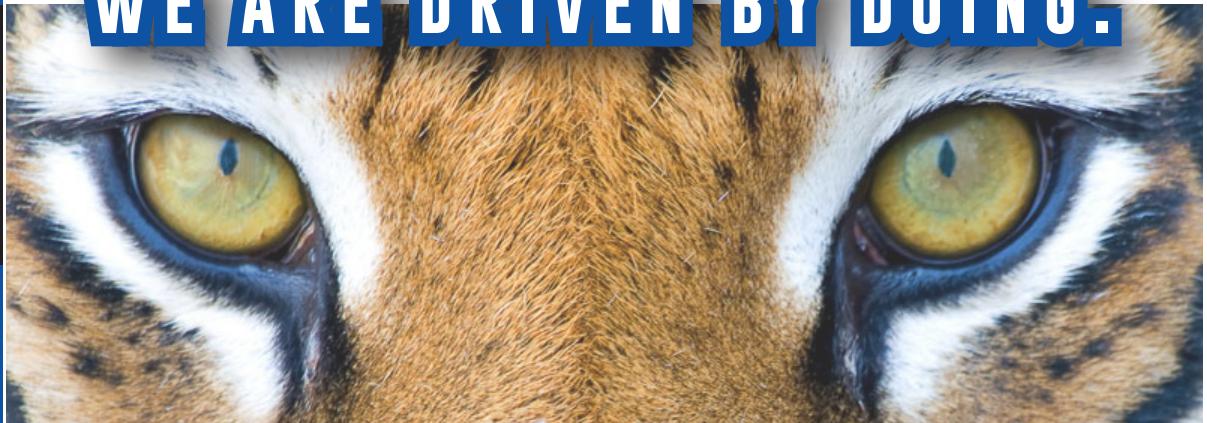


Volume 1, Issue 1
Fall 2015

**AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS,
WE ARE DRIVEN BY DOING.**



**THE MID-SOUTH
PROVOCATEUR**



Department of Social Work

WELCOME

Dear Friends:

It's hard to believe I am starting my fourth year as Chair of the University Of Memphis Department of Social Work. And what a great three years it has been so far!

Our Department is ensconced in the School of Urban Affairs and Public Policy, where we work with the Departments of Criminology and Criminal Justice, City and Regional Planning, and Public and Nonprofit Administration. The School itself is part of the College of Arts and Sciences, the largest College at the University.

Since 2011, we have gone from a brand new M.S.W. program with almost forty enrolled students to one that currently has about 125 students as of this Fall. We are the fastest growing Master's program at the University. Our B.A.S.W. program has been in existence since 1968, and has more than 300 students enrolled in it.

Our M.S.W. program was fully accredited by CSWE in 2014. We have already graduated 85 M.S.W.s, and many of them are working in the Greater Memphis area. Our current faculty is comprised of 13 members, including myself. Since 2011, our very productive faculty has published over 40 books, chapters, and peer-reviewed articles; brought in over \$3 million in grants; and participated in dozens of juried presentations all over the U.S. and the world. Moreover, our field students have put in more than 200,000 volunteer hours in their placements from 2012-2015.

Faculty at the Department have given dozens of interviews in newspapers, on radio stations and T.V. locally, nationally, and even internationally. We have started the Mid-South Family and Community Empowerment Institute. Truly, we are becoming one of the premier social work departments in the Mid-South.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, our faculty (and students) are doing community-engaged scholarship, which is making a real difference in the city of Memphis and beyond. As the University's vision states: "The University of Memphis will be recognized as one of America's great metropolitan research universities, noted for its comprehensive, innovative academic programs and for capitalizing on its urban setting and region to address the challenges of our global society."

Steven Soifer, Ph.D., LCSW-C
Chair & Professor





The Mid-south Social Work Professional Development Initiative (MSW-PDI), a three year 1.4 million dollar grant funded by HRSA, prepares advanced year social work graduate students for practice with transition-age youth facing behavioral health issues. The Principal Investigator, Dr. Susan Neely-Barnes, and two co-PIs, Dr Eslwick and Delavega, identified six focus areas of training for students: cultural and linguistic competence, violence prevention, engaging families, integration with primary care, transition-age youth, and interprofessional practice. Students attend an experiential didactic session on each focus area, and complete readings and practice assignments to augment comprehension.

MSW-PDI utilizes community partners and area professionals to provide the trainings, as well as leverages grant monies to bring national trainers to address focus areas for students and the professional community. Field placements are made for students based on the agency's ability to provide practice opportunities with youth and families. The project coordinator is

able to provide field supervision for agencies that do not have a qualified social worker on staff. This has allowed the school to develop new field placement opportunities, particularly in clinical and medical settings.



A total of six cohorts will complete MSW-PDI in the three year period, for an anticipated total of approximately 94 trainees. The first cohort of 18 MSW-PDI prepared students completed their training in April 2015, and have since graduated from the MSW program. Outcomes from the initial group indicate significant increases in competence in all six focus areas. The second cohort has been filled and will begin in July 2015.

