

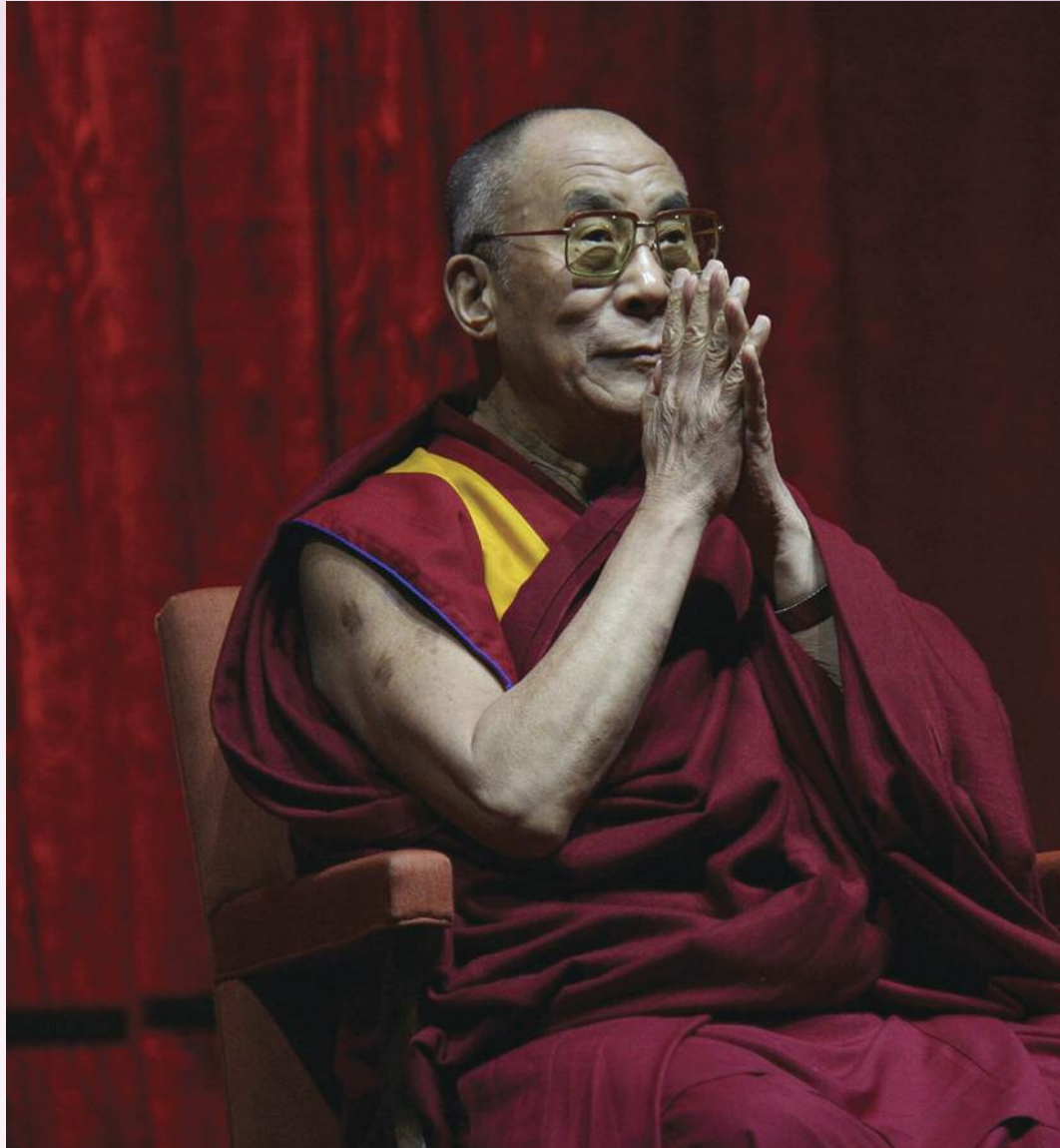
PARTNERING *for* CHANGE

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



SOCIAL WORKERS ARE EVERYWHERE

t h o u g h t s



“It is not enough to be compassionate. You must act.”

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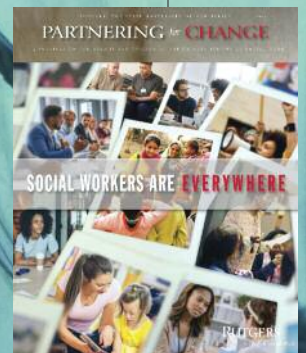
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Dear Friends,

I write to you with excitement as we begin another academic year at Rutgers School of Social Work.

This year we welcomed 820 new students to our BA in social work, MSW, DSW, and Ph.D. programs in New Brunswick, Newark, and Camden. Our students have a diverse array of backgrounds, including research in gender studies, politics, and public policy; activism in racial justice and peace initiatives; and accomplishments in the arts and theater. We are thrilled to have these students and their peers begin their journey to a career in social work with us. It is always so exciting to greet these new members of our profession!

One of our major responsibilities as social work educators is to demonstrate to students that there are endless possibilities that come with a social work degree. Although many social workers are employed in traditional spaces such as clinical arenas and program leadership, we also work in many other places such as politics, policy and planning, research, entrepreneurial enterprises and social innovation, and more. This idea inspired the theme for our magazine: Social Workers are Everywhere.

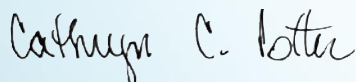
In this magazine edition, you will read about some of our faculty members who took nontraditional paths to get to a career in social work or who are conducting research in areas that are not commonly studied by others in our field. The diversity of their work not only enriches the Rutgers School of Social Work community but the profession as well. Also, in this edition, we share stories about two of our recent alumni who are employed in nontraditional social work jobs: one who works in HR for an education publishing company, and one who works in sports social work.

We will also introduce you to our new faculty members who are working in critical areas of research and practice. Much like our new students, our new faculty members always contribute to our sense of excitement for the future of our profession.

I hope you enjoy reading just some of the many stories from the School of Social Work community that demonstrate the potential that comes with a social work degree. As you read, if you yourself are in an interesting, nontraditional social work pathway, or if you know someone who is, please let us know!

As always, thank you for your dedication to the School of Social Work and the entire Rutgers community as well as the communities we partner with and serve.

In Solidarity,



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



RUTGERS SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK CELEBRATES CLASS OF 2022 AT CONVOCAATION CEREMONY

On Monday, May 16, Rutgers School of Social Work hosted an in-person convocation ceremony – the first since 2019 – to recognize BASW, MSW, DSW, and Ph.D. graduates.

Families and friends gathered in support of their loved ones who have spent years of hard work completing their programs and tackling countless hours of class time, research, and field work. In total, 831 students earned a degree from the School of Social Work this year, including 670 MSW students, 148 BASW students, 11 DSW students, and 2 Ph.D. students.

Dean Cathryn C. Potter welcomed guests to the ceremony and recognized the many sacrifices students have made as they earned their degrees during the pandemic.

Graduates were also greeted with supportive remarks from Dr. Francine Conway, Chancellor-Provost of Rutgers University–New Brunswick.

Mildred “Mit” C. Joyner, DPS, MSW, BSW, LCSW, President of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), delivered the convocation address. Professor Joyner also serves as President of the North America Region of the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW), which includes Canada and the United States. Joyner is also a member of IFSW’s Executive Committee. To round out the program, student speaker Khoi Ngo, a member of the MSW Class of 2022, addressed the audience with words of support.

Dean Potter concluded the ceremony with words of encouragement for the Class of 2022. “Graduates, you have been prepared for a wonderful career in social work, by an outstanding group of faculty and field instructors,” she said. “We wish you great success. Our hope is that each of you will find creative ways to make a difference in the lives of the people and communities you serve. We are so very proud of you!”

Congratulations, graduates, and welcome to the Rutgers School of Social Work alumni network! ■

OFFICE OF CONTINUING EDUCATION HOSTS SIXTH ANNUAL CHALLENGING RACIAL DISPARITIES CONFERENCE

Rutgers School of Social Work’s Office of Continuing Education hosted its sixth annual Challenging Racial Disparities Conference, “A Call to Action,” on Wednesday, June 1, bringing together more than 700 social workers and allied professionals for a powerful learning opportunity in a virtual environment.

Dean and Distinguished Professor Cathryn C. Potter welcomed participants to the virtual event and offered initial remarks. “Social justice and antiracism imperatives are a part of social workers’ calling and our commitment as a profession,” she said. “At this time in history, it feels especially urgent. Every generation gets a time to stand up and choose justice, and it feels like this is the time. What I know about our profession is that social workers have always stepped up to that call.”

The opening keynote, “Expanding Our Understanding of Stigma & Inclusion Efforts Through the Lens of Generalized Prejudice,” was provided by Diana T. Sanchez, PhD, who is a Full Professor in the Rutgers University Psychology Department and a Faculty Fellow in the Social and Behavioral Sciences Division Dean’s Office.

The main keynote was delivered by Michael Eric Dyson, PhD. Dr. Dyson is a compelling speaker and one of America’s premier public intellectuals. He is the author of over 20 books, including seven *New York Times* bestsellers. Dr. Dyson is a Georgetown University sociology professor, a *New York Times* contributing opinion writer, a political

analyst for MSNBC, and contributing editor of *The New Republic*. Dr. Dyson is the recipient of two NAACP Image Awards and the 2020 Langston Hughes Festival Medallion.

