Bridges is the University of Pittsburgh School of Social Work magazine. We selected the name Bridges largely because of its symbolism. The term provides an important metaphor for both our profession and our school. Social work is a profession that has, as part of its mission, the goal of building and sustaining bridges among individuals, families, groups, neighborhoods, and communities, and we felt that the title Bridges captures this part of our professional mission. At the same time, the city of Pittsburgh has more than 450 bridges, and Allegheny County has almost 2,000, suggesting an uncompromising desire of the city’s inhabitants to remain connected with one another. In keeping with this heritage, it is the school’s goal to sustain and build bridges among those needing social work services; our alumni, faculty, and staff; the community; and corporate and governmental partners. We believe that the information in this magazine is an important way to achieve this goal.
As dean of the school, it is my privilege once again to extend greetings to you. It seems like only a few months ago we released our last fall issue of Bridges. Time and events here at the school seem to be moving faster than ever; still, we welcome fall, a time of rebirth at the University of Pittsburgh. Students have arrived, bringing with them enthusiasm, curiosity, and fresh eyes with which to view both the old and new issues facing our world. We welcome these new students into the school and into the social work profession.

This issue of Bridges focuses on poverty, one of our profession's oldest and most persistent social problems. Social work—more so than any other profession—has as one of its missions the eradication of poverty. Unfortunately, much still remains to be done in our struggle against it. At present, one in eight Americans lives below the poverty level, with a disproportionate number of these being children. Moreover, this situation portends to worsen as the gap between rich and poor Americans continues to widen. Correctly so, social work views poverty not just as an economic problem, but as a constellation of difficulties: poor education, jobs, health care, housing, economic decision making and planning, marriage and family life, and community services. Broadly speaking, poverty as an issue represents a poverty of the human condition—of human capital, social capital, and situational opportunities. As social workers, we must intervene against poverty at both the micro and macro levels. Foremost, we must work to create greater opportunities and better life circumstances for our clients, while at the same time preparing them as individuals, families, and groups to take advantage of the opportunities afforded them.

Since the spring, good things have happened at the School of Social Work. We have brought to fruition the establishment of a joint degree program with the School of Law, making it possible to obtain an MSW/JD degree. In addition, our two BASW initiatives undertaken last year remain vibrant: Sophomores living in one of the University's residence halls continue to participate in a Civic Engagement and Community Service Living Learning Community program, where they are exposed to the issues, values, and perspectives of social work. Undergraduates in the First Experiences in Research program are afforded the opportunity to work with social work faculty on research projects that have a social work practice and research focus. Both of these BASW initiatives have enhanced the numbers of undergraduates who are interested in social work. At the same time, they have enabled our school to become more actively engaged in the education and mentoring of students from other disciplines within the University. With the addition of the joint degree with law and the BASW initiatives, the school has become a more active player in the life and culture of the University.

The school has had the good fortune to have added two outstanding faculty members, two staff members, and a new director of constituent relations (see School News, page 2 and Development News, page 13, respectively). With respect to scholarship, the school also is on the move. As Hidenori Yamatani notes in this issue (Research Update, page 19), faculty publications are up significantly in both numbers and quality. Also worthy of mention are the scholarly achievements of our PhD students, who have made their mentors and fellow students take notice (see Student Spotlight, page 10). I am sure that I speak for the entire University when I say that we are proud of their demonstrations of scholarly excellence, and we applaud them.

Finally, we continue to offer an array of lectures as part of both the school's and the Center on Race and Social Problems' speaker series. Lunch is provided at these lectures, and we encourage all of our alumni and friends to attend. We do sincerely invite you to come by the school for a visit, as we are sure that you will appreciate the exciting progress being made.

Larry E. Davis
Dean
Donald M. Henderson Professor
Social Work Launches Joint Degree Program with School of Law

The University Council on Graduate Study and Provost James V. Maher have approved a new joint degree program between the School of Social Work and the School of Law leading to a Master of Social Work and Juris Doctor (MSW/JD).

The MSW/JD program will enable students with interests in areas where law and social work intersect (such as child welfare, aging, health, mental health, juvenile and criminal justice, family issues, and housing) to engage in a highly integrated educational experience that will include academic courses, field placements, and research opportunities in both professions. Students can earn the joint degree in four years.

For more information on this program, please contact MSW/JD program faculty advisors Kevin Deasy at the School of Law (deasy@pitt.edu) or Jeffrey Shook at the School of Social Work (jes98@pitt.edu).

Faculty Speak at Commencements

Dean Larry E. Davis delivered the commencement address at the Boston College Graduate School of Social Work on May 21, 2007.

Valire Carr Copeland was the commencement speaker for Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Pittsburgh Roselia Center and Oakland Catholic High School on May 23, 2007.

Jeffrey Shook delivered the commencement address at Round Lake Senior High School in Round Lake, Ill., in June 2007.

CRSP Researchers Release Report

On June 26, 2007, the Center on Race and Social Problems (CRSP) held a press conference to release its report, Pittsburgh's Racial Demographics: Differences and Disparities. Authored by Dean Larry E. Davis, Ralph Bangs, and John M. Wallace Jr., it is the most comprehensive study ever done on the quality of life of multiple racial groups in greater Pittsburgh—African Americans, Asians, Hispanics, and Whites—and provides a snapshot of the quality of life for Pittsburgh-area residents compared with national quality-of-life averages.