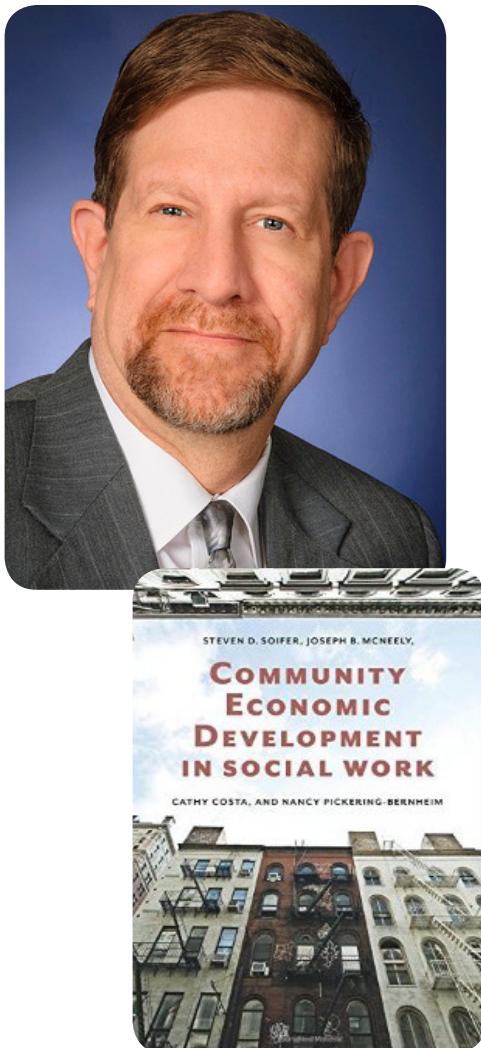
Students receive a \$10,000 stipend for participation in the six month training program. This substantial award allows students to address financial burdens that may otherwise hinder their success in the graduate program. One recent graduate shared the following:

“I am a single parent and have guardianship of my 14 year-old sister. Prior to the MSW-PDI program I worked a full-time job, in addition to my internship. This stipend has given me the opportunity to finish my graduate studies worry-free about financial burdens. I am able to cover living expenses and have gas to travel to school and training sessions. I now have the financial stability necessary to be successful and focused this semester. **”**



MSW-PDI

FACULTY BOOKS

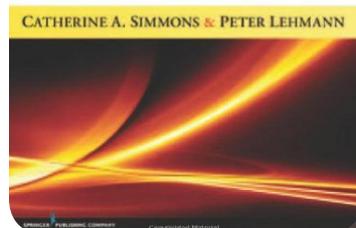


Dr. Steven Soifer

Chair of the Department of Social Work, recently published a book: "Community Economic Development in Social Work," (2014) by Columbia University Press. Community economic development (CED) is an increasingly essential factor in the revitalization of low- to moderate-income communities. This cutting-edge text explores the intersection of CED and social work practice, which both focus on the well-being of indigent communities and the empowerment of individuals and the communities in which they live.

Dr. Catherine Simmons has just published a co-authored book entitled "Tools for Strengths-Based Assessment and Evaluation" (2012) by Springer. The book explains why and how to incorporate a person's strengths into assessment and evaluation. Evidence for the effectiveness of including strengths is presented along with an examination of validity, reliability, and other factors to consider when selecting among assessment tools. The more than 140 practical scales and instruments included in this book are consistently formatted, organized according to construct measured, and include tools for working with adults, couples, families, children, and special populations.

Tools for Strengths-Based Assessment and Evaluation



FACULTY PEER REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS/CHAPTERS



Dr. Robin Lennon- Dearing

Delavega, E., & Lennon-Dearing, R. (2015). Differences in housing, health, and wellbeing among HIV positive women living in poverty. *Social Work in Public Health*, 30(3). Lennon-Dearing, R., & Neely-Barnes, S. (2013). Quantitative Research. In H. R. Hall & L. A. Roussel (Eds.), "Evidence-based practice: An integrative approach to research, administration, and practice." Sudbury, MA: Jones and Bartlett.



Dr. Susan Neely- Barnes

Lennon-Dearing, R., & Neely-Barnes, S. (2013). Quantitative Research. In L. Roussel, T. Taylor-Overholts, & H. R. Hall, "Evidence-based practice: An integrative approach to research, administration, and practice." Sudbury, MA: Jones and Bartlett.

The decision to write this book came about because Dr. Neely-Barnes and Dr. Lennon-Dearing wanted to develop a resource for students, as well as other mental and health professionals that was easy to understand and versatile in its many uses within the classroom and the field alike.

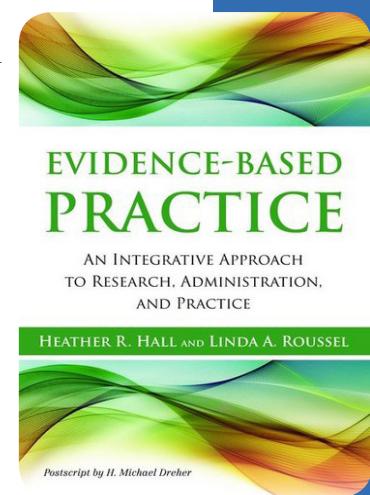
Dr. Neely-Barnes joined with Dr. Lennon-Dearing to write the first chapter of this book. Chapter 1 pulls past research from Social Work classes and focuses on the critical appraisal of research. It helps students and professionals compare different kinds of research and compare levels of validity of each study.



Neely-Barnes, S. L., Krcek, T., Zanskas, S., & Delavega, E. (2014). Parenting with a disability and child mental health: A propensity score analysis. *Journal of Social Work in Disability & Rehabilitation*, 13, 226-246. DOI:10.1080/1536710X.2014.912185

Dr. Susan Elswick

Elswick, S. (2014). Merging the Nonviolent Crisis Intervention Model and the Functional Behavior Assessment Processes. *Journal of Safe Management*.



FACULTY PEER REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS/CHAPTERS

Dr. Lamont Simmons

Simmons, L.D. (2015).

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Simmons, L.D. (2013).

