

Spring 2015

[Social Work] Newsletter, Spring 2015

University of Northern Iowa. Department of Social Work.

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Recommended Citation

University of Northern Iowa. Department of Social Work., "[Social Work] Newsletter, Spring 2015" (2015).
Social Work Newsletter. 3.

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FROM THE DEPARTMENT HEAD:

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

It has been a busy and productive year for the Department of Social Work that began with a site visit from our accreditors. Every eight years, CSWE (Council on Social Work Education) assesses our undergraduate and graduate programs. The process is rigorous and takes approximately two years of preparation. The final decision will be out in June, although, at this point, all indications are that both programs meet the standards set by CSWE. I thank all students and faculty who devoted time and effort in making the site visit a success.

The department is actively involved in creating an environment that is welcoming of all students and several initiatives were undertaken this year to meet that goal. During the fall semester, students conducted a walk-through of the department and provided feedback on ways we could improve the space to make it more welcoming to all populations. Another initiative was an in-service diversity training offered through the UNI-NCBI (National Coalition Building Institute). In attendance were social work students, department faculty and staff. Additionally, several faculty participated in training and testing to make their spaces designated Safe Zones (spaces that value respect for all people and encourage open and free exchange of ideas).

The student associations have been active this year, as well. A highlight for the MSWSA (Master of Social Work Student Association) was hosting Tim Wise, a nationally-recognized speaker on white privilege. The event was attended by hundreds of students, faculty, staff and community members. The SSWA (Student Social Work Association) was busy with activities that ranged from volunteering at the Northeast Iowa Food Bank to holding a garage sale and donating the proceeds to the House of Hope.

Future events for the department include the development of a distance education program for the Foundation, Trauma Informed Care specialization. The first cohort is scheduled to begin classes in January 2016. Information will be made available soon on our website at www.uni.edu/csbs/socialwork.

Dr. Cindy Juby

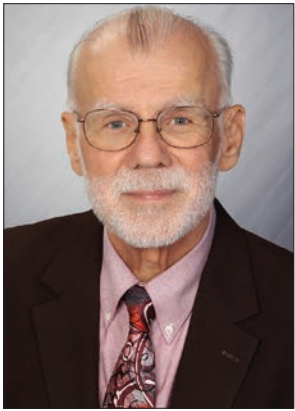
TRIP TO THE CAPITOL

In February, students from the Department of Social Work went to Des Moines in support of a dating violence bill. The bill (Senate File 138) would allow for victims and perpetrators of dating violence to receive the same services as those involved in domestic abuse cases. Twenty-seven graduate and undergraduate students from UNI attended the event which included a training on dating violence followed by the opportunity to speak with legislators in the Capitol. Students spent the remainder of the trip lobbying their local officials in the hopes of gaining support and pushing the bill into a law.



PROFESSOR SPOTLIGHT

DR. JAMES MCCULLAGH



Dr. James McCullagh began his career at the University of Northern Iowa in 1981. This fall, he will celebrate 35 years of teaching in the Department of Social Work.

While he teaches mainly undergraduates, he has taught graduate courses in the past.

In 1956, Dr. McCullagh was stationed at an Army barracks in Ft. Ord, Calif. He says it was there he realized he could not understand what his comrades were saying because he was the only man without a college degree. Following this

motivational encounter, Dr. McCullagh began seeking information on colleges and potential educational opportunities. After selecting his field of choice, he first went to Curry College near Boston and then transferred to Chico State College in northern California. He was awarded an M.S.S.W. degree at the University of Missouri, Columbia, and later a Doctor of Education at Northern Illinois University, and in 1992, a Juris Doctor from the University of Iowa.

In addition to his love for learning and teaching, Dr. McCullagh also enjoys his interactions with students. When asked what motivates him most in his career, he replied, "It is very reinforcing to be told by so many students that they like me as a professor and person." He strives to do whatever is in his power to assist his students with living the best life possible. To help with this, he started several scholarship

"IT IS VERY REINFORCING TO BE TOLD BY SO MANY STUDENTS THAT THEY LIKE ME AS A PROFESSOR AND PERSON."

programs that include the Anna McCullagh Memorial Endowed Scholarship, the Dr. James McCullagh Award for Academic Excellence, and the Robert A. Schneider Award for Excellence in Leadership. Dr. McCullagh has also written over 1,000 letters of recommendation for past and present students. It's this level of dedication to both his students and career that has earned him 13 separate awards, including the University of Northern Iowa's Regents Award for Faculty Excellence in 2014.

