

Photograph by David Antebi, Rutgers School of Social Work faculty retiree. The image depicts School of Social Work MSW students at the Solidarity Day march in support of organized labor in Washington, D.C. on September 19, 1981.



PARTNERING *for* CHANGE

A PUBLICATION FOR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS OF THE RUTGERS SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK



AGE - OLD QUESTIONS

t h o u g h t s



“Some people are old when they’re 18 and some people are young when they’re 90.
You can’t define people by whatever society determines as their age.
Time is a concept that human beings created.”

Y O K O O N O

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Professors find new ways to harness the resources and diversity older adults bring to the table.



FALL 2018

PARTNERING for CHANGE

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536 George Street
New Brunswick, NJ 08901
848-932-7520

DEAN
AND EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
CATHRYN C. POTTER, MSW, PH.D.

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS
AND EDITOR
AIMEE LABRIE

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
AIMEE LABRIE
MADISON MOLNER '17
KATHERINE PRULL '19
MELISSA KVIDAHL REILLY

PHOTOGRAPHY
JOHN O'BOYLE
PETE BYRON
BILL CARDONI

PUBLICATION DESIGN
ERIC MILLER + ASSOCIATES

PRINTING
GARRISON PRINTING COMPANY

We welcome your comments and suggestions. Please email us with your feedback or ideas to ecapone@ssw.rutgers.edu.



Dear Friends,

Welcome to the fall 2018 issue of *Partnering for Change*! We have begun another academic year with great energy. Our students and faculty are fantastic and represent the profession so well. You may have heard that in the latest *U.S. News and World Report* rankings, Rutgers School of Social Work has risen from 26th to 17th in the country! This is due to the strength of our faculty, the programs they create and deliver, the research they conduct and the impact it has on our state, nation, country and world. Please join me in offering your congratulations to them as you meet them through the year.

In these pages, you will find much that interests you, including our two feature articles. The first highlights the outstanding research efforts on bringing to light issues impacting aging populations, as well as the need to harness the resources and diversity this important demographic offers to society. This research along with the School's Aging and Health Certificate Program for MSW students, help us truly partner for change with this dynamic sector of our population.

"The Business of Helping People" looks at three alumni who have used their business sense and foundational experience in social work to create opportunities within their communities. All three illustrate how our alumni are innovative and entrepreneurial thinkers.

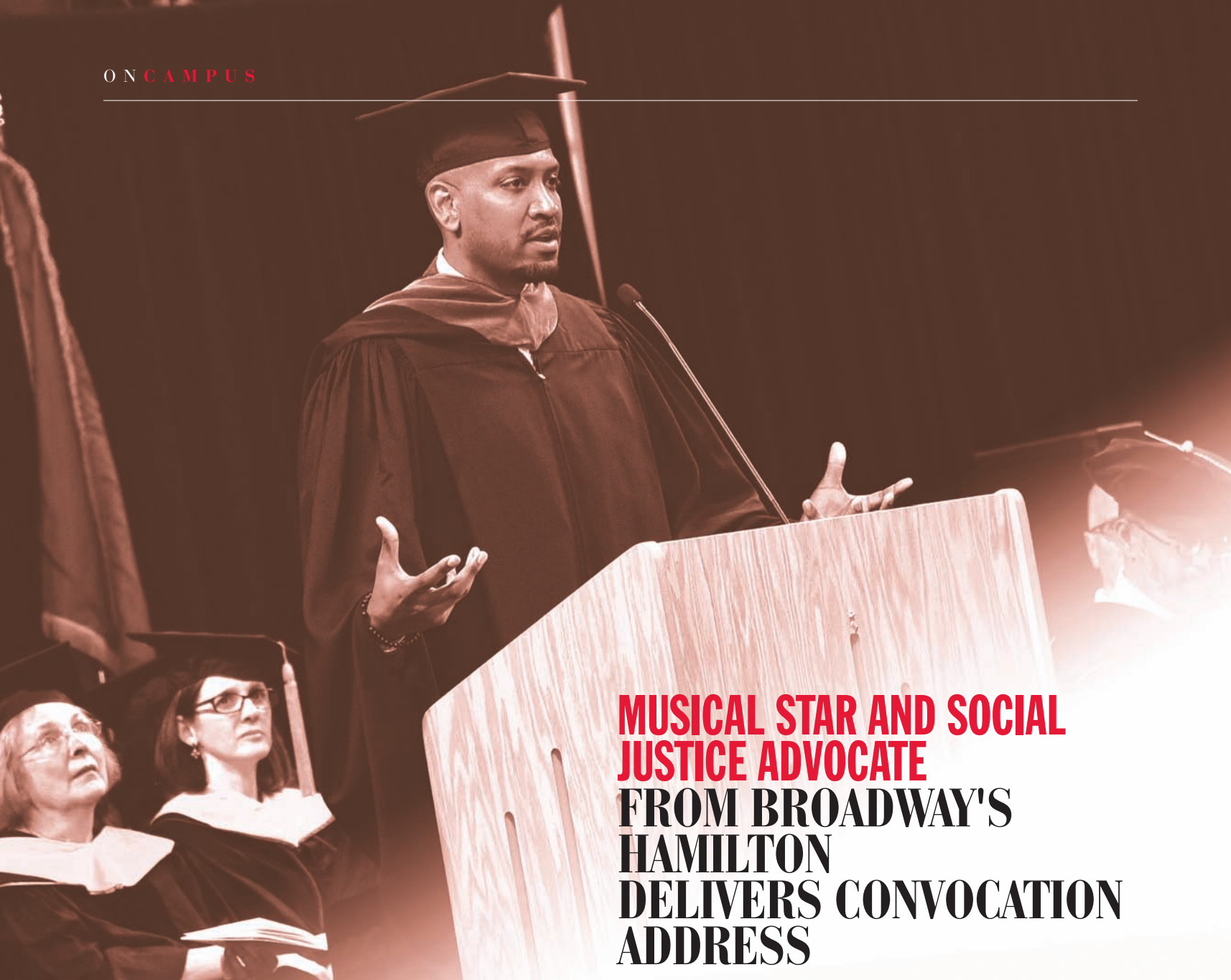
Please welcome Dr. Victoria Banyard to our faculty. Dr. Banyard is truly one of the foremost researchers in the world in the area of interpersonal violence. She joins our Center on Violence Against Women and Children, already a powerhouse in this field. Dr. Banyard brings decades of experience in partnering with communities, from universities to Native American tribes, to combat various forms of interpersonal violence. She is a leading researcher in the campus sexual assault arena and adds strength to Rutgers' existing leadership in this area.

Thank you for your commitment to the field, and for providing such inspiring stories of life-long dedication to social justice issues, as evidenced by the stories of alumna Mae Silver and the updates in the class notes section. Please join us at our before Annual Winter Alumni Reception on Thursday, November 29, when we will celebrate the next Outstanding Alumni Award recipient. See more details for this event later in this publication. A good time is always had by all at this gathering, and we hope to see you there.

Sincerely,

Cathryn C. Potter, M.S.W., Ph.D.
DEAN AND DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR
RUTGERS SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK





MUSICAL STAR AND SOCIAL JUSTICE ADVOCATE FROM BROADWAY'S HAMILTON DELIVERS CONVOCATION ADDRESS

By: Kat Prull '19

Even if you're not a fan of musicals, you've surely heard of the hype surrounding Broadway's *Hamilton*. Critically acclaimed, the show garnered a record-setting 16 Tony award nominations, 11 Tony Award wins, a Pulitzer Prize for drama, and a Grammy. It also has a multicultural cast of talented actors playing America's founding fathers in a rap musical that is energetic, empowering, and enlightening. Tickets are expensive and hard to come by. However, students taking part in convocation on Monday, May 14 had front-row seats to one of the show's key performers. Bryan Terrell Clark, the actor who has played George Washington in *Hamilton* since January 2017, was the School's keynote convocation speaker.