Navigating the path toward graduation: A qualitative case study of African American male persistence at a predominantly white institution (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from Proquest. (3586741)

Dr. Elena Delavega

Delavega, E., & Lennon-Dearing, R. (2015). Differences in housing, health, and wellbeing among HIV positive women living in poverty. *Social Work in Public Health*. DOI: 10.1080/19371918.2014.1001934



Delavega, E., & Soifer, S. D. (2015). Policy brief 1: Human services, case management, financial counseling. Multi-disciplinary Analysis and Recommendations for the Blueprint for Prosperity. The University of Memphis.

Cheung, M., & Delavega, E. (2014).

Five-way experiential learning model for social work education. *Social Work Education*, 33(8), 1070-1087. DOI:10.1080/02615479.2014.925538

Dr. Steven Soifer

Soifer, S. D. (2013). Paruresis or Shy Bladder Syndrome: A Weekend Workshop. In J. Clements & L. Grobman (Eds.) "Groupwork : New Days in the Lives of Social Workers." Harrisburg, PA : White Hat Communications. 113-116.



Dr. Gregory Washington

Watson, J., Washington, G. & Walker, S. (2009). "Mississippi in Action: Jackson, MS." Jackson State University Press.



Delavega, E., & Cheung, M. (2014). Poverty reduction through education: An analytical framework for cash transfers for education (Ch. 18). In S. Haymes, M. V. de Haymes, & R. Miller (Eds.). Routledge "Handbook on Poverty and the United States." Oxford, UK: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group.

Neely-Barnes, S. L., Zanskas, S., Delavega, M. E., & Krcek, T. (2014). Parenting with a disability and child mental health: A propensity score analysis. *Journal of Social Work in Disability & Rehabilitation*. DOI: 10.1080/1536710X.2014.912185

Delavega, E. (2015, September 9). Why HAAMI matters. The Benjamin L. Hooks Institute for Social Change. Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/University-of-Memphis-Department-of-SocialWork-468991716484983/timeline/>

Delavega, E. (2014). Memphis child poverty: A brutal contrast [Fact Sheet]. Retrieved from <http://www.memphis.edu/socialwork/docs/2014memphischildpoverty.pdf>

Delavega, E. (2014). Public transportation and earnings in Memphis [Fact Sheet]. Retrieved from <http://www.memphis.edu/socialwork/docs/2014memphistransportation.pdf>

Delavega, E. (2014). 2014 Memphis poverty [Fact Sheet]. University of Memphis' Department of Social Work. Retrieved from <http://www.memphis.edu/socialwork/2014povertyfactsheet.pdf>

Delavega, E. (2014). 2014 Memphis unemployment [Fact Sheet]. University of Memphis' Department of Social Work. Retrieved from <http://www.memphis.edu/socialwork/2014memphisunemployment.pdf>

Delavega, E. (2014, October). Pouring water on the wicked poverty of the MidSouth: Educating a quality workforce (pp 13-17). In A call for collective action: Tackling social challenges in Memphis. The Benjamin L. Hooks Institute for Social Change, University of Memphis. Memphis, TN: Author.

FACULTY SPOTLIGHTS

Professors Receive Tennessee
Board of Regents Research Grant



Congratulations to Gregory Washington, Susan Neely-Barnes, Susan Elswick, and Robin Lennon- Dearing who received a \$40,000 Tennessee Board of Regents Office of Academic Affairs Faculty Research Grant for “The Students Helping Students Program: ‘Response to Intervention’ in Higher Education.” Response to Intervention (RtI) is an evidence based practice model in K12 education that is used to identify at risk students and give them additional educational supports to promote success.



Although well established in K12 education, research on its use in higher education is lacking. The project will use MSW students serving as graduate assistants to screen undergraduate BA in social work students on writing skills, study skills, reading fluency, stress management, and coping skills. Undergraduates who are identified as at risk will be offered either one-on-one or group intervention targeted to the identified skill area. Students will also be encouraged to use existing campus resources when appropriate. Reassessment will occur monthly and students will stay in the program until supports are no longer needed.



FACULTY SPOTLIGHTS

Dr. Catherine A. Simmons



Catherine A. Simmons has been appointed to serve a three year-term on the highly prestigious Council on the Role and Status of Women in Social Work Education, which is part of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). Referred to as “the Women’s Council,” this national organization works to a.) Eliminate all procedures within academia that hinder the full participation of women, b.) Makes recommendations to the CSWE Board on all matters of policy, and c.) Initiates and coordinates programs and activities related to women in social work education. The Women’s Council is also responsible for the development of educational resources relevant to women’s issues within social work education. Appointment to the CSWE Women’s Council is highly competitive and a great honor within the Social Work community.

Dr. Gregory Washington

Congratulations to our own Dr. Gregory Washington for joining the faculty “millionaires” club. He has served as the PI on more than \$1 million in externally supported research during his time here at the University of Memphis.



Dr. Gary Schneider

Gary Schneider has received the 2014 Dean’s Office Award for Advising Excellence. Dr. Susan Neely-Barnes commented on the recipient, saying, “I can attest to the number of hours that he has put into advising and his commitment to student success.

FACULTY SPOTLIGHTS



Dr. Susan Neely– Barnes

Congratulations to Dr. Neely-Barnes, MSW Program Director, who has been awarded a Provost's Fellowship. The Provost's Fellowship is a 100% time commitment for the Fall 2014 semester in the Provost Office.



Dr. Susan Elswick

Congratulations for Dr. Elswick, Director of MSW Field Placement, on having an article accepted for publication! Dr. Elswick's article entitled Merging the Nonviolent Crisis Intervention Model and the Functional Behavior Assessment Process has been accepted for publication in the Fall 2014 issue of Journal of Safe Management.