The keynote lecture is offered each year in honor of social work professor Dr. William Neal Brown, the first Black professor at Rutgers, who passed away in 2009. Dr. Brown’s longtime partner, Suzanne Zimmer, supports the annual conference as a way to acknowledge his legacy and contributions to Rutgers, which have historically gone unnoticed.

Following the keynotes was a panel discussion moderated by Associate Professor of Professional Practice Dr. Tawanda Hubbard, which garnered a powerful audience reaction. Panelists included Bonnie Cushing, LCSW, Dr. Sylvia Chan-Malik of Rutgers, Dr. Dyson, and Dr. Sanchez.

Attendees gained new skills and ideas to address issues of race in their practice with clients, organizations, communities, and within themselves. “The fact that it is an annual conference speaks volumes to the need for it,” said an attendee. “For this person of color, it is an annual validation that what I see and experience is not an illusion. I appreciated Dr. Chan-Malik’s suggestion to put efforts into actions... Thanks for another meaningful experience.” ■

CELEBRATING OUR FACULTY RETIREES

Over the past year, four esteemed faculty members – Professor of Teaching and Director of the Intensive Weekend Program Ericka Deglau, Associate Professor Jerald Floersch, Associate Professor Jeffrey Longhofer, and Associate Professor Raymond Sanchez Mayers – retired from their positions at Rutgers School of Social Work. These longtime faculty members have made countless contributions to the School, and their impact on the field of social work cannot be overstated. Read on to learn more about our faculty retirees.



Dr. Ericka Deglau received an MSW from Hunter College School of Social Work and a Ph.D. in anthropology from the Graduate School of the New School for Social Research. Her work has appeared in the *Journal of Social Work Education* and the *Journal of Public Child Welfare*, as well as short pieces in NASW's *NJ Focus* and

NJAMHAA's *NewsWire*, and as a book chapter in Leung and Leung's *Title IV-E Education: Impact on Workers, Case Outcomes and Social Work Curriculum Development*, published by Routledge. Dr. Ericka Deglau joined the School of Social Work in 2006, after having worked in program development and administration in both child welfare prevention and HIV/AIDS services for many years. She was tasked with developing the School of Social Work's Intensive Weekend program, designed to permit working students to pursue an MSW while continuing full-time employment.

The Intensive Weekend program was first directed to public child welfare workers. It has since become an important avenue to obtain an MSW for working human service professionals in New Jersey and adjacent states. Since the program began more than 750 students have graduated with an MSW without interrupting their careers.



Dr. Jerald Floersch graduated with his BASW from Washburn University, his MSW from University of Kansas, and Ph.D. in social work from University of Chicago. He published his first book, *Meds, Money, and Manners*, an ethnography and historical-sociological analysis of deinstitutionalization policy and practice. In 2004, Dr.

Floersch received a prestigious \$700,000 NIMH K-award to develop the qualitative methods to study youth experience of psychotropic treatment. His work on psychotropic treatment was one of the first in social work and he supervised numerous doctoral students who also published work in this area. His K-award research resulted in an article co-published with colleagues and students in *Qualitative Social Work* that has received hundreds of citations across multiple disciplines.

In 2009, Dr. Floersch began his tenure at Rutgers School of Social Work where he assisted in establishing its first DSW program. While at Rutgers, he co-authored six additional books and published 30 peer-reviewed articles. He was appointed to editorial boards of *Social Service Review*, *Qualitative Social Work*, and *Clinical Social Work Journal*. In 2019, he was elected as a fellow in the Society for Social Work and Research. Dr. Floersch received teaching excellence awards both from MSASS and Rutgers. During his time at Rutgers, he served as the president of the American Association for Psychoanalysis in Clinical Social Work, a national organization with 1,000 members.

Dr. Jeffrey Longhofer holds graduate degrees in anthropology and social work. He is a clinical social worker, applied anthropologist, and psychoanalyst, whose research focuses on mental health practice, mental health case management, psychiatric medication, and the



roles that stigma and shame play in the social and psychological dynamics of practitioner/client interactions. His career has been shaped by a concern for developing and disseminating experience-near analyses of human experience with the creative use of research methods from the allied disciplines of anthropology, social work, and psychoanalysis.

He has seven books: *The Social Work and K-12 Schools Casebook: Phenomenological Perspectives*; *The Social Work and Sexual Trauma Casebook*; *The LGBTQ Sexual Trauma Casebook: Phenomenological Perspectives from Clinicians*; *Spirituality in Mental Health Practice: A Narrative Casebook*; *A-Z of Psychodynamic Practice*; *Qualitative Methods for Practice*; and *On Being and Having a Case Manager: A Relational Approach to Recovery in Mental Health*. He has served as the associate editor for the Society for Applied Anthropology journal, *Human Organization*, and the International Journal of Psychoanalysis and as editor of the American Anthropological Association journal, *Culture and Agriculture*. He has recently served as co-president of the American Association for Psychoanalysis in Clinical Social Work. He has also been a major contributor to the Islandwood Group, a group of social work researchers from around the world focusing on the science of social work.



Dr. Raymond Sanchez Mayers received his Ph.D. from Brandeis University's Heller School for Social Policy and Management and his MSW from Barry University in Miami. He was recruited to Rutgers to serve as director of the Camden program in 1989. He subsequently served in various administrative roles, including Associate

Dean for Camden, Director of the BASW Program, Associate Dean for Operations, field director for the Southern Region, Disabilities Coordinator for the School of Social Work, Judicial Officer, and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. In 2015, he started Latina/o/x Initiatives for Service, Training, and Assessment (LISTA) as an area of emphasis in the MSW program. In 2020, he received a grant from the New York Community Trust to support the development of a certificate program for LISTA. Along with his wife, Dr. Fontaine Fulghum, a long-time instructor at the School of Social Work, Dr. Sanchez Mayers set up an endowed scholarship fund for LISTA students.

Dr. Sanchez Mayers has published three books: *Hispanic Substance Abuse*; *Dilemmas in Human Services Management*; and *Financial Management for Nonprofit Human Services Organizations*. In addition, his work has appeared in *Journal of Applied Social Sciences*, *Journal of Family Relations*, *Journal of Drug Issues*, *Children and Youth Services Review*, *Administration in Social Work*, and other publications. He has also presented over 60 papers at professional conferences. Dr. Sanchez Mayers has served on the board of numerous nonprofits as well as the Association for Latino/a Social Work Educators, where he also served as board treasurer. ■

FACULTY VOICES IN THE NEWS



“The whole impact of the COVID epidemic is kind of like the last straw. It is showing the weaknesses that we had in the system.”

Could a vaccine mandate lead to a ‘mass exodus’ of nursing home staff?

Distinguished Research Professor Stephen Crystal on *WHYY*



“There’s a close association between domestic violence and economic insecurity... This is not just a women’s issue, this is not just a gender issue, this is a public health issue.”

Crisis Behind Closed Doors

Associate Professor of Teaching and Coordinator for the VAWC Certificate Program Rupa Khetarpal in *N.J. com*



“If institutions are willing to say they’re committed to having safe, inclusive campuses, they need to take a real look at what’s prohibiting that,” she said. “There’s enough that’s gone wrong with fraternities that there needs to be some engagement and looking at that system.”

College students protest fraternities over sexual violence. Will Greek life change?

Associate Professor and Director of the Center for Research on Ending Violence Sarah McMahon in *USA Today*



“We’ve known little about how municipalities’ spending patterns are related to their residents’ health until now. For instance, our findings suggest that more public health spending can increase health care resources available to the community that in turn could improve maternal health, and that more spending on libraries, which offer various community services and are many people’s sole access to the internet, can provide health information or resources that could lead to better health outcomes.”

Local Budgets May Cause Severe Consequences for Maternal Outcomes

Assistant Professor Felix Muchomba in *Patch.com*



“Some operators have more robust responsible gambling programs than others. But in the end there is a profit motive and I have yet to see an operator in the U.S. put the same amount of money and effort into developing a system for identifying and assisting at-risk players as they do developing A.I. technologies for marketing or extending credit to encourage players to return.”

Can A.I. Help Casinos Cut Down on Problem Gambling?

Professor and Director of the Center for Gambling Studies & Addiction Counselor Training (ACT) Program Lia Nower in *The New York Times*

THE CENTER FOR RESEARCH ON ENDING VIOLENCE EXPANDS SCOPE OF WORK

ORIGINALLY POSTED IN *RUTGERS TODAY*
BY MEGAN SCHUMANN



The Center for Research on Ending Violence at Rutgers School of Social Work is redefining its mission of a violence free future with a new name and expanded focus.

“While violence against women and children is pervasive in our society, so is violence against men and boys, against specific racial and ethnic groups, against the LGBTQ+ community, against gender nonbinary individuals, and many others,” said Sarah McMahon, an associate professor at the Rutgers School of Social Work and center director. “We are examining larger systemic elements and are encouraged to work on significant collaborations to end all forms of violence.”

Formerly the Center on Violence Against Women and Children, the wider focus provides more opportunities to partner with other university faculty and beyond to understand different types of violence, prevention and response practices, and how various forms of structural oppression and harm are connected.

