of the community

AREA OF EMPHASIS IN PRACTICE WITH IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES (AEIR) SCHOLARS PROGRAM
ST. KATE’S - ST. THOMAS
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

June 2018

PERSPECTIVES
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AEIR Scholar
Manuela Gonzalez is truly
of the community she serves.
Story page 14.
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As we prepared to go to print on this spring edition of our Perspectives magazine, focused on serving our communities and increasing access, University of St. Thomas President Julie Sullivan and St. Catherine University President ReBecca Koenig Roloff issued a statement concerning our School of Social Work. On May 24, they announced St. Kate’s and St. Thomas have come to a mutual decision they will end their formal collaboration as originally configured, and will work toward offering two separate Social Work programs, with the change to take place no sooner than fall of 2019. [The statement and future updates can be found at stthomas.edu/socialwork/news.]

Certainly this was not a decision we in the School of Social Work had hoped for, but it became clear it was the decision that had to be made at this point in the institutions’ histories. The reasons why the change is happening at this time are many and complex, but I want to assure our communities the decision signals a strong commitment to social work programs on both campuses. In fact, part of the decision was the fact each university wants to build its program in its own unique way that fits the mission and strategic priorities of each university. The announcement signals the beginning of a very long process, but let me address some of our communities’ most pressing questions here.

The degree status for current students will not change in 2018-19. Students who graduate on or before May, 2019 will graduate with a degree from both institutions. This year, students will also see no change in their programs, and in their access to resources at both universities. I also want to assure all alumni this does not affect their degrees. All alumni graduated from an accredited program and we are working with the Council on Social Work Education to ensure that the accreditation process for degrees from both institutions will move forward seamlessly for future students.

Each university anticipates it will admit students into its independent programs starting in fall 2019. St. Catherine University plans to offer a Bachelor of Social Work program in both its College for Women and its College for Adults. St. Kate’s is currently undergoing a study to determine future graduate-level offerings. The University of St. Thomas will continue to offer a Bachelor of Social Work, a Master of Social Work in clinical practice, and a Doctorate in Social Work in their current formats.

The faculty and administration at both universities expect that we will continue to partner where it makes the most sense, but we will be taking this year to decide on the details of that informal cooperation.

We ourselves are going through our own grieving for a partnership that has been rich and joyous. We have made deep friendships across the two campuses. Yet it is that love for these institutions that helps us understand the difficult deliberations that led to this decision. I know this decision will lead to distinct and strong programs that will serve our communities where there are so many needs. I see this as an opportunity to better meet the complex needs of the 21st century.

This brings me back to this edition of Perspectives. The School of Social Work, St. Catherine University and the University of St. Thomas each grapple with the challenges of serving our communities and increasing access. In this magazine issue, you will learn about some of the important ways our faculty, students and alumni address the barriers to accessibility – both locally and globally.

As Catholic universities that endeavor to educate the whole person, our social work programs seek to educate future leaders and workers who embrace that value and embody it in their professional work. We are eager to find new and exciting ways to explore the full sense of what it means to be accessible.

Corrine Carvalho, PhD

Interim Dean, St. Kate’s – St. Thomas School of Social Work

Professor of Theology
EMILY ROSS BULTHUIS
’10 BSW, ’12 MSW

Growing up with a family member dealing with serious mental health issues, Emily Ross Bulthuis ’10 BSW, ’12 MSW, LICSW found her passion. Over six straight years as a student in the School of Social Work, that passion shaped the dynamic clinician she is today.

“Core social work values stick with me every day of my working life, and in my work with the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI),” Bulthuis said. “That every individual has inherent dignity and worth, the power of collective voices, of advocacy and standing alongside people in their journeys.”

Beyond her work as a behavioral health psychotherapist for Park Nicollet Health Services, Bulthuis started in January a two-year term as president of the NAMI-MN board of directors.

“In the first chapter of my career I became acutely aware of issues related to access to services,” she said. “Seeing the problems in our mental health system firsthand, and trying to help people work through them, keeps me really excited about the work NAMI does. As board president I support the work NAMI is already doing, including expanding support services to other parts of the state.”

Whether in the micro-practice of her daily work or the macro-practice of policy and education with NAMI, Bulthuis appreciates the foundation the School of Social Work provided her.

“I would do my social work education over again and again,” she said. “I’m proud to say that’s where I come from.”
Sustaining Change from Psychotherapy

David Roseborough, PhD, associate professor, presented “Sustaining Change from Psychotherapy: A Mixed Method Study” at the Society for Social Work and Research Conference in Washington, D.C., in January, on behalf of his 2017 GRSW 682 student group research project. For this project, Roseborough and seven MSW students collaborated with Hamm Memorial Psychiatric Clinic to study both quantitative and qualitative data in an attempt to measure the extent to which clients improved over time: from beginning psychotherapy, upon ending it, and then two years later. The research team presented its findings at the 2017 Clinical Research Presentation Day as a group, as well as to Hamm clinic staff and to a standing committee of Hamm’s board of directors. The clinic has gone on to use parts of the report in its orientation for new interns. This work exemplifies what completing a GRSW 682 project can entail. Exploring new research methodologies, working in groups, and partnering with “real-life clinics,” are just a few examples of what students who choose to do an applied research project will have the chance to explore. Read more about this group project at: stthomas.edu/socialwork/news.

Nesmith Awarded Fulbright

Congratulations to Social Work associate professor Ande Nesmith, PhD, who was awarded a Fulbright grant for fall 2018. This is a highly competitive grant run through the U.S. State Department, and one of very few open to all disciplines, including social work.

As part of the grant, Nesmith will be in the Czech Republic for six months during her sabbatical, working with five research partners, including three social work faculty and one doctoral student at University of Ostrava, and a social work professor at Masaryk University in Brno. She will be studying older youth exiting their foster care system and how they fare living independently as young adults. As part of this research, she’ll be interviewing social workers in Ostrava, Brno and Prague, and will also partner with the European Research Institute for Social Work (ERIS), which has social work researchers from all over Europe.

This project is a continuation of the research Nesmith conducts in the U.S. While in the Czech Republic, she will also be doing presentations on her past studies and will present some of her current research at the International Conference on Social Work.

DID YOU KNOW? NAMI Minnesota (National Alliance on Mental Illness) offers more than 500 free classes and presentations and over 70 support groups each year.
Faculty Spotlight

MELISSA LUNDQUIST, PhD

Expanding Study Abroad Opportunities

Assistant professor Melissa Lundquist, PhD, has traveled across the globe in search of study abroad opportunities for social work students, something she has long been passionate about providing. Historically, opportunities to take social work courses as part of a study abroad experience have been extremely limited.

“They can be really transformative,” Lundquist said.

Her search recently brought her to Botswana and South Africa, where she met with social work faculty at the University of Botswana and the University of Cape Town to explore offering study abroad courses within the major at the two schools. Lundquist said providing students with a global, cross-cultural perspective is extremely valuable in the social work field, and studying abroad teaches students to navigate a world different from their own.

