

# SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK NEWS

SPRING/SUMMER 2015



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Steve  
Anderson

## Celebrating student success

Dear friends,

**M**ay is among our favorite times of year at the MSU School of Social Work, as we celebrate the achievements of our students at graduation and other events. In addition to MSU and College of Social Science ceremonies, the School hosts its own recognition ceremony for all School of Social Work graduates.

This year's School event was held at the Lansing Center on May 8, with nearly 1,500 students, family members, and friends participating. As we prepared for this event, it was interesting to consider the wide range of students we serve, as well as their geographic locations across Michigan. In total, 310 students will graduate with a social work degree:

- 5 will obtain their PhD degrees
- 240 will receive MSW degrees
- 65 will earn BASW degrees

The diversity of locations at which our students now receive their education is among the most notable features of our program. Although all PhD and BASW students receive their degrees through our East Lansing site, MSW students are dispersed widely across Michigan. Of our 240 MSW graduates, 89 (37%) will receive degrees through the East Lansing program. But 151 (63%) will have received their primary training at other School of Social Work locations. These include 30 in Flint, 30 in Saginaw, 31 in Oakland County, and 60 through the statewide blended and weekend programs. These numbers reflect a conscious attempt to extend geographic access to our program, which has required considerable developmental work by faculty members, staff, and our community partners. These efforts have positioned the School to be a national leader in providing broader geographic access for social work education.

As we finish up another academic year, it is also a time to express thanks to everyone who helps make the School of Social Work a leader in providing quality social work education. Our students and the family members who support them are, of course, the lifeblood of our educational programs. Our faculty members work tirelessly to assure that they are providing the highest quality training for our students, and our staff and administrators keep our programs operating smoothly. The School likewise depends heavily on hundreds of human services agencies that supervise and mentor students in field placements; and our university partners at sites away from East Lansing have allowed us to extend access to our programs. It is a good time to thank this large and extremely dedicated group of people for everything they do to make the School of Social Work successful.

Congratulations to our May 2015 graduates – we know you will do great things!

Best regards,

*Steve Anderson*

Steve Anderson, PhD  
Director, School of Social Work

# Jackson Prison: Site of Inside/Out

Inside/Out is a program that originated at Temple University in 1997. College students and incarcerated individuals join together in one group to study as peers and attend class together behind prison walls. All participants read the same texts and write papers; during class sessions, students discuss issues in small and large groups. In the final month of the class, students work together on a class project.

**Drs. Sheryl Kubiak**, social work professor, and **Jennifer Cobbina**, criminal justice assistant professor, received a Creating Inclusive Excellence Grant (CIEG) from the MSU Office for Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives for a project titled “Experiential Learning Opportunities Within a Michigan Prison.” CIEG funding is designed to further the MSU value of *inclusiveness* by creating synergy within and across organizational systems in support of an inclusive educational and work environment. In addition, Dr. Cobbina received funding from the School of Criminal Justice.

The United States incarcerates a higher percentage of its population, and for longer periods of time, than any other country. Research has established that improving education is key to reducing reoffending and increasing social mobility, both central factors in transforming the lives of incarcerated individuals who will be released back into society. At the same time, students across MSU’s campus are preparing for jobs in law enforcement, corrections, probation/parole, child welfare, and substance abuse and mental health treatment.

While our classrooms offer excellent information, there are few opportunities to know or learn about the lives of those involved in the criminal justice system. A program such as Inside/Out provides students on campus with transformative experiential learning opportunities that allow them to humanize those involved in the criminal-legal system. Students have the opportunity to recognize similarities and differences pertaining to experiences, perspectives, and beliefs.

During the 2014–2015 academic year, Dr. Cobbina presented CJ 491, “Examining Social Issues Through the Prism of Prison” in the fall semester. The CEIG funding was used to augment this pilot project in the spring, as Dr. Kubiak presented SW 492, “The Impact of Various Social Policies on Criminality, Criminalization, and the Criminal Justice System.”

The School of Social Work and the School of Criminal Justice view the Inside/Out Project as a step toward greater collaboration between departments; it also serves to fulfill the educational and professional



Twelve social work students were enrolled in this class:

*Sophomore*  
Brianna Simpson

*Juniors*  
Sharonda Chaney  
Aimee Dedic  
Kimberly Hayhurst  
Haley Hildebrand  
Kirstie Hileman  
Heather Hoffmeyer  
Allison Levine  
Carolyn Mirretti  
Lennie Pennisi  
Shelby Timm

*Senior*  
Carmen Hillier

“It was enlightening learning about stereotypes that we held going into the class. Discussing them... and now seeing the strengths in each individual and the different perspectives... showed me that in just five weeks, we broke down our assumptions about each other, and deep down we all respect each other. Although we have found our similarities... I think we also found out that each of us is shaped by our environments around us and within us.”

—“Outside” student

“Beyond the accomplishment I felt academically, there was the accomplishment that I felt in humanity. A sense of hope that the thick invisible lines of race can be erased, or designed to reflect oneness.”

—“Inside” student

missions and strong commitment to increasing experiential learning opportunities in both schools. The ultimate goal is to expand Inside-Out so that more faculty members from different academic disciplines within the University will teach a course.

SW 492 was taught by Dr. Kubiak with assistance from doctoral student **Edita Milanovic**. Class was held every Wednesday night at the Cooper Street Correctional Facility in Jackson, MI. Twelve currently incarcerated individuals were the “inside” students. Our students (the “outside” students) took a van to the prison and complied with all security measures, rules, and regulations of the prison in order to attend class. Twelve social work students were enrolled in this class.

The students were given a formal opportunity to share stories about this experience with their BASW peers. Ultimately, Inside/Out creates a dynamic partnership between institutions of higher learning and correctional systems in order to deepen the conversation about and transform our approaches to issues of crime and justice. Inside/Out’s vision is to empower those who are part of our criminal justice system—those incarcerated and those working in it, both now and in the future—to make the kinds of changes that will make our communities more inclusive, just, and socially sustainable. **S**

Several other universities within Michigan are offering Inside/Out courses that involve other prisons around the state. To date, there have been no adverse outcomes or serious security problems, and many “inside” students have been coming back to these universities to continue their post-secondary education once they are released.

# The Zombie Apocalypse: How it all started

During spring 2011, **Dr. Paul Freddolino**, associate director for research and distance education, was asked to lead a new initiative to develop fully online summer elective classes. The School had been offering general interest electives that were open to non-social work majors; this would be an online expansion of that in an effort to enrich the teaching and learning environment of the School.

Faculty were encouraged to submit proposals. As part of the arrangement, they were required to complete a “How to Teach Online” course co-led by Dr. Freddolino and staff from MSU LearnDAT (Learning Design and Technology).

Four existing courses were designed to be fully online, and five new electives were selected. For summer 2015, we are offering 16 online electives.

## Zombie class

When the Summer Online Electives Initiative was formally announced at a School meeting, **Glenn Stutzky**, senior clinical instructor in the MSU School of Social Work, almost immediately raised his hand and said something like, “You all may think this is a bit unusual, but I have an idea for a course that I think students will go for: Surviving the Coming Zombie Apocalypse. It would use the zombie theme to grab students’ interest, but actually focus on how and why humans behave the way they do before, during, and after catastrophic events.”

Initial reaction was mixed, but it all made sense to Glenn. Here’s how it happened.

Glenn figured an elective offered in the summer needed to be special to attract students and compete successfully with everything else students might choose to spend time doing. Talking to his grandson, he got what he considered to be excellent advice: “Just don’t be boring!”

Glenn had always been interested in doing an online simulation of an apocalyptic event (e.g., earthquake, tsunami, or massive solar flare), so he began looking for information on his topic. When he visited the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website, he found they had extensive resources devoted to public health preparedness and response, all within a “zombie framework.” Glenn contacted them and was invited to visit. They told him that relatively few 18–25 year olds had been visiting the site, so they started a blog about preparing for a zombie apocalypse. The resulting spike in traffic caused the website to shut down with more



Photo credit: Christopher Irvin

**“I believe that relationships are the best weapon for dealing with catastrophe.”**

—Glenn Stutzky

than 3 million views, up from the usual 1-3,000! What began as a whimsical campaign to engage new audiences had proven to be a very effective platform to spread preparedness messages.

Glenn’s further research found that while zombie references were used extensively by many prestigious institutions, there were no full college courses using the zombie narrative. He wanted his course to be an engrossing, immersive experience that would appeal to students. Looking to social media and gaming (which uses story to promote fun and engage group process), Stutzky and his Z-Team collaborators (see below) developed a new approach to online education they are calling MOLIE, for Multimedia Online Learning Immersive Experience.

The University and the School provided resources for course development and marketing, resulting in an award-winning multimedia marketing campaign for the course (see ADDY awards on page 18). A “poster worth stealing” was created for promotion as well as a movie-style trailer. The course has received worldwide attention, with countless articles and interviews.

