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Boston University School of Social Work

Currents

For Alumni and Friends | Vol. 20, No. 2, Summer 2009

In This Issue:

- 3 International Social Work at Home
- 9 Remembering Louise Frey
- 10 News Briefs
- 12 President's Corner
- 13 Alumni Updates



CONNECTING FOR Success

Uncovering why some mentoring relationships succeed where others fail

RACHEL WASSERMAN (SSW'10)

It's a truism: Children need support to grow, thrive, and reach their potential. But what makes for support? One parent? A good school? Access to after-school programs? Repeated research shows the real difference comes not with a particular relative, but in the actual relationship an adult has with a child, otherwise known as mentoring. Everyone from celebrities to politicians has discussed the difference that one person made in their lives. But how does that successful relationship get made? And what makes one more successful than others?

These questions are the focus of Professor Renee Spencer's current research, which is funded by a Scholar Award from the William T. Grant Foundation. Dr. Spencer and her team of PhD and MSW students are conducting a longitudinal study to determine how



Renee Spencer

mentoring relationships develop and become successful. Spencer explains that previous research has largely focused on the efficacy of mentoring in

response to the large growth in mentoring programs that began in the early 1990s: "At the time," she says, "it seemed an easy and inexpensive intervention, but, since then, we have learned that closer, more

continued on page 4



NOTES FROM THE **Dean's Office**

Greetings BUSSW Community,

I am delighted to share this latest edition of *Currents* with you. As we've witnessed historic change in Washington and ongoing economic upheaval, we have continued to fall back on our social work skills and values, focusing on a strengths-based approach in these unpredictable times. Over the past few months, we've fashioned these strengths into greater connections, from collaborating with diverse groups in need of new economic opportunities to new community-based

partnerships that seek alternative interventions for those in need. As a way to better share these strengths, we have made connecting the theme of this issue of *Currents*. In it, you can read more about our growing strengths, including our BRIDGE program and Professor Spencer's research on community-based mentoring.

In addition to showcasing our innovative program and research news, I am also pleased to share that we are creating stronger connections between our various research centers and faculty and staff by moving all SSW units into one building. By early 2010, all SSW faculty and staff will be relocated to the same

building at 264 Bay State Road. Part of this move includes considerable renovation, including the addition of a welcome center on the first floor to assist visitors with information and directions. All administrative units, from Field Education to Professional Education, will also be located on the first floor, making it easier for departments to share information and for visitors to find staff members. Our research centers, IGSW and CARS, which presently dwell at 232 Bay State Road, will move into a new, renovated space on the third floor of 270 Bay State Road. Truly, this move signals a major shift for the School and well positions us to attract strong students in the coming years. This fall, I hope that you will stop by during Alumni Weekend to see the changes!

You may also notice that we have redesigned *Currents* for greater readability and a contemporary feel. We are excited to unveil this redesign and believe it reflects our new focus as a School and enables us to better connect with you. We're hopeful you will enjoy its fresh look along with the longer, in-depth stories, and we welcome your comments and suggestions.

As we share these positive changes, we also bring the sad news of the death of one of our innovative groundbreakers, Professor Emerita Louise Frey. Many of you have shared your moving thoughts and tributes to her, which you can find on page 9. Her contributions to the field of social work and to the many lives she touched were profound.



Currents

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Editors' Note: Erica Scoppetti ('05), of Brookline, Massachusetts, was mistakenly omitted from the Alumni Association Board list in the last issue of *Currents*.

Boston University's policies provide for equal opportunity and affirmative action in employment and admission to all programs of the University.

♻️ Please recycle

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Finally, I encourage you to continue your connection to the School, from sharing your life and professional news stories to simply updating your e-mail address so we can stay in contact. Increasingly, as we move toward digital communication to reduce our carbon footprint, we need your most recent information more than ever. Update your information easily at: www.bu.edu/ssw/alumni.

Thank you again for your continued support of the School. I look forward to seeing you soon.

Sincerely,



International Social Work

AT HOME

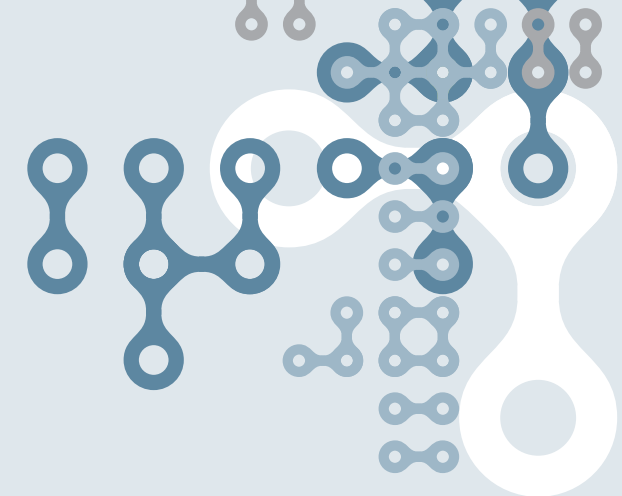
New BRIDGE Program Launched at BUSSW

FARHA SANDHU (COM'09)

In spite of their contributions to the larger society, refugees and immigrants who resettle in the United States are often burdened with poor working conditions, restricted access to health care, limited employment and training opportunities, and multiple forms of discrimination. While human service agencies have tried to address these issues, success has been limited by the lack of professional social work staff who belong to the immigrant groups being served.