“They’re going to face a lot of opportunities to work with people who are different from them,” Lundquist said. “And one thing a study abroad experience can do is give someone an opportunity to … learn different perspectives, about their own profession, even.”

Lundquist plans on making the courses available soon for junior and senior BSW students.
Lundquist Receives Research Grant

Congratulations to Social Work assistant professor Melissa Lundquist, PhD, who has received a 2018 University of St. Thomas faculty research grant intended to support the scholarly work of full-time, continuing faculty as they advance their professional careers.

Lundquist’s award will fund her historical research project about the original “war” on cancer by examining the experiences of the members of the Women’s Field Army (WFA). Although commonly believed that the “war” on cancer was launched in 1971 with the passing of the National Cancer Act, it can be argued that this “war” was launched decades earlier with women fighting on the frontlines as members of the WFA. During the 1930s through 1950, the estimated 350,000 members of the WFA engaged in extensive efforts to educate the public about the importance of early detection across the United States. The work of these women, though largely untold or marginalized, significantly shaped the way we think about, talk about and fund cancer control in our country. Her project will explore the historical intersection of cancer (research, prevention, care and policy), race and gender in the U.S.

National Spotlight on Interdisciplinary Education

Tanya Rand, clinical faculty and Aging Services coordinator, was featured prominently in the April 2018 National Association of Social Workers news article, “Social Work Education: Interdisciplinary teams a growing area of training,” in which she shared some of our school’s exciting work in interdisciplinary education.

“Between 120 and 150 MSW students connect with the interdisciplinary model in an interactive workshop,” Rand says in the article. “[Students are] from a variety of other disciplines, which can include dietetics/nutrition, respiratory care, physician assistants, public health, nursing, and physical and occupational therapy.”

“They’re given a case and all work through it,” Rand says. “One we have is an elder from the Hmong community, and they learn about culture and different ethical processes.”

Rand is actively involved with our Health Care Education and Leadership Scholars (HEALS) students, and is the faculty coordinator of our Area of Emphasis in Aging (AEA) Scholars, both of which participate in additional interdisciplinary learning opportunities throughout the year. In the article she highlights the Elder Teacher course that takes place at Carondelet Village, which pairs interdisciplinary teams with an “elder teacher” in the community to look at healthy aging goals.

In the article, Rand stresses that training social work students to work on interdisciplinary teams is important work for the profession.

“Based on my years of experience as a health care practitioner, I can’t see any place or any setting where a social worker would not be needed on a team,” she says.

Angeline Barretta Herman, PhD, professor emerita, was named Person of the Year for the New Smyrna Beach branch of the American Association of University Women. Under her three-year leadership as president, the vitality of the branch reached new levels with increased membership and a more than 40 percent rise in educational scholarships for women and girls.

Herman was a faculty member in the School of Social Work from 1991-2001 before assuming responsibility as associate vice president of academic affairs for the University of St. Thomas.
Hill Recognized for Civic Engagement and Leadership

At the 2018 Statewide Summit and Presidents’ Awards Luncheon held at Hamline University on April 19, associate professor and BSW program director Katharine Hill received a Minnesota Campus Compact Award for her leadership and civic engagement. As the recipient of St. Thomas’ President’s Civic Engagement Stewardship Award, she was recognized as a faculty member who has “significantly advanced their campus’ distinctive civic mission by forming strong partnerships, supporting others’ civic engagement and working to institutionalize a culture and practice of engagement.”

Hill’s nomination by her fellow BSW faculty recognized her outstanding contributions throughout the school and broader community. She is a national thought leader on the topic of “Voting is Social Work” and she has shared her passion and expertise in voter empowerment and community advocacy widely to engage students, community partners and the general public. Starting with her 2015 Social Policy for Change course, Hill developed a project in which students picked a population with lower voter turnout, registered them to vote, and worked to keep them engaged and informed through Election Day. Additionally, Hill has shared her work as a frequent guest speaker in courses throughout our campus communities, as well as with myriad community groups and academic communities throughout the state and nation. She is on the board of the National Social Work Voter Engagement Campaign; the board of the Nancy A. Humphreys Institute for Political Social Work; and is the board secretary of Influencing Social Policy, the national social work and social policy organization. She is also a member of the three-person panel that is revising the NASW National Statement on Voter Participation.

In April, the College of Education and Human Development at the University of Minnesota’s Alumni Association also recognized Hill as a 2018 Rising Alumni, which recognizes alumni from across its college who have achieved early distinction in their careers, demonstrated emerging leadership or shown exceptional volunteer service in their communities. The School of Social Work congratulates Hill on these much-deserved honors.

Tonya Horn, MSW, PhD, LGSW, will be joining the faculty in fall 2018 as an assistant professor. Horn received her MSW and PhD from the University of Minnesota and has been an adjunct professor at the St. Kate’s – St. Thomas School of Social Work.

Her research focuses on mental health, substance use and health disparities. She is particularly interested in collaborative, community development approaches to achieving health equity. She has more than 14 years of experience working with refugee-background communities in the Twin Cities.

Carey Winkler, ’03 BSW, ’05 MSW, ’18 DSW has accepted a tenure track appointment at St. Catherine University as an assistant professor in the School of Social Work starting in the 2018-19 academic year. Winkler has been a clinical faculty member in the St. Kate’s – St. Thomas School of
Social Work since 2008 and has been the director of BSW Field Education since 2010, working with hundreds of undergraduate field students and supervisors, and as a leader in the Field Practice Institute. In addition, Winkler has been a student in the St. Kate’s – St. Thomas DSW program for the past three years and celebrated her graduation from the program in May. We are thrilled she will be joining the faculty in a new capacity this fall.

**Eva Solomonson, MSW, LICSW**, clinical faculty, has accepted the role of director of BSW Field Education, effective fall 2018. Solomonson joined the St. Kate’s – St. Thomas School of Social Work in 2013 and has served as a field liaison and the MSW Area of Emphasis in Practice with Immigrants and Refugees (AEIR) faculty coordinator during that time. Prior to joining the faculty, she worked in direct practice for many years with the Center for Victims of Torture (CVT) in Minneapolis. Solomonson will continue her role with the AEIR scholars as she joins the Field Practice Institute leadership team.

**Mary Tinucci, ’88 BSW, ’97 MSW, ’17 DSW, visiting assistant professor.** After completing her one-year teaching assignment, Tinucci is joining the faculty of Walden University as an assistant professor, where she will be teaching in the MSW program. She worked in the St. Paul Public Schools for 24 years and had been an adjunct faculty with our School of Social Work for 14 years. Tinucci graduated from the inaugural cohort of the St. Kate’s – St. Thomas Doctorate in Social Work program in May 2017. “It’s been a great ride for me in the School of Social Work at St. Catherine University – University of St. Thomas!” Tinucci shared.

**Jessica Toft, MSW, PhD,** associate professor. After 13 years, 84 courses and nearly 1,500 students in her classes on research, policy and history, Toft will be leaving her appointment at the University of St. Thomas to join the faculty of the University of Minnesota. This position will provide a broad platform from which to research, write about and promote her model of citizenship social work, as well as engage in other projects, including writing her book, Citizenship Social Work. As she stated in a letter to her MSW and DSW students, “It is truly a bittersweet departure. I am so thankful for the hours of time in the classroom together – talking about social issues, challenging one another; building understanding and a sense of purpose to improve our social world. … I truly enjoy teaching, and teaching all of you has been the most meaningful and significant part of my work.”

