Changing the Perspectives on Social Work Education
Spring 2014

Milestones

St. Catherine University and the University of St. Thomas
From the Dean

The 2014–2015 academic year will mark significant milestones for the St. Catherine University – University of St. Thomas School of Social Work. We are thrilled to celebrate our BSW’s 40th anniversary alongside our MSW’s 25th anniversary, and to introduce our Doctorate in Social Work: Education as Practice, coming in August 2014.

Although deans around the country have told me they loved our newsletters’ “old-fashioned” design, it’s fitting to introduce our new Perspectives newsletter in conjunction with the introduction of our new DSW program. Both are built on strong foundations and reflect our commitment to serving the evolving needs of our communities. Through our 3,000+ BSW and MSW graduates, our extensive field supervision training, and the continuing education programming offered through our Institutes of Professional Development, the school has played a significant role in shaping the social work practice community in our region over the past 40+ years. Now, with the introduction of our DSW, we’ll be shaping educators throughout the country.

So, why are we “changing the Perspectives on social work education” by introducing a new kind of DSW? We feel the need is great. We began developing this program in response to inquiries from our graduates and others in the social work field who are interested in pursuing a doctorate and careers in higher education. The expansion of bachelor’s and master’s programs in social work nationally has created a strong demand for faculty who hold doctorates. This will be the nation’s first online doctoral program designed specifically for those with a master of social work degree who are either currently teaching at the bachelor’s or master’s level - or plan to do so - and who are seeking a doctorate in order to further develop the skills needed to excel as teachers and advance in their university careers.

The nation’s doctoral programs are not graduating enough individuals to replace retiring faculty or to staff the expansion of social work programs nationwide. In addition, many universities have moved beyond the requirement of the MSW as the terminal degree for most tenure-track positions.
Changing the Perspectives on Social Work Education

To help fill this gap, our doctoral program will focus on teaching, scholarship, service and leadership, as opposed to a traditional focus on research or advanced clinical practice. Strong practitioners and adjunct faculty need the teaching skills, writing and publication skills, full understanding and integration of the roles of the professoriate, and credentials to confidently teach and lead in university settings.

Our DSW will prepare graduates for leadership and scholarly roles in social work education who will become the stewards of our discipline.

Why is the St. Kate’s – St. Thomas School of Social Work the right School to offer a DSW focused on education as practice? As a collaboration between two private, liberal arts universities, we are committed to student development through teaching excellence, community engagement, and mentoring relationships. Our 30 full-time faculty, as recognized scholars/practitioners and researchers, are all committed, first and foremost, to pursuing transformational teaching.

I hope that you will help us spread the word about this exciting new chapter for the St. Kate’s – St. Thomas School of Social Work. Please see the following page for an overview of the DSW and the enclosed postcard to share with colleagues who may be considering options for a doctoral degree.

Because the program will be primarily online, it will be accessible to students nationally and even internationally. This year, we will be admitting students through early July to start in the inaugural cohort beginning in August.

On another note… I hope that this first color version of our Perspectives newsletter does justice to the many events and accomplishments of our School’s students, faculty, alumni, and friends over the last semester. This edition highlights our annual focus on Economic Justice and, of course, our BSW and MSW students who graduated in May. Congratulations Class of 2014!

Barbara W. Shank
Dean and Professor

Barbara
DSW: Education as Practice

About the DSW:

On-Campus Residency each summer in St. Paul, MN 1-2 weeks

Banded dissertation & a teaching practicum

Three-year curriculum; 45 semester credits required

Admission criteria:

- MSW degree from a program accredited by the Council of Social Work Education (CSWE)*
- Minimum of two years post-MSW practice experience and social work license eligibility
- Minimum cumulative grade-point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale for previous graduate work
- Three letters of reference

* Transcript evaluation and acceptable test scores for proof of English proficiency, as appropriate for international applicants

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Visit our website for more information and to register for an online information session: www.stthomas.edu/socialwork/DSW
St. Kate’s – St. Thomas BSW: Celebrating 40 years

Founded in 1974, our joint BSW program now has more than 1,600 alumni, including the 58 undergraduate social work majors who graduated in May. Congratulations to the class of 2014!