To address these challenges, BUSSW launched BRIDGE (Building Refugee and Immigrant Degrees for Graduate Education) during the Fall of 2008 to increase the number of social work professionals who are members of "newcomer" groups that are culturally and linguistically diverse and underserved. Led by BUSSW Professors Lee Staples and Mojdeh Rohani ('99), BRIDGE is open only to refugees and immigrants and aims to both prepare them for careers in social work and success in graduate school. The program consists of four phases: Orientation (Pre-admission), Preparation (Pre-matriculation), the Education Program (MSW program), and Career Development (Post graduation). The initial phase reviews social work at the graduate level and assists potential applicants who are considering a graduate social work program.

continued on page 8



BUSSW Staff Make the Most of Mentoring

RACHEL WASSERMAN (SSW '10)

In addition to their 9 to 5 work, BUSSW staff member Francois Exilhomme and former staff member Rilda Kissel have been participating in mentoring relationships.

Admissions Manager Francois Exilhomme experienced mentoring from both sides of the relationship. In his youth, Exilhomme was involved with the Supplemental Program of Education Skills (SPES), an after-school program in Dorchester, MA. Starting in middle school, he continued his mentoring relationship through high school and beyond. From the experience, Exilhomme learned “discipline and a different view on life,” as his mentor was Irish and a devout Catholic. “I learned everyday virtues of how to be a man, talk to people, and focus on schoolwork,” he says. The experience helped him to elevate his grades and succeed well beyond college.

Exilhomme views mentoring as important for people of all ages: “Even adults need someone to emulate. Having and being a mentor is important, because you are giving back and showing someone how you got there.”

Exilhomme, who also owns a small legal services business, continues to mentor other business owners. He views mutual respect and communication as important to a successful mentoring relationship, and regularly stays in contact with his mentor from SPES. In fact, Exilhomme has returned to the SPES program as a mentor himself and plans to go back to talk about his positive experience with the program. There’s value, he says, in “knowing you changed someone’s life for the better.”



Youth in mentoring relationships frequently say they never forget a mentor.

Kissel, a former staff coordinator for the PhD program and alumni relations, is a Big Sister through Big Brothers Big Sisters of Massachusetts. For more than a year, she and her Little Sister have been getting together every other weekend to spend time swimming, doing arts and crafts, visiting museums, and baking.

For Kissel, mentoring was an appealing way to give back. “I liked the idea of being able to establish a one-on-one relationship with my little sister and the regularity of seeing her often for an extended period of time. I can see how she is growing in part due to the experiences she is having,” she says.

Kissel can also attest to the value of a continuous relationship: “Our relationship has improved in that she is more and more comfortable with me. She was shy at first but now she calls me often, just to tell me about something that has happened at school or that she did with her mom.” ♦

Find out more on the web:

www.bu.edu/ssw/mentoring

According to Project Associate Anna Rosales, the decision to incorporate the parental perspective was critical, as many studies ignore parents or interview only the child or the mentor. Project Coordinator Toña Basualdo-Delmonico notes that they are particularly interested in “how parents contribute to the development of their child’s mentoring relationship.” She is pursuing this question in even greater depth in her own dissertation research, for which she is planning to conduct additional interviews with some of the parents participating in

Spencer’s study. Spencer’s research also emphasizes the importance of developing a better understanding of why some mentoring relationships end early and identifying factors that predict these early endings, such as the potential mediating role mentor attitudes might play. Rosales explains, “Sometimes the experiences of mentors are quite different from what they pictured when they first volunteered.”

continued on page 6

enduring mentoring relationships are more effective, and creating such relationships requires a greater investment on the part of programs than previously believed.”

As part of the grant, Spencer and her team are partnering with the community-based agencies Big Brothers Big Sisters of Massachusetts Bay and the Big Sister Association of Greater Boston. These partner agencies have been referring participants who are just beginning their mentoring relationships to the study, and Spencer plans to follow 65 mentoring pairs for two years.

“Sometimes the experiences of mentors

are quite different from what they had pictured when they first volunteered.”

By interviewing mentors, mentees, and their parents before a match is made and at regular intervals over the course of their mentoring relationship, Spencer is examining how pairs form a bond, and mapping different developmental trajectories of closeness in these relationships. In addition to interviews with these mentoring stakeholders, project participants will also respond to survey questions measuring child outcomes such as self-esteem, social acceptance, school connectedness, and risky behavior.



Dr. Renée Spencer and colleagues discuss recruitment activities for the mentoring research study.





CONNECTING FOR SUCCESS *continued from page 4*

Dr. Spencer stresses the importance of mentors tempering their expectations in order to form a successful relationship, as they often struggle with feelings of being overwhelmed or feel unsure of how to help a child: “There is great importance for mentors to be able to let go of or modify their expectations to engage with the individual mentee for who he or she is. [So far, it appears that] the relationships that make it are the ones in which the mentors are really committed to that child and his or her development.” That commitment may take longer than a few weeks or even months, but Spencer points out that previous research has found that “When relationships last for less than three months there can be a decrease in child functioning. [But] if relationships make it a year, they tend to continue on, and benefits accrue over time.”