The course content gets refined every year, and each previous year’s technology gets refined and expanded. International students have enrolled from their home countries. The course is also being used to pilot noncredit options for potential students who do not need additional academic credits. The Z-Team has presented about this course at conferences and is tentatively planning to attend South by Southwest (SXSW) in 2016. **S**



## The Z-Team

- **Glenn Stutzky**, course instructor; see story on the right.
- **Christopher Irvin**, instructional designer, believes that one must nurture and wield one’s creativity in order to approach life in an extraordinary way.
- **Keesa Johnson**, instructional designer, places a strong value on wide collaboration and “making visions happen.”
- **Hailey Mooney**, course librarian, strongly believes in the importance of knowing how to find the best information, not just the most convenient.

<http://zombie.msu.edu>  
**Noncredit registration:**  
<http://bit.ly/1AXQwTC>

## About Glenn Stutzky

According to Glenn Stutzky, three things describe him: (1) he has been interested in storytelling as far back as he can remember; (2) he always wanted to be in some kind of helping profession, even before he knew what they were; and (3) he always had a passion for teaching.

He says that when he found social work as an undergraduate, “It felt like coming home.” While he was earning his BASW (MSU 1994), he worked with **Dr. Cris Sullivan** (ecological/community psychology) on domestic violence research. He was able to see what happened to the children of families experiencing violence when they were in the school environment. This led directly to his interest in school violence and bullying. While Stutzky was earning his MSW at the University of Michigan, he had the opportunity to work with **Dr. Ron Aster**, an international expert on school violence.

Post-MSW, Stutzky was working with Dr. Sullivan again and doing presentations on school violence and bullying as a guest speaker in MSU social work classes. Students gave Stutzky high marks for both content and presentation. In 1996, he became a clinical instructor with the School and has been teaching here ever since. His work on school violence and bullying has received national attention.

Stutzky has also been tech-savvy throughout his career, and was part of the faculty team that developed our Statewide Blended MSW Program. Preparing to teach new fully online electives was a natural progression.

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# Geriatric Education Center of Michigan: Housed at MSU East Lansing campus

The Geriatric Education Center of Michigan (GECM) is a federally funded statewide consortium, one of 45 GECs authorized through Title VII of the Public Health Service Act and funded by the US Health Resources and Services Administration Bureau of Health Professions. The School of Social Work has long had a strong presence in this multi-disciplinary group, reflecting the important role the field plays in understanding and responding to aging issues as well as the prominence of geriatric/gerontological education in our program.

Established in 1987 and administratively housed on the MSU campus, GECM's core faculty, trainers, and administrative staff represent MSU's colleges of Human Medicine, Osteopathic Medicine, Nursing, and Communication Arts; School of Social Work; and Extension. **Dr. Anne Hughes**, assistant professor in the School of Social Work, serves as GECM associate faculty and the School's liaison with the Center.

The mission of the GECM is to advance geriatric education within

the state. The GECM worked with local communities across Michigan to establish interdisciplinary teams to provide comprehensive services to older adults and was the catalyst and support for those teams.

The GECM has formal partnership arrangements with other academic institutions and health systems within Michigan. It works with its partners to plan, develop, implement, and evaluate training programs and major training events for multidisciplinary groups of practitioners who provide health care to older adults in a variety of settings, including primary care offices, assisted living, hospitals, rehabilitation units, nursing homes, and the community.

Training programs are also targeted to faculty in geriatrics and gerontology and to health professions students in Michigan's academic institutions. The GECM initiatives are intended to strengthen geriatric care in medically underserved communities and to improve the organization and delivery of unique services for older adults. **S**



## Dr. Hughes champions geriatric social work



**Dr. Anne Hughes** joined the School of Social Work faculty in 2009, successfully concluding our search for a new faculty member to participate in the significant University initiative to build expertise within gerontology, and further develop the School's Levande Program in Gerontology (see page 9). Faculty members from social work, nursing, and medicine work with additional colleagues to enhance a campus-wide network committed to gerontology and health care research, teaching, and interdisciplinary practice.

Dr. Hughes was chosen by the Gerontological Society of America through a competitive process to serve as a Hartford Faculty Scholar in Geriatric Social Work 2012–2014; this honor and recognition provides support to faculty who will advance geriatric social work through research and the training of social work students to care for older persons. Dr. Hughes also was selected as a John A. Hartford Dissertation Fellow during her doctoral work at the University of

Maryland School of Social Work.

One of her responsibilities has been to represent the School within the Geriatric Education Center of Michigan (GECM). There she is part of a multidisciplinary team that develops and delivers content for providers in the community who have not had formal training in gerontology/geriatrics, including physicians, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, nurses, social workers, psychologists, psychiatrists, nutritionists, oral health providers, rehabilitation specialists, administrators, and others who work with older adults. At the GECM, she has also served on the planning committees for the 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> Annual MSU Geriatric Symposia. At one time, she presented a webinar on Sexual Health and Aging to more than 57 sites!

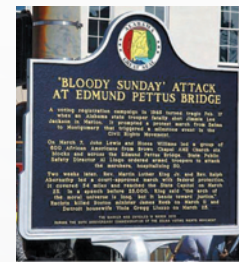
Dr. Hughes has also been an active member of our Levande Program since she joined the faculty. She serves as a faculty advisor, delivers content in weekend seminars, and offers electives to Levande students. Her most popular seminar is titled "Creativity in Aging and Aging Services." She also provides workshops on issues of older adults through our Continuing Education Program. **S**



MSU students in the crowd awaiting speeches from John Lewis and President Barack Obama



Students met three foot soldiers: Diane Harris, Joyce O'Neal, and Phyllis Alston (pictured with students), who were juniors at Selma High School when they first joined the march across Pettus Bridge on Bloody Sunday. All three went on to become professional social workers.



Bloody Sunday historical marker

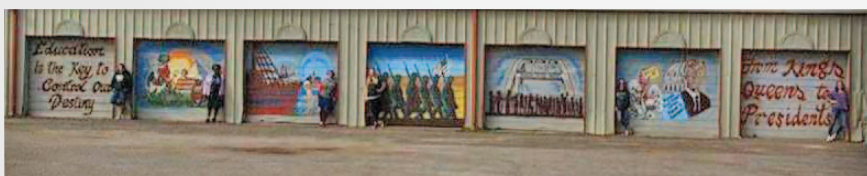
Photos on this page by Kate Sumbler.

## Students moved by events in Selma

Inspired by Helen Moore, our Martin Luther King Day speaker, and furthering their experience with the School's focus on the Voting Rights Act anniversary, two carloads of students (along with some family members and a BASW graduate) drove to Selma, AL, to join the activities commemorating the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Bloody Sunday and the national Voting Rights Act of 1965.

They spent the night in Montgomery, AL, and then joined thousands of people in Selma for speeches, marches, and other special events. They had planned to attend several of the large events, but so many people had come to Selma that they had a hard time making their connections. As a result, they were rewarded with a more local picture of Selma.

They connected with Students UNITE, a student-led civil rights advocacy group targeting social justice issues. On Sunday, March 8, our students were among 300 student and adult activists who joined a march organized by Students UNITE to commemorate Bloody Sunday and also publicize their petition campaign to



Murals depicting history and the fight for freedom near Pettus Bridge

"It was amazing to see that many people get together to say 'we stand for social justice.'"

"We think it's important that people really find out about what's happening not only in Selma today, but wherever they are."

—Students

rename the Edmund Pettus Bridge. The group started from Selma Community Church, the only integrated church in Selma, and marched to the bridge.

They also had an opportunity to meet with some of the original foot soldiers of the 1965 march (see photo above).

The students said they were struck by many contrasts that weekend. The media coverage told a story of amazing change, and yet the truth is that Selma is a small town that looks much like it did in the 1960s.

It is still very segregated, with a lot of poverty. The Jubilee was a joyous occasion, but at the same time it was distressing to see how much work is left to do.

Thanks to juniors **KC Austern**, **Courtney Haney** and **Kate Moffatt** for their organizational efforts. **S**

## Students commemorate César E. Chávez and VRA's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary

As part of MSU's 5<sup>th</sup> Annual César E. Chávez Commemorative Celebration, the School of Social Work was invited by MSU to lead an all-University march commemorating the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1965 Voting Rights Act. There was a great turnout despite the cold weather.

MSW student **Jennifer Onwenu**, organizer of the campus chapter of the National Association of Black Social Workers, and Students for Multiethnic Community Action members carried the School of

Social Work banner, followed by Phi Alpha students with their banner and Students for Social Work students with their banners and placards. More than 125 students from Cesar Chavez High School in Detroit also joined the march.

Stepping off from the Kellogg Center, the march ended at Beaumont Tower. There, Onwenu gave a moving speech about the National Voting Rights Act, followed by keynote speaker **Dr. Felipe Lopez** (MSW 2007). **S**

## Community Programs of the School of Social Work include: Chance at Childhood, FAME, Kinship Care Resource Center, and Veterinary Social Work Services.

### Chance at Childhood

#### New collaboration to serve mid-Michigan students

In spring 2015, the Chance at Childhood Program (CAC) began collaborating with Volunteer Advocates of Mid-Michigan (VAMM), a collaboration between the Student Advocacy Center of Michigan and the School-to-Prison Pipeline Committee of the Lansing Area ACLU.

