Positive Youth Development: Promoting Healthy Behavior in Children and Youth
This issue of GSSW Magazine shines a light on the exciting research GSSW faculty members are conducting in the comparatively new field of positive youth development (PYD). Their projects are creating and testing a variety of strengths-based interventions and programs aimed at preventing problem behaviors among children and adolescents. Adopted by an increasing number of schools and community programs around the country, PYD is the programming model for GSSW’s innovative Bridge Project, which serves children, youth and families in four of Denver’s public housing neighborhoods.

This issue also honors four valued members of the GSSW faculty and staff who retired at the end of the 2013-2014 academic year. It has been my privilege to have Associate Professor Marian Bussey, Professor John Kayser, Professor Jim Moran and Linda Clark, Assistant Dean for Administration, as my esteemed colleagues. Please join me in celebrating their achievements and the extraordinary impact their years of service have had upon our school.

We also invite you to meet the four new appointed faculty members who joined our school this fall. Among them is Professor Heather Taussig, who also serves as our new Associate Dean for Research. GSSW increasingly relies upon email and our e-newsletters to keep our alumni, donors and friends updated about our school. To ensure that these communications continue to reach you, please be sure to provide us with your current email address at www.alumni.du.edu.

As always, we appreciate your interest in our school, and we are especially grateful for the generosity of our donors whose names are listed in this magazine.

Sincerely,

James Herbert Williams, PhD, MSW
Dean and Milton Morris Endowed Chair

This and all past issues of our magazine are online. Visit www.du.edu/gssw and click on “Read GSSW Magazine” You can also scan this barcode to read GSSW Magazine on your smartphone or tablet computer.
Experts Discuss Impact of Changes in Federal and State Laws

In the wake of the U.S. Supreme Court’s ruling that overturned the 1996 “Defense of Marriage Act,” a dynamic panel of experts assembled at GSSW on May 5 to discuss the specialized needs of same-sex partners and strategies to address them. "Planning for the Future: Post DOMA Retirement and Legal Issues Facing the LGBT Community" focused on the current legal status of civil unions and same-sex marriage, practical considerations regarding entering into and dissolving civil unions, retirement planning, socially responsible investing, estate planning, parental rights and guardianship. Panelists included Julie Groves, JD, of Groves Law, LLC; Megan Sherr, JD, of Sheer Puttmann Akims Lamb, PC; and Morgan Stanley Financial Advisors Arthur Segall and Brain Stein.

On June 11, GSSW co-sponsored “Speak Up – It’s the Law,” an all-day conference held at DU’s Sturm College of Law. Presented by the City and County of Denver, Denver District Attorney and Colorado Department of Human Services, the conference helped community professionals understand their responsibilities and liability under Colorado Senate Bill 111 that mandates reporting of suspected elder abuse. The new law went into effect in July.

Rosenberg Links Social Work Skills, Effective Fundraising

On March 10, GSSW sponsored a workshop entitled “Why Social Workers Make Great Fundraisers: Applying your Knowledge and Skills to Secure Financial Resources for your Cause,” led by Professor of Practice Barry Rosenberg, MSW, Senior Lecturer at The Brown School of Social Work, service agencies. He has led numerous local, national and international workshops on nonprofit governance, leadership, volunteer/professional relations and fundraising.

Domestic Violence Discussion Includes Film Screening

GSSW and Denver nonprofit agency Family Tree, Inc. co-sponsored an exclusive film screening at the school on April 17. "A Truth in Silence" offered a revealing look at domestic violence and its effect on children in the home. Participants met writer/producer, Felipe Pula, as well as actors from the film. A panel of experts discussed broader domestic violence issues and community resources focused on breaking generational cycles of family violence. The panel was moderated by Clinical Assistant Professor Tina Hageman, project director for the Intimate Partner Violence Project that is funded by a grant from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. Hageman also serves on the Family Tree Services Committee.

Olds Lecture Highlights Research on Prenatal and Infancy Home Visits

GSSW sponsored a lecture on October 30 by David L. Olds, PhD, Professor of Pediatrics, Psychiatry, Preventive Medicine and Nursing and Director of the Prevention Research Center for Family and Child Health at the University of Colorado – Denver. His lecture was entitled “Improving the Life Chances of Low-Income Mothers and Children with Prenatal and Infant Home Visiting by Nurses.”

Olds has devoted his career to investigating methods of preventing health and developmental problems in children and parents from low-income families by improving the conditions for pregnancy and early childbearing. Olds’ lecture described his work on developing and testing a program of prenatal and infancy home visiting by nurses known as the Nurse Family Partnership (NFP), which serves socially disadvantaged mothers bearing first children. The program currently operates in more than 440 counties and serves more than 23,000 families per year in the United States. Olds also is working with governments in other countries to adapt and test the NFP in international contexts that include England, Scotland, Northern Ireland, the Netherlands, Canada and Australia.

An enthusiastic group of MSW students, graduates and faculty members gathered at the home of Professors Jim Moran and Lynn Parker on May 3 to celebrate their shared experiences in GSSW’s Social Work with Latinos/as Certificate Program and the noncertificate elective course "Global Relations and Poverty in Mexico." Both the certificate and the elective course include international experiences and components, and both are aimed at preparing students to serve individuals and families of Mexican and Latin American origin, the country’s fastest growing ethnic group.

Admission to the certificate program, part of the MSW curriculum since 2002, requires that students have intermediate to advanced proficiency in Spanish. The certificate includes an intensive Spanish language summer immersion course taught collaboratively with the Department of Languages and Literatures, as well as field internships offering students the opportunity to work with Spanish-speaking clients.

Celebrate Shared International Experiences

GSSW students, faculty and staff attended a presentation by Scholar-in-Residence John Fluke, PhD, on October 14 entitled “Error Favoring in Child Welfare Decision-Making: Steps to a Decision-Making Ecology.” Fluke is Associate Professor at the University of Colorado School of Medicine and Associate Director of System Research and Evaluation at Denver’s Kempe Center for the Prevention and Treatment of Child Abuse and Neglect. Internationally recognized as a researcher specializing in assessing, analyzing and teaching on decision-making in human services delivery systems, Fluke is known for his innovative and informative research and evaluation work in the areas of child welfare administrative data analysis, workflow and costing, and performance and outcome measurement for children and family services.


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Positive Youth Development: Promoting Healthy Behavior in Children and Youth

by Jeff Jensen, Philip D. and Eleanor G. Winn Professor for Children and Youth at Risk

C hildren and adolescents of every generation encounter significant developmental challenges as they mature and become young adults. Today’s youth face a dizzying number of social and environmental factors that inhibit their path to positive behavior and a healthy lifestyle. Rapid changes in technology, unlimited access to information and significant changes in social networking patterns are but a few of the challenges facing young people. Never before in our nation’s history have children and adolescents been exposed to such an array of social influences and risky behavior at such an early age. Overcoming these influences and risks is among the most important keys to a positive childhood and adolescence. Researchers have learned a great deal about the risk factors that place young children in harm’s way. Consistent evidence indicates that common individual, social and environmental risk factors are associated with the occurrence of problem behaviors like substance use, delinquency, violence and dropping out of school. However, unraveling the effects of risk on a young person’s behavior has proven to be far more complicated than many investigators had anticipated some two decades ago. Studies indicate that many risk factors for child and adolescent problem behaviors reveal complex interaction patterns and change continually over the course of development. Risk also differentially affects children by gender, sexual orientation, race and ethnicity.

Understanding the risks that increase the likelihood of problem behavior in young people has proved invaluable to developing effective preventive interventions in schools, neighborhoods and communities. Over time, however, researchers also noticed that many apparently high-risk youth never participate in problem behaviors as they mature and become young adults. Indeed, studies show that many youth are protected from risk. That is, they seem to have personal resources that help them prevail over adversities. These resources came to be called protective factors and are viewed commonly as attributes or characteristics that lower the probability of an undesirable outcome during childhood and adolescence.