Dr. Elena Delavega

Receives Honorable Mention PhD Distinguished Alumni Award
Due to her outstanding contributions to the profession of social work, Dr. Elena Delavega, Assistant Professor, was nominated by her PhD alumni colleagues and PhD faculty from the University of Houston to receive the University of Houston's Distinguished Alumni Award. This nomination resulted in her Honorable Mention award, an honor given by the Graduate College of Social Work Alumni Board of Directors in recognition of the 20th anniversary of the PhD program at the University of Houston. Dr. Delavega will be recognized for this honor at a luncheon to be held on April 26, 2014 at University of Houston in Houston, Texas.

FACULTY & COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHTS



Dr. Robin Lennon-Dearing, her social work students, and the Department of Social Work partner with Friends For Life, Hope House and CHOICES every year to offer women living with HIV a day of encouragement that is informative as well as fun. The goal of the Women's Empowerment Forum is to build connections and friendships among HIV positive women, as well as for women to learn how to take better care of themselves.

The Forum starts off with "Our Stories," a diverse panel of women living with HIV who each share stories of their personal experiences, triumphs, and success in overcoming life challenges since being diagnosed to foster the therapeutic factor of instillation of hope. Women go on to join small support group sessions facilitated by HIV social workers where they are able to share their own stories and there is the potential for women to make important healing connections with each other and create future relationships. The event offers pampering sessions featuring mini-makeovers by MAC cosmeticians and brief neck and shoulder massage therapy. This type of programming is an essential component of the holistic care as it addresses the importance of taking care of mind, body, and spirit required by women living with HIV (Tufts, Wessell & Kearney, 2010).

Reactions from social work students who have volunteered at the Women's Empowerment Forum demonstrate that they are moved by observing the emotions expressed by the women in attendance. They witness the women's excitement as they enjoy the different sessions offered, and as the women make connections with each other and with agency personnel regarding community resources. Volunteers report altruistic pleasure through "seeing the joy we brought to the participants of the Women's Empowerment Forum. They all left with such a wonderful smile on their face. It was rewarding to know that all of our hard work paid off and we put on something so meaningful to these ladies." Expressions of gratitude to the volunteers by the women throughout the day are also mentioned by volunteers as making the experience significant.



An email from Patty Belle, BASW '15, about her experience volunteering at the Women's Empowerment Forum sums up the feeling expressed by many volunteers; "I want to thank you so much for allowing me to take part in the Women's Empowerment Forum. I volunteered to be a help and a blessing to others, but this experience blessed me. This experience touched my heart and allowed me another opportunity to realize that social work is my calling."

Social workers show that they care by their actions. The volunteers involved in the Annual Women's Empowerment Forums clearly demonstrate the social work ethical principles of service to others, the dignity and worth of the person, and social justice.

Reference

- Tufts, K. A., Wessell, J. & Kearney, T. (2010). Self-care behaviors of African American women living with HIV: A qualitative perspective. *Journal of the Association of Nurses in AIDS Care*, 21(1), 36-52.

FACULTY & STUDENT SPOTLIGHTS

An innovative teaching approach developed by Dr. Robin Lennon-Dearing to engage undergraduate social work majors (BASW's) in developing group facilitation skills is a "hands on" service-learning experience leading social skills groups with middle school children. Prior to entering their field internship BASW students complete SWRK 3904 Practice II where, as part of the curriculum, they get to have direct practice experience through volunteering with children in a school setting.

Each student learns and practices the skills of group facilitation by being assigned, with a partner, to co-facilitate a four-week social skills education group in a Memphis City Middle School. This group activity provides ample opportunity for students to demonstrate core competencies of engagement, assessment, intervention and evaluation.

Although students may be daunted by this assignment initially, as they realize that they will be able to apply the skills that they are learning in the classroom in a real life group, their fearfulness grows into excitement. Capitalizing on students' eagerness to work with the middle school children makes it easier to engage them in learning about group developmental theory, group facilitation tasks and skills, ethics of group work, and the social development needs of preadolescents such as the ones they will be working with. Students' active engagement in learning increases their understanding and interest in course content (Thaman, Dhillon, Saggar, Gupta, & Kaur, 2013). Service-learning enhances the academic experience because the service is directly linked to the didactic material (Deeley, 2010). Feedback from course evaluations confirm how much BSW students appreciate the experiential learning outside the classroom in a real group; they "loved having the opportunity to experience the group sessions at the middle school" and the "assignment allowed us to gain real experience."

The end-of-session group evaluations regularly reveal that the children most enjoy the opportunity to share their thoughts and feelings with the BASW students. Evaluations have also found that the children wish that they had more group sessions. The children's feedback is discussed in the weekly verbal debriefing so the whole class can benefit. Informally, reports from the middle school counselors have noted that the "groups are going great," the "children don't want the groups to end" and "they have changed their attitudes."

One hundred and nineteen groups of children have participated in social skills groups over the past four years facilitated by 237 BASW students. A forthcoming article, "A teaching model for group work through service learning," detailing Dr. Lennon-Dearing's experience with the use of service learning as a teaching method in social work will be published in the Journal of Teaching in Social Work later this year.

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- Deeley, S. J. (2010). Service-learning: Thinking outside the box. *Active Learning in Higher Education*, 11(1), 43-53.
Thaman, R. G., Dhillon, S. K., Saggar, S., Gupta, M. P., & Kaur, H. (2013). Promoting active learning in respiratory physiology - positive student perception and improved outcomes. *National Journal of Physiology, Pharmacy and Pharmacology*, 3(1), 27-34.