A native of Baltimore and a graduate of the Yale School of Drama, Terrell Clark makes sense as the School's convocation speaker. Not only is he one of the central figures in a hit musical that explores the nature of revolution and the important contributions of immigrants in the creation of American democracy, he is also an advocate for at-risk youth in his personal life. In 2017, he became the co-founder of the philanthropic fashion brand inDEFINED. To date, the foundation has raised over \$92,000 for various charities and

philanthropic organizations, and has supported arts education for youth. Their mission is to empower youth to create change, to "redefine the world we live in," and to become a "community of change-makers."

Prior to his speech, Terrell Clark received the Voice for Social Justice Award. Dean Cathryn C. Potter explained the reasoning for this honor. "He does not live in the bubble that fame can bring. He has also chosen to make a difference for at-risk youth through his social enterprise, inDEFINED, a brand that has raised funds for charities, philanthropic organizations, and arts education."

In his remarks, Terrell Clark offered a moving portrait of what it means to be a social justice advocate. "All things work together for the good. If you live life with that mindset, you can craft the kind of life you want to lead." He also had an important reminder for those about to embark on a professional life that is based largely on serving others. "If you want to maximize what you want to give to the world, take care of yourself first." His remarks were met by a standing ovation from the students.



U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT RANKS RUTGERS SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK RANKS 17TH AMONG BEST GRADUATE SCHOOLS IN THE COUNTRY

By: Aimee LaBrie

According to the most recent ranking of graduate schools from *U.S. News & World Report*, Rutgers School of Social Work ranks 17th among MSW programs in the nation, up from 22nd place in 2014 and 26th place in 2012. Rutgers School of Social Work now ranks ninth among public university programs, and second (tied with NYU) in the competitive New York market.

"Our high ranking is a tribute to the people who work here," says Dean and Distinguished Professor Cathryn C. Potter. "My congratulations go

out to our talented faculty and staff whose commitment to research, learning, and advancing the core principles of the field have contributed to this national acknowledgement of excellence."

U.S. News & World Report is the global authority in rankings of graduate programs. The 251 Master of Social Work programs accredited by the Council on Social Work Education are ranked on the results of peer assessment surveys sent to deans and other key informants.





WE R HERE PROVIDES RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS ON ALL CAMPUSES

Approximately one in five women are sexually assaulted while in college. Dr. Sarah McMahon, associate professor at Rutgers School of Social Work and director for the Center on Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC), oversaw the administration of a series of climate surveys at Rutgers University campuses, including one in 2014 in New Brunswick and others on Newark and Camden in 2016. Those surveys found that while Rutgers has a number of resources available for students who experience violence, students may not be aware of how to access them.

As one way to respond to this crisis, Rutgers University recently developed the We R Here Campaign to “increase awareness of those resources, make it easier for students to know how to access those resources if something happens, and also to become involved in our many efforts across all of our campuses to join in prevention and build safe communities built on respect.” This means that each campus

will now have an office dedicated to addressing campus sexual violence with support, resources, education, and training. One such example is bystander intervention training, where students learn how to intervene in risky situations to prevent escalation, and how to best respond with concrete resources to a friend who shares an experience of sexual violence.

The We R Here initiative is supported through the “Enhancing Victim Services throughout Rutgers University” grant from the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) administered through the NJ Attorney General’s office. The grant is a partnership between the VAWC and each of the Rutgers campuses as well as university leadership. The campaign includes a public service announcement featuring Rutgers students from each campus encouraging their peers to come forward, seek help, and get involved to make the university a safer place to live and learn.

SOLD-OUT RACE CONFERENCE OFFERS EDUCATION AND ENLIGHTENMENT FOR WORKING PROFESSIONALS

On Wednesday, June 6, Rutgers School of Social Work hosted its second annual Challenging Racial Disparities conference at the Busch Student Center, featuring keynote speaker Dr. Derald Wing Sue. With several distinguished panelists, the conference quickly sold-out and was attended by social workers and other professionals, including a large number of Rutgers alumni.

Doug Behan, director of the Rutgers SSW Office of Continuing Education, emphasized the importance of conversations related to the problem of racial inequality and its impact on all aspects of our lives. “Conversations about race can be difficult and are often avoided, however they must take place if we are going to make progress as a society. Social workers are often on the front lines in addressing racial disparities, and this conference is designed to empower them in that important work.”

Dr. Sue, who is a professor of education in the Department of Counseling and Clinical Psychology Teachers College and the School of Social Work at Columbia University, was brought in as the featured speaker as part of the Professor William Neal Brown Endowed Lecture series. His lecture focused on microaggressions and understanding the ways in which people of color can be marginalized in day-to-day interactions. He spoke about how part of the solution to racial inequality is to allow others at the table. It is like an

African proverb, he said: “The true tale of the lion hunt will never be told as long as the hunter tells the story.”

Following his presentation, attendees were given the opportunity to hear from a panel of experts, which was moderated by Marla Blunt-Carter, an assistant professor of professional practice at the School of Social Work. The panel consisted of Dr. Sue, as well as Dr. Anne Gregory and Dr. Shalonda Kelly from the Rutgers Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology. Dr. Sue spoke about the importance of a practitioner’s own awareness of her race and how that might impact the power differential in their work with clients. The panel addressed various issues related to race currently occurring in society, such as the “Taking a Knee” controversy. The session was highly-interactive with members of the audience adding their experiences and questions.

Participants then had a lunch break to network and socialize, followed by the choice to take part in one of eight breakout sessions focused on issues related to addressing race as a professional social worker. These sessions ranged from racial disparities in child protective cases to the impact of race and trauma in the school-to-prison pipeline to mental health disparities in youth and families and the overall problem of racism, injustice, and poverty in New Jersey.

Attendee Dr. Alissa Koval-Dhaliwal first heard

of the conference via an email invitation, and decided to register to enhance her understanding of the issues. As a counselor at the New Jersey City University Counseling Center whose work touches diverse populations, she found both the opening presentation and her breakout session very useful. “Conferences like this are critical to supporting and assisting my clients and our student body, who often experience disparities in education, mental health care, and health care,” she said during a break. “I’m especially appreciative of this opportunity to learn from Dr. Sue, whose body of work on multicultural counseling and microaggressions has been so important and has been instrumental to my ongoing personal and professional development.”

Participants in the conference were eligible to earn five continuing education hours. In addition, they were able to enhance their knowledge about key issues in the field of social work in order to return back to their jobs and apply what they learned.

For information about next year’s conference on race or about continuing education opportunities with the School more generally, please contact Doug Behan at dbehan@ssw.rutgers.edu or visit the website at socialwork.rutgers.edu/academics/continuing-education.



Advance Social Justice by Including Rutgers School of Social Work in Your Will

Establish a planned gift today to benefit the students of tomorrow. Planned giving advances your alma mater’s mission while also allowing you to accomplish your own financial, estate-planning, and philanthropic goals.

You can also name Rutgers as a beneficiary of a retirement plan or

life insurance policy or even create a charitable gift annuity or trust.

With smart planning, you can even increase the size of your estates and/or reduce the tax burden on heirs. Finally, planned gifts play an important role in sustaining academic excellence at Rutgers School of Social Work.

