



# TAC The Alumni Connector

*SIUE Department of Social Work  
College of Arts and Sciences*

Volume 4 issue 1

Spring Summer-2009

## THANKS FOR THE OPPORTUNITIES

By Kathleen J. Tunney, Ph.D., Associate Professor and Interim Department Chair



As you are likely aware, the Department of Social Work will welcome our new department chair, Dr. Larry Kreuger, on July 1. Therefore, this will be my last message to you as Interim Chair. I would like to thank all faculty, staff, and students for the opportunity to provide leadership this last year.

Like most of us in life, I have accomplished some of my goals, while others remain incomplete. Briefly stated, in this past academic year, we did the following:

- Approved a new Student-Faculty Conflict Resolution Policy, designed to provide guidance to students and faculty alike in the process of clarifying and resolving issues related to the learning environment and academic forward progress.
- Submitted a proposal for MSW revision, which is now moving through the university approval system with anticipated implementation in Fall 10.
- Attempted to hire two new faculty members, a process which was ultimately unsuccessful. We will renew our search early in the fall.
- Worked on reviewing and improving our social work website, a project that is also incomplete at present. We will revisit in the fall, and would be most grateful for any computer geeks out there who have some volunteer time to spare to help continue this important effort.
- Completed the initial stages of the SIUE program review process for the BSW program. This peer review process is required of all university programs on a six-year review cycle. The internal "site team" will visit in the fall. Preliminary results of student and faculty surveys will be analyzed in advance of the fall site visit.
- Completed the first annual "Student Summit Meeting," bringing together the elected student leadership and faculty advisors for the purpose of increasing communication and collaboration among the four student groups in the department.

In closing, I would like to say that these and other initiatives of the department would not have been possible without the continued contribution of faculty, staff, and students. We have a lot of work to do in the future, and we also have a lot to be proud of.

Thanks again for the opportunity to be a part of both the work and the pride.

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## Honors Convocation

By Judy Zimmerman, Department Secretary

Ty Smith was recognized as the Department of Social Work Service Award Winner. This award is given annually to recognize an outstanding student in the department who has an excellent academic record with a minimum of 3.0, membership in the community or professional organizations and maintained an



active and continuous community service/volunteer commitment.

Ty is a volunteer with Heartlinks—a children's bereavement group has been Mentoring Teen Mothers as well as volunteering with the Red Cross. Ty possesses a passion to help others who cannot be heard.

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# It's All About Teamwork

By Michelle Graham, BSW



As the cars round the corner to enter the parking lot and the players run out onto the field, everyone knows it is time for ball season again, but this league is different, from the players, to the parents, to the volunteers, it is an

exceptional league.

A few years ago my sister, Mary Ann, asked me if I would be interested in assisting her and her husband with a baseball league for children with disabilities. With donations of uniforms from the St. Louis league and two baseball fields donated by the Edwardsville Park and Recreation Center, the development of the Madison County league was soon underway.

Challenger Baseball provides players with the opportunity to play on a structured baseball team and as a result increases their level of self-esteem and relationships with peers. Our first year consisted of 32 players that made up two teams. We are now concluding our second year and have doubled the number of players and expanded our league from two teams to four. Challenger Baseball rules are simple. Everyone gets to bat, play on the field, and everyone wins. There are no outs, strikes, and everyone scores a run. This is achieved by the invaluable help of the

buddies. Each player is teamed up with a peer, someone who can assist them with fielding the ball, getting to the bases, or simply offering encouragement along the way.

Over the last two years, I have had the privilege of coaching the Falcons. My team consists of 17 boys and girls in the age range from 7 to 13 years old. Every child is unique, some need minimal assistance and others require more hands on help during the game. I have several players, who were resistant during last year's season, run up to me with anticipation for the start of the game this year. These young boys and girls have not only impacted my life, but the lives of the buddies as well. Strong friendships form throughout the ball season between the buddies and the players. The young volunteers learn the importance of empathy, while at the same time making a difference in a young person's life. This program has not only affected the lives of the children, but brightened the lives of their families as well. It provides a supportive social environment for families who often feel isolated from the community.