In addition to her community-based research, Dr. Spencer is also following mentoring relationships in the participating agencies’ school-based programs. Whereas in community-based mentoring the mentor meets with the child in the evening or on weekends, visiting the child at home and going on outings, school-based mentoring happens at the child’s school with the mentor sharing lunch or during after-school time on the school grounds with the child. Spencer is interested in how bonds form under these different conditions and what factors predict closeness and longevity in this form of mentoring relationship.

Mentoring is an “interesting phenomenon,” says Spencer, “because so many new programs have opened their doors in the past decade, but we know surprisingly little about the inner workings of these relationships. While peer relationships may take center stage in adolescence, youth still need caring and committed adults in their lives.”

Photo above: School-based mentors often meet mentees at school for an hour each week. Employers who sponsor youth mentoring programs report increased productivity and staff morale.

Cultural Factors

Dr. Spencer notes that natural mentors, or adults with whom children naturally form mentoring relationships outside the bounds of a formal mentoring program, “tend to be adults within a child’s own community who share a similar background.” Yet in formal mentoring programs youth—typically children of color living in low-income families—are matched with mentors who are predominantly white and from middle-

Find out more on the web

www.bu.edu/ssw/about/facultystaff/faculty/profiles/spencer

high-income backgrounds. Whether and how these differences in backgrounds shape the mentoring process has yet to be closely examined; Spencer and her team are beginning to tackle some of these questions. They will do this by examining associations between mentors’ openness to cultural differences and relationship quality and length, as well as carefully studying the narratives of mentors, youth, and parents gathered through the qualitative interviews to track the different ways that cultural differences are navigated throughout the mentoring process.

Social Work & Mentoring

While racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic factors are yet to be fully understood, the role that social work plays in mentoring is clear. Some mentoring organizations are staffed by social workers who are hired to be caseworkers and match advocates. Says Basualdo-Delmonico, “Social workers may serve as the matchmakers for the adults and a youth seeking this kind of relationship. Social workers bring the skills of knowing and understanding people, and helping to support a relationship that develops from scratch. In particular, knowing that the majority of youth in these relationships are of color and may come from low-income homes, social workers can play a role within organizations to continually self-evaluate practices and train mentors with a consciousness toward racial and class differences.” Spencer would like to see more mentoring programs rely on social workers for these and other tasks. She notes, “The mentoring movement could be strengthened by involving more social workers. Their

expertise in relationship-building and skills working with underserved communities could enhance the quality of many mentoring programs and increase the likelihood that the relationships formed between mentors and youth are of the highest quality.”

Research to Practice

Using the research collected, Spencer hopes to aid mentoring programs: “The research may point to needed changes in program practices in some arenas or lend support to work that they are already doing in other areas, giving them greater confidence in those practices already in place. [Once completed, the research] will offer a better understanding of what factors contribute to the development of closeness in mentoring relationships, how long it takes for mentors and youth to begin to feel close, and what closeness looks like and how it is experienced from the perspectives of both mentors and youth.” ♦

Surveys have shown youth in mentoring relationships are more likely to stay in school and pursue college.



Remembering Louise Frey



Photo above: Dean Steketee and BRIDGE coordinators Mojdeh Rohani and Lee Staples listen to a participant at the first session.

INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL WORK AT HOME *continued from page 3*

Eleven students graduated from the Orientation phase of BRIDGE in February, representing countries as diverse as Cameroon, China, Columbia, Congo, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Haiti, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, and Sudan.

One graduate, Darmery Montoya, says that more than anything, the BRIDGE program opened her mind—before entering the program, Montoya had been debating whether to do social work or counseling, but a few weeks into the program, she decided on the former. She says that BRIDGE has been important because it has given her “an idea of what professional casework is really like and a feel for being in a class again.”

During the Orientation phase, Montoya and her colleagues took a free, ten-session course that introduced members to the expectations and culture of graduate-level social work education and taught them how to help and support new BUSSW applicants. Key features included presentations by BUSSW faculty describing the structure of the program, a review of the application process, a panel presentation by BUSSW alums, and opportunities for participants to share their own experiences and career goals. The course was facilitated by Staples, director of BRIDGE, and BRIDGE Coordinator Rohani.

Christine Karangwa, another participant who recently completed the first phase of the program, says, “BRIDGE is really important to me... I can see how dedicated the staff are. They really want to help all of us coming from different countries and communities, and I know they will help me achieve my dream of having a master’s degree and helping my community.”

BRIDGE has been important because it has given her “an idea of what professional casework is really like and a feel for being in a class again.”

BRIDGE participants review objectives for the Orientation phase of the program.



A critical goal is financial support for all BRIDGE participants throughout their enrollment in the third phase of the program (the MSW) through a combination of scholarships, grants, stipends, and forgivable loans. In addition to consistent support from the BRIDGE coordinator, a dedicated BRIDGE mentor, and writing assistance, participants can also attend regular gatherings for all BRIDGE members and a monthly in-field seminar to cover key topics and issues relating to the profession.

The final phase of the program is designed to help graduating students plan careers and secure jobs, and also to maintain a network for alumni of this program. Participants are advised on initial career planning, developing a portfolio, preparing a résumé, interviewing, and readying for social work licensure exams.

Both Karangwa and Montoya strongly believe that BRIDGE is truly making a difference in their lives. Karangwa, for instance, works with Refugee Immigration Ministries, a program that helps asylum seekers, asylees, and refugees from different countries. “There are so many challenges in this job,” she says, “but all in all we know we are making a difference—in their lives and ours.”

