265

...students in the class of 2015 made a gift to the Students Supporting Students Campaign. Because of them, 13 students will receive scholarships next year.
MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

AT RUTGERS SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK, our faculty and students study the social policies that reinforce poverty and make the economic divide unbridgeable for many of today’s middle and lower income individuals and families. We, along with the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), are concerned about “growing inequality, stagnant wages, and high unemployment in the U.S.” Joblessness and economic insecurity contribute to the incidence of mental illness, family violence, suicide, substance abuse, crime, and diminished capacity for health, family, and community functioning. In our cover story, called, "Income Inequality: Understanding the Impact of the Class Divide," we examine the impact of the socioeconomic gap on Americans.

I hope this issue will spur discussion among students, faculty and alumni about the role of social workers in advocating for economic justice and social policy reform. The NASW recommends that social workers support the following:

- Funding and support of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF).
- Funding and support of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).
- Support of legislative and administrative strategies that address pay equity.
- Support of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.
- Advocating for legislation, policies, and regulations that affect those who may not be able to advocate for themselves.

We know that these programs and initiatives are just the beginning, for surely meaningful, living-wage work for all its citizens is what lifts a nation out of instability. If our country is to thrive, we must find a way forward toward a socially just economic environment.

In other news, it was my pleasure to visit with many alumni at several spring events, including Rutgers Day, the School of Social Work Career Fair on the Newark Campus, and the NASW-NJ conference. Rutgers School of Social Work educates more social workers than any other college or university in the state, and our graduates can be found in prestigious roles across New Jersey, the country and around the globe. We also strive to assist our graduates in finding satisfying employment or to make a career change. This year’s Career Fair was attended by numerous agencies and businesses, all with active openings. I encourage recent graduates and alumni to check our website for ongoing job postings.

Many of you attended the awards ceremony to honor Bill Waldman with the 2015 NASW-NJ Lifetime Achievement Award. Bill has elevated the field of social work and enhanced the lives of New Jersey’s families. He inspires our students to new heights of service and success. The entire school congratulates him on this prestigious award for a career of service to others, and I encourage those of you who know him to do the same.

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

Greetings Alumni and Friends,

"The causes which destroyed the ancient republics were numerous; but in Rome, one principal cause was the vast inequality of fortunes."

— Noah Webster, American editor and writer
“By some estimates, income and wealth inequality are near their highest levels in the past hundred years, much higher than the average during that time span and probably higher than for much of American history before that.”

FEDERAL RESERVE CHAIRWOMAN JANET YELLEN
The NASW-NJ 2015 Lifetime Achievement Award recognizes an individual who demonstrates the best in social work values and professional accomplishments over the social worker’s entire career. This year the award was presented to William Waldman, professor of professional practice and Executive in Residence.

A Rutgers School of Social Work grad, he began his distinguished career as a case-worker with the Essex County Welfare Board. He soon was appointed the County’s administrator for Food Stamp and Employment & Training programs, and became director of the Department of Human Services in Middlesex County. In 1982, he was named NASW-NJ’s Social Worker of the Year. Governor Thomas H. Kean appointed Waldman as Acting Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Human Services in 1989. Governor James J. Florio appointed him as Commissioner in 1992 and Governor Christine Todd Whitman reappointed him as Commissioner in 1994. As DHS Commissioner, Waldman transformed services in health care, child welfare, mental illness, and developmental disabilities. He managed a $7 billion budget and led a workforce of 19,000 in expanding services to more than one million New Jersey citizens. His skill in reaching out to others made it possible for him to successfully implement Governor Christine Todd Whitman’s WorkFirst New Jersey welfare reform effort. This effort resulted in a drop in New Jersey’s welfare caseload by more than 50 percent, as record numbers of recipients joined the workforce. In another arena, he oversaw the New Jersey Kid Care program, which expanded eligibility for Medicaid and provided high quality health care for thousands of children in lower and moderate-income families.

Today, he inspires social work students as a faculty member and mentor at Rutgers. His lectures draw consistent praise from students who view his vast experience and his ability to connect with others as an essential element in their educational experience. Throughout his career, Bill Waldman has been a vigorous voice for the voiceless and has provided hope, opportunity, and a better life for the most vulnerable among us.
During his stay in the Baltics, LaSala was a discussant at an international conference on LGBT families and was a workshop presenter on working with LGBT youth. He also taught five weeks in Estonia, and family therapy for the children of the European Union’s Archimedes Foundation, funded by the Estonian Family Counseling Centers in Tallinn University to collaborate on research with the Swedish Family Therapy Association in Stockholm and Tallinn University. Following his stay in Estonia, LaSala gave child protective workers perspectives and assessment principals of Dementia Care, is being supported by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality and will bring together nursing facility state regulators and quality improvement organizations to track the medication safety progress of each state.

Dr. Crystal’s work, which has resulted in more than 250 publications, includes many widely cited books and research articles on old-age policy and services for the elderly, on the use and outcomes of psychotropic medications and other mental health treatments, on HIV/AIDS care; and on numerous other health care and social policy topics. He has also been an important contributor to research on long-term care and mental health among the elderly. His work on mental health services has contributed significantly to understanding problems of healthcare access, quality and disparities in large urban care populations; particularly those served by Medicare and Medicaid.

