

Maria J. Ferrera received her PhD and MA from the University of Chicago- School of Social Service Administration (SSA) and received her BS/BA in Psychology and Social Work from Loyola University in Chicago. She has served for over 20 years as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker in the areas of child welfare and medical social work, and continues to do work in the Filipino American and other immigrant communities. Her areas of practice and research revolve around: community-based, socially just practices and mixed methods research with racial and ethnic minority youth and families; decolonization methods and practices; the influence of historical trauma on ethnic identity development; mental health and health disparities within minority and immigrant communities.

Awards and Recognitions

Faculty Research Fellow, Provost's Collaborative Research Grant, 2016-18
Recipient, DePaul Public Service Council Grant for Community Based Service Learning Research, 2013-14; 2016-17
Recipient, DePaul University Research Council Grant for Competitive Research, 2013-14; 2016-17
Faculty Fellow, DePaul Center for Latino Studies, 2014-15
Faculty Fellow, DePaul Steans Center for Community Based Research, 2013-14
Fellow, National Institute of Mental Health -Council on Social Work Education Minority Research, 2005-08

Publications

Peer Reviewed Journal Articles

Ferrera, M. J. (In press) Integrating Principles of Positive Minority Youth Development and Health Promotion to Empower the Immigrant Community: A Case Study in Chicago. *Journal of Community Practice*.
[Working paper available through The Center for Community Health Equity at:
http://media.wix.com/ugd/23551f_9259b4cb5fa9403e9c770f22459b8ff5.pdf.]

Ferrera, M. J. (In press). The Transformative Impact of Cultural Portals on the Ethnic Identity Development of Second Generation Filipino American Emerging Adults. *Journal of Ethnic and Cultural Diversity in Social Work* (DOI: 10.1080/15313204.2016.1141739).

Ferrera, M. J. (2016). The Burden of Colonial Debt and Indebtedness in Second Generation Filipino American Families. *Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare*, 43(3),155-178.

Ferrera, M. J., Feinstein, R.T., Walker, W., & Gehlert, S. (2016). Embedded Mistrust Then and Now: Findings of a Focus Group Study on African American Perspectives on Breast Cancer and its Treatment. *Critical Public Health*, 26(4) (DOI: 10.1080/09581596.2015.1117576).

Ferrera, M. J., Sacks, T.K., Nixon, J. T., Perez, M., Asis, D., Coleman, W.E. (2015). Empowering Immigrant Youth in Chicago: Utilizing CBPR to Document the Impact of a Youth Health Service Corps Program. *Family and Community Health Journal*, 38(1):12-21.

Ferrera, M. J., Crabtree-Nelson, S., & Ostrander, N. (2013). Establishing a Community of Inquiry through Hybrid Courses in Clinical Social Work Education. *Journal of Teaching in Social Work (Special Issue on Distance Learning and Online Education in Social Work)*: 33, 4-5.

Refereed Book Chapters and Essays

Hensler, C. R. & Ferrera, M. J. (In press) Decolonizing Pinay Motherhood. *The Pin@y Radical Imagination Reader*. Melissa-Ann Nievera-Lozano & Tony Santa Ana, Editors.

Ferrera, M. J. (2015). Awakenings and Movement: The Chicago Area Youth Health Service Corps. *AREA Chicago*, Issue #15.

Ferrera, M. J., Ostrander, N., & Crabtree-Nelson, S. (2014). Establishing a Community of Inquiry through Hybrid Courses in Clinical Social Work Education in Kurzman, P.A. & Maiden, R.P. (Eds.) *Distance Learning and Online Education in Social Work*. New York: Routledge-Taylor & Francis Group.

Ferrera, M. J. (2013) Glimpses into the Indigenous: Cultural Portals and the Ethnic Identity Development among Second Generation Filipino Americans in *Back from the Crocodile's Belly: Philippine Babaylan Studies and the Struggle for Indigenous Memory*. Tera Maxwell, Leny Strobel and Lily Mendoza (Editors). San Francisco: Center for Babaylan Studies.

Op-Ed

Ferrera, M. & Sanchez, B. (2017, February 13). We Have Your Back: How Educators Can Support Undocumented Students. *Diverse Issues in Education*. <http://diverseeducation.com/article/92592/>.

