

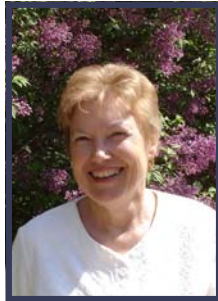
Social Work Department Spring Newsletter

Saint Mary's College
NOTRE DAME ◊ INDIANA
The Nation's Premier Catholic Women's College

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SPRING 2008

A Note from the Chair

Dr. JoAnn Burke



It has been a busy semester for the department. Our major week was held the third week of February and was filled with events to inform first and second year students about the profession of social work. During that week, Lisa Hardy, MSW came to classes and spoke at lunch with students about careers with the Veterans

Hospitals. The Veterans Administration has been recruiting social workers to work with vets returning from the Middle East, and this has generated much interest in our students.

In March, our spring luncheon was a very popular event. In fact, we filled the West Wing of the Dining Hall. Congressman Joe Donnelly, Rebecca Zaseck, and Sharon Mayer received honorary membership into Phi Alpha Social Work Honor Society. Hollye Harrington Jacobs '93, our keynote speaker for the day, received our Leadership Award. The Phi Alpha induction ceremony followed the keynote presenta-

tion. Next, our field instructors were acknowledged and thanked for the outstanding mentoring they offer to our students. As the day concluded, our seniors presented posters about their field placements and discussed their portfolios with the people attending the event. It was gratifying to look into the audience and see that four of our graduates were now our field instructors. Field Education is truly the heart of social work education, and we appreciate the role it plays in the education of our students.

As the spring semester comes to a close, we sadly bid farewell to Professor Sharon Mayer who has generously shared her talents in field education and teaching with us during the past two years. We wish her well as she retires north to Michigan.

As we look ahead to fall, we are preparing to welcome Leonard Sanchez, our new Field Practicum Coordinator. He comes to us from Arizona---we know the sunshine and warmth of the Arizona winter will be gone in South Bend, Indiana. But we hope to have a warm welcome for him this fall, and I'm sure he will learn to drive in snow very quickly!

2007-2008 Student Achievements



(Above) Jennifer McLean '08 was named the National Association of Social Workers Region 2 Student of the Year from the Saint Mary's College Social Work Program. Congratulations, Jen, on this wonderful

(Right) Lesley Weaver, '08, has been named valedictorian of the Saint Mary's College Class of '08. Lesley is completing her social work field practicum at the South Bend Office of Senator Evan Bayh. Special thanks to Julie Vuchovich, Director of the South Bend Office, for serving as her field instructor, to Dr. JoAnn Burke, who served as her field liaison, and to Professor Sharon Mayer for arranging the field placement.



The Social Work Program has a record number of Social Work majors who are presently studying abroad, and we are excited to hear of their experiences! Six Social Work majors are presently studying abroad! We are so proud of their successful completion of study abroad programs, and cannot wait until they share their experiences with us. These students, all from the class of 2010, are Natalie Bui, India; Kate Doornbos, South Africa; Amy Kendziorski, Ireland, Grace Lape, Spain; Mia Ravasio, Rome;



(Left) Erin Newsom, '09, was honored as a Student of the Week through the Athletic Department of Saint Mary's College. Erin received an award from President Carol Mooney on April 30, 2008, citing her achievement.



(Left) Lauren Kominkiewicz, '10, placed among the top three students in a poster presentation competition. Lauren received honors as well as a monetary award at the Annual Baccalaureate Program Directors Meeting in March for her presentation on Salvadoran Social Justice .

Congratulations to the Senior Social Work Students for completing a successful year in their Field Placements. It has been a busy year with sixteen students placed in agencies in the St. Joseph/Elkhart county area and beyond. The Department is especially grateful for the opportunity to have had practicum placements with Congressman Joe Donnelly's and Senator Evan Bayh's offices in South Bend. And this year we had several placements with Field Instructors who are Saint Mary's Alum. Whitney McMillan worked with Therese Ulrich, Andrea Moon with Amy Blue, Colette Zavala with Carrie Cravalho and Adriana Lopez with Nikki Gonzalez. The students have had interesting experiences and at times gone beyond what was expected of them in their settings. Two students completed block placements: Erin Mahoney in Care Management at SJRMC and Andrea Moon at Little Brothers, Friends of the Elderly in Chicago, Illinois. Kathleen Walton (Healthwin Specialized Health Care Facility) wrote a grant for her agency and was able to implement the purchase of wall televisions for