Looking ahead, we are excited to formalize our Accelerated MSW Admissions process for junior social work majors who are interested in pursuing their MSW in clinical social work practice after completion of their BSW. Social work majors who meet stringent criteria can apply through a streamlined process to the St. Kate’s – St. Thomas MSW program in the spring of their junior year. If they maintain a strong GPA and professional social work practice, they will be admitted to the MSW program and enjoy a smooth transition into graduate school.

In response to growing interest, the BSW program also will be offering two new undergraduate minors next fall. The first minor, Social Service Management, will combine social work and business courses to provide students with knowledge, values and skills focused on entry-level management and fundraising in social service organizations. The second is a minor in Chemical Dependency Counseling: Addiction and Recovery. The St. Kate’s – St. Thomas BSW program once offered both a minor and a major in chemical dependency counseling and we are pleased to reintroduce the minor. The minor is available to social work and other majors and will prepare the students to sit for their LADC license.

We believe that these new programs will serve both the students of St. Catherine University and the University of St. Thomas, as well as our larger communities.

MSW in Clinical Social Work Practice: Celebrating 25 years

For me, the transitions of spring inspire thinking about growth. Budding bulbs that have asserted their way to sunlight and the delight of blossoms that brighten the world with the diversity of their colors, shapes and textures. This reality is a metaphor for our 138 MSW graduates launching themselves with new identities into the profession. They join the ranks of almost 1,800 MSW students who have graduated since the program was introduced 25 years ago.

Looking forward to fall 2014, our newest initiative, the Area of Emphasis in Practice with Immigrants and Refugees (AEIR) will begin with three students. This student group of budding scholars joins those in the Area of Emphasis in Military Practice (AEMP) and in the Area of Emphasis in Aging (AEA).

These areas of emphasis afford students focused opportunities to address specific service delivery needs in the community, develop leadership skills and contribute to our knowledge base.

We also are excited about emerging initiatives related to healthcare reform and the impact they will have on the workforce. We are expanding our curriculum (classroom and field) to prepare students for interprofessional practice and integrative healthcare (integrating primary care and behavioral health.) We are tracking state-wide initiatives, and making sure clinical social work has a voice and is “at the table” as new service models are developed and launched in Minnesota.
What does a flash mob have to do with minimum wage legislation? Quite A LOT when it comes to three BSW students who did their field placements this spring at A Minnesota Without Poverty.

On February 27, almost 50 participants – including many St. Kate’s and St. Thomas students and faculty – donned bright red t-shirts that read, “Ketchup to the cost-of-living. Raise the minimum wage,” and performed a flash mob at the State Capitol. The effort was led by BSW student, Caitlyn Wright, who has been working with fellow social work students, Christine Reinke and Alicia Moder, to raise awareness and create support for the minimum wage legislation through their field placements at A Minnesota Without Poverty. On April 14, the Minnesota Senate passed the legislation to raise the minimum wage to $9.50 by 2016.

A Minnesota Without Poverty is a group created to organize and lead a statewide movement to end poverty in the United States by 2020, Wright said, a date set in a 2009 report by the Legislative Commission to End Poverty. The group targets its initiatives to fit the recommendations laid out by the commission and focuses on community organizing and public policy.

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In addition to macro efforts, A Minnesota Without Poverty also has a program that trains volunteers and provides micro-loans to people in poverty to start their own businesses. “That’s something that makes A Minnesota Without Poverty unique,” Reinke said.

In the push to increase the minimum wage, A Minnesota Without Poverty joined the Minimum Wage Coalition, Wright said. This was a group of hundreds of organizations throughout Minnesota, both large and small. “Usually, it is difficult to get such large support from different organizations,” Wright explained, “but it’s been in the conversation and I think everyone saw the momentum building.”