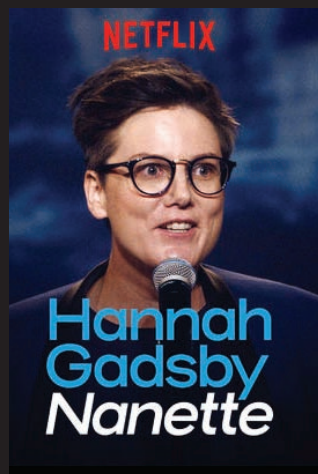
To learn more, please contact Erin Capone, Director of Development, at 848-932-4436 or ecapone@ssw.rutgers.edu.

WHAT TO WATCH: ADD TO YOUR VIEWING LIST



WILD WILD COUNTRY:
 "The six episode docuseries covers the creation and collapse of a cult leader's utopian city in rural Oregon. The story's complicated layers lend to a binge-worthy series with discussions around prejudice, separation of church and state, and class conflicts."

—Madison Molner, *Development & Alumni Relations Assistant*



NANETTE:
 "Comedian Hannah Gadsby makes people find their empathy for a person they may not have empathized with before. Her honesty and anger were so raw and true, no one could dismiss them. It left me shook. We read and read statistics and stories but we have become somewhat immune to the actual impact on oppressed groups. She demanded to be seen and heard, and honestly society does a great job of keeping these stories and voices silent... through disbelief, gaslighting, and minimizing. Everyone should experience it."

—Sarah Beth Plummer, *Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Teaching*



GRACE & FRANKIE:
 "Show starring Lily Tomlin & Jane Fonda. Showcases the lives of two old, active, smart, interesting women. In various episodes, issues they encounter related to ageism (their own or that of others) are depicted."

—Jeanne Koller, *Ph.D., LCSW, CEAP, Program Coordinator, MSW Aging & Health Certificate*



DEAR WHITE PEOPLE:
 "...A dramatic comedy that explores race relations at a fictitious Ivy League university. Through memorable characters and an engaging plot, it provides social commentary on issues at the intersection of race/ethnicity, education, income, age, and gender."

—Emily Greenfield Cohen, *Ph.D., Associate Professor*



THE FOSTERS:
 "The main characters are a lesbian couple and one woman's ex husband who is also her partner as a police officer. There's the son they co-parent with the ex-husband, then there are a brother and sister whom they fostered and then adopted, then a second brother and sister pair who got added to the family and ultimately adopted as well. They've dealt with issues around child protective services and custody, including birth parents returning and grandparents, young girls working as prostitutes, cheating on SATs, abortion, drug use, traumatic brain injury, breast cancer, transgender, and now immigration and DACA."

—Kerry Hennessy, *MPH, Research Specialist, Office of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs*



POSE:
 "It is about Black gay and trans men and Ball culture in the late 80s. From a social justice perspective, it shows the intersection of race, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, class, and HIV status (even if this is not chosen — I recommend you personally watch it — it is the best thing on TV in my opinion)."

—Michael C. LaSala, *Ph.D., LCSW, Director of the DSW Program, Associate Professor*



JANE THE VIRGIN:
 "The premise sounds like it would be terrible and very anti-social justice and anti-feminist, but it's actually an amazing show that deals with gender, sex, immigration, and education, and has one character who speaks exclusively in Spanish."

—Rita Seabrook, *Ph.D., Postdoctoral Research Associate*

FACULTY ACCOLADES

Assistant Professor **VIVIEN LI ANTHONY** has a new peer-reviewed publication in the *Journal of Addictive Diseases*. She also received an award from the Rutgers Global International Research Collaboration Grants for her study, "What Facilitates Video Gaming Disorder? An Exploration of Chinese University Students."

LAURA CUESTA, Assistant Professor, has been awarded a \$25,000 grant from the Institute for Research on Poverty (IRP) for her proposal, "The Regularity of Child Support and Its Contribution to Family Self-Sufficiency." Supported by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE), IRP conducts an annual Extramural Research Funding Program to support timely research that addresses policy-relevant questions.

Professors **ERICKA DEGLAU** and **AYSE AKINCIGIL**, along with doctoral grad student, **ANASUYA RAY**, and adjunct instructor, **JENNIFER BAUWENS**, have a publication that appeared online on May 3. It is part of a special issue on Title IVE Education in child welfare.

Assistant Professor **JACQUELYNN DURON** has two articles in press in the journals, *Child Abuse & Neglect* and *Social Work Education*. She is collaborating on a third piece for *Research on Social Work Practice*.

Professor **PATRICIA FINDLEY** served as a national task force committee member to help develop a guide to assist with military social work. In addition, **KATHLEEN RAY** and **JESSICA STRONG** (both SSW Ph.D. graduates) also served on the committee. Dr. Findley was recently named Director of the MSW Program.

We welcome **DR. SAMUEL C. JONES** as the new Assistant Dean of Part-time Lecturer Development in the Office of Academic Affairs and an Associate Professor of Teaching. Dr. Jones' area of practice and research interests are individual and family therapy, multi-family psycho-education treatment for families with members diagnosed with schizophrenia, and developmental tasks in aging.

DR. JEANNE KOLLER presented "Aging and the LGBT+ Community: Culturally Sensitive Practice Recommendations" at the annual NASW-NJ conference this year.

Associate Professor **JUDITH MCCOYD** co-published an article in *Health Policy and Planning* entitled "Health worker perceptions about women's service utilization in two HIV/AIDS health care delivery models: A qualitative evaluation from North India."

SHARI MUNCH, Associate Professor, had a refereed conference presentation at the Forty-Second Annual Conference on Perinatal Social Work, Long Beach, California.

Associate Professor **LENNA NEPOMNYASCHY** was awarded a \$25,000 grant from the Fatherhood Research and Practice Network for a project titled, "Criminal Justice Involvement, State Policies, and 'Involvement with Children,'" with post-doctoral scholar, **ALLISON DWYER EMORY**, as Co-Investigator.

Professor **LIA NOWER** and the Center for Gambling Studies has been awarded a \$2.6 million grant from the Division of Gaming Enforcement for projects examining the impact of Internet gaming on problem gambling.

Professor **JUDY L. POSTMUS** was selected for the 2018 Feminist Scholar Award by the CSWE Council on the Role and Status of Women in Social Work Education. Postmus was recognized for her significant contribution to the field of social work education and commitment to the goals and values of the Women's Council and to feminist practice and scholarship. Postmus has also been asked to join the newly-formed Match Group Advisory Counsel. The counsel will advise Match Group on how to improve safety on its platforms and study how safety plays out on online dating platforms.

Professor **WILLIAM WALDMAN** was honored on June 19 with the 2018 Mental Health Association in New Jersey Golden Bell Achievement Award at their 19th Annual Evening of Excellence in Kenilworth, NJ. Along with being an associate professor at the School, Waldman is the outgoing chairman of the Mental Health Association in New Jersey (MHANJ) Board of Trustees.



FACULTY IN THE NEWS



“Why living in South Jersey could take years off your life”

NJ.com / March 31, 2018

“There were higher levels of hypertension. Also, they reported higher levels of depression and anxiety which leads to poor physical health.”

Patricia Findley, Associate Professor, Director of the MSW Program, and Special Assistant to the Dean for Inter-professional Health Initiatives



“Rutgers teaching how to stop sexual assault before it happens”

NJ 101.5 / April 19, 2018

[The We R Here Campaign was created to...] “increase awareness of those resources, make it easier for students to know how to access those resources if something happens, but also to become involved in our many efforts across all of our campuses to join in prevention, to raise awareness.”

Sarah McMahan, Associate Professor and Director, Center on Violence Against Women and Children



“Best day care in New Jersey: Five tips for finding the best local care for your kid”

Asbury Park Press/April 23, 2018

“It is not unusual to pay as much for child care, particularly for infants, as it is to pay rent or even college tuition. The most important thing for parents who are looking for care, especially for infants and toddlers, is the care affordable?”

