

COMMUNITIES

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 2

SPRING/SUMMER 2015

MISSION STATEMENT:

The DePaul University Master of Social Work Program extends the university's global Vincentian mission of service to marginalized groups, particularly those in the Chicago urban community. The program offers rigorous, personalized, and responsive education, through collaboration with university and community partners in pursuit of social and economic justice. The DePaul University Master of Social Work Program is designed to foster excellence in community-based practice with an emphasis on ethics, leadership, and scholarship.

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Letter from the Department Chair

At the start of this new academic year, we mark the tenth anniversary of the MSW Program at DePaul University. Back then we were still in the basement of 990 W. Fullerton on the Lincoln Park campus and only had Professors Tracey Mabrey and Neil Vincent as faculty, with Troy Harden serving as the field education coordinator. During that year we enrolled our first part-time cohort; trail blazers who took a risk on a shiny new program. Much has changed in ten years. We've graduated more than 150 social workers; we've added more faculty (including Dr. Constance Sheehan, whom we welcome this year – a short introduction piece is included later in this newsletter); and we've moved the Program to the Loop campus. Looking back at how far we've come in ten years, I am excited to see what the next ten years hold.

I'd like to turn my focus now to Julian Bond, a civil rights leader

whose contributions to the struggle for social justice were limitless. Mr. Bond made the observation that "many are attracted to social service – the rewards are immediate, the gratification quick. But if we have social justice, we won't need social service." Mr. Bond, who died this past August, reminds us that we are in a unique position as social workers and social justice activists. Essentially, the ultimate goal of our work is to be out of a job. "If we have social justice, we don't need social service." From the "Black Lives Matter" movement to the refugee crisis in Syria, we are far from a socially just world. I take solace in knowing that I work with colleagues and future colleagues (yes, you students) who continue to struggle side-by-side to create a more socially just world.

Peace,

Noam

Advocacy Day 2015

by Marissa Cirilo



Marissa Cirilo is a second-year student in the two - year program.

This year's Advocacy Day was a new experience for most of us as first-year graduate students in the MSW program at DePaul. Traveling to Springfield, IL was very exciting and something I personally was looking forward to. It was really amazing to see so many individuals from all over the state rallying together in the social work spirit to advocate for the communities



into groups and visit our representatives, who serve our specific zip codes in Chicago respectively. Attempting to meet your representatives in their office can be anticlimactic as most will either not be in their office, in meetings, or in session. In this case, we were able to leave a letter addressed to them as well as the bills we support, which we hope they do as well.

In all, Advocacy Day is an event in which seasoned and first time attendees can come together and experience the political climate of how policies and bills work and how sessions run in the Senate and the House. If it is

your first time, enjoy the conference and the atmosphere of support that your fellow social activists will lend, and observe the comings and goings of different people and the politics that are present at the state capital. More importantly, have fun with your classmates, and learn something that you find interesting. A word to the wise: do not wear heels that you can't be in for more than 3-4 hours. You will be on your feet walking, and being barefoot in the capital is a less than savory site for a professional. I know I look forward to attending next year to continue our advocacy as a program.

Cheers!

we serve in Illinois. The conference portion of the schedule was quite informative; speakers such as Andrea Durbin came to talk on a variety of topics such as at-risk youth dealing with poverty and homelessness, for example. Mrs. Durbin spoke to the immediate threat that many youth face because of Governor Rauner's budget cuts in 2015. We were then able to separate



Student Presentations

Five of the program’s second year students had the opportunity to present at conferences in the months before graduation in June.

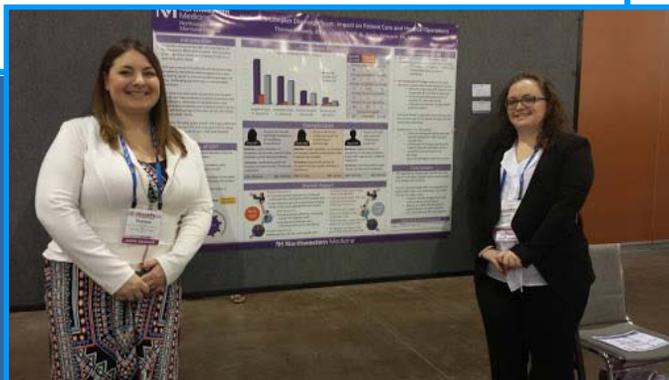
Four of the Department of Social Work’s students presented at **Crossing Boundaries**, the second annual LAS Interdisciplinary Graduate Student Conference held March 6, showcasing work by graduate students across the college’s many departments and programs. **Rasheen Gadson** presented *Intersectionality and Its Effects on the Social Work Profession* and **Bernadette Muloski** presented *Youth-Led Community Organizing in Chicago Hispanic Immigrant Communities*. **Maria Ferrera** attended the conference; Bernadette has worked with Dr. Ferrera on the healthcare-focused research project .