Minnesota’s minimum wage had not been raised since 2005, but projections made in relation to inflation showed the minimum wage should be at $9.50. Minnesota is one of a handful of states that, before this new legislation, had a minimum wage below the federal minimum wage.

“We’re used to hearing that this really is a great place to live, and it’s really surprising for people when they realize Minnesota is not doing well in something,” Reinke said. “People got upset. People were inspired to say that’s not OK, not in my state.”

Reinke and Wright attributed much of the success of the legislation to the community support, not just the organizational efforts. Many constituents communicated with their representatives, Reinke said, and that influenced how the legislators voted.

“A lot of people got really involved in the legislative process surrounding this issue,” Wright said. “It wasn’t just social service organizations or advocacy organizations that were doing it.”
Another part of the campaign for a higher minimum wage was holding forums that the students helped coordinate throughout different districts in Minnesota. “We just wanted to get people talking about the issue,” she said. “If they felt inspired to call their legislators, then great.”

Moving forward, A Minnesota Without Poverty will focus on economic mobility. The June conference, Economic Mobility: Moving Toward Enough for All, was co-sponsored by the School of Social Work.

Wright said seeing legislation for a higher minimum wage pass showed her that advocating for a cause can produce results.

“I think people think of legislation as this dull drudgery that goes on for years and years and nothing changes anyway,” she said. “[This] restored my faith in the process because things actually can change.”
Economic Justice for All

By Rebecca Mariscal, class of ‘15

Nekima Levy-Pounds, Esq., addressed the sixth annual St. Kate’s – St. Thomas School of Social Work Justice Lecture on March 18. Levy-Pounds is a University of St. Thomas professor of law and founding director of the Community Justice Project and was the chair of the MN Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. The findings of this committee’s report, Unemployment Disparity in Minnesota in 2013, were highlighted in Levy-Pound’s presentation on Economic Justice for All.

The committee report documented large racial disparities in key quality of life indicators: employment, income, poverty rates, home ownership, education and, she added, incarceration.

“Minnesota has the largest gap of unemployment between Blacks and Whites in the nation,” Levy-Pounds said. As reported in the study, only 6 percent of Whites in Minnesota are unemployed, whereas unemployment among African Americans in Minnesota is 22 percent.

In Minnesota, the average White household earned more than $55,000, while the average African American household earned $27,000. More than 57 percent of African Americans in Minnesota live in poverty, compared to the roughly eight percent of Whites. Levy-Pounds noted that “Only Mississipi and Louisiana have higher African American poverty rates than Minnesota.” In addition, more than 75 percent of Whites in Minnesota own homes, compared to only 20 percent of African Americans, a critical factor since “home ownership has been paramount within our society for transferring wealth from one generation to the next.”

Education disparity is another area in which Minnesota ranks among the worst in the nation. While 85 percent of White students graduate from high school, only 57 percent of African American students receive their diploma. American Indians in Minnesota have the lowest graduation rate at 48.8%. Levy-Pounds noted that even when African Americans earn a bachelor’s degree, they are still two times more likely to be unemployed than their White counterparts with the same degree.

Levy-Pounds further illustrated how education disparities play a role in the school-to-prison pipeline. She said that 1 in 15 African American men are incarcerated while only 1 in 106 White men are incarcerated. These numbers reflect the incarceration crisis the United States is experiencing. According to Levy-Pounds, “We incarcerate more individuals than any other country.”

Unemployment:

6% of Whites
22% of African Americans

During her remarks, she emphasized that the status quo needs to be changed through targeted initiatives to develop employment opportunities, provide housing, and assure access to quality education.

The findings of the study reinforce a 2010 report by Algernon Austin of the Economic Policy Institute, which Levy-Pounds cited as “a wakeup call that racial disparities in unemployment threaten the future viability of our state and must be addressed with a sense of urgency.” In her address, she added that we must “collectively resolve to use our time, talents, and resources to close the disturbing gaps and to work towards equity and justice for those who lack access to equal opportunity.”