The following comments demonstrate Dr. McCullagh's impact on students:

"Jim changed my perspective on what it meant to strive for excellence. I feel incredibly lucky to have had the opportunity to learn from such an intelligent and experienced professor. He inspired many of us through his passion for social work and investing in us to only achieve our best."

– Beth Keesy

"Jim is the type of man who goes above and beyond in everything that he does. He is a professor, advocate, advisor, counselor, peer and friend to any student who crosses his path. Beyond that, he is an inspiration and wonderful example of what hard work, perseverance, drive and kindness will bring you in life."

– Kristy Johnson

"Dr. McCullagh is a very dedicated man who cares about his students and the university more than anything else. His efforts to keep the standard for social work students high does not go unnoticed. He also makes time for any student in need, no matter what department they are in."

– Whitney Schipper

PROFESSOR HIGHLIGHTS



DR. STEVE ONKEN

This year, Dr. Steve Onken accepted the position as director of the MSW program. He expressed his excitement over

this change by saying, “We have a potentially powerful story unfolding as to our MSW program and I’m honored to be part of that narrative.” An Iowa native, Dr. Onken received his B.A. at the University of Iowa, before moving to Texas where he obtained both his M.S.W. and Ph.D. Upon completion of his doctorate, he spent time working as a faculty member at Columbia University after which he worked in the field while living in Hawaii. He has been teaching at UNI for a year and a half and says that he most enjoys the “opportunity to give back, to share and mentor part of the transformative journey of passionate Iowans who want to make the world a better place.” When asked if he had one piece of advice for graduating students, Dr. Onken replied, “Continue to be a flame unto the world around you. Be hope.”



MR. PETER COTE

Mr. Peter Cote is an adjunct lecturer for both the graduate and undergraduate social work programs. He began his work

at UNI in 2005 and has taught several courses throughout his time with the department. Although Mr. Cote has been at UNI for 10 years, he says that his most memorable moment is

still the day he was notified that he had gotten the position as a Lecturer. He feels that UNI’s Graduate program is cutting edge and works hard to prepare students for their professional careers. Mr. Cote believes that social work is a truly rewarding path for students. He states, “We get to be with people as they grow. That is our job. We help them grow behaviorally, emotionally, and spiritually. If we can help them with their strengths and passions, then we get to be the agents of change. Mr. Cote continued, “I like to think of social workers as ‘professional human beings’ who bring heart and soul to the work of human change. Social work educators have such a privilege and the honor, inviting our students to become, “true human beings” as a favorite poet, Rumi would say.”

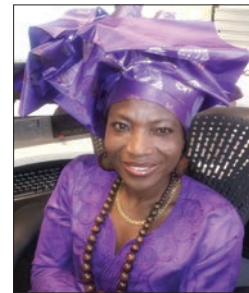


DR. GA-YOUNG CHOI

Dr. Choi currently teaches Social Policies and Issues, Social Work Research and the MSW

Foundation Field Seminar. Her research areas include secondary traumatic stress of helping professionals and multicultural social work focusing on Asian Americans/immigrants. Upon completion of this semester, she will have been a professor at UNI for five years. Dr. Choi most enjoys the atmosphere of the social work department, opportunities for research and development, taking walks across campus, and observing students as they test their comfort zones while challenging beliefs and expanding their perspectives. She believes that the field of social work offers the opportunity for students to choose from a variety of employment

opportunities and allows flexibility when selecting their focal area or population to serve. When asked if she had one piece of advice for graduating students she replied, “Explore the world. Take opportunities to study abroad. Try to look at things from multiple viewpoints. Have a 3D view of the world!”



DR. AUGUSTINA NAAMI

Dr. Augustina Naami began her career at UNI in 2011 as an assistant professor. She teaches a wide

variety of undergraduate and graduate courses such as Community and Organizational Practice, Social Work with Persons with Disabilities, American Ethnic and Racial Minorities, Social Welfare: A World View, Social Work Practice with Communities and Organizations, and Trauma Informed Practice Practicum. In addition to teaching, she has also published seven peer-reviewed articles and presented 15 peer-reviewed oral and poster presentations from her research, one of which was awarded *The Tanis Doe Prize* for best poster. Dr. Naami believes that the social work program at UNI teaches students to develop critical thinking abilities and analytical skills which they can then utilize in any social work field of their choosing. Her advice for students who enter the field is, “Remember that no one is immune to challenges. There will always be challenges everywhere we go, but our responses to these challenges is what makes the difference. Quitting should never be an option for you. Learn to persevere in life and work hard until you realize your dreams.”

