

connections

FALL 2006 • VOLUME 3, NUMBER 1

WWW.SW.UH.EDU

Back to School @ the GCSW

Homecoming 2006, Back to School @ the GCSW, was a day to remember for all alumni, students, faculty, staff and guests who participated. The GCSW joined other UH colleges to celebrate the University's 60th Homecoming. The day's events began in a spirited fashion with welcoming comments delivered by UH President Jay Gogue, followed by the UH Band's march through the auditorium in the Social Work Building.

The Homecoming festivities included a day of learning complete with CEU credits which began with a Homeroom Period facilitated by Dean Colby, who updated all with an overview of the changing environment in higher education at the GCSW. He elaborated on the five key challenges facing social work education today.

Dr. Jean Latting and alumna Stephanie Foy facilitated a stimulating forum, *Social Work Ethics in Leadership*, defining the skill sets future leaders need in making ethical and sound decisions to help agencies carry out their missions. Participants learned about the characteristics of organizational cultures and leadership styles that encourage ethical choices and behaviors.



Homecoming Reunion 2006
Ann McFarland, Barbara McGinity and Stephanie Foy

The Faculty Library was available for book purchases, signings and discussions during the Lunch Period. Alumni took the opportunity to reunite with old friends, to chat with professors, and to purchase Cougar Tails and t-shirts in support of the GCSW Student and Alumni Associations.

Second Period provided an opportunity to hear the latest from an expert GCSW clinical practitioner panel on *New Developments in Social Work Practice*. Dr. Andy Achenbaum served as moderator for the panel facilitating discussions on current issues involving schools, health care, geriatrics and

private practice. Panel members included Heather Constantine of Communities in Schools, Delores Hendrix-Giles of the VA Medical Center, Sondra Kaplan in private practice and Tziona Regev of the Harris County Hospital District's Edward Mease Geriatric Center. All distinguished panel members are alumni of the college.

The spirited cougar supporters headed for the Tulsa versus UH Homecoming game after collecting their .35 CEUs.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

■ Dean's Message	Page 2
■ Beyond the Andrea Yates Verdict	Page 3
■ Rubin "Hurricane" Carter	Page 4
■ UK Travel Study Course	Page 5
■ Cougar Tails	Page 6
■ Faculty Highlights	Page 7

■ Field Instructor of the Year Awards	Page 8
■ Capturing the Moments	Page 9
■ In The Spotlight	Page 10
■ Alumni Notes	Page 10
■ Alumni Association News	Page 11

GCSW Dean's Advisory Council

Carole Ashendorf

Baylor Geriatric Medicine Associates
GCSW Alumna '95

Angela Blanchard

Neighborhood Centers, Inc.

Ruth Brodsky

Community Volunteer

Sylvia Brooks

Houston Area Urban League

Cam Canion

Community Volunteer

Leonel Castillo

Retired

Felix Fraga

Neighborhood Centers, Inc.

Nancy Frees Fountain

Frees Foundation

Brenda Gallagher

The Frank and Brenda Gallagher
Family Foundation

Barbara Henley

Henley Foundation

Marjorie Jenkins

Human Relations Consultant
GCSW Alumna '16

Cecile Keeper

Psychotherapist
GCSW Alumna '18

Ronald Lewis

Marshall & Lewis, LLP

Barbara Mackey

GCSW Alumna '92

Linda May

Simmons Foundation

Rafael Medrano

GCSW Alumnus '80

Robert L. Navarro

Retired
GCSW Alumnus '76

Wayne Norden

Junior Achievement of
Southeast Texas

Cindy Reibenstein

Reibenstein & Associates
GCSW Alumna '88

Lawrence Root, MD

Monsignor Frank Rossi
Diocese of Galveston-Houston

Victor Samuels

Victory Packaging

Hinda Simon

Private Practitioner
GCSW Alumna '91

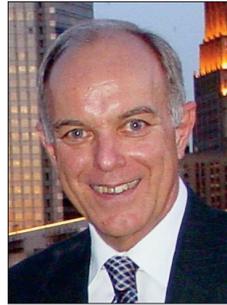
Ed Smith

Macy's

Jerri Workman

Heights Education Project
GCSW Alumna '89

A MESSAGE FROM DEAN COLBY



Dean Ira C. Colby

Having recently finished reading New York Times' columnist Thomas L. Friedman's latest book, *The World is Flat, a Brief History of the Twenty-first Century* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005), I was struck by how quickly the world changed, through what Friedman calls 'flatteners' – events such as 9/11, the fall of the Berlin Wall, and the rise of Netscape and the dotcom era. The convergence of a number of these flatteners, according to Friedman, resulted in new, but unexpected, economic and political relationships that empowered many individuals, groups, and nations. Some friends have argued with me that these fundamental changes in human affairs are not new, and they certainly are correct. Yet, I am more struck by a common denominator with these flatteners – most of us were unprepared for the 'flattening', did not recognize the tidal wave of globalization and are now reacting to, rather than being key leaders

in, the globalization process.