CAC, which conducts a number of ongoing projects in cooperation with other agencies, will now also work with VAMM to help protect the rights of public school students in mid-Michigan. All CAC students receive training in how to represent such students in suspension and expulsion hearings. This new project will give CAC students an additional opportunity to organize and promote activities designed to challenge institutional threats to educational success for low-income children. CAC students will serve these students by providing vigorous representation at hearings and connecting them with community support networks for additional help.



- A “freshman starter kit” featuring essential school and dorm room supplies
- Individual support from a trained life skills coach before and during their freshman year
- Connection to a professional mentor working in their desired field of study
- Community and peer support from other MSU students who have experienced foster care, kinship care, and homelessness.

In return, the students are required to participate in monthly individualized life skills coaching sessions and attend required FAME events. The grant will allow a total of 40 freshmen from Detroit to be served over three years.

#### Dress for success on a budget!

The FAME Program has partnered with Kellie’s Consignments, a Lansing-area consignment boutique, to provide FAME students with proper professional business attire to support them on their path to personal and professional success and economic stability. Donations toward gift cards were collected, and cards then were purchased at a 40% discount. FAME and shop staff together helped the students find appropriate attire to give them the professional edge for upcoming job and internship interviews.

### FAME (Fostering Academics, Mentoring Excellence)

#### First Year Success Program

The FAME Program is pleased to announce the launch of the First Year Success Program, beginning this summer. Thanks to an anonymous donation, MSU freshmen from Detroit who have experienced foster care, kinship care, adoption, or homelessness will be given resources, support, and services to ensure their successful transition to MSU. Student participants will receive:



#### FAME to be featured in CE course

**Andrea Martineau**, program coordinator for FAME, will be sharing FAME’s experience and expertise regarding the needs and barriers foster youth experience during their transition to higher education with child welfare professionals and the greater social work community through MSU social work continuing education. Her workshop is titled “Transitioning to Success: Promoting College Access and Support for Youth in Foster Care.” **S**

## Mandated Reporter pamphlets updated and expanded



The original set of mandated reporter pamphlets was created for:

- Clergy
- Nurses
- Physicians
- Public school employees
- Social workers

The new pamphlets are being prepared for these additional groups covered by the statute:

- Child care providers
- Dentists
- Law enforcement officers
- University employees
- General public

One of the early projects of the Chance at Childhood Program (CAC) was development of pamphlets to help mandated reporters understand their responsibilities. Michigan Child Protection Law requires certain professionals to report their suspicions of child abuse or neglect to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services; these mandated reporters are an essential part of the child protection system. There are civil and criminal penalties for a mandated reporter’s failure to make a report, as well as civil and criminal immunity for someone making a report in good faith. Reports made by mandated reporters are confirmed at nearly double the rate of those made by non-mandated reporters.



# Continuing Education latest news

Continuing Education now offers live webinars as an additional way to learn. Webinars are live web-based seminars or workshops that are transmitted over the Internet yet still allow interaction between the presenter and participants no matter where they are located. Individuals from around the world can earn continuing education credit hours from their home, office, or while on the go.

Participants view the webinar and then are sent a link to a site where they can complete an attendance

## Webinar Series

record, evaluation, and post-test. Pending a passing score of 75% or higher on the post-test, attendees will be mailed a certificate of completion. Webinars allow us to be accessible and to collaborate globally on issues that affect individuals, organizations, and communities throughout the world.

Attendees are reporting a positive experience, with comments such as "It was relevant and engaging—even though it was a webinar!" and "I loved the webinar aspect." **S**

## Levande Memorial Lecture

### The Link Between Well-Being and Home in Older Adulthood



On April 24, **Tam E. Perry**, PhD, MSW, presented "The Link Between Well-Being and Home in Older Adulthood" as a Levande Memorial Lecture at MSU's Kellogg Center. Housing is one key issue that comes to the forefront for older adults, kin, and practitioners. Present and future

safety and navigability of one's residence are critical considerations.

This presentation was designed to help social workers learn about reasons (triggers) that may lead to older adult relocation as well as reasons that do not necessarily result in relocation; the impact on older adults of relocation in urban contexts; and ways older adults can benefit from practitioner support. Dr. Perry addressed various issues of housing decisions for older adults such as aging in place vs. relocation.

Dr. Perry offered examples of relocations in older adulthood, based on her research. She also offered examples of involuntary housing transitions from research conducted in Detroit and discussed health-related, logistical, emotional, and financial ways practitioners can support older adults in their housing transitions.

Dr. Perry is an assistant professor at Wayne State University School of Social Work. Her research is primarily on relocation experiences of African Americans in and around Detroit, supported by a grant from the National Institutes of Health, and the Michigan Center for Urban African American Aging Research. She was also recently funded by the Wayne State University Humanities Center for a project titled "Surviving in Detroit: Men Experiencing Homelessness Due to Death of a Parent." **S**

## LEVANDE PROGRAM IN GERONTOLOGY

The original set of pamphlets was prepared by the CAC with assistance from the Michigan Department of Human Services and multiple MSU partners, including the MSU College of Human Medicine Department of Pediatrics. Several community partners such as the Michigan Education Association also contributed to this initial work. The development and production of the pamphlet series was supported by funds from a School endowment and by a grant from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Office of Justice Programs, US Department of Justice.

This year, with support provided by the Governor's Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect, the original five pamphlets are being updated and expanded, with five additional pamphlets being created. We are excited to continue and expand upon this crucial program. **S**

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**Dr. Diane Levande** was a pioneer in the field of gerontological social work at MSU and was instrumental in bringing the first grants from the John A. Hartford Foundation Practicum Partnership Program to the School in 2006. The Hartford program's funding allowed the School to develop a concentration in gerontology, including specialized coursework and field placements. Upon her retirement, Professor Diane Levande established the Diane Levande Endowed Fund for Work with Older Adults, allowing the School to continue this program after the Hartford funding expired. Dr. Levande died in July 2014, but her legacy continues. Read more about the School's leadership in gerontology education on page 6.



# Exciting two-day continuing education opportunities

Find all the details and register for CE courses at:  
<https://socialwork.msu.edu/ceu> ♦ (517) 353-3060

## **Creative Interventions with Older Adults** East Lansing • May 28–29 • Anne Hughes, PhD, LMSW

Because of unprecedented growth in the aging population, aging is being re-defined, often in a more positive light than ever before. The focus on aging is moving toward a strengths-based understanding of potential, instead of problems, a shift that will impact the advancement of health maintenance, prevention, and health promotion. Creativity and creative expression are important to older adults of all cultures and ethnic backgrounds, regardless of individual characteristics. *Dr. Hughes is an assistant professor in the School (see page 6).*

## **Creating a Playroom: Play Therapy Assessment & Intervention/Traumatized Children**

East Lansing • June 9–10  
 Victoria Fitton, PhD, LMSW, ACSW, RPT-S

The first day focuses on the theoretical framework of play therapy and the selection of items for a playroom, portable tote system, or filial play kit. The second day emphasizes key aspects of playroom activity. This is a non-directive play therapy perspective; however, directive assessment and intervention techniques are addressed, taught, and practiced during the course. *Dr. Fitton is a clinical practitioner and holds the School's Ruth Koehler Endowed Clinical Professorship in Children Services.*

## **Sandtray Therapy: Principles, Process & Practice**

East Lansing • June 11–12  
 Victoria Fitton, PhD, LMSW, ACSW, RPT-S

The course begins with a brief historical background and comparison of sandplay and sandtray therapies before the focus shifts to sandtray therapy. This course was developed to be highly experiential in order to build confidence and competence in sandtray assessment and intervention. *Dr. Fitton is a clinical practitioner and holds the School's Ruth Koehler Endowed Clinical Professorship in Children Services.*

## **Grief & Loss Across the Life Span**

Flint • June 19–20 • Julie Farman, LMSW

Grief and loss affect all of us. This course provides guidance and advice for anyone whose work brings them into contact with the bereaved and is particularly suitable if you are working in a helping or caring profession; it will provide an overview of grief responses, assessment, and treatment planning across life spans from childhood to older adulthood. *Farman is a clinical instructor and coordinator of the School's Flint, Oakland, and Saginaw MSW programs.*

## **Substance Abuse Assessment & Intervention 101**

East Lansing • June 26–27 • Brian Ahmedani, PhD, LMSW

Social workers frequently treat individuals with substance use conditions in practice even if they do not work in a drug treatment facility. As such, social workers must be aware of current issues in addiction practice and research. This course provides information that will assist practicing social workers in assessment and treatment of alcohol, tobacco, and drug use conditions and facilitate practitioner understanding of substance-related diagnoses. *Dr. Ahmedani is an assistant research scientist at Henry Ford Health System and also a clinical assistant professor in the School (see page 11).*

July 8–10, 2015



# 7<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL GREAT LAKES SUMMER INSTITUTE

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 Call **1-866-954-9653**

Use code: 1507MSUS\_001  
 Hotel rate: **\$139.00** based on up to four-person occupancy  
 and includes park admission

# Meet Dr. Brian Ahmedani

**Epidemiology** noun (ep-i-dee-mee-OL-uh-jee) The study of the distribution of diseases in populations, their causes, and the ways in which they can be prevented and controlled.

