



UNIVERSITY OF
TEXAS
ARLINGTON

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

United in Creating a JUST Society and Promoting Academic Excellence

Spring & Summer 2015



SOCIAL WORK HAPPENINGS

School of Social Work's Research and Community Outreach Office Hosted Colloquium on Agency Collaboration and Community-Based Human Service Innovation

University of Texas at Arlington faculty, staff, students, social work community partners and practitioners, as well as those from surrounding outside universities were invited to attend the Community Based Interdisciplinary Colloquium featuring Dr. Jeffrey M. Jenson on May 7, 2015 in the Social Work Complex. Dr. Jenson is a Philip D. and Eleanor G. Winn Professor for youth at risk in the Social Work Graduate School at the University of Denver.

FACULTY NOTES

AWARDS & HONORS

Dr. Alexa Smith-Osborne, *social work associate professor and Director of Center for Clinical Social Work*

Recipient of research grant to empower African-American faith communities in Texas, improve awareness and perceptions of mental health, recovery and wellness.

The theme for this year's colloquium was on: (1) adding value to community partners' resources for the development of evidence-informed practices as members of a learning community, and (2) providing tools and strategies for sustainable community-based human service innovation. The seminar integrated colloquium themes with grand challenges. Dr. Jenson presented his findings of engaging community partners in two youth education and behavioral health programs based in Denver, Youth Matters Prevention and the Denver Bridge Project. Following the keynote presentation by Dr. Jenson, there were two panel discussions featuring community partners and center directors from the School of Social Work. Dr. Jenson stated "to get community partners engaged in projects, researchers should select topics of interest for the common good." Once the interest has been generated, researchers must have a clear vision, create a supportive and efficient structure that promotes theory, practice and research. He also stated that providing opportunities for external funding and research publication along with generating institutional support will engage community partners and advance collaboration between universities and outside organizations.



Dr. Jeffrey Jenson discussed challenges and steps in securing support from community partners for his after-school youth program, the Denver Bridge Project.

Social Work Students Honored for Scholastic Achievement at 2015 Night of Excellence

The School of Social Work honored students on their academic accomplishments, achievements and service at the 2015 Night of Academic Excellence ceremony on April 21, 2015 in E.H. Hereford University Center's Rio Grande Ballroom. The evening started with

Funded by the Hogg Foundation African American Faith-Based Mental Health Education and Awareness Initiative.

Collaboration with The Potter's House and Dallas City Temple Seventh-Day Adventist Church to study mental health issues in African American faith-based communities. Funded by the Hogg Foundation.

Recipient of research grant from the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health Recovery. This grant will assist in the dissemination of recovery-oriented mental health procedures to social workers and social work education programs in Texas.

Recipient of 2015 Tarrant County National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Lifetime Achievement Award, presented by North Texas Chapter.

Appointment to the Editorial Advisory Board for the *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*.

Dr. Richard Hoefler

Director of Center for Advocacy, Nonprofit and Donor Organizations

Appointment to the Board of Directors for Metro Dallas Homeless Alliance.

Recipient of research grant from the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health Recovery to Practice. This grant will assist in the dissemination of recovery-oriented, mental

awards presented by Associate Professor Diane Mitschke to outstanding scholars, committee members, honor society inductees, scholarship recipients, and instructors. The event's festivities also included a motivational and uplifting presentation from Dr. Norman Cobb, social work associate professor.

In the words of former New York Senator and Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, "each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope...and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring those ripples build a current that can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance." Faculty, staff, students and research centers in the School of Social Work labor continuously to provide the kind of hope that Robert Kennedy spoke of and to break down the walls of injustice. Social work faculty, staff and students are passionate about helping individuals overcome oppression and social injustice and demonstrate this passion through quality education, human service, advocacy and research. This dedication is the reason why the School of Social Work proudly salutes all honorees for their leadership in service and commitment to academic excellence.

For a complete listing of award recipients for the 2015 Night of Academic Excellence, [click here](#). To see photographs from the event, [click here](#).

FACULTY RESEARCH

Social Work Faculty Report Findings on Adult Cancer Survivors and Emerging Older Adults in Two Separate Studies

School of Social Work Assistant Professor Dr. Gail Adorno and other researchers from UT Arlington and the University of Central Florida find many adult cancer survivors confront challenges from their disease after treatment and years of remission. [Read more](#).

Drs. Gail Adorno and Noelle Fields, assistant professors in the School of Social Work, are co-investigators of a study entitled *Emerging Elders and Older Adults of Arlington, TX: Perspectives on Aging Well in the Community*. The research team include graduate social work students Rupal Parekh and Karen Magruder. The study highlights Arlington's aging populations, identifies residents' existing strengths and needs for aging in

health procedures to social workers and social work education programs in Texas. **Drs. Noelle Fields and Ling Xu**, *social work assistant professors*

Recipients of Research Experience Program (REP) research grant for study entitled: "Exploring Healthy Aging among Older Chinese Immigrants and their Family Caregivers in Dallas, Texas.