the residents. Jenn McLean helped her field instructor (Memorial Prenatal Clinic) develop a grant program to work with Mothers with babies at risk for fetal alcohol syndrome. Connie Adams during her internship with the Domestic Violence program at the YWCA developed a presentation on Date/Relationship Abuse and presented it on Campus at Saint Mary's. Jenn McLean developed and coordinated a field immersion to El Salvador over the Fall break and this was attended by several sophomore, junior and senior students. Seniors attending included Jennifer, Colette Zavala, Kimberly Hodges, and Adriana Lopez. Several seniors were very involved in projects on Campus through CWIL, the Governance Board, and the Student Diversity Club. These seniors included Kimberly Hodges, Kelly Higgins, Adriana Lopez. Adriana Lopez helped coordinate the "Bridging the Gap" Seminar on campus and received help from the senior students including Katie Cosimano,

Kathleen Orr, Molly LaBarge, Colette Zavala and Liz Rectenwal. Adriana Lopez, Kelly Higgins, Abby Hinchey and Kimberly Hodges were facilitators for break out groups for this project. Kimberly Hodges also served as President of the Student Body. Kelly Higgins and Connie Adams received Honors for their work with Justice Education. And through her academic efforts, Leslie Weaver is the Valedictorian for the Senior Class of 2008 for Saint Mary's College.

As Field Coordinator it has been a real honor and a pleasure to work with this group of seniors. They have demonstrated great development in their Social Work skills and Professional maturity. I am proud of their professional and academic accomplishments and wish them the best for their future beyond Saint Mary's College.



Notes from Alumnae

Theresa Coye Nihill ('84): When I graduated from Saint Mary's I went to Tulane University in New Orleans, LA to get my MSW. After completing my MSW I returned to the Chicago area and began working in Children's Mental Health for Metropolitan Family Services. I was recently promoted to the Executive Director for Metropolitan Family Services DuPage. I credit Saint Mary's and the SMC Social Work dept. with helping me to find myself as a person, to develop a passion for helping others and for building my self-confidence.

Jenny Chmielewski ('07): I finished my masters program at the end of April and I received a job offer from Central Indiana Council on Aging. I took the job, and I'll be advocating for older adults and individuals with disabilities in Indiana. My job is to make sure that they are receiving the services guaranteed to them by the federal government.

Tenille Washburn, ('98) lives with her husband Brad and two children (Colin 2 ½ and Avery 5 months) in Falls Church, VA outside of Washington, DC. Since completing law school at Washington University in St. Louis in 2001, she has worked at the Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of General Counsel, Fair Housing Enforcement Division. She practices civil rights law and helps enforce the Fair Housing Act, which prohibits housing discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, familial status, and disability.

Shannon (Maloney) Giovingo ('04): I recently passed my social work license exam in November, and accepted a job as a full-time hospice social worker for a company in Chicago called Heartland Healthcare & Hospice. I will be visiting patients in their homes in the city of Chicago and some surrounding suburbs. I will also help with discharge planning at Rush Memorial Hospital. My primary responsibilities are to perform psycho-social assessments, provide community referrals, and help support caregivers and families.

Student Reflection

On Tuesday, March 18th, Carrie Cravalhom MSW, and I attended the 5th Annual Social Work Spring Luncheon. I was extremely impressed Fox News was there to capture part of this event on film. During the Phi Alpha Honoree Presentation, I was pleased that Professor Mayer received an honorary award. While she's only been with the Department for two years, Professor Mayer has definitely left her mark of genuine spirit on her students and the Social Work faculty. I found the guest speaker, Hollye Harrington, to be a very inspirational speaker and enjoyed how she glorified the role of the professional social worker. Later in the luncheon, when the field instructors were being recognized, I realized it is only a matter of weeks before all of the social work majors graduate and go their separate ways. While I have loved every minute of my internship at Oaklawn Hospital, a large part of me knows that it will soon be time to move on with my life. When presenting my senior comprehensive portfolio to Carrie, I was proud that I had achieved so much in only four years. Carrie informed me that I must be a more serious student than she was because my portfolio was much thicker than her own. While I would have liked my parents to be in attendance for this luncheon, it meant a lot to me that Carrie was there to recognize my hard work and achievements.

