Contact

School of Social Work
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Fall 2017

SOCIAL WORK THROUGH A GLOBAL LENS

Addressing social problems around the world

FY17 Annual Report

SPECIAL INSERT:
FY2017 Annual Report

Retired social work professor Hortense McClinton was honored by Chancellor Carol Folt and others at the "Carolina's Noteworthy Firsts" reception, and Dean Gary Bowen had the privilege of visiting with Mrs. McClinton during the event. McClinton was among those to have an existing UNC scholarship renamed to honor her important first in the University's history. She was Carolina's first black professor.

Expanding our reach

As social workers, we approach our profession every day with one central goal in mind: to strengthen the well-being of individuals and families, giving extra care to those who are vulnerable, marginalized and oppressed. We pursue this mission not only within our own communities but beyond our nation's borders. We do this because as researchers and practitioners, we understand that the economic, physical and social challenges that people face globally are similar to the problems and issues facing residents here in the United States and in North Carolina.

This is why our School of Social Work continues to expand its global reach, not only because we want to give people wherever they live the greatest chance to succeed but because we understand the invaluable opportunity we have to learn from others in other countries. In fact, over the years, our faculty have worked diligently to cultivate relationships with universities and organizations in places such as China, India, Japan, Sweden, South Africa and Zambia to help us bridge the gap between research and evidence-informed practice.

The connections that we forge around the world help us to further fulfill our educational responsibility. Because we live in an increasingly diverse society, we must ensure that our students graduate with the cultural competencies they need to work with populations here and abroad. The work we do to prepare these students and the research we conduct to impact policies around the world are a vital part of Carolina's efforts to be a leading global public research university.

With the launch this fall of professor Gina Chowa's Global Social Development Innovations research center and with the appointment of Jack Richman as the School's first associate dean of global engagement and international programs, I am confident we will continue to strengthen UNC's efforts and position our School to take on more of a leadership role. You can read more about this new center and a Q&A with Jack on the importance of social work around the world in this issue of Contact. You will also find other articles featuring our faculty, students, and alumni and their commitment to global social justice work.

I am excited about the steps that we are taking to deepen our scholarship, service and practice internationally. We embrace these endeavors because we must. The work we do is necessary to create a more equitable and better society for all. As always, we appreciate your support as we continue to work to improve the welfare of our state and our broader global community.

Sincerely,

Gary L. Bowen

Gary L. Bowen
Dean and Kenan Distinguished Professor

Contact

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Contact, the alumni magazine of the UNC School of Social Work, is published in spring and fall.

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- Nora Simmons
- SSW communications archives
- Thaddaeus Edwards
- Travis Moe
- UNC School of Medicine

OUR MISSION
The mission of the School of Social Work is to expand knowledge regarding social problems and programs, to educate social workers for advanced practice and to provide leadership in the development of socially and economically just policies and programs that strengthen individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
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CELEBRATE 100 YEARS 1920–2020

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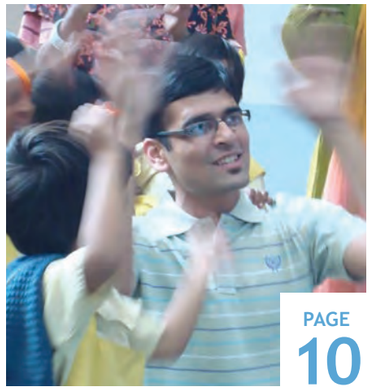
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Strengthening global practice and innovation

New research center works to improve economic and social welfare for all

By Susan White

GSDI GLOBAL SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT INNOVATIONS

Innovate • Evaluate • Disseminate

Nearly 30 years ago, Gina Chowa faced a pivotal decision. As a student at the University of Zambia, Chowa had enrolled believing that she was meant to be a doctor. That is until she learned she just didn't like the coursework and couldn't stomach the sight of blood. Anxious and uncertain of her next steps, she turned to her father for advice.

"I remember him asking, 'So what do you want to do?'" recalled Chowa, an associate professor at UNC's School of Social Work. "All I ever wanted to do was help people."

Her answer was hardly surprising. After all, Chowa's parents, both educators, had instilled in their seven children the values of assisting others in need from the moment they were old enough to understand. Chowa and her siblings often demonstrated these values by participating in service projects, from clothing collections to community cleanups.

"My father was the son of a World War II veteran, and he came from a very modest background," Chowa said. "So he was constantly reminding us to appreciate working and living with people who did not have our background and our privileges. We were always welcoming people into our home, and we were taught to respect them and value them and to see that they had something to offer."

These experiences and additional guidance from the university's registrar convinced Chowa that she should enroll in the School of Humanities. There, she found her path into the social work field. Although she knew very little about who social workers were or what they did, she quickly discovered her niche and a passion for social and economic community development, especially within the international arena.

That she could have held any doubt for her place and purpose in the world is difficult to imagine nearly two decades later. Chowa, who came to Carolina in 2008, is considered a pioneer in global intervention research, largely due to her groundbreaking work on the effects of asset ownership on youth and families in resource-limited countries. Her research has been supported by the MasterCard Foundation, Ford Foundation, the Chronic Poverty Research Centre in London and the UNC Center for AIDS Research. Chowa's work focuses on developing holistic and impactful interventions that positively affect the root causes of poverty and health disparities around the globe.

In October, Chowa reinforced her investment in the social and economic development field with the launch of Global Social Development Innovations (GSDI), a research center housed within the UNC School of Social Work. Chowa has been planning for this new center for years and will serve as director. GSDI was developed to train social workers for global practice and to bring together an interdisciplinary team of researchers and scholars to produce evidence, develop interventions and impact policy to improve the economic and social welfare of women, youth and their families around the world.

Gina Chowa, Ph.D., MSW

"At the core, GSDI is about bringing social justice and bringing solutions to historically marginalized populations," Chowa said.

Such a focus fits well within UNC's overall mission to be a leading global public research university, added Ron Strauss, Carolina's executive vice provost and chief international officer. Moreover, GSDI will strengthen the university's education, service and scholarly efforts to address "some of the world's thorniest, most difficult problems and move them forward," he said.

"What I love about the Global Social Development Innovations initiative is its embrace of some of the world's most complex and challenging issues," Strauss said, "and (its ability to) bring the intelligence of the university and this community together to try to do something constructive, creative, and …in partnership with other entities to make a difference."

GSDI's goal to connect scholars across UNC's campus and beyond is important for creating sustainable social change, Chowa said. Because global issues such as HIV/AIDS or the financial exclusion of women require complex solutions, researchers must be willing to collaborate with organizations on the ground and with experts from different disciplinary backgrounds, she said.

"We can't do this alone," she said. "If you go it alone, you might think you're solving something, but you're just scratching the surface. That's why I always say the biggest impact is done in teams."

GSDI's team brings a wealth of global experience to the table and will help guide the center's focus on six core research areas: economic security, financial inclusion, social protection, workforce development, education and health. Working closely with Chowa is assistant professor Rainier Masa, the lead researcher for the center's work on health and social protection. The team includes more than two dozen scholars affiliated with UNC and with other campuses across the country and globe. The team also includes assistant professor David Ansong, research project manager Sara Mitra and a handful of graduate student research assistants in the School.

(continued, next page)

The GSDI team is currently working in China, Ghana, India, Kenya, Philippines, South Africa and Zambia.

A trainer and partner from the Safe Motherhood Action Group (SMAG) delivers a training to expectant mothers on the role of fathers in birth and parenting in the Lundazi District of Eastern Province, Zambia.

Photos courtesy of GSDI

Community health workers educate adolescent girls on reproductive health in rural India.

“The partnership with GSDI is very beneficial to our work … because GSDI faculty are bringing in scientific knowledge, innovative approaches and global perspectives to local problems.”

Suresh Pathare, professor and director of CSRD

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The team is currently working in seven countries (China, Ghana, India, Kenya, Philippines, South Africa and Zambia), engaging leaders in government, business, non-governmental organizations and social development on initiatives that impact financial literacy, gender equity, access to education, food security and youth employment.

For example, in Ahmednagar, India, GSDI has been working closely with the Center for Studies in Rural Development (CSRD) at the Institute of Social Work and Research to reshape attitudes and behavior around young girls and women. Currently, the partners are evaluating a training program designed to teach adolescent girls and boys about the importance of education, gender equity, reproductive health, leadership, and gender-based violence prevention.

“The partnership with GSDI is very beneficial to our work … because GSDI faculty are bringing in scientific knowledge, innovative approaches and global perspectives to local problems,” said Suresh Pathare, a professor and director of CSRD.

With GSDI, collaboration and expertise flow both ways. If local solutions can positively impact global issues, then the reverse is just as true, UNC researchers agree. In fact, GSDI is already beginning to explore how lessons learned from other countries around issues of youth unemployment, food insecurity and financial exclusion may shed light on intransigent social problems in our state, such as homelessness and poverty.

Whether focusing on issues in North Carolina or abroad, the center will approach these challenges with the same focus, Masa said. Sustainable solutions must be “locally and culturally relevant.”

“GSDI is unique in our approach to finding solutions, building knowledge, and shaping policy because we recognize the expertise of all stakeholders, particularly the vulnerable and marginalized populations that we work with,” he said. “This multilevel expertise is so important as we tackle issues that have global social, health and economic implications.”

For Chowa, contributing to the next generation of scholars and practitioners is vital. She expects GSDI to play a significant role in preparing social workers for global practice and rigorous research work. As GSDI grows, she hopes to bring in two doctoral students and four MSW students every two years to work with the center. This educational experience will likely include travel abroad so that students can learn in the field.

“We want students to see how we’re working in these communities so that they can learn as we’re learning,” Chowa said. “We also want them to help replicate this work when we’re long gone.”

Although the social work profession is gaining more visibility in global social justice work, Chowa and her colleagues hope GSDI will further strengthen the field’s presence. Many of the problems facing communities today require a more holistic perspective, and social workers are well-suited for the challenge, she said.