The Honor Society's induction ceremony keynote address was devoted to economic injustice and featured Lissa Jones from KMOJ radio. Professing, “We need new eyes, a narrative of all perspectives.” Jones reminds social work students that we must be active in seeking if we are to be truly helpful. “In order to heal, we must meet people where they stand, and acknowledge the path behind them.” So what can we do to create a path of economic justice in our future? Jones says we can only respond to what we are consciously aware of and what we choose to integrate into our worldviews. Educating ourselves and taking responsibility for our role in reality is the only way to create a new future.

The honor society’s annual spring event was “Economic Injustice,” held on April 30 at St. Catherine University. The panel discussed Minnesota-based issues such as poverty and the minimum wage. It featured Jane Tigan of Minnesota Compass, Veronica Mendez from Centro de Trabajadores Unidos en Lucha, Rep. Andrea Kieffer, Stephanie Hogenson of Children’s Defense Fund and Sen. John Marty.

Tigan shared that about 319,000 people live in poverty in the Twin Cities area, about 11 percent of the population. Of those impoverished, more than 100,000 are children. She said the concentration of poverty is highest in the cities, meaning one in four people live in poverty in Minneapolis and St. Paul. Tigan reminded attendees that the federal guideline for poverty is a yearly income of $11,500 for a single individual and $24,000 for a family of four.

“What do we mean when we say that word, poverty?” Tigan said. “Broadly speaking we mean not enough. Not enough resources, not enough money.”

Kieffer stated that in order to address the income gap in Minnesota, we must first address the achievement gap. She said Minnesota has one of the worst achievement gaps in the nation. Students need access to good schools and high quality teachers in order to learn essential skills that will move them forward.

“We need to start at the preschool level to make sure that children are getting a good, founderational education,” Kieffer said.

Hogenson, on the other hand, stated that in order for children to perform well and achieve success, the family needs to have a steady source of income.

“When children are well-fed, have access to healthcare, and have high-quality early childhood experiences, they’re going to be not only more successful in the moment and later on in their academic careers, but they’re more likely to go on to college and be successful later on in life,” Hogenson said.

Hogenson also emphasized the importance of valuing all children. Marty agreed, saying we should encourage all people to work hard and get a better education. He said in order to ensure economic justice we need to make sure everyone has a solid foundation.

“Economic justice should matter to every one of us,” Marty said.

The Beta Epsilon Chapter of the Phi Alpha National Social Work Honors Society was focused squarely on our theme of Economic Justice this semester.

On Feb. 16, the society inducted 11 new undergraduate social work students who were selected based on their service and academic achievements.

The Beta Epsilon National Honors Society “recognizes and encourages superior academic achievement among undergraduate social work students, service to the community, advancement in scholarship, and social justice while promoting humanitarian goals and ideals.”

**Congratulations to our 2014 Inductees**
Congratulations Award Winners

2014 BSW Awards

Abigail Quigley McCarthy Center for Women – Student Leadership Award
Caitlyn Wright, St. Kate’s

Community-based Research Grant
Emily Scharpen, UST and Katharine Hill - Faculty

Luann Dummer Undergraduate Fellowship for Research on Topics Related to Women
Lindsey Landgraf, UST and Ande Nesmith - Faculty

Collaborative Inquiry Research Grant
Shannon Koester - UST and Ande Nesmith - Faculty

Tommie Award Nominee
NASW – BSW Student of the Year
Shanea Turner Smith, UST

Kappa Gamma Pi – St. Catherine Medal
Alicia Moder, St. Kate’s

Dean of Students Award Nominee
Eleanor O’Neil, St. Kate’s

Thomas More Award Nominees
Eleanor O’Neil, St. Kate’s
Gao Nou Xiong, St. Kate’s

Thomas More Award Winners
Raven Baker, St. Kate’s
Cristina de la Cruz, St. Kate’s