Dr. Siebert’s substantive work focuses primarily on the occupational and behavioral health issues of helping professionals, utilizing identity theories and employing specialized research methods tailored to the collection of sensitive data from cautious participants. She is currently analyzing data she collected from nurses, physicians, dentists, lawyers, and social workers. Her methodological work focuses on psychometrics and advanced statistical methods. She and her husband, Dr. Carl Siebert, offered multiple statistical workshops and faculty development institutes at national conferences the past few years, and they will have a nonparametrics book published in early 2016. Dr. Siebert also has specialized expertise and interest in curriculum development, and from 2010 to 2013, she created and implemented the Addiction Counselor Training (ACT) certificate program with colleague Dr. Nancy Vinelette from the Center of Alcohol Studies with a $3.4 million grant from the NJ Division of Mental Health and Addictions Services. Previous accomplishments also include directing a Doctoral Program and spearheading the complete revision of its curriculum, presenting and publishing dozens of papers, and being primary investigator or co-PI on numerous research grants.

Chien-Chung Huang, professor and director of the Huamin Research Center, published a study on migrant children in China. The study found that millions of migrant children and those left behind in China’s poor rural provinces by parents working in factory towns face greater psychological and behavioral problems. “Family migration negatively affects children, leaving them with more social skills problems and mental health issues,” says Huang.

Darcy Clay Siebert, associate professor, became the first Rutgers faculty member to be named a fellow of the Society for Social Work and Research. She was one of 27 inducted in 2013, joining an existing group of only 45 other researchers across North America. Dr. Siebert’s substantive work focuses primarily on the occupational and behavioral health issues of helping professionals, utilizing identity theories and employing specialized research methods tailored to the collection of sensitive data from cautious participants. She is currently analyzing data she collected from nurses, physicians, dentists, lawyers, and social workers. Her methodological work focuses on psychometrics and advanced statistical methods. She and her husband, Dr. Carl Siebert, offered multiple statistical workshops and faculty development institutes at national conferences the past few years, and they will have a nonparametrics book published in early 2016. Dr. Siebert also has specialized expertise and interest in curriculum development, and from 2010 to 2013, she created and implemented the Addiction Counselor Training (ACT) certificate program with colleague Dr. Nancy Vinelette from the Center of Alcohol Studies with a $3.4 million grant from the NJ Division of Mental Health and Addictions Services. Previous accomplishments also include directing a Doctoral Program and spearheading the complete revision of its curriculum, presenting and publishing dozens of papers, and being primary investigator or co-PI on numerous research grants.

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Karen Zurlo
Karen Zurlo, assistant professor, was one of nine members of the Gerontological Society of America invited to represent the Society and to publish an essay in the International Symposium on Public Policy Challenges in an Aging Society at the Institute of Public Policy and Governance, Shanghai University of Finance and Economics, Shanghai, China in June 2015.

In addition to Zurlo’s research on global aging issues, she has a keen interest in the academic role. She is a faculty member in the Management and Policy (MAP) concentration at the Rutgers MSW, and teaches Macro Practice, Policy (MAP) concentration at the Rutgers School of Social Work. Zurlo is a graduate of the Rutgers’ MSW program. She has worked as a macro social worker for various organizations including a government agency, a homeless shelter, and a non-profit agency serving the homeless.

Sarah McMahon
Sarah McMahon, assistant professor and associate director of the Center on Violence Against Women and Children (SVWC), participated in a roundtable discussion on March 18 at the Statehouse with retired Arizona Representative Gabrielle Giffords to discuss the intersection of domestic violence and gun violence. Giffords, who was critically wounded by a gunman to the head, joined State Senator Loretta Weinberg and Assemblywoman Gabriela Mosquera to discuss “the need for laws that protect women and families from gun violence.”

McMahon’s research interests include the etiology, prevention, and measurement of violence against women and children as well as social work education. She is currently pursuing research on the effectiveness of community-level prevention efforts, such as bystander intervention, that are aimed at changing the social norms that support relationship abuse and sexual violence. SVWC is at the forefront of the issue of the prevention of sexual assault on campus. McMahon and her research team piloted #iSpeak, a student survey and evidence-informed method for assessing the climate regarding sexual assault on the school’s New Brunswick campus. SVWC was invited by the White House to pilot the survey, the only school chosen nationally for this project.

Welcome New Faculty Members
Rutgers School of Social Work presents our new faculty members. These scholars have graduated from top programs nationwide and bring to Rutgers both excellent research and varied life experience.

Emily Book, Ph.D.
Emily Book, Ph.D. has joined the faculty as an assistant professor. She received a Ph.D. in Social Work and Sociology from the University of Michigan, as well as an MSW. Her research interests include intervention with high-risk children, youth and families; child welfare; prevention of child maltreatment; intersection of social service systems; implementation science; evidence-based practice; improving professional practice; parent-child relational disturbances; trauma; and infant mental health.

Laura Cuesta, Ph.D.
Laura Cuesta, Ph.D., has joined the faculty as an assistant professor. She graduated with a Ph.D. in Social Welfare from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She has a Specialist degree in Social Economics from the Universidad de los Andes, Colombia. She has worked as a macro social worker for various organizations including a government agency, a homeless shelter, and a non-profit agency serving the homeless.

Emily Bosk, Ph.D.
Emily Bosk, Ph.D. has joined the faculty as an assistant professor. She received a Ph.D. in Social Work from Columbia University. Bosk’s research interests include international approaches to child and family policy; poverty and inequality, and parental incarceration among disadvantaged families.

Felix Muchomba, Ph.D.
Felix Muchomba, Ph.D., has joined the faculty as an assistant professor. He graduated with a Ph.D. in Social Policy and Political Analysis concentration from the Columbia University School of Social Work. He also has a Master of Public Health Degree from Columbia. His research interests include gender inequalities within the context of social change, particularly economic development, family gender inequalities in resources, such as farmland, time, and how these gender inequalities affect health. This research is focused on East Africa and East and South Asia. Muchomba grew up in Kenya, which engendered his interest in poor families in developing countries.