**Hiyana Xiong, DSW Program Manager**

The School of Social Work congratulates Hiyana Xiong (pictured above with DSW Program Director Dr. Catherine Marrs Fuchsel) for completing her BA in communication and journalism from St. Thomas this May. She has been with the SSW for almost seven years and has taken classes primarily part-time over the past several years to complete her degree. She has become an integral member of our Doctorate in Social Work team and an expert resource for the entire university in supporting hybrid/online learning. We asked her to share a highlight and a takeaway from her experience as a student:

**HIGHLIGHT:** “Sitting in classrooms full of students half my age (sometimes younger) validated and reinvigorated my belief that St. Thomas is committed to developing compassionate and passionate scholars who want to change the world.”

**TAKEAWAY:** “A major in communication and journalism served to hone critical interpersonal communication skills to work successfully with faculty, staff, university administrators and external constituents in my professional career.”
George Baboila, co-director of the Interprofessional Center for Counseling and Legal Services, co-presented the workshop, “Supervision and Ethics with Groups,” in April for the Minnesota chapter of the International Association for Social Work with Groups (IASWG).

Kingsley Chigbu, assistant professor, and Hiyana Xiong, DSW program manager, presented the workshop, “Working with university stakeholders: Exploring best practices and standards for social work distance learning programs,” at the fourth Annual Social Work Education Distance Learning Conference in San Antonio, Texas, in April. The paper was co-written by Catherine Marrs Fuchsel, associate professor and DSW program director.

Kari Fletcher, associate professor, completed her fall sabbatical as a visiting scholar with Canadian Institute for Military and Veteran Health Research (CIMVHR) at Queen’s University in Kingston, Ontario, Canada, during January 2018. She has since moved into the role of MSW program director. In 2018, she has co-authored a spiritual fitness for military veterans article that has been published in the Journal of Religion and Health, as well as a chapter on the promotion of well-being in older veterans.

Mari Ann Graham, associate professor, was asked to submit an abstract for a chapter in an upcoming publication: “Handbook of Social Work Values and Ethics” and submitted, “Integral Ethics on the National Stage: A Case Study of Pope Francis.” An earlier publication, “Using Literature Groups to Teach Diversity,” was selected for a compilation of group work publications focusing on teaching social work with groups, which will include an updated preface for her chapter. In January, Graham co-facilitated a full-day retreat with Donna Hauer for the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet community’s Stirring the Fire event. “What we need from each other: A conversation about race,” was well-attended and favorably reviewed as they invited intimate reflection and sharing on this difficult topic.

Renee Hepperlen, assistant professor, has been working with an interdisciplinary team of faculty through the Henrietta Schmoll School of Health at St. Catherine University to create a training manual for community health workers in Zambia. She and her collaborators have presented at several meetings and conferences. Additionally, she co-presented a poster at the St. Kate’s Interprofessional Education summit related to her work with the Serving the Whole Child project. Hepperlen and Paula Rabaey, an occupational therapy professor at St. Kate’s, also partnered to write a Graduate Research Team grant, which will support a community-based participatory action research project to examine stigma and discrimination caregivers of children with disabilities face. This research will take place this summer in the Kanyama district of Zambia.

Katharine Hill, associate professor and BSW program director, has continued to conduct trainings and outreach around civic and political engagement for social workers. She is also serving on the steering committee of the National Social Work Voter Engagement Campaign (more information about the campaign can be found at VotingIsSocialWork.org.) In addition, she co-authored two publications, “Voluntary placements in child welfare: A comparative analysis of state statutes” in Children and Youth Services Review, and “Social work licensure and macro social work education: An exploratory study of impacts and influences” in Advances in Social Work.


Miriam Itzkowitz, clinical faculty, presented “Fostering Positive Consultation in an Age of Recrimination” at the 2018 Association of Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors meeting in Atlanta in March.


Catherine Marrs Fuchsel, associate professor and DSW program director, presented “Case Studies of Mental Health Professionals: Conducting Groups Using the Sí, Yo Puedo Empowerment Program with Immigrant Latinas,” at the Ethnographic and Qualitative Research Conference in Las Vegas, Feb. 26, 2018.

Lisa Richardson, associate professor and director of MSW Field Education, and Lisa Kiesel, assistant professor, received a Health Professionals Clinical Training Expansion Grant. The three-year initiative, funded by the Minnesota Department of Health, provides $122,080 in funding to the MSW program for its new Clinical Social Work Expansion Project (CSWEP). The grant will support expansion of field placement sites into agencies that are serving targeted underserved populations, including veterans, immigrants and refugees, and rural settings. Over the three years of the project, 16 students will receive $5,000 stipends, licensure exam preparation support and post-graduate supervision.

Barbara Shank, former dean and professor; has been archiving 40-plus years of materials accumulated by the St. Kate’s – St. Thomas School of Social Work. The archives provide a historical record of the development of social work on both campuses, including program development and accreditation. The archives hold student handbooks; field manuals; field opportunity listings; program and school annual reports; faculty accomplishments; program files; clinical research abstracts; newsletters; project and grant reports; calendars; leadership lists; etc. In addition to the documents for St. Kate’s and St. Thomas’ archives, she has sorted and compiled materials for the Social Welfare History Archives at the University of Minnesota. Her official retirement from the University of St. Thomas took effect in May, though she continues to serve as chair of the board of directors of Council on Social Work Education; secretary and board member of International Association of Schools of Social Work; board member of International Consortium for Social Development; and international advisory board member of Global Institute of Social Work.

Jessica Toft, associate professor, signed a book contract with Oxford University Press to write “Citizenship Social Work” in which she presents an argument and framework to orient social work practice, research and pedagogy towards the democratic rights of citizenship. She was the keynote speaker at Minnesota State University, Mankato Department of Social Work Honors Day event. In her role as National Association of Social Workers-MN president, Toft spoke at Social Work Day at the Capitol about the need to raise social workers’ salaries and to have more control over their practice.


Carey Winkler, director of BSW Field Education, has been a member of the national Association of Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors (BPD) field committee since 2012. In March, she presented at the new field directors preconference workshop at the BPD annual conference for the sixth year in a row. This workshop is aimed at supporting new field directors as they manage the competing demands of field education. In addition, Winkler is a 2018 graduate of the St. Kate’s – St. Thomas DSW program. She will transition to a new role as assistant professor of social work at St. Kate’s in the fall.
Two new programs increasing access to the underserved

By Amy Carlson Gustafson

In response to the increasing need of access to mental health services, the St. Catherine University – University of St. Thomas Master of Social Work program has introduced two new initiatives aimed at reducing the mental health workforce gap. Both programs seek to expand the number of MSW graduates with clinical training and licensure to work with underserved populations throughout the region.