The center has been working outside its former priority area for some time. Dr. McMahon and other faculty are on the last phase of a project funded by the New Jersey Office of the Attorney General, to continue to build Rutgers’ infrastructure and use the university as a model of how to provide campus-based services to students to address instances of violence. During this time, the center will evaluate the university’s model for addressing interpersonal violence and, by working with University Equity and Inclusion, ensure anti-racist frameworks are infused throughout.

Current center research projects include learning how communities work together to prevent and address domestic violence and sexual assault; how bystander intervention can decrease campus interpersonal violence; relational resources to better prevent Latino

victims of teen dating violence; and collaborating with National Institute of Justice scientists to identify critical gaps in knowledge about intimate partner violence, sexual violence, stalking, and teen dating violence.

“Over the years it has become clear the center has grown in important ways that were not necessarily reflected in its initial name,” said Dr. McMahon. “While suited for our work at the time, the center has shifted with the field of interpersonal violence. Our research, education, and community engagement have often spanned outside the scope of ‘violence against women and children.’ This is still a priority area but our work includes many other things.”

Professor Victoria Banyard, the center’s associate director, added: “The Center for Research on Ending Violence is a name that encourages a call-to-action for ourselves and others. It reflects the recognition that violence can happen to all people and all communities. It keeps us centered on where we’re going: ending violence.”

Considering a more aligned name for the center’s research became a strategic priority in 2019. Staff at the Center for Research on Ending Violence engaged in a thoughtful and rigorous process, with external help that involved gathering feedback from many internal and external partners and organizing focus groups and surveys.

Founded in 2007 at the Rutgers School of Social Work, the Center for Research on Ending Violence maintains its longstanding mission to strive to eliminate physical, sexual, and other forms of violence against all individuals and the power imbalances that permit them. The Center is a productive academic research center dedicated to generating new knowledge and through sound, ethical research. From the knowledge generated, the Center has produced professional training opportunities, technical assistance resources, and specialized learning for future social workers and other professionals, with a focus on multidisciplinary research, education, and community engagement. ■



Associate Professor **Qiana L. Brown** has been appointed as the inaugural Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Initiatives Chair at the new Rutgers Addiction Research Center housed in the Brain Health Institute.



Teaching Instructor, Assistant Director of Student Affairs and Newark Campus Coordinator **Charles Chear** belongs to a team of Rutgers–Newark faculty and staff that were awarded an IDEA Innovation grant. Led by HEND EL-BURI, Director of Nutrition and Food Pantry Operations, the team is using it to address inclusivity in food security among Rutgers students.



The Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management has appointed Assistant Professor **Laura Cuesta** and Melanie Guldi (University of Central Florida) as co-chairs for the 2022 Conference Family and Child Policy Sub-Committee.



Assistant Professor and Chancellor’s Scholar for Inclusive Excellence in Intimate Partner Violence Prevention & Intervention **Maxine Davis** was awarded a \$15,000 Black Bodies Black Health grant for her project Reimagining Intervention to Achieve Safe

Intimate Relationships for Black People in NJ: An Anti-Carceral Community Designed System Dynamics Project. This seed grant is funded by the Institute for the Study of Global Racial Justice through a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.



Associate Professor **Jacquelynn Duron** (PI) has received a Research to Action Grant from the Child Well-Being Research Network. The project, Examination of Key Elements to Successful Implementation of Services for Youth with Problematic Sexual Behavior: A New Jersey Research Partnership, will be completed with Children’s Aid and Family Services to explore factors that influence youth and family engagement in efficacious treatment for problematic sexual behaviors. Dr. Jennifer Daer Shields (clinical psychologist) and Ph.D. students Yafan Chen and Roxanna Ast are members of the research team.

Dr. Duron was also selected to participate in two national training opportunities: 1) She is part of the National Research Mentoring Network (NRMN) and the Utah NRMN Grant-Writing Coaching Groups Study funded by the National Institutes of Health. The study aims at refining the proposal-writing skills of new investigators to increase their success in receiving NIH grants. The intervention being tested is rooted in an intensive group coaching model. 2) Beginning in June 2022, Dr. Duron joined Victoria Spera from Prevent Child Abuse New Jersey in a year-long training program, the Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) Partnership Academy, hosted by The Detroit Community-Academic Urban Research Center and the University of Michigan School of Public Health. The integrated research education program connects 12 community-academic teams from across the country in an intensive week-long CBPR course and ongoing mentored learning activities throughout the year.

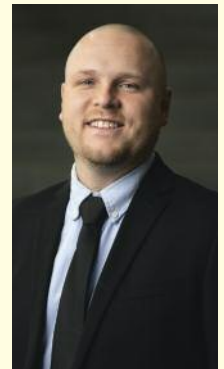


Professor **Emily Greenfield** was appointed by Governor Murphy to the New Jersey Age-Friendly Advisory Council. This is a statewide committee that is charged with developing a blueprint toward a better future for aging in New Jersey, and Dr. Greenfield is the only academic voice on the Council.



Associate Professor of Professional Practice and Executive Director of the Office of Field Education **Mark Lamar** was chosen by the Network of Social Work Management to serve as a mentor in the network’s new group mentoring project. Associate Professor Lamar joins

five other social work leaders nationally, from government, academic, and health and human service domains, who will collaborate with their mentees.



Assistant Professor **Jamey Lister** has joined a new advisory board for the Health Resources and Services Administration’s Behavioral Health Excellence Technical Assistance Center (\$10 million award, Project Director: Dr. Todd Molfenter) that oversees multiple grantee programs addressing behavioral health care in the United States. Dr. Lister is one of just a few behavioral health researchers on the board – the majority is comprised of leadership from national organizations.

Assistant Professor of Teaching and Director of Student Affairs **Natalie Moore-Bembry** was selected by the Rutgers Committee to Advance our Common Purposes to receive the 2022 Beloved Community



Award. The CACP's mission is to promote the development of a university community that values and advances diversity and inclusion. It helps to nurture and sustain a civil, compassionate, intellectually honest, and inclusive academic community that is respectful and fosters dialogue and interaction between those with differing views and belief systems.

Professor and Director of the Center for Gambling Studies & Addiction Counselor Training (ACT) Program **Lia Nower** has been appointed to the faculty advisory board, leading the public policy and behavioral addictions section of the newly launched Rutgers Addiction Research Center, which is housed in the Brain Health Institute at Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences. In addition, Dr. Nower has advised the U.S. Gaming Regulators Working Group and the Canadian regulators

participating in the Canadian Partnership on Responsible Gaming in evidence-based responsible gambling options for online sports wagering. She has also received the following appointments: Appointed Member, Education and Responsible Gambling committees of the International Masters of Gaming Law; Research Advisory Board, Here to Help, United Kingdom; and Responsible Gaming Advisory Board, American Gaming Association. Dr. Nower's recent grants include: Principal Investigator (Co-I, Anthony): Gambling Training and Technical Assistance, Division of Mental Health and Addiction Service, \$597,116; Principal Investigator (Co-Is, Stanmyre, Anthony): A Dynamic Framework for Gambling Treatment: From Counselor Training Through Treatment, Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, \$72,898; and Co-Investigator (PI, Lister; Co-I van der Maas): An Examination of Gambling Treatment Shortages in the US: A Multi-Year Analysis of Provider Supply, Rural-Urban Differences, and Comparisons with Psychiatric Disorder Services, \$70,000.

Celebrating 40 Years of Service to Rutgers SSW: Dr. Kathleen J. Pottick



Dr. Kathleen J. Pottick recently celebrated 40 years in her role as tenured professor at Rutgers School of Social Work. She is also Core Faculty at Rutgers Institute for Health, Health Care Policy and Aging Research and has served in a variety of administrative roles in the School of Social Work, including acting dean (2011-2013) and Associate Dean for Faculty Development (2009-2011). The milestone anniversary was celebrated at a reception hosted by President Jonathan Holloway on May 4, 2022.

The bulk of Dr. Pottick's research has focused on better understanding, and developing strategies for removing, the barriers to the provision of effective mental health services for children and adolescents, and disadvantaged populations. One line of research investigates racial and ethnic disparities in mental health service use for youths with serious emotional disorders in the United States. Another line targets clinicians' attributions of youths' emotional problems and the correlates of biased perceptions.

She is co-author of *The Parents' Perspective: Delinquency, Aggression and Mental Health* (with Paul Lerman), an analysis of inner-city adolescents receiving outpatient mental health services in Newark, New Jersey. She publishes in the fields of social work, psychology, and psychiatry, with articles appearing in *Social Service Review*, *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, *American Journal of Psychiatry*, and *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review*. Her article there, "Conceptualizing culturally-infused engagement and its measurement for minority and immigrant children and families" (with Miwa Yasui and Yun Chen), won sole honorable mention for the 2018 award for Excellence in Research from the Society for Social Work and Research. Her research studies have been funded by federal government and foundation sources (e.g., National Institute of Mental Health, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Annie E. Casey and Robin Hood Foundations).

She was named as a fellow to the honorific society of the American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare in 2020 for outstanding contributions to social work and social welfare.