STUDENT HIGHLIGHTS

UNDERGRADUATES



ABBIGAIL LARSON

Abbigail is currently a senior in the undergraduate social work program and co-president of the

SSWA (Student Social Work Association). After completing her bachelor's degree, Abbigail wants to continue on to get her M.S.W. Her goal is to work in a group therapy setting for victims of sexual assault. When asked how she feels her UNI degree has helped in pursuing her career, Abbigail replied, "I personally value the education that I have received at UNI. I truly believe that every class I have taken will impact my future career as a social worker. Also, I have had some great professors who have impacted my love for social work in a positive way."



HEATHER MCGUIRE

Heather is currently a junior in the undergraduate social work program. She is also the treasurer and former co-president

of SSWA. After graduation, she hopes to pursue a career in child welfare. Heather values the program at UNI and believes that it has prepared her for a professional job following college.

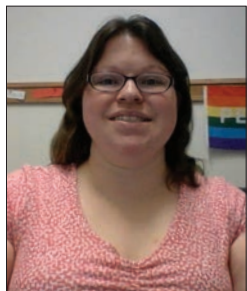
GRADUATES



ASHLEY HEFFERN

Ashley is a second-year foundation student who is specializing in trauma-informed care. Before deciding

to concentrate on social work, she obtained her undergraduate degree in education. During that time, she was able to study abroad in East Africa. As an MSW student, Ashley has held the positions of secretary and vice president for the MSWSA. Currently, she is completing her internship in Louisville, Kentucky where she lends her services to a resettlement agency focused on youth services, mental health and human trafficking. After graduating with her M.S.W. degree this spring, Ashley hopes to return abroad to utilize her degree and work with refugees.



KELLY PULATIE

Kelly is a graduate student specializing in social administration. While working toward her degree, she has participated in several

events with the MSWSA (Master of Social Work Student Association), where she holds the position of secretary. In addition to being active in the MSWSA, Kelly is also completing her internship at the YWCA in Waterloo. There, she works directly with the executive director and is deeply involved in learning how to run the agency. Upon graduation, Kelly would like to become active in domestic violence, sexual assault services or bully intervention for students. Kelly stated that throughout her time at UNI she believes she has grown as an individual and student, which will strengthen her ability to succeed outside of the classroom.

ALUMNI

KELSEY SHACKELFORD

Kelsey Shackelford graduated in May 2009 with a B.A. in social work. She currently works as an intensive psych rehabilitation practitioner at Hope Haven and previously was employed as a direct support professional and site coordinator at



Exceptional Persons, Inc. She believes that having a social work degree can make an individual very versatile and allows them to accept and even welcome change.

Kelsey chose her career as a social worker "because I truly love to empower people. Being able to walk alongside someone while they are on their journey to recovery and then seeing them complete their goals is truly fulfilling and heartwarming."



ELLIOT HOFTS

Elliot Hofts graduated in May 2011 from the MSW program. She specialized in the clinical track, now known as trauma

informed care. Elliot is currently employed at the Department of Veteran's Affairs for the Iowa City VA Healthcare System where she works as a clinical social worker. There, she provides veterans in Waterloo, Dubuque and Decorah with mental health and substance abuse counseling services at the outpatient clinics. When asked about the value of her graduate education Elliot replied, "My experience in the MSW program at the University of Northern Iowa was invaluable. Not only were we supported by our professors and encouraged to be the best we could be, but we were given the education that set us up for success in our profession. I would not be where I am in my career without the exceptional education and support I received throughout UNI's MSW graduate program."

STUDENT SERVICES

MSWSA

The MSWSA worked hard this year by participating in events such as Relay for Life, Out of the Darkness walk, and the annual Trick-or-Can Event where students collected canned goods on Halloween to be donated to the local Food Bank. Also, many students traveled to Des Moines to lobby and support a dating violence bill. This event was organized and guided by the MSWSA's student treasurer, Michelle Wilke. Following this, the MSWSA raised funds to bring Tim Wise on campus. Mr. Wise is among the nation's most prominent anti-racist essayists and educators. The association hosted the event and Megan Vogt, MSWSA president, had the honor of introducing Mr. Wise to hundreds of attendees. The event was a huge success that brought together students, faculty and community members.

SSWA

The SSWA had a busy and fun-filled year. They collaborated with the MSWSA where they worked on activities such as the Trick-or-Can Event and lobbying for a dating violence bill in the Capitol. When they weren't working with the MSWSA, the SSWA stayed busy by participating in events such as the Special Olympics, Relay for Life, and hosting a garage sale for the House of Hope and Goodwill. Students also rallied together to provide support and assistance to the Northeast Iowa Food Bank where they spent their time sorting food. Finally, the SSWA adopted a family in need. The students worked together to provide the family with gifts as well as monetary assistance.

