

COMMUNITAS

Florida State University College of Social Work

2014-2015

POLICY SUPPORT
COMMUNITY
STRATEGY
RESEARCH
LIVE
SOCIAL WORK
HEALTH
PROTECT
SAFETY
EMPOWER
CARING
HUMAN
SERVICES
WELL-
BEING
SOLUTIONS
INNOVATION
LEADER
-SHIP
STRONG
FAMILIES
DEVELOPMENT
PERMANENCY
CHILDREN
& FAMILIES
LOVE

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A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

Please excuse me if I stumble a bit in writing my final column as I near retirement this year. To our students, faculty, staff, alumni, community leaders, and other friends of the College of Social Work: Thank you for helping to make our College one of the finest in the nation! Thank you for granting me the privilege and honor of teaching, learning, and leading through a journey toward academic and professional excellence. We are indeed a College that is student-centered, community engaged, and committed to top-notch research that matters. In my early days I started with poetry through field instruction and classes in crisis intervention (asking students to write group poems on crisis nearly created crises for some of them!). I maintained the use of poetry in teaching and practice throughout the span of my 34-year career at FSU. When I became dean in 2008, the University was in turmoil and severe budget cuts were enacted. I started my first planning session for faculty and staff by asking them to write six word stories about “the state of the college.” Here are a few examples:

Not easily broken, cracked or bent.
Progress requires change, not existing state.
Professional at every level. Personal best.
Wrote articles. Taught students. Still married.
Standing up for others and ourselves.
Fallow fields/ Change the river's course.
Ready to move forward in excellence.
Now reclaiming our sense of humor.
Research meets policy and practice: Hallelujah!

Some faculty were wondering: What have we done in drafting Nick to serve as dean? But seriously we not only survived but we prevailed. It's only fitting that I close with a poem as my final days as a dean and faculty member draw to a close:

Homecoming¹

Homecoming
is the place in relationships
where time spent together
intersects with the days and miles
apart from each other.
And it's in saying good-bye
we have the measure
of how much we stand to lose
and how much love and strength we carry with us.
Our hands
holding the sorrows,
holding the joys,
and holding the dreams
reach out to those we care about.
And we learn that
coming home is a thread
that we maintain
through a lifetime.



And to all of our CSW “family,” I urge you to consider what drives your academic, career, and creative pursuits. In whatever way research/scholarship/practice is defined, discipline is at its core. Education is indeed a “human thing” and it's always unfinished. Writing, teaching, and practicing from the heart with discipline is not only possible, but it's also central in speaking to “what matters.” In my Editor's Note for the launching of the Journal of Poetry Therapy (JPT) in 1987, I wrote a reflection about my children, Nicole (age 5) and Chris (age 2), bringing their art supplies into my office while I was working on JPT. We proceeded to draw and play with words. My children have always been the greatest poems in my life (Nicole, 33, teaches kindergarten; Chris, a student at FSU, died in an automobile accident in 2005 at the age of 21 but remains in my heart). We are educating our students to become the leaders of a generation that will advance the art and science of social work. Our stories, whether personal or professional, are about transitions. Always, keep the colors, keep the honesty, and keep the promise along the journey. Wishing you well, happy, and fulfilled my friends.

Take care,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nicholas F. Massa".

Nick

¹Journal of Family Social Work, 15:96, 2012.
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print=1540-4072 online. DOI: 10.1080/10522158.2012.645414

THE HOME STRETCH

Social Work Dean to Retire this Year by Jeffrey Seay

Nicholas F. “Nick” Mazza never aspired to be a university administrator, but he found himself called to serve the FSU College of Social Work by faculty colleagues as interim dean in 2008 after the retirement of its former dean, Aaron McNeece. Two years later, Mazza was appointed to the permanent position. Now, after a 34-year career at Florida State and seven years as dean, Mazza plans to step down and retire by year’s end.

Over his career, Mazza built a reputation as an accomplished social worker, educator, poet and scholar specializing in poetry therapy. He also has finished an astounding 35 consecutive Tallahassee Marathons. Since joining the college’s faculty in 1981, Mazza has served and chaired nearly every College of Social Work committee, created and chaired the first certificate program in family social work, followed by one in the arts and community practice, and was significantly involved in many university committees. He also turned down every request from past deans to serve as a program director or associate dean.

Mazza stepped into the interim post during the recession, a time when the university was considering restructuring its colleges. The College of Social Work was one of many academic units facing major budget cuts and the possibility of being merged with other programs. He was determined, however, to maintain the College of Social Work as a free-standing academic unit. Acting as though he was permanent, Mazza restructured the college, making strides to advance its research, service and support of students. He improved the college’s external relations, increased its fundraising and urged a higher level of alumni and community engagement. By the fall of 2010, the college prevailed as a strong, free-standing unit that received laudatory internal and external reviews: specifically, the FSU Quality Enhancement Review and the Council on Social Work reaffirmation of ac-

creditation. Because of his leadership, then-Provost Lawrence G. “Larry” Abele appointed Mazza dean in 2010. Led by his passion for the college, Mazza has become very good at telling its story.

“We are a top-notch program that is well-regarded locally, statewide, nationally and internationally in practice, policy, administration and scholarship,” Mazza said. “Most of all, we are committed to our students and our mission to the community through service and research that matters. We have reconnected with our alumni and friends, and offered special recognitions for their support and achievements.”