Youth advocates, practitioners and researchers have used knowledge of risk and protective factors to better understand the complex individual, social and environmental influences that affect young people’s capacity to live healthy and productive lives. An impressive body of empirical evidence indicates that children and youth who possess individual strengths, prosocial attributes, and social and community resources are less likely than other youth to participate in problem behaviors during adolescence and young adulthood. Strengths and resources held by young people have also been identified as important change agents in interventions targeting at-risk children and youth. The orientation toward child and adolescent strengths has led to a relatively new intervention framework known as positive youth development (PYD).

At its most basic level, PYD reframes existing risk-based explanations of child and adolescent behavior by focusing on the positive traits and resources in a young person’s life. PYD underscores the healthy and adaptive development of children and adolescents. Advocates of the model, like the GSSW faculty members whose articles appear in subsequent pages, advance the notion that all young people not only have resources but that they are resources—to themselves, their families and others in society. They further suggest that healthy development is characterized by a sense of responsibility, connectedness and positive values. The perspective stands in stark contrast to the early viewpoints of adolescence in which young people were thought to be in need of psychological intervention because of developmental conflicts that are now seen as quite normal during adolescence.

Put into practice, the key principles guiding PYD include identifying and respecting youth strengths, engaging and motivating youth to support change through these strengths, working with youth as collaborators, avoiding victim mindsets and harnessing resources that exist in the environment. The practice of PYD suggests that youth, families, communities and broader systems can take proactive roles in the positive development of future generations. In this sense, individuals and their respective social ecologies—peers, schools, families and communities—are active contributors to the developmental process and promotion of healthy development. Theoretical explanations like PYD, that aim to specify the reasons why some young people have trouble at school or engage in behaviors like delinquency or substance use, are measured ultimately by their translation to real-world settings. Most experts would agree that PYD principles have been widely adopted by schools and communities because practitioners and policy-makers have found the framework relatively easy to understand and put into action.

Preventive interventions and programs based on principles of PYD emphasize the importance of healthy social bonds, competence, self-efficacy, positive opportunities and prosocial beliefs in the lives of young people. As an intervention framework, PYD also uses knowledge of risk and protective factors for problem behavior to identify specific targets for intervention and service delivery. For example, studies suggest that attachment to teachers and other positive adults is an important protective trait in reducing risk for academic failure or school dropout. Thus, it follows that a school-based intervention is consistent with a PYD model that uses strategies to increase school bonding and attachment. Similarly, a community-based youth service program like GSSW’s Bridge Project uses mentoring in an attempt to increase protective factors that promote healthy attachments between at-risk youth and positive adults in the neighborhood.

Intervention models emphasizing strengths and healthy development have much to offer practitioners, community and program planners, and administrators seeking to improve outcomes for children and youth. Indeed, the positive focus on healthy child and adolescent development that these models offer is a huge shift away from the rigid frameworks of the mid- to late-1990s. This framework laid the groundwork for interventions with a strong focus on improving academic outcomes by reducing risk factors for school failure, such as low commitment to school, weak attachments to positive role models, school absenteeism, association with antisocial peers and deficits in learning that hindered success. At the same time, Bridge Project staff members used the risk and resilience model to develop interventions that sought to enhance protective factors associated with preventing school failure. These included involvement in school activities, social and problem-solving skills, positive attitudes about school, and caring relationships with teachers and other positive adults.

Over time, Bridge Project staff members and the GSSW research team led by Jeff Jensen, GSSW’s Philip D. and Eleanor G. Winn Professor for Children and Youth at Risk, began to see limitations inherent in the risk and resilience model. In particular, new empirical evidence from the PYD field pointed to a need to incorporate additional aspects of strengths-focused approaches into the program’s intervention strategies. Toward that end, PYD principles were systematically added to the Bridge Project’s intervention model during the past five years. This is best illustrated by the program’s decision to intentionally link intervention strategies to the 5 Cs (competence, connection, character, confidence and caring) noted in the lead article on the opposite page. Together with elements of risk and resilience, PYD attributes now form the basis of all intervention elements at the Bridge Project.


Read more about GSSW’s Bridge Project on page 9.
many efforts to promote positive youth development focus on interventions with individual youth. We took a different approach when we partnered with the Denver Green School (DGS) to implement and study a school-wide approach called Responsive Classroom.

Responsive Classroom (RC) is an evidence-based school-wide intervention known to improve outcomes for disadvantaged students with attention deficits or behavior problems. Other research shows that school-wide and classroom-based interventions, rather than pull-out individual approaches, are the most effective strategies to reduce childhood behavior problems and improve students’ chances for sustained academic success. Sustained academic success is an integral component of healthy development among all youth and affects their life chances well into adulthood.

In addition to our work with this DGS team, seven MSW and PhD students of the RC research team played important roles in every aspect of the project. In order to assist DGS in evaluating the intervention, the research team conducted focus groups and classroom observations, collected survey data from teachers and tracked student referrals to the office.

While we are still in the process of analyzing the data, the DGS team reported that the number of student referrals for negative behavior was reduced. DGS is also using evidence from the research to decide which elements of the intervention to retain, adapt or discard. For example, some of the RC strategies are not feasible for the middle school because of the timing of homeroom period. Other evidence showed the need for a handy and quick toolbox to implement another one of the techniques on the fly.

While our role in the project has come to a close, the DGS lead principals will be doing when the problem is no longer there, an approach that can work as a graduate research assistant at a solution-focused alternative high school in Austin, Texas. The principal of the school had all of her employees (teachers, social workers, administrative staff, receptionists and janitors) trained in SFBT because she felt that it was how they should be interacting with the at-risk students. The outcomes from that study showed it was an effective intervention for reducing dropout rates and enabling at-risk students to earn their high school diplomas. In fact, that high school has gone on to receive numerous state and national awards as a model school.

We then pilot-tested, with nearly 100 youth at the Urban Peak homeless shelter, a team of GSSW doctoral and MSW students aided in all aspects of the research on its effectiveness has continued to grow since the 1980s. I have been collaborating with Professor Anne DePrince of DU’s Department of Psychology and Denver’s Urban Peak Homeless Shelter to study whether homeless youth can be trained in risk-detection skills in order to prevent further victimization. In first determining how homeless youth detect risk, we interviewed hundreds of youth accessing homeless services to ask them how they know they are in dangerous situations and how they keep themselves safe on the streets. Youth described three indicators of risk:

- Internal cues, or physical and physiological reactions that, in the moment, alerted them to danger; these included tingling sensations, racing hearts and feelings of panic.
- External cues, or interactions that suggested others were suspicious or unstable; these included specific facial expressions, eye contact and body language.
- Environmental cues of danger such as unfamiliar, dark, difficult-to-escape or precarious situations in which substances were involved.

We then pilot-tested, with nearly 100 youth at the Urban Peak homeless shelter, an intensive, mindfulness, skill-based intervention (“Safety Awareness For Empowerment” or “SAFE”) that targeted risk-detection among homeless youth. The intervention helped the youth enhance their attention to internal, interpersonal and environmental risk cues, problem-solve in risky situations, act assertively and seek help when necessary. SAFE used small group activities, role-plays and discussions to introduce and facilitate practice of these mindfulness skills. Over the course of a year, a team of GSSW doctoral and MSW students aided in all aspects of the study, including facilitating the intervention, tracking youth over time and interviewing them. Doctoral student Stephanie Begun coordinated the project and was instrumental in leading the research team to turn this notoriously transient homeless youth sample using cell phones administered through the project.