Lizbeth Gomez and **Sara Frohman’s** presentation was *DePaul University Masters of Social Work Program and Arab American Family Services: A Community Partnership to Conduct Participatory Action Research*. The two have worked with **Sonya Crabtree-Nelson** on this research, and she also attended. Department Chair **Noam Ostrander** has served on the conference committee for both years.



Clockwise from upper right:

Sonya Crabtree– Nelson, Lizbeth Gomez, Sara Frohman, Maria Ferrera, Bernadette Muloski, and Rasheen Gadson



Theresa Horowitz and Kaitlin Peterson

At the 2015 ACMA Annual Case Management Conference in Phoenix, **Kaitlin Peterson** along with **Theresa Horowitz**, her field instructor this year at Northwestern Memorial Hospital, presented the poster: *Without a Complex Discharge Team: Impact on Patient Care and Hospital Operations*.

Faculty Update - Maria Ferrera

From Spring 2015: These past few months have allowed me to enjoy both research and work in the immigrant community.

Through my **YHSC Impact Study**, I continue to document the progress and impact of a youth-led, peer-to-peer health promotion program which has been doing outreach



Maria Ferrera, is Assistant Professor in the department, and received her PhD and MA from the University of Chicago - School of Social Service Administration (SSA).

within undocumented and immigrant communities as well as promoting positive youth development. Through the **Youth Health Service Corps (YHSC)**, also known as "5+1+1=20," Pastor **Walter Coleman**, Health Coordinator **Miriam Perez** and the staff of Pilsen-based community organization **Centro Sin Fronteras (CSF)** have been acting on behalf of the immigrants who are categorically denied health care. I learn from them what it means to truly move people and organize communities. I am thankful to both the **Steans Center for Community Based Research** and the **Center for Latino Studies Program** for their ongoing support and allowing me to continue this research as a Faculty Fellow. In the past few months, I have been able to disseminate

information about YHSC and present preliminary findings to the **SRCD (Society for Research in Child Development)**, **SSWR (Society for Social Work Research)**, and DePaul's 8th Annual **Health Disparities and Social Justice Conference** this academic year. This work with community partners has been published in the recent issue of **Family and Community Health Journal**, in an article entitled, **Empowering Immigrant Youth in Chicago: Utilizing CBPR to Document the Impact of a Youth Health Service Corps Program**.

I have also been invited to speak about my experiences using the **CBPR (Community Based Participatory Research)** approach in the annual Steans Center **Faculty Seminar on Community-based Research** and the **7th Annual Asian American & Pacific Islander Policy Research Consortium (AAPIPRC)**. I will also be presenting the work of YHSC along with CSF staff and youth participants at the **APHA (American Public Health Association) Annual Meeting and Exposition** in Chicago this fall.

The need for social justice work within immigrant communities, including the Filipino American community has never felt so great to me than right now. This past year I have worked with some amazing other Fil Ams to co-found the **DIWA** network, a collective movement of

Filipinos and Filipino Americans concerned with tending to the emotional, social, psychological and physical well-being within the community.

I have been engaging in global outreach through the **Bayanihan Foundation Worldwide**, an organization that has been working to promote the quality of life in the Philippines and contributing to positive social change through: diaspora giving, strategic local and global partnerships, and expanding awareness of the rich culture and history of the Philippine Islands. As a result of my partnership with the Foundation, I am just now developing a new research project entitled: **The NextGen Cultural Portals Project**, which will document the progress and impact of an immersion program within the Philippines, and will follow the narratives of second generation Filipino American Bayanihan Fellows who will be traveling abroad and exploring their individual and ethnic identity development.