Tess McCutcheon, Director, Institute for Families



“Gambling Addiction Researchers Wary Amid Supreme Court OK'ing Legal Sports Betting”

WBUR 90.0 / May 21, 2018

“Based on studies that we’ve done, folks that gamble on sports tend to gamble more often and have more problems than the average gambler. A lot of legislation throws money at treatment, and my experience has been that by the time people need treatment, there’s already a lot of devastation.”

Lia Nower, Professor, Director, Center for Gambling Studies Co-Director, Addiction Counselor Training Certificate Program

WELCOMING NEW LEADERSHIP

We are very excited about changes in our leadership effective this fall.

Dr. Laura Curran has taken on the role of Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. In this position, Dr. Curran will oversee the academic programming of the School of Social Work and work closely with faculty and program leadership on teaching and learning initiatives. Her office also oversees the School of Social Work’s part-time lecturers.

Dr. Curran is also an associate professor at the SSW and she served as Director of the MSW program since 2014. In that role, she oversaw curriculum and master’s level program development. Prior to that appointment, she was the inaugural director of our Online MSW Program. In that capacity, she led the design and implementation of successful online endeavors.



Laura Curran, Ph.D.

Curran’s scholarship focuses on social work history, low-income women’s perinatal mental health, and most recently, issues in social work education. Her work has appeared in such outlets as *Social Service Review*, *the Journal of Women’s History*, and *Infant Mental Health*. Curran is the Co-PI for a CSWE Policy Practice in Field Education Initiative grant.

Also this fall, Dr. Judy L. Postmus started as the Associate Dean for Faculty Development and Strategic Initiatives. In this role,



Judy Postmus, Ph.D.

Postmus is responsible for developing and leading faculty tenure and promotion processes and faculty mentoring and development programs in conjunction with the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs and Associate Dean for Research. In addition, she will work closely with Dean Cathryn Potter to manage special projects related to developing and advancing strategic initiatives within the School and University, as well as locally and nationally.

Since 2007, Postmus has served as the founding director of the Center on Violence Against Women and Children, the premier social

work research center focused on interpersonal violence. Under her leadership, VAWC has grown to a large, vibrant, well-funded center including 18 doctoral students, and numerous post docs, staff, students, and faculty, with a current funding level of \$2.5 million per year. During her time with the Center, VAWC has received funding from the National Institute of Justice, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, the New Jersey Departments of Children and Families, Human Services, and Community Affairs, as well as with Verizon Wireless and Allstate Foundation. Her research is on physical, sexual, and economic victimization experiences of women with her most recent attention given to developing a Violence Against Women Research Consortium, funded by the National Institute of Justice (2016-MU-CX-K011). She has given many local, national, and international presentations on the impact of policies and interventions for survivors of violence. Her work is strongly influenced from her 20 years as a practitioner and administrator.

Dr. Patricia Findley has assumed the role of MSW Director. She will oversee the MSW program, including its specialized programs and curricular components, will chair the MSW Curriculum Committee, and will join the leadership team for the School.

Findley came to Rutgers in 2002 at the Program for Disability Research through the School of Management and Labor Relations, working on several grants including a large cooperative agreement

with the Social Security Administration and an NIH K Award. Following a brief time as a Health Science Specialist/Researcher in the VA at East Orange, she joined faculty at SSW in 2007. Dr. Findley was tenured as an associate professor in 2013. Her clinical and research work has focused on disability, health, and the impact of comorbid conditions. She became the Special Assistant to the Dean for Interprofessional Health Initiatives in 2015, and has been the MSW Campus Coordinator for the



Patricia Findley, Ph.D.

Newark campus. She also sits on the Board of Rutgers Health representing SSW. Findley has been a tremendous ambassador for the school, developing relationships with faculty and administrators across multiple campuses and programs.

We look forward to future successes with these leadership positions, and thank Curran, Postmus, and Findley for their commitment to the School.

Welcome New Faculty + **Five Objects**



RUTGERS SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK is pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. Victoria Banyard as a full-time professor. Banyard, who was a full professor in the Department of Psychology at the University of New Hampshire, has spent her academic life focused on issues related to the prevention of and responses to interpersonal violence.

She is currently the principal investigator on two grants, one from the Department of Justice and the other with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). She is also a co-principal investigator on a second CDC grant, "Preventing sexual violence through a comprehensive peer led initiative: a process and outcome evaluation."

Banyard brings with her decades of experience in working with these issues, having served as a research and evaluation specialist in the Office on Violence Against Women in the U.S. Department of Justice. Even as a Ph.D. student earning her degree in clinical psychology and certificate in Women's Studies at the University of Michigan, her interest in finding ways to prevent and respond to interpersonal violence was clear.

FIVE OBJECTS THAT MATTER

Footprints: This is a gift given to me by a good friend who directed a crisis center: two embroidered footprints made by domestic violence survivors. To me it is a reminder of why I do this work – to try to reduce the burden of violence and trauma that all too many people experience. It is a reminder to me that in doing this work I always need to think about trying to understand what it is like to walk in the shoes of others. The beauty of the embroidery is also a reminder of the incredible strength and resilience of survivors who keep going, one foot in front of the other, every day.



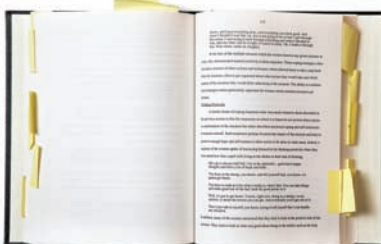
Family pictures: Family is the most important thing in my life. This is a painting my oldest son did in his first grade art class: a New Hampshire farm, complete with barn and scarecrow. He is now 17. My office is full of photos of my family – my spouse, three children, and two dogs. My family is my support and foundation. They help me keep balance and humor in my life and keep me from spending too many hours at the office.



White House name tags: I had the chance to participate in several White House-sponsored meetings during the Obama administration when I was working with colleagues at the Office on Violence Against Women. They would give us name tags and name plates. Sexual assault, dating and domestic violence, and stalking must be public health priorities nationally and internationally. These objects help remind me that the work that my colleagues in the field do – at the Rutgers Center on Violence Against Women and Children, and back at the University of New Hampshire at Prevention Innovations – really matters; it matters at the highest level.



Books: Many of the books in my office tell stories of people and communities. Stories and voices of people's experiences – often enduring and overcoming violence – fill my office and my work. My research draws heavily on mixed methods. Most projects involve at least some piece of qualitative research, whether through interviews, focus groups, or photovoice. The purpose of my work is to prevent violence and promote resilience among survivors. This work must be grounded in the perspectives and experiences of communities, "families" and practitioners. Their words keep our work relevant.



Magic wand: We are avid Harry Potter fans in my family. This is a replica of Professor McGonagall's wand. To spend decades working to end a big problem like interpersonal violence – to really believe that the world can change and be more positive, and to keep fighting for social justice – you have to believe in a little magic. It is also important that this is Professor McGonagall's wand in particular. She is a strong teacher and mentor; she has strong principles, and stands up for what is right by not only holding her students to high standards, but supporting and believing in them as they discover their own powers. It's not always easy, but I try to aim for that ideal every day. ■



PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN O'BOYLE

AGE-OLD QUESTIONS

The School of Social Work Provides Leadership for an Aging Society

BY: MELISSA KVIDAHL REILLY

A

CCORDING TO THE U.S. CENSUS, the country is on the brink of a seismic population shift: by 2030, all Baby Boomers will be older than age 65, meaning that one in five Americans will be retirement age and, for the first time in our nation's history, older people are projected to outnumber children.