“Meeting the population health needs in your state requires a functioning workforce pipeline to get people into the workforce, trained as they need to be trained, and then be out there providing services that are effective to meet the diverse populations, whether it’s cultural diversity or geographic diversity,” said Lisa Richardson, director of MSW Field Education.

When it comes to the mental health workforce gap, almost two-thirds of all social workers in Minnesota are working in the Minneapolis-St. Paul region, according to a 2014-2015 survey from the Minnesota Department of Health. In rural or isolated areas, there are more than twice as many residents for every social worker compared to urban or micropolitan areas. While it’s estimated one-third of Twin Cities working-age adults will be people of color by 2020, the survey shows 92 percent of social workers identify as “white.”

With the support of the Health Professional Clinical Training Expansion Grant from the Minnesota Department of Health, the MSW program has launched the Clinical Social Work Expansion Project (CSWEP). It’s aimed at expanding the health care workforce in underserved communities by addressing educational, clinical training and licensing barriers.

“The Minnesota Department of Health put out a call for clinical training expansion grants,” Richardson said. “They asked us what we would do differently if we had some money to expand the number of trainees we have and population they’re serving – trying to do anything to expand the workforce. We designed CSWEP, a program we think will have good success. It’s multifaceted because you can’t just approach a systemic problem from one angle. With our design, we’re approaching it from multiple angles.”

Helping the underserved

The CSWEP grant will support 16 students over three years. It includes a monetary stipend for students; travel support for rural students; LGSW licensure exam preparation; and supervision of post-MSW clinical practice.

“We targeted several underserved groups that were identified in the Governor’s Task Force on Mental Health report,” Richardson said, “seeking to enhance services in areas that were the best fit for the strengths that were already in our program.”
The underserved groups targeted by CSWEP include immigrants, refugees and underserved minority populations; rural Minnesota communities; active and veteran military members and their families; and communities served by free primary care/integrated care clinics and federally qualified health centers.

The program prioritizes counties and areas with the fewest number of social workers. Grant funds will also pay for external clinical social work supervision for students placed in these target settings.

“This is super exciting,” Richardson said. “There have been many times over the years where doors we wanted to open have been shut because we didn’t have the right resources. Now we do.”

There’s also a pay-it-forward aspect to the program, Richardson said.

“It’s not uncommon for MSW students to get hired into agencies where they do a practicum,” she said. “Our hope is that the CSWEP students will get hired by the agencies with whom they did the practicum and then we’ll support them in the steps to that independent licensure. Then they’ll be able to turn around and host other trainees a few years down the road when they get their own clinical license.”

New Hybrid MSW

For 15 years, the St. Kate’s – St. Thomas MSW program offered a weekend cohort distance learning option, mainly for working professionals who want personal connections and opportunities for in-depth discussions, but can’t make it to campus for “traditional” weekday/evening courses. Starting in June, the new Hybrid MSW will provide even greater access for students pursuing clinical social work education. It will increase the online component of the distance learning program and reduce the on-campus time requirements, while still maintaining meaningful face-to-face opportunities.

“If you’re focusing on mental health training, St. Kate’s – St. Thomas has a long-standing reputation for rigor when it comes to clinical preparation,” weekend cohort field coordinator Tanya Rand said.

“Students in outstate Minnesota have said, ‘We could have done it online with another school, but we wanted to come to you because of your strong clinical preparation and outstanding field education support.’

“There have been many times over the years where doors we wanted to open have been shut because we didn’t have the right resources. Now we do.”

Others said they’d love to come here, but they couldn’t because the way the program was designed was not accessible to them. We’re taking the solid program foundation we have in our clinical preparation and matching it with opportunity based on a more flexible pathway – an easier-to-reach format.”

Not only does the Hybrid MSW benefit working students, it expands workforce development and education pathways for students in outstate Minnesota and beyond. Students will come to campus just three Saturdays during each semester. The rest of the program is delivered online with the help of St. Thomas E-Learning and Research (STELAR) center, which supports faculty and students with technology-enhanced instruction.

“With this hybrid option, we’re saying, ‘We’re not going to get rid of our face-to-face interactive model that we so strongly feel is an important part of our pedagogy, but we are going to tweak, monitor and adjust what we can,’” Rand said. “So the face-to-face contact that you have is what we feel you absolutely need.”

Rand said that by increasing access to education through the Hybrid MSW program for students in Greater Minnesota, she hopes the number of social workers in those areas will eventually increase, too.

“When I look at some of my hardest-to-place students in internships, it’s students in counties with fewer Licensed Independent Clinical Social Workers (LICSWs). Students need to have a LICSW supervisor and there’s not enough of them, so it can be hard. We’re struggling with placement opportunities in certain geographical regions of Minnesota. However, if we can train a student, then they can stay there and can help build up the number of LICSWs in their area … hopefully it’s going to keep snowballing. We have to be able to make those connections and partnerships, and those aren’t going to happen unless there’s availability and creative programing. The Hybrid MSW coupled with CSWEP grant opportunities will be important levers in this process.”

Tanya Rand
OF THE COMMUNITY

The AEIR Scholars program prepares master’s social work students to respond to the unique needs and challenges of refugee and immigrant communities.

By Jordan Osterman

AEIR Scholar Manuela Gonzalez
Even before the country officially became the United States, the roots of social work in North America were well established. As government responses proved insufficient to the growing needs of the American population, private groups came together and played increasing roles.

At the heart of those needs were those of the drastically increasing immigrant population: Hundreds of thousands of people poured into the United States in the late 18th and early 19th century, and the field of social work coalesced in large part around the fact those people needed help.

Today, at the St. Kate’s – St. Thomas School of Social Work, that fact has helped evolve the dynamic Area of Emphasis in Practice with Immigrants and Refugees (AEIR) Scholars program within the Master of Social Work. The program – which started in 2014 – prepares master’s social work students to respond to the unique needs and challenges of refugee and immigrant communities, both groups that are on the rise in numbers and yet remain largely underserved in both Minnesota and the nation.

Among the 12 to 15 students AEIR coordinator Eva Solomonson works with in the program each year, many are themselves members of refugee and immigrant communities. These situations create the dynamic quality of social workers understanding best their communities’ needs – and the right way to respond – because they are of that community themselves.

“Only people within the community can have that deep, complex, beautiful sense of how culture, beliefs and family history all come together to make certain things work and others not work,” Solomonson said. “That expertise is in the community itself. We can then add on the universal framework of social work best practice, so these women or men get the framework on top of their own expertise of culture and community. That's where really unique, adapted practice happens.”

**Part of the culture**

Growing up with her immigrant father and grandparents, AEIR Scholar Manuela Gonzalez always knew she wanted to work with the Latino community. When she arrived in Minnesota from Pennsylvania in 2011, she began actively working with the Twin Cities’ large Latino population.

As an outpatient case manager Gonzalez quickly saw how big the demand was for bilingual social workers with an intimate understanding of the immigrant experience.

