltreatment in Chinese American Elders in a Southwest Metropolitan Area

Depressive Symptoms and Associated Factors in Older Chinese Americans: A Comparison Between Community-Dwelling and Subsidized Housing Residents

Daniel Vélez Ortiz

The Intergenerational Effects of Maternal Depression on Their Young Adult Children's Depression

In addition to School faculty, eight PhD students also presented and are listed below, along with faculty mentors (where appropriate):

Christina Callton

Cristy Cummings Faculty: Paul Freddolino, Anne Hughes, Sheryl Kubiak

David Koch Faculty: Kyunghee Lee

Ilan Kwon Faculty: Dr. Hyunkag Cho

Jaewon Lee Faculty: Kyunghee Lee, Daniel Vélez Ortiz

Edita Milanovic Faculty: Sheryl Kubiak

Kristen Prock Faculty: Angie Kennedy

Daria Shamrova

School participates in **Healthcare Education and Leadership Scholars (HEALS)** program

Sponsored by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) and the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), the MSU School of Social Work is one of 10 schools nationwide to participate in the Healthcare Education and Leadership Scholars (HEALS) program. HEALS is a skills and leadership training opportunity designed to prepare social work students for interdisciplinary health care service provision.

Under the direction of **Dr. Marcia Lampen**, MSU has tailored its program to serve two BASW students and six advanced year MSW students each year, in cooperation with four MSW instructors from the community. All participants share a common interest in delivering healthcare services to children, adolescents, and adults and their families. This year, the students involved are **Michelle Lopez, Chloe Hiner, Kirstie Hileman, Anne Osgood, Brittany King, Chelsea Antilla, Karah Ley, and Ashely Orel**. The instructors from the community this year include **Karen Bussey, Debbie Edokpolo, Amy Romain, and Diane Parsons**.

In each year of this five-year program, two BASW HEALS Scholars and six MSW HEALS Scholars will benefit from inter-professional health development opportunities, specialized seminars, focused coursework, and travel support to attend a policy and education event. This year, the policy and education meeting was held on March 7-8 in Washington, DC at the NASW national office. Students met with the leaders of NASW and CSWE, interacted with panels that included social workers on Capitol Hill, and met with their own legislative representatives and advocated for health care policy.

HEALS Scholar Hiner stated, "We set up this meeting [with representative] prior to coming to DC, and we got to sit down with him and talk to him regarding our concerns about what will happen if repeal and replacement of the *Affordable Care Act* actually happens. We discovered that over 32,000 residents in our district alone will be uninsured if the Medicaid expansion is taken away. Meeting with one



Dr. Marcia Lampen

of Senator Debbie Stabenow's staffers, he understood and completely agrees and told us that they are fighting this new healthcare bill and are trying to keep things like the Medicaid expansion so people can be covered."

Hiner added, "Conveniently, the day that we went to Capitol Hill was the "A Day Without a Woman" strike and International Women's Day. My group and I went outside the Capitol where there was a crowd, and then the women Democrats of the House (and some of the men Democrats of the House) walked down the steps of the Capitol with signs."

HEALS Scholar King said, "The HEALS trip was a great opportunity to get hands-on advocacy experience. It was really exciting to be on Capitol Hill, where policy is being made every day. It was a humbling experience, and it reinforced the importance of fighting for what's right. Being in the midst of it made it all seem more human and not so out of reach. It makes you realize that anyone can advocate. It just takes persistence. It was great to meet other HEALS Scholars and talk about some of the healthcare issues being faced in other states, as well as bonding with our own group of MSU students. I'm thankful for the opportunity and feel like I've gained a broader perspective on the role of social work in healthcare."

