



# Sociology Newsletter

Spring 2007



Irene Bayudan, Chelsea Gulling,  
Laura Frechette, and Maribeth Sarnecki

## SOCIOLOGY PRESENTATIONS AT NCSA MEETING

Sociology faculty and 10 students participated in this year's North Central Sociological Association (NCSA) meeting in Chicago, April 4-7. The participation of the students was made possible through a travel grant provided by the SMC Center for Women's InterCultural Leadership (CWIL). Six of the Sociology seniors presented the research from their senior comprehensive research projects

including: Laura Frechette, Chelsea Gulling, Alice Holohan, Anna Konger, Maribeth Sarnecki, and Amanda Shropshire. In addition, three students presented on arrest data collected as part of CWIL fellow Carrie Erlin's research team. We also caught up with Sam (Sarah) Medina (SMC 06) who is currently at the University of Connecticut in the Master's of Sociology Program.

The Sociology Department's newest faculty, Leslie Wang, gave a keynote address as the recipient of the NCSA's 2006 Outstanding Contribution to Teaching Award. Sociology faculty Mary Ann Kanieski presented on her newest research project, "Parenting 'Class': Childrearing and Class Advantage." Sociology department chair, Susan Alexander, presented on a new research project titled "Framing 'Deserving Victims': Social Constructs of Displaced Hurricane Katrina Survivors."



Amanda Shropshire, Sarah Medina  
and Carrie Erlin



## SOCIOLOGY MAJOR WINS NCSA PAPER COMPETITION

For the second year in a row, a Saint Mary's College Sociology major has won the North Central Sociological Association's annual student paper competition. Alice Holohan won first place in this national competition for her paper titled "The Catholic Cross-Over: A Case Study of St. Thomas More Parish, 1950-2000." The paper is a content analysis of Chicago's St. Thomas More parish bulletins from 1958 to 2000. Alice discusses how the Catholic Church dealt with racial and class issues following World War II and particularly the liberal ideas generated from the Civil Rights Movement and Vatican II. She assessed whether the Church encouraged the Catholic white flight to the suburbs or whether it embraced its new African-American parishioners and remained a Wrightwood community anchor.

To read Alice's paper, go to: <http://www.saintmarys.edu/~socio/Senior%20Seminar%20F07/Alice%27s%20paper.doc>

## Alumna Highlight: by Colleen Walsh (SMC 91)



I was a Sociology/ Anthropology major and graduated with the class of 1991. After college I did a variety of things such as traveling to Washington D.C. after graduation and working on Capital Hill in an internship for my Congressman Bob Clement from Nashville, TN. I

stayed there for about three months before returning home to Nashville. In 1992, when it was time for the Congressman's re-election campaign, I was asked to be his assistant Campaign Manager; I helped to run a winning campaign.

After that I moved to Atlanta, GA, and worked for Turner Broadcasting and then Accenture. I happened to have two roommates who were models at the time. I had always loved photography, and they convinced me to photograph them. It was then I realized my "purpose" in life was to be a photographer. I have grown my photography business over the last 10 years and have been able to travel nationally and internationally on photography assignments. I have had the opportunity to photograph many celebrities and interesting people such as actors like Dakota Fanning, music celebrities such as Lenny Kravitz, Rob Thomas, and Phil Collins, or auto racing legends like Mario Andretti and Evel Knievel.

My work also appears on billboards around the Tampa, FL, area and can be seen on magazine covers such as the Parent Guide. I am convinced that

my sociology / anthropology background is the key to what makes me a successful photographer. My love of people and genuine desire to understand what makes them tick, and how they think and live, is

what helps me to capture decisive moments with my subjects. My background in Sociology gave me the talent to allow others to trust me in a short amount of time so that they can open up for that split second, and allow me to capture the true essence of their personalities.

In addition, I feel my Saint Mary's experience impressed upon me the value of charitable works. When you are blessed with an incredible talent that has the power to effect lives, it is important to give back to others in order to fully reap the benefits of that talent. I have donated my time and talent to various organizations. A few include using my photography to help foster children find loving families through the Heart Gallery Project. I donated profits from my Photography Fine Art exhibit in April, 2006 and was able to donate over \$1000 to the Florida Gulf Coast Affiliation of the Susan G. Komen Foundation and the Helen P. Glimpse Charitable Foundation.

Some of my work can be viewed at my website at [www.colleenwalsh.com](http://www.colleenwalsh.com)

### WANTED ALUMNAE BUSINESS CARDS

We'd love to hear from you!!  
Email Sociology Department  
chair Susan Alexander @  
salexand@saintmarys.edu  
or send your business card!