“There’s a familiarity, almost, an unspoken understanding and comfort. Little things, nuances, that you don’t have to explain. … The comfortability and familiarity, at least for me, I was raised in that culture,” said Gonzalez, who had her first experience working with refugees last summer at St. Thomas’ Interprofessional Center for Counseling and Legal Services. “It’s one thing to speak a language; it’s another to be part of a culture. My case load shot up immediately. … The need is there, especially in the times we’re in now.”
Amid the anti-immigrant and -refugee rhetoric of many across the country, there is a complex mix of emotions for the social workers helping immigrants and refugees every day.

“[Our work] feels necessary now more than ever, but people are scared,” Gonzalez said. “You just never know. Someone who’s been a resident for 30 years is terrified [of being deported]. I can’t imagine someone who doesn’t have that security, aren’t at stable points in their lives. Most of my clients are undocumented. There’s that overarching uncertainty and fear. … It’s always present.”

As the field of social work as a whole grapples with those realities, Solomonson said the AEIR Scholars are responding in the right way.

“It is absolutely lighting a fire in these students,” she added. “It is an inspiration.”

‘Everybody helping each other’

Whether students are directly from a refugee or immigrant family themselves, everyone in the two-year AEIR program receives an education steeped in serving those communities. Courses, course assignments, research, field practicum and events are specific to serving immigrants, refugees, their families and communities, and added emphasis is placed on networking within the refugee- and immigrant-serving professional fields.

“Minnesota is a great place for social work education; we are really a serious hub of human rights,” Solomonson said. “I put a high premium on getting out in the community and meeting people while they’re students so they can see where they can potentially work, refer or get help from.”

That kind of help is second nature for AEIR Scholar Novia Josiah, who grew up “in a family of collective community, everybody helping each other.”

As a Karen refugee from Burma, Josiah started life in Thailand before coming to the United States in 2004. After becoming the first Karen student to receive her BSW in Minnesota, Josiah began working at the Center for Victims of Torture (CVT) and will soon be the first Karen MSW graduate.

“I see the needs in my community that we really need to have a culturally appropriate approach or service, especially in the mental health field. That’s why I decided to come here, because of the AEIR program,” she said. “I grew up in the community and lived through that experience, so I have that understanding of what it’s like to be a refugee or immigrant coming to settle in the new country, with different people, different culture. It’s helped me to understand them more, the cultural piece. I can speak from my own community, I know the language, culture, resources, and what’s needed.”
Coming from a place of love

For another classmate of Gonzalez and Josiah, there is a painful level of understanding for what many people arriving in the United States are leaving behind. In 2006, Harriet Oyera arrived in Minneapolis alone after fleeing Uganda following her torture and the murder of her husband at the hands of the Lord’s Resistance Army, a violent rebel group.

After being referred from the CVT, Oyera worked for years with St. Thomas School of Law Professor Virgil Wiebe’s Immigration Clinic at the Interprofessional Center for Counseling and Legal Services. Eventually she was granted asylum and joined in Minnesota by her four children. As Oyera and her children built their lives here and she dove into community work in Minneapolis, Oyera learned more about the tenants of social work and the AEIR Scholars program and “was called beyond myself to do this work.”

“Knowing I am an immigrant, I have this love, coming to the United States, knowing we are supporting immigrants and refugees. But it’s not enough. I joined this program and I love it because I need to encourage other immigrants to understand they belong to this country,” Oyera said. “I’ve gone through a lot and reached a point where I feel a human being must never suffer like that. … We can fit as human beings and serve one another without conflict, if given the opportunity of understanding each other.”

“We have to find the common good, and if there’s a weakness in me or in another, let’s empower each other and get the results we want,” she added. “My drive as a social worker is to show we have got to be supportive of one another.”

For the AEIR Scholars of St. Kate’s – St. Thomas School of Social Work, every day is about becoming the best supporters of immigrant and refugee communities they can be.

“There’s a saying, ‘Be the person you needed when you were younger,’” Gonzalez said. “I want to be a person that could have helped my dad when he needed it. As a kid I helped him, but it’s nice to be someone another kid’s parents need, so that kid doesn’t have to be.”

“Only people within the community can have that deep, complex, beautiful sense of how culture, beliefs and family history all come together to make certain things work and others not work …”
SHERRONDA BOWDEN
‘18 BSW

Despite enjoying her work in real estate, Sherronda Bowden knew it wasn’t where she was meant to be.

“I have always had the heart of a social worker,” she said. “I believe that we all have a voice, and I see social work as an avenue to help others find their own sense of empowerment.”

Bowden has done exactly that, both on and off campus: She worked with clients in the Elder Teacher program at Carondelet Village; interned with the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) through the Citizens League, Minnesota Capitol Pathways Program; and works with the Justice Commission of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet’s Anti-Human Trafficking Working Group.

On campus, Bowden was a BSW recipient of the Social Work Healthcare Education and Leadership Scholars grant. She did her field placement with St. Thomas’ Interprofessional Center for Counseling and Legal Services (IPC), where she supported immigrant and refugee clients. Students at the IPC noticed that food insecurity was a common struggle with clients, especially having access to fresh fruits and vegetables. To address this growing need, Bowden spearheaded the IPC’s effort to hold a one-day “pop-up farmers’ market” and received about 200 pounds of donated fresh produce from local grocers.

Throughout all this Bowden has seen how broadly and deeply social workers can support communities.

“The social work profession touches so many aspects of social service,” Bowden said. “I am thrilled to finally be on a path where I feel that I can truly effect positive change.”
HEALS’ Student Policy Summit in Washington, D.C.

Students capitalize on experience.

By Jordan Osterman

Four St. Kate’s – St. Thomas Social Work Healthcare Education and Leadership Scholars (HEALS) journeyed to Washington, D.C., in March to attend educational sessions on health care and advocate to policy makers on Capitol Hill during HEALS’ Student Policy Summit.

Along with MSW students Alison Waid Higgins and Stephanie Lien, BSW students Karolyn Britton and Sherronda Bowden joined 44 other HEALS students for the capitol experience.

“It was empowering to be surrounded by so many passionate future social workers who are already in the field doing amazing things,” Britton said.

“It is amazing what can happen when a group of people converge to examine ways to improve systems in need of changing,” Bowden added.

Since 2015 St. Kate’s – St. Thomas School of Social Work has been one of 10 schools across the country to be part of the HEALS program, which offers a robust health care education and training; opportunities to engage in a variety of leadership and interprofessional programs; a tuition stipend; and funding for the policy summit trip. This year the HEALS grant also provided additional funding to host a health care policy event, which St. Kate’s – St. Thomas has scheduled for Aug. 7, 2018.

“It was filled with the sense that these professionals meant each word they spoke and were excited to connect with us and inspire us,” Waid Higgins said. “I was inspired to look further into advocacy opportunities both locally in the Twin Cities and within the D.C. area.”

“It was amazing to hear [panelists’] stories about their journey to D.C. and their current work on the hill. It created a fire in me that caused me to want to be more engaged in policy work at a number of levels,” Lien said.

“This summit helped me discover a passion for policy and macro work. I better understood how important policy and advocacy is for our daily work and lives. It showed me that you don't need some prestigious law degree to be influential.”

Beyond those experiences, spending time with fellow students was a huge component of the trip for all four students.