Karangwa knows she will benefit from social work education: “There are so many things to learn in this field... I work with different communities and I need more social work skills to help me organize them.”

Montoya works as a Spanish parent liaison in an urban school with almost 3,400 students. She says, “Social work is very valuable to me because of the type of work that I do—I work with parents and students and help them as much as I can. With my social work degree, I hope I will be able to help them even more or in a different and better way.”

For more information about the BRIDGE program, please contact Professor Staples at lstaples@bu.edu or visit www.bu.edu/ssw. ♦

Find out more on the web
www.bu.edu/ssw/academic/bridge



The School mourned the death of Professor Emerita Louise Frey, who passed away in February at the age of 84. Professor Frey joined the School in 1957 and served in many roles, from professor of group work to Director of the Division of Continuing Education. She was instrumental in expanding the School’s efforts in global social work practice as well as post-graduate professional education. Named a Social Work Pioneer in 2007 by the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), she retired in 1991, leaving behind a rich legacy of programs, colleagues, and students.

Louise revered adult education and very generously offered a weekly seminar on teaching to a group of us who were new to the School. This was not something assigned to her, but rather a passion and a love she cared about so deeply that she sought out “newbies” with missionary zeal. As I look back almost 35 years later, I feel deep appreciation and gratitude to her for guiding me into a love of teaching. Louise’s imagination and creativity stood out—never one to follow the crowd, she was unique and sparked new ideas and ways of thinking at every turn. Thank you, Louise. I salute you for your incredible contribution to the School, the profession, and most of all, to me and my life.

—Bradley Googins
(former faculty)

Louise Frey was a mentor to many younger women professionals. She taught, advised, encouraged, and befriended us and included us on her grants and projects so that we could get further experience and have fun working together. Although she was housed in the group work sequence, her involvement in the School was broad. She was interested in health and mental health, multicultural practice, education and training. She was innovative. Her ideas can still be found in continuing education, the Off-Campus Programs, and agency staff trainings and partnerships. She knew how to construct a course and she continuously developed materials for teaching (a casebook on work with Southeast Asian clients with Kay Jones, for example). My students still benefit from having clear goals and objectives, the result of Louise’s mentoring.

—Trudy Duffy
Professor Emerita

Louise Frey retired just before I arrived in Boston in the summer of 1991. I met Louise that spring when the School of Social Work was interviewing me for the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs position; she had an extra ticket to the Boston Symphony Orchestra and invited me to accompany her to see Pinchas Zuckerman. Upon leaving the BSO, we ran into Louise’s friend Golda Edinburg, who offered to help me find a place to live if I came to Boston to work, which she did. While I did not know Louise long, I know that her work at BUSSW meant a great deal to her. She often talked about group work, continuing education, and the off-campus programs at BUSSW. The School of Social Work still reaps the benefits of her legacy and my transition to Boston was easier and my stay longer because of that BSO experience in the spring of 1991.

—Wilma Peebles-Wilkins,
Dean Emerita

Louise was an unusually gifted, creative woman with a zest for life. She was a scholar and an inveterate reader who was very brave about traveling by herself while on sabbaticals to experience different cultures and ways of life. She had an encyclopedic mind: if something came up that she didn’t know about, she quickly researched the subject, just as she researched the many countries she visited. She did not want to miss an important sight or experience. Her creativity was legend in that she was always thinking outside the box. She invented Continuing Education for Social Workers locally and nationally, and was a most loyal friend—I treasured her friendship as she pushed to explore new frontiers. Always stimulating, her mind so active and full of ideas, I truly miss her.

—Golda Edinburg
(SSW’46)

Louise was a mentor and friend to me when I first arrived at BUSSW in the early 1980s to work with the Division of Continuing Education on programs for refugees and immigrants, and later on training for the Boston Housing Authority. I especially remember a trip we took together to Japan in 1986 to present our work on training for bicultural bilingual workers to the International Association of Schools of Social Work. We decided to take some extra time to explore the country on our own. Louise was a wonderful adventuress—ready to hop on a train to northern Japan, stay at a remote ryokan, eat whatever we encountered, go out for sushi when only Japanese businessmen were doing so, and visit every sightseeing destination we could manage. She was a role model for social work and we should all be proud that she chose BUSSW as her professional home.

—Terry Saunders Lane
(former Associate Dean)

News from Off-Campus Programs

Three cohorts of off-campus students graduated in May of 2009. Most of these students will continue to work in their communities to enhance the quality of life and continue to further their lifelong learning experience. We are very proud of these graduates and look forward to continuing our relationship with them as they progress through their careers as social workers.

BU NORTH CAMPUS IN CHELMSFORD, MASSACHUSETTS

Beginning May 1, 2009, the Boston University School of Social Work will offer its Master of Social Work Off-Campus Program, previously offered in Tyngsboro, MA, in Chelmsford, MA. The campus, located at 100 Apollo Drive, is northwest of Boston off of Route I-3 and close to major routes such as I-495, I-95, and I-93. The campus is conveniently located for those living and/or working north of Boston; Lowell and the Merrimack Valley; western Massachusetts; and New Hampshire. The program will offer state-of-the-art classrooms, ample free parking, and wireless internet. For more information please go to www.bu.edu/ssw/ocp. An open house will be held at the campus in the fall.