HEALS Scholar Antilla added, "The HEALS conference and advocacy day on Capitol Hill was an incredibly empowering experience, especially given the tumultuous and teetering nature of the current healthcare policy climate. It was empowering to be able to speak with legislators about issues that are important to me as a social worker and also to the many people I serve in my work. I think that the more that I immerse myself in the field of social work, the more that I realize that policy is integral in all parts of social work. Even in my work in a "very clinical" setting (a hospital), I've come to realize how much even my work as a clinician is heavily influenced not only by internal hospital policies, but local and national policies like the *Affordable Care Act* and *HIPAA*." **S**

Students for Social Work support each other, inspire self-care through **Encouragement Wall**



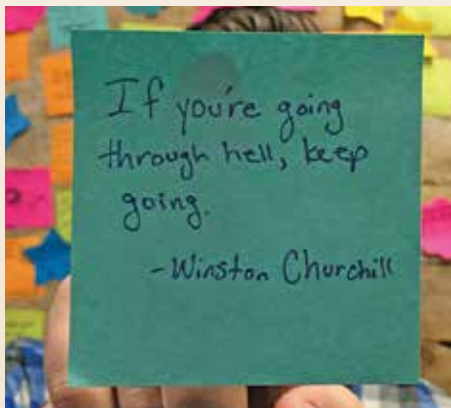
MSW student **Janelle Moulding** shared this photo (above) via Instagram, showing how the Encouragement Wall helped her during a rough week.

In a time when much of the country is feeling divided, Students for Social Work (SFSW) leaders met to make a plan to encourage others. They want everyone who walks into Baker Hall to feel encouraged, supported, and unified. The Encouragement Wall was made during one of their leader meetings. Students each placed quotes and notes of inspiration and support on the wall. Throughout the next few weeks, the wall was peppered with more encouragement from students in the building. SFSW hopes that the Encouragement Wall will help build a sense of positivity and community among all in the building.

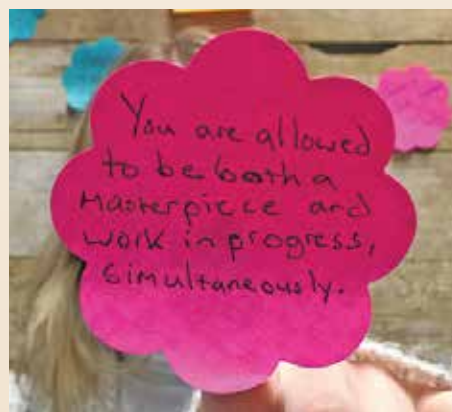
SFSW hopes to do more to promote self-care and positive change for social work students. Next year, they will host a career panel with local social workers and hold workshops regarding mindfulness and self-care. **S**



Claire Plagens, Students for Social Work co-leader and BASW junior, was reminded of a quote during her work at a local child welfare agency. "It can be hard to acknowledge and share our whole truth, but it is really important to hold space for it, even the parts that hurt."



Kenny Wirth, Students for Social Work co-leader and BASW junior, picked a favorite Winston Churchill quote. "He's inspiring. He led a nation through some of the darkest times and found strength to keep going. This quote helps me to remember to keep going."



"It is so important to remember proper self-care in our field. We all need to be reminded that rough patches are normal and that everyone is struggling with something. We are all okay!" This quote is a favorite motivator of **Caylin Rathburn-Smith**, BASW junior and SFSW co-leader.

MSW student publishes paper examining racial disparities, presents at national conference

In January of 2017, MSW student **David Koch** attended the Society for Social Work and Research's Twenty-First Annual Conference in New Orleans, LA. At the conference,



MSW student David Koch

Koch presented a poster examining racial disparities in drug arrests, based on a paper he authored with faculty member **Dr. Kyunghye Lee** and PhD student **Jaewon Lee**. The paper, entitled *Coloring the War on Drugs: Racial Disparities in Black, Brown, and White*, began as Koch's independent project in a research methods class taught by Dr. Lee, and was published in the journal *Race and Social Problems* in December of 2016.

The poster presentation provided Koch with a unique opportunity, as an MSW student, to network and discuss his research with scholars from other universities. He explained, "Having this chance to publish a paper and

present at a national conference was unexpected and incredibly rewarding. I gained a lot of confidence in my writing and presentation skills, and I made connections with faculty members that otherwise would not have been possible."

Koch points to the importance of persistence and collaboration as two of the greatest lessons he learned in the publication process. "Our paper was initially rejected and later required substantive revisions before it was published," Koch stated. "Dr. Lee, Jaewon, and I succeeded only by working together to give each other critical feedback and by simply not giving up." **S**

Achievement Gala to celebrate everyone's efforts

On April 21, a small group of MSU College of Social Science students will be honored at the College's Achievement Gala, receiving awards celebrating their research, leadership, humanitarian efforts, and academic success. The gala made its debut last year, imagined and executed by a group of students wanting to recognize their peers whose efforts might otherwise go unnoticed.