“So much of what we hear in the news seems daunting from a solitary viewpoint. However, working with other social work students from all around the country helped me consider possibilities I had not thought of before,” Bowden said.

“Beyond the magic of the trip, I am inspired by the passion of my classmates and I am sure that we will all continue to cross paths as we enter great, rewarding careers and continue to identify as social workers in all aspects of our lives,” Higgins said. “I will gladly stand beside these women again to advocate for what is right.”

Geared specifically at helping social work leaders learn about and take part in the policymaking process, the D.C. summit provided all four SSW students with opportunities to advocate directly with staff of Sens. Amy Klobuchar and Tina Smith. They also attended several panels featuring social workers and policy advocates, and met many others.
BSW Students Experience the World Café

This spring BSW students participated in St. Thomas’ 2018 World Café event hosted by Justice and Peace Studies in collaboration with 11 other disciplines. More than 250 students participated in this interdisciplinary discussion on gun violence, including 42 social work seniors. The event began with short videos of speeches and advertisements representing a variety of perspectives on gun violence. Then each department presented three questions that demonstrate how their discipline thinks about the topic, followed by rotating rounds of discussions addressing specific questions about gun violence.

The World Café model is a perfect fit with both social work and a liberal arts education; it allows students to gain exposure to a variety of disciplines and to consider a topic from an interdisciplinary, systems-level view, then use that knowledge to think critically and problem solve. As social work student Alyssa Grythe shared, “Being able to hear and listen to the other disciplines, and their opinions on the topic of gun violence, made me be more open-minded and willing to take in others’ understandings of the topic and how we can change societal views.”

2018 BSW Honor Society Induction

Congratulations to the 20 BSW students who were inducted as new members of the Beta Epsilon Chapter of the Phi Alpha National Social Work Honor Society in a ceremony at the Our Lady of Victory Chapel at St. Catherine University on Feb. 11, 2018.

Congratulations as well to Beta Epsilon faculty adviser Laurel Bidwell, who was nominated for a 2017-2018 St. Catherine University Excellence in Teaching and Advising Award.

For their spring event, Beta Epsilon partnered with the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet (CSJ) Justice Commission to screen the documentary, “The Mask You Live In,” followed by a discussion exploring cultural stereotypes of masculinity.


Kate Berg ’10 BSW, MSW is now the Disability and Aging Services unit supervisor for Anoka County. She recently co-authored the article, “Substance use and special education: Should we pay attention?” published in volume 27 (issue 2) of the Journal of Child & Adolescent Substance Abuse.

DID YOU KNOW? According to a Minnesota Department of Health study, 86% of the state’s graduate-prepared licensed social workers practice in metropolitan areas.
Gero-Practice Students a Force at Spring MGS Conference

Four St. Kate’s – St. Thomas MSW students were accepted to present their research at the 2018 Minnesota Gerontological Society (MGS) Spring Conference. Congratulations to MSW Area of Emphasis in Aging (AEA) Scholars Molli Slade, Kassara Kneeland and Morgan Hanley, along with MSW student Lisa Twomey, who presented their gero-focused posters (based on their MSW clinical research projects) to the attendees of this sold-out conference on Friday, April 27, at the Earle Brown Heritage Center in Brooklyn Center.

In addition, Kneeland (pictured below right) received a 2018-2019 Bloedow Scholarship award, which was presented at the MGS Spring Conference. This scholarship honors the lifelong contributions of Gerald Bloedow to the field of aging, and provides financial assistance to undergraduate and graduate students to further their education in gerontology.

“I’m so proud of our MSW scholars who are actively contributing to the growing body of social work knowledge in the high-growth, high-need area of gero-social work,” said Tanya Rand, Coordinator of Aging Services.

Social Work Student Named to Community Board

When Ande Nesmith, PhD introduced sophomore social work student Iris Castro to the director of the Minnesota Host Home Network, Jacqueline White, she thought it would be limited to minor help on a research project. Instead, Castro’s qualitative analysis on Minnesota Host Home Network’s project to understand the role of permanent connections with adults on alleviating youth homelessness was so effective, she was invited to join their board. “Iris is a great example of a highly motivated student who puts social justice at the heart of her work and hit the ground running very early in her college career,” Nesmith said.
MSW Student Featured in Article about Closing Mental Health Provider Gap

As a Pathways fellow at Washburn Center for Children, Keodara Moua ’18 MSW was featured in a March MinnPost article about the fellowship, which is designed to support people of color interested in completing mental health degrees. As the article states, “Keodara Moua has known that she wanted to make life better for members of the Hmong community. One way to do that, she figured, is to become a licensed clinical social worker, and offer mental health services to people with life experiences similar to hers.”

“Helping people like Moua become mental health practitioners is exactly what the Pathways program was designed to do. While there is a great need for mental health services among children and families of color in Minnesota, there is a clear disparity in the number of people of color completing therapy degrees in the state,” the article continues. “The program offers training, mentorship, clinical supervision, a cohort of scholars and an annual stipend of $7,500.”

“The first thing I thought was, ‘I want an opportunity to be in a position where people will support me and not judge me for the barriers I face,’” [Moua] said. “The program at Washburn Center felt that way. I knew that with their help I could make it.”

Find the link to the complete article at stthomas.edu/socialwork/news

MILITARY SCHOLARS GAIN NATIONAL RECOGNITION

Area of Emphasis in Military Practice (AEMP) Scholars Maggie Graham ’18 MSW and Andrew Qualy ’17 BSW, ’18 MSW were accepted to present their research at the 2018 Military Social Work Conference, which is being hosted by the University of Texas at Austin, Sept. 5-7, 2018.

Earlier this academic year, Qualy also received the honor of being named a 2017 Tillman Scholar. “Every year, the Pat Tillman Foundation receives thousands of applications from military veterans and their spouses nationwide. Up to 60 of the best-poised leaders who show strength in character, academic excellence and incredible potential are chosen as Tillman Scholars. They are individuals who will apply the best lessons they’ve learned in life and the military to impact our country for years to come in medicine, business, law, science, education and the arts.”

“As a combat veteran, I know what it takes to make the transition from soldier to citizen. I want to help other veterans make it all the way home,” Qualy said.

Read more at pattillmanfoundation.org/scholar/andrew-qualy

Student News
SSW Student Awards 2017-2018

BSW AND MSW AWARDS

Bachelor of Social Work Student Leadership Award:
Tiffany Newman and Clare Stadelman

Thomas More Award:
Zara Wolfe

Bonnie Jean Kelly and Joan Kelly Award for Excellence in Scholarly Writing:
Jane Crompton - Honorable Mention

Mary Jane Young Scholarship:
Karolyn Britton

Psi Chi - Psychology Honor Society
Jacole Hersant

BSW senior celebration speakers:
Amber Brookman and Tiffany Newman

Nominee for St. Kate’s College for Adults commencement speaker:
Sherronda Bowden

NASW - BSW Student of the Year Nominee:
Sherronda Bowden

NASW - MSW Student of the Year Nominee:
Lauren Abdill

Noel Ryan Endowed Scholarship - MSW:
Jordyn Hubin
Angela Miller

Jan Andrews Schenk Scholarship - MSW:
Lauren Abdill
Jamie Herman

Diversity Social Work Advancement Program (DSWAP) Award – MSW:
Manuela Gonzalez

Master of Social Work Student Leadership Award:
Teron Buford

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CLASS OF 2018!