I have been serving as an affiliated faculty to DePaul's WGS Department, and am extremely excited to serve as affiliated faculty to DePaul's newly formed **Critical Ethnic Studies Program** and The Public Health's **Center for Health Equity** this upcoming year. I enjoyed teaching this year immensely, and appreciate the level of commitment and talent our student body clearly hold.

***Congratulations to the Class of 2015!
I hope you keep us posted on your adventures in the field!***

Department Luncheon with Sister Helen Prejean



by **Cynthia Aynilian**

Cynthia is a second-year student in the two-year DePaul MSW Program

executed; Reed’s case is still pending. Sister Helen really brought to life how so many

innocent people are being put on death row. It is really hard to hear how extremely unjust, and racially-biased death penalty sentences are.

The death penalty affects not only the person who is sentenced, but also the families involved, friends, the guards, and the communities. As social workers we are on the ground working with vulnerable populations. It is important in our work to continue advocating that all life is valuable and matters.

Katie Hoyer, a first year student from the program, noted: “Helen Prejean’s speech was informative and captivating. Her personal stories of compassion and acceptance provided me with new

insight into the death penalty and social justice throughout our country.” For myself, I can positively state that my classmates and I are looking forward to seeing Sister Helen speak again in the future.

Note: this article was written in spring, right after the presentation. For updates about cases mentioned and Sr. Helen’s work go to : <http://www.sisterhelen.org/>

On April 29, 2015 as part of her fourth annual week-long visit to DePaul University, **Sister Helen Prejean** came to speak with Master of Social Work program students, alumni, faculty and field instructors on her work with **The Ministry Against the Death Penalty**. Sr. Helen is one the country’s leading advocates in this cause.

During her talk she discussed a couple of cases that she has worked on, such as those of Rodney Reed and Richard Glossip, both seen as innocent of the crimes for which they were sentenced. Glossip has not been



Sr. Helen Prejean



Constance Sheehan, PhD, LCSW



Constance Sheehan

The Department of Social Work welcomes the newest member of its full-time faculty.

Constance Sheehan, PhD, LCSW received her Doctorate of Philosophy in Social Work from **Loyola University Chicago** and her MSW at **New York University School of Social Work**. She completed an Interdisciplinary Fellowship in Palliative Care at the Bronx VA

Dr. Sheehan has a long-standing interest in restorative justice, human rights, and mindfulness practices. She is fully teacher trained in **Mindful Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)** through **UMASS Medical Center** and has written a chapter on *Mindfulness and*

Restorative Justice in Social Work (2016). Dr. Sheehan maintains an active interest in the integration of mindfulness in social work, mental health, and restorative justice approaches.

Dr. Sheehan was Clinical Faculty for nine years at **The Family Institute at Northwestern University**, where she is the founding director of **The Mental Health Human Rights Clinic** serving psychological needs of those seeking asylum in the United States. She has taught as an adjunct at several universities in Chicago since 2005. Dr. Sheehan is a frequent presenter at conferences and workshops locally and nationally and maintains a private practice in Evanston, IL.

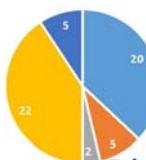
2015/16 Students - a Snapshot

Looking ahead to the new academic year, the charts below offer an overview of the department's enrolled students, including areas people hail from, both geographically and academically.

Prior Focus of Study

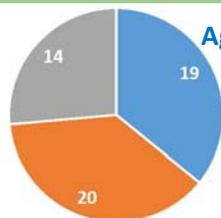


- Psychology
- Sociology
- Social Work
- Languages/History
- Criminal Justice and Law
- Human Development/Health
- Education
- Anthropology
- Other



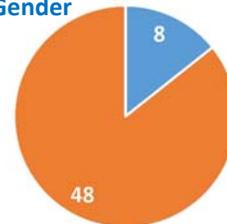
- Black/African-American
- Hispanic/Latino
- Asian
- White
- Not Specified

Age



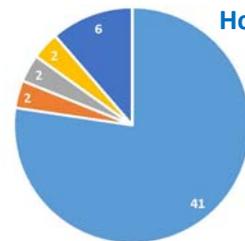
- 22-24
- 25-30
- Over 30

Gender



- Male
- Female

Home States



- IL
- IN
- CA
- MI, MN
- UT, NY, AL, MD, WA

Alumni Updates

From Sarah Closser (Class of 2010):

"I'm excited to share that in October, 2014 I relocated to Eugene, Oregon. I'm enjoying the relaxed pace, milder winters and have found a new love of hiking through Oregon's national forests. Most recently, I accepted a full-time position as Program Manager with **CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates for Children)** of Marion County. CASA has a long standing history of doing amazing advocacy work for abused and neglected youth in the foster care system nationally. I'm thrilled to join a team dedicated to making change and furthering the mission of CASA in Oregon.