The intervention appears promising. Relative to their peers randomized to a case management control group, youth randomized to the intervention group showed significant improvements in risk-detection abilities as measured by vignettes designed to reflect real risks on the streets. These preliminary findings suggest that risk-detection skills are malleable utilizing a mindfulness, cognitive intervention. My colleagues and I plan to further test whether the improved risk-detection associated with SAFE results in longer-term prevention of victimization.

Promoting Positive Identities Among Low-Income Youth of Color by Associate Professor Inna Altshul, Director of Assesment and Program Evaluation

Positive youth development (PYD) approaches are based on the premise that there are positive (or adaptive) and negative (or maladaptive) developmental trajectories among children and youth. PYD focuses on promoting positive developmental pathways among youth, in contrast with approaches that focus on ameliorating problems or preventing negative outcomes.

In my own PDT work, I have focused on promoting positive racial, ethnic, civic and academic identities among low-income youth of color, particularly Latino/Latina youth. In one study, I examined which types of racial-ethnic identities predicted positive academic outcomes. My findings indicated that youth who associated their racial-ethnic identities with striving to overcome discrimination and other barriers had the best academic outcomes across time.

In another study, Associate Professor Nicole Nicoctera and I showed that students with strong civic identities had higher attachment to school. Based on these findings, I worked with GSSW MSW students and alumni to develop a brief school-based intervention that supported middle and high school students in identifying their racial-ethnic and civic identities, developing and implementing a project that addressed that issue. The focus of the intervention was to empower youth to develop and act on their prosocial passions, thus enhancing civic and racial-ethnic identities and promoting positive developmental pathways.

More recently, I have been working with the Denver Scholarship Foundation to understand factors that support Denver Public School graduates in entering, persisting in and graduating from post-secondary educational institutions. Many of these students are from low-income families, youth of color, immigrants and first-generation college students, and most are from low-income families. I am very excited about this work because it allows us to link youth’s high school experiences to college outcomes, with the goal of finding ways to promote positive pathways from high school to college for vulnerable youth.

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New MSW Concentration Emphasizes PYD Approach

GSSW’s revised MSW curriculum, implemented during 2013-2014, includes the concentration, Children and Youth: Risks and Healthy Development. The overarching frameworks for the concentration are positive youth development and resilience.

The Children and Youth concentration provides students with knowledge and skills to work from a resilience perspective with adolescents and children in a wide variety of settings: mental health, family services agencies, schools, treatment centers, youth correctional facilities and community agencies. Students gain expertise in theories and practices for prevention and early intervention, as well as clinical strategies that are particularly effective for working with children and youth. Students in this very versatile concentration can focus their training on work with children or youth, or combine their studies with offerings from the Family Systems concentration.

Children’s Law Center Honors GSSW and College of Law

The Graduate School of Social Work and DU’s Sturm College of Law were honored by The Children’s Law Center at their Annual Breakfast on October 8. Ron Rizzuto, Children’s Law Center Board of Directors member and Daniels College of Business Professor, cited what he termed the “major support” the two schools have given the Center over the years. “The student internships that your schools have provided to the Children’s Law Center . . . have been immensely valuable to the organization in fulfilling its mission of transforming the lives of abused, neglected and at-risk children through compassionate legal advocacy, education and public policy reform,” Rizzuto said.

Your respective schools’ efforts are a credit to DU and a great example of DU’s commitment to the ‘public good,’” Rizzuto said.

Established in 1927, the Neighborhood House provided affordable childcare for working class families in the surrounding community for many years. The Bridge Project continues that tradition today, providing a safe haven for the children and youth it serves.

“I am so proud of everyone who was part of bringing this project to fruition,” said District 9 Denver Councilwoman Judy Montero (MSW ‘78), who also attended the event. “La Alma/Lincoln Park is a special community with a long, beautiful history. I’m so glad we can offer the building back to them in much better shape.”

Neighborhood House is “Key” to Bridge Kids’ Future

The grand reopening of Denver’s Neighborhood House on September 17 was a celebration not only for the La Alma/Lincoln Park community as a whole, but also for GSSW’s Bridge Project, which uses the House to provide afterschool and summer programming for the neighborhood’s children and youth. Denver Public Works installed energy-efficient lighting and updated the historic structure’s cooling system, electrical service, plumbing and fire safety/alarm systems to meet code requirements.

To symbolize the doors that Bridge tutoring, mentoring and other services will open for its participants in the future, Denver Mayor Michael Hancock presented keys to the more than 60 Bridge kids who attended the grand reopening event. “Thanks to voter approval of the Better Denver Bond Program, this historic structure was renovated to provide a safe environment for the youth of this community and a place for them to thrive,” Hancock said.

Bridge Project

Ismael Guerrero (2nd from left), Executive Director of the Housing Authority of the City and County of Denver, presents a key to Bridge Project participants at the renovated Neighborhood House as (L-R) Dean James Herbert Williams, District 9 Denver Councilwoman Judy Montero (MSW ‘78) and Denver Mayor Michael Hancock look on. Bridge kids also received their own symbolic keys at the event.

Some 500 people attended “Wine, Stein & Dine,” the festive new incarnation of the Bridge Project’s annual fundraising gala. The September 13 Oktoberfest event was held on the DU campus for the first time, one of many Sesquicentennial highlights marking the University’s 150th year.

Dean James Herbert Williams (L) welcomes Rebecca Chopp, the University of Denver’s recently appointed Chancellor, and Gregg Kvistad, Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor, to the Bridge Project fundraiser.

Rich and Sandy Laws received The 2014 Ambassador Philip D. and Eleanor Winn Community Service Award at Wine, Stein and Dine. Rich is a member of the Bridge Project’s advisory board.

Bridge participants (L-R) Gabriel Cortez and Abdi Abdirahman were featured in a video shown at the event.
**Inaugural IHAC Practitioner Conference Draws Hundreds**

More than 400 people attended the inaugural practitioner conference, “Transforming Trauma: Methods for Animal-Assisted Interventions,” hosted by GSSW’s Institute for Human-Animal Connection on May 7-8. Offered in partnership with the American Humane Association, Green Chimneys and the Horses and Humans Research Foundation, the conference featured national experts presenting pioneering research on the efficacy of animal-assisted therapy in alleviating emotional trauma sustained during military service, in the aftermath of natural disasters or as a result of domestic violence and child maltreatment. Topics included the effectiveness of animal-assisted therapy for veterans coping with post-traumatic stress disorder and for Coloradans recovering from the devastating impacts of the state’s recent floods and wildfires.

“The University of Denver received a $1.5 million grant to study human-animal therapy interactions,” says IHAC executive director Philip Tedeschi. “This conference was designed to have research inform the practice of animal-assisted interventions. It was the biggest conference on this topic ever organized.”

In addition to Tedeschi, featured speakers included Meg Dayley Olmert, natural history documentary producer and writer for The Discovery Channel, National Geographic, PBS and The Smithsonian Institution; Cheryl Krause-Parello, RN, PhD and director of C.P.A.W.W. (Canines Providing Assistance to Wounded Warriors); Lisa A. Brenner, PhD, a board-certified rehabilitation psychologist, director of the Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) Coordinating Office, and Associate Professor of Psychiatry, Neurology, and Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at the University of Colorado’s Anschutz School of Medicine; and Aubrey Fine, PhD, noted author and Professor of Education at California State Polytechnic University.

Conference sponsors included DU’s Graduate School of Professional Psychology and Metropolitan State University of Denver’s School of Social Work.