**B**rian Ahmedani (MSW 2006, PhD 2010) has had an interesting professional path. As an undergraduate student, he wanted to become a clinical therapist working with individuals with mental health conditions, which led to his graduating with a BA in psychology. When looking for a graduate degree, he discovered social work. He was attracted to the social work value system and the flexibility offered by the MSW degree, which allows graduates to work in all different types of clinical environments. He also appreciated the opportunity to work with many different client populations and learn about social work's strengths-based approach and its focus on putting the client first.

Brian came to Michigan State University to pursue his MSW degree and graduated with a concentration in clinical social work. During his studies, he had the opportunity to get involved in research with several faculty members and decided to pursue a PhD.

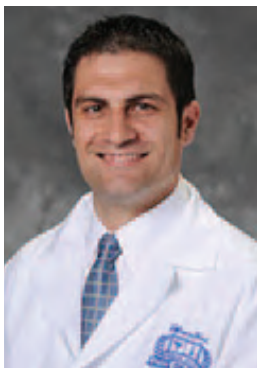
## Doctoral studies

As a doctoral student, Brian attended research meetings in the Department of Epidemiology with his committee chair, **Dr. Sheryl Kubiak**. These meetings were led by **Dr. Jim Anthony**, epidemiology and biostatistics professor in the MSU College of Human Medicine. This led to a two-year NIH-funded pre-doctoral fellowship program in drug dependence epidemiology. Along the way, Brian completed the Epidemiology Graduate Certificate Program, which also served to meet the requirement of a focused cognate for his PhD in Social Work. During the course of his studies, he continued his work with Dr. Kubiak and had additional opportunities for new projects in epidemiology. Brian describes this experience as "a perfect scenario for my education."

## Dissertation

Brian's dissertation focused on understanding the determinants of stigma among individuals with mental health and substance use conditions. His fellowship with Dr. Anthony supported access to the unique data of the World Mental Health Surveys. He also conducted a study of "health professional stigma" among master's-level social work students. His dissertation findings suggested that individuals with mental health and substance use conditions are afflicted by many different types of stigma, including by society, families, themselves, and even health professionals.

Most of our PhD graduates follow a path into academic positions. Brian was torn between this course



"I fell in love with the [social work] profession during my master's program."

and being able to focus his attention solely on research. His job search offered him several options, and he chose to become an assistant research scientist at the Henry Ford Health System Center for Health Policy & Health Services Research in Detroit.

## Research

Brian's research interests are in the area of health services for individuals with mental health and drug use conditions, with a particular focus on suicide prevention. In his own words: "At Henry Ford, I was immediately connected to numerous resources within the hospital system. Henry Ford has a very strong and active research mission, and it was the perfect fit. My position at Henry Ford is my dream job. I have also been

connected to the Mental Health Research Network, which is a consortium of several large hospital systems around the country. We've had the opportunity to conduct several impactful multi-site studies." Brian's research colleagues are doctoral-level researchers from psychology, medicine, statistics, genetics, epidemiology, and many other fields.

Brian also appreciates that he has been able to continue teaching within the MSU School of Social Work, offering both courses for credit and workshops for continuing education. "I really love teaching. It allows me to interact with students. I'm also able to translate real-world research happening every day at the hospital for new social workers earning their degrees. Even though I love spending most of my day doing research at Henry Ford, I still love being part of the MSU School of Social Work."

## Post-graduation accomplishments

Since graduation, Dr. Ahmedani has published more than 40 manuscripts and has received grant funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), and several foundations. He has recently served as principal investigator (PI) on the following projects: (1) an R01 award from the National Institute of Mental Health studying variations in patterns of healthcare before suicide, (2) a pragmatic trial of mental health screening and consultation services in a large medical hospital, (3) a technology-based screening and brief intervention for depression in spine care, and (4) a study of treatment adherence among individuals with depression. He also continues to serve as site-PI for the NIMH-funded Mental Health Research Network. **S**

## Spring break in Mexico

The International Social Policy & Practice: Mexico program is aimed at MSW students and focused primarily on social policy content. It was designed with collaborative support from Mexico's Sistema Nacional para el Desarrollo Integral de la Familia (DIF), which coordinates national policy and services for child and family welfare, and MSU Migrant Student Services.

This program took place over nine days during MSU spring break in March. It blends semester-long, on-line coursework with a faculty-led short-term study abroad experience in Mexico, including visits to three cities: Mexico City, Cuetzalan, and Puebla. Students have formal meetings with Mexican social service agencies, meet program staff, and view facilities; they also are taken to visit major cultural sites, and are given some free time to explore on their own.

The group arrived first in Mexico City, where they met with Nacional DIF officials. Next stop was Cuetzalan, high in the Sierra Madre Mountain range. There, students were welcomed by representatives of the municipality and visited agencies and cultural sites. In

Puebla, students visited CINIA, an organization that employs disabled individuals who are then able to support themselves by creating products that are sold in the CINIA store or purchased by other companies.

Also in Puebla, students toured many social service agencies and were hosted by **Mtra. Martha Erika Alonso de Moreno Valle**, president of DIF in Puebla. There was time for more cultural touring and free time before heading back to Mexico City for departure to Michigan.



Photos © 2015  
JoAnne Garrow



Walking through Cuetzalan

[This] study abroad trip offered a beautiful blend of academic and cultural learning. [It] included a stimulating educational environment, the privilege of visiting Mexican social welfare agencies and cultural sites, and the chance to reflect on our experiences with the group, the professors, the Mexican professionals, and the local people. In sum, this allowed us as students to submerge ourselves and challenge preconceived ideas and stereotypes, compare and contrast policies, and return with ideas about improving the world in which we live!

—Leah K., MSW student



The group pictured after an excellent day of learning and discussion at Puebla State DIF, with one of Mexico's many beautiful churches in the background.

School travelers enjoyed dining in Cuetzalan, Puebla!



The coursework had students focus on comparative and applied social policy, practice, and international social work in the context of Mexican social services provision at federal, state, and municipal levels. An additional 1–2 credits were available in independent faculty-mentored study to support students' personal research or practice agendas.

This mix of experiences, relationships, and time abroad, combined with the extensive on-line coursework, is designed to optimize professional and personal learning opportunities for students. The School places a high value on access to study abroad for graduate and non-traditional students. **S**



DIF is the primary public assistance agency for Mexican families; direct service provision is only part of their mission,

which also includes policy development, program development and evaluation, social service financial system management and funding allocations, and community needs assessment.

# Field experience in Puebla, Mexico



Tami Marsh and Adriana Carreon

Two of our students had the opportunity to fulfill part of their field placement requirement at Casa del Adolescente in Puebla, Mexico! Casa del Adolescente is a Desarrollo Integral para la Familia (DIF) agency that provides a temporary home for male and female adolescents who were sexually and/or physically abused, neglected, abandoned, or are runaways. DIF has legal custody of these residents while the legal system determines appropriate reintegration plans. They receive food and clothing and recreational, educational, cultural, and social activities throughout their stay, and they also are provided with medical, dental, and psychological services. In addition, there is an auditorium, green space, and a sports area for them to use.

Adriana Carreon is our first BASW student to do part of her field work in Mexico; she spent three weeks working at the agency. Tami Marsh, first-year MSW student, was initially part of the International Social Policy & Practice: Mexico spring break program (see page 12) and then worked in the agency for two weeks. This is the School's second year for MSW field work in Mexico.

While at Casa del Adolescente, Adriana and Tami were able to have a broad variety of experiences working directly with residents, observing special programs

(such as art therapy and equine therapy), and discussing with staff differences and commonalities of the US and Mexican approaches to foster care services.

In their final week, Amalia Cao R. Pomaski, coordinator of Casa del Adolescente, asked the students to propose a comprehensive development plan for the social work department. Because the social worker has very limited interaction with the 85 resident adolescents, the two psychologists were being called on to respond to all of their needs. In consultation with the coordinator and with input from the social worker, our students developed a new intake assessment form, allowing the social worker to be the first contact for new residents. This is expected to help her build rapport with them and enable her to handle many of the issues that arise. This will also allow the psychologists more time to do the required psychological assessments.

Adriana and Tami also developed an integrated paperwork format that, together with the new intake assessment form, will enable the social worker to have information from each department. This way when she or the house coordinator looks at an adolescent's file, they will easily be able to see fairly complete information about the adolescent. They also helped implement a system to reduce interruptions of the psychologists' sessions with residents, leading to improved efficiency and a higher level of client confidentiality.

In addition, Adriana and Tami recommended that all of the agency's departments meet together regularly to share their perspectives on resident issues in order to facilitate the agency taking a more holistic approach, and they developed a color-coded classification system for each resident's file, to give team members an immediate indication of the severity of each case.

These internships are another stage in the developing relationship between the School of Social Work and the social welfare system of Puebla, Mexico, DIF. The School plans to continue building these relationships and expanding this program. **S**

MEXICO



Significant thanks go to **Martha Erika Alonso de Moreno Valle** (president of DIF in Puebla) and DIF personnel: **Jorge Meruvia**, **Pepe Ayala**, and **Elba Perez** (Puebla); **Jenyffer Legnar** (Cuetzalan); **Lorena Lagarde Gonzalez** (Mexico City); and **Amalia Cao R. Pomaski**, coordinator of Casa del Adolescente, without whom these programs would not have been possible.