The Department of Social Work and the Mid-South Family & Community Empowerment Institute at the University of Memphis are on the forefront of positive change in today's economy. When it comes to the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and poverty, Dr. Elena Delavega and her students definitely give back to the community. The MSW students from The University of Memphis are now joining accounting, business, and law majors in working with the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program. Ours is the only social work program in the South that is participating in VITA. Through the Mid-South Institute for Family and Community Empowerment, Dr. Delavega has been collaborating with the United Way of the Mid-South and (later) Impact Tennessee's Save First for about three years. During tax season, MSW students become certified VITA volunteers and assist low-income people file their taxes and claim the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). This is an important social work intervention because the EITC can significantly reduce poverty. As of this writing, more than 120 MSW students from the University of Memphis have participated in this program, and in Spring 2015, 48 MSW students were certified and worked with the United Way and Save First.

The EITC is a refundable tax credit for American citizens or permanent residents if they have earned any income in a fiscal year, notwithstanding receiving other assistance. The EITC can help working families tremendously. Eligible citizens can receive an average of \$2,700 by claiming the EITC on their federal tax return, but taxpayers with earnings less than \$53,267 could be eligible for as much as \$6,242 through the EITC.

Dr. Delavega's research has shown that many eligible taxpayers in Memphis and Shelby County have not been utilizing the EITC. As of now, about \$70 million in potential tax refunds was left unclaimed by low-income taxpayers. This may be in part the result of the difficulty of filing for the EITC, which is not automatic when filing a tax return but must be claimed on an EITC form. Dr. Delavega's research and involvement have caught the attention of the media and of leaders such as Memphis Mayor A. C. Wharton, Shelby County Trustee David Lenoir, and Congressman Steve Cohen. Dr. Delavega and her students have been invited to participate in National EITC Awareness Day in 2014 and 2015 (pictured).

The economic benefits of helping more eligible people claim their EITC refund are very clear, but there are a host of other benefits for both our low-income clients and for our MSW students. Social workers can help make a difference in family's financial situation by educating our clients and working families access free volunteer tax services, but equally importantly, the rapport built while assisting people with their taxes leads clients to disclose a lot of things that they would not otherwise disclose. Social workers thus have a very important opportunity to intervene and refer clients to many other benefits and services. For MSW students, the benefits are knowledge about the economy for their clients and their own lives and finances. Better yet, Dr. Delavega has found that tax training is an excellent way to teach transferrable critical-thinking and out-of-the-box thinking skills to social work students.

To learn more:

<http://www.memphis.edu/socialwork/institute/index.php>

http://www.memphis.edu/socialwork/research/poverty_fact_sheets.php

FACULTY & STUDENT SPOTLIGHTS

STAFF & STUDENT SPOTLIGHTS

Kim Brown

Our own Kim Brown, Administrative Assistant for the Department of Social Work at The University of Memphis, has won the “Outstanding Employee of the Year Award” from the College of Arts and Sciences.

Council on Social Work Education Annual Program Meeting

Many students and faculty members from the Social Work Department at the University of Memphis will be traveling to Denver, Colorado for the Annual Program Meeting of the Council on Social Work Education this October. These include: MSW students Artice Carter and Mallory Williams, with the support of social work faculty members Robin Lennon-Dearing and Susan Elswick, have been accepted. Their project, “Mentoring from the Masters: Students Helping Students,” was accepted to the Higher Education/Nonprofit Leadership Track.

Additionally, Williams and assistant faculty member Susan Elswick will present their project, “Reaching In to Reach Out: Therapy Box for Escape-Maintained Aggression.” Treshain Norfleet and Megan Broadstreet, together with Dr. Catherine Simmons, will present their project “Safety-Planning with IPV Survivors Who Don’t Trust Police or Other Helping Professionals.” Roslyn Brewer, together with Dr. Susan Neely-Barnes, will present her project: “Teaching social work students how to engage as advocates in special education.”

Emily Hice and Wendi Albert will present their project, “Full Speed Ahead: The Track for Leadership Roles of School Social Workers.” Professors Lamont Simmons, Kenya Anderson, and Susan Neely-Barnes, and MSW student Stephanie Lovins will present their project: “Strategies for Promoting Academic Success among First-Generation Social Work Students” to the Baccalaureate Programs Track.



AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS, WE ARE DRIVEN BY DOING.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHTS

NO MORE Injustice!

Current full-time foundation year students recently took part in the NO MORE campaign, in participation with the counseling center at the University Memphis. These social work students demand no more injustice! Pictured are Sarah Newman, Lauren Reed, Gerald Richardson, Chelsea Heard, Darnetta Ware, Artice Carter, Jessica Sebeck, Catherine Clubb-Brown, Victoria Maher, DeAvila Bennett, Takindra Worles, and Thomas Graham.

Bria Gibson a senior in the BASW Program, is completing a semester-long internship in Nashville, TN with the Tennessee Legislative Internship Program. In the spring semester of each year, promising seniors or graduate students enrolled in degree programs in social work, political science, laws, history, administration, economics, sociology, journalism, or related fields are placed with Tennessee General Assembly legislators to gain hands-on experience in government. Bria's duties include bill and policy analysis, constituent work, and computer and library research.

Bria has been assigned to the following senators: Representative Steve McManus (Republican – Cordova/District 96) and Representative Antonio Parkinson (Democrat – Memphis/District 98). While completing her field practicum in Nashville, Bria plans to learn about developing and reforming federal policies, and advocating for oppressed groups.



2015 NASW-TN State Winners

The University of Memphis' Department of Social Work congratulates NASW-TNM's 2015 Social Work Award Winners Mildred Richard (Friends for Life); Representative Antonio Parkinson (TN District 9); Michael Valdes, LCSW; Roberta Renee Brown, LCSW, BCD, CFAE; Amber Crockett (BSW student); and our very own Megan Broadstreet who will be honored with the MSW Student of the Year award.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHTS

2015 Field Intern Awards

This year the Corri R. Thomas MSW Excellence in Field Award went to **Emily Hice** from Grizzlies Prep. The BA Student Excellence in Field Award this year went to **Deronique Hayes**.