Social work education all too often has been a 'follower' and not a leader, with few programs willing to risk educational innovation that leads to creative, proactive, just social work practice. The GCSW is not one of those programs.

In 1992, the then School of Social Work implemented a sweeping curriculum revision that introduced five concentrations, one of which had never been taught in American schools, 'political social work', while the 'gerontology' concentration was among the first of its kind in the nation. As the faculty developed the 1992 concentration model they were guided by the proposition that a graduate school should offer a proactive educational experience that meets the needs in the broader community.

And now, 15 years after the implementation of the five concentrations, the faculty is poised again to realize a new curriculum, one that is just as proactive, cutting edge in design and content, and specifically addresses practice matters. Beginning in the fall of 2007, the faculty will introduce a curriculum that includes the following key pieces:

- The program consists of 15 semester hours in foundation courses and 48 semester hours of advanced study – 76% of the student's time will be devoted to advanced study versus the 51% under the concentration model;
- The student will select a track (no longer a concentration) in either Clinical Social Work Practice or Leadership, Administration, and Advocacy;
- While pursuing one track, the student will be required to take at least one course in the other track;
- In addition to developing a specialization in one practice track, the student may opt to complete specialized certificate study in Gerontology, Political Social Work, or Trabajo Social;
- The student will complete a total of 1,080 field internship hours, which is 20% more time in the internship than the current concentration curriculum.

The faculty believes the new curriculum responds to the concerns that our practice colleagues have expressed locally, as well as nationally, and recognizes that educators in partnership with the practice community must lead rather than follow. The faculty is excited about this new educational venture as it opens the door to the next era in the College's academic programming, one that prepares students for critical social work positions while maintaining our decades' long-standing commitment to peace and justice. The new curriculum emphasizes additional time in advanced study and field internships to better equip students with more in-depth knowledge from which a refined set of practice skills will be rooted, all framed by the profession's values of peace and justice.

Please visit the GCSW's web page, www.sw.uh.edu, to learn more about the new curriculum.

Ira C. Colby
Dean and Professor of Social Work

BEYOND THE ANDREA YATES VERDICT

Renowned speakers, George Parnham, J.D. and Lucy Puryear, M.D., addressed women's mental health issues and the law at a symposium presented by the Mental Health Association of Greater Houston and co-sponsored by the UH Graduate College of Social Work on November 11th. As a result of the morning session, upwards of 350 participants walked away with a deeper understanding of the prevalence of perinatal mental illnesses as well as our state's interpretation of the "Not Guilty by Reason of Insanity" defense.

George Parnham, J.D. is a criminal defense attorney with Parnham & Associates. He served as lead counsel for the defense in the case of the State of Texas vs. Andrea Yates. Lucy Puryear, M.D., renowned for her work in the field of women's mental health, served as an expert witness in Andrea Yates' trials. Dr. Puryear is a psychiatrist in private practice and a faculty member at Baylor College of Medicine.

In 2002, a Texas jury found Andrea Yates guilty of capital murder, denying her plea for acquittal based on the insanity defense. She was sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole. On appeal, the conviction was overturned, resulting in a second trial where a jury found her not guilty by reason of insanity. During the morning session, Puryear discussed the risk factors for postpartum depression, postpartum obsessive compulsive disorder and anxiety, and postpartum psychosis in relation to the defense during the second Yates trial. Parnham discussed the standards for the insanity defense pointing out the legal interpretation and need for change.

Puryear stated that each year 19 million Americans experience depression of which 12 million are women. Depression occurs most often during women's childbearing years, ages 25-44. Where 8 out of 10 new mothers have the "Baby Blues," at least 1 out of 10 suffer from Postpartum Depression. Puryear pointed out that postpartum psychosis is an emergency and must be properly treated. She informed the audience of screening and educational efforts being used within the medical community to address postpartum depression.

Parnham stated, "The Andrea Yates final verdict changed the face of mental illness in the eyes of the public." He pointed out the differences that became apparent after the second verdict was reached including changes in public perception of mental illness, media exposure of mental health issues, and education of the public. He stated, "As a result of the verdict, the Yates children became the 'victims of understanding.' Andrea Yates is no longer a prisoner, but a patient in a mental hospital. These perceptions are a result of education and awareness." Parnham emphasized, "The jury 'got it' in delivering the final verdict."

When asked, "Where do we go from here?" Parnham stated that awareness of women's mental health issues and education are imperative. He sees a strong need for utilizing facilities available for women and children when the mother is suffering from mental illness. He spoke of changes needed in the law and within the legal system to address mental health issues. He also emphasized the need for legislative awareness.



George Parnham, J.D.

Lucy Puryear, M.D.