DEPARTMENT-WIDE EVENTS

SECOND-ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIPS AND AWARDS CEREMONY

The University of Northern Iowa's Department of Social Work hosted their annual Scholarship and Awards Ceremony on April 29, 2015, in UNI's Center for Multicultural Education event room. The event showcased the volunteer activities and training events hosted by the social work undergraduate and graduate student associations, as well as honored the student recipients of each scholarship and award.

The Diane H. Schaeffer Scholarship was awarded to undergraduate social work student Autumn Rathjen. The Mary L. Padovan Endowed School Social Work Scholarship was awarded to undergraduate social work student Elizabeth Keesey. The Robert Runkle Endowed Scholarship in Social Work was awarded to undergraduate social work student Hayley Downey, who was

recently accepted into the MSW Advanced Standing Program in the Trauma Informed Care specialization, and first year MSW student Jordan Andera. Dr. Runkle's widow, Susan, was present and shared a briefly history of Dr. Runkle's life and his dedication to the social work field. The Anna McCullagh Memorial Endowed Scholarship was awarded to three undergraduate social work students, Marie Nielsen, Jamie Lindstrom and Andrea Wilson. This scholarship has provided over \$30,000 of funds to UNI's social work students. The Robert A. Schneider Award for Excellence in Leadership was awarded to undergraduate social work student Kendra Renner. The Substance Abuse Award went to undergraduate social work student Cindy Kress. The Outstanding Graduate Service Award went to graduate social work student Ashley Heffern. The Outstanding Graduate Research Paper Award went to graduate social work student Megan Vogt. The Dr. James McCullagh Award for Academic Excellence was awarded to an undergraduate social work student alumni Laysa Marie Shreves.

For more information about UNI's social work program, please visit www.uni.edu/csbs/socialwork.



Back row, left to right: Jordan Andera, Hayley Downey, Elizabeth Keesey, Jamie Lindstrom, Kendra Renner, Ashley Heffern

Front row, left to right: Andrea Wilson, Megan Vogt, Autumn Rathjen, Cindy Kress Not pictured: Laysa Marie Shreves, Marie Nielsen

IN THE FIELD

2014-2015 YEAR IN REVIEW

The work we do at the Department of Social Work Field Program would never be possible without the relentless efforts and invaluable contributions from our agency partners, agency instructors, students and faculty. Here is a quick recap of the wonderful activities we were able to accomplish together this past school year.

- Undergraduate Field Orientations held in Sept., Nov. and Jan. for 73 students
- MSW Foundation, Advanced Standing and Extended Enrollment Field Orientation held in May and March
- 62 undergraduate social work students logging in over 27,280 hours completed their field experience
- 47 MSW students logging in 22,200 hours completed their field experience.
- Field sites in 40 Iowa communities with 153 sites/departments for our undergraduate, MSW Foundation, MSW Trauma Informed Care and MSW Social Work Administrative intern students' field experiences

WEBSITE RESOURCES

There are several resources for students and agency partners on our field website at www.uni.edu/csbs/socialwork/field-instruction. For students: Field manuals, local and statewide site listings, pre-placement forms, placement forms, templates for field assignments, NASW Code of Ethics, Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS). For agency instructors: Agency instructor orientation video, field manuals. Visit www.uni.edu/csbs/socialwork/area-conferencesin-services for a list of conferences and in-services shared with the social work department and campus events.

For job openings, visit www.uni.edu/csbs/socialwork/job-openings-field-social-work to find website links and current employment openings at various local and statewide agencies and organizations looking for social workers. Agency partners can provide job openings to the field director, who will promote it within the department and post on the department's website.

AGENCY INSTRUCTOR HIGHLIGHT:

Jan Pratt, LMSW, Lutheran Services in Iowa and Community Partnerships for the Protection of Children (CPPC), Waterloo, Iowa.



MSW Social Work Administrative Intern feedback (Megan Vogt):

During my internship I had many wonderful experiences as well as many education challenges. Jan did a phenomenal job referring my internship back to my classroom work each week. She would read my journals after they were completed each week to make sure that she could relate my internship to projects and assignments happening in the classroom. This was very helpful in understanding concepts that weren't as easy to identify in practice.