“I always say that a social worker is the best global social development practitioner because of our training,” Chowa said. “We understand that there’s no silver bullet and that you often have to deal with people holistically because what is affecting their health might be an economic issue or a psychological issue. So when we go in as social workers, we try to touch all these aspects of somebody’s life or a community’s life. So social workers shouldn’t just be at the table of global development practice, they need to be leading the discussions.” ♦

Photo: Thaddaeus Edwards

GSDI is currently partnering with scholars affiliated with UNC, with researchers from other campuses and with economic, nonprofit and policy leaders from across the country and globe, on programs and interventions in China, Ghana, India, Kenya, Philippines, South Africa and Zambia.

Launching for success

GSDI hosts symposium to open center

By Susan White

Social work researchers; economic, nonprofit and policy leaders; and practitioners from around the globe gathered Oct. 11-13 for a three-day symposium to launch Global Social Development Innovations (GSDI) at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The new research center is based within the School of Social Work and works to improve the lives of marginalized populations around the world.

GSDI kicked off its celebratory events on Oct. 11 with a dinner for nearly 100 guests at the Rizzo Center in Chapel Hill. The dinner included performances from two UNC student dance groups and a special video presentation highlighting GSDI’s work.

Dean Gary L. Bowen praised Chowa and her School of Social Work team — assistant professors Rainer Masa and David Ansong and research project manager Sara Mitra — as well as the center’s “tremendous vision,” which he said reflects the School’s commitment to social justice.

“The cutting-edge work of the center is designed to bring tangible changes in the well-being of marginalized and vulnerable populations globally,” Bowen said. “In other words, to make a real difference in the lives of individuals.”

In addition, GSDI is expected to strengthen Carolina’s efforts as a global university. Chancellor Carol L. Folt, who spoke at the launch dinner, said she is especially impressed with the center’s collaborative strategy for tackling critical social and economic issues around the world. GSDI models the university’s innovative ideals, she said.

“I know this center will be successful because I know Gina, and she is a game-changer,” Folt said. “And (the center) couldn’t be in a better place than in the School of Social Work.”

As part of the launch events, GSDI hosted its inaugural lecture (which organizers hope will become a biannual event), featuring Michael Sherraden, George Warren Brown (GWB) Distinguished University Professor and founding director of the Center for Social Development at Washington University in St. Louis. Sherraden was a mentor to Chowa, who earned her doctorate from GWB. Named one of the most influential people in the world by Time magazine in 2010, Sherraden is known for his pioneering work on asset building for low-income people. He has helped to influence policy development in the United Kingdom, Taiwan, Canada, Indonesia and other countries.

The GSDI symposium included two days of panel discussions where public policy leaders, researchers, nonprofit practitioners and others shared new discoveries and ideas in global social development work and explored research-informed practice and innovation. A variety of topics were covered, including food security and its impact on family health and economic security; measuring financial resilience around the world; and integrated approaches in healthcare and policy. Sessions also focused on innovative interventions and programs around the globe, including those addressing HIV medication adherence in South Africa; adolescent boys’ and girls’ programming in rural India; and women’s savings and credit groups in rural Zambia.

School of Social Work faculty members participated in many of the sessions, including Distinguished Professor Rebecca Macy, who along with Rani Deshpande, director of financial services and employment with Save the Children, led a discussion on how practice informs research and how research informs practice. ♦

Seeing the world

Students learn life lessons through service and research work abroad

By Susan White

Every year, our students bring a wealth of life and personal experiences to the MSW program, including volunteer experiences, service and research work abroad. These experiences deepen their passion for the field of social work and help them to see and understand social issues through a global community lens.

Travis Moe is from Boulder, Colo., and is a second-year full-time MSW student. He is interested in environmental justice and the intersections between place-based food sovereignty, renewable energy, regenerative agriculture and local empowerment, especially related to marginalized populations. He is currently working with Resourceful Communities, a subsidiary of the Conservation Fund, and hopes to continue that work after graduating.

Before returning to school, Travis spent eight years traveling and working both domestically and internationally in Alaska, the Middle East, Eastern Europe, West Africa and Central America. During that time, he gained practical experience in many skills, including community organizing, counseling, agriculture and construction. Travis is committed to social and economic justice and believes that solutions to the world's most intractable problems will come from the frontline communities that are most impacted by these issues.

"These experiences taught me much about the breadth and nuances of the global economy, the needs and desires of different communities, and the interconnection of broad issues like human rights exploitation and ecological degradation," Moe said. "These lessons forced me to re-evaluate dominant narratives about the causes and solutions to global problems, while also reaffirming the power and potential of grassroots efforts. That understanding has strengthened my commitment to social work."

Krista Nicole Scheffey is a first-year full-time student in the School's dual degree MSW/MPH program. Prior to serving as a Peace Corps volunteer, she received a bachelor of arts in anthropology from the University of Chicago and worked as an asthma educator and care coordinator at a pediatric hospital in Washington, D.C. She is interested in the social determinants of health and improving access to care for underserved women. After graduation, she hopes to work in the United States or abroad on community-based research and interventions to improve maternal health outcomes.

> **"Empowering communities to create their own solutions is my ultimate goal as a social worker."**
>
> Krista Nicole Scheffey, MSW student

In 2015, she entered the Peace Corps and, for two years, served as a community health advisor in a rural town in the central highlands of Madagascar. There, she worked closely with the doctor, midwife and community health workers at the town's public health clinic as well as with teachers and students at the community's schools. During her time abroad, she was selected to receive funding and training through the Let Girls Learn initiative to develop several community programs promoting gender equality, young women's health and girls' education.

"Before living in Madagascar, I was interested in women's empowerment and health, but I didn't necessarily see those topics as related," she said. "In Madagascar, where adolescent pregnancy is extremely common and women walk for hours to see a midwife for contraception or prenatal care, the connection is almost impossible to ignore. Although the barriers women in the U.S. face are often less obvious, my time abroad gave me a unique perspective on what we could be doing differently to improve maternal and other health outcomes at home. I also have a new appreciation for macro-level work. In Madagascar, I spent a lot of time building trust and understanding local problems and assets with the hope that my work would be culturally appropriate, relevant and sustainable. Empowering communities to create their own solutions is my ultimate goal as a social worker."

Nora Simmons is a Chapel Hill native and a first-year full-time student enrolled in the dual degree MSW/MPH program. She is interested in sexual, reproductive, maternal and child health. She is especially interested in promoting multilingual social work practice and plans to work with immigrant populations after she graduates. Simmons is currently doing her field placement at El Centro para Familias Hispanas in Raleigh.

Simmons has studied and worked abroad in South America and Asia. Before coming to UNC, she worked in South Korea for several years as an English teacher. During her time in Seoul, she learned Korean and volunteered at Keunsaem School, an education program for the children of North Korean defectors and refugees. This work was important to her as it provided educational and social support to children adjusting to life in a new country and exposed them to new cultural concepts that were not included in their national education system in North Korea.

Krista Nicole Scheffey in Madagascar

Travis Moe in Egypt

Nora Simmons in South Korea

While volunteering at Keunsaem, Simmons became interested in the concept of defecting and the effects of wartime mentality and political conflict on children. This experience heavily influenced her decision to go back to school.

"I met some amazing MSW mentors who encouraged me to pursue social work, taught me about culturally appropriate practices and demonstrated just how versatile an MSW can be," she said.

Benjamin Rosado is a U.S.-born Guatemalan-Puerto Rican, who grew up in Wilmington and is a second-year full-time student in the School's dual degree MSW/MPH program. He is an advocate for mental health, immigrants, and youth and is interested in the intersection of clinical social work, trauma-informed public health interventions, and program evaluation and monitoring practices. Following graduation, he plans to work with immigrant youth and families and communities of color.

Rosado's main international work and experience has been in Guatemala where, over five years, he volunteered with a Spanish school and social aid institution, worked with U.S.-based nonprofits and completed his own independent research on understanding depression and youth migration. During the summer of 2016, Rosado published an article for a Guatemalan nonprofit organization that focused on the emotional experience and resilience of youth with parents who have migrated to the United States.

Benjamin Rosado in Guatemala

"Being able to interact with various players from NGO managers, local community workers, tourists and Guatemalan social workers has given me a wider lens to better understand the complexity of the country, its history and the current social inequalities present today," he said. "In addition, this lens has helped me to look at my own community and the United States more critically so that I have a better idea of where I can best intervene as a future public health social worker." ♦

Creating the change he wants to see

Q&A with alumnus Darshan Mundada

By Susan White

Darshan Mundada MSW '11 has long been committed to improving human rights and the human condition, especially among the disenfranchised in his native country of India. As a teen, he founded a civil society that is dedicated to social welfare, community building and sustainable development. Those early efforts led to his selection as a Rotary World Peace Fellow and influenced his decision to pursue a graduate degree at UNC's School of Social Work. In this latest issue of Contact magazine, we catch up with Mundada and his ongoing work in India.

Q: *Tell us a little about yourself — what have you been doing since you graduated with your MSW?*

I've moved quite a bit since graduation! After returning to India, I worked on two social enterprises, the ideas for which were sown during my days at UNC. Sareelution worked with victims of human trafficking, empowering them to live a dignified life. TRAVolution connected campuses across boundaries, opening hearts and minds of young students to cultures beyond their own. Thereafter, I moved on to work with a start-up, helping to guide the philanthropic efforts of wealthy celebrities and others.

Those initiatives eventually connected me to a position that focuses on corporate social responsibility (CSR). Today, I serve as the chief executive officer for Sterlite Tech Foundation in India, the CSR arm of Sterlite Technologies Ltd., which manufactures and sells telecom products and solutions in India and internationally. I also serve as the chief sustainability officer for Sterlite Technologies.