Rubin “Hurricane” Carter

The life of Rubin “Hurricane” Carter has taken many twists from obscurity, to acclaim and back again. Carter’s boxing career began in 1961, and his fast and furious style made him a crowd favorite. Five years later, while preparing for a World Championship fight, Carter was arrested for triple murder. Although he steadfastly maintained his innocence, he was convicted and sentenced to three life terms, narrowly escaping the electric chair.

In 1974, upon the publication of his autobiography and the recantations of the state’s two key witnesses (criminals who admitted they had lied at the trial), Carter’s case attracted international attention. He became a celebrity of the civil rights cause and was immortalized in the Bob Dylan song “Hurricane.” A new trial ensued, but the injustice was repeated. However, he never gave up, and in February 1988, the 22-year indictment was finally dismissed.

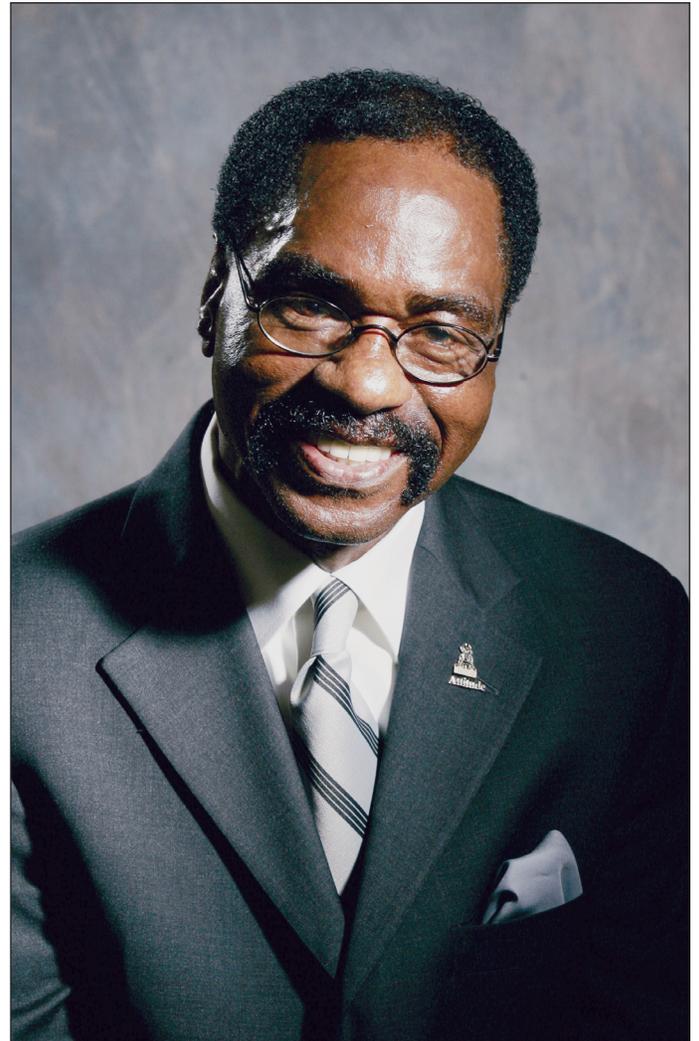
On October 4th, Hurricane Carter addressed University of Houston students, faculty and guests as the invited speaker for the Graduate College of Social Work Jenkins Distinguished Lecture. The lecture, “Justice and the Legal System: Where Do We Go from Here?” was generously co-sponsored by the UH Law Center and the University’s Tenneco Lecture Series.

The conditions of prison and the feelings of hopelessness led Hurricane to “wake up.” He read the great philosophers while in prison and was inspired by their words and messages. He said that hope became real for him. “You’ve got to dream and from your dreams come realities,” said Carter. He further stated, “You can’t become conscious, unconsciously. You have to wake up! Attitude is everything.”

For many years hate took over for Carter. He reclaimed his life for himself and stated, “Hate put me into prison, but love busted me out! We’ve got to stop being victims.”

Carter spoke with former President Clinton on issues related to the death penalty, addressed the General Assembly at the United Nations, and spoke alongside President Nelson Mandela. His story was depicted in the critically acclaimed film *The Hurricane* starring Denzel Washington. Rubin recently resigned from his position as executive director of the Association in Defense for the Wrongly Convicted (AIDWYC), the organization that he founded. He currently serves as CEO of Innocence International, which works to free the unjustly accused. He is about to celebrate 21 years of being out of prison and told the audience that he celebrates two birthdays every year, his real birthday and the day that he was released from prison and reclaimed his life.

When asked how he would like his tombstone to read, Carter stated, “Enough—He cared enough.”