Welcome New Phi Alpha Members

This year the Department of Social Work inducted 38 new members into the Phi Alpha Honor Society, both BSW and MSW members. Pictured are a majority of the members from the induction ceremony.



Social Work Day on the Hill

Social Work Day on the Hill was a great success! More than 60 students and faculty members of the Department of Social Work attended the event. This large group of professional and student social workers from Memphis gathered at the Tennessee General Assembly.

Lauren Reed and Artice Carter



Lauren Reed and Artice Carter [pictured at right], full-time MSW students in their foundation year, also presented at the HelpCare Homemaker Services Anniversary. Their Presentation, "Hoarding: Attacking the Issue, Not the Person" was a big hit! Good work, Lauren and Artice!

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Megan Broadstreet, a new MSW graduate, completed her advanced field placement this summer in Uganda. While in Uganda, Megan was able to fully experience social welfare services in an African context. She worked with young children in a residential care setting and a preschool setting. She worked with a community organization that raises awareness of child abuse and neglect. With this organization, she had the opportunity to work on safety planning and fundraising.

Megan also had the opportunity to visit a local high school and lead group discussions on drugs, HIV, prostitution, peer pressure, and safe sex. Finally, Megan had the opportunity to visit an AIDS clinic. Of her experiences in Uganda, Megan said Uganda is “a place where need is heavy and poverty is visible, a place with a strong sense of community, [and] most of all a place with great hope and perseverance.”

Megan is pictured here with her host mother, Robinah.



Tangie Dotson

Our own MSW graduate, Tangie Dotson, recently won the Tennessee Association of School Social Workers (TASSW) scholarship.



Stephanie Lovins, a new MSW graduate, is the first social work intern at the Law Offices of the Shelby County Public Defenders. Stephanie is pursuing forensic social work and is currently assigned to the Special Litigations team. She plans to graduate with her masters in May 2015. Stephanie has served as a BSW representative in the National Association of Social Workers, and currently holds a position as Graduate Assistant for Dr. Susan Neely-Barnes, working with the First Scholars program at the University of Memphis. Stephanie is pictured in the back row, far right.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHTS



Jamé H. Scott graduated in May 2015. She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Social Work from LeMoyne-Owen College in 2004 and received her MBA in Management from Strayer University in 2008.

Jamé has been a statewide trainer at the Tennessee Resource Parent Annual Conference for the last 3 years. This year she was the opening keynote speaker and had the opportunity to share her life experiences with over 1,000 Tennessee foster and adoptive parents.

Jamé is currently the Foster Care Department Manager at Goodwill Homes Community Services, Inc in Memphis.



MSW graduates

Mallory Williams and Wendi Albert

(pictured at left) were chosen to present at the 2014 Council of Social Work Education (CSWE), Annual Program Meeting (APM) with their Presentation titled : *Application of motivational interviewing with trauma informed care for women and children.*

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Student Volunteer Tax Preparers

Dr. Elena Delavega and the Social Work Earned Income Tax Credit Project are proud to announce that MSW graduate Debbie Layton obtained certification as a volunteer tax preparer (VITA) at the ADVANCED and MILITARY levels. Debbie is so proficient in taxes that she has become a trainer. MSW graduates Lydia Walker and Cheryl Fergerson have also achieved ADVANCED certification. These accomplishments showcase the excellence and dedication of our former MSW students.



Missy McGowan: NASW Tennessee Chapter BSW Student of the Year BSW student Missy McGowan was recently named the NASW Tennessee Chapter BSW Student of the Year, and she will receive her award at the 2014 Social Work Day on the Hill in Nashville, TN on March 26th. After experiencing pain and loss with the illness and death of her husband due to amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), Missy committed herself to helping other ALS patients and their families. She joined the ALS Association and now works tirelessly as a member of that group. Missy was nominated by Dr. Gary Schneider, former BA Program Director, for, among other things, her leadership both in the community and the classroom.

MSW graduate **Barbara Tileman** Gives Keynote Address : On Friday, March 7, 2014, MSW student Barbara Tileman was the keynote speaker at the Rust College Business Week Luncheon in Holly Springs, Mississippi. The luncheon was entitled "Preparing for a Diverse Business Future: 'Personal Branding.'" Barbara spoke about business and social work and how the two go hand in hand. Barbara holds a Bachelor's of Science Degree in Secretarial Science from Rust College and is now a graduate at the University of Memphis. Her 22 years of professional work experience includes working in several different fields and working with a diverse group of people in their cultures.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT



The Miss Princess Pageant is the first beauty pageant designed for individuals with special needs in the city of Memphis. The pageant just hosted its 4th Annual on Friday, August 14th, 2015 at Hope Church. The pageant accepts females as “princesses” and males as “escorts,” all ages, and all disabilities - completely free of charge! There is no cost to attend or participate in this event. This year we had 10 males participate as escorts to the 12 women who were the princesses. The best part is that EVERYONE is a winner. The boys receive a certificate of completion and the women receive a tiara, sash, and a rose. The pageant consists of three portions: the beauty, the talent, and crowning. This year we had a variety of crowd-pleasing talents from singing “Oh happy day” to performing the “nae-nae”! It was an extraordinary talent portion this year!

The pageant runs solely on donation and the help of generous volunteers. We are so lucky to have some amazing donors over the years to help with cost of the tiaras, flowers, decor, and food! Every year we aim to expand our event in order to host a magical evening for the participants.