~ Collette Zavala, '08

Class of 2008 Awards

Academic Award– Lesley Weaver

Josephine Murphy Kuhl Research Award in Social Work–

Kathleen Walton

Leadership Award– Collette Zavala

Kristi A. Morris Award– Kelly Higgins

A Note from the Director

Dr. Fran Kominkiewicz

Dear Friends,

I am sending best wishes to you as we enter this beautiful season of the year.

We are so proud of our graduating seniors and wish them the very best as they continue to make a difference in this world. Seniors have completed their Senior Comprehensive Portfolios and we have plans to revise the Senior Comprehensive requirements. We plan to move the portfolio into an e-portfolio format, and enhance the research requirement for the portfolio, encouraging students to increase their competencies in technology and in community-based research. Each student will conduct research in their field practicum setting over the course of the academic year, allowing students another opportunity to give back to the community as well as enhance their research competencies.

I had the opportunity this year to conduct a multi-state research project with two excellent Social Work colleagues from the University of Wisconsin-Superior, Elizabeth Blue and Jay Wolterstorff. The research is far-reaching and has implications for all undergraduate social work programs. We focused upon the undergraduate research curricula and the specific requirements of that curricula, including number of credit hours in research and statistics required and the if students are taught to be “consumers” or “producers” or research. We presented our research as a Baccalaureate Program Board Sponsored Research session in March at the Baccalaureate Program Directors Annual Meeting in Destin, Florida, and the research was well received by our colleagues. We also have plans to extend this research nationally.

I look forward to hearing from you. Have a wonderful summer! We will all be very busy working on our national accreditation self-study! Please feel free to send me any updates, and we will make certain that this information is presented in the newsletter.



Community Forum Deemed a Success!

Students in the Human Behavior and the Social Environment II class, taught by Dr. Frances Kominkiewicz, organized the Community Forum titled, “Healthcare, Immigration, and the Economy: How the Issues of ‘08 Affect You”. Approximately seventy community members, community leaders, and students participated in the Community Forum held on April 8, 2008, at the Charles Martin Youth Center. The goals of the Forum include not only educating the community on these important issues, but also facilitating dialogue in improving these issues. Feedback was extremely positive from the participants. The community members and community leaders commented that the students began a dialogue with them that they would like to continue. This is the seventh



year that the Forum was held, and each year students choose the issues to be addressed after research and experience in the community. They also plan, organize, implement, participate in, and gain funding for the Forum. We would like to expand the Forum in the future, and have received a generous donation to help assist in this continuing project. The panel members were Dr. JoAnn Burke, Hodge Patel, Office of Congressman Joe Donnelly, South Bend, Indiana, Reverend Christopher Cox, C.S.C., Pastor of St. Casimir’s Parish and St. Adalbert’s Parish in South Bend, Indiana, and Jamie Reinbold, M.S.W., Memorial Hospital, South Bend, Indiana. Special thanks to Nikki Gonzales, SMC Alumnae, Office of Congressman Joe Donnelly, for assisting us with the Forum.



Future Plans for the 2008 Graduating Class

Connie Adams

Washington University with advanced standing

Katie Cosimano

Boston College with advanced standing

Kelly Higgins

Washington University in St. Louis with advanced standing

Abby Hinchy

Teach for America, Indianapolis, IN

Kim Hodges

Undecided- Washington University and University of Michigan with advanced standing, Teach for America

Molly LaBarge

Catholic University in Washington DC with advanced standing

Adriana Lopez

1 year of service in Puerto Rico working with community leaders on economic stability

Erin Mahoney

Western Michigan College with advanced standing

Jenn McLean

University of Pennsylvania with advanced standing

Whitney McMillin

Western Michigan University with advanced standing

Andrea Moon

University of Illinois at Chicago in the Jane Addams College of Social Work with advanced standing

Kathleen Orr

Youth treatment specialist at Family and Children’s Center

Elizabeth Rectenwal

Undecided, working in South Bend

Kathleen Walton

University of Pennsylvania’s School of Social Policy and Practice with Advance Standing

Lesley Weaver

University of Minnesota-Twin Cities on a full graduate research assistanceship.

Colette Zavala

University of Texas School of Social Work with Advanced Standing



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Congratulations Class of 2008!

From left: Connie Adams, Kim Hodges, Abigail Hinchy, Jennifer McLean, Adriana Lopez, Molly LaBarge, Katie Cosimano, Kelly Higgins, Elizabeth Rectenwal, Collette Zavala, Kathleen Walton, Whitney McMillan, Andrea Moon, Kathleen Orr, Lesley Weaver

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