The report was released before an audience of Pitt faculty, community leaders, and representatives from city and county government as well as foundations. It explores six areas: families, youth, and the elderly; economic disparities; education; intergroup relations; mental health; and criminal justice. The data are expected to be helpful to policymakers, community leaders, and those who work to improve access to higher education and health delivery systems. The report is available at www.crsp.pitt.edu/demographics.html.

Copeland Named Doctoral Program Director

Dean Larry E. Davis has appointed Valire Carr Copeland, associate professor, the school’s doctoral program director. Copeland earned a PhD from the School of Social Work in 1989, a Master of Public Health in community health services from the Graduate School of Public Health in 1988, an MSW in children and youth from Pitt in 1978, and a BSW from Livingstone College in 1977.

Copeland is a member of the Board of Directors of the Presbyterian Publishing Corp. of the Presbyterian Church (USA), codirector of the Provost’s Faculty Diversity Seminar, and member of the Advisory Council on Instructional Excellence. She also serves on the editorial board of the Journal of Health & Social Policy.
New Faculty

Dean Larry E. Davis has appointed Rachel A. Fusco assistant professor in the School of Social Work, effective September 1, 2007. Fusco earned her PhD in social welfare from the University of Pennsylvania. Her work experience is in the areas of protective services, domestic violence, and the effects of exposure to violence.

Julie S. McCrae was appointed a research assistant professor in the School of Social Work Child Welfare Education and Research Programs, effective July 1, 2007. McCrae received her PhD from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Her research interests include developmental psychopathology, child welfare and mental health services, and mental health of maltreated children and their families.

New Staff

Philip Mack is the new director of admissions and financial aid in the School of Social Work. He came to the school from Barry University School of Social Work, where he also was director of admissions. Mack has 13 years of experience directing admissions for schools of social work, having formerly been director of admissions at Boston University School of Social Work.

Sandra Talbott is the new administrative assistant to the director of admissions. Talbott previously worked at the Community College of Allegheny County’s South Campus, where she was a student development specialist.

Center on Race and Social Problems Fall Speaker Series

Sponsored by Buchanan Ingersoll & Rooney PC

Mental Health Risk Factors in Non-White Populations
Carl C. Bell, President and CEO, Community Mental Health Council, Inc., Chicago, Ill.
Wednesday, September 12, 2007

Shopping Under Suspicion: Consumer Racial Profiling and Perceived Victimization
Shaun L. Gabbidon, Professor of Criminal Justice, Penn State Harrisburg School of Public Affairs
Tuesday, October 9, 2007

Post-Welfare Outcomes for African Americans and Hispanics
Andrew J. Cherlin, Benjamin H. Griswold, III, Professor of Public Policy, Johns Hopkins University Department of Sociology
Thursday, November 15, 2007

Challenges of Race, Poverty, and Sprawl
Sala Udin, President, Coro Center for Civic Leadership, Pittsburgh
Monday, December 3, 2007

All lectures are from noon to 1:30 p.m. in the School of Social Work Conference Center, 2017 Cathedral of Learning. Lunch will be provided; registration is not required. For more information, visit www.socialwork.pitt.edu or call 412-624-6304.

School of Social Work Speaker Series

The Raymond R. Webb Jr. Lecture
Public Sector Behavioral Health Services in Pennsylvania: A Transformational Agenda
Joan L. Erney, Deputy Secretary, Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare
Wednesday, September 19, 2007

Breast Cancer and Social Interactions: Identifying Multiple Environments That Regulate Gene Expression across the Life Span
Sarah Gehlert, Deputy Dean for Research and Professor, School of Social Service Administration, and Professor, Institute for Mind and Biology, University of Chicago
Wednesday, November 7, 2007

Building a Profession for Social Justice or Picking Up the Scraps?: Whither is Social Work in the 21st Century?
Mark Courtney, Ballmer Chair in Child Well-Being, University of Washington School of Social Work; Executive Director, Partners for Our Children
Wednesday, February 6, 2008

Promoting a Developmental Perspective in Social Work: Lessons from the Global South
James Midgley, Harry and Riva Specht Professor, University of California, Berkeley, School of Social Welfare
Wednesday, April 9, 2008
On the front lines of today’s fight against poverty, there exists a dichotomy that is as ironic as it is frustrating. State-of-the-art facilities and fine institutions are on the rise, and so is the number of people who are unable to use them.

That is the reality that Adrienne Walnoha, executive director of Community Human Services Corp., lives with every day. The Oakland-based agency exists in the shadow of world-class universities and medical centers, but the people who walk through its doors often lack health care or the resources to meet basic needs, let alone attend college.

Fortunately, Walnoha’s agency has been able to capitalize on its location and connect the two worlds by collaborating with the School of Social Work to provide students with the fieldwork necessary to gird them for what literally has become a battle.

“It’s hard to prepare students who have [been] sheltered from some realities for the magic that happens when you can be real with other people,” says Walnoha, who herself graduated from the School of Social Work with an MSW in 1999.
“People can be ugly, and situations can be ugly and painful, but that’s not a bad thing. That’s life, that’s reality, that’s the society we live in.”