And thank you to **Haida Lopez** and **Juan Flores** of MSU Migrant Student Services High School Equivalency Program who assisted Adriana and Tami with integrating their experiences in Mexico with their spring semester field learning agreements and gave them release time from their field placements to participate in this field experience.

MSU School of Social Work MSW Program faculty responsible for these experiences are **Marcia Lampen**, **Karen Newman**, and **Danny Garcia** (International Social Policy & Practice: Mexico) and **Leisa Fuller** (Puebla field experience).

**The MSU Social Work Doctoral Program is an interdisciplinary program** designed to prepare social workers for leadership positions in the profession. It provides students with the education and training necessary to become highly skilled social work scholars, researchers, and teachers who will enrich the lives of those they serve and the communities and institutions in which they practice and contribute to the advancement of knowledge in the social work profession and the field of social welfare.

Relatively few social workers pursue doctorates, and we are proud of the impact our graduates have in the profession. School alumni are found throughout the state of Michigan, the nation, and in several foreign countries.



**Jennifer Farley's** dissertation is titled *The Integration of Relational Play Therapy into Infant Mental Health Services for At-Risk Preschoolers and Their Families Living in Poverty*.

Relational Play Therapy is a therapeutic modality that uses play and play techniques to resolve psychosocial difficulties for at-risk preschoolers and their families. As infant mental health treatment services expand to include preschoolers, the integration of Relational Play Therapy into infant mental health increases the scope of interventions available to clinicians when working with preschoolers and their families. Additionally, it ensures that supportive clinical services—such as concrete assistance with basic needs and advocacy within school, health, and court services—are embedded within treatment, which can help families reduce the risks associated with living in poverty. To examine this treatment process, a mixed-method study was conducted with clinicians and parents who have at-risk preschoolers. Results indicate that two treatment components contributed to parental growth and empowerment: active parental involvement and a supportive clinician-parent relationship. This research suggests that further studies and clinical training experiences focused on integrative treatment models are needed in order to ensure quality treatment services for this population.

After graduation, Jennifer will begin her professional career as an assistant professor in the School of Social Work at Eastern Michigan University.



**Gina Fedock's** dissertation is titled *Women Coping with Life: A Mixed Methods Study of Incarcerated Women with Life Sentences*. This study examines a sample of incarcerated women with life sentences in terms of three factors: (1) their pre-prison life experiences; (2) treatment outcomes after a new intervention;

and (3) their ways of coping before and after the intervention.

Fedock's dissertation extends existing scholarship on the pre-prison experiences of women with life sentences, and it is the first study to empirically examine the outcomes of a new intervention with this population and theoretically explore their ways of coping with a life sentence. Her work promotes advocacy for this often invisible and underserved population, and for practice, policy, and research to apply a human rights framework to the intersections of social work and the criminal justice system.

After graduation, Gina will begin her professional career as an assistant professor with the University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration.



**Sally Pelon's** dissertation is titled *Compassion Fatigue in Hospice Social Work: Potential Moderating Factors*. It looks at the significant professional stress for social workers that can be created working with dying individuals and their families in the hospice setting. This study explores how hospice social workers

perceive the stress of their work with the dying and how this stress may be manifested as compassion fatigue. In addition, this study is intended to consider if and how the use of social work supervision and a focus on the more fulfilling and satisfying aspects of hospice work may serve to lessen the experience and impact of compassion fatigue.

Sally expects that hospice social workers who have routine access to supervision in their work and are in touch with the parts of their work that are meaningful and fulfilling will experience less compassion fatigue.

After graduation, Sally will begin her professional career as an assistant professor of social work at Grand Valley State University.



**Linda Schmidt's** dissertation, *Evolution of Responsibility for Poverty: New Federalism and State Poverty Reduction Coalitions*, explores state vs federal responsibility for public intervention in poverty reduction over time in the US by identifying commonalities of states that have made poverty reduction a policy goal; comparing the constructs

of having real decentralized power or only the appearance of having that power; and comparing states with and without specific poverty reduction targets in order to identify relationships between their actual capacity to act and other socioeconomic and political factors.

The study found that although states acknowledge their reliance on federal programs and funding sources as viable strategies for poverty reduction, they rarely address the state-federal partnership specifically. Also, consistent with earlier research, this study found that in general, states with lower poverty rates over time and less diversity in terms of race are more likely to adopt formal targets for poverty reduction. Future flexibility in regard to implementing poverty reduction efforts will only continue to exacerbate current gaps between states based largely on race without specific, thoughtful, and strategic interventions to address differences among states.

After graduation, Linda is hoping to find a position teaching policy in academia, or in public service. **S**

## Visiting scholars hail from China, Netherlands, and South Korea

**D**r. **So-Hee Jeong** is an assistant professor in the Department of Industrial Welfare at Daegu University (South Korea) School of Social Work. Dr. Jeong's research interest is on the effects of parenting behavior, especially of low-income families, on children's development outcomes such as school performance, school adaptation, and adolescent delinquency. She is interested in how family processes such as parental conflicts and parenting behavior affect the developmental outcomes of children from low-income families.



During Dr. Jeong's 2014–2015 visit, she worked with **Dr. Kyunghye Lee** on research about over-controlling parental practice on adolescent mental health and the moderating effects of gender and income.

**A**nnick Bosch is a research master's student in behavioral science at Radboud University in Nijmegen, Netherlands. Bosch's international mentoring is funded by an honors program at her university called "Beyond the Frontiers." This program awards 40 talented students the opportunity to study abroad or carry out a research project or internship at an internationally renowned laboratory or research institute.



Bosch came to work with **Dr. Joanne Riebschleger**; they are conducting a qualitative study about developmental risk and protective factors reported by Dutch Children of Parents with a Mental Illness (COPMI). Bosch and Dr. Riebschleger are currently analyzing data from face-to-face interviews with Michigan children who have a parent with a mental illness; these findings together with quantitative survey data will be the basis of a paper they are co-authoring, which will be submitted to a peer-reviewed journal.

**Y**ue Feng of Capital Normal University in Beijing is on campus for calendar year 2015, working with **Dr. Steve Anderson** as part of MSU's Visiting International Professional Program (VIPP). Her home school is providing the support for her year in East Lansing. Her primary interest is in family resiliency.



VIPP was established to create practical links between MSU faculty and global industries, businesses, governments, and societies. It is dedicated to developing globalized perspectives and innovative futures, helping participants gain a deeper understanding of their professional fields through achievement of three goals: professional development, cultural enhancement, and global awareness. Participants engage in regular academic classes, specialized lectures, group discussions, seminars, and independent research on MSU's campus. **S**

## Faculty news and honors

**Sue Bowden** is serving as one of five national consultants developing a national society of collegiate honor societies. She serves as chair of the National Phi Alpha Scholarship Committee, awarding funding to students from the multiple Phi Alpha Honor Social Work Society chapters around the country and is faculty advisor to the School's chapter of Phi Alpha.

**Dr. Anne Hughes** is serving on the advisory board for the Center for Innovation and Research (CFIR), created through a formal partnership agreement between Sparrow Health System and Michigan State University. This unique partnership of a major research university and a community-based hospital will serve as a hub for creative, innovative collaboration.

**Dr. Sacha Klein** is providing ongoing consultation to the Pew Charitable Trusts for their initiative on Home Visiting Data for Performance. Ten states and Los Angeles County are participating in this initiative, aimed at ensuring meaningful outcomes and a solid return on taxpayer investment. Dr. Klein is consulting on effective measures, outcome indicators, data collection methodologies, and application of the resulting data.

**Dr. Sheryl Kubiak** is currently engaged in evaluating the eight 2015 pilot programs across the state funded through the efforts of the Governor's Mental Health Diversion Council. The pilots in Barry, Berrien, Kalamazoo, Kent, Marquette, Monroe, Oakland, and Wayne counties are focused on diverting persons with mental illness from incarceration. Students in Kubiak's doctoral-level evaluation course are involved, getting the opportunity to use real-world evaluation issues to learn how to conduct community-based cross-site evaluations.

**Dr. Kubiak** has also been nominated by the Michigan Domestic and Sexual Violence Prevention and Treatment Board and the Michigan Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence for a seat on Governor Rick Snyder's new Justice Policy Commission.

**Andrea Martineau** is a member of the Fostering Success Michigan (FSM) Higher Education Consortium and meets quarterly with a collaborative group representing the programs from across Michigan that provide campus-based support for youth and alumni of foster care.

**Jo Ann McFall** was just named to the Social Work HEALS (Healthcare Education and Leadership Scholars) Advisory Committee. This is a collaborative endeavor of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) and the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) supported by the New York Community Trust to develop curriculum and train social workers for the new national healthcare paradigm. McFall is also featured in the *NASW News*, discussing social work field education; an *NASW News* interview with her can be viewed on YouTube.