**“State of the Wild” Includes Symposium, Peaceful Demonstration**


The day after the symposium, “State of the Wild” organizers led a two-hour peaceful demonstration on the west steps of the Colorado State Capitol, expressing their concern for the fate of elephants and rhinos they say are endangered by climate change and the worldwide demand for ivory and rhino horn. Among the group’s demands were that Colorado adopt a total ban on the ivory trade, adopt policies favoring the rapid development and use of renewable energy and end policies the favor fossil fuel development.

**IHAC Affiliated Faculty Provide Interviews, Lectures**

In July, Clinical Professor Philip Tedeschi was quoted in the MedShadow Foundation’s online newsletter in an article entitled “Can Therapy Animals Decrease Medication Use?” His other recent media activities included interviews with radio stations in Lansing, Michigan, the Canadian cities of Winnipeg and Vancouver, as well as an online interview posted on the American news reporting and opinion website, The Daily Beast.

Tedeschi also spoke at a variety of local and national events, held this fall in Denver, including the Denver Dumb Friends League Board and Volunteer appreciation event, the Assistance Dog International Conference, the Colorado Animal Welfare Conference and the DU Alumni Pioneer Symposium Weekend.

Tedeschi was one of two GSSW faculty members who gave University College Enrichment Program lectures this spring. His presentation was entitled “Our Kinship with Animals.” Scholar-in-Residence Sarah Bexell co-presented “Wildlife Crime: Drivers, Solutions and a Call to Action” in April, along with former Scholar-in-Residence Sarah Bexell.

IHAC sponsored a screening of the award-winning documentary, “The Ghosts in Our Machine,” on March 28 at Craig Hall. The film illuminates the lives of animals living within, and rescued from, the “machine” of our modern world. A discussion with the film’s producer, Liz Marshall, and author, Jo-Anne McArthur, followed the film.
Butler Institute for Families

GSSW’s Erna and Brad Butler Institute for Families is home to the new National Child Welfare Capacity Building Center for Tribes, which began operation in October. The Center will provide capacity building technical assistance to American Indian and Alaska Native Nation child welfare systems throughout the country, working cooperatively with Tribal Nations to help strengthen their systems and improve outcomes for American Indian and Native children, youth and families.

Funding for the Center is provided by a five-year, $16 million federal cooperative agreement from the Administration of Children and Families Children’s Bureau, awarded to the Butler Institute. Butler will co-lead the effort with program partner, the Tribal Law & Policy Institute, based in Los Angeles, California. Other program partners include the University of Southern Maine and Westat, a national corporation that provides research services to government agencies, businesses and foundations. A national advisory council of representatives from a number of Native organizations, as well as individuals with strong experience in tribal human services, will provide guidance for the Center’s technical assistance services.

“Our team is thrilled with this opportunity to build on our past experiences and partnerships in Indian Country with program partner, the Tribal Law & Policy Institute, based in Los Angeles, California. Other program partners include the University of Southern Maine and Westat, a national corporation that provides research services to government agencies, businesses and foundations. A national advisory council of representatives from a number of Native organizations, as well as individuals with strong experience in tribal human services, will provide guidance for the Center’s technical assistance services.

“Recently, we hired Jennifer Komoski, a new program director. Jen is a leader with a strong background in Native American social work, and she will help us build on our past work with NAPA (Native American Parents Association) and other organizations,“ says Anne Comstock, Butler Institute director.

Founded in 1994, the Butler Institute collaborates with leaders, policy makers and legislators to address issues facing children, youth and families in an effort to improve the quality of public human services programs across the United States. Learn more about Butler at www.thebutlerinstitute.org.

Resource Center for Separating & Divorcing Families

Since opening its doors just over a year ago, DU’s Resource Center for Separating and Divorcing Families (RCSDF) has had a significant impact on the community, providing legal education, dispute resolution, and therapeutic and financial consultation services to 80 families with a combined total of 118 children. The Graduate School of Social Work is one of the Resource Center’s founding partners, along with Colorado’s Judicial Branch and DU’s Department of Psychology. Graduate School of Professional Psychology, Sturm College of Law and Institute for the Advancement of the American Legal System (IAALS).

The first program of its kind in the United States, RCSDF is based on an interdisciplinary out-of-court model resulting from the “Honoring Families Initiative” that IAALS developed. The Resource Center is a pilot project, testing whether this is an effective model for helping families through the transition of separation and divorce.

Besides being an invaluable community resource, RCSDF also provides experiential learning opportunities for student interns from the Center’s partner schools and programs across campus.

“As a dual JD [Juris Doctorate] and MSW student, I thought the Resource Center seemed like the opportunity of a lifetime, allowing me to work on both my law and social work skills in one setting,” explains dual degree student Deanna Barton. She completed an internship at RCSDF while working toward her MSW last year. “In the end, the experience turned out to be better and more valuable than I could have ever dreamed,” Barton adds.

Five MSW students, in addition to Barton, were RCSDF interns during the 2013-2014 academic year, and three more are completing their internships there this year.

“Four Corners

Four Corners Graduate to Lead its Great Hearts Great Minds Project

Janelle Doughty, a 2004 graduate of the Four Corners MSW Program, has been hired to coordinate the programs’ Great Hearts Great Minds Project. Funded by a generous grant from Denver’s Greenberg Traurig Law Firm, which supports the work of local nonprofits through its Philathropic Fund, the project is aimed at strengthening culturally responsive foster care for Native American children and families.

Doughty, who is Southern Ute and Navajo and a member of the Southern Ute Indian Tribe in Ignacio, Colorado, has vast experience working with foster children and their families. As the former director of the Ute Mountain Ute Department of Social Services and former director of the Department of Regulatory and Justice for the Southern Ute Tribe, Doughty brings with her knowledge of the complex issues that face Native American children and their families. “I want to make sure that building the legacy of Native American youth is a part of social work practice,” she explains.
Dean James Herbert Williams (2nd row, left) joins student award recipients (1st row, L-R) Jill M. Eelkema (Edith M. Davis Award), Adam Clark (Ruth Marx Stark Award), Lori Beth Jurecko (Jean Peart Sinnock Award), Grace Jasmine Stein (Ina Mae Dunham Award) and (2nd row, L-R) Lacey Marie Faughender (Dean Emil M. Sunley Merit Award), Juliet Elizabeth Gordon Ruth (OMNI Research Award), Hunter Capwell Allen (Honorable Mention for Ina Mae Dunham Award) and Stephanie Sharp (Tommi Frank Memorial Award).

Even GSSW faculty members can’t resist the “selfie” craze!

Teresa Koch’s student remarks received a standing ovation from the audience.

Clinical Assistant Professor Jae McQueen spoke on behalf of the faculty.

Sonya Juancho’s family members cheer for their favorite graduate.

Dean Williams presents the Award for Excellence in Mentoring to Doctoral Students to Assistant Professor Leslie Hasche.

Dean Williams congratulates Carol Heinisch, recipient of the Award for Excellence in Field Instruction.

Assistant Professor Ramona Bettini and Clinical Assistant Professor Michael Salama were each awarded the Award for Excellence in Teaching.

Four Corners MSW graduates held a class reception in Durango on May 31. Jennifer Turner (front row, 5th from right) received the inaugural Catherine F. Alter Merit Award at the reception. The award will be presented annually to a student from one of GSSW’s off-campus MSW programs.

LaShonda Ray shares pre-Commencement excitement with her MSW classmates.

Clinical Assistant Professor Jae McQueen spoke on behalf of the faculty.

Assistant Professor Ramona Bettini and Clinical Assistant Professor Michael Salama were each awarded the Award for Excellence in Teaching.

Dean Williams presents the Award for Excellence in Mentoring to Doctoral Students to Assistant Professor Leslie Hasche.

Dean Williams congratulates Carol Heinisch, recipient of the Award for Excellence in Field Instruction.

Even GSSW faculty members can’t resist the “selfie” craze!