Emmy Tiderington, Ph.D.
Emmy Tiderington, Ph.D., has joined the faculty as an assistant professor. She graduated with a Ph.D. in Social Work from NYU’s Silver School of Social Work. She received her MSW from the University of Michigan. Her research interests include recovery-oriented practices in supportive housing programs. She brings over a decade of experience as a service provider and clinical supervisor in housing and mental health services for people with serious mental illness.

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URING A FEBRUARY HEARING by the House Financial Services Committee, Federal Reserve Chairman Janet Yellen delivered a speech on economic opportunity and inequality. She offered extensive research on the evidence of increasing income and wealth inequality between the wealthiest and poorest households in America. She noted that the disparity in wealth and income in the U.S. has grown wider for several decades. Despite evidence backed by data from the government’s Survey of Consumer Finances, Yellen’s message was met with anger by Republicans who accused her of political bias. In challenging Yellen’s discussion, Rep. Mick Mulvaney (R-S.C.), told her “You’re sticking your nose in places you have no business to be.”

Yellen has continued to respond with statements that indicate that she views the declining economic state of America’s middle and lower classes to be very much her business.

“The extent and continuing increase in inequality in the United States greatly concern me. I think it is appropriate to ask whether this trend is compatible with values rooted in our nation’s history, among them the high value Americans have traditionally placed on equality of opportunity,” said Ms. Yellen at a conference on economic opportunity and inequality.

A GROWING DIVIDE
Recent research by the Pew Research Center found that the gap between America’s upper and middle-income families has grown to its highest level since the Federal Reserve began collecting these data thirty years ago.

Some fast facts on the issue:

- The U.S. is more unequal than most of its developed-world peers. America has a higher degree of income inequality than almost any other developed country. Only three of the 34 members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development rank higher: Chile, Mexico and Turkey.
- Wealth inequality is even greater than income inequality. Economists Emmanuel Saez and Gabriel Zucman showed that in America the wealthiest 160,000 families own as much wealth as the poorest 145 million families. The median wealth of the nation’s upper-income families was seven times the median wealth of middle-income families in 2013.
- The nation’s largest cities have the most income inequality. Across the 50 largest cities, households in the 95th percentile of income earned 11.6 times as much as households in the 20th percentile.
- The black-white income gap in the U.S. persists. When it comes to household income and wealth, the gaps between blacks and whites have widened. The poverty rate for blacks continues to be three times that of whites.
- Life expectancy is lower in places with more income inequality. New research by the Population Health Institute found that people living in a community with high income inequality were more likely to die before the age of 75 than people in more equal communities.
RUTGERS SSW FACULTY EXAMINE THE ISSUE

Associate professor Lenna Nepomnyashchy has extensively studied the effect of income inequality in America. Her research interests are focused on how poverty and inequality impact child and family health and well-being. She examines the impact of social policies, particularly related to fathers and child support, on the well-being of families and children.

“The latest research shows the U.S. to have the highest inequality of income of all developed countries. The effects of inequality are increasing, especially in the areas of health care, access to education and wellbeing outcomes. Families with young children are the most likely to be poor, with 20 percent of families with children reporting food insecurity in the home,” says Nepomnyashchy.

She describes a picture of poor children falling behind from birth. Babies from lower income mothers are more likely to be born prematurely and with low birthweight. By the time they begin kindergarten, they are already behind their higher-income peers because they are more likely to live in unhealthy and unsafe neighborhoods, have much less access to high quality child care and preschools, and have poor nutrition. These gaps continue and actually increase as children progress through high school because they are more likely to attend low-performing schools, their parents have fewer resources for enrichment activities, and they are more likely to have unaddressed health problems, such as asthma, obesity, and dental decay than their higher-income peers. “At all points in the life cycle, higher income families have the advantage. Another area of concern is access to affordable health care. The poor are frequently one medical emergency away from financial ruin. Medical bills are the biggest cause of U.S. bankruptcies, according to a 2013 study by the Urban Institute, which used data from the U.S. Census and Centers for Disease Control.

“We will see if the Affordable Care Act will close this huge gap in access to health care. When a medical emergency arises, the first thing the uninsured do is use up what little savings they have to pay for it,” says Nepomnyashchy.

Access to higher education also separates the rich from the poor, with low-income students having much less access to college. The federal Pell Grant program, which is designed to help college students from low-income families afford college costs, now covers less than one-third of the cost of attendance at public four-year universities, the lowest in its history. The cost of obtaining a college degree has increased 1,120 percent in three decades. “Lack of access results in so much wasted talent, and it is so inefficient economically. Even when disadvantaged students have the skills and credentials to be accepted to elite colleges, they are much less likely to apply because they are not aware of these opportunities, and once accepted, they are far less likely to attend, because of the perceived cost. At the same time, evidence suggests that low-income students have the most to gain from attendance at elite universities,” says Nepomnyashchy.

Poor children with access to high quality child care do better across the board than those without. Associate Professor Myungkook Joo found in her research that unsecured debt, one form of financial stress, frequently has a detrimental effect on the mental health of older individuals. In middle-aged and older Americans, unsecured debt—which includes debt from credit cards, student loans, medical bills, and child support—was found to have negative effects on mental health because of the associated depressive symptoms and reports of decreased psychological well-being. Secured debt, like a mortgage, is backed by collateral to reduce risk, unlike unsecured debt.

“In our study, thirty percent of the respondents had unsecured debt. The magnitude of this debt was a significant predictor of depressive symptoms and lower psychological well-being. Perceived control over how poverty and inequality impact child and family health and well-being,” reports Zurlo. “Until the main sources of income, namely savings, pensions, and Social Security, are more secure for older adults, many older Americans will experience financial insecurity and stress in retirement. And if public policy can attenuate the effects of income inequality in this country, young and older Americans, alike, will benefit.”