## Congratulations Sociology Class of 2007

*Irene Bayudan  
Jessica Binhack  
Colleen Courtney  
Lauren Falvey  
Laura Frechette  
Grace Gordon  
Chelsea Gulling*



*Alice Holohan  
McKenna Keenan  
Anna Konger  
Carolyn Logan  
Maribeth Sarnecki  
Amanda Shropshire*

# CommUnity Fund Helps SMC Workers

By Chelsea Gulling (SMC 07)

Last spring I was racking my brain trying to think of a meaningful topic for my senior comprehensive research project. At the time, I was working as a photographer for *The Observer* and was avidly following Notre Dame student activist group CLAP's fight for a living wage for the university's hourly employees. President Jenkins' official response to the activists was that Notre Dame paid "fair and just wages" to their workers although they are paid far less than a "living wage" (around \$13 in South Bend). After hearing Jenkins' response, I began to wonder about the definition of "fair and just," as the statement seemed highly arbitrary.



Knowing that Saint Mary's also lacked a living wage policy for its workers, I wondered if SMC employees were able to make ends meet with their wages. I decided that this would be the topic for my project. In the fall of 2006, I conducted twelve in-depth interviews with SMC hourly employees. After recording the interviews and transcribing them into over 100 pages of conversation, I had a good insight into the experience of low-wage workers at SMC. What I discovered was that employees, some of whom have worked here for over 20 years, were not able to supply their families with necessary resources due to their low salaries. The worst case I discovered as a result of the interviews was of a single father who was not able to afford a down payment on an apartment; thus, he and his young daughter lived in a weekly rate hotel. This man's story along with the similar stories by his colleagues made me realize the irony and hypocrisy of such poverty existing at a prestigious Catholic institution that should be following papal doctrine by paying their workers a living wage.

After presenting my research, students and faculty in the Sociology Department were equally disturbed with my findings and wanted to support the hourly wage community in some way. Knowing that the administration could vote to raise the wages of hourly employees in the spring of 2007, the Sociology Club sold "Belle's" sweatpants to raise awareness of the living wage issue and raise money for the employees. I am proud to say that the result of the sales was according to plan. Upon hearing about the problem, many campus clubs were interested in helping with the sales and BOG asked me to give a brief presentation so that they could be allies for the upcoming Board of Trustees vote on the issue. In addition to awareness, the sales produced over \$900 that will be placed into a fund which employees can apply to receive monetary support beginning in the fall 2007. As students and alumnae of Saint Mary's, we have a responsibility and obligation to ensure *all* workers are being paid enough to live with the most basic forms of human dignity. I only hope that this project will help to achieve that goal.



Chelsea presenting her research at NCSA

To read my paper on this topic, please visit the following link of the Sociology Department website:

<http://www.saintmarys.edu/~socio/Senior%20Seminar%20F07/F07%20Senior%20Sem.htm>

**Continuation of the fund for the hourly wage workers will be entirely dependent upon donations. If you would like to donate to the "Comm(Unity) Fund," please contact Debby Kelly in Human Resources @ [dkwalsh@saintmarys.edu](mailto:dkwalsh@saintmarys.edu)**

## Sociology Department News

It was another busy year in the Sociology Department.

Among the highlights of the year, we were pleased to have sociology alumna Leslie Wilson (SMC 76) on campus in March for a talk about her work as the Director of Save the Children in Afghanistan. Leslie leads a team of more than 100 Afghani and Americans who work to protect the health and improve the education of Afghani women and children.

During Sociology Week in February, we were honored to have Dr. Charles Gallmeier, Indiana University Northwest, give a talk about his ethnographic research on a professional hockey team and his latest work on James Deans fans.



Carrie Erlin, Susan Alexander, Mary Ann Kanieski, and Leslie Wang in Chicago

As another academic year comes to a close, the Sociology faculty are looking ahead to a busy summer. Mary Ann is headed to England for a conference on the newly developing field of Parenting Studies. Leslie will be busy teaching two courses in the SMC summer school program. Susan is off to Louisiana to work with Habitat for Humanity for a third time in the on-going rebuilding post hurricane Katrina.

After two years as a CWIL fellow in the Sociology Department and the Justice Education Program, we say good-bye to Carrie Erlin (kind of!). Carrie is taking a position at Indiana University South Bend, but she will continue to teach for us part time.

**Hope everyone enjoys the summer!**

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