Walnoha and many social workers who have dedicated their careers to working with the poor are finding that it’s increasingly difficult to persuade students to follow in their footsteps. Yet the irony continues: As the number of social workers willing to work against poverty dwindles, the number of people who need their help is rising.

“There is a very thin line between people who are in the middle class and people who can be thrown into poverty by a simple thing that can happen in their lives,” says Joni Rabinowitz, codirector of Just Harvest, a membership organization that works to eliminate hunger and poverty.

Such events include “a medical bill they can’t pay because they don’t have adequate health insurance, or loss of a job, or a divorce, or the death of a breadwinner,” she says.

A Growing Problem

The topic of poverty may have gone out of vogue, but it has never gone away. The United States carries one of the highest percentages of people living in poverty among industrialized nations. Mark Rank, Herbert S. Hadley Professor of Social Welfare at the George Warren Brown School of Social Work at Washington University in St. Louis and a nationally recognized expert on poverty, says the numbers are surprising.

Rank, who has been a guest speaker at Pitt and wrote One Nation, Underprivileged: Why American Poverty Affects Us All, says 60 percent of Americans will experience at least a year at the official poverty line between the ages of 20 and 75. Between the ages of 20 and 65, two-thirds of all Americans will use some form of welfare, such as food stamps or Medicaid.

“The argument I make is [that] we think of poverty as something that happens to someone else, when actually, poverty happens to the majority of Americans,” says Rank. And while people may not identify themselves as poor, “the facts and figures tell a different story.”

As the profession of social work has evolved and become more academic, so, too, have the faculty and students. Interest has ebbed from issues traditionally thought to be the domain of fighting poverty—housing, education, health care, community service—and shifted instead to focus...
more on individual pathologies. Universities, being partly market driven, strive to fulfill the goals of students, the majority of whom seek careers as therapists or private practitioners.

Universities, being partly market driven, strive to fulfill the goals of students, the majority of whom seek careers as therapists or private practitioners.

“Social workers really shy away from an issue like poverty, because they feel like they alone can't do anything about it,” says Walnoha. “It’s hard for students, because if you’re in a master's program, what poverty is to you is very different than what the poverty experience is in the world.”

When Walnoha was still earning her MSW and working for a food pantry as her field placement, she recalls a fellow student who came to work decked out in gold jewelry and full of stories that she shared with clients about the elaborate wedding she was planning. Until she actually worked in the field, that student had no idea what a food pantry was: “I think she thought it was a little grocery store,” Walnoha recalls.

Jim Cassels, clinical director of Every Child, Inc., in Pittsburgh, understands the culture shock. Seven years ago, he arrived at the agency, which provides services to children in birth, adoptive, and foster families, and walked into a situation he never could have imagined.

“I remember my first experience with an impoverished family,” he says. “I almost threw up; the smell in their house was that bad. There were broken pipes in their basement.” The children slept on a mattress that was wet with urine; there were five of them living with their grandmother, and there was food on the floor and an elderly man living in their back room.

“There are a lot of people, I guarantee you, if that was their first exposure to a poverty situation, they wouldn't have gone back,” says Cassels. Yet they were good people, and they needed his help.

Today, Pitt students who arrive at Every Child are better prepared for what they’ll experience before they venture out into the field. New students learn about the organization’s structure and mission; later, they are introduced to the different situations they’ll encounter so they won't be as overwhelmed. The idea is to keep the students engaged and interested, because the need for their help is so great.

“You can't really quantify the importance of this field,” says Cassels. “It's almost an absolute. It's like asking, ‘Why do we need oxygen?’

But in a society that is increasingly obsessed with instant results, convincing people to work among the poor can be a tough sell. Clients can be difficult, unappreciative, and even offensive. Helping them out of poverty may seem an impossible goal, though Cassels believes that hope persists.

“It may take generations,” he acknowledges. And for new graduates, that slow pace may be frustrating: “They want immediate gratification in their careers and [they want to] see tangible benefits.”

**Related Problems**

Though social class affects poverty, race plays an even larger role.

“Race is really critical, yet we shouldn’t let race get in the way of seeing poverty as simply an issue about race,” Rank notes.

“With the closing of the mental hospitals, more and more people are on the streets with mental illness.”

—Marcia Snowden
director of residential programs,
Bethlehem Haven
Likewise, psychological issues often intertwine. Marcia Snowden, director of residential programs at Bethlehem Haven, finds that many of the homeless women who use the organization’s services are battling substance abuse problems or dual diagnoses.

“With the closing of the mental hospitals, more and more people are on the streets with mental illness,” Snowden explains. “Well over 80 percent of the women we see have mental health issues, and many are self-medicating with drugs and alcohol.”

When students arrive from the School of Social Work, Snowden works with them to determine what their career goals are and explain the expectations associated with each of Bethlehem Haven’s departments. Though the agency has a wealth of volunteers, finding social workers is another story.

Just Harvest and the School of Social Work: Side by Side on the Front Lines

When Joni Rabinowitz graduated from the School of Social Work in 1974, she was a woman with a mission: to work toward the empowerment of the poor.