“We are committed to our students and our mission to the community through service and research that matters.”

Mazza’s enthusiasm extends to talking about the profession of social work because it is one of the nation’s fastest growing careers, according to *U.S. News & World Report*, and it leads the pack of “helping professions” as a frontline provider of mental health services. He consistently reaffirms the importance that the public be aware that degrees in social work (BSW and MSW) are professional degrees and serve society well, with social workers dealing with health and wellness, aging, poverty, mental health, domestic violence, substance abuse and addiction, criminal justice, child welfare, human rights and much more. “And we emphasize professional standards,” he said. “We are proud because we maintain standards of excellence in both the college and the profession.”

Since joining the college’s faculty, Mazza has met with enthusiasm every opportunity to educate the next generation of social workers, playing an integral part in shaping a college that

is student-centered and research-focused. He has not only spent his career encouraging students toward practice and research, but has joined them as a research partner and mentor. Over his career, Mazza, who holds Florida licenses in clinical social work, psychology and marriage and family therapy, has participated in the research of undergraduate, master’s and doctoral students, and estimates that he has served on about 75 dissertation committees across numerous disciplines. As a faculty member, he maintained a heavy teaching load and continued to teach a course in poetry therapy in the fall and spring semesters, as well as offering directed individual studies and informal mentoring.

In addition to teaching, Mazza maintains an active research agenda and continues to publish articles, chapters and poetry. He continues to serve as editor of the *Journal of Poetry Therapy*, which he founded in 1987, and is the author of the definitive book on poetry therapy, “Poetry Therapy: Theory and Practice.” In 2006, Mazza was named Florida State’s Patricia Vance Professor of Social Work. Since becoming dean, Mazza has underscored his, and the College’s, commitment to undergraduate research by working with the Division of Undergraduate Studies to create the Social Work Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity Award, funded by the college.

“The fact remains that we will continue to prepare our students to be some of the finest clinical social workers, administrators, researchers, educators, policymakers, community organizers and consultants across the country.” Dean Mazza wrote in a past issue of *Communitas*, “We want our students to be successful, our research to make a difference in improving the lives of others and our engagement in the community to model social work values and ethics. I hope you will join me and the ‘family’ of the College of Social Work to write the next chapter in our shared story of excellence. It’s a tradition. It’s a promise.” Mazza is proud that he did his best to keep the promise. “There are a lot of chapters yet to be written, but if I’ve helped write one or two, then I’m satisfied.” ■



The Florida Institute for Child Welfare by Dr. Patty Babcock

The Florida Legislature passed sweeping child welfare legislation (SB1666) in 2014 in response to media reports of almost 500 children known to Florida's child welfare system who died in the past five years. The legislation created the Florida Institute for Child Welfare (FICW) housed at the FSU College of Social Work. The purpose of the FICW is to advance the well-being of children and families by improving the performance of child protection and child welfare services through research, policy analysis, and leadership development.

Along with Florida State University, the FICW consists of a consortium of public and private universities in Florida with social work programs along with the Department of Children and Families (DCF), sheriffs providing child protective / investigative services, community-based care lead agencies (CBC), community-based provider organizations, the court system, the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ), the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence (FCADV) and other partners

that contribute to and participate in providing child protection and child welfare services.

As the interim director, it has been my privilege and challenge to bring together this group of stakeholders to establish a set of unified goals and priorities for the newly established Florida Institute for Child Welfare.

As of February 2015, I have been to 19 formal statewide/national child welfare conferences and meetings as well as numerous smaller consultative meetings to better assess the state of child welfare in Florida and to set the priorities for the FICW. Three research priorities have been established to:

1. Enhance the collaborative relationships in child welfare practice;
2. Prioritize the replication of child welfare evidence-based practices;
3. Utilize innovation and development of promising child welfare practices.

To this end, the Florida Institute for Child Welfare is making available ten \$60,000 academic/community awards available by calling for research proposals that focus on these three established research areas. The faculty affiliates at the Florida State University College of Social Work will also take the lead on assessing the impact of: workforce recruitment and retention strategies, pre-service training and social work curriculum alignment, and results oriented accountability program related research.

The interim report was submitted to the Governor on February 1, 2015 outlining preliminary recommendations for improving Florida's child welfare system. The annual report to the Governor and Legislature is due on October 1, 2015 and will present the 5-year strategic plan for the Florida Institute for Child Welfare. ■



COLLEGE AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH TO LOCAL HOMELESS POPULATIONS

The Tallahassee community will be welcoming a valuable new resource in 2015: the Comprehensive Homeless Emergency Service Center (The Center). Opening on the northwest side of town, The Center will serve the Big Bend area's persons experiencing homelessness. "This center is unique because of the comprehensiveness of the services and that it is community organized," remarked Dr. Tomi Gomory, College of Social Work Associate Professor and Vice Chair of The Tallahassee-Leon County Homeless Shelter Board of Directors.