OFF-CAMPUS PROGRAMS FIELD ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Off-Campus Programs has two advisory committees, one in Northern Massachusetts that's connected with the NEMA Program in Chelmsford, and another in Southeastern Massachusetts that collaborates with our SEMA Programs in Fall River and Cape Cod.

The committees meet twice each year to work on projects that enhance the educational experience of our off-campus students and to increase partnership between BUSSW and the communities served by our Off-Campus Program. The committees—made up of BUSSW alumni, agency representatives from the community, and a member of the off-campus administrative team—inform the School about changes in service delivery and community events that impact social work practice and field education. In turn, the School informs the committee about the curriculum and other issues. All members are active in agency-based social work in the communities served by our Off-Campus Programs.

We have an active group of members from the communities of Southeastern Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Cape Cod, and Northeastern Massachusetts. Our advisory committees are a way for individual community-based social workers to share their ideas, agency news, and perspectives on field-related social work curriculum. As a result, recommendations are often formulated in a focused, small group.

This year the SEMA Field Advisory Committee reviewed the placement process and use of technology, discussed the expectations of foundation and advanced-year placement sites for students, and reviewed the content of the OCP Integrative Seminars. The economic climate and its impact on our students and the communities we serve was discussed extensively.

The NEMA Field Advisory Committee has taken on a project of particular interest to the group that involves providing a traveling seminar for our MSW students placed in the greater Lowell community. Each agency hosts one session and teaches students placed in the area agencies about the kind of social work practiced at the particular agency. This project has been challenging, as attendance tends to fall off as students get busier. The committee continues to experiment with alternative scheduling and the possibility of mandatory attendance.

Honoring a Legend & Training the Future:

Highlights from Achievements in Aging

Honoring a legacy that began over sixty years ago, Boston University School of Social Work hosted "Achievements in Aging," a reception celebrating the life of social work pioneer and beloved Professor Emeritus Dr. Louis Lowy, and the School's leading research and scholarship in the field of gerontological social work. Dean Gail Steketee welcomed over 80 invited guests



From left to right: Reeve Goldhaber; honored guest Edith Ditta Lowy (SSW'88); Mary Tambiah.



Honored guest Frances Frank (SSW'79) and Dean Steketee.

to the event, and shared that the tradition of gerontological social work begun by Dr. Lowy still thrives at the School. Honored speakers remembered Dr. Lowy's work, including his widow Edith Ditta Lowy, SSW'88, and former students Barry Shrage, SSW'70, and Frances Frank, SSW'79.

Testaments to the continuing tradition of Dr. Lowy's work included brief highlights from faculty members Professor Scott Miyake Geron, Reeve Goldhaber, and Professor Robert Hudson, who gave the evening's keynote address, "Challenges Facing Gerontological Social Work in a Time of Change."

Read more at bu.edu/ssw/lowy

Alumni Association: DOD Event for Social Work Month

Reaching military parents: SSW DOD grant project kicks off Social Work Month

Professor Ellen DeVoe and alumni Betsy McAlister Groves (SSW'75) ushered in Social Work Month in March as they discussed "Strong Families, Strong Forces," their \$1.3 million Department of Defense (DOD) grant project focusing on military servicemen and women with very young children.

Assistant Professor DeVoe discussed what current research with military families exists, and how the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan differ from prior conflicts and what that implied for social workers. Highlighting the effects that the cycle of deployment can have on young children, DeVoe shared moving stories and videos featuring children whose parents were deployed and explained how a region such as New England has additional layers of complexity for providing treatment.

BUiverse webvideo
www.bu.edu/ssw/sfsf



Professor Ellen DeVoe expounds on trauma in military families.

Betsy McAlister Groves, director of the Child Witness to Violence Project (Boston Medical Center) and associate professor at Boston University School of Medicine, gave the audience an overview of the project and their hopes to help families throughout New England. Currently in Phase 1, the project team is recruiting service people and their families for interviews to better understand the challenges and issues that they face as they navigate life within a continuous cycle of deployment. During Phase 2, expected this summer, SSW researchers hope to pilot an intervention that can later be replicated for all programs serving military families.

As part of the First Thursday series sponsored by the Alumni Association, the event was open to all alumni and community members. Free CEUs were offered as an added bonus. For more information about the project or to participate, please visit www.bu.edu/ssw/research/sfsf or e-mail sfsf@bu.edu.

News from the PEP Office

CALLING ALL ALUMNI!

Did you know that new and recent alumni have money-saving benefits through the Professional Education Programs Office? All recent graduates are eligible for a 20 percent discount on any daylong training workshop. Learn more at bu.edu/ssw/pep.

CHANGES TO THE HURWITZ LECTURE

After more than 25 years, PEP announces the end of the Miriam Hurwitz Annual Lecture. Following the wishes of the family of Miriam Hurwitz, the Miriam Hurwitz Memorial Lecture Fund has been converted to scholarship funding for meritorious MSW students in financial need. *We will no longer be hosting an annual lecture.*

From 1982 to 2008, Boston University School of Social Work hosted thousands of social workers, therapists, and other professionals through the Miriam Hurwitz Memorial Lecture. We have been moved by our speakers, as well as your participation and thoughtful feedback. Your many comments attested to the lecture's clear benefits, from its content and networking opportunities to the collective atmosphere of collegiality it fostered.