“I believe in the self-determination part of social work, which is that people need to learn what their power is and need to help pull together what they have within themselves in order to fight for themselves and their community,” she says.

Now, more than 30 years later, Rabinowitz still looks to her alma mater to help her in the fight. As codirector of Just Harvest, a membership organization that works to eliminate hunger and poverty, she helps to give students the experiences they will need to work on the front lines after graduation.

“The students who come to work for us as field placements have all been extremely committed to the work that we’re doing here and toward making societal change,” says Rabinowitz. “Making change and social work, to me, are two sides of the same coin.”

In recognition of this partnership, Just Harvest awarded the School of Social Work its Seeds of Justice Award at the 19th annual Harvest Celebration Dinner in October 2007.

Of the Pitt faculty and staff who have contributed to that work, Rabinowitz says, “They are really perceptive people who understand the breadth of the problems that we have to overcome and the problems people are facing toward making a full life for themselves.”

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Community Human Services Corp.

“It’s very hard to get a case manager,” she says. “We put out the call, and we’ll go through a couple of people. We’re definitely not getting the cream of the crop. One woman told me she didn’t want to come here because there was no opportunity for advancement.”

But Snowden, like many of her colleagues, believes the only way to serve as an effective administrator in social work is to put in time on the front lines. In fact, as Walnoha points
“The rich have gotten richer, and the poor have gotten poorer. We used to have this huge middle class; we don’t have that any longer.”

—Tracey

POVERTY BY THE NUMBERS—AND THE RACE FACTOR

Nationwide in 2006:

• The poverty rate was 12.3 percent
• 36.5 million people were in poverty
• 7.7 million families (9.8 percent) were in poverty
• 12.8 million children (17.4 percent) under 18 years of age and 20.2 million (10.8 percent) people aged 18–64 were in poverty
• 15.8 percent of Americans were without health insurance, up from 15.3 percent in 2005
• 8.7 million children (11.7 percent) were uninsured, up from 8 million (10.9 percent) in 2005

Our local community also faces a profound crisis—persistent hunger and growing poverty strike at the very core of our pride in Southwestern Pennsylvania. In Allegheny County alone, more than 112,000 people rely on food stamps to help keep food on the table—up 17 percent in just the past three years. Bringing an end to hunger, poverty, and economic injustice will take more than just food.

If you are Black in America, the likelihood that you will experience poverty between the ages of 20 and 75 is 91 percent—compared to about 52 percent for Whites.

In Pittsburgh, the numbers are even more compelling. The poverty rate for Blacks in Allegheny County is 31 percent, compared to 8 percent for Whites, says Ralph Bangs, associate director of Pitt’s Center on Race and Social Problems (CRSP).

“I am constantly teaching staff how to maintain professional boundaries. You have to remain professional without being aloof,” says Snowden. “It’s so easy to get sucked into someone else’s problems, issues, and deficits.”

Walnoha concurs, saying new graduates are asking themselves, “Do I want to put myself in a position where all day, every day, I am dealing with complex and painful problems? They are less able to emotionally make that commitment to someone else.”

That is the fourth-highest rate among the 50 largest counties in the United States.

Contributing factors such as poor management of public housing projects, the destruction of Black-owned businesses and neighborhoods through urban renewal, and the sharp decline in the region’s manufacturing jobs all exacerbated the disparity, says Bangs.

To address these inequities, Pitt is working to produce new knowledge and solutions and apply them to the community through neighborhood-based organizations. CRSP integrates faculty not only from the School of Social Work but also from Pitt’s Graduate School of Public Health, Department of Sociology, School of Education, and other related programs.

The school also is looking overseas for new ideas about poverty and race relations. Bangs teaches a one-credit course that includes a trip to a foreign country to compare economic disparities. In March 2007, the class went to Paris, France; in 2008, they will travel to London, England.

“When we learn about how these other countries deal with poverty and racial problems, it helps us understand our own problems better and identify alternative solutions,” says Bangs.
It falls to the universities, then, to reignite the passion for helping other people that used to be the hallmark of social work.

“Being a social worker is about being a servant,” Walnoha says. “Yes, we bring this intellectual capital to the table. But social work is service and being able to strategize in a whole host of different ways to make something happen.”

One example of the role academia can play is the decades-long tie between the school and the Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh. To help improve educational outcomes—a key factor in elevating socioeconomic status—the two groups are working to create a safety zone of 1,000 square feet around Pittsburgh public schools. Hidenori Yamatani, associate dean for research and director of community enhancement research, has helped the Urban League tremendously in its efforts to help released prisoners reenter the community as responsible citizens.

“Oftentimes I’ll call and just speak to Dean Davis or his staff and say, ‘The Urban League is looking at A-B-C-D; what do you think?’” says Esther Bush, president and CEO of the Urban League. “Relationships like Pitt and the Urban League are extremely rich and help to keep both of us on the cutting edge of the areas of interest that are relevant to our mission. That’s very important for the students at Pitt—to understand the hands-on world of what’s going on out there—and it’s absolutely important for the Urban League to work with an institution like Pitt.”