Q: *Tell us more about your current role as head of corporate social responsibility for Sterlite Tech Foundation. What does the phrase "corporate social responsibility" mean and why is CSR important, especially from a global point of view?*

As the CEO for Sterlite Tech Foundation, I help guide the company's strategic direction for investing in projects and programs that have a social impact. We focus on holistically integrating the organization's core business with the social and environmental concerns of our communities. For example, the foundation currently works with initiatives that provide vocational training to women in India to empower them and to give them greater opportunities to become self-sufficient.

All of this work is driven, in part, by the fact that India is probably the only country that mandates that all major corporations use 2 percent of their net profits to enhance the well-being of communities and people outside of their businesses. At the center of this mandate are beliefs that Mahatma Gandhi embraced — the idea that all wealthy people are custodians of their wealth and not the owners of it. As trustees of this wealth, they must maintain a balance between their own personal needs and the needs of the greater society.

So although people may have different interpretations for what corporate social responsibility means, I believe in a broad definition that encompasses all aspects of good corporate citizenship, enabling companies to play a much larger role in the betterment of our communities, rather than just acting as the primary drivers of economic growth.

Q: *When you graduated from the School of Social Work, you said you longed to return to India so that you could be the "change I want to see." What did you mean by that? How has earning your MSW helped you accomplish your goals?*

I knew that whatever I did in the U.S. would have an impact, but I also knew that I would be able to multiply my impact in India because I know this geography; I know the context; I know the people; and I know the culture better. So for me, it was about coming back to India with the knowledge and skills that I learned in the U.S. so that I could start building bridges. Just having an MSW on my resume has given credibility to my voice that I didn't have earlier.

Q: *What specific skills can social workers offer that work well within the global environment?*

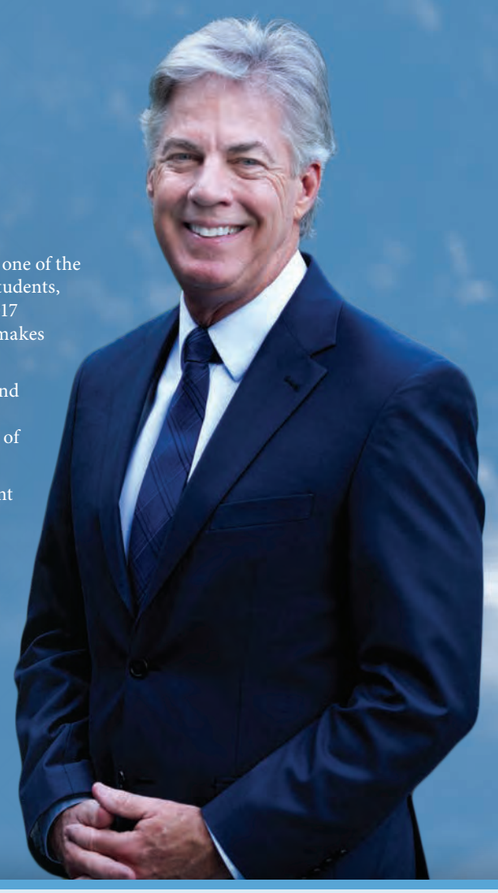
First and foremost, you have to have empathy to be a good social worker. Personally, I think social workers have the skills to be better managers than someone with an MBA. As a social worker, I learned people management skills from a very different perspective. I think more than anything, what social workers can teach or offer are values — values of empathy, values of selflessness, values of care, values of understanding, listening and going that extra mile. The core part of social work is our value system.

Q: *If you had to offer advice to a social work student or graduate considering working in the international field, what would you suggest they need to know to be successful?*

To be successful at creating change requires commitment and real action. I am amazed at how many individuals I meet who speak the language of changing the world and saving humanity and yet none has spent time in the communities they plan to "save." We cannot bring about change without truly understanding the experiences of those in need. The only real way to create change is to get into communities and spend time with people and listen to them. ♦

FY17 Annual Report

From the Dean



Dear Friends,

As dean of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Social Work, one of the things I enjoy most is the opportunity to celebrate the accomplishments of our students, faculty and staff. And we have much to celebrate! You'll see many of the 2016–2017 accomplishments in this annual report, a new publication for our School. Your support makes these accomplishments possible.

With your support, we are able to offer scholarships to outstanding students, recruit and retain world-class faculty and develop innovative new programs and initiatives that are earning national recognition for their impact in the field of social work. Our Honor Roll of Donors (beginning on page 10) recognizes those who contributed to these activities.

On behalf of our students, faculty and staff, I thank you for your generous commitment to the work of our School and I invite you to share your ideas as we continue on our mission. Together, our efforts create a lasting impact on individuals, families and communities in North Carolina and beyond.

With warm wishes,

Gary L. Bowen

Gary L. Bowen

Dean and Kenan Distinguished Professor

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Highlights

Doctoral Enrollment
34

MSW Enrollment
272

INCLUDING
- Triangle DE, 49
- Winston-Salem DE, 30
- Advanced Standing, 18

DUAL DEGREE
- MS - Public Health, 17
- Master of Divinity, 4
- Master of Public Administration, 4

47 percent of MSW students receive scholarships
Average award
$6,800

Alumni Worldwide
+5,000

Gary L. Bowen
Named to serve as
DEAN

Global Social Development Innovations research center, led by Gina Chowa
GSDI
Approved by
UNC
Board of Trustees

Project NO REST team, led by Dean F. Duncan
Awarded
$4.9 MILLION
to fight human trafficking

Recognizing Excellence in our Faculty and Staff

HONORS AND AWARDS, 2016–2017

UNC School of Social Work faculty and staff received national and university recognition for their service, research and other contributions to the field, our world and our mission. We are proud of each individual and want to share their accomplishments with you.

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL WELFARE
Fellow
Gary Bowen, Dean and Kenan Distinguished Professor

AMERICAN STATISTICAL ASSOCIATION
Fellow
Ding-Geng (Din) Chen, Wallace H. Kuralt Distinguished Professor

SOCIETY FOR SOCIAL WORK AND RESEARCH
Fellow
Betsy Bledsoe

SOCIETY FOR SOCIAL WORK AND RESEARCH
Fellow
Mimi Chapman

SOCIETY FOR SOCIAL WORK AND RESEARCH
Social Policy Award
Mark Testa, Spears-Turner Distinguished Professor

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL

C. Felix Harvey Award to Advance Institutional Priorities
Amy Blank Wilson

Distinguished Teaching Award for Post-Baccalaureate Instruction
Marilyn Ghezzi

Edward Kidder Graham Faculty Service Award
Mimi Chapman

Faculty Mentoring Award
Mark Fraser, John A. Tate Distinguished Professor for Children in Need

Information Technology Award
John Anderson

Junior Faculty Development Awards
Melissa Lippold

Junior Faculty Development Awards
Rainier Masa

Office of the Provost Award for Engaged Scholarship
Gary Cuddeback / Mental Health and Criminal Justice Evidence-Based Intervention Collaboration

Robert E. Bryan Public Service Award
Joshua Hinson

UNC-Chapel Hill Manager of the Year
Kelly Smith

UNC-Chapel Hill Nominee for UNC System's O. Max Gardner Award
Gina Chowa

PROFESSORSHIPS AND PROMOTIONS

During the 2016–2017 academic year, UNC School of Social Work named select faculty and staff to key leadership roles within the School. Congratulations to these individuals!

NAMED PROFESSORSHIPS

Berg-Beach Distinguished Professor
Iris Carlton-LaNey

Johnson-Howard-Adair Distinguished Professor
Jack Richman

Wallace Kuralt Early Career Professor
Gina Chowa

Wallace Kuralt Early Career Professor
Gary Cuddeback

Wallace Kuralt Early Career Professor
Trenette Clark Goings

PROMOTIONS IN ADMINISTRATION

UNC-Chapel Hill Director of Ethics Education and Policy Management
Kim Strom-Gottfried

Senior Associate Dean for MSW Education
Lisa Zerden

Associate Dean for Global Engagement and International Programs
Jack Richman

Associate Dean for Research and Faculty Development
Sheryl Zimmerman

Associate Dean for Doctoral Education
Matthew Howard

Assistant Dean for Administration
Kelly Smith

Assistant Dean for Field Education
Rebecca Brigham

Recognizing Excellence In Our Students

HONORS AND AWARDS

One of the characteristics of a nationally-recognized school is nationally-recognized students! This year, UNC School of Social Work students received national honors as well as top University awards. It is our privilege to work with such high-achieving students.

NAADAC, THE ASSOCIATION FOR ADDICTION PROFESSIONALS

Minority Fellowship Program for Addiction Counselors
Jennifer Mossefin, Shane Phillips, Allison Schad

SOCIETY FOR SOCIAL WORK AND RESEARCH

Research Presentations
Erum Agha, Brittany Chesworth, Joseph Frey, Ashley Givens, Laurie Graham, Todd Jensen, Brianna Lombardi, Jennifer O'Brien, Sarah Rabiner Eisensmith, Elaina Sabatine, Joy Stewart, Christopher Wretman, Shiyou Wu

SOUTHEASTERN COUNCIL ON FAMILY RELATIONS

Student Writing Award
Todd Jensen

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL

University Award for the Advancement of Women
Olivia Bass

University Team for CLARION Case Competition
Cynthia Royals-Wilson

OUTSTANDING DOCTORAL STUDENTS

Tricia McGovern and Charity Sneed Watkins received the School's Outstanding Doctoral Student Award for 2017.

McGovern has worked in clinical practice for six years, primarily in addiction therapy. Her research focuses on college student alcohol use and behavior economics. She has published four peer-reviewed journal articles, with others in review.

Watkins is known for her leadership in social justice and served on several School and University committees that worked to create more inclusive communities. Her research focuses on academic resilience among low-income African American children and the role of parents in supporting their children's academic success. She has published two book chapters and four peer-reviewed journal articles, with another in review.