Teresa Koch’s student remarks received a standing ovation from the audience.

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Sonya Juancho’s family members cheer for their favorite graduate.

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Recent Faculty & Doctoral Scholarship

Books


In addition to the GSSW doctoral students listed as co-authors and co-presenters above, additional doctoral student scholarship by Stephanie Bogen, Samantha Brown, Skanna Kattari, Suzanne Klavetter, Chris Knoepke included the following:


Kattari, S.K. (2014, February). Examining aboriginal and ab- Induced privilege through social dominance theory and social learning theory. Paper presented at the University of Denver Graduate Student Research Summit, Denver, CO.


Knoepke, C.E. & Aronoff, K. (2014, April). Big challenges, small company: Lessons Learned providing services to small businesses. Presented at the 26th Employee Assistance Society of North America (EASNA) Institute, Ottawa, ON.

Peer-Reviewed Presentations

Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles


Assistant Professor Ramona Beltrán received a professional development grant in April from the Center for Multicultural Excellence. The grant will support research she’s conducting with Native American partners on Digital Storytelling as an HIV prevention method. In May, Beltrán received a Public Good Grant to support her project, RiseUp! A Culture-Centered HIV/AIDS Prevention Program for Indigenous Youth. Also in May, Beltrán was a featured speaker at DU’s Diversity Summit luncheon.

Associate Professor Daniel Brissien received a Professional Research Opportunity Fund (PROF) grant from the University of Denver in April for his research project, “Parents and Kids Bonding,” a dual generation intervention study designed to address academic success and health and well-being for families living in subsidized housing communities. The PROF fund supports an increase in faculty members’ scholarly and creative activity that strategically enhances the reputation of the University.


Jeff Jenson, Phillip D. & Eleanor G. Winn Professor for Children and Youth at Risk, presented a paper on April 16 at the 6th European Conference for Social Work Research, held at the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, Bolzano, Italy. The paper was entitled “Intervention Research in the Emerging Science of Social Work in the United States.” In July, Jenson accepted an invitation from the Board of Directors of the Society for Social Work and Research (SSWR) to participate in the “Meet the Scientist” lunch to be held at the 2014 SSWR Annual Conference in New Orleans, LA, on January 15. The luncheon will provide an opportunity for early career scholars and doctoral students to talk with senior scholars like Jenson, who was selected because of his outstanding contributions to social work research and his ability to provide informal guidance regarding various aspects of career development and research.

Associate Professor Kim Bender received the 2014 Public Good Faculty of the Year award. This award honors a faculty member who has demonstrated outstanding commitment to the public good by applying her or his knowledge and intellectual resources to enhance student learning, faculty research, social capital and community development. Bender received the award at the Pioneer Awards ceremony on May 8.

Clinical Associate Professor Michael Talamantes was a participant scholar for the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD) Translational Health Disparities course, “Integrating Principles of Science, Practice and Policy in Health Disparities Research,” taught August 11-22 in Bethesda, MD. The course, for which the application process was extremely competitive, offered a cross-disciplinary perspective that informs innovative research, practice and policy interventions.

Clinical Associate Professor Wanda Ellingson served as the Region XII Board Delegate to the NASW National Delegate Assembly on August 12.

Associate Professor Johnny Kim is working with SAGE Publications to create 10-minute videos for students and clinicians on various social work topics. Kim’s videos will focus on Solution-Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT). The films will be accessible to all students of universities that subscribe to the service through the publisher’s website. SAGE, which published Kim’s 2013 book, Solution-Focused Brief Therapy: A Multicultural Approach, is a leading international publisher of journals, books and electronic media for academic, educational and professional markets.

Clinical Associate Professor Emeritus Donald Kriil had an article, “Existential Social Work,” published in the 2014 special issue of the online journal Advances in Social Work. The issue is entitled “Eyewitnesses to History: First-Hand Accounts of Sages of the Profession.”

Dean Lectures in Taipei

As a part of their training, participants were asked to identify and examine how their cultural views, beliefs and values influence clinical practice. Encouraging cultural self-awareness and reflection supports the development of a culturally responsive perspective, Professor von Merz explains.

Following the training, he provided four weeks of consultation services in-home and school-based therapy. “We sought out Professor von Merz to provide this training because we are eager for a more integrated, systemic approach to working with the diverse client systems and families we serve,” says Lydia Prado, PhD (pictured above), Director of Child and Family Services at MHCD. Participants in the MHCD training included clinicians who provide outpatient, intensive and in-home and school-based therapy.

Professor Debora Ortega, director of DU’s Latino Center for Community Engagement and Scholarship, has been appointed to the Board of Directors of the Latino Community Foundation of Colorado. Established in 2007, the LCFC is a Rose Community Foundation initiative aimed at engaging Latinos and others to become leaders and philanthropic investors to develop strong and vibrant Latino communities in Colorado.

Ortega was a member of a panel discussion on September 2 entitled “Cooling Off ‘Summer Melt’ – Keeping Kids on the Path to Success: Learning Skills for Colorado’s Opportunities Today.” Held at the Community College of Denver, the event was hosted by Congresswoman Diana DeGette, senior member of the U.S. House Energy and Commerce Committee.

On October 3, Ortega gave the 2014 Margaret Schutz Gordon Lecture at the University of Kansas School of Social Welfare. Her lecture was entitled “Collectivism and Liberation: Why the Latino Experience Matters.”

On September 29, Ascione spoke at a seminar in Brisbane, hosted by The University of Queensland in partnership with Central Queensland University. His topic was the relationship between intimate partner violence and animal abuse, focusing on the welfare of women, children and pets in violent environments. Ascione previously served as GSSW’s inaugural American Humane Endowed Chair.

Scholar-in-Residence Frank R. Ascione was among the international keynote speakers at the 10th Anniversary Conference of Animal Management in Rural and Remote Indigenous Communities held September 23-25 in Darwin, Australia. His lecture was entitled “Animal abuse and psychopathology: Conduct Disorder and Antisocial Personality Disorders.” AMRRIC is a national nonprofit organization led by veterinarians, academics, and health and animal management professionals who work to facilitate sustainable, culturally sensitive, professional dog health programs in Indigenous communities around Australia.

The Mental Health Center of Denver (MHCD) contracted with Clinical Assistant Professor Stephen von Merz to provide culturally responsive training and consultation services to a group of its family therapists over a six-month period. The training introduced family systems, feminist and cultural/contextual models of family therapy, integrating theory, practice and skill development. It covered a variety of family system models (intergenerational, structural, strategic, solution-focused brief and narrative), and it analyzed intersecting issues of oppression including sexism, racism, classism, heterosexism, citizenship privilege and ageism. The training included a bilingual component for clinicians seeking to utilize their Spanish language skills in supervision and consultation.

“The engaged students and clinicians were eager for a more integrated, systemic approach to working with the diverse client systems and families we serve,” says Lydia Prado, PhD (pictured above). Director of Child and Family Services at MHCD. Participants in the MHCD training included clinicians who provide outpatient, intensive and in-home and school-based therapy.

Indigenous Youth. Also in May, Beltrán was a featured speaker at DU’s Diversity Summit luncheon.

 sparkle treatment of the page that is being displayed.

Clinical Assistant Professor Molly Calhoun, Executive Director of GSSW’s Bridge Project, was honored as a 2014 Denver Housing Authority (DHA) 90th birthday recipient. The award honors individuals who make significant contributions to DHA, was presented by Denver Mayor Michael B. Hancock at a ceremony on September 18.
Heather Taussig, who was appointed Professor with tenure on September 1, also serves as Associate Dean for Research. She replaces Philip D. and Eleanor G. Winn Professor for Children and Youth at Risk Jeff Jenison, who has held the position since 2008.

