



Social Work Department Newsletter

Saint Mary's College  
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A Note from the Director

It is with much warmth that I send my greetings to you. I returned from my sabbatical this academic year, and am enjoying working with our very wonderful class of junior and senior Social Work majors. I am also now a Saint Mary's parent as my daughter, Lauren, began her first year at Saint Mary's. Dr. JoAnn Burke was Acting Chair while I was on sabbatical, and did a fantastic job in working with our students. I want to thank her for her expertise and hard work.

Our department is growing and we now have eighteen juniors! We have been spending much time this semester talking with students throughout Saint Mary's College about the great profession of Social Work. We have held several information sessions as well as graduate school seminars this fall, including seminars with such highly-ranked institutions as the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor; Jane Addams Graduate School of Social Work, University of Illinois, Chicago; St. Louis University; and University of Pennsyl-

vania, Philadelphia. As a result, we are increasing the knowledge base of students regarding Social Work. We also hope to continue to strengthen the department through increased numbers of students enrolled in Social Work classes. The juniors are very busy completing their Social Policy government documents research, planning for their field placements with Professor Sharon Mayer, our Visiting Assistant Professor and Field Practicum Coordinator, and videotaping their social work practice interviews for Dr. Burke.

The seniors are well into their 500 hour field placements, and are busy completing Social Work Research Methods papers and Senior Comprehensive Portfolios. I returned to Saint Mary's with much excitement about sharing my learning experiences with our students. Through some excellent translation assistance from my son, Joseph, I was able to collaborate with German Social Work professors to extend my child welfare research cross-culturally, and also presented my



Dr. Kominkiewicz, Department of Social Work Chair

research in Germany. This certainly allowed me to meet and collaborate with additional international colleagues. The Social Work majors were very excited to learn of this new collaboration, and had questions regarding the differences in our child abuse reporting procedures. Many of our students are interested in research opportunities.

I wish you the most blessed year, and please know that all of you are always in my prayers. You are all so special to me.

Department of Social Work featured in Courier

The Fall 2006 *Courier* focused upon the Department of Social Work in beginning its series on six nationally accredited programs at Saint Mary's College. We are very proud to be featured first in this series. President Carol Mooney related the following in *Courier*: "Many things contribute to Saint Mary's excellent reputation, but one that you may not be aware of is that the College is home to six nationally accredited academic programs. In this issue, we begin a six-part series on these outstanding programs by focusing on our Social Work Department. The article shares details about this vibrant program – its growing local and international connections and what social work majors do before and after they leave Saint Mary's."



Senior Sophia DelFabro was interviewed by the Courier.

Please also see the article titled "Meeting Emerging Needs" by Elizabeth Station discussing the profession of Social Work and our Department. Sophia Del Fabro, SMC '07, is interviewed in this article. Sophia plans to attend medical school, and has already been accepted by

two medical schools. Maureen Donovan, SMC '00, was featured in the article, "A Calm in the Storm," by Cynthia Machamer. Maureen is a cardiac intensive care and telemetry social worker at Mercy Hospital and Medical Center in Chicago, and shares her professional and Saint Mary's experiences. Dr. Kominkiewicz was also interviewed in the Faculty Profile. We thank *Courier* for their excellent writing. Please check your copy of *Courier*, or go online at <http://www.saintmarys.edu/~courier/> where you will soon find the Fall 2006 issue. You will certainly be pleased and proud to read about our students, alumnae, and the Department of Social Work!

## Notes from the Field



*Professor  
Sharon Mayer is  
our  
Field Practicum  
Coordinator.*

I am very happy to have the role of Practicum Coordinator and visiting professor for the Social Work Department. It was a real honor for me to have been asked to take this position. Over the past five years I have been Field Instructor and adjunct instructor for the Social Work Department. I knew I would like working with Dr. Kominkiewicz and Dr. Burke. I knew I would also like working with the Senior Social Work students.

I continue to be impressed with the passionate energy and creativity that Dr. Kominkiewicz and Dr. Burke put into further developing and maintaining an excellent nationally accredited Social Work Program for Saint Mary's College. And the students I have worked with never cease to amaze me with their knowledge base, excellent research skills and commitment to the Social Work Profession. I feel I bring some valuable skills, social work knowledge and a vast social work experience to my new role. I have been a masters level social worker for 25

years and during that time have worked in many social service settings. I also have a certificate in Holistic Health which has given me training in health and wellness education. Over the years I have worked in mental health, an employee assistance program in medical social work, and school social work. I have experience working with people across the full age spectrum from early childhood to geriatrics.

My training in Bridges Over Poverty has given me an in-depth understanding of the diverse population of poverty. I have made so many community and state connections over the years to build a strong networking base that I can bring to the Field Practicum Program.