Today, more and more researchers and innovators in the field of social work are harnessing the resources and diversity that the aging population brings to the table. At the School of Social Work, faculty members are stepping up to focus their research on policy and practice around long lives, and the school itself is doing more than ever to prepare its students to address this great demographic change.



Key Findings

Associate Professor Karen Zurlo, whose research focuses on the economic security of older adults, has recently examined the link between income adequacy and mental health. “We learned through one study, which is pending publication, that adults between the ages of 55 and 64 have more challenges than their older counterparts when it comes to income adequacy and depressive symptoms,” she says. “Middle-aged adults are challenged by the costs of housing, maintaining gainful employment, financing their children’s college education, caring for their parents, and managing their own healthcare needs. In combination, these life circumstances negatively affect one’s mental health.”

Zurlo’s research shows that the older members of society—those born prior to World War II—tend to be more frugal and focused on saving and planning as compared with their younger peers. As a result, the oldest among us will have a more financially secure retirement (yielding better mental health and fewer depressive symptoms) than Baby Boomers, or those born between 1946 and 1964.

Not surprisingly, Zurlo’s research has also illuminated a need for financial education among older adults. Unlike previous generations, which benefited from employer-managed pensions, today’s retirees must be personally responsible for managing their retirement accounts and planning for retirement. “Older adults claim to be financially literate and active consumers of financial education and advice, but many are not,” she explains. Middle-aged adults often are not aware of the

In addition to her research on communities, Greenfield also is studying how inequalities from childhood influence people’s experiences of later life. With support from the National Institutes of Health, she is using survey data from one of the longest-running cohort studies in the U.S., which has followed the high school class of 1957 in Wisconsin for about 60 years. “As it turns out, the more privilege you have in childhood, the more cognitive advantages you are likely to have, even 50-plus years later,” she explains. “This research shows the continued importance of breaking down silos between research and policy on children and research and policy on older adults.”

In this way, social workers are in a prime position to make a difference.

Changemaking at SSW

As trained professionals in tune with issues of inequality and diversity, social workers can get involved in their communities on behalf of aging populations and offer suggestions and improvements to better serve these populations. How? “Act locally and think bigger than that,” says Greenfield. “What social workers experience in their work on a day-to-day basis connects with systems-wide impacts at the organizational, community, regional, statewide, national, and global levels. There are patterns here, and social workers experience those patterns and have so much to offer at all these broader levels.” She recommends that

TODAY, MORE AND MORE RESEARCHERS AND INNOVATORS IN THE FIELD OF SOCIAL WORK ARE HARNESSING THE RESOURCES AND DIVERSITY THAT THE AGING POPULATION BRINGS TO THE TABLE. AT THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK, FACULTY MEMBERS ARE STEPPING UP TO FOCUS THEIR RESEARCH ON POLICY AND PRACTICE AROUND LONG LIVES, AND THE SCHOOL ITSELF IS DOING MORE THAN EVER TO PREPARE ITS STUDENTS TO ADDRESS THIS GREAT DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE.

financial expenses they will have in retirement, or don’t know what steps to take to secure a sound retirement, Zurlo adds. Programs like Social Security and Medicare provide significant supports to their beneficiaries, but can be difficult for older adults to navigate to obtain maximum program benefits.

There is also a need to reassess the infrastructure in place for this population, says Associate Professor Emily Greenfield, whose research focus is largely on those who remain living in their communities, as opposed to moving to retirement neighborhoods, assisted living communities, or other similar living arrangements. “The fact is that most people remain living in the community in later life,” she says. “So it’s a big question for advocates, policy makers, social workers, family members, and older people themselves how we can make these environments better to support people aging in place.”

Greenfield’s research on age-friendly initiatives indicates that supporting aging in place is about so much more than access to medical treatment or a senior center. “We’re starting to think about how the physical infrastructure can facilitate a good quality of life for this population,” she says. This means assessing available transportation, housing, health and social services, opportunities for social inclusion, civic engagement, and information and communication. What it all comes down to? Choice. “The aging population is not a homogenous group,” Greenfield says. “Take communications, for example. A senior center may think they’re meeting the communications needs of their audience by offering a weekly newsletter. That may work well for some, but there are likely volumes of other people for whom Facebook, word of mouth through a church, or other ways would work better.”

social workers get involved through their professional organizations and also raise the visibility of social work and aging in their own private networks. The key is working within the formal and informal networks available, and sharing ideas, information, and possible solutions.

At the School of Social Work, one solution is the MSW Certificate in Aging and Health, which garners about 10 percent of the students enrolled in the master’s program. But with the need so immense, why not more? “Students may not realize that the things they have interest in are affecting older adults,” says Jeanne Koller, the certificate’s program coordinator. For example, those who want to work with veterans will find a large cohort in the older adult population, as will those who want to work with people diagnosed with AIDS/HIV and other chronic diseases, or affected by sexually transmitted diseases or addiction—two areas not only often publicized, but which increasingly impact the aging population.

“There’s a misconception that people can’t change if they’re over a certain age,” says Koller. “But the truth is that they face the same mental and physical issues as younger folks, and in some ways a 66-year-old may be more interested in talking and receiving help than a 16-year-old.” Indeed, opportunities for graduates of the certificate program abound, from those in hospitals, hospice, assisted living, and skilled nursing programs to those in community programs, elder abuse services, and the government.

“There is a large need for this focus,” says Koller. “The popularity of the certificate program has been steadily increasing, and those who choose this path are very committed. Social work is a helping profession, and students want to have a positive and real impact on their clients’ lives. Working with older adults—often, a very appreciative population—meets that need.” ■



5 TIPS FOR INTERFACING WITH THE OLDER ADULTS

Social justice advocate David J. Stern '72 is the namesake of a School of Social Work lecture series endowed by his son, Robert. It focuses on issues facing older adults and new approaches in addressing them. Here are his top tips for working with the people later in life.

- 1 Overcome resistance:** “It’s always too early before it’s too late,” Stern says. Older adults will often recognize the value of a service or care option, but say they don’t need it yet. While respecting the client’s right to make decisions within their capabilities, Stern says it’s important to patiently identify and overcome resistance to needed changes. Engaging the client and their significant others in a life care planning process can be helpful, and at times essential, in this effort.
- 2 Understand reluctance:** Although there are millions of older Americans who are victims of abuse (physical, emotional, and financial), the vast majority, because of shame or fear, are reluctant to report it or take action, says Stern. This is especially true when the abuser is a friend or relative. Social workers, since they provide a combination of services and emotional support, are in a good position to connect senior victims with the help they need.
- 3 Prioritize values:** Stern says it’s important to recognize the significance of spirituality in the lives of the aged, and use this knowledge as a means to better understand them and their values. “We must consider how the pain of social isolation and loss may be compounded when seniors can no longer access that religious institution that had been a source of much solace, comfort, and companionship in their lives,” he adds. “And we must work to find ways of connecting them to that source of help.”
- 4 Capitalize on resources:** Fall prevention and detection systems, GPS devices, and appliances that can be remotely monitored or controlled can increase client safety. Utilizing medication dispensers and remote telemonitoring can also increase healthcare compliance. Robotic vacuum cleaners, devices like the Amazon Echo, and even Uber can boost a client’s independence. Engaging in FaceTime or virtual senior centers can help clients socialize, even from home. And electronic case management systems and teleconferencing can help social workers connect with other caregivers and providers to optimize care.
- 5 Determine the true need:** When a senior or family member calls for help, be welcoming and responsive, but try to determine what precipitated that call, Stern says. Why today? Why not yesterday, or tomorrow? “Be aware that they may be requesting a specific service, often Meals on Wheels, not because they need it, but because they need help and that may be the only service they’re aware of,” Stern says. “Also recognize that the family member and the older adult may have sharply differing views on the kinds of care needed or whether care is needed at all.” The key, he says, is working with older adults to help them assert control and independence in identifying when and how care is provided.