We thank you for your support and extend our sincere thanks to the Hurwitz family for their sponsorship. We believe that the scholarship fund created by the family will continue to honor our former colleague, Miriam Hurwitz, and inspire today's students to focus on clinical social work practice with families.

SSW Launches PHSW Campaign During NPH Week



As the nation marked National Public Health Week (April 6-12) this spring, BUSSW kicked off its Campaign for Public Health Social Work (PHSW). Launched by BUSSW and the Group for Public Health Social Work Initiatives

(GPSI), the campaign raised awareness of the importance of public health and the many contributions that BU public health social workers make in creating a foundation for a healthy America.

The School released the website publichealth-socialwork.org, which clarifies the role of public health social work, its historical roots, and the latest trajectories of interdisciplinary research. Each day of the week, a new profile of a BU public health social worker was posted to the site; a complete kit can also be downloaded there.

As an early advocate for transdisciplinary public health and social work collaboration, Boston University is one of the oldest graduate programs

offering a dual degree in social work and public health and continues to graduate the highest number of MSW/MPH students in New England.

International Visiting Scholars

The School hosted twelve visiting scholars from Hong Kong and five from Amsterdam last March. As part of an exploratory international research conversation, Dean Steketee, Associate Dean Freedman and other faculty members discussed trends and issues in social work, as well as the School's research expertise in hoarding, substance abuse, and public health.

Shares Dean Freedman, "It was exciting and stimulating to host faculty and researchers from Hong Kong and Amsterdam. Many of our faculty and researchers had the opportunity to meet with the visitors in informal small groups to discuss common areas of interest including social work education, evidence-based practice, community development and substance abuse and addictions research. The visitors learned a great deal about US current trends and issues in our profession, we learned a great deal about their programs, and we shared many common interests and challenges. There was great connection and energy in our discussions. I am hopeful that we will communicate and collaborate in the future with our Hong Kong and Amsterdam colleagues."



Photo above: Assistant Dean Trudy Zimmerman, Dean Gail Steketee, and Associate Dean Ruth Freedman review social work programs with a team from Denmark. Below: BUSSW and the delegation of researchers from Hong Kong.

Greetings Fellow Alumni and Friends,

Whew! We made it! Welcome to summer—finally!

As the cold winter raged on here in the northeast this year, the School of Social Work kept warm and cozy, buzzing with activity. New Dean Gail Steketeer has settled in to her now-permanent role and has been steering the SSW full-steam ahead. Applications for the fall are up compared to previous years, and our amazing faculty continues to be awarded national grants to conduct groundbreaking, innovative research on topics ranging from the mental health needs of returning war veterans to the effects of incarceration on family members.

As you know, the Alumni Association strives to keep graduates connected with the School. To that end, we have hosted several events at the SSW this year, starting with the Alumni Association Awards Ceremony and annual Alumni Association Board meeting last fall. (Speaking of alumni awards, we are beginning to plan for the 2009 Alumni Association Awards Ceremony, which will be held in October. Please consider nominating a fellow BUSSW alumna/us for an award; it is a fantastic opportunity to recognize their hard work and contribution to the field. You can find more information about the nomination process in this issue of *Currents*.)

Last March, we hosted our First Thursday program entitled “Strong Families, Strong Forces,” during which Professor Ellen DeVoe and Betsy Groves ('75) described the fascinating family-based program they will develop to serve service member parents who have deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan and have very young children. As always, BUSSW alumni networks around the country have been busy hosting BUSSW on Wheels programs and contacting prospective students to help them get to know the School.

Finally, BUSSW is brimming with opportunities for you to remain involved and connected to the School, from simply introducing yourself as a BUSSW alumna/us among colleagues to assisting with student recruitment, nominating a fellow graduate for an Alumni Association Award, serving as a career information resource for new graduates, attending a local event, or supporting fundraising efforts. Any contribution—of any size or manifestation—is greatly valued.

We know that BUSSW is already a terrific place to gain a social work education. With your participation and support, our alma mater is poised to become even better than ever. I encourage you to consider giving back to the School in any way that you can.

Enjoy the warm and relaxing days of summer!

Nanci Ginty Butler ('01), President
BUSSW Alumni Association Board

Congratulations to the students who have been awarded BUSSW named scholarships, prizes, and field stipends.

Tina Howell Scholarship

Sarah Gillis
Moira Murphy

Richard Cohen Scholarship

Elaine Coggins

Ruth Cowin Prize

Lisa Cremer

Mary Finnegan Scholarship

Lindsay Ginnetty

Commencement Prizes:

Saul and David Bernstein Prize

Marisa Soch
Ashley Wickam

Herbert S. Strean Memorial Prize

Elana Klein
Jonathan Karanja

Carl D'Ettore Memorial Prize

Esther Hill

Sarah Lange Prize

for Social Change
Kathleen Bray

Correction: The Dean Wilma Peebles-Wilkins Human Relations Scholarship was incorrectly identified in the last issue of *Currents*. The editorial staff regrets the error.