The league also offers additional opportunities for social events for the families, such as challenger night with the Gateway Grizzly's, an annual tournament, and the all star game. This league's success is dependent on the support of volunteers and donations. If you would like to contribute in any way or know of a child who would benefit from this league, please contact Mary Ann Byrd at 618-288-1935 or go to [www.challengerbaseball.org](http://www.challengerbaseball.org).

Challenger



Picture: Complements of Ravettas Photography

Baseball

# Readings in Diversity and Social Justice

By Gerald V. O'Brien, PH.D., Associate Professor, Director of the BSW Program



## *Sundown Towns and Driven Out*

A primary concern of those of us in the Social Work profession is social justice, and we are particularly drawn to such issues when the rationale for inequitable treatment of

various groups is race or ethnicity. Furthermore, among the most basic of human rights is the right to live where one chooses. Two recent books, *Driven Out* by Jean Pfaelzer and *Sundown Towns* by James Loewen, each take up this issue in relation to two different historical periods. Pfaelzer's book describes in detail the exclusion of Chinese and Chinese-Americans from West Coast communities, particularly in California, during the 1870s and 1880s. Loewen delineates the practice of removing and excluding African-Americans from towns, many in the Midwest, beginning around the turn of the century. These books set out a number of stark parallels between the two "alarm" periods. While each had its unique aspects, they were both fostered and maintained by similar fears and rationalizations.

As Pfaelzer describes, reaction against the Chinese arose because of a host of concerns, including the increasing number of immigrants, labor competition, contagion fears, control of gold prospects and issues surrounding racial superiority and ethnic stereotypes. Chinese residents were forced out of a large number of coastal communities, and the agitation led to the first major immigration restriction policies targeted at a specific cultural group. The anti-Chinese movement

would be followed several decades later by a second alarm period targeting Japanese immigrants.

Loewen's book is particularly important in that it has a great deal of local relevance, since many of the sundown communities were located in Illinois and surrounding states. He contends, in fact, that at various times (or continually, depending on the town) the vast majority of communities along the Illinois River between Alton and Peoria were sundown towns. It's very disconcerting to note that his book also has contemporary relevance, as many communities continue to "warn away" blacks, in part through their reputation. As with the Chinese on the coast, African-Americans were forced out of communities beginning in the 1890s, often through violent acts such as hangings. Many communities allowed blacks to enter during daylight hours (especially when their labor was required by local businesses or integrated businesses wanted more customers) but had to leave by nightfall. Loewen noted that at least one community even had a siren sound to alert African-Americans when it was time to leave.

As noted, the right to live where one chooses is a basic and undeniable human right. To have this right removed due to racist beliefs is among the greatest abominations in the pantheon of social injustice. Furthermore, as Paulo Freire alluded to in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, such actions serve to dehumanize not only those who are oppressed but also the oppressors. Both of these books shed important light on the rationales and impact of widespread measures of community segregation, and provide historical context for our understanding of contemporary acts of segregation.

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## BSW Program: Year in Review

By Gerald V. O'Brien, PH.D., Associate Professor, Director of the BSW Program

As most of the readers of the TAC are aware, the leadership of the BSW Program changed this past year, as its long-time Program Coordinator Shirley Rakers resigned. We wish Shirley well in her future endeavors, and once again thank her for her service. The Program has seen quite a few other changes this past year. Among other initiatives, we have created our own statistics course within the Department to support quantitative literacy and better prepare students for graduate programs, we have made efforts to fine-tune the delivery of the undergraduate curriculum, and we

have continued to focus on student writing skills.

The Program has seen a very active year on the part of the Student Social Work Association. We owe a debt of thanks to the following outgoing officers of the Association; Stephanie Ondes, Megan Panella, Christie Haskenherm, Carrie Larsen, Kendra Donaldson, and Kelly Frey. Their leadership has been an important factor in the Association's growing presence within the University and the Community.

Lastly, as we close out the academic year, (*cont. Page 5*)

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## “Stand Up & Stand Out Against Prostate Cancer”

By Christian Cooper, MSW Student



My name is Christian Cooper and I am currently interning with East Side Health District as my practicum requirement for the Master of Social Work (MSW) program. I have had the opportunity to work with different

health issues that affect communities and ethnic populations in the City of East St. Louis.