**ORGANIZATIONS THAT PROVIDE PAID FIELD PLACEMENTS**

for School of Social Work Students

- ACTION-Housing, Inc.
- Addison Behavioral Care, Inc.
- Adelphi Village—Greensburg, Latrobe
- Allegheny County Department of Human Services/Office of Children, Youth and Families
  - Area Agency on Aging
  - East Regional Office
  - Lexington Intake Office
  - Mon Valley Regional Office
  - North Regional Office
  - Office of Community Relations
  - South Regional Office
- A Second Chance, Inc.
- Birmingham Foundation
- Bloomfield-Garfield Corp. Youth Development
- Bradley Center—Castlegate Avenue
- Breachmenders Ministries
- Center for Victims of Violence and Crime
- Community Human Services Corp.–South Oakland programs
- Consumer Health Coalition
- Emmaus Community of Pittsburgh
- Hazeldale Initiative/Community Outreach Partnership Center
- Heritage Health Foundation, Inc.
- Hill House Association
- Holy Family Institute—East Liberty
- Human Services Administration Organization
- Jewish Family & Children’s Service of Pittsburgh
- Just Harvest
- Mercy Hospital—Operation Safety Net
- Salvation Army Birmingham Free Clinic
- United Cerebral Palsy of Pittsburgh
- University of Pittsburgh
  - Department of Athletics
  - Office of Residence Life
  - Student Health Service
- School of Social Work
  - Office of Admissions
  - Continuing Education Program
- University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC) Senior Care—Shadyside
- Ursuline Senior Services
- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
- VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System
  - H. John Heinz III Progressive Care Center
  - Highland Drive Homeless Center
  - Medical Center
- Three Rivers Youth—Family Partnership Program

The School of Social Work Office of Field Education would like to thank all the agencies that participated in the Field Education Agency Fair that was held in the William Pitt Union Assembly Room on September 18. The event was attended by more than 100 students and was a great success. Students enjoyed popcorn while taking advantage of the time to network and discuss internship and job opportunities with about 40 agencies that participated in the fair. In addition, more than 15 agencies donated gift baskets, which were raffled off to students who attended the event. The school greatly appreciates all the agencies and students who attended and helped make this fair a success!
STUDENT Spotlight

Student Accomplishments

Doct oral Student Accomplishments

PUBLICATIONS


PRESENTATIONS


Conner, “Racial Differences in Attitudes toward Seeking Mental Health Treatment,” University of Pittsburgh Poster Session on Aging, November 2006.


Thomas, with Graziani, “Rediscovering Pittsburgh’s Soul Through its Soil: A Look at Food Equity and Urban Farming in Pittsburgh,” Bridging Borders Toward Food Security, the 10th Annual Conference of the Community Food Security Coalition in conjunction with Food Secure Canada, October 2006.


Latika D. Davis-Jones was awarded a predoctoral fellowship from the School of Social Work for summer 2007.

Shaun M. Eack received funding from the National Institute of Mental Health for Assessing Social-Cognitive Deficits in Schizophrenia (2007–09).
Ruthanne Hackman has been awarded a predoctoral fellowship from the School of Social Work for summer 2007.

Brenda N. Henry, doctoral student in social work and MPH student in behavioral and community health sciences, has been awarded a teaching fellowship through the University of Pittsburgh Center for Instructional Design and Distance Education for fall 2007.

Hyun Zee Jung received an award from the Pitt Women’s Studies Program Student Research Fund to support her study, Gender Role Attitude, Perceived Unfairness, and Psychological Well-being among Korean Married Women in the United States.

“Racial Differences in Attitudes toward Seeking Mental Health Services: The Mediating Effect of Stigma.”

**MSW Student Accomplishments**

Part-time MSW student Jason Munsie was featured in a July 3, 2007, article in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* titled “Police Get Training in How to Handle the Mentally Ill.” Munsie, a Pittsburgh Police officer, participated in training exercises designed to help officers better respond to distress calls from people who are mentally ill.

Community Organization and Social Administration (COSA) students held a clothing and toiletry drive in spring 2007.

**BASW Student Accomplishments**

BASW student Bridget Bailey received a $3,000 Brackenridge Undergraduate Fellowship from the University Honors College in May 2007.

Bailey also received the Mattie Addis Scholarship from the Pittsburgh Foundation.

BASW students Bailey, Michael Beatty, Kimberly Waller, Danielle Benteler, Kathleen Parke, Ryan Thomas, Amanda Ellenberger, and James Beasley received the Henrietta T. Campbell Scholarship from the Pittsburgh Foundation.

**HONORS, AWARDS, AND RECOGNITIONS**

Kyaien O. Conner was awarded a fellowship through the 2007–08 Hartford Doctoral Fellows and Pre-Dissertation Award Program to fund her dissertation, “Mental Health Treatment Seeking among Older Adults with Depression: The Impact of Stigma and Race.”

Conner was the 2007 American Society on Aging Graduate Student Research Award winner in recognition of research excellence in the field of aging.

Conner received a 2007–08 renewal of her Council on Social Work Education Minority Research Fellowship in recognition of research excellence in the area of minority mental health.

Conner received the 2007 Research Training Award to attend the Michigan Center for Urban African American Aging Research Seminar.

Conner received the 2006–07 University of Pittsburgh Institute on Aging Graduate Student Research Award for her poster, “The Impact of Stigma and Race on Mental Health Treatment Seeking among Older Adults.”