**Dr. Joanne Riebschleger** was one of 25 international researchers from 11 countries invited to a meeting in Prato, Italy, to plan the development of one or more research studies about children of a parent with a mental illness and their families. The Prato group gathering will be generating new studies with additional manuscripts to disseminate findings. **S**

### PRESENTATIONS

**Dr. Suzanne Cross** (presenter): "American Indian Grandparents as Sole Providers of Care for Their Grandchildren," with **Dr. Angelique Day** (MSW 2005); and "Historical Context of Boarding School Experiences and the Reverberation in Subsequent Generations" at the 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Protecting Our Children Conference in Portland, OR.

**Dr. Angie Kennedy** (roundtable discussion): "Utilizing Innovative Life Course Methods Across Diverse Populations: Implications for Research and Practice" at the meeting of the Society for Community Research and Action; other presenters: **Kristen Prock** (PhD student) and community psychology colleagues **Adrienne Adams** (MSU) and **Marisa Beeble** (The Sage Colleges).

**Dr. Sacha Klein** (invited speaker): "The Case for Collaboration as Prevention" at the Relationships Matter: About Building Connections Conference, Los Angeles, CA.

**Dr. Sheryl Kubiak** (organizer): "Females as Perpetrators of Violence: A Promising Intervention" at the International Academy of Law and Mental Health, Vienna, Austria; she will also present two additional papers at this conference. Also (webinar leader): offered by the National Alliance to End Domestic Abuse. Also (presenter): two papers at the national Law and Society Association (LSA) Conference in Seattle, WA, related to her NSF-funded research with **Hannah Brenner** (Law) investigating the mechanisms associated with reporting sexual victimization during incarceration.

**Mark Nester** (panelist): "Men in Social Work" at Grand Valley State University.



## MAJOR CONFERENCES

### American Society on Aging

The American Society on Aging is the nation's largest multidisciplinary conference for professionals who work with older adults. Its 2015 conference, Aging in America, was held in Chicago, IL, in March.



**Dr. Paul Freddolino** presented "Designing, Implementing, and Assessing Technology Use and Interventions for Older Adults," along with a panel of MSU faculty and representatives of the Oasis Institute and the Pew Research Center's Internet Project.

**Dr. Freddolino** also presented "Designing Effective Post-Discharge Telehealth Interventions for Older Adults and Their Caregivers" with BASW senior **Marianne Caddy**, who also presented a poster on "Caregiver Role and Patient Use of Telehealth Services." Co-researcher **Dr. Amanda Woodward** was unable to attend.

**Dr. Anne Hughes** co-presented "High Tech and High Touch: Helping Health IT Live Up to Its Promise in Healthcare Transitions" with **Dr. Freddolino**. **Dr. Woodward** was also involved in this research.



PhD student **Gina Fedock** and graduated MSW/JD student **Jonathan Litt** presenting a poster describing research they conducted with **Dr. Sacha Klein** on how social work faculty teach Geographic Information Services (GIS). Photo taken at the SSWR conference.

### Association of Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors

The Association of Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors (BPD) held its 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference in Kansas City, MO, in March. BPD represents the interests of undergraduate education and practice in social work and is the primary organization that represents undergraduate social work.



**Dr. Ellen Whipple** and **Sue Bowden** presented "Use of Zen Philosophy in Teaching Undergraduate Practice," looking at the integration of Zen readings into the syllabus, the use of Zen as a teaching strategy, and examples of the compatibility of Zen with NASW's Code of Ethics and CSWE core competencies.

**Bowden** was co-leader of a discussion titled "Baccalaureate Social Work Program Educator Groups: What Is Happening in Your State?" regarding how state BSW educator groups can be an effective way to advocate for the needs of our students and improve our skills in delivering social work education.

And **Bowden**, together with **Shani Saxon**, presented "The 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the National Voting Rights Act: Implications for Today." As part

of their session, the students who went to Selma (see page 7) called in and shared some stories from the "remarkable moving experience."

### Society for Social Work and Research

The Society for Social Work and Research (SSWR) is dedicated to the advancement of social work research. Its 19<sup>th</sup> annual conference, The Social and Behavioral Importance of Increased Longevity, was held in New Orleans in January.



**Dr. Sacha Klein**, **Gina Fedock** (PhD student), and **Jonathan Litt** (MSW 2013) presented "Using Geographic Information Services (GIS) to Teach Social Work." Co-researcher **Kaitlyn Kapnick** (BASW senior) was unable to attend.

**Dr. Klein** presented "Do Early Care and Education Services Improve Language Development for Maltreated Children? Evidence from a National Child Welfare Sample."

**Dr. Sheryl Kubiak** moderated "Family Dynamics and Involvement in Criminal Justice."

**Dr. Kubiak** and **Gina Fedock** presented "Physical and Mental Health Concerns for Young Women with Arrest Histories: Results from the National Survey on Drug Use and Health." **S**

## School news



### Nationally acclaimed author presents on family resilience

The School joined with Human Development and Family Studies (HDFS), University Outreach and Engagement, and the Department of Psychology to invite **Dr. Froma Walsh** of the University of Chicago to campus. Dr. Walsh, an internationally-acclaimed author and leading authority on family resilience, has developed a resilience-oriented, community-based practice approach to strengthen families in crisis (e.g., major trauma, loss), in disruptive transitions (e.g., separation/divorce, migration), and facing challenges of persistent, multi-stress conditions (e.g., illness, disability, economic hardship, discrimination). Dr. Walsh discussed this approach to strengthen families in need as part of the HDFS Distinguished Speaker series. Dr. Walsh presented a public talk, followed by a meeting with practitioners on April 10.

### Dr. DeBrenna Agbényiga accepts new position



**S**chool of Social Work faculty member **DeBrenna Agbényiga** recently left MSU to begin a new position as vice provost and dean of the Graduate School at the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA). She also will have an appointment as professor in the UTSA Department of Social Work.

Dr. Agbényiga, who has served as associate dean for graduate studies and inclusion in the MSU College of Social Science since 2012, earned both her MSW and PhD degrees from the School of Social Work. She then served as a faculty member in the School of Social Work from 2005 until her recent departure, and was promoted to associate professor with tenure in 2012.

Dr. Agbényiga's research focuses on organizational culture, international social and economic development, community development and sustainability, women's rights, children's rights, gender-based violence, cross-cultural learning, and diversity. Her research has been published in leading social work journals including the *Journal of Social Work Education*, *Children and Youth Services Review*, *Administration in Social Work*, and *Advances in Social Work*. She currently serves the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) as a member of the Global Commission and has chaired the Council on External Relations since June 2011. Dr. Agbényiga was among the leaders in the School in developing international research and teaching efforts, and led study abroad trips for social work students in Africa.

The School wishes Dr. Agbényiga well as she begins her important new role and thanks her for her many contributions to the School. **S**

### College and School win ADDY awards



At this year's Mid-Michigan Creative Alliance ADDY awards ceremony, the School of Social Work and College of Social Science received four awards for marketing of the summer online elective, "Surviving the Coming Zombie Apocalypse: Disasters, Catastrophes and Human Behavior" (see page 4).

The award categories were:

- Best of Show and Best of Category for Audio Visual
- Gold ADDY Award for Audio Visual
- Gold ADDY Award for Integrated Campaign
- Silver ADDY Award for Advertising for the Arts and Sciences, Collateral – Poster

The ADDYs are awarded by the Mid-Michigan Creative Alliance, the local affiliate of the American Advertising Federation. They are the advertising and marketing industry's largest and most recognized competition; these local ADDY Awards are the first step of a three-tiered national competition. The Audio Visual entry has won a Silver at the district level and will move on to the national competition!



### Rev. Jim Wallis awarded honorary doctorate

Social justice is a core value of social work. One of the leading voices for social justice in America, Rev. Jim Wallis (MSU 1972) was awarded an honorary doctorate of humanities degree at the Michigan State University 2014 Winter Commencement. Rev. Wallis was nominated for the honorary degree by **Dr. Gary Anderson** (former director, now professor in the School of Social Work) and MSU College of Social Science Dean **Marietta Baba**.

Dr. Wallis is the president and founder of Sojourners, a national progressive Christian organization committed to faith in action for social justice, peace, and environmental stewardship. He is a bestselling author, public theologian, speaker, and international commentator on ethics and public life, and he recently served on President Obama's White House Advisory Council on Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships.

While on campus, Dr. Wallis met with students and faculty at a reception held at the Broad Art Museum to talk about social issues and current events, including the conflicts in Ferguson, MO. When he accepted his degree, he encouraged students to be the voice for social change, noting the importance of student movements and student activism. Consistent with the School's diversity initiatives, this attention to social justice and civil rights affirmed the role of social work and the values of our profession. **S**



**Margaret Nielsen**, long-time chair of the School's Diversity Committee and now retired from MSU, was at the ceremony to present the awards. The School again wants to recognize Dr. Nielsen's many accomplishments in this area, as well as her prominent role in the School.

*The Diversity Committee is a group of MSU School of Social Work faculty and students committed to promoting diversity in all aspects of the life of the School. The committee has been very active this year in the development and implementation of activities associated with celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the national Voting Rights Act of 1965.*

## Margaret Nielsen Awards for Diversity Achievement announced

The School Diversity Committee honored this year's *Margaret Nielsen Award* winners at a special ceremony on March 20. The awards honor diversity achievement at MSU and in the greater Lansing community. This year's winners are:

**Delanie Pope** is a faculty member in the School's Chance at Childhood Program. As part of our School of Social Work celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the national Voting Rights Act of 1965 (VRA) and the Selma, AL, marches that led up to its passage, she developed a slideshow explaining the history of the Act and its current status.