The Jenkins Distinguished Lecture is designed to bring speakers who are nationally and internationally known for their expertise on political and public policy issues to the University of Houston and the Houston community at-large. This prestigious lecture series was initiated in 2001 with a generous gift from Marjorie and Robert Jenkins. Mrs. Jenkins, a practicing psychotherapist, is an alumna of the Graduate College of Social Work.

*“Hate put me into prison,
but love busted me out!”*

TRAVEL STUDY COURSE COMPARES SERVICE DELIVERY IN THE UK

By Saralyn McIver

Last May, Dean Colby and Dr. Raffoul led a student delegation on a journey to compare the social welfare system of the United Kingdom to that of the U.S. Although my voyage began on a rocky note, losing my passport days before departure and then finding out my identity had been stolen and my bank account drained just hours before heading to the airport, I am so glad I did not throw my hands up in surrender.

Our time in the UK was split between London and Edinburgh. We met with a Member of Parliament, Dr. Sunil Kumar of the London School of Economics, visited Toynbee Hall, dialogued with social work students and professors at the University of Luton, and visited social welfare agencies in Edinburgh. It was inspiring to visit Toynbee Hall, which is the birthplace of social work. Having the opportunity to meet and hold discussions with

Joan Humble, Parliamentary member, and Dr. Kumar was exciting and inspiring, as they are both thoughtful progressive thinkers. I thought the UK would be much different, since they have a socialized public welfare system. But, what I found was that social workers there are dealing with the same issues we are: drug use, crime and delinquency, teen pregnancy, vagrancy or homelessness, HIV/ AIDS, child welfare, etc.

The main difference I saw was not in the issues being addressed, but in attitudes toward social work. Several times social work students and those already in the field said that they do not tell people they meet what they do. They prefer to avoid questions and reactions so they just say, "Oh, I work in an office." Coming home, I was overrun with the pride of being a social worker and telling everyone why what we are doing is important.



The Travel Study Group at Toynbee Hall

**Social Welfare Policy:
A Comparative Study of the US and the UK
3 credit hours**

COUGAR TAILS

Strut Your Tail!

Cougar Tails are on sale now by the GCSW Student Association and the GCSW Alumni Association. Each tail costs \$6, which includes tax. Profits from Cougar Tail sales will support both organizations. Checks should be made out to the GCSW Alumni Association.



Order Your Cougar Tails Today!

1. Pay by Credit Card:

Order your Cougar Tails and pay by credit card at:
<http://www.sw.uh.edu/alumni/alumnicougartail.php>

2. Pay by Check:

Pick up your Cougar Tails in person at 204 Social Work Building. Make your check payable to GCSW Alumni Association.

-Or-

Order your Cougar Tails by sending an e-mail to gsswalum@mail.uh.edu. Include your name and shipping address in the e-mail. Send a check for \$6 per tail and add an additional \$1 for each tail to cover shipping costs to: GCSW Alumni Association, University of Houston, Graduate College of Social Work, 237 Social Work Building, Houston, TX 77204-4013.

GCSW FACULTY AND STAFF NEWS

UH GCSW Announces its New Curriculum!

Highlights of the New Curriculum for Fall 2007 Include:

- One semester integrated foundation curriculum (15 SCHs)
- Three Semesters Advanced Study in a choice of 2 tracks (48 SCHs)
- Three Certificate Options: Political, Gerontology, and Trabajo Social
- Allows for a total of 1,080 Field Internship Hours
- Flex option with many evening and weekend classes
- Advanced Standing option for graduates of accredited BSW Programs

For more information, visit our Web site at www.sw.uh.edu

Applications are now being accepted for Fall 2007

Births

Kelli Connell-Carrick and husband are the proud parents of their second daughter, Kennedy Anne Carrick, who was born October 19th. She weighed 7 lbs. and measured 20 inches long.

Marsha and Scott Christ are the proud parents of their daughter, Annmarie, who was born on October 25th. She weighed 7.5 lbs. and measured 19.5 inches long.

IN MEMORY

of our beloved GCSW Staff Member

Leslie Marie Sims

September 8, 1948 — July 9, 2006

Leslie Sims was a devoted career professional with the State of Texas, Department of Family and Protective Services where she began as an Intake Worker/Case Manager and later served as supervisor. She retired as a Practitioner Trainer after 25 years of dedicated service and returned to her Trainer position after one month of retirement. Leslie was also co-owner of Sims Bonding Company for many years. Leslie is dearly missed by all at the GCSW.

FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

Andrew Achenbaum, Professor of History and Social Work, was awarded the Joseph C. Valley Gerontology Professional of the Year Award and delivered the keynote address on "Vital Communities for New Seniors" at the 20th Annual Selenia and Joseph Valley Conference held at UH in September.