Bachelor of Social Work Student Leadership Award
Gao Nou Xiong, St. Kate’s

Mary Jane Young Scholarship
Aragsan Samatar, St. Kate’s

Senior Celebration Speakers
Tessa Nelson, UST
Caitlyn Wright, St. Kate’s

Assistantship Mentoring Program Award (AMP)
Comfort Dondo-Dewey, St. Kate’s and Felicia Sy, Faculty

Partnership in Learning Grant (PIL)
Danielle DeRose, UST and Felicia Sy, Faculty

Summa Cum Laude
Christine Rintoul, UST

Magna Cum Laude and Delta Epsilon Sigma
Madeline Busch, UST

Thomas More Award Winners
Raven Baker, St. Kate’s
Cristina de la Cruz, St. Kate’s

BSW Field Instructor of the Year 2014:
Kristen Perron

BSW Student Leadership Award:
Gao Nou Xiong

MSW Field Instructor of the Year 2014:
Lisa Brennom

MSW Student Leadership Award and NASW-MN MSW Student of the Year:
Elisabeth Wells

NASW-MN BSW Student of the Year:
Shanea Turner Smith with Katharine Hill, faculty

2014 MSW Awards

Master of Social Work Student Leadership Award
NASW – MSW Student of the Year
Elisabeth Wells

Noel Ryan Endowed Scholarship
Megan Boysen
Amanda Kepler

MSW Graduation Ceremony Welcome Speaker
Fatai Popoola

Janice Andrews Shenk Scholarship
Nicole Kaul
This spring the School of Social Work sponsored three events that showcased the diversity – and growing opportunities – of careers in social work.

BSW Field Education Poster Sessions, April 1 and 4: A representation of juniors and seniors showcased their field education experiences for the St. Kate’s and St. Thomas communities, including juvenile probation, community organizing, hospital intake and assessment, assisted living, housing assistance, school counseling, and developing a prison doula program. Now THAT’s diversity of opportunity!

Careers in Aging Poster Session, April 8: In collaboration with St. Catherine University’s School of Health, the School of Social Work’s gero-practice students highlighted the many emerging career opportunities working with aging adults.

Careers in Social Work 2014, April 9: We’ve all heard that social work is one of the fastest-growing professions. In fact, the Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that social work employment will increase by 19% over the next decade. Employment of healthcare social workers is projected to be especially strong, with anticipated growth of 27% from 2012 to 2022, fueled largely by our aging population and healthcare reform initiatives. These trends were readily apparent during the Careers in Social Work 2014 discussion, as we asked our panel of BSW and MSW alumni to discuss their careers and the trends and opportunities they’re seeing in their own areas of practice.

Here are a few excerpts from our panelists’ comments:

Kate Berg, BSW, LSW, Anoka County contracted case manager - Developmental Disability Unit: “I love the macro setting and the policy piece of my work. There’s tremendous energy around trying to figure out what we need to do on a broader scale to make sure everyone is supported.”

“A lot of care coordinators and social workers are being hired to manage healthcare needs. Healthcare and medical assistance programs are areas of opportunity for undergraduate social workers.”

Tanya Rand, MSW, LICSW, clinical social worker, Bethesda Hospital Outpatient Services, HealthEast: “Where I work, there are social workers in every department and at every level: management, maternity care, outpatient services, acute care, home care, hospice, and more.”

“With ACO’s (Accountable Care Organizations) and Medical Homes, more social workers will be in primary care clinics to promote healthy communities and prevent hospital admissions – which will save the health care systems a lot of money. I’m incredibly excited about social work within the health care setting.”

Tim Eiesland, MSW, LICSW, senior program manager, Catholic Charities: “Within the clinical realm, healthcare reform will continue to create a lot of opportunities, especially moving into integrated care models, working in inter-disciplinary teams, and training support specialists.

Our war is ending, so we need more clinicians working with PTSD. The “silver tsunami” is coming, so there will be more support issues for people as they age. We’re seeing a lot of attention around anti-poverty initiatives and increased crisis services. Minnesota has put a lot of money into school-based services. Of those who have serious, persistent mental illness, many are in jails. There is a lot of work to be done.”