Taussig joined the GSSW faculty in March as a Research Professor in order to transition several of her grant projects to the University of Denver. She previously served as Associate Professor of Pediatrics and Psychiatry at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center, as well as the Associate Director for Clinical Research at the Kempe Center for the Prevention and Treatment of Child Abuse and Neglect, where she developed and directed the Fostering Healthy Futures Program (FHF) from 2000 to 2014. Her team conducted two randomized controlled trials of FHF, funded by the National Institutes of Health, and they are piloting a mentoring program for teens to extend the program's reach. Other current research endeavors include the dissemination and implementation of FHF through community-based organizations and a longitudinal study funded by the National Institute of Justice, to examine the transition to independence for young adults with a history of out-of-home care.

Taussig also has conducted studies on risk and protective factors, child well-being in foster care, youth mentoring and policy issues. She served on former Colorado Governor Bill Ritter’s Task Force on Foster Care and Permanence, and she participates in several community collaborations. Taussig was honored by the International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect for her significant contributions to the field.

Clinical Professor Ann Petrila has been appointed to the newly created position of Assistant Dean for Field Education effective November 1. "Under Ann's leadership, GSSW has realized tremendous growth in both excellence and quality in field education," noted Dean Williams in making this appointment. "As GSSW continues to receive national, regional and local recognition for innovation and quality of service in field education, these accomplishments are a testament to Ann's leadership and our wonderful colleagues in the Office of Field Education.”

Anamika Barman-Adhikari was appointed as Assistant Professor on September 1. She formerly served an Assistant Professor at California State University, Fresno. Her areas of research are HIV prevention, sexual risk reduction, substance abuse prevention, social network analysis, vulnerable youth, homeless adolescents, evidence-based practice implementation and community-based participatory research.

Jennifer Bellamy was appointed as Associate Professor with tenure on September 1. Bellamy was previously a faculty member at the University of Chicago. She focuses her research on the engagement of fathers in child and family services, evidence-based practice and mental health services for families involved in child welfare.

Tina Hageman was appointed as Clinical Assistant Professor in August. She chairs the Organizational Leadership and Policy Practice MSW concentration and directs a research grant funded by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development on children exposed to intimate partner violence and animal abuse.

Kevin Morris, a Denver-based scientific consultant, has been appointed as a Scholar-in-Residence at GSSW and the Institute for Human-Animal Connection. He previously served as director of research at the Animal Assistance Foundation and was a founding partner at Sirius Medicine, LLC, in California.

Patricia O’Brien, Associate Professor at the University of Illinois Jane Addams College of Social Work, joined GSSW as Visiting Associate Professor for the fall quarter. Her professional interests include group methods, gender oppression and globalization, violence prevention and intervention, and substance dependence.

Effective on September 1:
Debora Ortega was promoted to the rank of Professor.
Ann Petrila was promoted to the rank of Clinical Professor.
Karen Bensen was promoted to the rank of Clinical Associate Professor.
David Blair was promoted to the rank of Clinical Associate Professor.
Kate Ross was promoted to the rank of Clinical Associate Professor.

Effective on September 19, Kathleen Olman was promoted to Professor Emerita. She retired from the GSSW faculty at the end of 2013.

An enrolled member of the Little Shell Chippewa Tribe and active participant in Denver’s American Indian community, Moran was named Outstanding Minority Faculty in 1991. He received the Outstanding Administrator Award from the Center for Multicultural Excellence in 2007. The author of numerous scholarly publications, Moran served as Principal
Dillon Miskimins joined the GSSW staff as the Director of Budget and Planning on June 2. He received his BBA in Accounting from Creighton University, and he has held administrative and financial positions with the Gallup organization and the University of Colorado-Denver. Most recently, Miskimins served as Director of Budget in Accounting from Creighton University, and he has held administrative and financial positions with the Gallup organization and the University of Colorado-Denver. Most recently, Miskimins served as Director of Budget in Accounting from Creighton University, and he has held administrative and financial positions with the Gallup organization and the University of Colorado-Denver. Most recently, Miskimins served as Director of Budget and Planning at DU’s Colorado Women’s College. In early July, Miskimins was selected to serve on the Western Association of College and University Business Officers Research Committee.

Linda Clark

A school-wide reception held on June 4 and a staff luncheon on June 19 honored the long service of Linda Clark, who retired from the GSSW staff at the end of the academic year. Her 33-year career at GSSW began in 1981, when Dean LeVerne McCummings hired her for a faculty support position. She subsequently served under five other deans, holding positions that included secretary and coordinator for a child welfare teaching grant and assistant to the director of admission. Clark earned her MS degree from DU in Computer Science in 1986, then served as GSSW’s database coordinator and Local Area Network (LAN) supervisor from 1986 to 1988. In that demanding role, she helped upgrade GSSW into what was then the new frontier of computer technology—purchasing and installing hardware and software, training staff and developing the school’s database for budget, admission, registrar, field, alumni and inventory.

Clark was appointed Assistant Dean for Operations in 1988 by Dean (later Dean Emeritus) Jack Jones. Dean James Herbert Williams subsequently changed her title to Assistant Dean of Administration. She served as GSSW’s chief budget officer and supervised nearly all of its staff. During the 2002-2005 construction project that transformed Spruce Hall into our state-of-the-art educational facility, Craig Hall, Clark served as the owner’s representative—monitoring costs, budgets and schedules in coordination with the building committee, architects, project manager and subcontractors, as well as DU’s facilities management, technology services and finance department. With the able assistance of office manager Jennie Ratico, Clark also oversaw the school’s temporary move to Pioneer Hall, then back into Craig Hall when the construction was complete.

Nick Ota-Wang, GSSW’s admission assistant, received the Safe Haven Award from the Center for Multicultural Excellence. The award recognizes his willingness to serve as a nurturing point of connection for Lesbian, Gay, Bi-, transgender, Intersex, Queer, Questioning & Ally (LGBTIQQ&A) communities. He received the award at GSSW’s 2014-2015 Annual LGBTIQ&A Gala on April 3. Learn more at www.du.edu/cme/programs-services/lgbtiqa.

Investigator for research projects funded by Casey Family Programs, the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention and the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. His research interest included the prevention of alcohol abuse among American Indian youth and cultural identity among urban American Indians.

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Additionally, the American Psychological Association has accepted a proposal submitted by Ota-Wang for a peer-reviewed poster session at the association’s Biennial Multicultural Conference and Summit, to be held January 15-16, 2015, in Atlanta, GA. Chosen from among 400 submissions, Ota-Wang’s poster is entitled “A University Investigator for research projects funded by Casey Family Programs, the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention and the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. His research interest included the prevention of alcohol abuse among American Indian youth and cultural identity among urban American Indians.

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The Sista Circle, an annual gathering of color who share the GSSW experience, took place on April 19. Hosted by GSSW’s Shades of Brown Alliance (SOBA) student organization, the event provides an opportunity for the women of SOBA and the school’s Advisory Council on Racial Diversity (ACoRD) to join together in a creative group activity while sharing successes, challenges and strategies for success.

GSSW’s new Graduate Student Association (GSA) incorporates members who are MSW (MSW ‘91), Adjunct Professor Eugene Robinson, director of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (LGBTQ) student services. GSA also offers the chance to students to network and receive feedback, connect with other students and student organizations, and to facilitate student relationships with the Denver community, help students make positive change at the school.

MSW Students Publish Empowerment Anthology

MSW students in Assistant Professor Ramona Beltrán’s winter quarter course, “Empowerment Practice with Diverse Communities,” didn’t just read books to complete their assignments. They wrote one themselves. Now their book, in attracting national attention as a resource for students in other universities’ social work programs.