2016-2017 MSW Awards

Alumni Development Award
Aura Victoria Castillo

Melvarene J. Howard Adair Scholarship
Jessica Martinez-Matamoros

Jane Hall and William Johnston Armfield Scholarship
Johanna Alexandra Contreras, Ceara Velesa Smith

Berg Scholars Award
Claire Elizabeth Bates

Annie Kizer Bost Award
Rebecca Martin Oshige

Amy Louise Brannock, MSW Memorial Scholarship Fund
Dena Marie Lind

Kathleen Price Bryan Scholarship
Josephine Peggy Carmona, Heidi Elizabeth McNeilly, Millicent Nicolle Robinson

Chaney-Jacobs-Preyer Award
Lindley Danielle Reynolds, Mattie Steele, Guillermo Miguel Tremols

Brett Chavis Memorial Scholarship
Mary Stephanie Houston

Child Welfare Education Collaborative
Lillian Mindich, Rebecca Martin Oshige, Tori Rae Rolston

Robert and Peggy Culbertson Scholarship
Naomi Ruth Spencer

Bertie Oscar Edwards Scholarship
Sarah Macht Dergins

Joanna Finkelstein Gorham Scholarship
Bethany Lorraine Bivens, Yazmin Garcia Rico, Alice Jane Keyes, Kaleia Michelle Martin, Mackenzie Nicole Rockett

Kirsten E. Hewitt Scholarship
Kristin Taylor Bristol

Alan Keith-Lucas Scholarship
Dawn Michelle Bowes

Jeffrey Langston Scholarship
Caitlin Avery Klein

Leadership in Neurodevelopmental & Related Disorders Traineeship (LEND)
Nicole Ames Michaelson

James and Connie Maynard Scholarship
Ana Beatriz Cabello-De la Garza

Robert Ernest McClernon Memorial Fund
Brittany Teresa Allen, Karina Fabiola Alvarado, Danielle Nicole Destiche, Amanda Faye Hobgood

Margaret Mebane Parker Scholarship Fund
Ashley Rose Wilhelm

Meehan Scholarship
Linda Batchelor, Brooklyn Skye Milner

Betsy Rogers Millar Scholarship
Tyrek Tormaine Corry

Hugh MacRae Morton, Jr. Memorial Scholarship
Laura Natalia Castro

Jane Curtis Parker Award
Olivia Augusteen Bass, Danya Silberman Holtzman, Britnie Nikole Hopkins

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Ellen E. Power Scholarship
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Kenneth C. Royall, Jr. Scholarship
Danielle Nicole Destiche

Janice Hough Schopler Scholarship
Carolina Cecilia Ahumada Mejia, Isabel Helen Chasse, Xi Chen, Sara Collins Hamilton, Katherine Bess Hilbinger, Kristan Ryan Rosenthal

Dean E. Smith Opening Doors Fund
Carolina Cecilia Ahumada Mejia, Katelyn Leah Ehle, Zane Daniel Shetler

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UNC-PrimeCare
Laura Stuart Barkley, Katherine Melissa Barron, Amanda Marie Blaede-Guiliano, Whitney Shaw Blalock, Kristin Taylor Bristol, Emily Marie Carr, Mark Douglas Ernsberger, Deborah Manring Furr, Kadijah Ra'Gine Grant, Patrick Joseph Hecker, Laura Powell Hicks, Danya Silberman Holtzman, Mary Elizabeth Hudson, Jordan Elizabeth Lodato, Verlissa Melynda Mason, Tierney Maureen Diane McNamara, Kelsey Lynn Morris, Christine Elizabeth Pavey, Cynthia Louise Royals-Wilson, Allison Marie Schad, Renee Lynn Sheppard, Hayley Elizabeth Smith, Ayat Ratiq Soufan, Sarah Marie Sterling, Amanda Nicole Strott, Julia Minor Tarr, Pamela Louise Wellman, Brandy Lea Wilson, Amanda Marie Zaski

Walsh-Cioffi Award
Kadeisha Mariah Bonsu

Ellen Black Winston Scholarship
Katelyn Leah Ehle

2016-2017 Ph.D. Awards

Carolina Consortium on Human Development (CCHD) Predoctoral Fellowship
Todd Jensen

Dissertation Completion Fellowship
Jennifer O'Brien

Doctoral Merit Assistantship
LB (Lauren) Terese Klein, Sarah Rabiner Eisensmith

North Carolina Excellence Fellowship
Michael Joseph Lazar

Order of the Golden Fleece
Todd Jensen

Five-Year Royster Society of Fellows Fellowship Award for Doctoral Study
Laurie Graham, Shiyou Wu, Todd Jensen

Sam & Betsy Reeves Doctoral Fellowship
Erum Agha, Stefani Nicole Baca-Atlas, Brittney Chesworth, Kanisha Latina Coleman, Premela Gillian Deck, Annie Maria Francis, Joseph Frey, Jane (Jaime) Moore Hughes, Brianna Lombardi, Elaina Sabatine, Charity Sneed Watkins

"Social Work Education: The International Journal," Best Empirical Article of 2016
Shiyou Wu

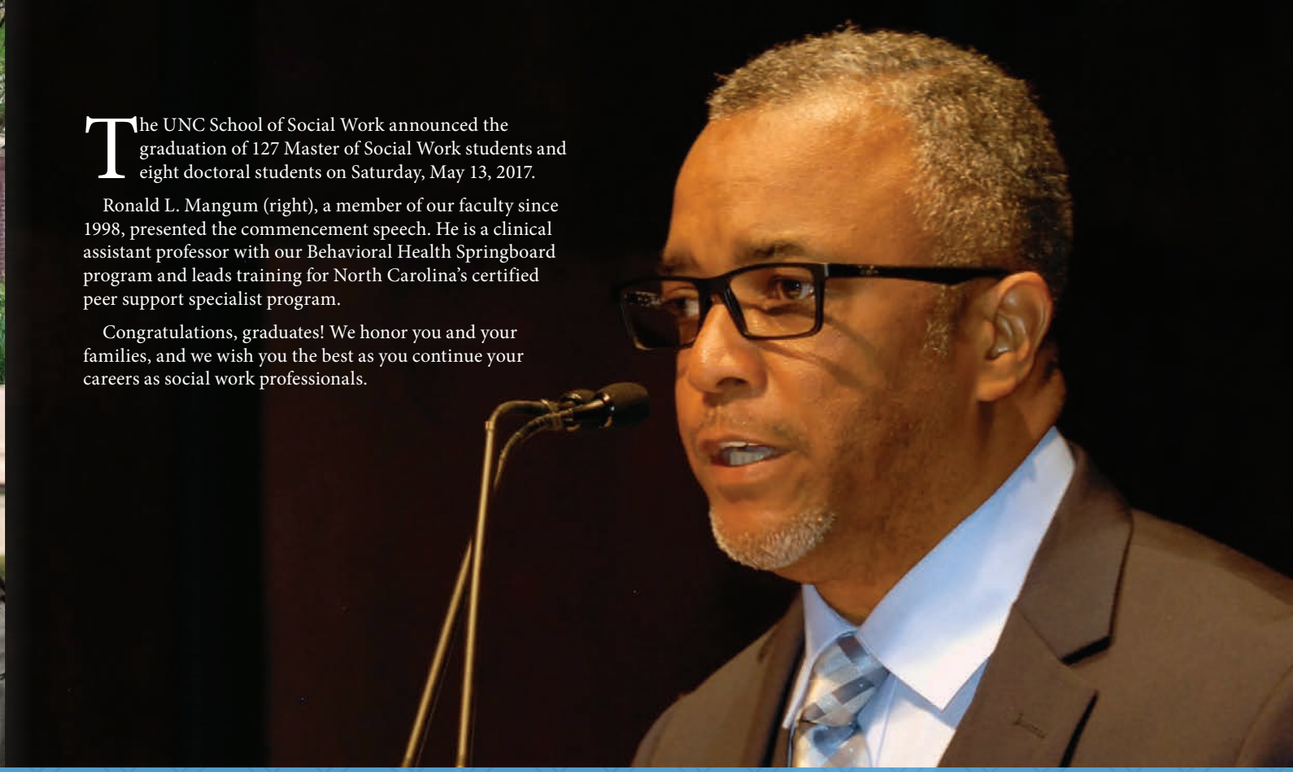
University of New Hampshire, Innovative Research Award from Prevention Innovations Research Center
LB (Lauren) Terese Klein

Congratulations, Class of 2017!

The UNC School of Social Work announced the graduation of 127 Master of Social Work students and eight doctoral students on Saturday, May 13, 2017.

Ronald L. Mangum (right), a member of our faculty since 1998, presented the commencement speech. He is a clinical assistant professor with our Behavioral Health Springboard program and leads training for North Carolina's certified peer support specialist program.

Congratulations, graduates! We honor you and your families, and we wish you the best as you continue your careers as social work professionals.



MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK GRADUATES

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Karina Fabiola Alvarado
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Laura Stuart Barkley
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Julia Britt Griffin
Kali Madeline Hackett
Sara Collins Hamilton
Brittini Hanna Harbin
Patrick Joseph Hecker
Michelle Clark Helton
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Charles Norman Holleman
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Mary Elizabeth Hudson
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Caroline Rebekah Jones
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Martha Zdon Triggs
Breana Nicole Van Velzen
April Leigh Walkowski
Kaylyn Elizabeth Weller
Pamela Louise Wellman
Ashley Rose Wilhelm
Brandy Lea Wilson
Amanda Marie Zaski

SOCIAL WORK PH.D. GRADUATES

Kanisha Latina Coleman
Angela You Gwaltney
Jaime Moore Hughes
Todd Michael Jensen
Jennifer Elizabeth O'Brien
Charity Sneed Watkins
Shiyou Wu
Christopher John Wretman

We were also proud to recognize five Distinguished Alumni Award recipients for their outstanding leadership, service and achievement:

Sharon Warren Cook
Dana Courtney
Karen McLeod
Phyllis Thomas-Thorpe
Irene Zipper

Honor Roll of *Giving*

The School of Social Work thanks the many alumni, friends, foundations and corporations who made financial contributions as gifts or grants for sponsored research between July 1, 2016 and June 30, 2017. Thanks to your generous support, our School has become one of the best in the country. We produce leaders in social work education, research, direct practice and community service. Your generosity enhances everything we do. We have made every effort to ensure the accuracy of the listing below. If an error or omission has occurred, please notify Mary Beth Hernandez at marybeth@email.unc.edu or 919-962-6469.