Geri Adler, Assistant Professor, has published the following articles: Adler, G., & Rottunda, S. "Older adults' perspectives on driving cessation" *Journal of Aging Studies*, Vol. 20(3), 227-235 (2006); Adler, G. "Geriatric field education in social work: A model for practice" *Educational Gerontology*, Vol. 32(9), 707-719 (2006); and Adler, G., Rottunda, S., Kuskowski, M., Christensen, K., & Thuras, P. "Driving SAFE: Development of a knowledge test for driver's with dementia" *Dementia: The International Journal of Social Research and Practice*, Vol. 5(2), 213-222 (2006).

Monit Cheung, Professor, was awarded Honorary Professor at the Centre on Behavioral Health, University of Hong Kong from July 1, 2006 to June 30, 2009. She also became an Honor member of Phi Alpha Honor Society, April 2006.

Professor Cheung's presentations include: "Therapeutic games and guided imagery: Tools for school and mental health professionals," *Chinese University of Hong Kong Department of Social Work*, Hong Kong (June 2006); "Project Passport: Empowering young minority women through a volunteer program," *2nd International Conference on Youth Empowerment*, Hong Kong (June 2006); "Therapeutic games and guided imagery," *2nd International Conference on Youth Empowerment*, Hong Kong (June 2006).

Media Coverage included: TVB Hong Kong (TV program on child sexual abuse, June 20, 2006); Radio 99.7, Hong Kong (Live Interview on child sexual abuse issues, June 24, 2006); Ming Pao Daily, Hong Kong (Interview on teen sexual abuse, July 4, 2006).

Ira C. Colby, Dean and Professor of Social Work, received the "Alumni Star" Award from Virginia Commonwealth University and is President-elect of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE).

Gerson David, Professor Emeritus, participated in the International Federation on Ageing (IFA) 8th Global Conference in June 2006 in Copenhagen, Denmark. He shared his perspective on Work and Retirement in a Society for All Ages in the interactive Forum on "Full Citizenship for All Ages" which included discussants from Australia, Wales, and U.S.A. Additionally, he attended the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) World Conference in August 2006 in Munich, Germany. At age 86, his service as a social work educator and researcher in North American universities for nearly half a century was recognized by Imelda Dodds, IFSW President, at a VIP Dinner celebrating 50 years of outstanding work at an international level. Dr. David participated in sessions on social work advocacy within the organizational framework of the U.N. System, striving for social justice, human rights and social development.

Howard Karger, Professor, is on leave at the University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand for fall semester 2006. On July 18 he gave a keynote lecture, "Two peas in a pod: Welfare-to-work and the making of the fringe economy," for a welfare reform conference at the University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia. His recent book, *Shortchanged: Life and Debt in the Fringe Economy*, Berrett-Koehler (2005), won the 2006 Independent Publisher Book Awards in Finance/Investments/Economics. Karger recently signed a contract (with David Stoesz) for a new book tentatively titled *Curbside academics: Reforming social work education*: Oxford University Press. The third edition of *Controversial Issues in Social Policy* (with J. Midgley, B. Brown and P. Kindle) will be coming out in December.

Susan Robbins, Associate Professor, delivered the following presentation: "Evidence Based Practice for Working with Substance Abuse in Families," *17th Annual Family Preservation Conference*, San Antonio (September 2006).

Avelardo Valdez, Professor and Director of the Office for Drug and Social Policy Research was interviewed by Houston Public Radio, June 16, 2006 where he discussed Latino Drug Usage. The National Institute on Drug Abuse has awarded a three-year, \$1.5 million grant to the University of Houston's Office for Drug and Social Policy Research (ODSPR) to study substance use and other health consequences among Katrina evacuees living in Houston.

We hope you are enjoying
the new format of
the Connections newsletter.

2007 is the Year of Change
at the GCSW
and it seems appropriate
to reflect the ongoing theme
in our communications!

We welcome your feedback and
encourage you to update us
on new happenings and changes
going on in your lives.

E-mail updates to:
gsswalum@sw.uh.edu

OUTSTANDING FIELD INSTRUCTORS

by **Melanie Fisk**

Every year our MSW students get a chance to nominate a Field Instructor they believe exemplifies mentorship, expertise in the field of social work, and ethical social work practice. We recognized the 2005-2006 nominees during the 16th Annual Outstanding Field Instructor Awards Banquet, which was sponsored by the GCSW Field Office. For the first time in the history of the award, two exceptional candidates—Debbie Okrina and Dianne Long—both received the top honor of Field Instructor of the Year. Ms. Okrina was subsequently selected Outstanding Field Instructor of the Year for the state of Texas by the Texas Field Educators Consortium. She was presented with this statewide honor at the NASW state conference in Arlington.

Debbie Okrina has been a Field Instructor with the GCSW for seven years and has been nominated every year for the past five years. Each time she has been nominated not by one student each year as is the norm, but by two or three students. This is a testament to her superior education-focused supervisory skills and to her talent for assessing the needs of her students and adjusting the pace of learning to meet their needs. She was described by her students as demonstrating an, “unconditional positive regard for both the clients and interns under her supervision,” and as being, “completely accepting and tolerant of the limitations clients (and interns) have in this world.”