Dr. Marta Mercado-Sierra, *social work assistant professor*

Appointment to the National Association of Social Workers (NASW)/Texas Women's Issues Committee

Dr. Marcela Gutierrez, *social work assistant professor*

Recipient of research grant from the University of North Texas Science Center to evaluate project entitled "Texas Center for Minority Health, Education, Research and Outreach.

Dr. Vijayan Pillai, *social work professor*

Membership into the American College of Epidemiology.

Dr. Diane Mitschke, *social work associate professor*
Appointed MSW Director in the School of Social Work, effective June 1, 2015.

place and continues the dialogue about making Arlington an age-friendlier place to live. The study concluded an overwhelming majority of older adults desire to age in place for the sake of living in one's own home and community safely, independently and comfortably regardless of ability level, income or age.



Dr. Gail Adorno



Dr. Noelle Fields

STUDENT NEWS

Social Work Students from Fort Worth Cohort Advocate for Disabled Children

Four social work, MSW students from the Fort Worth cohort testified to the city of Mansfield in February 10, 2015 to advocate for the installation of modified park equipment for disabled children with special needs for their advocacy and social policy class.

The student advocates include Liz Farias, Amanda Kruse, Laura Zavala and Chidi Onyekanne. They were successful in getting approval for sensory, tactile, moving tables and wheel-chair assessable equipment installed at Katherine Rose Park in Mansfield. "We believe all children deserve the right to play. As advocates, we are here to help make changes we would like to see in our world," stated Liz Farias. Installation for the modified park equipment will begin after funding has been secured and announced at a later date.

Dr. Regina Praetorius, *social work associate professor*

Appointed BSW Director in the School of Social Work, effective June 1, 2015.

Dr. Larry Watson, *social work assistant professor*

Congratulations on retirement.

Dr. Watson began his appointment in the School of Social Work in 2009. He has published and taught in the areas of nonprofit administration and social policy.

PRESENTATIONS

Dr. Katherine Sanchez, *social work assistant professor*

"Mental Health Disparities among Racial and Ethnic Populations," March 31, 2015 at the fellows training on youth in Alexandria, VA for the CSWE Minority Fellowship Program.

ALUMNI NOTES

Christie Mosley-Eckler (MSSW 2009, BSW 2007), *social work adjunct professor, Vice President of Development at Samaritan House*

Selected as a Forty Under Forty Honoree at the annual awards ceremony that is sponsored by *Fort Worth Business Press* on May 26, 2015 at the Cendera Center. The purpose of the event is to salute 40 area individuals



Pictured above from left to right is Liz Farias, Amanda Kruse, Laura Zavala and Chidi Onyekanne.

under the age of 40 years old who are making their mark with professional success and community involvement.

Jo Ann Ceo Regan (PhD, 1999)

Appointment of Vice President of Education for the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), effective July 1, 2015.

Thank You

2015 World Social Work Advocacy Day

In March 2015, several social work students traveled to Austin, Texas to talk with senators and legislative representatives in an effort to pass laws that support the social work profession and clients. The theme for this year's World Social Work Day was "Promoting the Dignity and Worth of Peoples." Social Work students advocated for fair compensation for state employees, Medicaid, mental health services, social service programs and funding.



The School of Social Work extends its appreciation and gratitude to alumnus **Jonathan R. Beard** and **Mary Lou Almendarez** for their generous monetary contributions to the school in its efforts of educating students, promoting innovative research and fostering academic scholarship. December 2014 marked Beard's silver anniversary of graduating with a MSSW degree from the School of Social Work. Almendarez earned a Masters degree in social work in 1979.

Connect with the SSW



Donna Schuman, LCSW and social work doctoral student, was a recipient of a research grant from the Foundation for Education and Research in Biofeedback and Related Sciences (FERB). This grant is offered to full-time students enrolled in a college, healthcare university or mental healthcare academic program studying neurofeedback or some area of applied psychophysiology.



Brandi Felderhoff, LMSW and social work doctoral student, was honored with the Social Worker of the Year award by the National Association of Social Workers, Texoma Branch.



Cara Wallace and **Shannon Sliva**, social work doctoral students, were recipients of dissertation fellowships from the Office of Graduate Studies to assist with tuition fees for the completion of their doctoral studies.

Cara Wallace is also the recent of the Association for Gerontology

Education in Social Work (AGESW) Doctoral Student Leadership Award. This award is given to doctoral students who have demonstrated strong leadership in social work education and aging.



Cara Wallace



Shannon Sliva

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