Professor Chun-Chung Huang, whose previous research has focused on examining social policy, such as welfare and child support policy, reducing income inequality and poverty in single-parent families, has found that child support enforcement improves the economic well-being and reduces the poverty rate for families. Strong child support enforcement is associated with low welfare utilization, and high women labor participation and father involvement, all of which contribute to improving well-being and reducing poverty.

His recent research has examined other ways to reduce income inequality, particularly on tax policy and philanthropy. With respect to charitable giving, the government can use tax incentives to encourage affluent people to voluntarily share their wealth with others. The charitable tax deduction is one of the government’s generosity of child care subsidy policy changes. His study found that the odds of the mothers who lived in generous states working full-time were 1.65 times higher than those who lived in stringent states working full-time. Levels of subsidy encourage recipient mothers to work longer and help to close income gaps,” says Joo.

A GROWING DIVIDE

At the gap widens between the richest and poorest Americans, and the middle class declines, older adults also become more economically vulnerable. Many older adults experience psychological and financial stress, which interferes with aging comfortably. Assistant professor Karen Zurlo found in her research that unsecured debt, one form of financial stress, frequently has a detrimental effect on the mental health of older individuals. In middle-aged and older Americans, unsecured debt—which includes debt from credit cards, student loans, medical bills, and child support—was found to have negative effects on mental health because of the associated depressive symptoms and reports of decreased psychological well-being. Secured debt, like a mortgage, is backed by collateral to reduce risk, unlike unsecured debt.

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The vast and well-documented increase in income and wealth inequality in our nation which reflects that the top one percent of individuals control 25% of the nation’s income and 40% of its wealth;

The stagnation of wages which makes what is perceived as the American dream consisting of home ownership, a college education, and a decent home further out of reach for so many;

The continued and growing intersection of race and class in our nation which now includes a disproportionate number of individuals and families of color in poverty with attendant less favorable life outcomes related to morbidity, mortality, incarceration rates and others;

The growing national response to the deaths of young men of color and a decent home further out of reach for so many;

The fraying of our social safety net with growing threats to the sustainability of our social insurance and income support programs;

The corrosive and escalating impact of money on our political processes especially given the impact of the U.S. Supreme Court decision in the matter of Citizens United versus the Federal Election Commission; and

The erosion of the “vital center” of American political thought coupled with polarization of elected officials and the resulting gridlock of our policy and political processes.

One might define American “exceptionalism” in terms of economic, military and technological prowess — but if there truly is such exceptionalism, it emanates more from our efforts to make our country socially and economically a land of equal opportunity, one with a vibrant middle class, a viable safety net, and one that is replete with individual freedoms, supports and protections. If we are unable to reverse or redirect the confluence of factors noted above, we may well not have the strength, unity, and perseverance to address the extraordinary challenges we face.

How is it that we tend the frayed fabric of our society, restore a sense of national inter-connectedness and purpose? How is it that we have the majority groups that make up the population of our Nation no longer regard and deal with members of the majority groups as “the other”?

How do we move from gridlock to bipartisanship in our political and policy domains and from ideology to practicality and compromise in resolving our differences? There are no easy answers to any of these profound dilemmas and the feasibility and likelihood of the emergence of a comprehensive response to all is extremely limited. Despite the above, there may be some relatively incremental but important initiatives that may be undertaken that lead us in the right direction. A specific one that comes to mind is a two-year program of required national service for all youth in our nation that might take place upon either graduation from high school or college. A choice of venue might be offered that would include military service, environmental remediation, construction and repair of the nation’s infrastructure, work in social welfare programs to benefit indigent populations, working in health care and education in underserved areas and others. There would be no exceptions or exemptions so our youth from all backgrounds could join together for a common purpose.

There needs to be a way for each of us to take responsibility and a sense of ownership for our nation and do our part by making a contribution of our time and effort.

There are many more such examples of possibilities, but the ultimate benefit might be the degree to which such an initiative generates understanding and respect for others and creates a sense of national purpose, common cause and unity. As the Beatles classic song goes “you may call me a dreamer” but some dreams are worth pursuing and maintaining the status quo over time may prove to be a nightmare. Mandatory national service is not the solution, but could be a key component in a broad scale revitalization effort to reconnect our nation, through our youth, with a vibrant middle class, a viable safety net, and one that is replete with individual freedoms, supports and protections. If we are unable to reverse or redirect the confluence of factors noted above, we may well not have the strength, unity, and perseverance to address the extraordinary challenges we face.

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There needs to be a way for each of us to take responsibility and a sense of ownership for our nation and do our part by making a contribution of our time and effort.
The mission of the Institute for Families (IFF) is to support and strengthen individuals, families, and communities by building the capacity of human service professionals and organizations through research, training, evaluation, and policy development. IFF is a leading center for the professional preparation and development of social service work, focusing on policy and practice change.

IFF conducts applied research and offers technical support for several State and local partners. The Institute’s research and training focus on a range of issues, including child welfare, youth aging out of the child welfare system, and child abuse and neglect evaluators.

Youth Advisory Boards (YABs) are youth-run and youth-led forums that provide meaningful opportunities for youth who have experienced foster care or other out-of-home placements to advocate for policy and practice change. YABs at IFF have impacted the professional landscape by promoting social work as a profession among policymakers, providing leadership opportunities, and sharing knowledge and experiences with each other.