In her four decades at Rutgers, Dr. Pottick estimates she has taught about 3,000 graduate students, adjusted for course releases for extramurally funded research and sabbaticals, as invited visiting scholar at the University of California-San Francisco's department of psychiatry, the University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration (now the Crown Family School of Social Work, Policy and Practice), the University at Albany School of Social Work, the University of South Florida's Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute, and the University of Michigan School of Social Work. She was also Katherine E. McBride Visiting Associate Professor at Bryn Mawr Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research.

Dr. Pottick says of her career to date: "My colleagues and students, together with supportive administrators and staff, and an ever-deepening research program of questions having practice and policy significance have made these years seem like a summer's quick passing, where the day after Memorial Day is Labor Day."

ALUMNI



Alyssa L. Bradley



Lorin Tredinnick

Social workers are, indeed, everywhere. Recent alumni Alyssa L. Bradley, MSW and Lorin Tredinnick, Ph.D., MSW, LSW give a glimpse into their professional lives and show how they're putting their social work degrees to work in nontraditional job settings.

A

LYSSA L. BRADLEY, MSW
Tell us about your journey to the field of social work.

As a teenager with parents undergoing a divorce, it was mandated by the family court that kids under 16 had to attend counseling in my home state. I went through group and individual counseling, and I didn't connect with either. This inspired me to pursue

counseling individuals in the ways I wish I received it and the ways I did receive counsel that really did help.

Upon completing my bachelor's degree, I wasn't interested in continuing the doctorate, education, or research route with psychology, so I spoke with my aunt, Associate Professor of Professional Practice Marla Blunt-Carter, about what I was interested in, and she said, "It sounds like you should pursue social work." Before I had even decided on it, she created a Rutgers School of Social Work application account for me and sent me the information. She didn't know my email address, so she made one up with "Alyssamsw" in it. I asked her what MSW meant, and she said, "Alyssa, Master of Social Work." Over 10 years later, I still use this email address. It was like she wrote it out and manifested it.

My grandfather and aunt pursued careers in leadership in politics and education on the macro level with their social work degrees and, to be honest, I was not interested in pursuing either of those. I wanted to do more of the micro/ground-level work with people first. I always found it important to build a solid and humble foundation serving people before leading people. After research into the field, I learned that the field of social work truly has no bounds regarding the populations you can serve and in what capacity. I also discovered the humble beginnings my family started with before transitioning into leadership roles in their respective fields.

I went on to do direct service, counseling, and casework for

individuals struggling with addiction, mental health, access to vocational rehabilitation resources and services, and workforce development for underrepresented populations.

What are you currently doing for work?

I currently serve as VP of People and Programs for an award-winning educational content development company based in Austin, Texas.

My role consists of four main components:

- Lead social media and content strategy to build brand awareness and engagement.
- Spearhead the design layout of a branch-off nonprofit organization geared towards developing underrepresented young adults in the field of educational content creation.
- Create professional development opportunities for our network of 800+ freelancers.
- Manage employee recruitment strategies and onboarding processes.

Outside of this, I volunteer as a meal deliverer for Meals on Wheels weekly and put together hygiene kits for a local organization geared towards serving Central Austin's homeless population. I host a podcast called "No Water Added" which is self-help and spiritually based. I also assist social media influencers and small organizations with social media strategy and content creation.

How did you get involved in your current role? Was there something in particular that attracted you to it?

The route to my current job was one I never expected. My former employer was a national nonprofit organization and workforce development program in which I was given the opportunity to stretch myself in different ways. I began there as a social work professional and then when our program manager took on another position, we needed someone to fill the role. I voluntarily assisted the former program manager with many duties, and the team trusted me and supported me to take on the role. In addition, I loved connecting with the young adults

I worked with, and they were always very open in sharing their stories with me. When I started, we really didn't have a social media manager or strategy, so I was given the opportunity to execute this for our site as well. This was the beginning of my real professional experience with program management, social media designing, and content creation. I enjoyed the young adults feeling seen and heard, and their stories shed light on the awesome mission of the program.

After years of service, I decided that my assignment there was done. It was perfect timing, as a tragic family medical situation occurred in my life that needed my full attention. When I was ready to re-enter the workforce, I applied to several jobs and was denied like many. One day, I decided to share my story on LinkedIn about an intensive, long job interview process I underwent that didn't result in me landing the job. I shared my experience to uplift others in my situation. The post blew up to over 125K views. I was approached by my current manager about a new position she was creating for her organization. Thankfully, I possessed the experience needed and the rest is history. I never considered a career in the educational content development industry. However, I loved her vision of wanting to bring different perspectives into the industry for diverse groups of people so they can learn and connect with education more.

What are the connections between social work and the work you're doing?

- **Advocating:** Working with the leadership team to advocate for change to be made within the educational content development industry. We believe that all learners from diverse backgrounds are not often reflected in the tools that they use to learn, and we work to change that.
- **Connecting:** Connecting people with resources, programs, and opportunities to grow and help them do their best work.
- **Community Organizing:** Collaborating with and financially supporting local organizations that are devoted to educating Black and Brown populations.

What advice would you give to a social work student who's considering a nontraditional career path?

Whatever is in your mind, heart, and spirit to pursue regarding your purpose in life, write it down, make plans and/or bucket list items towards ways to get there, and say yes to all of the opportunities that align with it. I had a rule that I would leap with faith towards opportunities that I would want to say no to due to insecurities or a fear of not experiencing them before. I knew that saying no because of those things would serve as excuses, not valid reasons to not explore new opportunities. With each new opportunity I explored, I connected with people, I strengthened my skills, I learned about myself, and I was led to new career opportunities that I wouldn't have had the confidence to pursue. These nontraditional career path opportunities led me towards roles leading people and programs, public speaking, social media management, and content creation jobs.

Have an open mind and embrace creating a blueprint for your own life and those behind you. Sometimes we are so focused on watching other people's journeys and processes, and many times, the "traditional path" we are used to might not be for us – and that is okay.

LORIN TREDINNICK, Ph.D., MSW, LSW

Tell us about your journey to the field of social work.

When I was in my junior year at Rutgers, I landed a part-time job with the Institute for Families (IFF) at the School of Social Work. It started as a

temporary position, and I ended up working there for 10 years. I had the privilege of working with many bright, influential IFF staff who taught me about research and evaluation, grant writing, program development, curriculum development, and administration. After learning more about the field beyond clinical work, I decided to go back to school for my MSW and graduated with a concentration in nonprofit and public management.

What are you currently doing for work?

I'm currently the Managing Assistant Director of Student-Athlete Development at Kean University where I help student-athletes navigate their college experience and prepare for life after sport. I primarily coordinate programming that centers on personal enhancement, leadership development, career readiness, and social responsibility. I also oversee academic support to increase student-athlete retention and graduation rates. Since Kean Athletics places an equally strong emphasis on academic and athletic success, we want to equip our student-athletes with the tools to achieve their goals.

How did you get involved with sport social work?

When I was completing my field placement at Rutgers School of Social Work's Center for International Social Work, I learned about the increased risk of human trafficking during major sporting events. This topic generated a lot of buzz at the time because the Super Bowl was going to be held in New Jersey. Coincidentally, our team at IFF rolled out a mandatory statewide training for child welfare professionals on human trafficking in an attempt to prevent the recruitment of vulnerable youth into the trafficking industry prior to the Super Bowl. That's when I realized I could leverage my role as a social worker to address issues in sport. I decided to pursue a Ph.D. to further literature on the role of social workers in sport, specifically in gender-based violence prevention. That decision ultimately led me to where I am now.