**CONGRATULATIONS DOCTORAL GRADUATES!**

Congratulations to the following PhD graduates:

Parris Jerome Baker
Antonio Fevola
Mary Anne Fisher
Solveig S. Peters

The School of Social Work wishes them all the best as they embark on the next phase of their careers.

**PhD STUDENT LAUNCHES FIRST SOCIAL WORK PODCAST**

PhD candidate Jonathan B. Singer launched the world’s first podcast dedicated to topics related to social work in February 2007. Singer has received e-mails from social workers all over the world—the United States, Canada, Australia, Germany, and even Iran—thanking him for providing relevant, scholarly, and accessible programs that speak to the needs of social workers.
Greetings! As a new member of the School of Social Work family, I want to thank you for your generosity to the school during the past year. Since I joined the school a few months ago, I have been so impressed by the energy and enthusiasm of the Pitt social work community.

In fact, in fiscal year 2007, more than $500,000 was raised to support the school, which is a 300 percent increase over last year. This achievement would not have been possible without the support of people like you—the more than 620 alumni, parents, and friends who have helped make a lasting impact on the lives of our students and programs through your generous giving.

As the school’s new director of constituent relations, my goal is to help you consider how you might enrich the lives of students during the course of the next year—and in the future—with a tax-deductible gift. There are a number of excellent methods for contributing. For example, many donors make an outright gift that can extend over a five-year period, like establishing an endowed fund that will give to students in perpetuity. Another option is a planned gift, like a charitable gift annuity, that can generate income for you and Pitt during your retirement years with a modest up-front investment.

To learn about other giving options and how you can help the School of Social Work, visit www.socialwork.pitt.edu/give.html.

The School of Social Work is successfully preparing students to achieve excellence in their chosen fields of study. I am excited to be part of a school that is making a positive impact on the lives of its students and in the communities in which its graduates work each day.

If I can be of assistance to you, please call me at 412-624-8239 or e-mail me at Elizabeth.Cooper@ia.pitt.edu. I look forward to talking with many of you soon.

Gratefully,

Elizabeth B. Cooper
Director of Constituent Relations
she has held many leadership positions in social work, including coordinator of children's services at the Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic in Pittsburgh and director of children and adolescent services at Operation Hope Community Mental Health Center in Detroit, Mich. She started at Orangeburg as coordinator of children's services before being named the center's assistant director and later its executive director.

Patricia Watkins, staff psychiatrist at the center, nominated Abraham for the award. “She has managed to achieve while not leaving her community behind,” Watkins said. “She leads by example—in her concern for the center's clients and staff alike. She is able to find the good in all and is satisfied with no less than the best for all who depend on her. [And] she is not afraid of hard work or hard decisions; [she] makes it all look easy.”

If you wish to nominate a School of Social Work alumnus for a 2008 Distinguished Alumni Award, please contact Linda Hilinski at 412-624-6304 or lrh19@pitt.edu.

March Career Madness Event a Success
By Petrina Sichak (MSW '07)

The first School of Social Work March Career Madness student and alumni networking event took place on the evening of March 14, 2007, in the school's new conference center on the 20th floor of the Cathedral of Learning. Held during National Social Work Month, the event gave alumni and students the chance to discuss the field of social work in a relaxed and interactive atmosphere.

Dean Larry E. Davis gave the welcome message during the program. One hundred people attended, including alumni in the fields of mental health and mental retardation, drug and alcohol services, children and youth services, individual and family counseling, and gerontology as well as BASW, MSW, and PhD students in the direct practice and Community Organization and Social Administration (COSA) programs. Light refreshments were served, and door prizes were awarded. The forum provided an opportunity for alumni to give back to the School of Social Work by offering support and information to social work students. It also allowed students to ask questions about social work careers in the real world and to network with potential colleagues and employers.

A special thank-you to the Student Executive Council, the Direct Practice Student Group, and the COSA Student
Group for partnering with the School of Social Work Alumni Society to make this event a success. To find out how you can participate in the 2008 March Career Madness event or other alumni society activities, please contact Linda Hilinski at 412-624-6304.

Petrina Sichak received her BS in neuroscience from the University of Pittsburgh in 1992 and her MSW from Pitt in April 2007. She joined the School of Social Work Alumni Society in fall 2006 through member Diane Conti (BASW ‘85, MSW ’86). Sichak works full time as the utility specialist for North Hills Community Outreach, and she and her husband, David, are expecting their first child in the fall.

Bridges 15

Fund and Lecture Ensure Legacy of Raymond R. Webb Jr.

The Development News section of the spring 2007 issue of Bridges announced the establishment of the Raymond R. Webb Jr. Endowed Fund to assist students pursuing careers in public welfare. In addition, the fund will provide for an annual Raymond R. Webb Jr. Lecture at the School of Social Work.

The desire of many to ensure Webb’s legacy has been met with great success. A $350,000 goal has been set for the fund, and at publication, $160,000 had been raised.

The first Raymond R. Webb Jr. Lecture, “Public Sector Behavioral Health Services in Pennsylvania: A Transformational Agenda,” was held September 19, 2007, and featured Deputy Secretary Joan L. Erney of the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services.