East Side Health District and St. Clair County joined together to promote awareness of an increasing health problem, Prostate Cancer. East Side Health District, in collaboration with other leaders and community organizers, came together to provide a “one stop shop” approach event titled, “Stand Up & Stand Out Against Prostate Cancer” on June 20, 2009.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, African American men have the highest incident rates and deaths from prostate cancer. In an effort to address this issue, East Side Health District located in East St. Louis hosted its’ First Annual *Stand*

*Up & Stand Out against Prostate Cancer* conference. This event was held from 10:00 am - 1:00 pm at Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church, Garfield Hubbard Sr. Complex Banquet Facility located at 616 Garfield Hubbard Sr. Boulevard in East St. Louis, IL.

This conference was designed to educate men ages 40 to 65 in St. Clair County, with a specific focus on African American males, on the importance of prevention of prostate cancer and receiving an annual prostate cancer screening. The conference included a panel of physicians, advocates, survivors and educators who addressed the issues of prostate cancer and were available to answer questions regarding prostate cancer. The Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) test, which is a simple blood test, was available for those who desired to be screened for prostate cancer. There were also vendors at the conference that presented additional information to those attending.

For further information please call East Side Health District at 618-271-8722 ext.119. This project was made possible by funds received from the Illinois Department of

## Spring Commencement 2009 Congratulations from Faculty and Staff !

### *Bachelors of Social Work*

Emily M. Bumbacher, Kendra J. Donaldson, Jennifer K. Ervin, Monique L. Ford, Kelli D. Frey, Michelle L. Graham, Kala A. Hammond, Christie A. Haskenherm, Deadra Humphrey-Vinson, Melissa S. Koishor, Carrie M. Larsen, Tiffany J. Likert, Nicole L. Livell, Reba M. Lockett, Erika R. McIntyre, Alesha N. Morrison, Bethany R. Mulholland, Kayla M. Nickel, Lynda M. Norris, Megan A. Panella, Heather R. Parker, Amanda M. Piepenbrink, Michael L. Poznanovich, Charmaine L. Robertson, Ashley Royce, Kathleen M. Ryan, Dawn E. Schulte, Andrea R. Schultz, Beth A. Smith, Ty K. Smith, Cindy R. Stonich, Tiffany E. Ward, Sara E. Werner, Melissa B. Wesley, Deborah J. Williams, Carol A. Worthington



**SIUE Department of Social Work**

**“Where Crossroads of Academic Excellence and  
Community Commitment Meet”**



## Today's Students - Tomorrow's Leaders

By Brooke Mueth, MSW



Hello!! My name is Brooke Mueth (formerly Brooke Portz) and I am a Program Supervisor at Illinois MENTOR in O'Fallon, IL.

Illinois MENTOR is a specialized foster care agency committed to providing specialized foster care services to children with developmental and medical disabilities. The key to the MENTOR program is the relationship between a child and their mentor. We feel that linking a child with special needs to a person integrated in the community enhances that child's opportunity to grow up and lead a satisfying life.

I perform supervision and monitor all aspects of service delivery to an assigned team of program coordinators (also known as caseworkers).

Prior to entering the MSW program at Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville, I worked at Illinois MENTOR as a program coordinator. After obtaining my MSW degree, I was contacted to return to the agency as a Supervisor. I received my MSW in August 2007.

Aside from work, I enjoy spending time with my husband. We are avid St. Louis Cardinals and St. Louis Rams fans!!

## Where have all the Alumni Gone?

**Melinda Brown**, MSW, 2008 – Community Treatment Home Case Manager, Boys and Girls Town, Missouri.

**Debra Deiters**, MSW, 2008 — Community Integration Supervisor for the Supported Employment Department Judevine Center for Autism, St. Louis, Missouri.

**Kristina Nail**, MSW, 2007, BS, 2006 – Family Counselor in the Youth Services Program at Children's Home and Aid in Belleville, Illinois.