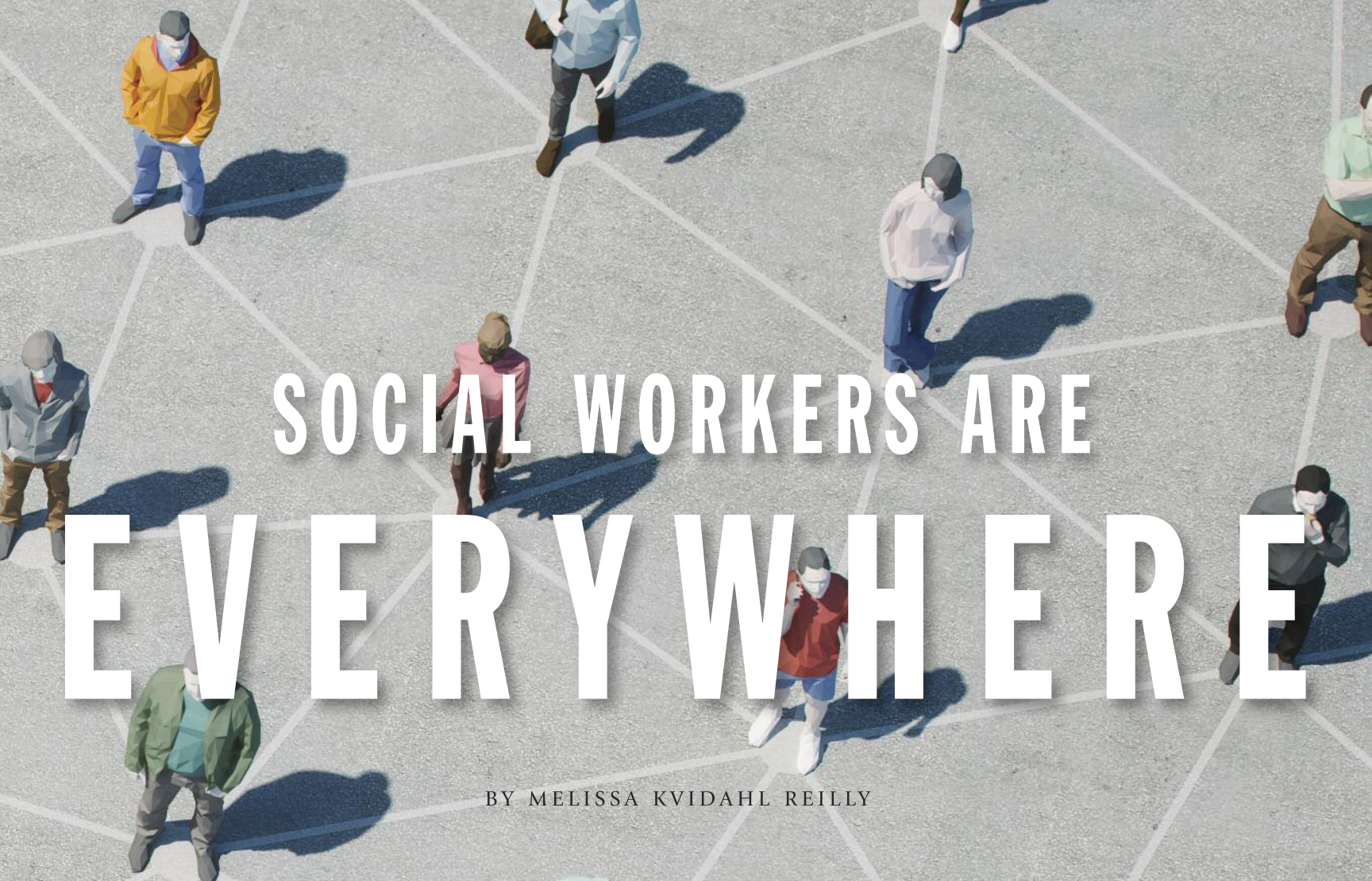
What are the connections between social work and sport?

Sport social work is an emerging field that aims to enhance the overall health and well-being of athletes at all levels of sport. Social workers can not only provide counseling to athletes struggling with mental health concerns, but also connect athletes to social services or community resources. Social workers can organize training to educate athletes, coaches, sport administrators, and even parents to promote healthy behaviors and inclusivity. In addition, social workers can be involved in the policy-making process to advocate and facilitate social change in sport. The Alliance of Social Workers in Sports (aswis.org) was established in 2015 and is driven by members who work in these micro and macro spaces including higher education, private practice, nonprofits, etc.

What advice would you give to a social work student who's considering a nontraditional career path?

Social work is such a broad field! You learn so many transferable skills that are valued across multiple disciplines. If you're interested in a niche area, conduct informational interviews with professionals in that line of work to learn about job opportunities and grow your network. You may also want to consider joining a membership organization in your field of interest to stay abreast of current trends and, if time allows, volunteer on a committee. Be creative and persistent. ■





SOCIAL WORKERS ARE EVERYWHERE

BY MELISSA KVIDAHL REILLY



here's no such thing as a typical social worker, and nowhere is that more evident than some of our faculty members' unconventional work experiences and research projects. Whether their focus is on business, technology, politics, or something else entirely, these educators and professionals are helping to mold the School's next generation of students into the most dynamic social workers yet.

"The social workers of tomorrow will need to address our society's challenges from a number of different angles," says the School's dean, Cathryn C. Potter. "The first step in achieving that goal is to surround our students with multidimensional educators."

Here, get to know just some of the nontraditional faculty that make the School such a vibrant place.

Marla Blunt-Carter, Associate Professor of Professional Practice

Marla Blunt-Carter's social work is steeped in politics. She follows in the footsteps of her father, activist, educator, and politician Theodore Blunt, who graduated from Rutgers School of Social Work in 1968 and held positions in the housing authority, a local school district, and Wilmington, Delaware, city council, where he served for nearly 25 years until his retirement in 2008. "I saw my dad serving in different positions, and never doing just one thing," Blunt-Carter says. "He shaped the way I saw social work."

Upon receiving her MSW (also from Rutgers School of Social Work, just like her father), Blunt-Carter returned to her home state of Delaware and got involved in politics. She landed in then Senator Joe

Biden's office as a projects manager which, among other responsibilities, entailed creating programs to support nonprofits and serving as a liaison to community stakeholders. She later was selected to be one of the 50 state directors for the 2008 Obama/Biden presidential campaign, during which she organized fundraising events, developed a local media and communications strategy, and recruited over 1,000 volunteers to perform grassroots outreach in Delaware, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. Her expertise in social work, coupled with this experience, earned her a spot in the Obama administration as a senior agency liaison.

During the spring 2022 semester, she put her political savvy to work in a five-week political social work course. "It aligns with the social work code of ethics, which says that social workers should be involved in political and social action," she says. "I'm trying to bring to attention the fact that politics isn't something

that only a few social workers should be involved in, but rather, that all social workers should be aware of the policies that affect society, how they're created, how we can inform those policies, and possibly how we can draft and enact them ourselves as elected officials."

One of Blunt-Carter's goals is to demystify the political arena for her students and instill in them the belief that the skills they're learning as social workers are the same skills desperately needed in political spaces. Indeed, whether they're working with a client or advocating for an entire community, Blunt-Carter believes that social workers must understand where programs get their funding, identify public advocates, and become a part of policy making. "I want social workers to understand that political knowledge is as important as any other skill," she says. "The 21st century social work student is ready for a movement. I want to contribute to their knowledge in some way so they can do this great work that is needed now more than ever."



Mark Lamar, Associate Professor of Professional Practice and Executive Director of the Office of Field Education

When Mark Lamar arrived at the School of Social Work for his MSW in the 1970s, he mentioned to a professor that he didn't have any relevant experience; between earning his undergraduate degree and starting graduate school, he supervised Teamsters in a construction warehouse. "That's common for social work students, to always apologize for whatever they've done before, if they believe it's not directly related to social work," he says. "The truth is that everything informs your social work, and I challenge you to find ways in which any previous experience isn't social work in some way."

As it turns out, Lamar's extensive business background is unconventional but has proven invaluable in teaching the next generation of social workers. As executive director of a multiservice health care, education, and social service corporation in Mercer County, New Jersey, Lamar was immersed in the business of running a nonprofit, including fundraising, marketing, and administration. And while the budget was always top of mind, he also developed a keen interest in human resources, specifically how employees are trained, compensated, and rewarded. "I saw the value of the counseling part of what we did, but also the relationship between a happy, well-trained, satisfied workforce and good quality health care outcomes," he says.

Today, this correlation is central to Lamar's teaching philosophy. "I see my students as the upcoming workforce," he says. "They are the organizational leaders of tomorrow, so teaching them management skills, strategic planning, finance, and organizational assessment is important. These students are ready to help, but they also have to be well-trained and high-performing successful employees of all kinds of organizations, whether it's health care, government, school systems, or nonprofits."

In his classes, Lamar utilizes business cases to help students understand how to run a budget and manage employees. These cases run the gamut from nonprofit mergers to buying, renovating, and budgeting for a school. Part of the goal here is to also invite students to believe in themselves and their business skills, so they can envision themselves working with a board, developing personnel policies, and running nonprofits, whether they're working with a budget that's \$200,000 or \$50 million.

"In the end, social workers are stewards of the programs for people who need them, and it's up to social workers to advocate for the resources to keep these programs going," Lamar says. "So I always say that social workers should have everything to do with the financial, human resources, training, and other business aspects of running a successful corporation."



**Woojin Jung, Assistant Professor and Core Faculty,
Global Health Institute**

Woojin Jung became interested in social work when she realized that many of the world's social safety nets weren't reaching families in need. "Particularly in developing countries, even if you have the best intention to identify vulnerable populations, it's very hard to reach them because of a lack of data," she explains. For example, the most recent census data in Lebanon is 80 years old, she says; and even in countries that do collect ongoing national data, it's incredibly difficult to glean insights about individual communities. When a crisis like COVID-19 hits, organizations don't have years to generate data in the old-fashioned ways. That's why Jung's research focuses on utilizing social media and computer imaging to enhance prediction of poverty, and ultimately help match public resources with vulnerable communities around the world.

The benefits of social media are fairly obvious: data is generated frequently, and many posts are geolocated. Jung tracks topics like job loss, famine, and hunger, and matches these topics to very specific areas. For one project, Jung collected all the Twitter data from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Zambia over the course of three years and utilized this data to locate populations in need. But this method does have its drawbacks. "You need a computer or phone, electricity, and the internet to generate social media posts," Jung points out. "So while it can be telling when a certain district has two posts in one week and another has 14,000 posts, it does limit the data we can generate from some of the poorest areas."

That's why Jung also utilizes satellite imaging, which is collected at least twice a week (sometimes daily) and can reveal roads, water sources, building footprints, and other attributes associated with development. "You can also see illumination at night," she says. "In the least-developed areas, it will be pitch black at night, and this can help us identify which areas might need more help." Artificial intelligence is also deployed here, specifically via an intuitive machine-learning method that detects features that signal poverty to local people, such as unpaved roads. She then can put this data to work for various organizations.