One of the student organizers is also president of the College Dean's Student Advisory Council, **Leigh Rauk**, a current senior who feels the gala will be the footprint she leaves on campus. "As students, we do enough to compete with each other for internships, jobs, and perhaps good grades," she said, "But I wanted there to be at least one moment where students could come together and congratulate each other. At the end of the day, we are all striving to do great things, so why shouldn't we fully support one another?"

Rauk has also served on the College's Strategic Planning Committee as the undergraduate representative, assisting Dean Rachel Croson in her efforts to revamp the College's outreach programs while also addressing the College's efficiency and budget. "I am able to provide student input, and I feel that my ideas are heard and well received by the committee," she said. "It is a committee of faculty and staff, and they truly care about everyone's input."

As a social work major, Rauk uses her positive attitude and passion for inclusiveness to have a positive influence on the community around her. One way she has done this is by participating in MSU's Adolescent Program, which connects MSU students with at-risk youth in the Lansing area to try and divert them from going down the wrong path.



"Being involved in the Adolescent Program has truly been the greatest thing I have ever done as a student here at MSU," she recalled. "This program has impacted me in ways that I never thought possible and has molded me into the type of professional I want to embody when I begin working in this field."

The program, which was created 40 years ago and is still run by **Dr. William Davidson** in MSU's Department of Psychology, has proven effective in its attempt to keep kids in school and away from crime. Now, even after the experience has ended, Rauk remains involved by working as a teaching assistant for the current Adolescent Program class.

After graduating this spring, Rauk will continue her education at the University of Miami, pursuing a PhD in community well-being. She plans to put her education to work for the people around her: "Essentially, I will be getting my doctorate in community psychology so that I can work with communities on a larger scale to fight for social justice and bring about competency to marginalized populations regarding hidden and invisible powers so that they can then advocate for themselves."

Although she will spend the next few years in Florida, Rauk made it clear she will carry her Spartan experiences with her. "The School of Social Work has provided me with a wealth of knowledge about how to work with people and groups to produce positive outcomes," she said. "It has given me an ethical code book to model my career around to ensure that the people and communities I work with are being treated with dignity and respect. I truly believe that the School of Social Work and the College of Social Science here at MSU have shown me the path to being a helping professional." **S**

Students attend conference, learn of challenges facing Latino communities

School of Social Work and MSU students **Adriana Carreon**, **Julissa Olguin**, **Barbara Jean Almeida**, and **Rochelle Rivera** attended the Latino Social Workers Organization (LSWO) conference 2017 at the University of California–Berkeley in March. Faculty, social workers, and students gathered to share their research work and professional experiences in order to improve their cultural competence, as well as to create partnerships to provide the Latino community with the services they need during this uncertain time in our history. The workshops presented an array of topics, including inequality and discrimination, immigration and human rights, the impact of parental deportation, the need for Latino social workers in health services, academic success, higher education, research demystification, and gender affirmative services for transgender youth.

According to Carreon, “The LSWO conference was a tremendous learning experience that provided me with the opportunity to improve my learning about the challenges that the Latino community in the United States encounters, new approaches to improve the mental health of this population and to network with professionals in the social work field.”

Olguin added, “The Latino Social Worker’s Organization conference was such an eye-opening experience. It made me more passionate about my

major, and it helped me gain knowledge about what is happening to the families who are getting deported. It was horrible to hear how people are treated and how everything is affecting the lives of children. I am very grateful to have had the opportunity to meet Mr. Zayas and the rest of the speakers; they motivated me to continue my dream of finding a solution to the deportation of thousands of families. Overall, I have to give a big thank you to Dr. Anderson who made my experience possible.”

Almeida continued, “The conference in UC Berkeley was an amazing experience. I became very open minded on the situations that were being addressed and on how social workers play a very important role. It is important that people are able to attend conferences like this because it makes us aware of the circumstances that are going on around the country and how they affect the Latino community.” **S**



Pictured above L-R are MSW student **Adriana Carreon**, MSU students **Julissa Olguin** and **Barbara Jean Almeida**, and BASW student **Rochelle Rivera**.