Over 90 Percent of BUSSW New Grads Quickly Employed

RESULTS FROM THE BUSSW NEW GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT SURVEY

It's official: BUSSW graduates are entering the workforce armed with the skills and knowledge that employers prize. Preliminary findings from the annual employment survey of 2008 graduates administered by the School's Alumni Relations Office reflect this demand and offer a glimpse into the staying power of a BU MSW degree. Launched in February 2009, the survey was returned by nearly 55 percent of the 2008 graduates. Highlights include:

- Forty-one percent of those who responded found employment *prior to graduation*; nearly 50 percent of those who searched for employment after graduation were successful *in three months or less*.
- Four out of five of the graduate respondents are currently employed in social work or human services. More than 75 percent are in clinical practice, with about 19 percent in macro practice positions.
- Most graduates have remained in Massachusetts. Over half of the respondents indicate that they are working in urban settings and 63 percent are in private, not-for-profit agencies.
- The highest percentage of respondents were found to be working in mental health, followed by public health social work, family services, health/medical/physical rehabilitation, aging/gerontology, and child welfare.
- The median reported starting salary range is \$40,000 to \$45,999.

For more information about the 2008 alumni employment survey, please contact the School's Alumni Relations Office at **617-353-3765** or **1-800-735-ALUM** (both voice/TTY) or e-mail us at swalum@bu.edu.

70s

Susan E. Schwartz ('70) wrote a chapter of the upcoming book, *Perpetual Adolescence*, scheduled for release in October from SUNY Press.

Lucie Tillson ('77), of San Anselmo, California, is Community Operations Manager for the Mercy Housing System of the Francis of Assisi Community in San Francisco.

Bet MacArthur ('78) was honored with the Human Rights Commission of the City of Cambridge's annual Peace & Justice Award in November 2008. Ten individual recipients and four organizations received the 2008 award. Bet was recognized for a lifetime of activism in the human rights, civil rights, antiwar, disability rights, and women's rights movements. She was a voting rights worker in the deep south in the 1960s, led the Moratorium Against the War in 1969 in Boston, was keynote speaker at the first Montreal Feminist Therapy Conference in 1973, and more recently is past Chair of Cambridge's Commission for Persons with Disabilities. Bet maintains her private practice in Central Square, Cambridge, and has also been active with the Mass Chapter of NASW since her student years at BUSSW.

80s

Pat Beauchemin ('86), of Warwick, Rhode Island, is a School Social Worker with Barrington Public Schools. She recently presented at the School Social Workers Association of America national conference in Philadelphia and was instrumental in encouraging two Rhode Island congressional members to sponsor School Social Work Week resolutions on both floors of Congress.

Karen Comiter Beer ('86) is in private practice in Boca Raton, Florida. Her son Nathan is currently a freshman at Boston University and her twin girls Kelsey and Marly are in the seventh grade at Donna Klein Jewish Academy.

Paki Wieland ('86) represented social workers as part of a health delegation to Gaza in March of 2009.

Anna Randall ('88), of Redwood City, California, is working on her PhD in Sexology at the Institute for the Advanced Study of Human Sexuality. She is a clinical sexologist in private practice.

90s

Nora Willcutts ('90) works at Mystic Valley Elder Services as a Care Manager Supervisor, overseeing a team of state home care case managers and working with the supervisory team to help implement Client Services projects.

Congratulations to **Jennifer Ahljianian ('91)** on the birth of her daughter Isabella, born on February 16.

Pamela Charney ('91), of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, is an Assessment Supervisor with Smith Community Mental Health.

Liz Stookey Sunde ('94), of Wilder, Vermont, is an independent nonprofit management consultant and facilitator.

Deidra Somerville ('95), of South Holland, Illinois, is Senior Grant Developer with the Chicago Housing Authority.

Jennifer Hill ('96) treats anxiety disorders, specializing in children and adolescents, and is teaching as an adjunct faculty member at Fordham University.

Katy Abrams ('97), of Austin, Texas, is a Clinical Supervisor at MHN Behavioral Health in the Employer Services Division.

Congratulations to **Betty Bernier ('97)** on the birth of her daughter Janelle Marguerite Buissereth, born on April 6.

Lesley Dixon ('97) now lives in Millbury, New Jersey, and works for Magellan Health Services in Parsippany.

Jenn Brandel ('98), of Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts, is Staff Social Worker at Emerson College Counseling Center.

Kami Kato ('98), of Miliani, Hawaii, works to improve educational outcomes for Hawaii P-20 Partnerships for Education, a statewide effort led by the Good Beginnings Alliance, the Hawaii State Department of Education and the University of Hawaii System.

Barbara Kondilis-Petropoulos ('98, SPH'99) is on the faculty at Hellenic American University, in Athens, Greece, where she performs administrative and research duties and teaches for the MBA program in the health care management concentration and for undergraduate social sciences. Her research interests include health communication, tobacco control, chronic and infectious diseases, quality improvement, and diversity awareness.

Jill DeMello ('99) is an adjustment counselor at Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical High School in South Easton, Massachusetts.

Jose Fabian ('99), of Chicago, Illinois, is Internship Coordinator with the Loyola University Chicago School of Social Work.

David Ward ('99) has started a new training program in group therapy with Carol Crosby, LCSW, CGP. Together they have established the Group Therapy Observation Workshop at Community Counseling Center in Portland, Maine.