Center for International Social Work (CISW)

Rutgers students from the CISW visited the United Nations for two events this year. The first was Social Work Day. This UN event is an opportunity for those involved in the helping professions to celebrate social service work, discuss best practices, network, inspire, and learn from each other. This event promotes good social work practice as it brings attention to global social problems in localized contexts and provides advocacy opportunities. It also promotes the importance of social work and their value in the professional landscape. This event was an opportunity to celebrate social workers and the contributions they make around the world.

The second event was the 17th anniversary of the Millennium Development Goals. This celebration highlighted the work of social workers collectively in advancing the UN’s goals. This event was an opportunity to celebrate the UN’s accomplishments and the role of social workers in furthering the goals.

IFF conducts applied research and offers technical support for several State and local partners. The Institute’s research and training focus on a range of issues, including child welfare, youth aging out of the child welfare system, and child abuse and neglect evaluators.

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Youth Assembly and joined students from the Bloustein School of Planning & Public Policy and the GAIA Centers. The overall purpose was to facilitate discussion, foster information sharing, connect stakeholders and program facilitators, and inspire those involved in advancing the Millennium Development Goals. This assembly was the epitome of thinking globally and acting locally in that the UN collectively convenes individuals from around the world who represent interests in global issues such as: mental health, gender based violence, basic education, healthcare, environmental issues, and child maltreatment.

Visit support.rutgers.edu/SocialWork.
NEWS FROM OUR CENTERS

Huamin Research Center

- The Huamin Research Center and Rutgers China Office co-hosted a distinguished scholar lecture by Dr. Jiangang Zhu entitled “Accountability of Civic Organizations in China” in April. Dr. Jiangang Zhu is a professor and the Executive Dean of the School of Philanthropy at Sun Yat-Sen University. Professor William Waldman provided remarks to the lecture.

- Lisa Lawson, a 2014 China Study Abroad program participant, is developing a life skills program for mental health rehabilitation patients in Beijing, China, with help from the Huamin Research Center. The project incorporates life skill improvement through plant care and maintenance, environmental responsibility, and knowledge on health and nutrition.

- From May 21 to June 17, the Center hosted the 5th China Study Abroad program with the Rutgers GAIA Center. The program introduced students to China’s social welfare system and social work practice.

- On May 29, the Center hosted the International Conference on Capital, Philanthropy, and Sharing at Tsinghua University. Beijing, China. At the conference, U.S. and Chinese nonprofit leaders, researchers, and philanthropists discussed the development of nonprofit sector and modern philanthropy from a global perspective. The Chairman of the Huamin Charity Foundation, Dr. Dezhi Lu, gave a keynote speech.

- The Rutgers China Office and the Huamin Research Center co-hosted the Rutgers-China Bridge Program in Social Work and Public Policy in August. This program offers Chinese university students an opportunity to attend lectures and workshops at Rutgers’ prestigious School of Social Work. To support the Huamin Research Center, please visit, support.rutgers.edu/SocialWork.

Center for Gambling Studies

- The New Jersey Division of Gaming Enforcement released the Responsible Gaming Internet impact report for the first year of authorized Internet gaming in New Jersey. This is the first in a series of four annual reports required by N.J.S.A 5:12-95.18. This study is the first comprehensive examination of online betting patterns and responsible gaming features in the United States. Lia Nower, Ph.D., professor and director of the Center for Gambling Studies, along with the Division, compiled the necessary data for this report, which focuses primarily on a statistical analysis of the first year of Internet gaming in New Jersey as well as the use of responsible gaming features such as deposit limits, time limits, loss limits, cooling off periods, self-exclusion, and their effect on Internet gambling behavior. Subsequent reports will focus on play patterns, the use of responsible gaming controls as well as the prevalence of problem Internet gaming in New Jersey.

  “New Jersey is one of the first states to regulate Internet gaming and to focus on developing a responsible gaming framework that is based on actual evidence. This gives us a unique opportunity to really understand how players bet, who sets limits on play, and what indicators are important for reduction of harm going forward.” said Dr. Nower.

Center on Violence Against Women and Children (VAWC)

- VAWC sponsored a screening of the documentary, “THE HUNTING GROUND” on March 10 at the Douglass Campus Center. THE HUNTING GROUND is a discussion-provoking documentary that exposes the issue of rape on U.S. college campuses, institutional responses, and the complex toll rape culture has on students and their families. In attendance were Ruth Anne Koenick, director of the Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance at Rutgers University, Amy Zierling, producer of the documentary, Judy Postman, associate professor & VAWC director, and Sarah McMahon, assistant professor & VAWC associate director.

- VAWC released findings from its report, “SCREAMing to Prevent Violence,” which highlights key research points from its recently completed CDC-funded study about preventing campus sexual assault. Overall, the study demonstrated that interventions from SCREAM (Students Challenging Reality and Educating Against Myths) Theater resulted in a number of positive outcomes for students who participated, including positively impacting bystander behavior, especially in the short term.

  To support VAWC, visit support.rutgers.edu/SocialWork.
one than fifty universities offer a Ph.D. in social work. Consequently, there are many choices, programs, and opportunities for Licensed Clinical Social Workers seeking careers in academe and research. For those seeking doctoral education to develop clinical scholarship, seeking doctoral education to address the critical need for clinical leaders and advanced practitioners while providing our students with an innovative educational model that prepares them to become knowledge producers in the field of clinical social work.

Each semester of our program consists of four on-site residencies and one online residency. The four on-site residency sessions will include lectures, seminars, writing workshops, case presentations, meetings with faculty and advisors, and group research sessions.