THE BUSINESS OF HELPING PEOPLE: INNOVATIVE ALUMNI WHO FIND NEW PATHWAYS IN THEIR FIELD

BY: AIMEE LABRIE

T

THE DREAM OF SONIA SINGH, NCAS '12, MSW '13, was to one day open her own practice. Knowing she would face obstacles, she remained determined to build her own path to an independent private practice.

Jeff Fleischer RC '75, MSW '77 grew up in Newark and saw first hand the struggles of families in his neighborhood and surrounding cities. While earning his undergraduate and graduate degrees in psychology and social work, Fleischer became involved first as a Big Brother for Rutgers Community Action, and then operating an after school youth center in New Brunswick for the community.

For Christina Serrano MSW '15, starting a business was the furthest thing from her mind as an undergraduate. Her main goal was to help others. It wasn't until her life partner, Aaron, a long distance tractor trailer driver, started having health problems that the idea of Juice for Us began to take shape.

All three alumni have taken entrepreneurial steps to arrive where they are today. Along with their desire to help others, they share common characteristics – all exhibited the patience and determination needed to forge ahead despite various obstacles. Uniformly, they credit their experiences at Rutgers as providing direction as they moved beyond the more traditional frameworks of their fields to become leaders with a vision for success.

At first, Sonia's direction seemed fairly straightforward. After graduation, she worked as an outpatient therapist in a large clinic. She soon found the hours, politics, and paperwork were burdensome, and felt her skills as a clinician were not being fully utilized.

At the same time, she knew that starting a private practice would be challenging. She began slowly – by searching for resources and people who could help her make the transition from a group dynamic to her own private practice.

"I took an all out approach," she says. "I joined NASW to network, and I started looking for people who were successful in their private practices and asked them for help. I scoured the web for Facebook groups to

"It is important for people, especially women, to listen to our inner voices. We have a sense of what we want, but often, out of fear, we choose to stay where we are. This experience has taught me that it's okay to go for it. You have to make that leap."

CHRISTINA SERRANO, MSW '15



“You can help a large majority of kids with the right approach. Even if you can’t assist them right away, you often get another chance in the future. I see many former youth now, and they are using lessons that they learned. You have good days and bad days, but on the whole, the balance is very positive.”

JEFF FLEISCHER, RC '75, MSW '77

join, and I read every book I could put my hands on about private practice.”

She didn’t hesitate to ask lots of questions — how did they get started? What was the overhead like for an office? What did they wish they had done differently from the beginning? “Everyone I was talking to had something to offer me, and I took it all in.”

One of the things she realized from those conversations was that in order to be successful, she would have to develop a business plan, a personal brand, a website, and marketing skills to stand out. “I also had

clients who return. Being a part of ACT was the best decision I ever made, because the program prepared me for what I do today.”

Jeff had no idea as an undergraduate social work student that his professional life would lead him where he is today: CEO of Youth Advocate Program (YAP), an organization he has been with for 33 years.

He credits the School for putting him on this path. “I had great experiences at Rutgers,” he explains. “I was part of the Perth Amboy student unit, led by Dr. Marcos Leiderman and Professor Abe Espada. They assigned five students to work in the Low Income Stockton Street

unique skills and interests. “For example, we had a gang member who was really good at math whom we paid to tutor younger kids. Another youth was good at fixing bikes, so he started fixing up abandoned bikes for other kids to ride,” he explains.

YAP now serves more than 19,000 families annually in 23 states, 30 major U.S. ‘cities’, and several foreign countries. In New Jersey alone, Jeff was part of a movement that collaborated with colleagues and partners to create significant changes in the New Jersey Child Welfare System, such as the passage of the Bring Our Children Home Act, legislation that reduced the state’s practice of sending youth to out-of-state institutions and encouraged family and community-based care for at-risk youth in their own neighborhoods. Today, Jeff and YAP are part of a movement to shut down the state’s youth prisons. “Nationwide, YAP is committed to reducing racial disparities in our juvenile justice systems,” he says.

Though the job is difficult at times, he focuses on the benefits. “You can help a large majority of kids with the right approach. Even if you can’t assist them right away, you often get another chance in the future. I see many former youth now, and they are using lessons that they learned. You have good days and bad days, but on the whole, the balance is very positive.”

Like Sonia, Jeff recognizes that a large part of his success required him to include the voices of the youth and families from communities around him. “You don’t have to go it alone. What I learned at Rutgers is that together, we can forge coalitions and partnerships to change our human service systems so they empower families and communities.”

In 2016, Christina and Aaron realized they needed a lifestyle change when Aaron learned he was pre-diabetic. Other health issues in their immediate family underscored the importance of radically altering their eating patterns.

First, the couple switched to a plant-based, vegan diet and noticed

an immediate positive impact on their health and well-being. As Christina recalls, “We went from eating out a lot and consuming processed foods to juicing and adding locally grown fruits and vegetables to our meals. Almost immediately, we noticed a change in our energy level and overall sense of well-being.”

These changes opened up another possibility. What if they could bring idea of making small changes in one’s daily eating habits to prevent illness to people in their community? And just like that, the idea for Juice for Us began to flourish.

Christina had worked for 13 years at Collaborative Support Programs of New Jersey, a community mental health agency. While she found her role to be fulfilling, she had a feeling that her purpose was pulling her elsewhere. “Both of us had been thinking about starting a business for a while, and when we began significantly altering our approach to eating, I had an instinct that the two could be combined somehow.”

Aaron conceived of the initial idea of Juice for Us, and the couple sat down to formulate the concept of a mobile juice company as a way to bring healthy juice to underrepresented communities, especially those with food deserts and their hometowns of Carteret and New Brunswick.

“Healthy eating choices don’t exist here. It’s primarily an industrial area,” says Christina. “There are parts of Carteret that have very limited fresh fruit or vegetables available, let alone a juice or smoothie shop. Aaron and I knew we weren’t the only people in the area who would like more options.”

However, Christina didn’t want to jump into anything without being financially prepared. She continued to work full time, to save money, and to insist they go through their expenses to figure out ways to cut costs and pay down debt. The couple even took a business class at NJSDBC at Rutgers that helped them to develop a solid and reasonable business plan.

Eventually, Aaron found a former hot dog truck on Craigslist for an affordable price. After transforming the truck with bright paint colors and bringing it up to proper health and safety codes, they were ready to roll out a small menu of juices and smoothies.

“We are at various locations throughout the week including Bradley Beach, Woodbridge Mall, and the East Orange Farmer’s Market. Our ultimate goal is to have a steady presence at a specific location and also to continue to travel where there is a need.”

As a student, Christina was part of the Management and Policy program (MAP), and she credits Professor William Waldman for having a large impact on her trajectory. “He shared his professional journey with us, and his teaching style was to show us that you can use the skills that you were given, and the ones you learn, to make a difference in the world.”

“I honestly believe that there is no other degree program than social work that has the most amount of transferrable skills,” Christina says. “It is important for people, especially women, to listen to our inner voices. We have a sense of what we want, but often, out of fear, we choose to stay where we are. This experience has taught me that it’s okay to go for it. You have to make that leap.”

Juice for Us has several vibrant (and delicious) smoothie and cold-pressed juice options: Piña Coco, Brekkie for Champs, Mango Creamsicle, Minty Melon Cooler, among several others. Their goal is to expand the menu into more vegan food options, but they are taking it slowly.