00s

Heidi M. Behr ('00) works in private practice in Winter Park, FL, serving clients who are seeking healing from addictions and trauma as well as anxiety and depression. Her website is www.FeelPeaceNow.com. Behr reports that her public health degree is serving her well in her new position as Vice-Chair of the charity Libby's Legacy Breast Cancer Foundation™ (LLBCF), www.libbyslegacy.org. LLBCF offers patient advocacy and wish-granting services to women with stage IV breast cancer, as well as free mammograms to uninsured or underinsured women, helping them avoid late-stage cancer. In the last ten months, they have offered three free mammogram events, helping 53 local Central Florida women get much-needed mammograms.

Sharon L. H. Cruz ('00) joined Rochester Memorial School and works as a School Adjustment Counselor.

Marieka Farrenkopf ('00), of Portland, Oregon, is a child abuse specialist at Legacy Emanuel Hospital in Portland and has a private practice where she sees girls and women individually to focus on abuse and trauma.

Erin Ruane Kuehn ('01) and Fran Kuehn ('01) of Hyde Park, Massachusetts, welcomed son Nathan Francis on October 13, 2008.

Dallia Lavi-Ghanem ('01), of Los Angeles, California, is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center.

Doreen Reis ('01), of North Haven, Connecticut, works with the Institute of Professional Practice, a private, nonprofit corporation serving people with developmental and other disabilities.

Jen Sterling Sentlinger ('01), of San Francisco, California, is a perinatal and pediatric social worker with Kaiser Permanente Medical Center.

Stay in the Loop

Update your information, share news, and sign up for the new alumni e-newsletter at www.bu.edu/ssw/alumni.

Stephanie (Wilgus) Stidham ('01), of Rancho Santa Margarita, California, is the Director of Case Management at Country Villa Laguna Hills Healthcare Center.

Guy R. Croteau, LICSW ('02), works at Fenway Health, Boston, MA, as a psychotherapist serving the GLBTQ community.

Rebecca Mulhern ('02), of Brooklyn, New York, is the Mental Health Care Coordinator in the Virology Clinic at Bellevue Hospital Center.

Katie Britton ('03), of West Roxbury, Massachusetts, works at Thrive in 5 in the Office of Mayor Thomas M. Menino in Boston.

Catherine Ehrhardt ('03), of Boston, Massachusetts, is Assistant Director of Counseling at Wentworth Institute of Technology.

Brooke Rufo Hill ('03), of Seattle, Washington, serves as the Service and Education Manager at Agros International, an international community development organization working in Mexico and Central America.

Terry Moynahan ('04), of Cambridge, Massachusetts, is the Institutional Giving Officer at Project Hope in Roxbury.

Taffy (Smith) Ruggeri ('05), of Greenfield, Massachusetts, works for Mohawk Trail Regional School's alternative program in Shelburne and is also working toward her school social worker/adjustment counselor certification.

Christina Bethke ('06), of Cambridge, Massachusetts, works as a Project Coordinator for the Global Health Delivery Project at Harvard Medical School.

Amanda Horowitz ('07), of Brighton, Massachusetts, is a dual degree student in public health who received her MSW in 2007. She currently works as Project Director at the Center for Addictions Research & Services at BUSSW.

Leslie Hu ('07), of San Francisco, California, is a Learning Support Professional with the San Francisco School Health Programs Department.

Eugenia M. Papatsoris ('08) shares, "I was married in June of 2008; my married last name is now Toppi. I am currently working as a school social worker for the city of Chelsea, Massachusetts."

Abby Ross ('08) of Brookline, Massachusetts, is a 2008 graduate of the MSW program and a current student at the Boston University School of Public Health. She works as the Project Coordinator for Strong Families Strong Forces, a four-year study funded by the Department of Defense, and as a research assistant in Emergency Psychiatry at Children's Hospital Boston.



BUSSW welcomed its newest alumni and advocates for social change and justice at Commencement on May 15. Honored speaker and SSW alumna Ellen McCurley (SSW'05, SPH'06) shared her experiences as an international public health social worker and co-founder of The Pendulum Project, a nonprofit organization that serves children and families affected by the HIV/AIDS crisis in Malawi. Read more at www.bu.edu/ssw/commencement.

Time for Alumni Award Nominations

The Boston University School of Social Work Alumni Association Board cordially invites nominations for the 2009 Alumni Association Awards

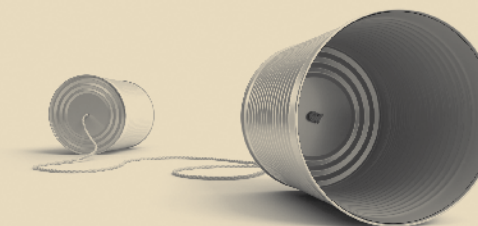
AWARD CATEGORIES INCLUDE:

- The Hubie Jones Urban Service Award
- Outstanding Career in Social Work
- Outstanding Contributions to the Field of Social Work
- Outstanding Contributions to the Alumni Association

For selection criteria and a nomination form, please visit our website at www.bu.edu/ssw/nomination.html, send an e-mail to sswalum@bu.edu, or call 617-353-3765 or 1-800-735-ALUM (voice/TTY).

The Nomination Deadline is July 15, 2009.

The BUSSW Alumni Association Awards Ceremony will be held on October 23, 2009. Watch for an invitation in early September.



Join the CAN!

Network to your next job or share your career advice with the new Career Advisory Network.
www.bu.edu/alumni/careers/can