Entitled Journey: Empowerment, the book is a community-based anthology that includes poetry, prose, fiction, nonfiction, digital photography, drawings and sketches representing student and curricular reflections on power, privilege, oppression and the meaning of empowerment.

“The book is an example of using narrative techniques to engage critical and creative consciousness for social change,” Beltrán explains. Within days of its publication, social work professors from three universities expressed interest in incorporating the anthology into their syllabi.

GSSW Volunteers Take up the Challenge

GSSW’s fifth annual Community Service Day, held on September 5, brought teams of student, faculty and staff volunteers to five locations in the Denver metropolitan area: the Arapahoe County Department of Human Services, Barking C.A.A.T. (Center for Animal Assisted Therapy) Ranch, Food Bank of the Rockies, Safari Thrift Store and Washington Park. A total of 18 student, faculty and staff volunteers contributed a total of 171 hours on the Service Day, placing the group in fifth place at that time among the volunteer teams on campus.

The Community Service Day, which coincides with GSSW’s new student orientation each fall, is a tradition that began during the school’s 80th anniversary celebration in 2010-2011. This year, the volunteers’ efforts took on an added dimension, as the hours they worked were added to the University of Denver’s Sesquicentennial 1864 Service Challenge that aims to achieve a combined 186,400 hours of community service by the end of 2014. GSSW volunteers contributed a total of 171 hours on the Service Day, placing the group in fifth place at that time among the volunteer teams on campus. (GSSW’s field education program team currently holds first place, by a wide margin, with MSW interns completing a total of 85,500 volunteer internship hours during the year.)

Beltrán’s MSW course explores empowerment practice and community organizing as social work intervention methods. Students examine the challenges and promises of community practice in today’s world and with diverse groups, while learning community organizing techniques and community capacity-building models. Other topics include critical, progressive and liberatory approaches to community practice, narrative and creative expression practice skills, ethical issues in community practice, and social work for social justice.

Journey: Empowerment is available for purchase online at Createspace and Amazon. All proceeds are being donated to Cafe Cultura, a Denver nonprofit organization that promotes unity among Indigenous peoples through creative expression, and to the Air/Us Reach the Rez Campaign, which provides outreach to youth and community by sending copies of an Indigenous women’s literary journal to school libraries, community centers and reservations.

Enthusiastic students accompanied Clinical Professor Philip Seidenz on his annual climb up Mt. Bierstadt, one of Colorado’s “14ers,” in the state’s 14,000-foot peaks area called. The September 27 climb was the first such experience for some of the students.

Congratulations to MSW student Stacey Cook, who was chosen Miss Colorado at State competition and represented Colorado in the Miss America pageant, held on September 14 in Atlantic City, New Jersey.

Students in Assistant Professor Ramona Beltrán’s spring quarter Historical Trauma and Healing class listen to National Park Service tour guide Jeff Campbell at the Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site on May 14. More than 150 Cheyenne and Arapaho (most of them women, children and elderly men) were slaughtered during the 1864 massacre by volunteer cavalry troops.
Dear Alumni and Friends:

As you see in the letter from Board of Visitors Chair Gary Yourtz, we are celebrating the end of a very successful fundraising campaign to build scholarship support for GSSW Students.

A special thank you to donors who established and contributed to the following scholarship funds since the beginning of the ASCEND campaign in 2006. These scholarships are supporting GSSW students to pursue their dream of becoming social workers:

- 1931 Legacy Endowed Scholarship Fund
- Eleanor Barnett Endowed Scholarship Fund
- Margaret and Jean F. East Endowed Scholarship Fund
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- Colorado Society for Clinical Social Work Endowed Scholarship Fund
- Margaret Roath Endowed Scholarship Fund
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- Enid Cox PhD Endowed Scholarship Fund
- Yourtz Family Foundation Endowed Scholarship Fund
- Helene and Marshall Abarbams Endowed Scholarship Fund
- Pete's Endowed Scholarship Fund
- Evi and Evan Makovsky Endowed Scholarship Fund
- John and Joyce Degenhart Endowed Scholarship Fund

On behalf of the students, faculty, staff and our Board of Visitors, we are celebrating the end of a very successful fundraising campaign to build scholarship support for GSSW Students.

For a complete list of giving opportunities, please visit Director of Development and Alumni Giving Lynda Ricketson

Warmest regards,

Lynda Ricketson
Director of Development and Alumni Giving

For a complete list of giving opportunities, please visit www.du.edu/social-work and click on “Support GSSW.”

Donors support GSSW scholarship funds for a wide variety of reasons. For longtime donor Judi Choury, it’s a way to honor a former staff colleague by helping students like the ones they both got to know when they worked together in the GSSW Office of Admission and Financial Aid.

“I am not a DU or GSSW graduate,” says Choury, “but I have been touched deeply by the school. I was fortunate enough to be GSSW’s financial aid coordinator from 1999 to 2001, when Pat Sheller was director of admission. We shared the joy of admitting so many excited and passionate incoming students, but we also saw firsthand the stress many of them experienced in finding ways to pay the ever-rising cost of tuition. The admission staff worked diligently to acquire more financial aid for those students to help ease their burden, and we did the best we could to spread the limited money among those students in need.

“After I left GSSW, I realized anew what those amazing students do when they go out into the work world, and I wanted to help. Knowing that many GSSW students have both undergraduate and graduate loans to repay, I wanted to help them financially by funding a scholarship.”

The Patricia Sheller Memorial Scholarship, created in the wake of the admission director’s untimely death in 2005, was a perfect choice for Choury.

“GSSW was Pat’s life,” Choury recalls. “It was such a privilege to work with her, and this scholarship is a legacy she would be grateful for; it is truly my pleasure and an honor to support GSSW students in following their dreams!”

Throughout the campaign, the University of Denver raised $490 million, and other planned gifts accounted for one-third of the nearly $490 million raised through ASCEND: The Campaign for the University of Denver.

For decades to come, gifts designated to GSSW Scholarship Funds will change the lives of our students. Please contact us to find out how you can build on this foundation and plan your own GSSW legacy.

Contact Lynda Ricketson  Director of Development and Alumni Giving

303-871-7599  lynda.ricketson@du.edu  or visit www.du.edu/social-work and click on “Support GSSW.”

Dear Alumni and Friends:

Thank you for joining me in supporting our Graduate School of Social Work!

The University recently completed the ASCEND campaign, which began July 1, 2006. I’m pleased to report that the Graduate School of Social Work raised $16,645,527! Over that time period, we established 14 new endowed scholarship funds to support students who are pursuing their dreams of becoming social workers.

On behalf of the Board of Visitors, please accept our heartfelt appreciation for your support, whether it is through volunteering, spreading the word about the tremendous accomplishments at the Graduate School of Social Work or providing scholarship support to the 95 percent of students who require it.

Quite simply, we couldn’t do it without you.

Gary L. Yourtz
Chair, Board of Visitors

During the ASCEND campaign, almost 400 visionary supporters notified the University that they have included DU in their estate plans. We are grateful for their generosity. Bequest distributions and other planned gifts accounted for one-third of the nearly $490 million raised through ASCEND: The Campaign for the University of Denver.

For decades to come, gifts designated to GSSW Scholarship Funds will change the lives of our students. Please contact us to find out how you can build on this foundation and plan your own GSSW legacy.

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We gratefully acknowledge the donors listed here whose support represents an investment in the Graduate School of Social Work, including our outreach efforts that include the Bridge Project, the Butler Institute for Families, and the Institute for the Human Animal Connection. On behalf of our faculty, staff and students, thank you!