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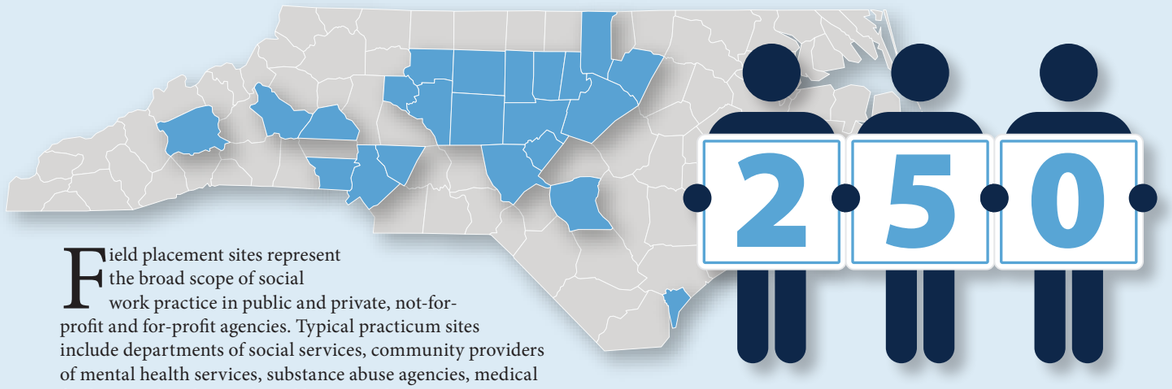
Brenda L. Pearson
M. Noel Pellish
Penguin Random House - Matching Gifts
Spencer S. Perkins
Lauren A. Perkins
Jo Ann M. Pettiford
Caroline R. Phillips
Cynthia J. Phillips
Jacqueline L. Pierce
Caryl A. Polk
Connie J. Polk
Elizabeth C. Powell
John Y. Powell
Fennell Preddy
Mary Ann T. Preddy
Carly N. Price
Bridget M. Rasmussen
Beverly T. Reeb
Jacques A. Revoir
Kerriann Revoir
Lindley Reynolds
Jack W. Rhyne
Karen Rhyne
Nelson L. Richardson
Patricia S. Rickenbaker
Suzette M. Roach
Helen H. Robinson
Isaac A. Robinson
Robert N. Rodriguez
Sandra K. Rodriguez
Benjamin R. Rosado
Larry J. Rosenfeld
Carrie B. Ross
David S. Ross
Denise Rosser-Blanco
Judith S. Rothenberg
Melanie L. Sadur
Edward D. Sale Jr.
Marsden W. Sale
Hannah W. Sanii
Vahid J. Sanii
Robin L. Sansing
Charles A. Schoenheit
Ivan C. Schonfeld
Jillian A. Schonfeld
Limor B. Schwartz
Jack G. Scruggs Jr.
Susan Scully
Michele S. Seagraves
Margaret B. Seagroves
Ralph W. Seagroves
Mary S. Shields
Patricia S. Sikes
Emily B. Simmons
Larry W. Simmons
Matthew B. Slotkin
Charlotte S. Snead
Grady K. Snyder
Mary E. Snyder
Pamela M. Somers
Lisa T. Soto
Tina M. Souders
Brian Spencer
Nora E. Spencer
Taylor L. Starns
Craig D. Stauffer
Lisa A. Stauffer
Vicki Lynn C. Steed
Daniel B. Stern
Isabel F. Talton
Suzan M. Teague
Mary A. Terzian
Gordon M. Thomas
Sharon H. Thomas
Chervonne Thompson
Jean R. Thompson
Joel H. Todd
Jeanne M. Trexler
TTE Lura Deaton McMurray Living Trust
Rebecca R. Tyrrell
Charles L. Usher
Janan Usher
Tonya B. VanDeinse
Jennifer S. Vaughn
Beverly L. Wagner
Elaine Walker
Roberta M. Wallace
Davey L. Ward
Jo P. Ward
Jo S. Watson
Alan B. Weber
Carolyn G. Weeks
Natasha A. Wells
Sandra J. West
Katherine N. White
Christopher G. Whitley
Barbara D. Whitley
Barry L. Whitsel
Ruth A. Whitsel
Catherine D. Wilsnack
Elizabeth T. Wilson
Erica J. Wood
Charles H. Woodell
Elizabeth T. Woodell
Gwendolyn D. Woodmansee
Ronald W. Worley
Susan P. Worley
Stacy H. Wright
Georgiana L. Yonuschot
Robin Zalkin-Brown
Geoffrey C. Zeger
Ronni Zuckerman

Field Education Across Our State

Our students serve 250 government, nonprofit and other human resources agencies across North Carolina.

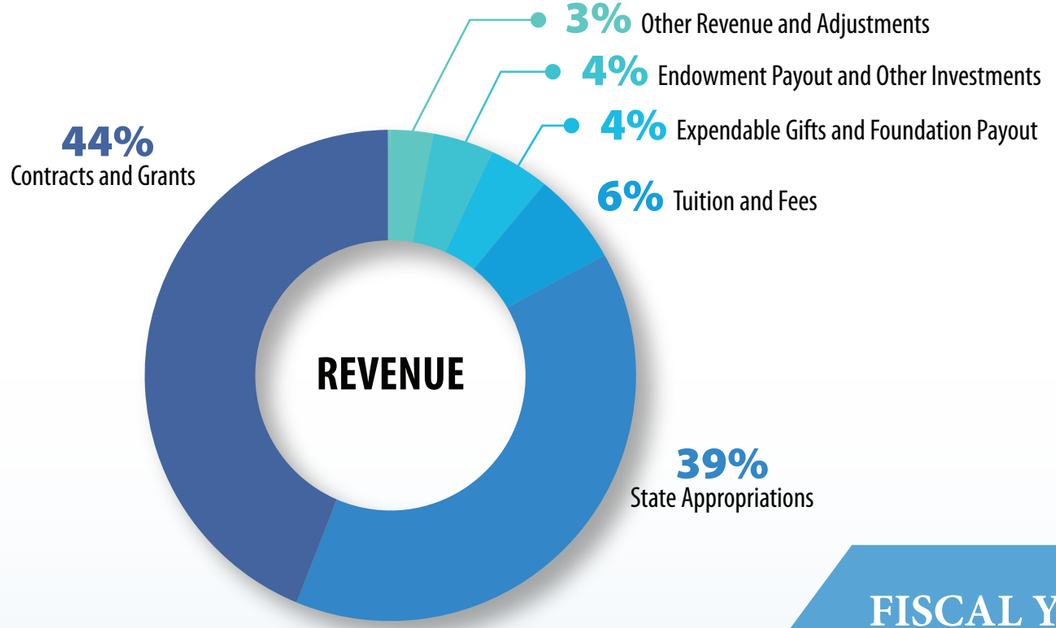


Field placement sites represent the broad scope of social work practice in public and private, not-for-profit and for-profit agencies. Typical practicum sites include departments of social services, community providers of mental health services, substance abuse agencies, medical facilities such as hospitals and hospices, domestic violence agencies, homeless shelters and public schools. Students are also placed in agencies involved in program and policy development, advocacy, and regional and statewide planning such as local United Ways, private non-profit agencies, family resource centers and others.

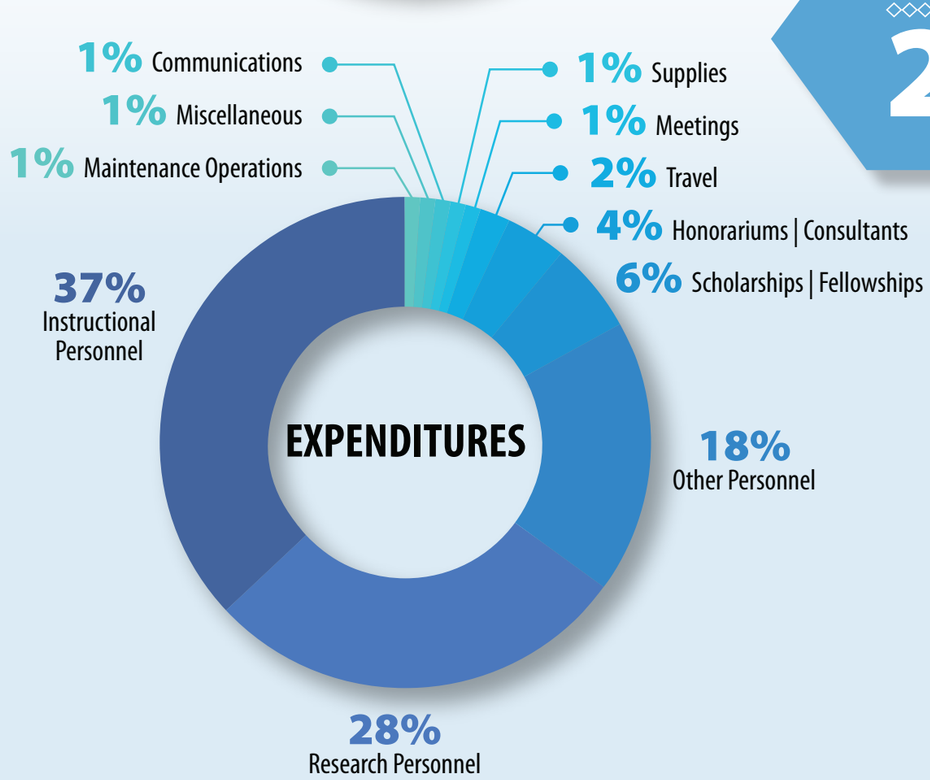
More than 130,000 hours are contributed.