The Center is the result of a special community collaboration with the support of business entrepreneur Rick Kearney and because of several organizations including The Tallahassee-Leon County Homeless Shelter (The Shelter), Renaissance Community Center, Big Bend Homeless Coalition, Ability First and Emergency Care Help Organization (ECHO) and many other organizations serving our most vulnerable individuals and families. The FSU College of Social Work has also played an active role in bringing this project to fruition and

establishing better services and resources to aid the homeless in the local area. College of Social Work students work actively within a majority of these organizations at various levels from internships to leadership roles, such as MSW student and Executive Director of The Shelter, Jacob Reiter, and one of the Renaissance Community Center's lead social workers CSW doctoral student Monique Ellsworth. When The Center's construction is completed this spring it will be the new home of The Shelter and the Renaissance Community Center of-



Student Interns and volunteers to assist at The Center in 2015

fering all the services of both organizations but also providing several new assets to area homeless, making it a one-of-a-kind resource in the U.S.

The Center will not only provide separate accommodations for men and women, but will also have a state-of-the-art security system, including cameras, to improve safety at The Center. Areas will also be available for storage of resident belongings. There will even be a “hot room” where clothing and belongings coming into The Center will be heated to 130 to 140 degrees to combat bed bugs, a growing concern in shelters and hotels across the country.

The Center will also address health concerns by providing a full medical facility equipped with nurses on site, recovery rooms for recently discharged hospital patients experiencing homelessness, and equipment for distance medicine allowing doctors to remotely access and treat patients. A full service kitchen will both serve the residents of The Center, and will be a training ground for teaching residents food services skills from local restaurateurs with the expectation of getting them hired by local restaurants and cafes.

The FSU College of Social Work began in 2014 planting and maintaining a summer and fall vegetable garden for the benefit and use of The Shelter’s residents. This initiative started as a part of the College’s commitment to the Wendy P. Crook Project, honoring late faculty member, Dr. Wendy Crook who was a passionate advocate for Florida’s residents experiencing



Left to right: Rick Kearney, Heather Mitchell, Tomi Gomory, Jacob Reiter

homelessness. This project, lovingly named the Wendy P. Crook Memorial Garden will continue at The Center’s new site providing it’s larger community of residents with fresh vegetables, fruits and flowers.

“What I value is that we at FSU and the College of Social Work are participants in a community of cooperation that includes all sectors, government, public and private agencies, educational organizations. And the local business sector. We came together and figured out through a consensus process what services were needed at the center and how to best provide them to the homeless members of our community” Dr. Gomory emphasized about The Center’s creation. “It’s been an incredibly supportive and positive experience, which reflects our commitment to a community of engaged researchers and service providers.” ■



The Gomory Family Scholarship

Faculty members, Dr. Tomi Gomory & Ms. Fran Gomory, MSW, have created the Gomory Family Scholarship to be awarded to a student in the College of Social Work program that is an approved intern at the Leon County Homeless Shelter.

OPERATION FAMILY CAREGIVER

The FSU College of Social Work has embarked on a partnership with the Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregiving (RCI) to aid local veterans and their caregivers. The Operation Family Caregiver (OFC) program within the College will provide free, confidential support to family and friends of local service members and veterans; aiding caregivers as they manage difficult transitions and obstacles.

This partnership represents a new model for RCI, offering the first university-based OFC program accessible to the more than 400 military personnel and veterans and almost 600 dependents currently enrolled at FSU, as well as veterans and their caregivers throughout the Big Bend region and southeastern United States.

Currently, OFC operates in six service locations in Pennsylvania, California, Texas (2 sites), New York, and Georgia. The additional service location at Florida State is particularly well suited for the state of Florida, home to the sixth highest concentration of military and veteran populations in the nation. Faculty member Margaret Ashmore, MSW, will oversee the coordination of the OFC Program at FSU and supervise the caregiver coach that will work directly with local military caregivers.

"Caregivers who have been through Operation Family Caregiver report being more satisfied with their lives, and feeling better prepared to take care of loved ones," says RCI's Executive Director Dr. Leisa Easom. "We know the program works, and we are thrilled to make it available to more families." ■

For more information, visit
OperationFamilyCaregiver.org



The Guy and Delores Spearman Veteran Scholarship

This award created by 1975 MSW alumnus Guy Spearman and his wife, Delores Spearman. First awarded in 2014, the Guy and Delores Spearman Veterans Scholarship is awarded each year to two graduate student veterans: one to a student completing their field placement, and one to a student who is pursuing research focused on military service members, veterans, their families, and their community.



“Caregivers who have been through Operation Family Caregiver report being more satisfied with their lives, and feeling better prepared to take care of their loved ones.”



ARTS & ATHLETICS

LIFE CHANGING FOR CAMPERS AND COUNSELORS

In 2014, the College of Social Work celebrated the Arts & Athletics Camp's third year of providing a two week university campus experience for underserved youths in the Tallahassee/Big Bend area. Twenty middle schoolers were immersed in arts, athletics and college preparatory activities with the hope that the experience contributes to their positive development and inspires them to seek opportunities to pursue higher education. Created by Dean Nick Mazza, the camp has been an ongoing collaboration between the College of Social Work and other FSU departments and organizations, including FSU Athletics, FSU Department of Art Education, FSU School of Dance, College of Music, the FSU Intramural Sports Program, and the Center for Academic Retention and Enhancement and the Tallahassee Housing Authority. The camp has also become a learning tool for College of Social Work students interested in working with children and young adults. Four social work students participated in the camp as counselors and mentors to the campers. The counselors also received Directed Individualized Study credits from Dr. Mazza for their participation.