I also wanted to thank and acknowledge DePaul MSW program's adjunct faculty, Ms. **Alison McKenna**. Alison was instrumental in my interviewing, references and position negotiating process. From 2,250 miles away, she continues to be compassionate and endlessly supportive of the alumni of the program.

.....

And the department congratulates **Quinn Banks** (formerly Matthews) (Class of 2011) who recently obtained her **LCSW** in Florida.



Deanna Filkins (class of 2010) is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) and an experienced and passionate clinician whose work includes building resiliency in at-risk youth and their families; she has been working in the community mental health field for the past seven years. In addition, she has knowledge in collaborating with various school systems to expand mental health awareness and interventions, especially within the population of high school youth. Deanna was a contributing author to the recently published *Interconnected Systems Framework Monograph: Advancing Education Awareness: Interconnecting School*

Mental Health and School-Wide Positive Behavior Support and has spoken at several state and national conferences regarding the importance of her high school group work within the PBIS framework.

In 2015 she became the new executive director at **Glen Ellyn Youth and Family Counseling Services**. The primary mission of the agency is to promote the mental health and well-being of youth, families, and the larger Glen Ellyn community through the provision of professional counseling services and community based support and education. Deanna is committed to serving the larger Glen Ellyn community with creativity and passion to empower and strengthen youth and their families.

(adapted from [chicagotribune.com: http://www.chicagotribune.com/suburbs/glen-ellyn/community/chi-ugc-article-glen-ellyn-youth-and-family-counseling-servic-3-2015-02-03-story.html](http://www.chicagotribune.com/suburbs/glen-ellyn/community/chi-ugc-article-glen-ellyn-youth-and-family-counseling-servic-3-2015-02-03-story.html))

COMMUNITIES is a newsletter of the DePaul University Department of Social Work. Contributors include Deanna Filkins, Cynthia Aynilian, Constance Sheehan, Maria Ferrera, Sarah Closser, Marissa Cirilo, Bernadette Muloski, Noam Ostrander, Syreeta Carter, Quinn Banks, and Lee Casteel. Special thanks to everyone who submitted photos. Please direct submissions, suggestions, and comments (including alumni updates) to mswprogram@depaul.edu

Second year, full-time student Bernadette Muloski, as part of her graduate assistant work supporting field, conducted interviews with students in their second year placements. One aim of this was to give current and prospective students of the program an idea of the variety of settings and experiences in Community Practice placements. These interviews are planned to be collected annually and posted on the department's website; one example (of Syreeta Carter at her placement at the Chicago Park District) is included here.

Mission Statement



Internship Profile— Chicago Park District

“The Chicago Park District Website states that “The mission of the Chicago Park District is to:

- Enhance the quality of life in Chicago by becoming the leading provider of recreation and leisure opportunities
- Provide safe, inviting and beautifully maintained parks and facilities
- Create a customer-focused and responsive park system that prioritizes the needs of children and families”

Internship Profile (from Spring 2015)

This year **Syreeta Carter** is completing her Advanced Year internship at the Chicago Park district. Syreeta wanted to explore options for increasing her program evaluation and development skills. The Chicago Park District offers several opportunities for social work interns, based on the interest of the student and the current needs of the various sites.

As an intern at the Chicago Park District, Syreeta is working on two major projects. The first project is to work on the Teen Leadership Club at the park district Women’s Park and Gardens site. This site is located at 18th and Indiana in the South Loop. The staff at this site have established a strong relationship with the community and brought people together. The Teen Leadership Club focuses on teen entrepreneurship and uses the Youth

Continued on page 9

Internship Profile—Chicago Park District

Continued from page 8

Quality Program

Curriculum. Each session runs for 10 weeks. As the intern on this project Syreeta helps run the logistics of the club, but does not facilitate. She is involved in making decisions about what subjects would be covered, recruiting at schools and at the recreation department, and advertising. Currently, there are nine teens in the program, which is significant since this is the first teen program offered at this park district site. The second project that Syreeta is working on this year is a city wide coach training for male coaches working with female athletes. The three topics covered by this training are reframing conflict, sportsmanship, and interpersonal relationships. Syreeta began working on this program by researching curriculum for coaches and deciding what would be included in the training. She will finish her internship year by designing a manual for the training and a plan for evaluation.