This service represents $1.2 million in value provided to North Carolina.

Revenue and Expenditures



FISCAL YEAR 2017



We need your help.

On Oct. 9, 2017, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill launched the largest fundraising campaign in University history. The UNC School of Social Work is part of this campaign, with a School goal of $23 million over the next five years.

"Ambitious and attainable" — that's how we view our School goal for this campaign. To achieve this goal, we must work together to support our School. The funds we raise (with your help!) in this campaign will help support three of the School's top priorities:

Clinical assistant professor Josh Hinson

Ph.D. student Christina Horsford

Students

How do we attract the best and the brightest MSW and Ph.D. students in today's competitive educational environment? Often, a student's decision to enroll in our School is based largely on the financial assistance that we are able to offer. Scholarships give our MSW students "breathing room" to focus on their classes and their field work. Merit and need-based scholarships help ensure our students have fewer worries about covering basic expenses.

Equally important is funding for our Ph.D. students to help with tuition costs, living expenses and participation in the kinds of academic experiences (such as professional conferences) that will help them launch their careers. Our doctoral students are innovative thinkers who conduct research that informs public policies and improves services for vulnerable populations.

Students in our MSW and Ph.D. programs are passionate about social work, and they are determined to do what they can to ensure that everyone has the same chance to succeed in life. Campaign contributions help guarantee we can provide them with opportunities to succeed in their profession.

Faculty

Our faculty members are nationally recognized and respected scholars who tackle some of society's most pressing problems, such as addiction, health and mental health care, poverty and family violence. Because of their contributions to the field of social work, they can — and do — attract employment offers from other schools.

To recruit and retain star professors and junior scholars, we must strengthen salaries and support faculty research and academic interests. Your contributions allow us to pursue outstanding faculty and to promote their continued success at UNC School of Social Work.

The Collaboration for Social Justice and Racial Equity

Despite all of our progress, we continue to live in a world where many people experience more social, economic and health challenges than their coworkers, peers, friends or neighbors may experience. These challenges often have a greater impact on individuals who are from minority populations, who are from underserved communities, who have disabilities or who face other socioeconomic disadvantages.

Our School and the graduates we produce understand how such disparities can have long-term repercussions for individuals and families. We believe our newest initiative — the Collaboration for Social Justice and Racial Equity with "(CSJRE), part of the Jordan Institute for Families — will help to strengthen our overall efforts to create a more equitable society for all. With equal emphasis on scholarship and practice, CSJRE will guide social workers as they develop the knowledge, skills and professional networks necessary to succeed in this challenge.

These are critical needs for our School and for social work today. You'll learn more about this campaign following its launch, and we encourage you to imagine the ways that you could make a difference!

· the CAMPAIGN for CAROLINA ·

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

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School of Social Work • University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill • CB #3550 • Chapel Hill, NC 27599

A lasting legacy

New scholarship fund honors Iris Carlton-LaNey

By Susan White

A new scholarship fund has been established to honor Berg-Beach Distinguished Professor Iris Carlton-LaNey and to benefit under-represented MSW students who have an interest in working in the field of social justice and racial equity.

The Iris Carlton-LaNey Scholarship Fund was created with a $50,000 gift from UNC School of Social Work alumnus Noel Bost, MSW '96, in cooperation with Amethyst Consulting & Treatment Solutions, PLLC, a Greensboro-based mental health practice that Bost established. The School plans to seek additional donations to endow the fund fully by the end of the year, with the hope of awarding the first scholarship to an MSW student in 2018.

"The Iris Carlton-LaNey Scholarship Fund provides a lasting legacy in recognition of Dr. Carlton-LaNey for her many contributions to the profession of social work and to the UNC School of Social Work," said Dean Gary L. Bowen, who praised Bost for his generous gift. "I cannot think of a higher honor for an MSW student than to be known as an Iris Carlton-LaNey Scholar."

As a former student of Carlton-LaNey's, Bost said he felt called to give back to the community of social work and to recognize Carlton-LaNey's leadership on addressing racial equity and other diverse societal issues. Carlton-LaNey is a nationally renowned scholar who has engaged students in and out of the classroom on social justice issues throughout her 40-year career with the UNC system, including the last 23 years at UNC School of Social Work.

Her efforts have earned her national recognition, including the Distinguished Recent Contributions in Social Work Education Award from the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), the Social Work Pioneer Award from the National Association of Social Workers, the Feminist Scholar Honoree recognition from the Council on the Role and Status of Women, the Sisters of the Academy Legacy Award, and the Distinguished Achievement in Social Work Education Award presented by the National Association of Black Social Workers.

"Dr. Carlton-LaNey stands out among scholars who have impacted my career, not only because of the importance of her research and subject material but also the effectiveness of her teaching style in addressing extremely challenging topics, such as injustice and inequality," Bost said. "She is unwavering in her patience, accessibility, and supportiveness of students. Her emphasis and instruction on cultural competence continues to be a core value that guides our practice and work culture at Amethyst."

As a mentor to social work scholars across the country, Carlton-LaNey has helped to inspire the next generation of social work practitioners, teachers and researchers, added Bost, who attributes his former mentor's influence for leading him into teaching and private practice. Bost is a former co-instructor at the University of Chicago (where Carlton-LaNey earned her MA in social work), adjunct professor at Dominican University and faculty member with the UNC-Greensboro Department of Social Work.

Bost said he hopes the new UNC scholarship will help to attract students to the School of Social Work who are eager to be a voice for marginalized populations, as Carlton-LaNey has been throughout her life.

"I hope that I am helping others interested in doing this kind of work," Bost said. "I hope to attract people who want to be a part of the solution in helping us bridge our nation's racial and cultural divisions."

Carlton-LaNey, who was named the Berg-Beach Distinguished Professor in Community Social Work last year, said she is "incredibly humbled and honored" to have a scholarship endowed in her name.

"It's a recognition that I could never have imagined," she said. "This generous scholarship will provide innumerable opportunities and is particularly salient and timely given the racial hostility and social injustices that permeate our social system today. Students' and professionals' commitment to social and racial justice is critical and essential to competent social work practice. Dr. Bost's gift will help more students to prepare for this challenge, which will ultimately influence the quality of social work practice in perpetuity." ♦

"She is unwavering in her patience, accessibility, and supportiveness of students."

Noel Bost, MSW '96

Social work around the globe

Q&A with Jack Richman, associate dean for global engagement and international programs

For more than 40 years, UNC School of Social Work faculty members have collaborated with their colleagues in social work education and research around the globe. This year, Jack Richman was named as the School's first-ever associate dean for global engagement and international programs. In this question-and-answer discussion, Richman examines the past, present and future of global social work involving the School.

Q: *How do challenges in social work vary from country to country?*

It's very different, depending on the country. Each area has its own cultural perspectives and therefore is different in the way it approaches developing solutions.

In some places, there is abject poverty, poor education, a lack of opportunity, no work for young people. The issues are bleaker — less resources, less government.

You have to be careful with transferability. You have to recognize that what is effective and efficient in one place may not work well in other places. You may have to implement pilot projects to evaluate intervention programs and their adaptability.

Q: *What are some of the first things at the School that you'd describe as "global"?*

In 1975, Morton Teicher, who was dean at that time, took a leave of absence to serve for six months in a consulting role in Israel. Before John Turner became dean, he consulted on a research project in Egypt. He lived in Cairo for a while, as a community organizer; this was the late '70s.

Kim Strom-Gottfried, Mark Fraser, Anna Scheyett, Gary Schaffer and Katie Dunlap were some of the first [faculty members involved in global social work]. We worked with the American Professional Partnership for Lithuanian Education after the collapse of the Soviet Union. [Lithuania] didn't have many social workers. Teachers, psychologists and the police did some of that work. We worked with them for six years; they brought students for training in social work practice skills, substance use disorders, suicide prevention [and other issues].

We also conducted some study abroad trips with students and alumni to China, India and South Africa.

Q: *How does the School engage with other institutions and individuals in global social work?*

There's a lot of training and consultation. One example is the "Let's Be Friends" training the School did in China. Mark Fraser, Shenyang Guo, Maeda Galinsky and Steve Day worked with Fan Wu at Nankai University in Tianjin, China, to train social workers there to use the "Let's Be Friends" materials [this curriculum teaches children to use social problem-solving skills]. "Let's Be Friends" is based on the "Making Choices" program developed here. It was translated and adapted for Chinese culture, and the American relevant references were removed. A delegation from China visited schools in Siler City and Goldsboro to see students using "Making Choices" in the classroom.

Global Social Development Innovations Director Gina Chowa and colleagues Rain Masa, David Ansong and Sara Mitra have several global research projects in Africa — Kenya, Zambia and South Africa — and in India and the Philippines. [Other international projects have included training on the "CareerSmart" curriculum for middle grade teachers in Israel, led by Dennis Orthner; research on the well-being of migrant youth in urban China, conducted by Mimi Chapman; workshops on academic leadership to female university administrators in Saudi Arabia, presented by Kim Strom-Gottfried; and consultation and technical assistance relationships by Mark Fraser and Mark Testa in Sweden and Denmark.]

Q: *What opportunities are available within the School for students who want to learn more about global social work?*

The GSDI symposium in October included wonderful sessions here at the School, and we invited students to attend and learn what is going on with social development programs around the world.

We have visiting scholars, and we want to integrate this program more effectively into our school, so that students have more opportunities to engage with them. We are looking at how we can alter the curriculum so that there is additional global content and application in our MSW and Ph.D. coursework.

I really want to offer opportunities for international field placements. This year, MSW student Claire Bates wanted to do her field placement in Uganda. She was able to work with an organization in that country but, as recommended by the Ugandan organization, due to security concerns, she worked remotely. If you want to do something internationally, ask.

Q: *What are the next steps in global social work for the School?*

Relationships in global work don't generally develop via the computer or telephone relationship — they happen best in person.