Along with classroom work, Jan always made sure to check in to ensure everything was going

Agency instructors can obtain a visitor card and check out materials from UNI's Rod Library for free. Campus parking is free after 5 p.m. and materials can be returned Cedar Falls or Waterloo public libraries. Agency instructors also can book Rod Library rooms for meetings and in-services. Agency instructors can use the "Ask Us" link on the Rod Library homepage at www.library.uni.edu to inquire about resources for their agency's needs, such as evidence-informed practice, treatment approaches, case studies and research. Follow all the events happening at Rod Library at:

www.facebook.com/rodlibrary twitter.com/RodLibrary <http://rodlibrary.tumblr.com/>

"COMING TOGETHER IS A BEGINNING. KEEPING TOGETHER IS PROGRESS. WORKING TOGETHER IS SUCCESS."
—Henry Ford

well whether it was everyone at home, school, or my other jobs. She made sure that I was keeping myself motivated and excited about my awesome opportunities and adventures.

Jan enhanced the field experience through her knowledge of professional conduct, grant writing, PDSA (Plan, Do, Study, ACT), and Economic Justice & Policy. Jan isn't only a wonderful supervisor, she is a wonderful community member and friend. I cannot thank her enough for everything she taught me while I have been at CPPC, and I hope that I can still count on her for support after leaving my internship, as she has some wonderful knowledge in all social work areas.

AGENCY INSTRUCTOR HIGHLIGHT:

Jen Alexander, MA in School Counseling, NCC (Nationally Certified Counselor), RPT (Registered Play Therapist), Hansen Elementary, Cedar Falls, Iowa.

MSW Trauma Informed Care Intern feedback (Baylee O'Brien):

Jen Alexander is knowledgeable, passionate, and has great rapport with her students. Jen has taught me how to engage with K-6th graders at Hansen Elementary through classroom instruction, individual sessions, and group sessions. Jen has a wide range of valuable skills such as classroom instruction, behavioral management, play therapy, and individual/group counseling. Jen has enhanced my knowledge of trauma informed care, and understands the trauma that impacts elementary students on a day-to-day basis. Jen is certified in play therapy, and students

enjoy the play, as well as a great understanding about themselves and others through play. Jen comes to school prepared, and is flexible to students and their needs.

Every day, Jen comes in with a positive attitude, follows the code of ethics, and remains professional throughout the day. In addition to those CWSE competencies, Jen is passionate about trauma informed care. She has an interest in the daily ACES connection articles, and is research based with the way she counsels. She brings research into her classrooms, and presents evidence based skills to her students. These students gain knowledge of helpful coping skills and other important lessons in order to learn and grow. Jen is trauma informed, and understands the impact of trauma on the brain with children. Jen advocates for her students, and teaches others on the impacts of trauma and how to better handle students within the building.

Jen brings many years of experience, and overall is a passionate, fun, and knowledgeable school counselor and field instructor who teaches interns how to fully engage with students, build rapport, use evidence based practices, and to be an overall positive and supportive adult for these students. Jen has positively impacted so many students within this community, and is truly a wonderful role model for our youth.

AGENCY INSTRUCTOR HIGHLIGHT:

Dana Meyer, Social Worker II, Black Hawk County Department of Human Services, Waterloo, Iowa

BASW intern feedback (Alaysia McAtee):

Dana Meyer has been with the Black Hawk County Department of Human Services for 11 years and has been taking and mentoring students for about seven years. Dana is a UNI alumni and a graduate of the social work program. Her outgoing personality along with her expertise in both child welfare and "pizza Mondays" ensure for an unforgettable and educational experience. During my time at DHS I have had the honor of meeting some incredible children, foster parents, and workers, while also being a part of many difficult situations. While working for the department I have taken on the responsibility of scheduling and completing visits between children and parents, managing several cases, attending juvenile court, drafting state documents, and the list continues to grow every day.

I have also had the opportunity to expand my critical thinking in regards to working with diverse populations who are all apart of different social and economic backgrounds. Working so closely with Dana and her peers has made me lifelong professional connections in the Cedar Valley and surrounding areas. Being a part of such a diverse group of kind hearted and strong willed professionals has expanded my passion and desire for the field.



ANNUAL CONFERENCE

This year's annual trauma informed conference, "Where There's Breath, There's Hope: Advancing Our Trauma Understanding and Responses in 2015," was a huge success with nearly 300 registrants. Tonier Cain brought a unique client perspective that resonated hope and promise for social service providers. Tonier overcame a life of drug addiction, multiple incarcerations and two decades of homelessness with the help of a program that asked, "What happened to you?" rather than "What's wrong with you?" One conference participant commented, "Tonier's presentation was motivational rather than just educational." While in Iowa, Tonier conveyed a message of inspiration to inmates and correctional officers when she visited the Iowa Correctional Facility for Women in Mitchellville and the Women's Center for Change in Waterloo.



Tonier Cain and Paul Rode, Warden of the Iowa Correctional Facility for Women in Mitchellville, Iowa



DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK
University of Northern Iowa

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