Please consider contributing to the Raymond R. Webb Jr. Endowed Fund and helping us reach our goal of $350,000. You may give online at www.giveto.pitt.edu (indicate Raymond R. Webb Jr. Endowed Fund) or by contacting Liz Cooper, director of constituent relations, at 412-624-8239 or Elizabeth.Cooper@ia.pitt.edu.

Faculty and Alumni Establish Joseph W. and Helen F. Eaton Emerging Scholars Award Fund

The Development News section of the spring 2007 issue of Bridges featured an article about a reception that was held during the Society for Social Work and Research annual meeting to pay tribute to Joseph Eaton, founder of the school's doctoral program. Organized by a group of Eaton’s former students, the reception typified the legacy he has established. Eaton captivated those in attendance when he spoke about metrics and the state of our country’s security as it relates to the absence of quality identification documents. At the conclusion of the reception, Michael J. Austin (PhD ’70) presented Eaton and Dean Larry E. Davis with a bound collection of Eaton’s works. Following the event, the former students in attendance hosted a dinner for Eaton and his family.

As a testament to their admiration for Eaton and their dedication to the school, those closest to him have established the Joseph W. and Helen F. Eaton Emerging Scholars Award Fund. This fund will enable the School of Social Work to recognize outstanding first- or second-year doctoral students by presenting them with a cash award to further their academic and professional development. Eaton has said that it was early recognition and praise that launched his career.

If you wish to make a special gift and join others in honoring Dr. Eaton, please contact Liz Cooper at 412-624-8239 or Elizabeth.Cooper@ia.pitt.edu. You also may give online at www.giveto.pitt.edu (please allocate your gift to the Joseph W. and Helen F. Eaton Emerging Scholars Award Fund).


OP-EDs


PRESENTATIONS


Christina Newhill, with M. Vaughn, “Cluster Profiles of Incarcerated Adolescent Females: Violence and Mental Health Characteristics”; Gender, Delinquency, and Justice Symposium; Carlow University; March 2007.


AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Cynthia Bradley-Pugh’s Child Welfare Services course was selected as a University Honors College course for fall 2007.

Larry E. Davis received the 2007 Chancellor’s Affirmative Action Award.


Tracy Soska unanimously was endorsed as one of the new editors of the Journal of Community Practice.

GRANTS

Daniel Rosen, Rafael Engel, and Tracy Soska received a grant from the Staunton Farm Foundation for “The Capacity of Service Providers in Allegheny County to Understand and Treat Problem Gambling.”

Jeffrey Shook and Michael Vaughn received the University Center for Social and Urban Research seventh annual Steven D. Manners Faculty Development Award for their project, “The Back End of the Criminal Justice Process: An Exploratory Study of the Experiences and Outcomes of Juveniles on Adult Probation and Parole.”
Faculty Scholarship
Associate Dean for Research Hidenori Yamatani’s analysis of faculty research activities reveals that School of Social Work faculty members are making significant progress in terms of scholarship. From March 2006 to February 2007, 19 unduplicated articles appeared in peer-reviewed journals and 28 manuscripts were accepted by peer-reviewed journals. As Chart B1 indicates, compared to the baseline year (March 2001–February 2002), the school’s faculty has increased its number of scholarly refereed publications an average of 425 percent during the past two years—a rate unmatched in the past.

Chart B1: School of Social Work Faculty Publication Profile (March 2001–February 2007)

The number of publications has increased steadily compared to the total number of tenured/tenure-stream faculty members (see Chart B2). It should be noted, however, that during the past 12 months, the school has lost five tenured and tenure-stream faculty members and gained one tenure-stream assistant professor.

Chart B2: School of Social Work Faculty Publication Index vs. Total Number of Tenured and Tenure-stream Faculty Members (March 2001–February 2007)*

The School of Social Work tracks and compares its faculty publication rate with other benchmark schools (Case Western Reserve University; Fordham University; University of California, Berkeley; University of California, Los Angeles; the Universities of Michigan, North Carolina, Texas, Washington, and Wisconsin; and Virginia Commonwealth University). For quality-assurance purposes, eligible journal publications include those articles cited in either Social Work Abstracts or the Social Sciences Citation Index component of the Web of Science. Among benchmark schools, Pitt’s School of Social Work ranks:

- fifth in articles abstracted in Social Work Abstracts,
- fifth in the total number of articles published, and
- sixth in the average number of articles published per faculty member.

Yamatani’s analysis highlights the importance not only of increasing the publication output of faculty but also of targeting manuscript preparation and submission toward highly valued mainstream social work journals. In addition to refereed journal publications, the school’s faculty contributed six book chapters this year and have eight book chapters scheduled for publication next year.
Dara Bergel Bourassa (BASW ’98, MSW ’99) has been named assistant professor and director of the gerontology program at Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania in Shippensburg, Pa. Bourassa also earned her PhD from the University of Maryland Baltimore in the spring.

Anthony D. Bruni (BASW ’94, MSW ’98) completed a tour in Iraq as a member of a U.S. Army Stress Control Unit. He currently is in private practice with Pete DeLouis and Associates in Oakmont, Pa., and is a captain in the U.S. Army Reserve.