Dean’s Circle

GIFT TOTALS $2,500 OR MORE July 1, 2013–June 30, 2014

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David L. and工作区成员的贡献。为了表达我们对贵校社会工作学院的贡献，包括我们的外展项目，如桥梁计划，巴特尔家庭研究所，和人与动物研究所。我们代表我们学院的教职员工，员工和学生，向您表示感谢！
When I started as a student at GSSW in 1998, I wanted to make a difference for the LGBT community. Earlier this year, I left my job as Program Officer for the Gill Foundation and accepted the position of regional director for the Human Rights Campaign. I am incredibly lucky to be doing what I love, a difference and a living doing it.

Throughout my career, I have stayed involved with the Graduate School of Social Work, co-authoring articles with faculty members for peer reviewed journals, and as an adjunct professor and your Alumni Association president. GSSW gave me an excellent foundation in professional social work, and those skills have assisted me throughout my career.

GSSW stays at the forefront of social work education and has modified the MSW curriculum so students can customize their degrees by selecting one of eight concentrations. In addition to celebrating the 10th anniversary of its Durango-based MSW program in 2013, GSSW launched the Western Colorado MSW Program in Glenwood Springs to help increase the number of social workers in rural communities. In my position as Program Officer, I am a proponent of a program that is so proactively meeting the needs of communities across Colorado, throughout the United States and even internationally.

In keeping with the vision of Dean and Milton Morris Endowed Chair James Herbert Williams and the faculty, the Alumni Association remains focused on sharing GSSW’s story of excellence through outreach to alumni and friends. On behalf of the students, faculty and staff, I would like to thank you for your time, energy and generosity. We would love to hear your story of GSSW’s MSW and look forward to seeing you on campus.

Sincerely,

Hope Errocio Wisneski MSW ’00
Alumni Association President
Darlene Avery (MSW ’98), MDiv., LCSW, is the first chaplain to serve at Rocky Mountain PACE in Colorado Springs, CO. PACE (Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly) provides a continuum of medical and supportive services to El Paso County seniors with chronic care needs, while maintaining the seniors’ independence in their homes for as long as possible. Avery says she was hired in part because her dual graduate degrees give her the clinical understanding to develop spiritual care plans and documentation.

“I have a love of seniors, and it’s been a blast developing programming for them,” says Avery. She notes that the senior population is increasingly made up of Baby Boomers who have broad spiritual interests and needs. “I work with a number of clients who aren’t ‘religious,’ but who nonetheless are looking to make meaning of their lives in their later years,” she says. In addition to individual pastoral care and Christian worship, Avery hosts an interfaith prayer and meditation group, and a Bible study group focused on the challenges of aging and chronic health conditions. She also serves on GSSW’s PROGRESS Advisory Committee.

Ari Campbell-Kloke (MSW ’10), MA, LCSW, invites you to read the blog that she writes on behalf of THE BEET, Berlin Experimental Education Tours: www.thebeettours.com/blog. She and her husband, Dr. Richard Campbell, launched the program this June.

Berlin Experimental Education Tours: MA, LSW, invites you to read the blog that she writes on behalf of THE BEET, Berlin Experimental Education Tours: www.thebeettours.com/blog. She and her husband, Dr. Richard Campbell, launched the program this June.

Animal-Assisted Social Work Certificate along with his MSW, is one of three clinical counselors at the Argus Institute at Colorado State University’s Veterinary Teaching Hospital. Argus is a specialized service that supports humans, veterinarians and pets. Clark works one-on-one with clients going through the grieving process after the loss of a pet and supports animal owners facing making tough decisions regarding their pet’s healthcare. He also educates his community about the grief process that many people experience after losing their companion animals.

By working with veterinarians, clients and animals, Clark hopes to reduce the stigma around grief resulting from the loss of a pet. “GSSW gave me a great foundation and allowed me to find out who I am as a social worker,” Clark says. “I am happy where I am and making a difference every day.”

Antoinette Gomez (MSW ’10), LCSW, CAC III, loves her work with individuals, families and couples in relationship enhancement and trauma recovery. “My training at GSSW has profoundly impacted my life and the lives of my clients… I came to GSSW knowing this was what I would do, and [my career] brings me so much joy. My passion is working with children who have bright futures ahead but who are affected by the cycle of violence… In 2009, during my MSW internship, I began working with an African boy, age 5, who had been severely traumatized by witnessing domestic abuse in the home… Two years later, I began seeing the child again at Denver Family Institute for trauma-based counseling… In my private practice we have reestablished our therapeutic rapport… In a recent testimonial, his mother said, ’I don’t know where my son’s life would be if it was not for Miss Antoinette’ This is why I do what I do, counseling opens minds and hearts and begins the healing process.” Gomez (’10) is pictured here with classmate Michelle Meadows (’10).

In Memoriam

Patricia Ellen Abdale (MSW ’02), LCSW, of Westminster, CO, died on January 29, 2014. She was 57. In addition to her career as a forensic case manager, Abdale was a skilled dancer and held a degree in Dance/Movement Therapy from Nippon Institute in Boulder, CO. She developed movement therapy techniques for seniors in both New York and Colorado, as well as exercise, music, and art to bring joy to their lives. She was a deeply spiritual person, and she traveled around the world, including trips to Australia, New Zealand and Fiji. Abdale’s survivors include her husband, Morgan Bay, her father, her brother and numerous other family members and close friends. She was preceded in death by her mother and her sister. Memorial donations in Abdale’s memory are suggested to the Natural Resources Defense Council at www.nrdc.org.

Katherine “Katy” Harold, who directed GSSW admission activities from 1972 to 1983, died on November 4, 2013, in Arvada, CO. She was 95. For many years after her retirement, she sent current GSSW staff members small, decorative calendars each December as a New Year’s gift.

Jena T. Kelly (MSW ’87), LCSW, passed away on October 18, 2013, at the age of 62. A resident of Lakewood, CO, Kelly founded a small, home-based business called Social Work Advocacy in 1996, providing social work services to people with disabilities and the disability-related community. Kelly contracted with the Colorado Neurological Institute from 1997 to 2007, conducting a support group for stroke survivors and providing stroke education and rehabilitation services. She also prepared guidelines for independent living, conducted training sessions and seminars, was a member of the Huntington’s Disease Testing Program at the University of Colorado Hospital, and presented lectures through the Autism Foundation on self-empowerment and accessing resources.

Nicholas G. Albanese (MSW ’68) of Englewood, CO, former of Arvada, CO, died on January 6, 2014, at the age of 78. A Marine during the Korean War, he met his wife when they were classmates at GSSW. Albanese was a pioneer in rural mental health in Colorado and had a 25-year career as a social worker in the Department of Social Services, conducting a support group for stroke survivors and providing stroke education and rehabilitation services. He also prepared guidelines for independent living, conducted training sessions and seminars, was a member of the Huntington’s Disease Testing Program at the University of Colorado Hospital, and presented lectures through the Autism Foundation on self-empowerment and accessing resources.

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George Leibowitz, MDiv, LCSW, is the first Chair of the Department of Social Work Certificate at the University of Vermont. His clinical practice experience includes interventions with youth and conducting mental health/psychosocial evaluations in juvenile justice settings.

Leibowitz focuses his teaching, research and consulting on co-occurring disorders and trauma and dissociation among adolescents, the assessment and treatment of sexually abusive youth and adult offenders, restorative justice, family-based interventions and international social work. He is a part of ongoing collaborative projects on mental health and sexual abuse in India and Scotland.

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For many years, they had the pleasure of working with Katherine Graham, the remarkable graphic designer whose artwork has graced numerous GSSW brochures and flyers. She passed away last December. Katherine continued to embrace her life and art with grace, working tirelessly on GSSW projects until just weeks before her death. Katherine died on August 26 at the age of 64, too young to see the fruits of her labor. Katherine’s career was full of creativity and talent will be sorely missed.