We've been talking with Ron Strauss [chief international officer for UNC-Chapel Hill] about a funding model. We need support to grow our global programs.

We've talked about an exchange program with Australia. We need support for students to have study abroad and international field experiences. We also need funds for faculty development. ♦

From left: SSW professors meet with colleagues from East China University of Science and Technology. On-site conversations between Gina Chowa and David Ansong promote collaboration in Ghana. Mimi Chapman meets with mothers in Shanghai.

A promising research exchange

By Susan White

Rie Masuda will be a familiar face around the School of Social Work over the next few months. Masuda is a Ph.D. student from the University of Tokyo's School of Integrated Health Sciences and a visiting scholar as guest of assistant professor Paul Lanier.

Masuda arrived at UNC in August to work alongside and to learn from Lanier, whose research focuses on child maltreatment and prevention. Lanier is helping Masuda navigate her own research project: the effects of child care policy on child maltreatment. Her interest in the topic grew out of her experience as a public health nurse in Tokyo, where she said she saw firsthand numerous examples of child abuse and neglect.

Although Japan has seen a 93 percent increase in child maltreatment rates over the past 25 years, the country does not currently collect the same kind of comprehensive data that the United States collects to evaluate its child welfare programs and policies.

Masuda is trying to change that.

"Without evaluating policy, how can we make it better?" she said. "At the moment, the policies and programs that are used rely on a lot of luck. That's why I want to fill this (knowledge) gap. I'd like to encourage the Japanese people to think about how academic research could affect actual policymaking."

During her study at UNC, Masuda will focus on the research process, Lanier said, including learning how to "formulate research questions that are policy relevant and analyzing administrative data in a way to rigorously assess the causal effects of a given policy."

The exchange experience is part of a broader partnership that the School and the University of Tokyo are continuing to explore, Lanier added.

"Who knows where it will lead down the road but maybe our students can go there and continue it moving forward," he said. "I'm really excited about it." ♦

Verbiest named as director

New opportunities for Jordan Institute for Families

With a national reputation for work in preconception, prenatal and postpartum health and wellness, Sarah Verbiest, DrPH, MSW, MPH, John A. Tate Early Career Scholar for Children in Need, sees a natural connection between her work and the mission of the Jordan Institute for Families: "It's about strengthening families and the people and communities who care for them."

That connection will serve Verbiest well in her new assignment as director of the Jordan Institute. She will help foster collaboration and support more than a dozen programs that address child welfare, developmental disabilities, substance use disorders, trauma and mental health across the life course.

"What's really exciting about the Jordan Institute is that there are so many talented social workers engaged in innovative work that meets different family needs," Verbiest says. "We can capitalize on those collective ideas.

"I see the Jordan Institute as engagement," she adds, explaining that Jordan Institute programs reach all 100 counties in North Carolina through partnerships with state and local agencies, nonprofit organizations and alumni.

Those collaborations serve North Carolinians of all ages, with a very inclusive definition of family.

"I love the life course emphasis that the Jordans put into the original charter," Verbiest says. "The Jordan Institute looks at all ages and stages of the life span and the way generations affect each other."

For example, the Jordan Institute has provided training for prospective foster parents, developed a camp directory for children with special needs, researched guardianship for aging adults and worked with agencies to develop resources for social work professionals. All of these activities help strengthen families — a mission that Verbiest describes as "a unique space for social work."

In the months ahead, the Jordan Institute will expand its focus with several new opportunities, Verbiest shares. One of these opportunities is an emphasis on social innovation and entrepreneurship, which engages diverse organizations in seeking new solutions to challenging social problems.

"There's so much to learn and share about social innovation, what's out there, what people need," she says.

The Jordan Institute will also serve as an incubator for the School's new Collaboration for Social Justice and Racial Equity, Verbiest said. As part of that initiative, the Jordan Institute is introducing a new lecture series focusing on social justice issues.

It's an ambitious agenda, but Verbiest is comfortable with a very full schedule. A clinical associate professor at the School since 2015, she is also the executive director of the Center for Maternal & Infant Health (CMIH) in the UNC School of Medicine, a post she will continue to hold. She is a senior consultant to the Centers for Disease Control, the co-chair of the North Carolina Child Fatality Task Force Perinatal Health Committee and a Fellow of the William C. Friday Fellowship on Human Relations.

Verbiest earned her Master of Social Work, Master of Public Health and Doctor of Public Health degrees at UNC-Chapel Hill. ♦

During its 21-year history, the Jordan Institute for Families has provided a home — sometimes temporary, sometimes permanent — for many School of Social Work programs serving families in North Carolina. A few of these programs are listed here:

- Center for Aging Research and Educational Services
- Center for Social Justice and Racial Equity
- Child Welfare Education Collaborative
- Developmental Disabilities Training Institute
- Family and Children's Resource Program
- Family Support Program
- Refugee Mental Health and Wellness Initiative

We welcome Rachel Woodson Goode, Ph.D., MPH, and alumnus Will Hall, Ph.D. '15, MSW '12 as our newest assistant professors to the School.

By Susan White

When Rachel Woodson Goode decided to focus her research on obesity and weight loss, particularly among African American women, two things became clear. First, although Black women have the highest rate of obesity in the country, they haven't performed well in behavioral weight loss interventions. Second, social workers have not been historically involved in a lot of the discussions around obesity.

Goode aims to change that narrative. Her goal: to improve treatment and healthy outcomes for African Americans who have struggled with their weight and to demonstrate to social workers, including students in her classroom, that they have an important role to play in addressing the obesity epidemic.

"There are a lot of things that contribute to a person's weight, including environmental concerns, racial health disparities and access to food," Goode explained. "One area that really hasn't been explored is how can we, as social workers, begin to help people who are battling a myriad of situations address those psychological and emotional barriers in their environment so that they can begin to make forward development. I think social workers have an opportunity, knowing what we know about the environment and systemic barriers that people face, to begin to put our foot in the door. Then, we can begin to offer our services because we know weight loss challenges for many people are more than just, 'I didn't eat the right calories or exercise today.' We know it's more complex than that."

Goode, who earned her undergraduate degree in psychology, gravitated toward social work after spending several summers in Pittsburgh, where she worked with an organization that serves low-income families, children and the elderly. That experience, she said, challenged her idea about advocacy work and redirected her professionally. She needed to be "a voice for those who may not have a voice in society."

Today, Goode's primary research is driven by a desire to reverse a national trend where four out of five African American women are overweight or obese, according to the U.S. Office of Minority Health (OMH). Such disparities can have long-lasting consequences. According to the OMH, the rates of deaths from heart disease and stroke are almost twice as high among African Americans than Whites.

As someone who has struggled with her own weight over the years and watched many within her family do the same, Goode is determined to help African American women re-think their relationship with food, both physically and spiritually. ♦

Will Hall is well aware that his research on the mental health of LGBTQ+ youth is territory that few others have explored. For Hall, such a focus is necessary to further support gay, lesbian and queer youth, many of whom, he said, are more likely to be involved in the child welfare system, to be homeless, to be depressed or to attempt suicide and drop out of school than youth who are not LGBTQ+.

Hall views this work from a very personal lens — he once struggled to accept his own sexual orientation. As a gay man, he's fought his own battles with internalized homophobia and understands the overwhelming anxiety that many young people often feel when coming out to friends, family and others. In fact, that knowledge fuels his determination as a researcher to make that process less painful for gay and questioning youth.

"I grew up in the South in a very small, traditional, religiously conservative town, and it took me years to be OK with being gay," said Hall, who came out in his 20s. "Today, I know there are tons of young people, especially in the South and in rural areas, who are growing up stigmatized and who are feeling ashamed as I once felt. And because I made it through that journey and grew and learned things, I feel like this is my calling now. I want it to help make that journey easier for other people."

Hall is currently working on a potentially groundbreaking intervention that could help young people better manage the coming-out process, especially those struggling with depression related to family and peer rejection or internalized homophobia.

With many more gay and queer youth identifying at earlier ages, the intervention could be a helpful tool for school social workers seeking ways to improve the climate for LGBTQ+ students, especially if they are being bullied by classmates, Hall said.

"School social workers provide mental health services, and they work with this community," he said. "But I think a lot of social workers oftentimes aren't sure how to provide services to a client who may have been rejected by their parents. So I think we need to offer this practical knowledge and skills for practitioners so they can be more effective in what they do." ♦

New Alumni Council president

Ashley Benefield and the power of mentors

Ashley Benefield MSW ‘08 was an undergraduate studying social work at Winston-Salem State University when she discovered a simple truth: A good mentor can change your life.

In Benefield’s case, this mentor was Sharon Warren Cook MSW ‘95, who served on the faculty of WSSU and North Carolina A&T University before moving to the City University of New York system, where Cook now serves as dean of curriculum instruction for Kingsborough Community College.

Cook filled her car with WSSU undergraduates — including Benefield — and drove 80 miles east to take them to the School of Social Work open house at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She led the WSSU undergraduates on a tour that included the campus and Franklin Street.

“You need to come here,” Cook told Benefield. So Benefield took her mentor’s advice and came to UNC-Chapel Hill, enrolling in the MSW program and receiving the Billy and Janie Armfield Scholarship.

A decade later, Benefield is still on campus, working as a clinical care manager for UNC Hospitals and becoming a mentor herself. While at UNC Hospitals, she has worked with both adult intensive care patients and pediatric patients.

Benefield says that her SSW coursework continues to inform her practice.

“I was fascinated with all of Kim Strom-Gottfried’s ethics work,” she explains, adding that she now serves on the ethics committee for UNC Hospitals.

“And I took Marty Weems’s ATOD [alcohol, tobacco and other drugs] course — that was so helpful” in Benefield’s earlier work with the UNC Horizons Program, a substance use disorder treatment program for pregnant/parenting women and their children.