58 Bachelor of Social Work graduates
115 Master of Social Work graduates
20 Doctorate in Social Work graduates
2017-2018 Graduates

BSW GRADUATES

Emily Adrian
Lizeth Andrade-Vital
Taylor Austin
Bridget Barrett
Julie Beckman
Sherronda Bowden
Karolyn Britton
Amber Brookman
Janice Carlson
Jane Crompton
Chelsey Dabill
Madeleine De Grace
Margrit Doyle
Katrina Dragon
Bintu Fahnbulleh
Laura Garaghty
Alyssa Grythe
Jessica Hanson
Anna Hatgidakis
Gretchen Herfert
Jacolette Hersant
Alexandra Howard
Margaret Johnson
Ici Kelley
Talaya Lawson-Shoals
Julie Leaf
Jessica Lema Jara
Lexy Lentz
Tenzin Lhadon
Lulu Lundeen
Milcella Ly
Paola Maldonado Irazoqui
Jennifer Martinez-Galarza
Jennifer Mejia
Kelly Mills
Teagan Mohs
Shea Nearman
Tiffany Newman
Ruth Ochoa-Pineda
Kristin Page
Gretchen Pederson
Jessica Perez-Adame
Maria Reins
Cassandra Roy
Madelyn Rydeen
Jenni Schmidt
Tami Sibben
Melaka Smith
Clare Stadelman
Emily Stengel
Maria Thomas
Kalley Thurner
Nicole Weber
Sarah Welter
Jennifer Williams Toth
Alexandra Urgiles
Zara Wolfe
Vasana Yang

MSW GRADUATES

Lauren Abdill
Catherine Avant
Lauren Bahe
Crystal Barrera
Alicia Bauers
Kamara Bauman
Joelle Bellows
Kayla Beuning
Venessa Bjork
Jamie Blackledge
Katherine Boyer
Issurah Brannan
Ashley Brant
Phyllis Braxton
Richard Brooks
Teron Buford
Victoria Christian
Holly Clark
Jacqueline Conklin
Angela Cox
Nikki DiVirgilio
MaryBeth Ehler
Sonja Eidenhink
Nicole Erben
Olivia Erickson
Brittany Feller
Malory Giraldo
Anne Godfrey
Jessica Goek
Ryan Goman
Manuela Gonzalez
Katherine Goodman
Annika Graffstrom
Maggie Graham
Shane Hamp
Morgan Hanley
Miranda Harwerth
Danielle Henry
Nicole Herje
Jamie Herman
Ashley Hipp
Gabrielle Holloway
Alexandra Holzschuh
Kelsey Howland
Marisa Hutterer
Erica Janssen
Naava Johnson
Kelly Johnson
Novia Josiah
Sarah Kirschbaum
Andrew Kishel
Cristina Klappa
de la Cruz
Nathan Klein
Lina Knox
Nathaniel Kostick
Helena Lafave
Julia Lambert
Bao Lee
Becky Lee
Megan Lewis
Stephanie Lien
Mao Lor
Amanda Maloney
Andrea Markworth
Jennifer Metzger
Angela Miller
Krista Murphy
Emily Neighbors
Danielle Norgren
Keighley Null
Jenna Oakley
Derek Otte
Chelse Paulzine
Annette Pridemore
Andrew Qualy
Travis Quinlan
Brittney Rademacher
Courtney Reinitz
Nicole Rominski
Ali Ryan
Katelyn Santos
Josie Schmitz
Ann Schroeder
Elizabeth Schumack
Paul Schuster
Kayla Scott
Mary Pat Seter
Madigan Shank
Ryan Sheats
Emily Shopek
Jessica Skaare
Molli Slade
Joseph Slusarczyk
Jean Soehl
Kimberlyn Sorvaag
Emily Staples
Lauren Steel
Angela Stockwell
Josalan Sullivan
Andria Swanson
Dustin Thomforde
Rikki Thompson
Sam Twomey
Katie Ubl
Alexa Upton
Jenny Vang
Esther Vogelzang
Mai la Vue
Ka Blia Vue
Alison Waid Higgins
Jade Wallat
Nicole Wehseler
Victoria White
Janine Wimmer
Brigit Wingert
CONGRATULATIONS TO DOCTORATE IN SOCIAL WORK COHORT TWO:
DSW Class of 2018

Teresa Beadlescomb, Mich.
Banded Dissertation: “Examining Influencing Factors on the Intent to Persist by BSW Students of Color”

Lisa Borneman, Minn.
Banded Dissertation: “Implications for Youth Identified on a Criminal Justice-based List”

Stephanie Bradford, Ohio

Denetria Brooks-James, La.
Banded Dissertation: “Perceptions among Faculty Members of Adolescent Bullying: Implication for African-American Males”

Shannon Cassidy Cousineau, Mass.
Banded Dissertation: “Faith Spirituality and Social Work Education: An Exploration Into the Quest for Integration”

Stephanie Grant, Calif.
Banded Dissertation: “Military Social Work: Utilizing Interprofessional Practice and Education to Increase Efficacy”

Amanda Greubel, Iowa

Rebecca Hoffman, Minn.

Janet Holter, Wisc.

Terri Klemm, N.J.
Banded Dissertation: “Civic Engagement and Social Action in Social Work Education”

Sky Niesen Smith, Minn.
Banded Dissertation: “Social Work’s Dynamic Role in Oncology: Providing Leadership for Environmental Responsiveness”

Debi Thibeault, N.C.
Banded Dissertation: “Developing Transformational Curriculum to Educate Social Worker Students About Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous Knowledges”

Andrew Thompson, Minn.

Amy Williams, Wis.

Carey A. Winkler, Minn.

Judy Zimbelman, S.D.

St. Kate’s – St. Thomas School of Social Work 25
Congratulations to 2018 incoming DSW student ZaDonna Slay, who will receive the inaugural Dr. Barbara W. Shank Endowed Scholarship in Social Work. This scholarship was endowed in 2017-18 to provide support for doctoral social work students from underrepresented/diverse backgrounds.

This first scholarship award corresponds with Shank's official retirement from the University of St. Thomas after 40 years in the School of Social Work, 21 of these years as dean. View the Spring 2017 edition of Perspectives, which highlights Dean Shank’s legacy and professional milestones, notably the founding of the St. Kate’s – St. Thomas DSW program in 2014 and the graduation of its first cohort in 2017.

stthomas.edu/socialwork/events/perspectives

St. Kate’s Complete: Expanding Opportunities to Serve Our Communities

Social Work is one of a handful of majors included in the first phase of the St. Kate’s Complete partnership agreements with St. Paul College and Minneapolis Community and Technical College (MCTC), which will provide new pathways for women and men at two-year colleges to move on to bachelor’s degree completion.