MSW Online

The MSW 100% Online Program continues to grow, with our sixth cohort of students starting in Summer 2015 and our first cohort entering the advanced portion of the program. Our students continue to come from diverse backgrounds and geographic regions, spanning across the country in states such as New Jersey, New York, Florida, Virginia, California, and Arizona. The online program continues to offer flexibility to our online students, many of whom are working full time and managing multiple responsibilities, by allowing students to complete course work online and field work over seven semesters of the program. Our field office has been busy developing new, innovative models of practice. Our program has been designed to provide clinical leadership.

NEWS FROM OUR PROGRAMS

MSW Certificate in Aging and Health

The MSW Certificate in Aging is now the MSW Certificate in Aging and Health. This change reflects a growing trend, whereby it is increasingly necessary for social workers in aging to also be prepared to address issues related to health and healthcare. The new certificate program requires students to take advanced coursework in health policy, as well as to work within the life course. It also requires students to take at least one additional course in medical social work, as well as one additional course in aging. Students in the new program will also complete their advanced field placements with organizations working at the interface of aging and health.

The Program on Aging gathered input from community partners, field instructors, faculty, current students, alumni, and other social work programs nation-wide to re-develop the program in a way to optimally prepare social workers for the future of aging and health. Reflecting this insight, Latanya Hayes, a current certificate student in Newark, remarked, “My choice to enter the program was both personal and professional. Having an older adult parent, I often hear ‘you’ve already lived your life.’ As a geriatric social worker, I want to help people to continue to live to their fullest and healthiest potentials.”

Visit socialwork.rutgers.edu for more information.
Ph.D. Program

Congratulations to these Ph.D. students who look to become leaders in the field:

- Ph.D. student Louis Donnelly accepted a postdoctoral research associate position at the Center for Research on Child Wellbeing (CRCW), affiliated with the Woodrow Wilson School and the Office of Population Research at Princeton University.
- Ph.D. graduate Jamey Lister accepted a postdoctoral research associate position at Rutgers School of Social Work.
- Ph.D. student Louis Donnelly accepted a postdoctoral research associate position at Rutgers School of Social Work.
- Ph.D. graduate Kerrie Oceño has accepted a position as an assistant professor at the University of New Hampshire, Department of Social Work. Morton was a research associate at Rutgers School of Social Work with faculty mentor Andrew Peterson.
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- Congratulations to Samantha Winter for being awarded the PEO Chapter AK, as she begins dissertation data collection in Africa.
- Congratulations to Ananya Ray who is completing a post-doctoral Congressional Fellowship in the office of Senator Bernie Sanders.
- The School of Social Work, in conjunction with the Graduate School-New Brunswick, offers a doctoral program that prepares students for careers in higher education, research and advanced positions in social policy and administration. Our Ph.D. programs are ranked 3rd nationally in faculty productivity by Academic Analytics. We will welcome our next cohort of Ph.D. students in fall 2015. Applications are due January 15, 2016. Information is available on the social work website socialwork.rutgers.edu/Academics/phd or by contacting program director Allison Zippay at zippay@sws.rutgers.edu.

BASW Program

Every year, the Undergraduate Social Work organizations on the Rutgers Camden and New Brunswick campuses host the Krystal Skinner Memorial Scholarship Fund Domestic Violence Awareness Walk. This year, as a culmination and celebration of the domestic violence awareness and fundraising efforts of Rutgers School of Social Work over the past seven years, a Krystal Ball was held on the Camden campus on March 28th. Krystal Skinner, a 22-year-old student, mother, and New Jersey Division of Child Permanency & Placement intern, was killed on March 26, 2008, in a tragic domestic violence incident in the wake of her passing.

Dr. DeWayne Battle, director of the BASW program, led the effort to establish the Krystal Skinner Memorial Scholarship Fund to financially assist eligible undergraduate students pursuing their social work degree at Rutgers. The Domestic Violence awareness Walks and the Krystal Ball were established to further this effort. About 40 people attended the Krystal Ball, which included dinner, dancing and a silent auction. Since 2009, this effort has raised nearly $100,000 and 11 scholarships have been awarded. To make a gift, please visit support.rutgers.edu/SocialWork.

Intensive Weekend

Congratulations & MSW Intensive Weekend students this year celebrated the passage from the foundation to the advanced/clinical curriculum with “acknowledgement” luncheons at the program’s off-campus Jersey City, Bordentown, Mays Landing and, last year, Parsippany locations. The year round, sequential nature of courses in the program, designed for students who work full time in the human services, makes it particularly important to mark important milestones. The luncheons were positive, re-energizing, and often moving. Students spoke about the power of the cohort as a personal and professional support network, the skills they had acquired and hoped to further develop and their growing sense of confidence in the workplace.

The photographs is from the most recent Acknowledgement Luncheon at Rutgers EcoComplex in Bordentown. For more information about the program, please visit socialwork.rutgers.edu/MSW.

MSW Traditional

At Rutgers School of Social Work, all students enrolled in the Masters of Social Work program are required to select an area of concentration. The choice is between Social Work, Management and Policy, or MAP. Rather than counseling people one on one, the MAP concentra-

Students accepted into the program will also receive mentorship and preparation for the licensing exams. The Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services has marketed our ACT program extensively to their licensed treatment organizations. A substantial percentage of these organizations do not currently have the proper proportion of licensed staff, and their organization license (and funding) is in jeopardy if they are not in compliance. For this reason, the graduates of our program will be in high demand, as they will be close, if not ready, to earn their license upon completion of the ACT program.

ACT

The Addiction Counselor Training Certificate Program’s (ACT) primary goal is to educate master and doctorate-level clinicians who wish to prepare for licensing in their profession as an Addictions Counselor (LCADC). Dual credentialed clinicians are in great demand in our state and across the country, particularly for leadership positions in organizations that treat both mental health and substance abuse disorders. The ACT Certifi-
 cate Program provides a 6-course curriculum that covers all 5 domains and the educational hours needed for the CAADC/LCADC. The program also requires a minimum of 675 experience hours gained through field placement or employment at a DAHAS-approved agency.