Reflections

by Brynna Wright,
Counselor and BSW student

Working as a counselor for the Arts and Athletics Camp was the most enjoyable and rewarding part of my summer. The connection I made with each camper made the camp the most gratifying course credit I have ever received. I was thrilled to be a part of the network of staff, volunteers, and the middle school students who, for two

weeks, became a connected team with the common goal of making the most of our experience together. It was incredible to see the expression of individuality in each camper—the distinct skills and gifts, the unique personalities, the transformations, and the inspiring determination that was a part of each student. The campers shared with me their

dreams and goals for the future, and I encouraged them to not only articulate their desires, but I tried to instill in them the confidence needed to achieve their passions. I was filled with overwhelming joy to be a part of these kids' lives, and if I made a fraction of the difference in their lives as they made in mine, I will be content to know that I did my part. ■





Lindsay Greene

RESEARCH AND CREATIVITY LEAD TO INTERNATIONAL IMPACT

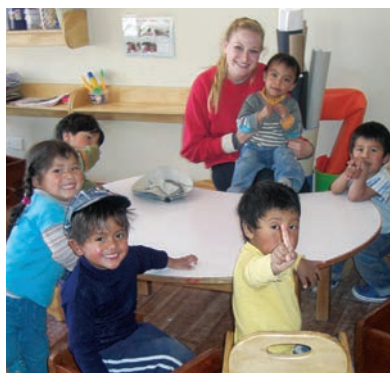
With an interest in both research and international social work, BSW Student Lindsay Greene embraced many the opportunities available at FSU and the College of Social Work. As the 2014 Social Work Undergraduate Research and Creativity Award (SWURCAA) recipient, Lindsay was able to pursue an independent, creative research project of her own design in Huancayo, Peru. Through her research Lindsay evaluated Expanding Peru: Casa de Bebes and the organization's child care program, providing assessment data to aid program improvement and child care efforts.

Lindsay Greene, BSW Student

My experiences in Peru were nothing short of transformative. Through FSU's Global Scholars program, I was introduced to new perspectives and ideas regarding international NGOs, not-for-profits, and humanitarian aid. A fine line was drawn between good intentions and good initiatives to produce tangible, sustainable results. We learned from case studies, scholars in the field, and from discussions how to discern which side our eager plans and opinions fell on. Learning these important considerations and with

the guidance of social work professor, Dr. Neil Abell, I was amply supported in crafting a culturally informed and non-invasive research project. For my project, I collaborated with the Expand Peru: Casa de Bebes in Huancayo, Peru, undertaking a preliminary evaluation of their child care program.

Although volunteering and conducting research in Huancayo encouraged positive academic and personal growth it was not without its challenges. Preparing and constructing my own study was a novel experience for me, including a crash course in the fundamentals for ethical and effective research. Discussions about these



Greene with school children in Peru

factors with Dr. Abell encouraged me to reach out to other scholars in the field for further learning and advice. Once in Peru, I encountered obstacle after obstacle in carrying out my research. Dr. Abell warned me that you could only work out logistics to a certain extent and that it was not uncommon for issues to arise and circumstances change. This taught me the valuable lesson in research of flexibility and resourcefulness. For instance, my translator, the only one available in the community, was unreliable and this caused rapport with my interview respondents to suffer. To allow my research to move forward I adapted my interview schedule, setting the time to meet with my translator earlier than I had told the respondent, so that the translator, late to arrive, would be on time for the interview. I grew in terms of both mindfulness and resilience. At first in Huancayo, it was uncomfortable to stand out as a blonde-haired, blue-eyed American in an ethnically homogenous city.

SWURCAA continued on page 15



The John and Meg Paschal International Scholarship

The John and Meg Paschal International Scholarship was created to provide support to social work students demonstrating integrity and passion for the profession, particularly in international settings, along with academic excellence and financial need.



STUDENT HIGHLIGHTS

BSW



Jordan Park Bachelor's In Social Work

Jordan Park was born into the life of an "Air Force Brat" which allowed her the opportunity to move every 2 to 3 years. Tallahassee is the longest I have ever lived in one location and Florida State University, specifically the College of Social Work, is becoming my home. I call it home because of the incredible relationships I've accumulated during my two years in the college. I am blessed to be part of a small college where all of my teachers know my name and I am friends with nearly every one of my class mates. The faculty and staff of the College of Social Work are unique because there is no power differential between them and the students. Each and every teacher and faculty member I have ever encountered take the time to get to know me as they encourage me towards making a difference in the population I feel called to work with.

What drew you to social work as a major and a career path?

I was drawn to social work as a career after visiting Burkina Faso in West Africa when I was 16 years old. After this mission trip, I knew that I wanted my career to be centered on serving those in need and advocating for those who do not have a voice. The practice of social work was appealing to me because of the core belief of non-judgmental acceptance and the emphasis on listening rather than advice-giving. This is a highly versatile profession which allows people the opportunity to practice in a myriad of fields. A degree in social work equips me with a set of skills to then go out into the world and intercede on behalf of others. I was attracted to this field because it provides such a versatile career path, which could lead me down many paths both nationally and internationally.

What is your primary area of interest and the population(s) you are focusing on?

My population of interest is children experiencing poverty. While this encompasses all children in every nation, my heart specifically goes out to children experiencing poverty in developing nations.

How do you currently give back to the community?