In Zambia, for example, Jung is working with the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services to identify poor districts that need resources like fertilizers and seeds. "Right now, because of a lack of data, all the districts are getting similar amounts of seed," she says. "This is not ideal, because aid is not being deployed in

proportion to poverty." Instead, the Ministry is seeking poverty estimates at the district level so they can adjust their upcoming budget to allow for increased aid in the neediest districts. "Industries like finance and IT use these advanced methods," Jung says. "The humanitarian sector is far behind, but we have human life at stake. We are the ones that need to use these methods the most."



Karun K. Singh, Professor of Teaching

Karun K. Singh's path to social work was a winding one. Originally interested in English literature, he switched gears and pursued a degree in psychology when he arrived in the United States from his home in Mumbai, India. But something still wasn't clicking. "I wasn't sure what to do next, and a professor recommended I explore social work," he recalls. "My reaction was, what's that?"

After one visit to the career center, Singh was hooked. "I read about social work and I loved it," he says. "Once I finished my MSW, I realized that I loved macro level work and wanted to focus on management and leadership in human services and health care organizations." Singh's interest in nonprofit management led to the development of the Singh Strategic Planning Measure for Excellence (SSPMX), an evidence-based survey instrument designed to help nonprofit human service organizations achieve superior performance.

The SSPMX is a questionnaire and planning tool for key stakeholders, such as executive directors and board members, which includes 10 main process tasks and a glossary of terms. With the completion of each major process task, participants can articulate a desired planning outcome that has been achieved. "While my instrument is meant for organizational-level strategic planning, you can also use it at the program level," Singh points out. For example, the NYC Police Foundation's Options program, which helps the city's youth build decision-making skills and access career development opportunities, began using the SSPMX this summer to optimize its operations. Singh was also tapped to provide assistance as a board member of Wynona's House, a prominent New Jersey child advocacy center, which also started using the SSPMX over the summer to help facilitate its strategic planning process.

For Singh, it's all about adapting and applying the best possible business practices to the nonprofit sector and running nonprofits like successful for-profit organizations—with one caveat. "In the for-profit sector, executives are hoping to beat out their competitors, but I want my students to learn how to design strategic collaborations among compatible partners," he says. "There's a growing recognition that no single organization can solve seemingly intractable challenges on its own. It's going to take a focused coalition of agencies coming together to implement effective solutions, including nonprofits, government agencies, and local businesses."

Singh's students learn the nuts and bolts of management practice and theory, and then put that knowledge to work in various case studies. They learn fundraising and marketing. And they learn to perceive and analyze organizations like humans—as complex systems that must adapt and change with their environments. "I'm training my students to become advanced, research-informed managers and leaders in the field of human and health care services," he says. In May 2022, his students voted for him to receive the Outstanding Professor award in the Management and Policy specialization at graduation. ■



FIVE THINGS

NEW FACULTY: **FIVE** OBJECTS THAT MATTER

Rutgers School of Social Work is pleased to announce the hiring of seven new faculty members. Assistant Professor and Chancellor's Scholar for Inclusive Excellence in Research on Black Americans **Ryon Cobb**, Assistant Professor **Caroline Harmon-Darrow**, Assistant Professor **Rachel John**, Associate Professor of Professional Practice & Director of the Intensive Weekend Program **Jack Lewis**, Assistant Professor **Angela Malorni**, Assistant Professor & Chancellor's Scholar for Inclusive Excellence in Racial Minority Health **Michael Park**, and Assistant Professor **Grant Victor** began in their roles earlier this year.

We asked each of them to identify five meaningful objects in their homes and offices.



01/ FAMILY

As a Black first-generation college student from a socioeconomically disadvantaged background, I live in two disparate worlds: academia, where I investigate the social determinants of health, and the "real world," where these detrimental processes I study play out in the lives of my loved ones.



RYON COBB



03/ RELIGION/HOODIE

Houses of worship remain one of the few organizations where ethnoracial minorities can create worldviews that are free from the influences of the dominant society. Unlike other organizations, ethnoracial segregation in houses of worship creates a social space where people of color can thrive.



02/ CIVIL RIGHTS

Health inequality emerges from differential exposures and experiences in social environments. My research examines how stress exposure shapes health and mortality risks among older Black adults who came of age during a time of state-sanctioned discrimination in the United States.



05/ COVID

Some of my future work will examine the individual and joint contributions of ethnoracial identification and immigration status to Black adults' choice to attend religious services in overwhelmingly Black, overwhelmingly white, or multiracial houses of worship and assess how this relationship varies across generations.



04/ TRAYVON MARTIN

Research on religion among Black adults indicates that a declining proportion of Black adults do not attend religious services in overwhelmingly Black houses of worship. It remains unclear how the intersection of ethnoracial identification, immigration status, and age shape Black adults' choice to attend religious services.

THAT MATTER



01/ MUGS

My kids are nine and fourteen. They made me these mugs when they were little, and they're now cracked and perfect. My kids are my most honest critics and teachers – messy, perfect, and hilarious. I try to make big decisions based on what's best for them, and they've had a lot of fun visiting Rutgers where we did cartwheels through campus.



04/ WATERCOLORS

My mom is an artist, and I love to paint and draw when I can. My wife and best friend and I worked with 20 other families to co-found my children's arts-based public elementary school in Baltimore.



02/ CHALLAH

We have a two-religion family. I was raised in the Presbyterian church and my wife was raised in an Orthodox Jewish synagogue. My daughter and I learned to bake challah during the pandemic lockdown/school closure phase, and I love what the Motzi [the blessing over bread] teaches about the Jewish discipline of gratitude for life and survival.



CAROLINE HARMON-DARROW

03/ PRAYER

I found this in my dad's apartment when he died. He was our county's director of mental health when I was growing up and then got a second master's in counseling in retirement. He also struggled mightily with alcoholism, which taught me we are all helpers and, like all clients in need of help, we are always growing. I want to do, teach, and study social work in a way that comes from that equality and vulnerability.



05/ BUTTONS

These remind me that social work is innately political and show my journey in 25 years of service, including as an AmeriCorps member, anti-homelessness advocate, public transit organizer, community mediator, campaigner, and macro social worker.



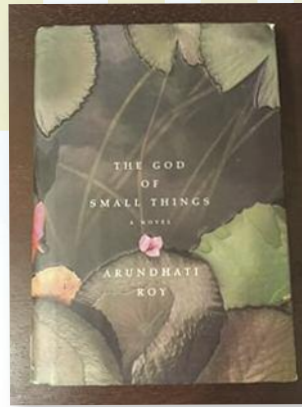
01/ **PAINTING**

This picture was gifted to me for my birthday a couple of years ago. I have never owned a painting of someone that looked like me. She reminds me of me. The outfit she is wearing, the colorful bangles and anklets all bring me joy. She is a reminder of why representation matters.



02/ **ST. LOUIS MUG**

I moved to St. Louis, Missouri, after I got my MSW. This city is where I learned to be a social worker, a clinician, and where I realized that the Midwest was a very different place than the Northeast. I learned who I was as a social worker in this city and what my life's work was going to be. I met amazing individuals who became part of my chosen family.



03/ **THE GOD OF SMALL THINGS BOOK**

I remember reading this book and being dumbfounded that there were Malayalam words in this book. I am from a small state in India and outside of Indians and some South Asians, most folk have never heard of this language. When I read the first paragraph of the first chapter, I am immediately transported back in time having the time of my life living with my grandparents.



04/ **PHILADELPHIA PHOTO**

I immigrated to the United States, specifically Philadelphia, when I was 6 years old. This city became my home. I learned English with my father by watching the Philadelphia Eagles and 76ers play on television and the radio, respectively. The one thing that unites all Philadelphians are their sports teams (the grief that binds us together). I belong to this group wherever I go and feel an instant connection to a group of people.



RACHEL JOHN



05/ **"THE JOURNEY" POEM**

I have this poem by Mary Oliver hanging by my desk. This is one of my favorite poems. I remember reading this and thinking, how does she know? Every time I read this poem I take something new away from it. One thing that is constant is to trust myself and to remember how far I have come.

01/ **SOCIAL WORK PRAYER**

This prayer was written by Louis Carter, a former professor at the University of Pennsylvania School of Social Work. I was blessed to have the opportunity to be taught by him and other Black professors including Professor Sam Sylvester, Dean Howard Arnold, and Dean Orniece Leslie while pursuing my MSW from 1979-1981. These individuals served as role models for me and have inspired me to become a professional social worker. The words reflected in this prayer reflect the aspirations I strive to achieve as a social work educator.



04/ **CHIAMANDA NGOZI ADICHE'S "THE DANGER OF A SINGLE STORY"**

This is a very powerful Ted Talk, which I usually show during the first day of every class that I teach. I feel that this talk reflects the importance of several key social work values and concepts like meeting people where they are, person in the environment, and cultural competence and humility. I encourage students to use the messages conveyed in this talk as a frame of reference to reflect upon through the duration of the course.



02/ **FAMILY PHOTO**

This is a photo of my wife of 20 years Jennifer, my son Cory, and my twin daughters Karis and Kristin. As I embark on this new journey at Rutgers I am comforted by their ongoing love and support.