To appear in **Where Have All the Alumni Gone ?**

**E-MAIL** information to kehamil@siue.edu or send to SIUE Social Work Department, Campus Box 1450,

## BSW Program: Year in Review ( continued from page 3)

By Gerald V. O'Brien, PH.D., Associate Professor, Director of the BSW Program

the BSW Program is beginning to gather data and write a self-report in relation to our 2009-2010 assessment review. This review will be undertaken by a group of University personnel under the direction of the Office of Assessment. Drawing on surveys of alumni, current

students and faculty, the Department will submit a report about the current status of the Program at the end of summer. We then will undergo a Program review throughout the academic year, with a Committee Report being submitted during the Spring Semester.

### *American Indian Proverb*

One day I said, "*I will go out and look for my enemies*", and that day I found no friends. The next day I said, "*I will go out and look for my friends*," and that day I found no enemies.

## Alumni Reflections

By John G. Ross, MSW, LCSW, Senior U.S. Probation Officer, Eastern District of Missouri



I can hardly believe that it has been 20 years since I walked the campus of SIUE as a social work student. I was determined to become a change agent and an advocate for at-risk and vulnerable populations. I am forever thankful and grateful for the SIUE faculty members who were there when I made my undergraduate

journey. In June of 1989, I remember how proud I was when a professor took the time out of his schedule to visit me at my first, post-college job. We discussed the positive things that were taking place at my new agency and we discussed several steps that I could take to enhance services that were in need of improvement or change. His input was valuable and helpful as he was an expert in the area of mental retardation, but his mentoring was exceptional and memorable. Shortly after this visit, another professor invited several former students over to check on our respective graduate school successes and gaffes; she offered encouragement, wisdom and a good lunch.

When I walk around the SIUE campus today, the campus has changed tenfold. There are now names for buildings that were only known to me as "One" and "Two" and there are amenities offered to students that would not have seemed possible when I was a student. However, in the midst of all of this change and growth, a constant remains. The faculty continues to be vested in their students and vice versa -- the mentoring process continues to be exceptional. The students continue to be exemplars in the area of social work and demonstrate and possess an incredible ability to express care and concern

for vulnerable groups through advocacy and intervention strategies. I am currently working with such a student and intern, Michael Poznanovich.

On January 13, 2009, Mike amazed me. He called me to report that he would be a few minutes late for his internship as he had a work emergency and was required to complete a report. What I learned later was that prior to reporting for his internship at our office, Mike and a co-worker saved a man's life who suffered a cardiac arrest. Mike and his coworker performed CPR and utilized an Automatic External



Poznanovich

Defibrillator (AED) - the man, who had no pulse and was not breathing, is alive today thanks to Mike's efforts. Upon realizing what Mike had experienced, I offered him the day off. Mike refused and stated that he wanted to work on the various projects that were pending and wanted to meet with the clients who were scheduled to see him on that day. I thought for a

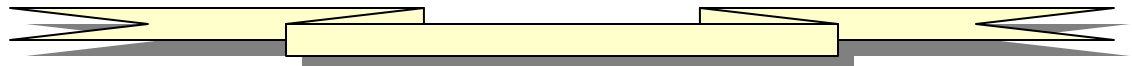
moment that the one life that he saved was clearly evident - there was a pulse and breathing - and ultimately survival. The other lives that he impacted at our office on the same day may not demonstrate positive results as clearly evident as resuscitation and survival, but I am certain that the impact of Mike's work and the work of other SIUE interns like him will impact lives more than what we can imagine -- much like the work of past and current professors, who sow or have sown seeds of knowledge and mentoring that

## Association of Black Student Social Workers

By Janell Smart, MSW Student



The Association of Black Student Social Workers (ABSSW) ended the semester with an Empowerment Session: Understanding the College Experience. The target audience was junior and senior high school students from various communities, many of which were going to be 1st generation college students. The session was nice and we received lots of questions. ABSSW is planning a Grandparents Raising Grandchildren session over the summer.