Faculty members **Sacha Klein, Hyungkag Cho, and Maureen Moloney** all promoted the VRA's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in their sections of SW 441 "Social Work Practice with Task Groups, Organizations, and Communities," our senior-year macro practice class. They have all promoted the VRA's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary to their classes, and each has offered their students relevant assignments and other learning opportunities. Thanks to their efforts, we had a number of students actively working to promote VRA related activities not just at the School but across the MSU campus.

**Jennifer Onwenu** (BASW 2014) is an advanced standing MSW student who helped found our new student chapter of the National Association of Black Social Workers. She also has been an active participant and planner for the last three Martin Luther King Day celebrations, and this year was our emcee for that event. (Read about her role in MSU's 5<sup>th</sup> Annual César E. Chávez Commemorative Celebration on page 7.)

**Adriana Carreon** is a BASW senior. She organized and participated in several panels on immigration in a number of classes last year. She also was our first BASW student to participate in an international field placement experience this semester in Mexico (see page 13).

Also in attendance at the awards ceremony were several of the students just back from their trip to Selma, AL, the prior weekend (see page 7). **S**

## Welcome to our newest Continuing Education staffer



**Amanda Dubey-Zerka**, LMSW, (MSW 2006) earned her bachelor's degree in social work in 2005 from Saginaw Valley State University. She is a clinical social worker with nearly nine years of experience as a mental health clinician, focusing on treatment for issues related to sexual trauma, domestic violence, PTSD, and homelessness.

Dubey-Zerka is certified in Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavior Therapy and has a small caseload of mental health clients at the St. Vincent Catholic Charities outpatient clinic in Lansing. She is the president of the Firecracker Foundation Board of Directors, "honor-

ing the bravery of children who have survived sexual trauma with a community invested in the healing of their whole being." Dubey-Zerka is now the program coordinator for Continuing Education and a clinical instructor for the MSU School of Social Work.

Dubey-Zerka was drawn to this position for many reasons, including her love for MSU, her enjoyment of lifelong learning, and the opportunity to facilitate high quality professional development for social workers, thus improving the quality of service for clients in Lansing and statewide. She has a special interest in online and distance learning and has been integral in the development of webinars now being offered by the Continuing Education Program (see page 9). **S**

**Connect with the School!**

**facebook**

Find us by joining the group *MSU School of Social Work*. Are you a Flint MSW program grad? Join the *Michigan State University Flint MSW program alums* group! Or check out the *Michigan Kinship Care Resource Center*

**twitter**

Read the School's "tweets" at [www.twitter.com/MSUSocialWork](http://www.twitter.com/MSUSocialWork) or connect with other Spartan social workers by joining the *MSUSocialWork* group.

**LinkedIn**

Join by searching for *MSU School of Social Work* in the groups or visit the recently launched *College of Social Science* group at MSU College of Social Science.

# School's sixth annual Undergraduate Social Work Research Fair

The School's sixth annual Undergraduate Research Fair was held Thursday, March 19, 2015, in space provided by the MSU Federal Credit Union. Our undergraduate researchers and their faculty mentors have been hard at work expanding knowledge on a variety of topics that will have lasting impact on client populations for years to come.

Each year, this event gives our junior and senior undergraduate researchers an opportunity to exhibit posters describing and summarizing their research work with their faculty and doctoral student mentors. Many of these same students entered their posters in the University Undergraduate Research and Arts Forum (UURAF), held on April 10 in the MSU Union (see articles on next page).

**Dr. Steve Anderson**, director of the School of Social Work, greeted participants and all our guests. The School is viewed as being a leader in undergraduate research opportunities by the College of Social Science and the University. All of the work by our faculty and students in this area is well recognized, as reflected by the list of special guests who attended:

- **Dr. Steve Kautz**, associate dean for academic and student affairs in the College of Social Science
- **Dr. Doug Estray**, associate provost for undergraduate education
- **Dr. Korine Wawrzynski**, assistant dean for academic initiatives and director for undergraduate research in the Provost's Office

Thanks go to everyone who participated in this event, to **Dr. Arnie Greenfield** and **Monaca Eaton** for their help in all aspects of the festival and for including their SW 431

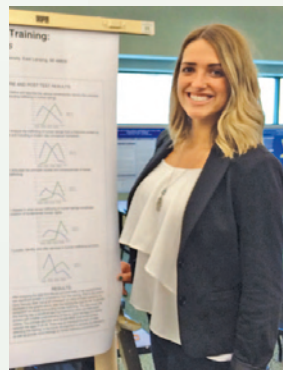


"Research Methods in Social Work" students in the event, to **Debbie Vasicek** for all her help in organizing and facilitating the festivities, and to **Sue Bowden**, BASW Program director, for her continuing work to help grow this initiative. **S**

**Zach Bosey and Samantha Martin**



**Daniel Carreon-Camberos, Alison Osika, Emily D'Imperio**



**Hailey Hildebrand**



At left: **Hadley Brandenburg** (back), **Marianne Caddy** (facing)

## Student researchers, faculty mentors

### Sophomore

**Emily Dimperio** Faculty: *Steve Anderson*

### Juniors

**Zach Bosey** Faculty: *Pilar Horner*

**Ericka Barber** Faculty: *Marya Sosulski*

**Daniel Carreon Camberto** Faculty: *Steve Anderson*

**Lauren Choi** Faculty: *Cheryl Williams Hecksel & Rosemary Jackson*

**Brittany Compton** Faculty: *Sheryl Kubiak, Gina Fedock, & Woo Jong Kim*

**Alex DeNuccio** Faculty: *Anne Hughes*

**Haley Hildebrand** Faculty: *Gretchen Archer*

**Kailey Hindes** Faculty: *Anne Hughes*

**Olivia Kaatz** Faculty: *Tina Timm*

**Allison Osika** Faculty: *Steve Anderson*

**Leonard Pennisi** Faculty: *Marya Sosulski*

**Amy Schaafsma** Faculty: *Jennifer Farley*

**Emily Sheridan-Fulton** Faculty: *Gretchen Archer*

**Natasha Sprau** Faculty: *Joanne Riebschleger*

**Carolina Vasquez** Faculty: *Daniel Vélez Ortiz*

**Xi Zhang** Faculty: *Kyunghee Lee*

### Seniors

**Elizabeth Bonham** Faculty: *Amanda Woodward*

**Hadley Brandenburg** Faculty: *Paul Freddolino & Amanda Woodward*

**Marianne Caddy** Faculty: *Paul Freddolino & Amanda Woodward*

**Adriana Carreon** Faculty: *Daniel Vélez Ortiz*

**Olivia Ehret** Faculty: *Joanne Riebschleger*

**Carmen Hillier** Faculty: *Sheryl Kubiak, Gina Fedock & Woo Jong Kim*

**Kaitlyn Kapnick** Faculty: *Sacha Klein*

**Hadley Kleinschmidt** Faculty: *Sheryl Groden*

**Christina Johnson** Faculty: *Joe Kozakiewicz*

**Marie Rose** Faculty: *Pilar Horner*

**Jessica Silber** Faculty: *Terry Keller*

## UURAF showcases student research

The annual Undergraduate University Research and Arts Forum (UURAF) provides MSU undergraduate students with an opportunity to showcase their scholarship and creative activity. This prestigious competition brings together an intellectual community of highly motivated students to share their work with faculty, peers, and external audiences and provides a unique educational opportunity for aspiring researchers.

This year's forum on April 10 showcased more than 750 students from 14 different colleges who were mentored by more than 400 faculty members. Because of the School's high UURAF participation, the School of Social Work has its own program category, distinct from the other College of Social Science disciplines. See the next column for the full list of undergraduate researchers who participated in UURAF. **S**



### *Congratulations to first-prize winners!*

**Marianne Caddy &  
Hadley Brandenburg**

**Older Adults and Technology**

*Mentors:*

Paul Freddolino & Amanda Woodward

### UURAF poster judging criteria

Faculty judges take the following criteria into consideration when evaluating UURAF programs:



- **Delivery:** The presentation was organized and delivered in a clear, engaging, and professional manner.
- **Comprehensibility:** The presentation could be understood by an educated but non-expert audience.
- **Significance:** The presenter explained the significance of the work, and how the work contributes to broader research on the subject area.
- **Elements:** The presenter adequately addressed the project's essential elements (e.g., introduction, literature review, conceptual framework, methods, and analysis).
- **Current status:** The presenter effectively illustrated the current status of the project (e.g., results obtained, discussion of findings).
- **Visual aids:** The visual aids were appropriate, effectively used, and appealing.