JACK LEWIS



03/ **JESUS CHRIST PAINTING**

I give glory to God and my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

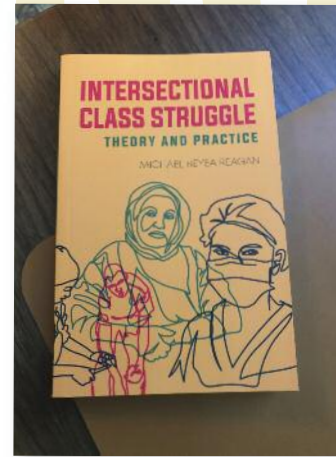


05/ **BICYCLE**

I am a firm believer in the importance of self-care and that all social workers should have a self-care plan. Physical exercise is a main component of my self-care plan, and cycling is one physical activity I really enjoy. This bike was a Christmas gift from my wife several years ago, and I've ridden it to complete two American Cancer Society bike-a-thon city to shore rides from Philadelphia to Atlantic City.

01/ **PORTRAIT OF LUCY PARSONS**

About 10 years ago, I drew this portrait of Lucy Parsons as part of a zine series on influential community organizers throughout history. Today the original portrait sits in my office as a reminder of her lifelong commitment to building a different world. She was a powerful writer, which sparked my own interest in popular writing and media, and also a founder of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). My first major experience organizing community campaigns was with an IWW labor and tenant project.



04/ **MY PARTNER'S BOOK**

This primer on intersectional class struggle was written by my partner. His love and support is very important in my personal life, but he is also a thought-partner and his intellectual work pushes me to grow and encourages regular critical dialogue in my professional and political life.



02/ **COFFEE CUP**

This coffee cup is a memento from my life in Seattle. It was from one of my favorite coffee shops where I would reflect on my work, have organizing meetings, and shared plenty of meaningful conversations with friends. Today, my daily cup of coffee gives me a moment to ease into the day ahead, and I look forward to forging new relationships over a drip!



ANGELA MALORNI

05/ **HAND SHOVEL**

Throughout my doctoral program, my garden was a place where I could de-stress, build something beautiful, connect with the physical world around me, and enjoy a drink with friends. I look forward to rebuilding a garden and a community to enjoy it with here at Rutgers!



03/ **DOG COLLARS**

Anyone who knows me knows how much I love my sweet dogs, Arthur and Fran. They keep me active and outside and fill me with levity and joy!



01/ CHEMEX COFFEE MAKER

I can't start my morning without a cup of coffee from this Chemex. When Caffeine Use Disorder was recognized as a "condition for further study" in the DSM-5, and when I realized that I met all those diagnostic criteria, I tried quitting coffee. But after my son was born, I gave up on these attempts. Now, my little one knows how important my morning ritual is and even joins me in brewing coffee whenever possible.



02/ JANG-GU (KOREAN TRADITIONAL DRUM)

I worked at an immigrant-serving agency in Chicago where I used traditional Korean music as a medium to bring minority children together. Through this youth development program, these inner-city youth were able to understand their shared minoritized status and learned how they could build allyship through this collaborative performing experience. This Korean traditional drum reminds me of those youth.



04/ FAMILY DRAWING

My family is everything to me. As an immigrant with no extended family members around here in the United States, family becomes much more important. And this is my little one's first drawing of my family. I don't know why, but this painting reminds me of the collective joys and struggles that my family members have experienced over the years, so I put it in front of my desk.



MICHAEL PARK

03/ FENCING GEAR

During my college years, I joined a college fencing club and just fell in love with it. After six months of practice, I won a gold medal at an amateur fencing tournament in South Korea. For the first time in my life, I found something that I was really good at. From that point on, fencing has been my favorite sport/activity, and I bring this fencing gear with me wherever I move.



05/ YOONSANG'S CD

Yoonsang is both me and my partner's favorite South Korean singer-songwriter. In fact, we got closer to each other because we had similar taste in music. My partner gave me his CD while we were dating, and I still listen to his music when working in my office. Fun fact: Yoonsang is currently living in New Jersey, and we really hope to run into him someday.



FIVE THINGS

01/ **LIVERPOOL SCARF**

This scarf represents my beloved Liverpool Football Club. As is tradition, when the Liverpool team walks out on to the pitch, they are welcomed by the fans holding scarves over their heads whilst singing "You'll Never Walk Alone" to foster a harmonious spirit of togetherness and optimism that runs through the fans and wider community. This scarf represents my place as one among many in football, but also to the broader society.



03/ **PASSPORT**

There is typically little to get excited about when discussing a national identity card and travel document, and in this case that probably holds. However, in this case meaning is drawn not from the item itself – a passport – but what it represents – what to explore, learn, and ultimately teetering within the unknown of a new place.



02/ **BIKE**

Like many, I enjoy a nice bike ride. I also love a good deal. At just \$12, this Fuji bike has fulfilled both fundamental needs to provide me with a sense of fulfillment and a bit of exercise. My favorite time to ride is on a summer evening, among friends, where I feel strangely, inexplicably comfortable, happy, and at home.



GRANT VICTOR



04/ **BRAHMS VOLUME 5, SYMPHONY NUMBER 4**

Admittedly, I know relatively little about classical music. This CD was gifted to me by a dear mentor of mine and provided an initial introduction to a formal musical tradition. This album has been a fixed entity in the CD player in my car for nearly seven years. Although I enjoy the music, the true meaning is derived from the cherished memories of a wonderful time in my life.



05/ **JULIA CHILD COOKBOOK**

I am a big fan of winging it, but this cookbook has provided me with a guide to practice the craft of French cooking. The ability to feed myself and those close to me is a simple pleasure that I enjoy. This book is my first cookbook and it has, I hope, moved me a little bit closer to being a proficient home cook.



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Throughout **Jacqueline Adams SSW'98's** professional career as a licensed clinical social worker, senior clinician, program coordinator, and adjunct professor, it is apparent that the MSW and doctoral training has provided her opportunities to effectively impact change. As a change agent, she is proud to be an alum of the School of Social Work.

Kristyn Anderson SSW'20 works as a forensic social worker for Kedren Community Health Center, Inc. in Los Angeles. Working as a community social worker has allowed her to observe an increase in the incidences of loneliness and isolation that many in society have experienced since the pandemic began. In an effort to build a sense of community and connectedness, she started meet-up groups to get people connecting with one another again.

She also created Sisterhood Formation to help women to connect with one another, build sisterhood and community, and help women feel that they are not alone. This group encourages positivity, fosters communication, and invites connectedness so that women feel supported. Kristyn also formed Young Adult Networking Alliance (YANA) to help teach young people social skills in real time. Twenty-somethings have reported in her meet-up group questionnaire that they are feeling extremely lonely and are having difficulty connecting with others. YANA's virtual meetings help young people unpack their feelings and understand why they are having difficulty connecting with others. YANA's in-person meet-ups give them

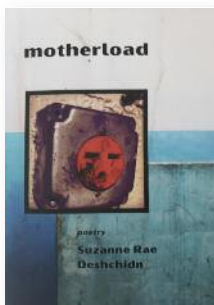


an opportunity to practice their social skills in a safe space.

Lastly, she formed the group *Writer Meets Illustrator* to help form relationships between creatives.

Kristyn is a writer and is working on a children's book, *I Am Who I Am*, which will be published this year. She wrote the book to teach children about feeling good about themselves and to help build positive self-images in young children.

In the future, Kristyn plans to open a mental health residential treatment center for women of color in Los Angeles.



Suzanne Deschidin SSW'20 wrote a collection of poetry, *motherload*, which is available at bit.ly/3whuB2l.

Joan deVelder SSW'86, LC'72, LCSW earned a Ph.D. in human sexuality from the SF Institute

for the Advanced Study of Human Sexuality. Joan continues to practice as a clinical social worker part time now.

Shana Herman SSW'16 is the General Manager at Altitude Trampoline Park in Lawrenceville, GA. Her RU education was a big motivator in the hiring process. She engages with over 10,000 kids a week! Altitude is a very fast-paced, growing industry, currently ranking 2nd overall in trampoline parks in the world.

Bonnie Kerness SSW'78 is celebrating 50 years with the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC). Bonnie started her journey with AFSC as a young organizer in New Jersey, after having been trained in the South during the civil rights movement. Bonnie's spirit, energy and heart have created a deep and lasting impact in all of

the communities who have had the privilege of knowing and working with her. As the Director of AFSC's Prison Watch Program, Bonnie has been a catalyst for change by providing opportunities to bring the voices of people in prison to the outside world. She helped put together the *Survivors Manual*, a resource for people suffering in solitary confinement, written by people who have been through it. She also developed a manual by and for women in prison. Bonnie was also recently appointed by Governor Murphy to the Board of Trustees of Edna Mahan Correctional Facility for Women, the state of New Jersey's only women's correctional facility.