Community Research Report

Andal, J., Azada, J. and Ferrera (Avrushin), M. (2006). *Are We Empowered Yet? A Community Report on the Needs Assessment Survey of the Chicago Filipino American Community*. Retrieve from: http://issuu.com/operationmango/docs/operation_mango_are_we_empowered_yet

Dr. Ferrera has presented her work at various multi-disciplinary conferences, including those sponsored by the: APHA (American Public Health Association), SRCD (Society for Research in Child Development), SSWR (Society for Social Work and Research), Critical Ethnic Studies Association, ACA (American Counseling Association), CSWE (Council on Social Work Education), FANHS (Filipino American National Historical Society), Center for Babaylan Studies, and DePaul's Health Disparities and Social Justice Conference.

Current Research

Inequality of Life Expectancy Study

Utilizing a critical ethnographic approach, this study investigates multiple factors in relation to health and life expectancy in the city of Chicago, including how the built environment shapes practices and decision-making of local residents. In partnership with CDPH (The Chicago Department of Public Health), the research team explores and examines contributing factors to the twelve-year variance in life expectancy in two Chicago neighborhoods: The Lower West Side/Pilsen and Washington Park. Co-Investigators: Dr. Judith Singleton, DePaul College of Science and Health and Dr. Akilah Martin, School of New Learning.

Undocumented Immigrant Youth Mental Health Study

This project engages undocumented youth and emerging adults from multiple ethnic groups to better understand their experiences. Utilizing mixed methods, the research team seeks to identify key struggles and concerns of youth surrounding immigration status, the intersection of identities, as well as what kind of psychological and social support is necessary to assist them during this critical developmental period. Co-Investigator: Dr. Basia Ellis, University of Chicago, Department of Comparative Human Development.

NEXTGEN Cultural Portals Study

This study seeks to document the impact of Bayanihan Foundation's NextGen 'Pagbabalik' Program for second generation Filipinx American participants as it relates to their ethnic identity development and learning about their cultural heritage. The study aims include: 1) to document the progress of the NextGen 'Pagbabalik' Program initiated by Bayanihan Foundation Worldwide; 2) examine the processes of critical conscientization involved in the program including understandings of social justice work; and 3) examine the processes of identity development among participants of the program.

The YHSC (Youth Health Service Corps) Impact Study

In partnership with CSF (Centro Sin Fronteras) and utilizing a community-based participatory research (CBPR) approach, this study examines the impact of a program that is trying to address the healthcare dilemma of uninsured, undocumented and

new immigrants. The YHSC - "5+1=20" campaign builds on youth capacity to promote health and increase health literacy through community outreach, as well as enhance positive minority youth development.

COURSES TAUGHT:

MSW 411 and 412: Human Behavior in the Social Environment I and II

MSW 450: Positive Minority Development: Examining Narratives of Resilience among Youth of Color (Elective)

MSW 481,482, and 483: Foundation Practice I, II and III

MSW 484: Advanced Standing Practice

MSW 491, 492, and 493: Foundation Field Education I, II, and III

MSW 494: Advanced Standing Field Education

MSW 581, 582, and 583: Community Practice I, II, and III

MSW 591, 592, and 593: Advanced Field Education I, II, and III

Affiliate Faculty, Center for Community Health Equity, Women's and Gender Studies and Critical Ethnic Studies

Current Faculty Advisor, UNICEF -DePaul and ACE (Asian Cultural Exchange) Student Organizations

Community Service

Active member of *CIMH* (Coalition for Immigrant Mental Health), a community based collaborative and research informed initiative that is a partnership between undocumented individuals and mental health practitioners, community organizers, researchers, and allies that work to promote awareness of culturally and linguistically appropriate mental health services through education, advocacy and resource sharing; in order to improve and facilitate access to services for immigrant groups.

Co-founding and active member of *DIWA*, a network of mental health professionals, community activists and allies facilitating dialogue, providing education and training regarding the social, emotional, physical and mental health needs of the Filipino American community in the Chicagoland area.

Board Member of *Bayanihan Foundation Worldwide*, a non-profit organization that promotes youth leadership among second generation Filipinx Americans; conducts public education and outreach promoting the clean-up of toxic wastes in former U.S. military installations in Clark and Subic and the lack of recognition of over 50,000 Amerasians (children of American military personnel) left behind in the Philippines; and addresses other social issues affecting Filipinx in the United States and abroad through strategic partnerships and linkage agreements. Serving integral role within the NextGen program, which engages second generation Filipinx Americans and provides scholarships for social justice-focused immersion trips to the Philippines.