Florida State has a vast number of resources to provide community involvement for students. I am thankful for the service projects I have had the opportunity to participate in over the past four years. Recently, I have been involved at the Renaissance Community Center (RCC). The RCC is an organization which provides amenities to those experiencing homelessness in the Big Bend area. Abroad, I was involved in FSU's nonprofit organization, Global Peace Exchange (GPE), as a co-leader of the Uganda Project 2014. This opportunity allowed me to live last summer in the rural mountains of eastern Uganda in a town called, Nuusu. While in Nuusu, I lived as a local and worked to educate the community and create sustainable change through the involvement of the village.

How have the College and FSU helped to prepare you for your career path?

The College of Social Work has provided a dynamic and thorough education for me. Recently, the college created a field placement position for my final semester in South Africa through the hard work of Dr. Abell, the Social Work International Programs Director. Together, we designed an internship which is divided into three sections: the first portion is in Johannesburg working with a food distribution company, the second is in Durban working

in an orphanage, and the final stage will be working alongside refugee minors in Cape Town. This exciting opportunity is laying the groundwork for my goal of bringing awareness and aid to children experiencing poverty around the world. After this internship, I plan to return to Florida State where I will complete my master's in Social Work.



Jordan at African Dynamics, a South African aid organization providing food to over one million children in poverty.



Michael Barnes

Master's In Social Work

Michael Barnes is an MSW student from Pahokee, Florida. He is a proud alumnus of the University of Florida where he graduated cum laude with a BA in Criminology and Sociology. He is the recipient of the Mary DiNitto Endowed and C. Aaron McNeece Field scholarship, and was named the 2014 National Association of Social Workers Florida Chapter's Big Bend Unit Student of the Year. He serves as the student representative for the NASW-FL Big Bend Unit and the College of Social Work's Field Advisory Committee. Michael recently co-developed a new mentor initiative in the NASW-FL Big Bend Unit that pairs social work students and graduates with professional social work mentors.

What drew you to social work as a major and a career path?

My extensive background in service and volunteering, primarily at homeless shelters throughout the state, and my own upbringing in a low-income and resource destitute community made me a champion for change. Attaining my Master's in social work will provide me with the tools that I need to bring the change that I often visualize to reality.

What is your primary area of interest and the population(s) you are focusing on?

I am primarily focused on providing therapy and advocacy for veterans experiencing readjustment and stability issues that lead to homelessness. I'm interested in toppling the barriers to

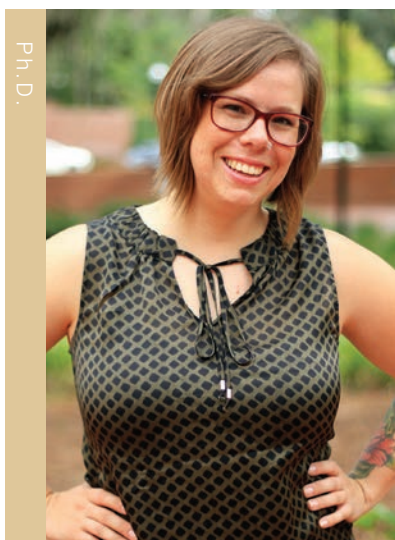
adequate education for students from impoverished and low-income communities. Promoting the successful matriculation of first generation college students is also of great interest to me.

How do you currently give back to the community?

I have volunteered with Volunteers of America at Veterans Village providing transportation and referrals to local social service agencies for veterans. I have also served as a panelist and moderator for the FSU Graduate School during Think Graduate School Week and the 2014 New Graduate Student Orientation, providing insight into graduate school for over one hundred and fifty undergraduates and newly admitted graduate students alike.

How have the College and FSU helped to prepare you for your career path?

My education has been invaluable. The College of Social Work has provided me with a unique education which I can use to positively impact a multitude of clients and communities. It has afforded me an opportunity to learn from some of the best social work researchers, practitioners, and mentors about the level of skill, research, and ethics that define a truly successful social worker. The support I have received from the College of Social Work, and FSU as a whole, has made me confident in my abilities as an agent for individual, community, and societal change.



Annelise Mennicke

Doctoral Candidate in Social Work

Originally hailing from Minnesota, Annelise Mennicke is a doctoral candidate in the College of Social Work and earned her MSW at the college in 2009. She has mentored by Karen Oehme, JD and the Institute for Family Violence Studies, and has worked with Dr. Dina Wilke expanding her skills and conducting meaningful research that impacts FSU's campus. Under the guidance of Dr. Stephen Tripodi, she led an investigation into a prison-based domestic violence program, for which Annelise was awarded a 2014 Research and Creativity Award. Working with the Florida Center for Prevention Research, Annelise has actively contributed to the sexual violence prevention work at FSU. Recently she received a 2014 Avon Foundation Grant that will help FSU move forward with creating bystander intervention programs for violence prevention. She is also active in the community through roller derby with the Tallahassee Roller Girls.

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SWURCAA: Lindsay Greene

Continued from page 11

I was clearly marked as a foreigner. I was charged more for goods in the market, people were suspicious of me, and children would come up to me and touch my hair. I adjusted to it over time and was able to persevere when times were challenging. As I became more mindful, I was better able to approach situations in which I needed to consider multiple perspectives, and required understanding and empathy. I came to acknowledge many of the biases I brought with me, allowing me to better evaluate what I was learning in light of my own preconceptions. This self-assessment made me more receptive to growing personally from these experiences.