## Alumni Corner

By William White, LMSW, MSW



Hello my name is William White, and since graduating in 2004, I relocated to Atlanta, Georgia. I have worked as a Peer Group Counselor at a therapeutic boarding school and as a hospital social worker in New Mexico. I am currently employed at Fulton County Court Appointed Special Advocacy (CASA) Inc. as an Advocacy Coordinator at the Juvenile Justice Center Drug Court in

Atlanta, Georgia. The family Drug Court is a collaborative effort of the Fulton County Juvenile Court, Department of Family and Children's Services, the Department of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Addictive Diseases (MH/DD/AD), the parent's counsel, and numerous community treatment providers. As an Advocacy Coordinator I provide professional staff support to CASA volunteers ensuring

that children involved in Drug Court receive sound advocacy and early permanency planning. In addition to interviewing children and families, I am responsible for volunteer training, supervision and coordination of cases. Casa Central serves a diverse population of all ages toward self-sufficiency and a higher quality of life. The ability to advocate for others is a rewarding experience.

I am active in my community as the volunteer Director of Sharon Community Church Counseling Center and serve as the Vice Polaris of Iota Phi Theta Fraternity, Inc., Atlanta Alumni Chapter and, I am a member of NASW Georgia Chapter. My wife and I have two children and as a family we enjoy a variety of outdoor activities. I am licensed at the MSW level and currently exploring options for my LCSW and PH.D. in

## Social Work Scholarship Gala—2010

By Kellene M. Hamilton, LCSW, DCSW

Social Work Scholarship Gala 2010 will feature John P. Foppe as the keynote speaker. Born with seven major birth defects including no arms, John has gone on to lead a remarkable life: Executive Director, Community Link, Breese, Illinois; CEO of Visionary Velocity Worldwide; author, "What's Your Excuse? Making the Most of What You Have" (Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, Tenn., 2002); professional speaker/independent contractor (Zig Zigler, 1992-1995); Master of Social Work Degree, St. Louis University, 2001; and Bachelor of Arts in Communication (Cum Laude), St. Louis University, 1992.

"As the CEO of Visionary Velocity Worldwide, John has worked in 15 different countries. His clients include Fortune 500 companies like Boeing, GE,

and State Farm." John believes, "All things are within reach, when you reach within."



The Gala will be held on Saturday, March 20, 2010, at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville in the Meridian Ballroom. The Scholarship Gala is an annual event to raise money for the Alumni and Friends Scholarship Fund for students seeking scholarship benefits for an education in professional social work leading to a Bachelor and/or Master's Degree in Social Work.

We are pleased to announce that we will be presenting our first Scholarship at the GALA 2010. Former Keynote Speakers include:

Julius K. Hunter, Vickie Newton, and Matt Chambers.



## GALA 2009 MEMORIES





## 10-23-2009 / 6-CEU Event-*Critical Incident Debriefing*

By Deborah F. Vogel, MSW, LCSW

We are very fortunate to have George Smith, MA, LCPC, CSADC as the speaker at St. Elizabeth Hospital on **October 23, 2009, 8:30-4:00 pm** for our Fall CEU Workshop. This will be the fourth workshop that SIUE Social Work Department and St. Elizabeth's Hospital, Belleville, have co-sponsored offering affordable continuing education credits for licensed social workers, licensed professional counselors and other helping professionals.

In this day in age when we have so much crime and natural disasters happening with fires, tornados, hurricanes and floods, as well as accidents on the job and on the roads, it is often the social worker who is called to assist with debriefing the emergency staff, the grieving family, or the friends of those lost or injured.

Have you ever wondered what you would do if you, as a social worker or counselor, were called upon to assist in the after math of a major incident or community disaster?

George Smith is well trained and versed in what we can and should do to help the first responders and families of the victims and wounded. He will present a workshop detailing the steps of critical incident debriefing so that we all are better prepared if we are called upon in the future as helping professionals to assist in a disaster.

George Smith, M.A., L.C.P.C., C.S.A.D.C., is currently working as a Clinical Training Specialist and Licensed Therapist in Mental Health and Substance Abuse Treatment with Chestnut Health Systems in Granite City, Illinois. He has over 30 years experience in the treatment field. Mr. Smith is licensed in Illinois as a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor and certified as a Certified Supervisor Alcohol and Drug Counselor. He has had specialized training in Critical Incident Stress Debriefing, Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing, Red Cross Emergency Response Training, and Crisis Prevention.