The Pageant was created by Jessica Seebeck and Courtney Loveless in 2012 from the desire to want to create something new and unique for individuals with special needs. We do not belong to any organization and are currently not a non-profit, however we are playing with the idea of becoming one in the future. We host the event at Hope Church because it has a beautiful venue and a pre-existing amazing special needs ministry who is very, very supportive. Also, both Jessica and Courtney have been volunteers at the Hope Special Needs ministry for a few years. It is our dream and our vision to give these individuals an experience that fills them with confidence, love, and adoration.



Broadstreet, Takindra Worles, and Artice Carter also represented their support by being incredible audience members. Every single person in the audience is so extremely valued because without you guys, there wouldn't be anyone to encourage and adore these beautiful men and women on stage.



There is truly nothing better in life than seeing their faces LIGHT up on stage and soak in every ounce of love they deserve.

Jessica Seebeck is a current graduate student in the MSW program at U of M and could not have had a successful pageant without the dedication and help from her fellow colleagues, Lauren Reed, Roslyn Brewer, Chelsea Heard, DeAnn Smallwood, DeAvila Bennett, Betsy Mays, and Victoria Maher. Megan

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Wendy Barringer, BASW



Wendy Barringer graduated with her Bachelor of Arts in Social Work degree from the University of Memphis in May 2012. While in the program she was a stipend student, which allowed her to have her last two years of school covered financially. Barringer is currently working for the Department of Children Services, where she is an Investigator for situations of abuse and neglect. She works with families to help ensure there are no safety risks of the children, she works to keep children with the families, and as a last resort she will help find foster homes for the children.

Wendy Barringer went into social work because she was passionate about helping people. Because of her training, she is able to touch lives of families, take care of them respectfully, and do some team building techniques with them. The social work program prepared her for working in the Department because of the mentoring program that allows students to shadow other social workers. The internships were helpful in preparing her for the real work in the department when deal with the public. It helped her have a level of empathy to where she can be supportive because this is the worst time in these families' lives. She believes the program has prepared her to help minimize the amount of trouble that happens in her presence.



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Leslie Lindsey, LMSW



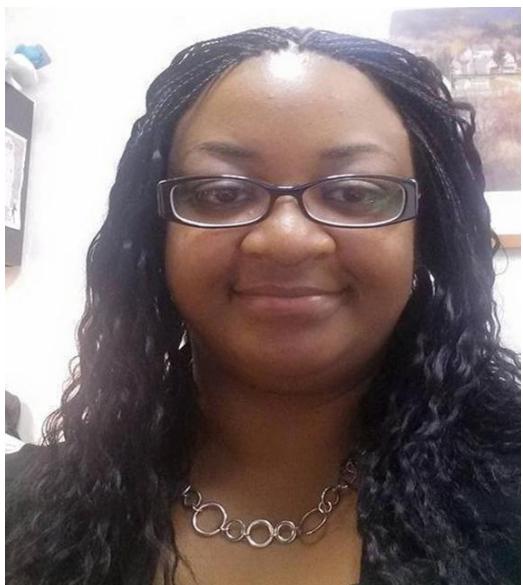
2011 Bachelor of Social Work, University of Memphis
2013 Master of Social Work, University of Memphis

Leslie Lindsey, LMSW received both her Bachelor and Masters of Social Work at the University of Memphis, Department of Social Work. As an undergraduate she was selected for a position as the lead community builder with the Memphis Ambassadors Program. In this role she assisted with the design, implementation and evaluation of this the City of Memphis' inaugural youth development program. During her undergraduate studies she completed her field placement as a Research Associate for the Center for Advancement of Youth Development (CAYD). In the first year of her MSW studies was awarded Graduate Assistant position at CAYD and was trained in research design, data collection and research analysis. While at CAYD, she assisted with the design and implementation of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services (SAMHSA) funded youth guided empowerment evaluation camps and think tanks for at risk youth. Ms. Lindsey assisted with evaluation of the SAMHSA funded Meharry Medical College Treatment Access Project, which included focus groups with the homeless population who have primary substance use disorders and other mental health diagnosis. She also assisted with the design and implementation of the Expanding Assets Strengthening Initiative awarded by the University of Memphis' Strengthening Communities Initiative. Ms. Lindsey completed her first year intern placement at Friends For Life where she was a certified trainer and presenter for the federal Office of Women's Health. She was awarded the Master of Social Work Student of the Year (2012) by the Tennessee Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers and the Corrie R. Thomas Excellence in Field Award (2013).

As a Master of Social Work graduate, in addition to being awarded a Graduate Assistant (GA) position for Dr. Gregory Washington, Department of Social Work in her first year, in her second year she was awarded a GA position with Dr. Gayle Beck, Lillian and Morrie Moss Chair of Excellence, University of Memphis, Department of Psychology. While placed with Dr. Beck at the Athena project in the Department of Psychology she was extensively trained in trauma research with a specific focus on diagnostic interviewing, data collection and trauma focused therapeutic approaches for women survivors of intimate partner violence.

Ms. Lindsey is currently employed as the Senior Clinical Therapist for Serenity Recovery Centers, Inc. in Memphis, Tennessee women's residential treatment with a focus on substance use disorders, trauma and evaluation. Serenity Recovery Centers provides integrated treatment for substance use disorders and mental health diagnosis. She also coordinates data collection under the SAMHSA TCE-HIV Minority Women grant. She provides clinical supervision for both undergraduate and graduate students who are completing field placements. Ms. Lindsey has recently been contracted and is a consultant for the University of Memphis working with the SAMHSA Center for Integrated Health Solutions Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) Core Training Program where she will conduct continuing education workshops and teach a substance use disorders course. She frequently serves as a guest lecturer for the Department of Social Work. She has been a co-author on three publications and is currently working on a manuscript for publication. Since graduation, Ms. Lindsey has obtained her Board of Social Work licensure and is currently working toward her LCSW.