In looking towards the future, my experiences clarified some of my career goals, instilling in me a passion for working abroad and an appreciation for diverse cultures. I plan on pursuing a Master in Social Work to prepare me to better serve clients both stateside and internationally. ■

STUDENT HIGHLIGHTS: Annelise Mennicke

Continued from page 13

What drew you to social work as a major and career path?

My path to social work came from my realization that I had the skills and passion to advocate for social justice. As a white woman, I was conflicted be-



Annelise (left) promoting the FSU kNOW More campaign in the Oglesby Union

tween feeling privileged in some settings and disadvantaged in others. I wanted to use my skills to help achieve equality and justice for all women, and knew that social work would be a great fit for that. Interpersonal violence is one of the greatest and most traumatic abuses of power and privilege, and I became impassioned to work to make our communities safer for everyone.

What is your primary area of interest and the population(s) you are focusing on?

My primary area of interest is gender-based violence as a system of oppression and the way that intersecting identities influence experiences of violence. My dissertation focuses on identifying the types of intimate partner violence that exist in relationships, with the hopes that a better understanding of this violence will yield more response prevention and intervention programs. I believe that we all have a part to play in violence prevention, and hope to develop programs that reflect the range

of experiences that exist across genders, socioeconomic statuses, races, ethnicities, sexual identities, and other social locations.

How do you give back to the community?

I have been actively involved in sexual violence prevention work here at FSU since May 2013. This involves facilitating a social norms campaign on violence prevention, supervising peer educators as they deliver workshops on violence prevention, and co-chairing committees on collaborative approaches to sexual violence prevention. I helped launch the kNOW More campaign, and will be working with the Green Dot, Etc. Bystander Intervention Program in the future to bring a comprehensive and FSU specific violence prevention program to campus.

How have the College and FSU helped to prepare you for your career path?

I cannot fully express my gratitude to the College of Social Work, the University, and the faculty and staff that have contributed to my preparation thus far. All of my professors have gone above and beyond to facilitate my learning, and the college continues to provide ample support from staff and administrators. I have a strong knowledge base that has been enhanced through practical experiences. My mentors have challenged me when I needed a push, and been there to pick me up when I hit rock bottom. I would not be the researcher, teacher, practitioner, or person I am today without the College of Social Work at Florida State University. As much as it pains my UF alum to hear me say this, I am truly proud to be a Seminole. ■





ALUMNI HIGHLIGHTS



Dr. Nolia Brandt

Dr. Nolia Brandt planned to have a career in a profession working with human and social issues. She found a good fit in social work, at Florida State University and within the tenets she took away from the programs at the College of Social Work, including:

- When engaging with those you are helping, do no harm;
- Start where your client is (his or her perspective) and deter-

mine from that view how best to proceed; and

- Your job is to work yourself out of a job, not to form dependencies (i.e. "Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime.")

"Understanding and appropriately applying these tenets in any situation greatly increases the chance of a successful outcome, whether in a human service, business or technology context," Dr. Brandt said. "We were taught how to better understand and interact with people across a wide range of demographics in innumerable contexts; to engage successful analysis, planning, solution development and implementation; and to understand how people, organizations and cultures can have both separate and shared values, belief systems, practices and to engage them in reaching common goals."

After receiving both a bachelor's degree and master's degree in social work (BSW '72, MSW '73), Dr. Brandt

launched into a richly diverse career in human services and in business that spanned: counseling, community development, policy and program development, supervision, writing, administration, education, medical social work, criminal justice, and information technology. Along the way, Sshe also completed a Master's degree in English and her doctoral degree in 2004 in education.

Dr. Brandt joined her husband, Bill Brandt, in his software development company as president and CEO for a number of years and retired for the first time after selling the company. Dr. Brandt then returned to the workforce and to FSU as an Associate Director and Lecturer of the Jim Moran Institute for Global Entrepreneurship at the College of Business. She has since retired from this position as well, but continues to be active within local non-profit organizations, schools and churches in north Florida and Georgia. She emphasizes that a commitment to lifelong learning can be energizing, gratifying, fun and provides the building blocks to exciting experiences and career paths.



R. Kevin Grigsby

R. Kevin Grigsby (MSW '81) fully expected to go to law school or seminary after completing his Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy at the University of Georgia in 1976. A few years of work

experience in mental health services opened his eyes to other possibilities. He came to understand he wasn't really interested in law, he was interested in justice. Nor was he really interested in religion, he was interested in spirituality. He was drawn to social work as he learned of the breadth of career possibilities professional social work training offered. He completed his Master of Social Work in 1981 and returned to mental health services. In 1983, he enrolled in the University of Pennsylvania School of Social Work Doctorate in Social Work program. After completing his coursework, Grigsby was appointed to the faculty at Yale.

Over the last 29 years, he has worked in academic medicine and science. Today, he serves as Senior Director, Member Organizational Development at the

Association of American Medical Colleges, the group representing all of the medical schools and teaching hospitals in North America. At the AAMC, he leads a team that offers programs to improve organizational and leadership performance at medical schools and academic medical centers, address the needs of women and underrepresented minorities at academic medical centers, and link individual professional development to improved organizational performance.