Elizabeth Nordland, BSW, LSW, special projects coordinator, office of Gov. Dayton: “Watching people realize that they have the power to make legislation happen is exciting and energizing.”

“I see opportunities for social workers as community organizing and electoral politics meld together. We want people to vote a certain way, change their hearts and minds, and to have effective conversations. Social workers have a lot to bring to this area because we’re very relational.”

Sarah Ferguson, BSW’ Program Director and the panel’s moderator, identified a recurring theme from the speakers, “Clearly, current legislation impacts social workers’ jobs, their practices, and their clients. Advocacy and an understanding of policy is important whether you’re practicing at the micro, mezzo, or macro level.”
Day at the Capitol

A large showing of BSW and MSW students attended the annual Social Work Day at the Capitol April 7, sponsored by NASW-MN. This day-long event provides an opportunity for social work students from across Minnesota to meet with their legislators. It starts with a number of justice- and social work-themed workshops and ends with a march to the rotunda of the Capitol. St. Kate’s-St. Thomas School of Social Work students sported T-shirts designed by MSW student, Nicole Dahl, which won “best t-shirt” of the day.

Presentation Day

On May 19, 136 MSW students participated in our annual Clinical Research Paper Presentation Day. Students were joined by the committee members, faculty, family, friends, and colleagues who supported them throughout this journey. Presenters brought their passion for a topic, population group, practice field, or service delivery area to life through projects that allowed them to demonstrate the skills they have developed and honed during the program. The presentations encouraged us all to explore new perspectives of social work practice. Thank you to all who participated!

If you are interested in learning about serving on a clinical research committee, please contact Hiyana Xiong at hiyana@stthomas.edu.

See more photos of Day at the Capitol and Presentation Day at the St. Kate’s – St. Thomas School of Social Work Facebook page.
Katharine Hill
Promoted to Associate Professor. Hill came to St. Catherine University/University of St. Thomas in the fall of 2009. She teaches primarily in the BSW program, including Introduction to Social Work, Social Policy for Social Change, and Generalist Practice with Large Systems. Katharine’s research interests include improving services and supports for youth with disabilities in the foster care system, the transition of at-risk youth to adulthood, and social work macro practice. She and her husband, Chris, live in St. Paul and are doting parents to Frances, age 5.

Felicia Sy
UST Faculty Development Office has awarded Felicia Sy a 2014-2015 Research Grant. The Research Grant supports faculty engagement in and continuation of current scholarly work, in new directions in scholarship, or for large, multi-year projects. Sy’s research is titled: Dismantling Power and Privilege in Western Buddhism: Issues of Race, Class, Gender, and Sexual Orientation.

Catherine Marrs Fuchsel
Marrs Fuchsel’s current research project examines an 11-week topic specific curriculum that provides education on healthy relationships, dating, dynamics of domestic violence, and self-esteem for immigrant Latina women in group settings. Participants in the program also learn how to access resources in the community. The paper addressed the research project that was conducted in the community. Four groups (n = 36) were conducted at a community-based agency in rural Minnesota using a qualitative research design. Participants provided weekly feedback on their experiences with the 11-week empowerment program. Findings indicated participant’s self-esteem increased and participant’s gained awareness and knowledge about domestic violence and healthy relationships. Currently, a new community partner in the Twin Cities has agreed to participate in the research project.

Mary Tinucci
Adjunct professor Tinucci’s article about The Poetry LAB will be included as a chapter of a book that will be published and available August 2014. The chapter will feature the development of The Poetry LAB, a groupwork program model specifically serving youth with emotional/behavioral disorders in St. Paul Public Schools.

Published by Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Expressive Writing: Classroom and Community (It’s Easy to W.R.I.T.E. Expressive Writing) will feature many stories about how expressive writing is used in both public school education and adult education across the country.

Mike Chovanec and Charles Kalogo
Mike Chovanec and student research assistant Charles Kalogo presented at the SCU Scholar’s Circle April 26, 2014. The presentation was titled: Assessing Utility of Client Feedback Instruments: Application in Domestic Abuse Treatment.