She offers advice for fellow alumni who may be thinking about making a similar life and/or career change. “We see issues and we get overwhelmed. But you can make a difference, even if it’s one person at a time. You have more resources around you than you might realize. Don’t be afraid to open yourself up to any possibility.” ■

“If it wasn’t for the clinical skills that Rutgers gave me, I wouldn’t be the clinician I am. You can’t have mediocre skills, because you won’t get referrals or clients who return. Being a part of ACT was the best decision I ever made, because the program prepared me for what I do today.”

SONIA SINGH, NCAS '12, MSW '13

to know my own limitations. I wasn’t equipped to build a personal brand or to create a web presence, so I knew I would have to invest financially in getting those pieces in place.”

She never questioned reaching out to others who knew more. “If you have a private practice, you have to get comfortable with outsourcing and recognizing what is actually feasible given your limited time and resources.”

After about two years where she continued to balance a part-time job to support her newly-founded practice, Sonia has built a solid client base and is now owner of the Center of Inner Transformations, LLC, in East Brunswick, NJ.

She credits Rutgers for helping her to succeed. “If it wasn’t for the clinical skills that Rutgers gave me, I wouldn’t be the clinician I am. You can’t have mediocre skills, because you won’t get referrals or

Homes in Perth Amboy. Back then, mail wasn’t delivered, windows and elevators were not repaired, and violence and drugs were everywhere. We were engaged in the building, in community organizing, and in getting older kids in the complex to supervise the smaller children. We also organized individual counseling and gang outreach, and went to court with kids who got into trouble.”

At first, Jeff worked in New York with youth involved in gangs, and in 1981, found himself as a youth center director at La Casa de don Pedro in Newark. This work led him to hear more about YAP, and, in 1985, he was hired on to the then fairly small staff. “I was drawn to the mission to keep families together and at-risk youth out of institutions, detention centers, or psych wards.”

Under his leadership, YAP has honed its focus on providing individualized care for each person by underscoring the individual’s



By: Madison Molner '17

MAE SILVER '58 founded the first alumni association at the Rutgers School of Social Work and remains a proud advocate for the field of social work today. Born in New Brunswick, she has dedicated her life to bringing social work resources to her community. As a resident of San Francisco for nearly four decades, she founded her local neighborhood association and chaired NASW's bay area chapter. Later, she returned to New Jersey to establish the Thomas Paine Society of Bordentown, NJ.

Prior to her recent move to Jacksonville, Mae lived in Fort Lauderdale, where she continued to offer insights into the community, including a presentation on "The Secret History of Fort Lauderdale," which illustrated the city's segregation-era history. A prolific writer, Mae has written a number of articles and pamphlets and published upwards of 10 books, most notably, *Too Hot to Handle: Remarkable Women of Fort Lauderdale*.

Mae's passion for social justice continues to inspire her work and her life, alongside her interest in exploring historical origins of places in order to connect people more specifically with their communities and personal identity.

What is it that drew you to working closely with community organizations?

I am a social worker for life, regardless of the work I do. I look at my community through those eyes, and listen as a social worker to get a sense of what's going on beneath the surface. When I was living in San Francisco, I recognized that when people understood their history and the stories of the community, they would become involved in whatever project we had going in the neighborhood organization

— like planting a tree or tending a community garden.

Once people get invested, regardless of whether they were homeowners or renters, they established an emotional connection to their community and were then more likely to stand up for issues that had to do with their neighborhood, or with other neighborhoods in San Francisco. Community investment in where you're living keeps the neighborhood alive and functioning.

Why do you think it's important for social workers to understand the history of their communities?

It's like understanding your own personal history. As you learn about your origins, you begin to appreciate who you are and to celebrate the connection with your ancestors. When you move into a new city, as sophisticated and vast as many big cities are, you assume you don't have any connection, and then it doesn't mean anything to you beyond a place to live.

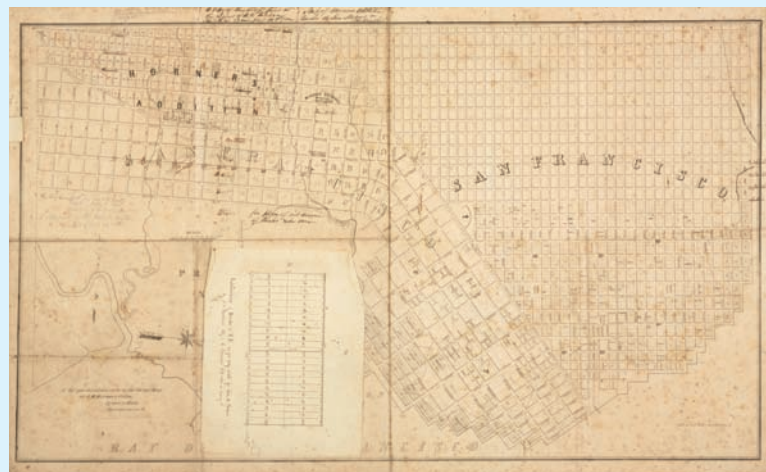
For example, when I bought a home in an area in San Francisco called "Horner's Addition," I became curious about the name. After doing a little research at the local library and looking at municipal records, I discovered that the place was named after John M. Horner, who, in the 1840s, became known as "California's First Farmer" because he provided fresh produce to prospectors during the California Gold Rush. He also built a school and meetinghouse for the community, and it turns out that he was originally from Hornerstown, New Jersey. As a native of New Jersey, now living in California like Horner — this knowledge of its history created for me an immediate connection to the place.

How should social workers get started in understanding their local history?

Be curious about your environment and the place you live. Most social workers have an innate curiosity about others; they are detectives of emotion. You can treat the history of a place in the same way. Every location has a social and political history that has shaped it. Start by going to your local library archives to find out the history of the street you live on — who is it named after? When was the area around it developed? Think of the location as a person you are better trying to understand, as you would a client or colleague. As you begin to uncover its history, you will likely develop a stronger connection and a better sense of understanding about the place.

How has being a social worker for the past several decades shaped your life?

Being a social worker has enlightened me; given me a greater understanding of the complexities of life, as well as the skills to involve others in what I'm doing for the community. A social worker's ability to focus on the human aspect of situations and the skill to involve others — never underestimate this strength. ■



Map of San Francisco with Horner's Addition

Thank you to Antoinette Farmer



Associate Dean Antoinette Farmer stepped down from her role on September 1, 2018. Dr. Farmer has served in this leadership role for 13 years, across the tenure of three Deans. She has provided the calm, attentive, ethically grounded leadership that has made it possible for the School to grow and thrive across this span of time. Under her leadership, the MSW and BASW programs have grown

substantially, new certificates and programs have been established, and each of these initiatives has received the support and attention needed to be successful. In 2014, following implementation of the recommendations of the Restructuring Task Force, AD Farmer took on an expanded scope of supervision and leadership. She has just recently led our successful reaffirmation efforts.

In her role, Farmer built the course schedules for MSW and BASW programs, and deployed 72 full-time faculty and over 150 PTLs each year to field the courses that serve over 1,900 students. She worked closely with the directors of the Ph.D. and DSW programs with regard to course scheduling and University-required assessment programs. She led our Assessment Committee and oversaw all assessment processes. She led our academic integrity processes. She served on a plethora of committees and led the academic management team, as well as serving as a lead teacher. She managed a team of support staff and assessment team members while troubleshooting situations with her excellent problem-solving skills.