This internship involves very little direct service and working with others. While there are team meetings, most of the work is done independently and then brought to the team later. Supervision has been very flexible, as that is the style that Syreeta prefers. Her supervisor works with each intern to determine what style of supervision is going to work best for them. While some interns have a set time to meet weekly, Syreeta checks in with her supervisor at the beginning and end of her day.

During this time, she and her supervisor talk about what she is working on and present any questions that come up. Her work primarily takes place in the park district corporate office downtown. She has her own desk and computer, and access to any supplies needed for her work.

Syreeta said that this internship involves macro practice elements because the work effects the entire city of Chicago. Each park district has their own programming, but they all work together on common goals. There are 570 parks included in the Chicago Park District and representatives from each park meet regularly for the Park Advisory Council. One project that Syreeta has worked on for her coursework is a recommendation to install an individual advisory council at each park in addition to the one that includes all the parks. This would allow for structured input to be made at multiple levels of the park district system.

Syreeta feels that this placement integrates well with her classwork. She often uses logic models and other tools learned in program evaluation. The community practice class helps Syreeta plan for programs because she understands the need to know the population that is being served. Recruitment for programs will be different based on the individuals being targeted. One difference is the expectations for a program proposal. While in class she is writing a thorough analysis of needs and how a program would address them, the Chicago Park District first asks her to write up a one page initial proposal before it will be

explored by the intended park office.

Syreeta would recommend this placement to other students. She feels that students who would be a good fit are able to work independently and be good at communicating. They need to be able to work with a team and be vocal with their ideas because the staff are looking for new things to try. This internship involves a lot of writing and editing, so students should also be comfortable with this.

Top 3 things learned:

Syreeta learned how to apply different topics learned in class. She was able to create a logic model that was used for her programs and see how it helps evaluation of a program.

She learned about the Youth Quality Program Model curriculum. The teen program will prepare youth to become recreation leaders. This provides job opportunities for young people. Syreeta also learned that when teens apply to be recreation leaders the park districts want individuals with previous volunteer experience.

Syreeta learned to be confident in her ideas and decisions. When she began this internship, she was more reserved in stating her opinion because she did not know if it was right or wrong. She realizes that even if something is wrong, it is still a valuable learning experience.

For more information:

<http://www.chicagoparkdistrict.com/>

<http://www.chicagoparkdistrict.com/parks/Chicago-Womens-Park-and-Gardens/>

DEPAUL UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Department of Social Work



14 E Jackson Boulevard

Suite 900

Chicago, IL 60604

Phone: 312-362-7325

Fax: 312-36207327

E-mail: mswprogram@depaul.edu

Web: las.depaul.edu/msw

New MSWSA Board Elected

The Master of Social Work Student Association (MSWSA) is open to all admitted MSW students and represents the voice of full-time and part-time students in the operation and direction setting of the program.

The MSWSA board for
AY 2015-2016 is:

- **President:** Marissa Cirilo
- **Vice-President:** Melvin Bruce
- **Treasurer:** Laura Bustos
- **Secretary:** Sheree Rome
- **NASW Rep:** Michael Berger
- **Part –Time Rep:** Nancy Martinez

*And to round out the
Spring/Summer news, we
congratulate the newest of
our department's alumni:*

Brittany Blackmon
Syreeta Carter
Benjamin Ellenson
Marcos Erazo
Sara Frohman

Rasheen Gadson
Aracely Galvan
Nancy Gavilanes
Lizbeth Gomez
Caitlyn Graves
Nicole Hughes
Elmida Kulovic
Sevana Malkasian
Bernadette Muloski

Gregory O'Brien
Kaitlin Peterson
Sara Primus
Kathryn Raginis
Durrell Sheppard
Esmeralda Zepeda
Abigail Smith
Karly Smock



**Congratulations to
the class of 2015!**