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Tomika Flowers, MSSW, LCSW

Tomika Flowers graduated from the University of Memphis obtaining a Bachelor of Social Work degree in 2007. While pursuing her degree she was working as a teacher assistant for Memphis City Schools and as a mental health tech for the Babylove program. After securing a BSW, she began working for Urban Strategies Memphis HOPE as a Case Manager/Senior Coordinator. She provided intensive case management for multi-families and seniors. Tomika collaborated closely with the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to reintegrate tenants into new revitalized housing, now named University Place & Legends Park.

She began working towards obtaining a Masters of Science in Social Work from the University of Tennessee, securing this degree in 2009 after completing the accelerated program. The Master's degree made Tomika hungry for clinical experiences. She then began working for Counseling Services of Eastern Arkansas as a Therapist. This experience as extremely educational, difficult, & eye-opening, that sparked her passion for mental

health services. She was required to do emergency screenings in jails, homes, schools, & hospitals. She also completed treatment plans, provided therapeutic interventions for children, adults, & families. She began diagnosing using the DSM-IV-TR, using different counseling theories and modalities, performing clinically appropriate assessments, doing crisis interventions, & worked collaboratively with a variety of agencies, schools and other healthcare organizations in the community.

After gaining the clinical experiences, Tomika returned to Memphis and worked as a Drug/Alcohol Therapist with pregnant and postpartum women addicted to drugs and alcohol. She worked as Medical Social Worker for a community health center where clinical services included: immunizations and early screening, family practice, obstetrics and gynecology, internal medicine, HIV/AIDS primary medical services, dental, medical laboratory, pediatrics, pharmacy, radiology, ophthalmology, homeless services, student health services, and podiatry. Tomika was required to coordinate various services for uninsured patients. She still longed to provide mental health services while in the process of receiving clinical supervision to become a LCSW (Licensed Clinical Social Worker). Tomika achieved her LCSW in 2012 where she worked with an LCSW who maintains a private practice in the community and by doing contract/PRN work for Lakeside Behavioral Health Systems.

After obtaining her, LCSW, The Department of Veterans Affairs developed an aggressive national mental health hiring initiative to improve recruitment and hiring, marketing, education and training programs, and retention efforts for mental health professionals. She was hired as a mental health social worker under this initiative to work in the Outpatient Mental Health Clinic. She provides various clinical services while continuing to assess the psychosocial functioning and needs of veterans and their family members. She identifies the veteran's problems, strengths, & weaknesses; while also conducting assessments and crisis interventions. Tomika must maintain effective therapeutic relationships with veterans and their families; providing individual/group therapy for patients and families who are experiencing a variety of psychiatric, medical, and social problems.

While acclimating herself to the diverse veteran population, Tomika was presented the opportunity of doing one of her life's passions, teaching. She has served as an adjunct professor for the University of Memphis since 2013 and absolutely loves it! She has taught the SWRK 2911 Social Response to Human Need & SWRK 4840 Integrative Field Seminar I classes. She describes the classroom as a great place to learn about yourself and your students. It's a safe place to discuss, dissect, and offer solutions for the social problems of our world today. People of all races, backgrounds, and cultures can openly talk about how they fit into the puzzle.

The Mid-South Family & Community Empowerment Institute

A multidimensional research and intervention Institute based in the Department of Social Work at the University of Memphis. The Institute is dedicated to training and professional development, assessment, research and the dissemination of knowledge, information and referral, and wraparound services to the Memphis community. The Institute publishes information and resources for and about the Memphis community. One of the most important publications is the Memphis Poverty Fact Sheet, updated every year, which has been cited extensively in local and national media.

The Poverty Fact Sheet can be accessed here:

http://www.memphis.edu/socialwork/research/poverty_fact_sheets.php

**Rural & Urban Poverty & Its Call for Abstracts
Fourth Social Work Symposium
Effects on Health & Mental Health:
Social Work Interventions
April 15, 2016
8-5 pm
U of M**

The Department of Social Work and the Mid-South Family & Community Empowerment Institute at the University of Memphis invite practitioners, students, and scholars at all levels in social work or related disciplines to submit abstracts for presentations during the Symposium. In keeping with the theme of the symposium, priority will be given to presentations that provide useful knowledge on practice techniques, advocacy, or ethics that address poverty and its effects on health and mental health. Students at all levels are strongly encouraged to submit abstracts.

Submission Guidelines:

Abstracts with titles must contain no more than 550 words. Submissions must also include three learning objectives (no more than 50 words). Accepted abstracts will be published in Proceedings of the Symposium in Fall 2016. Please submit your abstract and CV or resume for each author in MSWord to Christopher Matthews at cimathws@memphis.edu

Deadline for submission is November 1st, 2015. Authors will be notified of accepted abstracts by December 15, 2015. The authors of selected abstracts will be invited to present their research at the Symposium as a long oral presentation (90 min.), short oral presentation (45 min.), or poster presentation at the Symposium.

For questions, please contact Dr. Elena Delavega, Symposium Chair, at mdlavega@memphis.edu

GIVING TO THE U OF M DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

The Social Work Department is very proud of our accomplishments in our time with the University of Memphis. We could not continue to do great work without the Support of our great Alumni and friends of the Department. We sincerely thank you for your past, present, and future contributions!

There are fast, easy, and secure steps to giving to The Department of Social Work. Please copy and paste the following link for more information on how to give to the University and Department of Social Work.

https://umwa.memphis.edu/new_giving/index.php/donation

You can then specify that you would like your gift to go to the Department of Social Work.

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