The Dec. 13, 2017, St. Kate’s Newswire article, “St. Kate’s signs on to partnership with Minneapolis Community & Technical College and St. Paul College,” shares that, “Through St. Kate’s Complete, the university is reaching out to students where they are – at schools like MCTC and St. Paul College – and offering a smooth transition to St. Kate’s for bachelor’s degree completion. Both the College for Women and the College for Adults are involved in the St. Kate’s Complete program, giving both women and men a chance to earn a bachelor’s degree at St. Kate’s.”

“Saint Paul College is extremely proud and honored to forge this new partnership with St. Catherine University, allowing more students to seamlessly transfer and have access to affordable four-year degrees,” said Rassoul Dastmozd, president of Saint Paul College. “When higher education institutions come together to provide more opportunities to our students, we make our community stronger.”

The School of Social Work looks forward to an increasing number of similar programs at both of our host universities in the coming years, allowing us to better serve our communities and providing a strong lever in tackling the diversity gap in the social work profession.

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stthomas.edu/socialwork/events/perspectives
School Hosts Hmong Social Worker’s Career Conference

Hmong social work students, social workers and human service professionals from across the Midwest gathered at St. Kate’s to attend the second annual Minnesota Hmong Social Worker’s Coalition Career Conference on May 19. The theme of the conference was Hmong Professionals in Leadership, and was co-sponsored by Hnub Tshiab Hmong Women Achieving Together, SHE Pab Student Association, and the St. Kate’s – St. Thomas School of Social Work.

The annual conference provides a forum for Hmong professionals to come together to tackle issues related to policy, service delivery, and direct services with clients who face cultural and language barriers; and social issues affecting the Hmong community.

2018 Field Instructors of the Year

Congratulations to our BSW Field Instructor of the Year, Jamie Moczynski, of the Hennepin County Juvenile Probation Crossover Initiative and our MSW Field Instructor of the Year, Jennifer Littlewolf, of Community of Peace Academy. These awards were presented at our annual Field Education Spring Workshop and Luncheon on May 4, which celebrated the dedicated service of field instructors, and the graduation of BSW senior and MSW clinical students. Thank you to all our field instructors for the teaching, mentorship, support and guidance in co-creating transformational learning experiences with students throughout the year.

The St. Kate’s – St. Thomas Field Practice Institute thanks Jane Hurley Johncox from the School of Social Work; Tim Eiesland from Fairview Health Services; Jonathan Lofgren from Minneapolis Community and Technical College; Jennifer Schaefer from the Hennepin County Department of Community Corrections and Rehabilitation; and Russ Turner from People Incorporated for leading the day’s professional development workshop, “Using Motivational Interviewing to Cultivate Empowerment and Change Across Systems.”
On Feb. 7, the Area of Emphasis in Social Work Practice with Immigrants and Refugees (AEIR) Scholars hosted **Immigrants and Refugees 101: A Roadmap for Effective Helping**. Together students and community members listened and learned new ideas for how we can better navigate the service delivery system for immigrants living in our community. A collection of resources to help you empower new arrivals to achieve safety and independence for themselves and their families can be found at: [https://www.stthomas.edu/socialwork/events/events/aeir-feb-event-2018.html](https://www.stthomas.edu/socialwork/events/events/aeir-feb-event-2018.html).

On April 5 the St. Kate’s – St. Thomas School of Social Work co-hosted St. Kate’s **Careers in Aging Day 2018**, highlighting more than a dozen community partners, professional organizations and employers. They shared information about rapidly growing career opportunities in their organizations and communities that support, and enhance, the well being of older adults and their families. Plus, the Vital Aging Network presented the “Aging With Gusto” ageism workshop for free CEU’s. See photos on Facebook @stkatestthomassw.

*By 2035 – for the first time in Minnesota’s history - the Minnesota State Demographic Center estimates we will have more adults over age 65 than children.*
BSW students at the National Association of Social Workers-MN Social Work Day at the Capitol, pictured (above) with Rep. Erin Murphy (an MA, organizational leadership graduate of St. Kate’s.) More than 200 St. Kate’s – St. Thomas BSW and MSW students and faculty participated in this 22nd annual day of education and advocacy on April 2.

Members of the School of Social Work community recognized international Denim Day on April 25 in honor of Sexual Violence Awareness Month. Wearing jeans on Denim Day has become a symbol of protest against erroneous and destructive attitudes about sexual assault: denimdayinfo.org

MSW Student Association volunteers were out in force on Saturday, May 12, for the sixth year of supporting our local philanthropy, Dash-it for Baskets: Moving Forward for Mental Health. Dash-it is a 5K race, a 5K walk or a 1-mile walk in support of our neighbors who live with a mental illness. openbaskets.org
By Jordan Osterman

More than 100 people braved the snow and gathered at St. Thomas on April 16 for the Prenatal to Three Policy Forum, a quarterly non-partisan event co-hosted by Elders for Infants, Rep. Dave Pinto and Sen. Jerry Relph, and the St. Kate’s – St. Thomas School of Social work.

Since 2017, the forum has provided a space to advance state policies in support of early childhood, from prenatal through age 3. The April installment was another dynamic gathering as policy makers, medical providers, social workers and early childhood educators came together around the goal of increasing access for all children to the resources and support they need for success.

“There is probably no statistical ROI greater than investing in early childhood education,” said speaker Kelly Harder, MSW, Dakota County Director of Community Services. “We haven’t moved the dial on generational poverty in over 40 years. Our goal [at Dakota County] is to get every kid reading at third-grade proficiency. To do this, all services need to be working together.”

That idea of working together is exactly what started the forum: Pinto founded the gathering with the retired early childhood workers of Elders for Infants, and a partnership with St. Kate’s – St. Thomas School of Social Work developed through faculty member Katharine Hill.

“You have all these people [in the past] trying to move policy around the littlest Minnesotans, but they weren’t coordinating in the most effective ways,” Hill said. “The idea is to bring all these smart, passionate people who care about kids and the future of our state into a space, talk to each other and coordinate.”

“Early childhood education is one of our state’s most important issues - how to give kids a healthy start,” shared Forum attendee Mary Jo McGuire, Ramsey County commissioner. “Having these conversations and learning opportunities helps develop action steps about how to move forward in our state.”

Save the date for Monday, May 20, 2019. We are committed to developing a new event to provide opportunities for free continuing education contact hours and to highlight our community’s social work scholarship.

Look for an e-survey in early fall to get your input about this new event!
UPCOMING EVENTS

JUNE 15, 2018

**Annual Hamm Clinic Conference** co-sponsored by the St. Kate’s – St. Thomas Advanced Clinical Practice Institute: Attachment, Embodiment and Transformation, featuring Benjamin Lipton, LCSW. Continuing education units provided.

AUG. 7, 2018

**Field Practice Institute Seventh Annual Summit** on Emerging Issues in Social Work Practice, co-hosted by the Healthcare Education and Leadership Scholars (HEALS): Healthy Communities: Broadening the Lens of Healthcare, Equity, and Policy. Certificates of attendance provided.

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School of Social Work news: stthomas.edu/socialwork/news

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