I look forward to another semester working with the students and watching their progress in their field experience. I am excited about building new practicum settings and developing curriculum projects.

## SAC Update

In my roll as 2006-2007 Social Work Club Historian, I am excited to inform you of a project that I hope will become an ongoing tradition. My name is Joanna Mackiewicz, and I am a senior Social Work major, the Social Work Club's Historian and the Student Academic Council Representative. Over the past three years I thought it would be great if we could make use of one of our greatest assets: our alumnae! Their knowledge from their own experiences would be something very valuable to current and future Social Work majors. Starting this year, I have come up with a way to connect with past alumnae through student-alumnae letter writing. How beneficial would it be for our seniors to leave Saint Mary's College with greater alumnae ties? If any alumnae are interested in participating in this beneficial program please contact us at [kominkie@saintmarys.edu](mailto:kominkie@saintmarys.edu). Thank you for your continued help!



*SAC Representative  
Joanna Mackiewicz*

## Social Work Alumnae News

Jeanine (Mauro) Stricker, SMC '01, was married in September, 2006, and is living in Chicago. She is in her second year of graduate school at the University of Chicago's School of Social Service Administration. Jeanine is enrolled in the clinical track of the part-time program. She works full-time at a supportive housing agency, Mercy Housing Lakefront, as a case manager. Jeanine wants to say "hi" to everyone!

Elizabeth Gansler, SMC '06, is an advanced standing student at Boston College. Elizabeth will complete her MSW in 2007, and is currently in her field placement in the emergency room at South Shore Hospital, Weymouth, MA. Congratulations, Elizabeth!

Jessica (Jarvis) Strong, SMC '06, is the Director of New Choices, a program of the Women's Center in Fayetteville, North Carolina. In that position, Jessica has various responsibilities, including conducting classes on resume building, interviewing skills, and job retention skills for clients as well as supervising students, interns, and volunteers from various disciplines, including social work.

Megan Kennedy, SMC '06, is entering her third and final semester at Loyola University Chicago and will graduate with her M.S.W. in May, 2007. Megan's concentration is Mental Health and she is completing her internship with Resurrection Behavioral Health at St. Francis Hospital in Evanston, Illinois. She is working on the adult, outpatient unit and is doing both individual and group therapy.

## A Message from Dr. Burke

As I write this brief article for our newsletter, I think about the privilege of working with each of you during the past nine years that I've been here at Saint Mary's College. Through all of our joint efforts, we are seeing the Social Work Program grow and continue to develop here at the College. During the past two years, I have been able to travel to El Salvador, Korea, and Germany and incorporate these experiences into courses and projects in our curriculum.

I am very excited about directing a new project involving Social Work with Spanish-speaking populations. We will keep you informed on the progress of this project! As you can probably guess, my work in gerontology continues. During my sabbatical in Fall 2005 at Catholic University of Korea, I taught two courses and conducted research on elder care services in Korea. From my work with students in Korea, I developed a curriculum module on population aging that I replicated here at Saint Mary's College in the Mezzo Course this past spring. I presented the curriculum module at the International Federation of Social Work Conference in Munich, Germany this past summer. My work also continues in the community. I have just been elected Chair of the Board of Directors for REAL Services. In addition, I am now serving on the Indiana Home Care Task Force to work at the state level with advocacy issues related to long-term care.

In addition to our wonderful students, alumnae, and field instructors, I am blessed to be working with such fine colleagues here in our department. It is through our joint efforts that we continue to thrive!



*Dr. Burke is the new President of the  
Board of Directors for REAL Services*

# Social Work Class of 2007– Field Practicum

**Jennifer Chmielewski**—YWCA  
Instructor: Joann Phillips, M.S.W. &  
Laura Milner

**Sophia Del Fabro**—St. Joseph County  
VNA  
Instructor: Sue Myer, M.S.W.

**Lauren DeLuca**—Madison Center-  
Sunshine Club  
Instructor: Paul Curry, M.S.W.

**Stephanie Doran**—Child Protective  
Services  
Instructor: Christine Beckman, M.S.W.

**Sarah Jones**—South Bend Community  
School Corporation  
Instructor: Jill Wagonner, M.S.W.

**Christina Latty**—Youth Service Bureau  
Instructor: Shotanus Peterson, M.S.W.



**Joanna Mackiewicz**—St. Joseph Re-  
gional Medical Center  
Instructor: Beth Temple, M.S.W.

**Ann McConville**—REAL Services, Inc.  
Instructor: Brandyn Long, M.S.W.

**Chelsa Meek**—South Bend Community  
School Corporation  
Instructor: Mark Geissler, M.S.W.

**Perryn White**—Midwifery of Michiana  
Instructor: Vicki Warner, M.S.W.

**Katy Yoder**—Oaklawn Hospital  
Instructor: Dan Peck, M.S.W.

## Social Work Club President Update



This year has been an exciting one thus far for the Social Work Club. First of all, we have had an incredible turn out...more than thirty members! In September, we participated in both the Alzheimer's Walk and the CROP Walk (that definitely made for a busy weekend...). In October, we helped out at Holy Cross College's annual Halloween event--Ghosts & Goblins.