Ellen Csikai (BASW ’84, MSW ’86, PhD ’95), associate professor at the University of Alabama School of Social Work, received a 2007–08 Fulbright Scholar Program grant to lecture at the University of Debrecen in Hungary. Csikai will aid the school’s College of Health in developing a curriculum for a master in social work program and will teach at the college during the spring 2008 term.

David C. Droppa (MSW ’67) has been granted tenure at Seton Hill University in Greensburg, Pa., where he is an associate professor and field coordinator of the social work program and coordinator of the liberal arts core curriculum. Recently, he had an article published in The Journal of Baccalaureate Social Work on teaching policy practice using partnerships with human service organizations, and he published a book chapter on service learning in social work education over the summer.

Nancy Flanigan (MSW ’83), who retired in 1997 as a social worker in the Baltimore (Md.) City Public School System, has established a scholarship in memory of her daughter, Andrea Minadeo. The first recipient will be Saint Katherine’s Elementary School in East Baltimore, through the Partners in Excellence Fund. Saint Katherine’s offers a safe, nurturing educational environment for disadvantaged students and, in addition to providing a strong academic foundation, helps instill character, compassion, and values.


Anne Horst (MSW ’05) is a grant writer in government and community affairs for the Uhlich Children’s Advantage Network (UCAN) in Chicago, Ill. UCAN is a child welfare and family services organization that serves about 5,000 children, youth, and adults in the Chicago area every year.

Martha Laux (BASW ’76, MSW ’80) recently celebrated 30 years of full-time service in social work and education. She is an elementary school guidance counselor and school social worker in the Plum Borough School District in Plum Borough, Pa.

Celeste Ottena (MSW ’99) is manager of care management at Highmark in Pittsburgh, where she oversees a staff of 20. Recently, she helped facilitate the transition of behavioral health care services from Magellan to Highmark. Ottena currently is pursuing her MBA.

Ronald Rabold (MSW ’73) was named the 2007 Veteran’s Administration (VA) Social Worker of the Year during a ceremony honoring recipients of the U.S. Under Secretary for Health Awards for Excellence in Social Work Leadership, held June 30 in Washington, D.C. Rabold is vice president of community-based care, acting associate director for site management, and a social work executive with the VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System. He received the award from Michael J. Kussman, the Veterans Health Administration under secretary for health.

Christina L. Stuber (MSW ’04) was named executive director of CONTACT Pittsburgh, Inc., effective July 2007. Stuber joined CONTACT Pittsburgh in 2001 as a volunteer with the 24-hour crisis and suicide hotline. Prior to being named executive director, she held the position of director of outreach and volunteer recruitment.

Judy (Grossman) Watman (BASW ’75, MSW ’77), practice manager with Neurodevelopmental Pediatrics of the Main Line in Rosemont, Pa., recently celebrated her 30th year as a full-time social worker. She is responsible for managing a developmental pediatric practice that diagnoses and treats children with developmental disabilities.

Candice Williams (BASW ’04) works for the national organization Citizen Schools as campus director of an after-school program at Eastway Middle School in Charlotte, N.C. Through a curriculum that focuses on hands-on learning and mentorship with career professionals, Williams helps ensure students receive necessary academic support as well as develop leadership skills for their future careers.

IN MEMORIAM

Margaret Monks Burke (MSW ’50)
Ramsey Kleff (PhD ’75)
Rina Marie Menegaz (MSW ’63)
Mary Frances McDermott (MSW ’83)
Thomas L. McFalls (MSW ’58)
Michael V. Mulcahy (MSW ’77)
Catherine Y. Scheaffer (MSW ’44)
Lydia Henrietta Brown Wynn (MSW ’64)
Keep in Touch!

The School of Social Work wants to know the most recent information on your career advancements, papers, honors, and achievements. This information will be posted in our Class Notes section. Include name, dates, and locations. Photos are welcome. Please write legibly.

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Complete and mail or fax to:

University of Pittsburgh
School of Social Work
2117 Cathedral of Learning
4200 Fifth Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15260
Fax: 412-624-6323

Attn: Linda Hilinski
CRSP Buchanan Ingersoll & Rooney PC Fall 2007 Speaker Series

All lectures are from noon to 1:30 p.m. in the School of Social Work Conference Center, 2017 Cathedral of Learning. Lunch will be provided; registration is not required.

Mental Health Risk Factors in Non-White Populations
Carl C. Bell, President and CEO, Community Mental Health Council, Inc., Chicago, Ill.
Wednesday, September 12, 2007

Shopping Under Suspicion: Consumer Racial Profiling and Perceived Victimization
Shaun L. Gabbidon, Professor of Criminal Justice, Penn State Harrisburg School of Public Affairs
Tuesday, October 9, 2007

Post-Welfare Outcomes for African Americans and Hispanics
Andrew J. Cherlin, Benjamin H. Griswold, III, Professor of Public Policy, Johns Hopkins University Department of Sociology
Thursday, November 15, 2007

Challenges of Race, Poverty, and Sprawl
Sala Udin, President, Coro Center for Civic Leadership, Pittsburgh
Monday, December 3, 2007

THE LAW FIRM OF BUCHANAN INGERSOLL & ROONEY PC HAS GENEROUSLY SPONSORED THIS SPEAKER SERIES.