Ms. Okrina works for the Houston Area Women’s Center, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to supporting survivors of domestic and sexual violence and providing prevention education. She is a recognized expert in women’s issues, violence prevention, and sexual assault prevention. Ms. Okrina has been a presenter in the classroom and at statewide conferences on many topics including working with children and teens, teen sexuality, using poetry and writing in counseling, and addressing white privilege. She is currently the co-chair of the Allies for Children and Teens (ACT) of the Texas Council on Family Violence and she consults with the University of Houston Women’s Resource Center around issues of assault prevention. She has presented in a variety of forums, provided critical prevention services, and serves as a member of the NASW/TX Committee on Women’s Issues. Her commitment to her clients, the community, and to the profession of Social Work is unwavering. She models for field students a passion for social work as a means to achieve social, economic and political justice.

As a Field Instructor for the past four years, **Dianne Long** has shown creativity in her teaching while modeling competence, high standards, and intelligent problem-solving and organizational skills for her students. Her practice, her leadership, and her community service exemplify social work values and ethics. In the words of one of her field students, “Dianne exemplifies all six of the Social Work core values: service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relations, integrity, and competence. The most important lesson Dianne has taught me is the importance of human relations. Dianne has instilled in me how relationships between and among people are the most important way to keep a collaboration strong and to make change in a community.” Ms. Long is known for her talent of engaging students in critical thinking that allows them to learn not only how she does her job but how they will practice in their own arenas.

Dianne Long is a leader in Houston’s gerontology community. She juggles multiple responsibilities in her role as coordinator of Care for Elders, a program supported by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation through its Community Partnerships for Older Adults (CPFOA) national initiative. The program’s mission is “To improve care and services provided to vulnerable older adults and family caregivers in Harris County through collaborative problem solving and strategic planning that involves consumers, providers, funding organizations, and other major stakeholders in the long-term care system.” Ms. Long works directly with consumers, providers, funding organizations, and other stakeholders with a goal of seamless long-term care. In addition, she is a member of the AGIFT Consortium, a coordinating arm for the UH GCSW’s John A. Hartford Foundation supported initiative for educating students for competent social work practice.

Ms. Long was very involved in the coordination of services to elderly evacuees from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. She was able to turn a crisis mode of practice delivery during a critical time in Houston in to a learning experience for her students with innovative assignments at the Houston Emergency Center. Ms. Long is a leader in the community, coordinating a major city wide effort to provide services to the elderly. In this work, she is compassionate and assertive, inspiring students and her colleagues to go the extra mile in meeting the needs of Houston’s elders.

Welcome to Geri Adler

Dr. Geri Adler has recently joined the faculty as Assistant Professor. She comes to the GCSW from the College of Social Work at the University of South Carolina where she was an Associate Professor and the Director of the South Carolina Center for Gerontology. Beginning her career as a medical social worker at an Alzheimer’s research center, Dr. Adler quickly found her passion in research and working with the elderly. Teaching Research Methods during her first semester with the GCSW has allowed Dr. Adler the opportunity to pass these interests on to her new University of Houston students.

Dr. Adler received both her MSW and Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota and is an accomplished researcher dealing with the driving habits and patterns of older adults. She is a Hartford Faculty Scholar and the principal investigator for the current Hartford Foundation study, “An Integrated Study of Driving Cessation in Older Adults with Dementia.” Dr. Adler was also awarded over \$100,000 to conduct elderly driving research with the Minnesota Department of Public Safety. With over fifteen published articles in the Gerontology field, Dr. Adler is a wonderful addition to our faculty. In addition, Dr. Adler presently serves as a co-investigator for an initial assessment of the non-profit on-line response to hurricane Katrina.