During her term as AD, Farmer has also maintained a strong research agenda. She was appointed as an Assistant Professor in 1996, promoted to Associate in 2002, and promoted to Full Professor in 2017. Her scholarship focuses on social work education, research with diverse groups, and parenting behaviors and outcomes. She is first author of the very well received 2014 book *Research with diverse groups: Research designs and multivariate latent modeling for equivalence*, as well as three previous books and many articles. Of the articles published since her arrival at Rutgers, for the vast majority, she serves as first author. In addition, she is an active doctoral chair and committee member. She is also actively engaged in grant-funded work, serving as co-PI for several state and SAMHSA funded initiatives, and working on a VAWC research project in which she and Dr. McMahon collaborate with Historically Black Colleges and Universities. She is a member of the Commission on Accreditation for CSWE, is a frequent accreditation and reaffirmation site visitor, and has served in numerous other volunteer capacities with social work organizations.

Farmer will rejoin the faculty of SSW, and will spend the 2018-2019 academic year on a well-deserved research leave. We thank her for her years of service and offer her best wishes for the coming years as a senior faculty leader at the School.

Annual Winter Alumni Reception

Thursday, November 29, 2018, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Rutgers Visitor Center, Busch Campus

All SSW alumni are welcome for our largest gathering of the year at the Rutgers Visitor Center to celebrate and network with free food and entertainment. Guest speakers will include Dean Cathryn C. Potter and other esteemed colleagues. The winner of the 2018 Outstanding Alumni Award will also be recognized.

Exhibition — Kevin Blythe Sampson: Olde Soul

Current through Saturday, February 23, 2019
The Box Gallery, Newark Campus

Olde Soul presents a selection of rarely seen drawings by Kevin Blythe Sampson, alongside early mixed-media sculptures and ephemera from the artist's studio. The son of a civil rights leader, Sampson was raised in Elizabeth, New Jersey. He initially trained with and joined the New Jersey police force as a sketch artist.

Symphony in C — The Great Composers

Saturday, March 2, 2019, 8 p.m.
Center for the Arts, Camden Campus

Enjoy a performance by Symphony in C, one of only three professional training orchestras in the country, at Rutgers Camden. Works featured in this performance include Mendelssohn's *Nocturno*, Mozart's *Concerto for Flute and Harp in C Major, K. 299*, and Beethoven's *Symphony No. 7 in A Major, Op. 92*.

David J. Stern Lecture on Innovations in Social Work & Gerontology

Wednesday, March 13, 2019
New Brunswick Theological Seminary, College Avenue Campus

This annual lecture hosted by the SSW celebrates the convergence of social work and other fields to create a better-informed workforce when serving clients. Visit socialwork.rutgers.edu in February for registration details.

Exhibition — Timekeeping

Current through Sunday, March 31, 2019
Zimmerli Art Museum, College Avenue Campus

Timekeeping examines the ways that artists have traced, recorded, and interpreted the passage of time through prints, drawings, and photographs drawn widely from the museum's collections.

Rutgers Day

Saturday, April 27, 2019
Activities in Camden, Newark, and New Brunswick

Experience hands-on learning activities, see exhibitions and demonstrations, enjoy entertaining stage performances, and more! All are welcome and admission is free!

We appreciate

our alumni and friends who made gifts between July 1, 2017, and June 30, 2018. Your contributions create opportunities for our dynamic and determined students and faculty which otherwise would not be possible. We hope you find lasting pride in Rutgers School of Social Work.

Please note that names are listed as they were entered at the time of the gift. Questions or changes can be directed to Madison Molner at mmolner@ssw.rutgers.edu.

Thank you!

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IN MEMORIAM

We extend our deepest sympathy to the loved ones of the deceased alumni and friends listed below who have passed since February 2018.

Rose Marie Bass SSW'81
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 Ray L. Thomas SSW'77

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Thank you to all of our alumni who have sent us their news and updates. We encourage you to keep us posted with any good news about your job, your life, or your family. Email your news to alabrie@ssw.rutgers.edu.



MSW alumna **Lisa Arnold '10** started working for PACIFYR as a consultant in April 2017. In September of last year, she became the director for the company she describes as the “Uber of mental health and wellness.” As she explains, what sets PACIFYR apart from other apps is its holistic nature in covering mental health, including emotional, and wellness aspects, as well as allowing the client to connect instantly with a counselor or wellness expert of her or his choice. She believes that telehealth will continue to grow in part because of the flexibility, privacy, and affordability of this approach. For more information about the company, visit pacifyr.com.

Dr. Rosanna Ferro RC '99, SSW '06, GSE '12 joined Ithaca College in October 2017 as the vice president of Affairs and Campus Life. Ferro provides strategic leadership and vision for the division of Student Affairs and Campus Life.

Rena Beyer (formerly Brandeis), SAS'11, SSW '13 celebrated the two-year anniversary of opening her private practice, Fostering Greatness, this October. At Fostering Greatness, Rena provides psychotherapy, psychological evaluations, and financial coaching services to clients who struggle with PTSD, depression, anxiety, grief and loss, behavioral concerns, and infertility. Her practice was featured in a



newscast by CBS Philly last March for her work in the field of Ketamine Assisted Psychotherapy.

On a more personal note, Rena married her high school sweetheart in July 2016, and she and her husband purchased their first home together this past July.



Nicholas Mazza, Ph.D. '77, professor and dean emeritus at the Florida State University, College of Social Work, was elected president of the National Association for Poetry Therapy.

Dr. Mazza, founding and continuing editor of the *Journal of Poetry Therapy*, delivered the keynote address, “No Place for Indifference: Poetry Therapy and Empowerment in Clinical, Educational, and Community Practice,” at the 38th Annual NAPT Conference in Minneapolis. Last year, Mazza received the Lifetime Achievement Award from NAPT.



In June 2018, after 30 years of service, **Lisa Thomas '83** retired from her position as the deputy director at Child Development Resources in Norge, Virginia. With her work at CDR, Lisa helped to evolve the organization from focusing solely on children with disabilities into a broader early childhood center.

Lisa credits her MSW as the foundation that prepared her not only for her career at CDR, but also for her work in the community with a variety of human service organizations, including Big Brothers Big Sisters, the new Hope Family Village, and the Historic Triangle Safe Kids coalition. In retirement, Lisa looks to continue to serve her community in the spirit of advancing the program’s mission of social work practice that strengthens individual, family, and community well-being with an understanding of diversity in local, national, and global contexts.

Class of 2008 graduate **Kimberly Bradley** is currently working with the New Jersey Department of Children and Families Northern Region Child Study Team. She’s worked with DCF for almost five years and says she loves being a social worker, as it’s a rewarding and humbling experience.



George Pfirrmann '79 had his play, *The Brothers Khan, An American Story*, produced in The Broadway Bound Theater Festival this past August in New York City. The play illustrates the lives of two brothers, Muslim immigrants, who have grown apart, and their struggle with their relationship and settling into their American lives.



Helen F. Pirrello, UCNB'00, MSW'05, joined the ranks of the Rutgers Alumni Association’s Loyal Sons and Daughters of Rutgers at the organization’s 60th Anniversary Gala this past April.

Helen was honored for her commitment and service to Rutgers as an alumna. During her time on the banks, she has served on the University Senate, on the executive board of the Union of Rutgers Administrators, and as president of the University College, Rutgers New Brunswick Alumni Association.



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School of Social Work



Annual Winter Alumni Reception

Join us for this once-a-year celebration exclusively for School of Social Work alumni. This free event features great food, drinks, a photo booth, and giveaways.

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For more information and to RSVP by November 14, please contact Madison Molner at mmolner@ssw.rutgers.edu or call 848-932-4437.

Guest speakers include Dean Cathryn C. Potter and other esteemed colleagues.