Social work inspires passion, leads to gerontology fellowship



MSU senior Marwa Mallah is passionate about her major in the School of Social Work. In fact, her passion is so strong she'll be pursuing a master's in the field at the University of Michigan this fall. But as with many MSU students, her initial education/career decision was difficult—at first.

"I was admitted into MSU as a human biology major," Mallah explained. "I didn't know what I wanted to be, aside from wanting to help others." A conversation she had with a family member about the social work field intrigued her. "I began to do my research and was hooked. I was so impressed with how broad and amazing the field of social work truly is."

After taking an introductory course, Mallah knew her decision to pursue social work was the right one. She had initially focused on pediatrics because of prior experience in childcare, but then the MSU School of Social Work arranged for her field placement in an elder care facility. There Mallah found her calling.

"I immediately felt a connection with the elderly

population as I admired their wisdom and appreciation toward life. I always look forward to being at the facility and have made incredible connections with some of my residents," Mallah said. "Coming from Dearborn, MI, a predominately Arab American community, I've noted the lack of elder care in the area due to the widespread cultural ideology that 'we take care of our parents until they pass.'"

After graduating, Mallah will pursue a master's degree in social work at the University of Michigan, which granted her a prestigious gerontology fellowship. "I am incredibly saddened to be leaving MSU but also excited to be embarking on this new journey in my life," she explained. "I'm hopeful it will open up so many opportunities for me to give back to my community later in life."

Although her path wasn't clear in the beginning, by getting involved in the School and her program, Mallah found her direction in life. "I look back now and realize there isn't much more I would want to do. I was always interested in the medical field, but I couldn't see myself pursuing a career as a nurse or doctor. I'm interested in creating social change within our world." **S**

Gupta Scholar conducts research, volunteers

My name is Annie Brandicourt, and I am a second-year Gupta Scholar. This semester, I have been conducting research with professors, volunteering at a homeless shelter, participating in Scholar events, and gaining new experiences. In my free time, I have been preparing my artwork to display in a coffee shop near campus, heading the acroyoga club on campus, and working at a local bookstore.

As a second-year scholar, my class and I have been researching different notable developments and events in history, from the emergence of feminism, to South African Apartheid, to the modern "war on drugs." We have spent class time discussing competing ideas about human nature, global conflicts, and how and when social and ethnic tensions may be reduced or resolved. Additionally, fellow scholar Michael Marchiori and I have been working to finish our research paper entitled *Mental Health on Big Ten College Campuses*. This paper outlines the differences and similarities in the way that colleges deal with the rising problem of addressing mental health on campus. Its main purpose is to identify best practices among the Big Ten schools and to make recommendations for effective strategies that more universities should adopt.

Last year, I was nominated through the Scholar's program for the *Gupta Scholars Award*, and I received it, along with nine other MSU students. The award is given to those who exhibit "integrity, altruism, and respect for humanity" in all that they do. As a Gupta Scholar, I receive a monetary scholarship, funds for an unpaid internship, and a trip to Washington, DC in the spring with the other Gupta Scholars.

When I am not doing work for my classes, I work for Professor Gary Anderson as a professorial assistant through

the Honor's College. I do research, write policy, conduct studies, and follow up on meetings all related to child welfare and the social care workforce in Michigan. This semester, in particular, I have been involved in responding to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services about a report I helped to write last year, a study on attrition and retention in college programs, and research for proposed Michigan legislation that would give foster youth priority in hiring within the professional world.

As a break from school and research, I have volunteered at Haven House, a homeless shelter in East Lansing. Haven House is the only shelter in the area that keeps the entire family together in one place while providing a program that works to enable each family to move into housing as soon as possible. At Haven House, I have worked as the front desk volunteer, processing intake forms, assisting the residents with various tasks, answering the phones, and organizing donations. I plan to continue this volunteer work next semester but working in the playroom rather than at the front desk.

After I graduate from MSU next spring, I plan to attend an advanced standing program to earn my master's degree in social work. My goal is to work within the social welfare system before advocating for change. After gaining valuable experience working as a caseworker within the foster care system, I plan to become a social policy writer for either the state or the federal government. One day, I'd like to run for mayor or city council. I believe more female representation is needed in politics, and even if I don't become a legislator or senator, I plan to effect change at some level. **S**



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