Continuing Education

The Office of Continuing Education at Rutgers School of Social Work is the largest university-based program of its kind in the county. Our administration and staff are experienced — successfully providing continuing education to social workers and human service professionals for over 35 years. Our Office offers training on a wide variety of subjects, led by the top professionals in the field. Contact Continuing Education for all your educational program needs at 848-932-8758, or ce@ssw.rutgers.edu. For more information, visit our website at socialwork.rutgers.edu/ce.
Grad Profile: From Homeless to a Career Helping Others

When Kareem Oliphant, then age 15, and his family emigrated from Jamaica to the United States in 2007, they hoped it would be an escape from poverty, economic conditions and problems associated with his elder brother. After a 10-year wait for emancipation approval, and a period of homelessness after the family’s home was devastated by Hurricane Ivan, they moved into his grandmother’s East Orange residence.

Life was not easy. The family shared the home’s small basement as their living quarters. His mother, who had worked at a bank in Jamaica, could not find employment and became depressed. His father traveled frequently as a truck driver. These challenging and cramped conditions continued for four years. “The hardest part was watching my mother struggle. She was very driven and worked hard, but there was still more out there,” Oliphant says. “And I know what she would have said: That I had done well and she was proud, but that there was still more out there in the world for me to accomplish.”

Despite the family’s turmoil, Oliphant excelled in high school and was accepted into Virginia Tech. But during his freshman year, complications after surgery. They spoke on the phone and she assured him that all would be well. A few weeks later, he was summoned home and learned upon arrival that she had died of complications after surgery.

Once again, Oliphant had to persevere through unimaginable pain and loss. Rather than turning inward, he reached out to help people in need. As a regimental commander for the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets, he led the corps to raise more than $20,000 for scholarships and charitable organizations, and set a new record for corps blood drives.

After graduating from college and entering the MSW program at Rutgers School of Social Work with a Management and Policy concentration, he continued his minister of service. Oliphant improved community health by coordinating annual health fairs at his church. A mobile health van was used to offer basic health screenings to church members and residents in the surrounding community. He made a medical mission to Jamaica with nurses from his church to provide basic health screenings in rural towns.

Now an ordained a minister, Oliphant says, “The social work gene is imprinted in my DNA,” said Biden. “I think part of the reason that I give back so much is that there were times that I wished someone had reached out to my family when we were in need. They say that if you go into social work, there must be some wound that brought you there. I know what it is like to be homeless, to lose a loved one. I know what it is like when the odds are against you.” Oliphant says.

At the graduation ceremony, Oliphant wished his mother was alive to see her dream become a reality.

“We are a very rare and special breed of individuals. We possess a sacred sense of empathy for humanity. We believe in service, social justice and the importance of human relationships. . . Like you, the social work gene is imprinted in my DNA,” said Biden.

“His story is one that speaks volumes about the impact of social work,” said Oliphant. “I had done well and she was proud, but there was still more out there in the world for me to accomplish.”
and had a deep sense that my story mattered, and that I was loved
counsel and support foster children transitioning into society.
that can keenly relate.
was eventually adopted by a new family.
My mother was just not able to follow through on the testing
the separation. Her brother was able to fill in some missing pieces about
realized that I didn't want my hurt to hurt others," says Hernandez.
"I see the children finally letting people into their little hearts. I
resulted in "a whole new level of healing for both of us."
Donor Profile: An Endowed Fellowship Made in Memory of a Beloved Husband

W hen Joan Axelrod remembers her husband, Robert Jay Axelrod, she is proud to recall the way he supported her long-life personal mission to become a well-respected lawyer who championed the causes of his clients. He was a certified civil trial attorney at Levinson Axelrod, a prestigious 75-year-old law firm in New Jersey, and those he assisted revered the best representation possible.

“He was always on the side of the underdog and showed such compassion for his clients. He was a wonderful lawyer and is still remembered in the legal community for his amazing skills,” she says.

The couple met in Trenton while they were still teenagers and went on to have four children. Joan, who is a Rutgers School of Social Work alum with a MSW (’81) and Ph.D. (’91) recalls how nervous she was to return for her doctoral program as an older student at the age of 50. Robert fully supported her return to school, championing her efforts and even driving her at night for some of the papers she needed to print out at school. “It was truly a team effort,” she recalls.

As she defended her dissertation one spring, he was diagnosed with cancer. It was a terrible contrast, the beginning of a new path in her career and the slow ending of her beloved husband’s life. After his death in 2000, she tried to find some new path in her career and the slow ending of her beloved husband’s life. After his death in 2000, she tried to find some new path in her career and the slow ending of her beloved husband’s life.

Serendipitously, years later, Joan was invited to a Rutgers dinner where she heard a speech by a student from Rutgers School of Social Work who incorporated violence prevention in the courses she teaches. Joan has since been able to speak with Kyle Smiddie (SSW ’11, NLAW ’15), a graduate of the program who utilizes the skills and knowledge in his career today as an attorney at the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice. Seeing how Smiddie uses his dual degrees to assist the mentally disabled, those with special needs in prison, and a host of others in need, reaffirmed her commitment to helping vulnerable communities.

Joan has since been able to work with the Joni Munch, an associate professor-student relationship into a collaborative future social worker.

Many students in this dual degree program have reported that they have benefited from the sense of community they feel as part of the School of Social Work community, which includes not only students but also faculty and staff. Students interested in this dual degree can apply for admission to the School of Social Work and to either the School of Law-Camden or School of Law-Newark.