CAPTURING THE MOMENTS

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION AWARDED RED BANNER

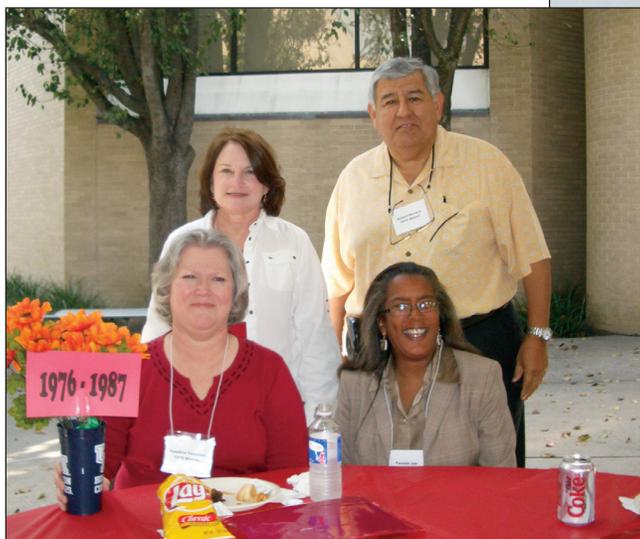
Friday, November 3rd began the Homecoming excitement around the GCSW. Dean Colby invited all past GCSW Student Association presidents and GCSW Alumni Association presidents to join his table at the UH Houston Alumni Organization's Annual Lunch & All That Jazz held at the UH Hilton. Alumni who joined in the celebration included Jim Hodge, Barbara McGinity, Michelle Hughes, Sandra Lopez, Malukah Marrus, Agnes Dulin, Kay Schiller, Cynthia Reibenstein, Will Dickey, Josh Reynolds, Sara Lewis, Bill Clements, Mary Guillory, Dean Colby and Ann Liberman. The group enjoyed lunch and were present to see Sara Lewis accept the HAO Red Banner Award on behalf of the GCSW Alumni Association. HAO gives banner awards each year to constituent alumni groups as recognition for outstanding programming and service to its members and to the community.



GCSW Past Student Association and Past Alumni Association Presidents at HAO Lunch & All That Jazz



New Developments in Social Work Practice panel members



Alumni Reunite



Back to School Lunch Period

IN THE

Spotlight

The spotlight for this issue falls on our outstanding alumni who always say “yes” when asked to participate in GCSW sponsored events. The devoted social work professionals who contributed to this year’s Homecoming success include: **Sondra Kaplan, Tziona Regev, Heather Constantine and Delores Hendrix-Giles**, who discussed New Developments in Social Work Practice as panel participants. Each drew on clinical experience to respond to questions directed by the moderator and from the audience regarding changes in current practice, trends, and expectations for future practice. **Stephanie Foy** joined Dr. Jean Latting as a co-facilitator for the Ethics in Leadership forum held that day.

Moderator **Kay Schiller** and panel members **Ellen Seaton** and **Lisa Cano** responded to the request to address a career focused workshop at NASW TX this October facilitated by Ann Liberman of UH and Jennifer Luna-Idunate of UT, both Directors of Career Services. The alumni discussed their roles in their current social work positions, the paths that led them to their positions, and the roles of mentorship and networking in their careers. They were joined by Julia Cuba of Austin in sharing information that was well received by the packed audience of afternoon job seekers and career changers.

The Many Faces of Social Work captured **Wendy Evans, Paul Hoisington, Toby Newman, Josie Salaz** and **Marci Mir Tipton** as panel members for the recent Clinical Leadership Society’s fall program hosted by Jewish Family Services. Bob Ziegler, CLS Chair moderated the panel. **Sandra Lopez** is to be credited for her ongoing work as faculty advisor to the group of clinically focused students.

Thank you for your continuous support of the GCSW.

ALUMNI NOTES

Roxanna Johnson (‘80) is Administrative Coordinator of the Crime Analysis Division Planning and Research Section of the Houston Police Department.

Karen Stephenson (‘85) works in a management/clinical position with a non-profit in Bangor, Maine. Her client population includes families, children and adolescents with mental health issues. Karen says there are several Texans in the area and at least three GCSW alumni. If you are interested in working in Maine, contact Karen at kstephenson@chcs-me.org.

Ana Eigler (‘87) is self employed as a facilitator, consultant and trainer with specialization in Bilingual and Bicultural (Spanish/English) diversity issues.

Caroline Zorn Pickens (‘88) is a State Program Consultant working for the AARP Foundation, the services arm of AARP. The Partners for Independence program she coordinates provides volunteer-driven services to senior evacuees of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita who currently reside in Texas.

Beverly McPhail (‘89) was named as interim director of the Women’s Resource Center at the University of Houston in July. McPhail is a researcher and lecturer in the Graduate College of Social Work.

Ivis Bird (‘94) is employed as a renal social worker at Fresenius Southeast Kidney Center.

Neera Nijhawan Puri, Ph.D. (‘95) has accepted a faculty position at Mentorcoach, a therapist coach training institute. She works with executives, businesses, and individuals to enhance their careers, relationships, and health. She is the proud mother of a baby boy and lives in the San Francisco Bay Area. She welcomes connections with GCSW colleagues and can be reached by e-mail at neera@bayareacoach.com.

Vashonda Hickman (‘01) joined Odyssey Hospice as a medical social worker in August. She brought her past long-term care experience from San Jacinto Manor.

Alana Howard (‘01) is now living in San Jose, CA. She is working for the Palo Alto Veterans Administration system. Alana began her career with the VA in Houston as a Student Intern.

Kenneth Bowman (‘04) is Program Director for Pathway to Recovery in Angleton and LaMarque where he is involved in residential substance abuse treatment, detox, and intensive and supportive out-patient treatment.