Along with his clinical expertise, Mr. Smith has trained hundreds of professional and para-professional staff, teachers, and human service workers in critical areas such as Crisis Intervention Techniques, Critical Incident Stress Debriefings, Administration of Bio-Psycho-Social Evaluations, Motivational Enhancement Therapy, Weapons in the Workplace, Intervening Alone, and other crisis intervention issues.

**Preregistration** is recommended for this workshop. The cost is **\$79.00** which includes free parking, a light continental breakfast, lunch and 6 CEUs. A 50% discount is available for students and 4 or more registrants from the same agency. Call Emily Coffin 618-650-2663 or/e-mail [ecoffin@siue.edu](mailto:ecoffin@siue.edu).



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# PHI Alpha Inducts New Members—April, 2009

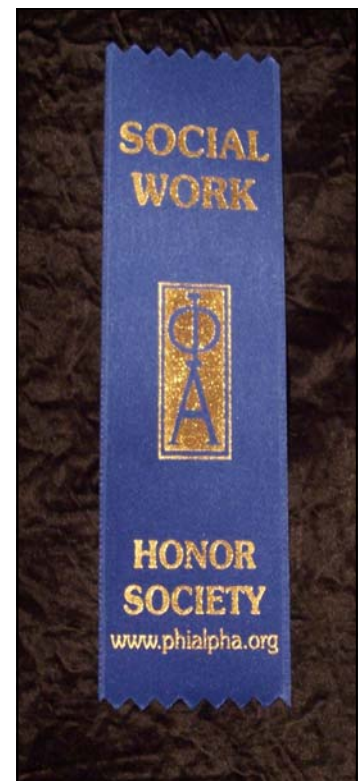
By: Autumn Dunham-Neubert, MSW Student

April, 2009, the IOTA Chapter of Phi Alpha Honor Society for Social Work majors inducted 46 new members: Tara L. Artinger, Emily Mae Bumbacher, Samantha C. Christie, Jessica P. Diel, Janice Curtis Donaldson, Kendra Jean Donaldson, Diana Lynn Herr Douglas, Jennifer K. Ervin, Chealsi Nichole Fancil, Ashley Fensom, Kelli D. Frey, Brianna M. Fritsch, Kelsie E. Genail, Michelle Louise Graham, Kala A. Hammond, Christie A. Haskenherm, Rachel L. Hodge, Carina

R. Jones, Caitlin E. Kos, Carrie M. Larsen, Reba M. Lockett, Kati A. Long, Tracy L. Mathias, Amanda G. McCallister, Marcie A. Moore, Bethany R. Mulholland, Kayla M. Nickel, Lynda M. Norris, Megan Ann Panella, Heather Renee Parker, Michael Louis Poznanovich, Kathleen A. Pritchard, Brittany N. Reynolds, Jamie A. Rickert, Charmaine L. Robertson, Ashley Alexa Royce, Kathleen M. Ryan, Alicia N. Sipp, Ty Kay Smith, Cindy Stonich, Barbara Grace Sweatt, Dustin L. Walls, Laura White, Karen E. Whitted, Carol Ann Worthington, and Stephanie M. Young.



“Through Knowledge the  
Challenge to Serve”



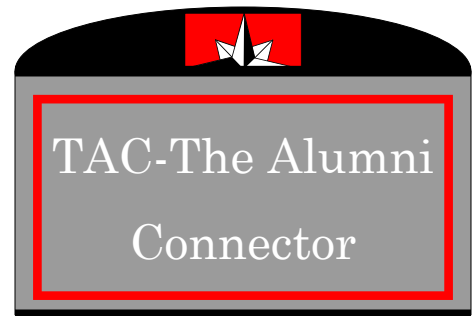
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## REMEMBER TO MARK YOUR CALENDARS

**FOR THE 4TH ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP GALA ON**

**MARCH 20, 2010 5:00—9:30 P.M.**

**MORRIS UNIVERSITY CENTER, MERIDIAN BALLROOM**



## John P. Foppe

Author of "What's Your Excuse?  
Making the Most of What You  
Have"

**Keynote Speaker for 2010  
GALA**