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Joan Describes the Joa Dunn and Robert Jay Axelrod Endowed Fellowship for the dual degree program: ‘I thought this felt like the perfect way to honor his memory,” she relays.
GET INVOLVED

Attend lectures and receive FREE CEUs. Rutgers School of Social Work hosts at least four annual donor-funded lectures where complimentary CRUs are provided! To view upcoming CEU features, please visit socialwork.rutgers.edu/events.

Become a Field Instructor or Liaison

Want to mentor a Rutgers social work student at your agency? To become a field instructor, liaison, or for your agency to have social work interns, visit socialwork.rutgers.edu/Current/Field

Work toward a certificate through our Continuing Education department

You already need CEUs, so why not earn them while working toward a certificate? Learn more about our Continuing Education Certificate Programs by visiting socialwork.rutgers.edu/ce

Submit your professional or personal updates to share good news with fellow alumni

We love to hear what our alumni are up to! Share good news with the Rutgers School of Social Work community by sending an email to alumni@ssw.rutgers.edu.

Post and/or view job openings

Looking for a new job? Have an opening at your place of employment? Post and/or view current job openings in the tri-state area by visiting socialwork.rutgers.edu/jobs.

Support our students

Our students rely on private funding to receive scholarships and support for their programs. To explore giving opportunities and make a donation please visit socialwork.rutgers.edu/give.

Speak at classes or career panels

Social Work students love hearing from our alumni! We have various speaking opportunities throughout the year. Let us know you’re interested by emailing alumni@ssw.rutgers.edu.

Network with other alumni, faculty and staff

There are many opportunities for our alumni to come back and network with fellow alumni, faculty, staff, and students. Become a member and alumni news at socialwork.rutgers.edu/alumni.

STAY CONNECTED

Make sure to update your contact information and subscribe to our eNews. facebook.com/RutgersSSW alumni@ssw.rutgers.edu

Linked In: School of Social Work Alumni Network

The Rutgers School of Social Work Alumni Council is pleased to honor Ms. Victoria Williams Brown as the 2015 Outstanding Alumni Award recipient. Ms. Brown graduated from the Rutgers School of Social Work in 1976, following completion of a BA in History from Tennessee State University in Nashville. She retired this year after 38 years with Robert Wood Johnson Rahway, where she served as a Social Work Manager. She has served for the Mental Health Association in New Jersey in many roles, including volunteer member, officer, and president, and is currently a Board Member there. She has also been active in the New Jersey chapter of Social Work leadership in Health Care, and has also been very involved with her sorority, Delta Sigma Theta, where she has served as chapter member, vice president, and president. Ms. Brown has previously received the NAACP Freedom Fund Award, and gaining one of her social work skills, she is active in the community as a volunteer with the YMCA Plainfield Homeless Shelter as well as the Plainfield Blue-Collar Club.

Ms. Brown was nominated by one of her employees, Elizabeth Janusik, who said, “Vickie has been the best boss I could have asked for as a brand new MSW. She hired me for my first post Rutgers MSW position and has been inspiring me to be the best social worker I can be.”

Do you know an outstanding social worker? Be sure to nominate them for the 2016 award at socialwork.rutgers.edu/alumni/award.

IN MEMORIAM

The Rutgers School of Social Work family extends its deepest sympathy to the loved ones of deceased alumni, faculty and friends.

Dr. Douglas A. Whyte, SSW’81
November 26, 2014
Ms. Ann K. Benz, SSW’66
December 30, 2014
Mr. Louis Eugene Arreau, SSW’67
March 9, 2015
Mrs. Nancy Halli Marzi, SSW’68
March 9, 2015
Mr. Roger G. Settari, SSW’79
April 12, 2014
Mrs. Dorothy Wald Atue, SSW’71
August 22, 2013
Mr. Robert Lodgers, SSW’71
February 2, 2013
Mr. Harvey F. Guerin, Jr., JD’31, SSW’72
December 29, 2012
Mrs. Mary Gregory Willcox, SSW’75
March 10, 2014
Ms. Barbara S. Tatyel, SSW’77
October 12, 2012
Ms. Hazel T. Butler, SSW’78
March 29, 2015
Ms. Marion Williams, LCN’78
December 27, 2014
Mr. Hermione R. Croyabo, SSW’79
May 5, 2015
Ms. Ruth E. Stagg, SSW’79
January, 2015
Mr. John R. Vincent, SSW’81
January 17, 2015
Mr. Sydney M. Roberts, LC’79, SSW’83
May 5, 2015
Ms. Barbara B. Renton, LCN&B’77, SSW’84
January 24, 2015
Mr. James P. Young, SSW’87
June 26, 2015
Ms. Theresa J. Bastaphrode, SSW’83
December 31, 2014
Ms. Dolores Genetti Ragusa, SSW’83
January 29, 2015
Ms. Harriet J. Fish, LC’73, SSW’94
May 18, 2014
Mr. Leonard J. Lomash, SSW’95
August 21, 2013
Mr. Nicholas Depamphile, LC’07, SSW’08
December 26, 2013
Ms. Deborah A. McFall, CCAS’10, SSW’11
November 17, 2014
Dr. Judyne Oren Faulconer
May 20, 2015
Professor Emilia R. Robinson
February 6, 2015

The Rutgers School of Social Work Alumni Council is committed to increasing alumni engagement and involvement; increasing financial support; building alumni networking opportunities; and increasing the visibility and impact of the School of Social Work. We welcome your comments, ideas, and feedback. Contact a Council member today at alumni@ssw.rutgers.edu.