In November, we collected nonperishable food items to donate to Saint

Margaret's House and Chelsa Meek, our Community Liaison, collected money for Hope Rescue Mission's Thanksgiving drive.

Finally, in December, we adopted a little girl from SMC's Angel Tree--she wanted tennis shoes, so that is what we gave her! We had a great first semester, and we are looking forward to next semester. We have many things in mind, including a team to market social work to the SMC student body!

*-Jennifer Chmielewski, President*

## Social Work Faculty News

### Publications:

Kominkiewicz, F. & Kennedy, M. (2005). "Increasing understanding of mental health issues affecting college women: How can we foster student to student support?" Proceeding Abstracts of the Fourth Pan-Asia Pacific Conference on Mental Health, China Association of Mental Health: Shanghai, China. (Translated into Chinese by conference organizers)

Kominkiewicz, F. (2006). "Heideggerian existentialism and social work practice with death and survivor bereavement." Social Science Journal, 43 (1), 47-54.

Kominkiewicz, F. & Kennedy, M. (2006). "The role of social work in lives of college students." Conference Proceedings of the 2006 Council on Social Work Education Annual Program Meeting. Council on Social Work Education: Alexandria, VA.

### Scholarly Presentations/Papers:

#### (Kominkiewicz, F.)

"Integrating Research into the BSW Curriculum." Invited - Board Sponsored Research Session. Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors Annual Meeting. Los Angeles, CA. October 27, 2006.

"Freeing Children to Tell Their Stories: The Utilization of Person-Centered and Experiential Psychotherapy in Child Welfare Investigations." 7<sup>th</sup> World Conference for Client-Centered and Experiential Psychotherapy and Counseling. Potsdam, Germany. July 12-16, 2006.

"Strengthening Diversity through Strengthening the Diversity Curriculum at a Women's College." Midwest Biennial Social Work Education Conference. Ferris State University, Big Rapids, MI. March 9-10, 2006.

"The Role of Social Work in the Mental Health of College Students." Co-presented

with Megan E. Kennedy (SMC '06). Council on Social Work Education Annual Program Meeting. Chicago, IL. February 18, 2006.

Co-presented with Megan E. Kennedy SMC '06, "Increasing Understanding of Mental Health Issues Affecting College Women: How Can We Foster Student to Student Support?" The Fourth Pan-Asia Pacific Conference on Mental Health. Shanghai, China. November 15, 2005. (Presentation translated into Chinese by conference organizers.)

"Building Student Child Welfare Advocacy Competencies Through the Community Forum and the HBSE Curriculum" and "The Impact of Child Protection Service Caseworker Education on Child Abuse Investigations." Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors Annual Meeting. Austin, TX. November 4th and November 6th, 2005.



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## We Would Like to Hear from You

The Department of Social Work wants to know what our alumnae are doing. Please send us information about your lives, careers, families, and education that you would like to share with other Social Work alumnae. Either visit the Alumnae page on the department’s website at [www.saintmarys.edu/~socwork/alumnae.html](http://www.saintmarys.edu/~socwork/alumnae.html) or send an email to [kominkie@saintmarys.edu](mailto:kominkie@saintmarys.edu). You can also write to Frances Kominkiewicz, Saint Mary’s College, 25 Madeleva Hall, Notre Dame, IN 46556. We will share your information in our next newsletter and online (unless you tell us otherwise). We look forward to learning and sharing what being a SMC Social Work program graduate has meant to you.

## Resource Center Fund

The Social Work Department Resource Center Fund was developed to strengthen funding for student learning. Funds have been used in areas of conference/seminar development and student community leadership development. We hope to purchase educational/training materials to enhance student learning. Please support the Social Work Department. As noted below, please include your name, address, email, and the amount. You may send your gift to the Department of Social Work, 109 Madeleva Hall, Notre Dame, IN 46556, or you may make a gift online with your credit card at <https://www.saintmarys.edu:8888/devoff/giving.html>. Checks should be make payable to Saint Mary’s College. **On the memo line of your check or in the online gift designation comment field, please indicate the designation: Social Work Resource Center Fund.**

## Please Support the Department of Social Work Resource Center Fund.

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