She adds that one of her fondest SSW memories is meeting Dean and Linnea Smith at a scholarship reception: “I was speechless, but [Coach Smith] was so down to Earth, and it was so much fun!”

With so many positive experiences, Benefield wanted to stay involved with the School. She has served on the Alumni Council for several years, with opportunities to serve on the selection committee for the Distinguished Alumni Awards program and help support current SSW students through her work with the scholarship committee.

Benefield was elected as president of the Alumni Council this year. She encourages all SSW alumni to participate in Alumni Council opportunities.

“A lot of people don’t know [alumni] have a voice in the decisions made,” Benefield says. “[This is] your way to have a voice on what you think is the biggest need.” ♦

SSW receives $14.5 million for research, service

The 2016–2017 fiscal year (FY17) was one of the strongest years for financial support in the history of the UNC School of Social Work, according to Dean Gary Bowen. The School received $14.5 million in external awards, which included $5 million in funding for research projects and more than $9 million for service projects throughout the State of North Carolina.

Sheryl Zimmerman, associate dean for research and faculty development, reported that 37 new and continuing research projects were in progress at the School.

Mimi Chapman, Cindy Rizo, Trenette Goings, Matthew Howard, Melissa Lippold, Rebecca Macy, Mark Testa, Sarah Verbiest, Amy Wilson and Lisa Zerden received funding for new research projects in FY17. These project awards included a $450,000 grant from the Centers for Disease Control to investigate the effectiveness of a program designed to help prevent relationship violence and a $275,000 National Institutes of Health grant to investigate how persons with severe mental illnesses in prison can receive treatments to help improve outcomes.

In addition to its research activities, the School partners with government agencies and human services organizations to provide professional services, including data collection and analysis, development and delivery of educational materials and program administration.

The School received 14 new service contracts during FY17. These included $2,500,000 for Project NO REST (Governor’s Crime Commission), $1,715,000 for Behavioral Health Springboard, $310,000 for the Family Support Program and $108,000 for the Refugee Mental Health and Wellness Initiative.

Mellicent O’Brien Blythe, Rebecca Brigham, Dean Duncan, Josh Hinson, Noel Mazade, Gary Nelson, Tamara Norris, Wanda Reives, Kim Strom-Gottfried, Tonya VanDeinse and Sarah Verbiest received funding for service contracts in FY17.

The School is on a similar pace for the 2017–2018 fiscal year, Bowen said. By October, more than $8 million in research grants and service contracts had already been awarded.

“Our work impacts hundreds of thousands of people, not only in North Carolina but across our country and throughout our world,” Bowen said. ♦

In September, more than 150 social workers from around the state attended a workshop on the critical role that social workers play in integrated healthcare settings. UNC-PrimeCare, which is based within the School of Social Work, and NASW-NC co-sponsored the event at Extraordinary Ventures in Chapel Hill. PrimeCare recently received a $1.9 million federal grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration — money that will help the School continue to prepare social work students to work in teams with behavioral and healthcare providers to find appropriate treatment options for patients with mental health conditions, substance use disorders or other challenges that may not be addressed by a general medical practice. So far, more than 90 MSW students have been trained by PrimeCare. With this new funding, PrimeCare will select 30 students each year through a competitive process to participate in the program.

1970s

Clifford W. Sanford Jr., MSW ’72, former director of Group Child Care Consultant Services, died on July 27.

1980s

Mike Newton-Ward, MSW/MPH ’84, was recognized for “Outstanding Contributions to Social Marketing” at the World Social Marketing Conference in Washington, D.C. in May. This was the first year of the awards. Newton-Ward served as a field education instructor at UNC SSW and adjunct instructor for seven years. He has worked in the field of social marketing for 20 years.

1990s

Michelle Johnson, MSW ’98, was recognized as a WCHL “Hometown Hero.” Johnson, who has served on the Carrboro Board of Aldermen since 2011, recently announced that she is stepping down from the elected position to pursue employment opportunities in Portland, Ore.

Lori Messinger, MSW ’96, Ph.D. ’99, was awarded a fellowship for the 2017-2018 academic year by the American Council on Education. Messinger is one of 46 fellows nominated by the senior administration of their respective institutions. Messinger is the current associate vice chancellor for community engagement at UNC-Wilmington.

2000s

Eric Garland, Ph.D. ’09, associate dean for research at the University of Utah College of Social Work, was recently named director of a new Center on Mindfulness and Integrative Health Intervention Development. The center will focus on unifying research on mindfulness and other integrative behavioral health interventions.

Meredith Powers, MSW ’03, co-edited the book, “Social Work: Promoting Community and Environmental Sustainability,” which was published earlier this year by the International Federation of Social Workers. Powers is an assistant professor in the department of social work at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Karen Smith Rotabi, Ph.D. ’05, was appointed professor and director of the department of social work at California State University, Monterey Bay. She returns to California after working for five years in the United Arab Emirates University, where she was coordinator of the MSW program. While overseas, Rotabi’s research agenda included investigation of perceptions of Indian surrogate mothers. Additionally, she has published on Islam and social work.

Sophia Smith, Ph.D. ’07, MSW ’01, was recently featured in an article on WRAL.com about the mobile app she created, which teaches survivors of cancer tools for managing and reducing stress and PTSD symptoms related to their diagnosis. Smith is an associate professor with the Duke University School of Nursing.

Rachel Foster Stuart, Ph.D. ’08, published her first children’s book, “Lilies for Looper,” about a fearless little girl who “loves to try new things and explore what life has to offer.” When she isn’t publishing children’s books, Foster Stuart serves as a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Air Force and continues to work as a practicing clinical social worker.

Victoria Crouse, MSW ’17, helped lead an “Immigration Teach-In” at the School of Social Work during the spring. The workshop was sponsored by the Latinx Student Caucus and the Diversity Committee and explored areas of mental health, community policing, and terminology used in discussing immigration and immigrant groups.

2010s

Laura Stuart Barkley, MSW ’17, is working as a research assistant and policy analyst with the UNC-Chapel Hill Office of Ethics Education and Policy Management.

Amber Renée Callahan, MSW ’11, died on July 1, after a 10-month battle with breast cancer.

Victoria Crouse, MSW ’17, published a policy brief with the N.C. Justice Center on “The Impact of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) in the Tarheel State.” Crouse, who is a state policy fellow with the Michigan League for Public Policy, wrote the policy brief based on her research from a project she completed last year in the School of Social Work’s 810 class, “Evaluation of Social Interventions.”

Christina DeNard, MSW ’10, has joined the faculty at Jane Adams College of Social Work at the University of Illinois at Chicago. DeNard’s professional interests are in child welfare and prevention and evidence-based practices within child welfare settings. She has experience working in publicly funded settings, where she has provided therapeutic and supportive services for children who previously experienced child maltreatment and who are leaving foster care for permanent placement.

Mat Despard, Ph.D. ’15, was honored at the Network for Social Work Management’s 28th Annual Management Conference in New York City in June with the 2017 Slavin-Patti Award for Outstanding Article of the Year from the Human Services Organizations: Management, Leadership, and Governance journal. Despard, who has been working as an assistant professor with the University of Michigan for several years, was recently named the executive director of the UNC Center for Community Capital, effective Oct. 1.

Katelyn Ehle, MSW ’17, is employed as a program manager with Second Family Foundation in Carrboro.

Stephanie Friend, MSW ’10, was named manager of the homeless management information system for the Coalition for Homelessness Intervention and Prevention (HMIS) in Indianapolis, Ind. Friend previously worked on HMIS in Mecklenburg County, N.C., where she served as a management analyst.

Charrise Hart, MSW ’13, was named executive director of the YWCA Lower Cape Fear, following a six-month national search. She was also featured in an article in the Wilmington Star-News about her new role. Hart previously served as chief operating officer of the YWCA in Greensboro.

Karen Kranbuehl, MSW ’17, was featured in an article in the quarterly newsletter of the North Carolina chapter of the National Association of Social Workers for her work in addiction recovery. Kranbuehl is the founder and chief executive officer of Say It Solutions, an intervention she developed that teaches self-advocacy skills to individuals in recovery.

Donald McDonald, MSW ’16, was selected “Tar Heel of the Week” and featured in The News and Observer article, “This former addict is working to help others overcome their addictions.”

Sierra Spellmon, MSW ’14, was selected as a 2017 summer associate with the North Carolina law firm Ward and Smith, PA. Spellmon studies law at N.C. Central University’s School of Law.

Nora Spencer, MSW ’17, presented, “Want to Attract and Keep Top Talent? Think Like a Designer,” at this summer’s Network for Social Work Management conference. Her presentation focused on how to use innovative problem solving tools to develop a strategic recruiting and retention plan in nonprofits and public agencies.

Julia Grace Tompkins, MSW ’14, is employed as a care manager with UNC Internal Medicine.

Alumni, do you have news to share?
Email updates to
unc.ssw.communications@unc.edu for use in Contact or in Impact, the School’s monthly newsletter.

Welcome our associate dean for advancement

A familiar face is returning to the School of Social Work. Mary Beth Hernandez has accepted the position of associate dean for advancement, a role she previously served in for 15 years. Hernandez returns to the School of Social Work as the University launches an ambitious five-year multi-billion fundraising campaign. As part of this historic campaign, the School of Social Work’s goal will be to raise a record $23 million. Hernandez will be vital to the School’s continued advancement success, said Dean Gary L. Bowen. “With Mary Beth’s leadership, I am confident that we will not only meet but will exceed our targeted goal,” Bowen said.

Congratulations to Kelly Smith, our assistant dean for administration! Kelly received the University’s “2017 Manager of the Year Award.” Chris Meinecke of the University Managers Association presented the award to Kelly.

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Where in the world is UNC School of Social Work?

Although Chapel Hill is our home base, our faculty, students and alumni have been around the world in service. Inside this issue of Contact, you'll read about some of their adventures, individually and as part of a School project, in the countries marked on this global map. You'll also learn how the UNC School of Social Work is taking global engagement to a new level of collaboration!