Sarah Ferguson and Nora Smyth
Sarah Ferguson and Nora Smyth, BSW Student, presented Organizational Identities of Agencies Responding to Interpersonal Violence: Implications for practice (Generalist, All Levels) at the 24th Annual NASW State Conference in June in St. Paul, MN.

Group Work Students Develop Parenting Skills Workshops
Seventeen students in Kendra Garrett’s group work skills class developed workshops over the spring semester to help parents from El Centro, an agency dedicated to serving the Latino community in Minneapolis, increase their parenting skills. The workshops on listening, rewards, and consequences were held April 26 to coincide with Dia del Niño.
Katharine Hill and Emily Scharpen
Katharine Hill and Emily Scharpen, BSW student have been awarded a Community-Based Research Grant through UST Undergraduate Research Office. They will be working collaboratively with the Link to conduct an assessment of their Juvenile Supervision Center’s services on homeless and runaway youth’s interactions with corrections.

Katharine Hill, Ande Nesmith, Katie Christophersen and Shannon Koester
Professors Katharine Hill and Ande Nesmith presented with BSW students Katie Christophersen and Shannon Koester in March, 2014 at the Minnesota Social Services Association 121st Annual Training Conference. The presentation was called, Fostering Lasting Relationships for Youth in Out-of-Home Placement.

Carol F. Kuechler and Sarah K. Breyette
Carol Kuechler and Sarah Breyette, MSW student presented, “Ethics in the Use of Electronic Communication – Untangling the Personal and Professional,” at the Minnesota Association for Children’s Mental Health (MACMH) Annual Mental Health Conference on April 28th in Duluth, MN.

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Tonya Brownlow, MSW ’03 and Adjunct Faculty
Recently, Brownlow became the Executive Director of Emma Norton Services (Helping Women, Children, and Families Get Healthy and Get Ahead). Emma Norton Services partner with women, children, and families who are homeless and experiencing the challenges of mental and/or chemical disabilities.

Fatai Popoola, MSW ’14
Fatai Popoola, MSW student from Nigeria, Africa presented the welcoming address at the 2014 Graduate Commencement ceremony at St. Catherine University on Friday, May 23.
School of Social Work

Faculty, Student and Alumni Notes

Sondra Payne Elizondo, BSW ’92:
Sondra Payne Elizondo, a Benson, Minn., native, is University of St. Thomas Humanitarian of the Year for her contributions to the betterment of the spiritual and material welfare of the less fortunate.

Elizondo, who earned a bachelor’s degree in social work, is co-founder and director of VIDA (Volunteers for Intercultural and Definitive Adventures), a nonprofit volunteer program. VIDA offers pre-medical, pre-dental and pre-veterinary college students the chance to work with local doctors, translators and guides in underserved remote areas of Costa Rica, Nicaragua and Guatemala.

Kendra (Hensch) O’Connor, MSW ’02
For six years Kendra O’Connor worked in addictions as the clinical director and the therapist of a residential treatment program for women. She said of her work there: “It was amazingly rewarding work to see these women transform their lives.” O’Connor has an LCSW and LCAC and now works in a private practice with seven other clinicians where her focus is children and adolescents, mood disorders, addiction, and trauma.

Miranda Yang, BSW ’14
Having grown up in America, Miranda Yang always wanted to learn more about the country of her parents and grandparents. She did an independent study in Laos during J-Term 2013-2014, where she compared the lives of Hmong women in Laos and with the lives of Hmong women in America.

Alicia Moder, BSW ’14
During spring break 2014, 28 students from St. Catherine University participated in a Papal Audience with Pope Francis in St Peter’s Square as part of the “Catholic Rome Pilgrimage with Sister Andrea.” Among the pilgrims was BSW student, Alicia Moder, who tells her story about the experience.