Pam Necessary (‘05) moved home to Arkansas where she is working as a therapist on the Child/Adolescent Unit at The Bridgeway, an acute psychiatric hospital in North Little Rock.

Martha Piedra (‘05) started at Heartland March ‘05 as Bereavement Coordinator, then in July ‘05 moved into a Social Worker position. She is participating in LCSW supervision and will be taking the exam sometime in 2007.

Stacie Quinn (‘05) is working as a therapist at the Montrose Counseling Center. She also started a business with Arbonne International, a health and wellness company, through which she is trying to raise money to support an orphanage in Africa where she worked several years ago.

Brooke Gomez Robillard (‘05) and husband are the proud parents of Ezra James Robillard born on November 25th. Brooke and family are now living in Georgia.

Monica Rivera (‘06) and **Rebecca Rosalez** (‘06) have taken jobs in the UK. Having moved after graduation, they are now gaining global experience.

Ronda Tewell (‘06) became licensed two weeks after graduation and is working as a Program Specialist with the Texas Department of State Health Services in the Patient Quality Care Unit. She finds it to be a challenging and interesting position.

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION NEWS

As the newly elected leader of the GCSW Alumni Association, it is indeed a pleasure and honor to serve as your president. GCSW passion and devotion continues to impress and amaze me. Each time I visit the campus or talk with alumni, students, faculty and staff, I get a greater sense of what makes the GCSW special and unique. I am so proud of our past achievements and so excited by what great strides we will make in the future.

The work of the Alumni Association continues in earnest as we play an ever increasing role in the community, college and the University. Our past accomplishments have won us, in the third consecutive year, the Red Banner Award from the Houston Alumni Association. It is competitively awarded to HAO constituent groups based on membership, student recruitment, community service, advocacy and scholarship fund raising. We could not have reached this high pinnacle without the help of exceptional alumni who are committed to supporting the GCSW. The highest banner awarded is the Gold Banner so this year's mantra is "Going for the Gold!"

The purpose of the GCSW Alumni Association is to build and strengthen personal and professional connections between the GCSW and alumni, to raise the visibility and profile of the GCSW through volunteer activities and direct support, and to promote academic excellence of the social work profession throughout the community. As alumni, you are a valuable asset to our growth and to the strength of the GCSW. Your membership has a significant impact on the future growth of the University of Houston as well as the GCSW. Your membership includes professional learning opportunities, invitations to special networking events and continued connections with your friends and colleagues from the GCSW. We have expanded our outreach to those alumni who have a desire to serve on special committees and or projects through the GCSW Alumni Association whose passion may not include board service. Please join us; we have fun, we do good work, and we would love your participation and ideas. If you are up to the challenge, please feel free to contact me at 713-308-0082 or at Sara.Lewis@cityofhouston.net.

Sara Lewis, President
GCSW Alumni Association



TIME TO
RENEW YOUR
ALUMNI
MEMBERSHIP!

Don't let your membership lapse!
Stay involved with the GCSW and
keep your connections strong!



Alumni Happy Hour at La Tapatia



Student Mixer Sponsored by Alumni Association Board

Join or renew online at
www.mycougarconnection.com
or contact us at
(713) 743-8071

**UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON
GRADUATE COLLEGE
OF SOCIAL WORK**

**237 Social Work Building
Houston, TX 77204-4013**

Ira C. Colby
Dean

Mary Marks Guillory
Director of Development

Ann Liberman, Editor
Director of Alumni
& Career Services

**PHONE:
713-743-8071**

**E-MAIL:
aliberman@uh.edu
or gsswalum@sw.uh.edu**

Connections is a semi-annual publication of the GCSW Office of Alumni and Career Services. Its purpose is to link the GCSW with alumni and the social work community.

GCSW CONTACTS

Telephone Numbers

Dean's Office (713) 743-8085
MSW Admissions (713) 743-8130
Ph.D. Admissions (713) 743-8080
Development (713) 743-3599
Alumni Relations (713) 743-8071

E-mail Addresses

Dean's Officedeans@sw.uh.edu
MSW Admissionsmswinfo@sw.uh.edu
Ph.D. Admissions phdinfo@sw.uh.edu
Alumni Relations gsswalum@sw.uh.edu
Career Services mswjobs@sw.uh.edu
Continuing Ed..... gsswce@central.uh.edu
Field Office mswfield@sw.uh.edu

**Connections can be accessed online at
www.sw.uh.edu/alumni/newsletter.htm**

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

Social Work
Awards Breakfast
March 2

Field Agency Marketplace
March 30

2nd Annual
Greater Texas PeaceJam
April 21-22

GCSW Graduation
May 12



UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON
Learning. Leading.™

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-profit org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Houston, TX
Permit No. 5910

0073018514
UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON
GRADUATE COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK
237 Social Work Building
Houston, TX 77204-4013