## Student researchers at the 2015 UURAF

**Leonard Pennisi**

**Community Development: A Study of Faith Based Organizations Within Detroit Neighborhoods**

*Mentor:* Marya Sosulski

**Emily Sheridan-Fulton**

**The Continuing Education of Social Workers in the Field of Child Welfare**

*Mentor:* Gretchen Archer

**Ericka Barber**

**Detroit Recovery Study**

*Mentor:* Marya Sosulski

**Olivia Ehret & Natasha Sprau**

**Developing and Testing a Fidelity Instrument for a Social Work Intervention Pilot Program**

*Mentor:* Joanne Riebschleger

**Haley Hildebrand**

**DHS Continuing Education Trainings**

*Mentor:* Gretchen Archer

**Brittiany Compton**

**Early Substance Use and Trauma:**

**An Examination of Incarcerated Women's Histories of Substance Use and Childhood Traumatic Events**

*Mentors:* Gina Fedock, Woo Jong Kim, Sheryl Kubiak

**Xi Zhang**

**Effects of Parenting Practices on Chinese Children's Mental Health**

*Mentor:* Kyunghye Lee

**Carmen Hillier**

**Examining the Relationship Between Sexual Victimization, Subsequent Retaliation, and Suicide Risk in a Sample of Incarcerated Women**

*Mentors:* Gina Fedock, Woo Jong Kim, Sheryl Kubiak

**Marianne Caddy & Hadley Brandenburg**

**Older Adults and Technology**

*Mentors:* Paul Freddolino & Amanda Woodward

**Lauren Choi**

**Lifebooks as Adoption Preparation Intervention: A Comparative Literature Review**

*Mentors:* Rosemary Jackson & Cheryl Williams-Hecksel

**Amy Schaafsma**

**The Parent-Young Child Program: A Program Evaluation for At-Risk Families with Children Ages 3 to 5**

*Mentor:* Jennifer Farley

**Kaitlyn Kapnick**

**Preventing Child Maltreatment: Do Geographically Accessible Social Services Make a Difference?**

*Mentor:* Sacha Klein

**Alec DeNuccio & Kailey Hindes**

**Social Worker Attitudes Toward People with HIV/Aids: National Survey**

*Mentor:* Anne Hughes

**Allison Osika, Emily D'Imperio, Daniel Carreon-Camberos**  
**Technology for Fighting Poverty**

*Mentor:* Steve Anderson

## Student news

**B**ASW senior **Marianne Caddy** presented a poster session, “Caregiver Role and Patient Use of Telehealth Services,” and co-presented a workshop, “Designing Effective Post-Discharge Telehealth,” at the American Society on Aging annual conference, Aging in America, in Chicago in March, with support from the School.

Doctoral candidates **Julie Ma** and **Sally Pelon** were awarded dissertation completion fellowships from the College of Social Science. This support will help them finish writing their dissertations, in preparation for their defense.

College of Social Science Research Scholars Fellowships were awarded to **Kristen Prock** (first-year) and **Eva Palma Ramirez** and **Dasha Shamrova** (renewals) to support their independent research projects over the summer. The award is made to students who are making good progress toward their degree who demonstrate a strong preparation for and aspiration toward a career in research.

**Celeste Santi** was selected by our faculty as *Outstanding Senior* for the 2015 graduating class in recognition of her exemplary leadership of Students for Social Work the past two years, her fine academic record, and her outstanding service to MSU in non-social work areas. Celeste was also honored at NASW–Michigan Chapter’s *Student of the Year Awards* April 16 and at our Graduate Recognition Ceremony on May 8. She led our graduating seniors to the podium to receive their degrees from the College of Social Science Commencement at the Breslin Center on May 9.

Second-year MSW student **Amy Shelle** is president and founder of the MSU Animal Assisted Therapy Group. She and other members of the group were interviewed for a *State News* article highlighting the benefits of animal assisted therapy and service animals.

**Dr. Pilar Horner** taught SW 822 “Topics in Policy Practice and Advocacy–Immigration & Transnational Issues” this semester. Students in her class—**Emily Blankenship, Candace Buckner, Kaitlin Christman, Johanna Dart, Elizabeth Elsner, Jackie Gibson, Tiffanie Hilgendorf, Ayami Kawamata, Jennifer Klein, Rachel Lewis, Melissa Metevier, Jenny May Wallsteadt, London Wilson, Samantha Wright, Bryanah York, Lydia Zuker**—organized a series of campus-wide free events and advocacy efforts open to the public. Collaboration and support were provided by the School of Social Work, the Office for Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives, and Migrant Student Services. Presentation topics were:

- Immigrant Women and Domestic Violence: *A seminar to increase awareness and sensitivity of issues related to women, domestic violence, and US immigration policy*
- “I Am Not For Sale”: *A night of human trafficking prevention and awareness*
- The Dream is Now! *A night of education and advocacy about the DREAM Act and the DREAMer generation*
- Executive Order on Immigration Workshop: *Discussion on President Obama’s Executive Order on Immigration.* **S**

## 2014–15 Diversity Project Poster Contest winners chosen

**A**s part of the School’s BASW Diversity Curriculum, all juniors create poster presentations. All of the diversity project posters have been on display in the first and second floors of Baker Hall. The Undergraduate Advisory Board leads the effort to judge the posters, and winners were recognized at the School’s Martin Luther King Day event, where the winning posters were on display.

### First place

**Samantha Linck:** Alternative Spring Break: Homelessness

### Second place

**Nicole DiMichele:** My Brother’s Keeper

### Third place

**Karla Aguinaga:** Destination Detroit

**Lindsey Cattell:** Life After Loss

**Kathryn Coleman:** Community Mental Health

**Zoe Cutie:** Capital Area Response Effort

**Jaycie Giordano:** International Rescue Committee

**Christina Johnson:** Breaking the Chains

**Kaitlyn Kapnick:** Michigan State University Adolescent Diversion Program

**Hadley Kleinschmidt:** Crisis Hotline

**Ashley McElyea:** Support Group for Grieving Widows

**Janie Milks:** Read to Succeed

**Mercedes Noble:** Loaves and Fishes

**Alison Rebello:** Vista Springs: Full of Life

**Jessica Silber:** Work of Heart

**Ben Spreitzer:** MRule

## Student groups

**P**hi Alpha, the social work student honors society, chose to sponsor a book drive this semester as one of its service projects, collecting books of all kinds. Phi Alpha members will sort the books and distribute them to several field agencies in which members are placed and also to the School’s Community Programs. Also, the Phi Alpha induction ceremony for new members was held on April 24. **Sue Bowden** is Phi Alpha faculty advisor. **S**



**Students for Multiethnic Community Action (SMCA)** volunteers helped with all aspects of the January 2015

Martin Luther King Day celebration. Pictured (from left): **Cierra Salter, Pam Perez, Shani Saxon** (faculty advisor), **Elena Alemayehu, Ellise Lee** (president), and **Antoine Smith**.

## MSU engages in Empower Extraordinary Capital Campaign

**M**ichigan State University has launched a \$1.5 billion capital campaign intended to build on MSU's traditions while empowering critical initiatives for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. For more information, check out [empower.msu.edu](http://empower.msu.edu) or #empowerMSU.

Among the strategic investments envisioned through the campaign are:

- Providing full scholarships to the best students, regardless of background and socioeconomic status
- Investing in faculty and academic excellence by establishing endowed chairs and professorships
- Expanding research capacity that enables MSU to solve the big problems of our time and to strengthen the economy and enrich quality of life across Michigan and around the world

The School of Social Work is actively engaged in the MSU Capital Campaign, and we invite supporters of the School to participate. Contributions are welcome both for general financial support of the School or for specific scholarships or activities, as well as for new initiatives that may be of interest to you. If you would like to contribute, please send your donations to:

Nancy Perkins  
MSU School of Social Work  
Baker Hall  
655 Auditorium Road Room 254  
East Lansing, MI 48824

If you have ideas for new initiatives on which you hope the School will work or which you would like to support, please contact Director Steve Anderson ([stevea@msu.edu](mailto:stevea@msu.edu) or 517-355-7515).



Visit the School on the web: [www.socialwork.msu.edu](http://www.socialwork.msu.edu)

**S**

Spring/Summer 2015 SSW NEWS

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**OUR MISSION:** We are dedicated to educating students for competent, responsive, and ethical social work practice. Our teaching, research, and outreach seek to promote positive change and social justice for diverse communities, organizations, groups, families, and individuals.

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STAY ACTIVE IN THE SCHOOL!

## Stay active in the School!

### Join our Social Work Alumni Association

<http://alumni.msu.edu/account/join.cfm>

### Attend our Continuing Education sessions

<http://socialwork.msu.edu/ceu/>

### Prepare for the Social Work Licensure Examination

<http://socialwork.msu.edu/ceu/licensure.php>

### Qualify for State of Michigan School Social Work certification

[http://socialwork.msu.edu/ceu/competency\\_series.php](http://socialwork.msu.edu/ceu/competency_series.php)

### Become a Continuing Education presenter

<http://socialwork.msu.edu/ceu/announcements.php>

### Become a Field Instructor or Field Faculty Liaison

[http://socialwork.msu.edu/field\\_education/contact.php](http://socialwork.msu.edu/field_education/contact.php)

### Donate to support the School's scholarships, research, and programs

<http://socialwork.msu.edu/alumni/goals.php>

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School of Social Work

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