His experience at the FSU College of Social Work had a major impact on his career. He considers the MSW to be well worth the investment. The social work knowledge and skills he learned at FSU helped him to become an internationally recognized scholar and leader in academic medicine and science. ■

The Class of 1975 Reunion

The Class of 1975 held their first reunion the at end of the millennium in 2000, twenty-five years after graduation. In 2014, the Class of '75 celebrated its second reunion the weekend of October 10-12, 2014, hosted by the College of Social Work, Tallahassee, Florida.

They started off the weekend with a reception on the patio of the Four Points by Sheraton Hotel. The 1975 grads gathered the next day at the College of Social Work to hear about and discuss recent developments within the College and the University, hearing from a current student scholarship recipient of the MSW Class of 1975 Scholarship and another CSW student. The Class of 1975 was special in its united dedication to advocacy and outreach, particularly the support of social worker students, that lead to the establishment of The MSW Class of 1975 Scholarship.



The Class of 1975 toured the stadium and ended the day with dinner at the University Club restaurant and a recount from each attending Class of '75 graduate on their lives and experience since graduation. A brunch at Madison Social closed out the weekend of old friends and reminiscing.

Class of '75 grad Hiram Ruiz, made this particular appeal to his fellow Class of '75 alumni, "As someone who made it through our MSW program with the help of scholarships and financial aid, I request that those of you who can will consider a contribution to the scholarship fund. Let's ensure that the Class of '75 will continue to enable the education of young people committed to making a difference in the world, something that I can confidently say that so many of our classmates have done over the course of these past 40 years."

To contribute to the scholarship, visit csw.fsu.edu, click **Donate** at the top of the page, and indicate on the donation page you wish to contribute to the **#5279 MSW Class of 1975 Scholarship**.



2014 COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP AND DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI DINNER

At the College of Social Work's 2014 Student Scholarship and Distinguished Alumni Dinner, five alumni were honored for exceptional commitment and dedication to social work service, research and practice. Sixty-six social work students were also awarded scholarships. These students, along with many of the donors that made these scholarships possible, were honored at the event.



Distinguished Emeritus Alumni Award:
Robert Disbennett

Mr. Disbennett earned his MSW at FSU in 1963 and has an extensive career as a licensed clinical social worker with the Children's Home of Cincinnati, Children's Home of Tampa, Catholic Charities, Diocese of St. Petersburg, Big Bend Hospice and teaching part-time at the University of Tampa and Hillsborough Community College before retiring in Tallahassee, Florida. He is also an active member of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), the United Way in Hillsborough County, Florida and the Hillsborough County Schools Enrichment Program.



Distinguished Young Alumni Award:
Jerrold Jackson

Dr. Jackson is currently a National Institute of Health (NIH) funded post-doctoral fellow, director of retention data analytics and adjunct assistant professor at Emory University's Rollins School of Public Health. He earned his MSW from FSU in 2008, served as a li-

censed clinical social worker in New York City for five years in school-based clinics throughout Harlem and South Bronx, and completed his doctoral degree in clinical and translational research from Mount Sinai School of Medicine in 2013.



Distinguished Social Work Educator Award:
William Meezan

Dr. Meezan of New York City earned his MSW from FSU in 1969. He has held numerous educational, instructional, research and administrative positions over his 40-year career. Currently he holds the Mary Ann Quaranta Chair in Social Justice for Children and is a distinguished professor at Fordham University. NASW named him a Social Work Pioneer, and he was inducted in 2005 into Columbia University School of Social Work's Hall of Fame.



Distinguished Alumni in Social Work Practice Award:
Paula Clark

Captain Paula Clark is a licensed clinical social work with the U.S. Air Force. She earned her MSW at

FSU in 2003 while serving in the Florida Air National Guard. Along with her primary role of providing patient care, she has held multiple leadership roles and received recognition, including multiple medals and decorations, for her service. Capt. Clark has deployed multiple times in support of Operation Desert Storm, Southern Watch, Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.



Distinguished Alumni in Social Policy and Administration Award:
Dominic Calabro

Mr. Calabro is president and CEO of Florida Taxwatch, an independent, non-partisan, nonprofit taxpayer research institute and government watchdog that works to improve the productivity and accountability of Florida government. He earned his MSW from FSU in 1979 and joined Taxwatch in 1980. Under his leadership, Florida Taxwatch has earned and maintained the respect of Florida's most highly regarded and influential leaders and has earned the credibility and respect of the citizens of Florida. He also serves as president and CEO of Prudential Productivity Awards that recognize and reward government productivity and innovative cost-saving. ■



ALUMNI UPDATES

2014 Cynthia Cabrera (MSW) is currently in social services at The Manor at Bluewater Bay and resides in Navarre, Florida.

2013 Erica Horowitz (BSW) is currently a project coordinator at the NYU Langone Center in New York City.

2012 Scott Henderson (MSW) is currently a therapist at A Helping Hand in St. Augustine, Florida.

2011 Latoya Ifill currently runs her own private practice and works actively within the LGBTQ and AIDS community in Brooklyn, New York.

2009 Alicia McLaughlin (PhD) of Shorewood was recently awarded tenure at the University of St. Francis in Joliet, Illinois. She is an associate professor of social work and began her employment at the University of St. Francis in 2008. She holds a bachelor's degree from Indiana University, an MSW from the University of Chicago and a doctoral degree in social work from FSU.