Lisa Lawson SSW'15, MSW, MBA, LCSW, is the Certified Clinical Supervisor and Director of Clinical & Integrated Health at Catholic Charities. Lawson is a 2022 Presidential Candidate for the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), NJ Chapter. She has held several memberships and positions within the social work and health care communities, including the NASW-NJ Chapter Membership Committee, National Association of Puerto Rican Hispanic Social Workers, the New Jersey Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association, and as an active NASW-NJ chapter member. Lawson co-chairs the Education Council of the New Jersey Association of Mental Health & Addiction Agencies alongside Rutgers' Dr. Nora Barrett. Lawson is co-chair of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee at Catholic Charities. As an LCSW and administrator, Lawson has over a decade of experience providing social work practice support as well as clinical and field supervision to bachelor and graduate-level students at over a dozen universities in the tri-state area. Lawson has published content and provided trainings, and conference presentations on social work leadership, integrated health care, and diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Jeremy Lees SSW'16 graduated from the Intensive Weekend program and completed clinical hours to earn his clinical social work license in 2020. He is now entering private practice in Little Silver, New Jersey.

Nicholas Mazza SSW'77, Ph.D., PTR, Dean and Professor Emeritus of the College of Social Work at Florida State University and Florida licensed psychologist, clinical social worker, and marriage and family therapist,

was elected for a second term as president of the National Association for Poetry Therapy. He recently had *Poetry Therapy: Theory and Practice, 3rd ed* (2022) published by Routledge/Taylor & Francis. Dr. Mazza is the founding (1987) and continuing editor of the *Journal of Poetry Therapy*. Last month, at the invitation of the Israeli Bibliotherapy



Center, he spoke (via Zoom) on the expanding international practice and study of poetry therapy. Dr. Mazza's work was also noted in *Children's National Geographic* and *Business Insider*.

After retiring as director of social services at Vineland Developmental Center in 2014, **Linda Moore SSW'93** travels whenever possible to countries like England, Ireland, Scotland, Switzerland, Germany, and Austria. She currently volunteers at Oasis Animal Sanctuary and belongs to the South Jersey Collie Club. Linda was also doing pastoral visits to women with developmental disabilities until the pandemic began. She also spends her time making teddy bears and gnomes, which she sells at craft shows throughout the year.

Marypat Tracy SSW'79, LCSW leads Supportive Older Women's Network (SOWN) in Philadelphia as the executive director. SOWN creates communities for older women to ensure they are not alone on the aging journey. Marypat received a gerontology fellowship while a Rutgers School of Social Work student. She credits the School with providing her an excellent social work education.

Emily Yang SSW'15 (formerly Rice) **SSW'06** began working with A Home Within as a clinical consultant in May 2021. A Home Within is the only national non-profit that matches therapists with youth in foster care or adults formerly in care for weekly pro bono therapy. Volunteers are provided with free clinical consultation and CE's as well as other support (contact eyang@ahomewithin.org to find out more).

Emily also sits on the professional advisory board for Miriam's Heart, a nonprofit in Bound Brook, NJ, that supports local foster and adoptive families. She runs a small private practice, Play & Heal Therapy for Families, LLC, within Miriam's Heart's

offices where she practices trust-based relational intervention and child-centered play therapy and is working toward becoming a registered play therapist. She lives with her husband Oonay, daughter Irene, and son Asher in Mercer County.



Following graduation, **James "JW" Williams SSW'17** obtained his LSW, LCADC, and LCSW. Over the last seven years, he has worked in a variety of mental health programs from in-home to outpatient. In 2019, he assisted in the development of Penn Medicine Princeton Health's Men's Program in Eatontown, New Jersey, as the primary lead clinician. After continuing to help assist other programs in their own development, he briefly left the full-time work force to open his own practice, Somatic Relational Counseling, LLC. It aims to work with BIPOC adult men and adolescent teen boys working through life transitions, identity and self-exploration, mood, anxiety, and trauma-related stressors. He resumed working for Rutgers University Counseling, Alcohol and Other Drug Assistance Program & Psychiatric Services (CAPS) in one of its newest programs, Next Step, in 2021. Next Step is one of three group-based programs in the entire nation that provides more concentrated care for higher-risk students. He is enrolled in a post-master's certification program with Somatic Experiencing International. The skill sets that he brings into his work with clients starts with helping build insight into how the body shows up, communicates with us, and can be a powerful tool to promote healing. Follow him on Instagram at @jamesdwilliams and @somaticchumandesign. His website is www.srcounselingnj.com.

Valerie Vaughn, LC '75, BSW, made a career as a singing social worker. She was dubbed New Jersey's Troubadour by Senator Frank Lautenberg and was featured in the winter 1998 edition of *Rutgers Magazine* as "Troubadour from the Shore." She has been working with the New Jersey State Council on the Arts and the Jersey Shore Folklife Center in Tuckerton, NJ where she is also a resident folk singer and songwriter. Valerie has written numerous songs about NJ history and folklore and has performed far and wide, including at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. and throughout England's folk clubs while she was on numerous tours. In 2015 she helped create the Home Bound Folk Arts (HBFA) program for the New Jersey State Council on the Arts that is now state wide and still going strong. HBFA is a free program that brings art and music into the homes of anyone in NJ who has difficulty getting out of their homes to participate in arts and culture. In this program social outreach comes full circle with the arts. As a social worker, she wrote and administered the training for artists on how to work with this population, and she also performs for and teaches participants.



IN MEMORIAM

We extend our deepest sympathy to the loved ones of the deceased alumni and friends listed below whose passing has been shared with the School between January 2022 and June 2022.

- Ms. Lynne Adler, SSW'79
Mr. Peter J. Alderuccio, SSW'10
Ms. Katharine B. Aldridge, SSW'81
Ms. Nancy M. Allerman, SSW'87
Mrs. Yvette Alvarado-Colon, DC'79, SSW'87
Ms. Elsa A. Arellano, SSW'92
Mrs. Brenda D. Barton, SSW'71
Ms. Madelyn J. Berensmann, NCAS'66, SSW'80
Mrs. Florence M. Bernstein, SSW'63
Mr. Richard H. Bogh, Jr., SSW'65
Ms. Ann Therese Burke, SSW'72
Ms. Barbara L. Canfield, DC'53, SSW'66
Mr. Michael W. Clissold, SSW'83
Ms. Joan C. Colquhoun, SSW'95
Dr. James M. Conneran, RC'71, SSW'77
Mr. Edward C. D'Arcy, SSW'75
Ms. Anne Maureen Daughtrey, SSW'86
Mrs. Rocio Botero Day, LC'73, SSW'75
Ms. Darlene J. Dennis, SSW'89
Ms. Theresa Devecka-Rigoglioso, SSW'90
Ms. Gail V. Dougherty, LC'79, SSW'80
Mr. Robert A. Drexel, RC'70, SSW'08
Ms. Mary E. Elwood, SSW'80
Ms. Kim Fendrick, M.S.W., L.C.S.W., SSW'85
Ms. Kathleen M. Gilligan-Greer, SSW'79
Dr. Taft Gray, Jr., SSW'85
Mrs. Lillian Grodsky, ED'60, SSW'64
Mrs. Michelle T. Grybowski, DC'76, SSW'81
Mrs. Joan Gutkowski, DC'71, SSW'78
Mr. Clifton D. Harrell, SSW'68
Ms. Sarah J. Hart, SSW'87
Shuey M. Horowitz, M.S.W., SSW'78
Ms. Sandra Imberman, SSW'80
Ms. Elsbeth Jaggi, CCAS'98, SSW'99
Ms. Patricia A. Kenny, SSW'70
Mr. Clarence C. Leach, SSW'68
Ms. Anita A. Manno, SSW'86
Mrs. Patricia A. Mattos, SSW'75
Ms. Loretta Lee Mazie, SSW'81
Mr. Robert Joseph McDonald, SSW'69
Ms. Mary Frances McFadden, SSW'86
Mrs. Patricia K. McHale, UCNB'83, SSW'89
Mr. Conrad Burt Metz, SSW'67
Mr. Edward M. Mialky, SSW'74
Mr. James D. Miller, Sr., SSW'67
Mr. Charles T. Morrison, RC'52, SSW'68
Douglas B. Nessle, A.C.S.W., SSW'60
Ms. Virginia D. O'Dor, SSW'95
Ms. Dorothy O'Keefe-Diana, SSW'09
Ms. Sandra Lee Owens, SSW'76
Ms. Frances Weiss Robbins, DC'39, SSW'71
Mr. Donald A. Romeo, SSW'84
Mrs. Eleanor R. Ross, UCNB'64, SSW'66
Mr. Paul R. Rowe, SSW'72
Ms. Barbara Sage, SSW'88
Mr. Frederick Seifer, RC'52, SSW'62
Ms. Camilla Senteneri-Bricker, SSW'14
Ms. Marcyann E. Sosnoski, SSW'65
Ms. Marjorie Summerville, CCAS'72, SSW'77
Sister Diane P. Szubrowski, GSED'71, SSW'88
Marian Tesser, M.S.W., SSW'83
Ms. Laura P. Thatcher, SSW'87
Mr. Alexander P. Thomson, NCAS'72, SSW'78
Ms. Darrilyn R. Vassar-Jackson, SSW'73
Mrs. Joan Wendel Wiegand, SSW'69
Mrs. Virginia L. Wintemute, SSW'67
Mrs. Charlotte Zimmerman-Grant, SSW'81
Mrs. Irene Zmitrovic, UCNB'70, SSW'95



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