Extended articles of many of these features can be found on our website.
www.stthomas.edu/socialwork/events/schoolnews
**Professional Notes**

**Mike Chovanec**  

**Ande Nesmith**  

**Lance Peterson**  


**Lisa Richardson**  

**Catherine Marrs Fuchsel**  


**Kari Fletcher**  


**Katharine Hill and Sarah Ferguson**  

**Jessica Toft**  

**Miriam Itzkowitz**  
Annual Interprofessional Education Workshop held March 14 in collaboration with St. Catherine University’s Henrietta Schmoll School of Health

Over two hundred students participated in this year’s IPE workshop, including all foundation-level Master of Social Work students. Each multi-disciplinary table participated in an interprofessional dialogue about a complex medical case and the perspective that each profession brings to the table. As School of Social Work clinical faculty member, Eva Solomonson, remarked, “participants gained a real appreciation for how much overlap there is between professions and a much more concrete understanding of what each other do.”

MSW student participants commented on the value of the experience:

Kyle Murray: “It was nice to hear a validation of what social workers can bring to the table on an interprofessional team. For example, we had a great discussion about a social worker’s ability to assess what else might be going on with a patient that could be contributing to their non-compliance.”

Rebekah Elling: “This discussion brought out the voices of the other professionals and it was nice to see the shift in all disciplines towards being more person-centered.”

Tara Reopelle: “No profession has all the answers. It’s important for us to remember that a particular profession may have more ability to help a client depending on where they are in their care, but this can change over time and it’s important for interprofessional teams to pay attention to the client’s evolving needs.”

Jeanette Olson: “As a social worker, I found that I contributed the perspective of client self-determination. We can assess the situation, but we must recognize that our goals [as healthcare professionals] are not always our clients’ goals.”

Francois Vang: “It’s OK not to know everything. There’s a relief in knowing there are other professionals that you can draw on when caring for patients with complex needs.”

Field Workshop and Luncheon

This year’s Annual Field Workshop and Luncheon was a huge success with over 250 people in attendance. Our topic was Secondary Trauma: Building Resilience.

Our presenters, Cynthia Packer, MSW, and Jeremy Mork, MSW, are clinical social workers at Minnesota Intensive Therapeutic Homes (MITH), a statewide program for children and youth with mental health and behavioral challenges, many of whom have experienced complex trauma.

Thank you to all of our field instructors for their tremendous contributions to student learning during the year!

– The Field Education Leadership Team

Dash-it-for-Baskets – MSW Student Association

On May 10th, the MSW Student Association (MSWSA) sponsored the 2014 Dash-it-for-Baskets 5K: Moving Forward for Mental Health.

The School of Social Work received the award for the largest number of race volunteers, whose efforts supported Open Baskets, a non-profit group that “fills the hearts, minds, and souls of our neighbors who live with mental illness by creating and sending winter holiday gift baskets.” In the fall semester, students, faculty and friends help assemble the holiday baskets, which are often the only gifts these neighbors receive each year. Good work MSWSA!
Dr. Carol F. Kuechler
MSW Program Director
As we celebrate our MSW’s 25th anniversary, I am marking the occasion with a specific donation of $25 to one of our SSW scholarship funds. Want to join me? Visit www.stthomas.edu/socialwork/SupportUs

Support the School of Social Work

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Coming Soon … a new School of Social Work website.
Check it out later this summer!
www.stthomas.edu/socialwork
Full time faculty, 2013-2014
Barbara Shank, Dean and professor
Sarah Ferguson, BSW program director
Carol Kuechler, MSW program director and DSW program director
Carey Winkler, BSW field education director
Lisa Richardson, MSW field education director
Kathy Caron, MSW field weekend cohort coordinator
George Baboila, Director, Social Work Services, Interprofessional Center for Counseling and Legal Services

Adjunct faculty 2013-2014
Michele Braley
Tonya Brownlow
Marcy Buckner
Tim Eiesland
Kathleen Fargione
Teresa George
Michelle Gricus
Renee Hepperlen
Abel Knochel
David McGraw-Schuchman
Theresa McPartlin
Rajean Moone
Tanya Rand
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