2008 Jerrold Jackson (MSW) is the new Director of Retention Data Analysis within Emory University's Office for Undergraduate Education. In this capacity, he will lead efforts to collect and analyze data to better understand freshman-to-sophomore year retention and attrition among Emory students, along with better understanding Emory's graduation rates. Additionally, he will lead efforts to develop and implement interventions to optimize retention and graduation rates. Jerrold will also begin the Executive MBA program at Goizueta Business School next month, where he received the Dean's Scholarship for Talented Leaders.

2005 D. Lynn Jackson (PhD) is currently the Director of Field Education at Texas Christian University in Fort Worth, Texas.

2006 Crystal Cumbo (MSW) is currently the coordinator for corporate support at WFSU in Tallahassee, Florida.

Lonnie Swanangan (MSW) is currently a mental health therapist and supervisor

at West Florida Hospital in Pensacola, Florida. He is the supervisor of his unit and looking to getting interns from FSU.

2004 Stacey Ann Norris (MSW) is currently the supervisory program coordinator at the Veteran Affairs Medical Center in Louisville, Kentucky overseeing the Compensated Work Therapy program, peer support services, and advance level social workers located between southern Indiana and greater Louisville.

1999 Erica Hill Serrine (BSW) earned her MSW from the University of Central Florida and a doctorate from the University of South Florida. She is currently an associate professor at Southeastern University.

1998 Rebecca Keapproth Harter (MSW) is currently a clinical social worker for the Memorial Hospital in Miramar, Florida.

1997 Deborah (Arner) Evans (MSW) is currently a school social worker for Lee County Public Schools in Cape Coral, Florida.

Annemarie Kramer Powell (MSW) is currently an LCSW and Case Manager at the Mayo Clinic and supervises FSU MSW students in both clinical and generalist field placements. She is also in private practice part-time with the Marsh Landing Behavioral Group in Jacksonville Beach, Florida.

David Springer (PhD) is the director of the RGK Center for Philanthropy and Community at the University of Texas at Austin and has been with their School of Social Work since 1997 as a University Distinguished Teaching Professor.

1996 Julia Benson Loncar (MSW) is currently the assistant director of admissions for the Berkeley Preparatory School in Tampa, Florida. She is in charge of institutional research and data analysis of admissions trends, she meets and interviews prospective families, assesses applicants and selects and coordinates ambassador hosts for prospective students.

1995 Audrey Adelson (MSW) is currently working at Emory University as a Work-Life Manager in Atlanta, Georgia.

1994 Gerda Murphy (MSW) is currently a licensed clinical social worker and a private contractor.

Cheryl Ray (MSW) is currently a cardiovascular educator in Pensacola, Florida.

1993 Dr. Jay A. Seligman (MSW) has recently transferred to the Bureau of Prisons (BOP) as the Chief Social Worker at Central Office in Washington D.C. Responsibilities include working on national prisoner reentry initiatives and facilitating the Compassionate Release Program. He also provides oversight to 50 BOP social workers throughout the nation.

1992 Lorraine C. Blackman (PhD) is an associate professor emeritus at the Indiana University School of Social Work.

1990 Cheryl Bebey (MSW) is currently a clinical social worker at Employee and Family Assistance Consultants.

1988 Susan Folwell (MSW) runs a private practice in Clifton, Virginia that primarily focuses on domestic violence.

1983 Dawn Lockhart (BS) is the executive director of Family Foundations in Jacksonville, Florida.

Debra Powell DuBose (MSW) is currently the director of A Safe Harbor Counseling Center in Pensacola, Florida.

1980 Patricia Holliday (MSW) is in charge of the Tallahassee Community Human Service Partnership grant process for the City of Tallahassee, which awards human services dollars from the City, Leon County and United Way to community non-profit organizations.

1979 Anne Kabatt (MSW) is the executive director of the Northwest Community Health Center in Buffalo, New York.

1978 Jennifer LaHurd (BS) is currently the director of human resources at State College of Florida, Manatee-Sarasota and is a Certified Senior Professional in Human Resources

1975 Sheryl Gilbert (MSW) retired three years ago from the New York State Office of Mental Health after 35 years as Associate Deputy Director for Program Operations at Creedmoor Psychiatric Center. Currently she is enjoying her retirement with friends and family. "I don't know what the next chapter of my life will be or where it will be, but I will always be a social worker in my heart.

1970 Terry Saxe (MSW) is currently retired and residing in Montesano, Washington.

1964 Harold E. Quilin (MSW) is now retired and located in Jacksonville, Florida.

In Memoriam

Thomas William Corwin (MSW 1990)

Age 64, Thomas William Corwin died peacefully on Saturday, March 1, 2014, after a lengthy illness. Born in Riverdale, Maryland, Tom received his BA at the University of Florida. After working for 9 years as a clinical social worker at Shands Hospital, he moved to New Smyrna Beach where he attained a teaching certificate and taught English for 10 years in Deltona. He was also an accomplished classical guitarist.

Loretha D. Brown (BSW, 1973; MSW, 1975)

Loretha was born December 25, 1950 in Donaldsonville, Georgia. Raised in Greenwood, Florida she received her Associate's degree from Chipola Junior College and went on to become one of the first 100 African American students to graduate from FSU. Loretha had a full professional career in management that spanned from Harlem, New York to Fort Lauderdale, Florida. She established several community and religious non-profit organizations. She passed away on Monday, October 20, 2014.

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