

THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

# INTERACTION

Norman, OK

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Fall 2008

*Celebrating 90 Years of Social Work Education*



**TOGETHER WE CAN CHANGE THE WORLD**



## Inside this issue:

Director's Report	2
Board of Visitors Report	3
Practicum News	4
CWPEP	5
OU - Tulsa Program News	6 & 7
Program Updates	8 & 9
Annual Social Work Day	10

## Message from:

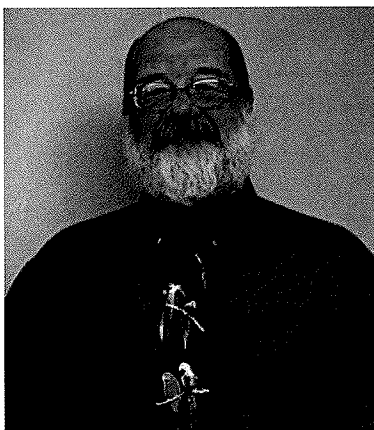
- Our Director

## Upcoming Events:

- Annual Social Work Day

## Director's Report

*By Donald R. Baker, Ph.D., Director*



According to a recent journal article, the University of Oklahoma School of Social Work was ranked 39<sup>th</sup> out of 69 graduate social work programs based on the mean of all professional journal rankings of scholarly productivity published from 1990 to 2003 (Feldman, 2006). Clearly the School is 'up-there' with many fine programs across the nation in terms of faculty productivity. As Feldman points out, scholarly productivity is only one measure

of the quality of a social work education program. Other variables that influence reputation include: the leadership positions of the School's graduates; the size, stature and relative influence of the School's alumni; the content, quality and coherence of the School's educational program; the quality and effectiveness of the School's teachers; and, perhaps most important, the extent of learning and practice effectiveness of the School's graduates. There is much to do to bring the School of Social Work to the point of prominence that its alumni, students and faculty desire and deserve. In this brief message, I will focus on a discussion of the things that the School and its faculty are doing and planning to improve the practice effectiveness of the School's graduates and raise the status of the School within the State, region and Nation.

We are growing our faculty resources. We have recently added Dr. Susy Villegas to our practice faculty at OU-Norman. Dr. Villegas will be teaching in the area of advanced direct practice with a specialty in families. We will be recruiting another Assistant Professor for the direct practice area in the fall of 2007 and with these additions our Direct Practice faculty will become stronger and better able to serve our students in this important area of our curriculum.

We have also added a Clinical Assistant Professor to the OU-Tulsa program. Ms. Lori Franklin, formerly of Tulsa Family and Children's Services, will be joining the Tulsa faculty this fall and will teach in the area of direct practice. In the fall we will also be recruiting for an Assistant Professor position to replace Dr. Sondra Burman who will be retiring from our faculty in August, 2007. I want to take this opportunity to wish Dr. Burman well in her future endeavors.

We had a very busy academic year with the faculty working hard to reorganize both the program and the curriculum to better address the needs of our students. We have developed an integrative seminar for the second year Direct Practice students to establish a stronger linkage between theory-based course work and the all important block field practicum that students take in their very last semester of the program. We have created more flexibility in our program so as to allow students to extend their educational process if needed. For example, our Advanced Standing students, those who are in our nine month accelerated program, can actually extend their education over an additional year if needed. We are also extending our Administration and Community Planning concentration to OU-Tulsa which will place the complete 2<sup>nd</sup> year curriculum in Tulsa beginning in the fall of 2007. The faculty thinks

that these changes create a more flexible approach to graduate education and a more 'student friendly' educational experience.

To guide us in our program and curriculum planning efforts, the School has sponsored two retreats over the last year – one in the spring with the School's Board of Visitors and one in the fall for the faculty. The second retreat has built on our first effort with the BOV and has allowed the faculty to focus on four areas of concern as we move the program forward: increasing faculty scholarship and productivity; increasing the rigor with which students are taught within the program – particularly in reference to professional writing; seeking ways to better support students financially; and, working to develop stronger public relations with the larger University and the social work professional community.

The School is becoming very future directed – with a number of new forward looking initiatives I would like to mention. The faculty is looking to strengthen our relationship with the OU Health Sciences Center. We have already been working with Allied Health to increase our involvement in the Gerontological Certification program, an effort that we are coordinating with Ms. Sandra Edge-Boyd. We have most recently begun to work with the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences to enhance our course content in the area of chemical dependency treatment. This semester we have placed our very first student with Ms. Donna Hammond, the social work faculty member in the Department. We are also beginning to work on an infant mental health initiative with Ms. Karen Irely and the Infant Mental Health Association – a project that is also in its infancy, so to speak, but offers real promise to the School's efforts to strengthen its involvement in mental health more generally and the nexus of child welfare and mental health more specifically.

Last, but certainly not least, the School is collaborating with the department of Modern Languages and Literatures within the College of Arts and Sciences to develop an online course in Spanish for Social Workers. Mr. Luis Silve, a faculty member in MLL, is preparing this course and we will be offering this course in the spring of 2008. We are planning to extend this course offering to the practice community as a continuing education opportunity and will be looking into the possibility of providing continuing education units to social work practitioners taking the course. I would like to thank Dean Paul Bell and Ms. Karen Cozart for their support and help in making this course a reality. I think it fits a present and future need of the social work practice community in Oklahoma.

As a closing note, I would like to remind the reader that the School is coming on its 90<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration – an event that coincides with the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the State. This suggests how integral the development of social work within Oklahoma has been to the development of the State. Dr. Julia Norlin, former Director of the School, has graciously consented to be the Chair of the planning committee for our upcoming birthday party. We will be convening social workers, alumni, and friends of the School at the Oklahoma History Museum on the evening of October 26, 2007 for this event. I wish to thank Judy for all the hard work she and her dedicated planning committee have accomplished and all of the hard work they have before them.

Feldman, R. (2006). Reputation, Rankings, and Realities of Social Work Schools: Challenges for Future Research. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 42.3, 483-505.

## Board of Visitors Report

The BOV has continued its busy schedule the past year. One of the highlights was the OU School of Social Work 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala held at the Oklahoma Historical Society, Oklahoma City. Board Officers and members assisted in planning and enjoyed a memorable evening.

Board members attended while other were program presenters during the NASW 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual State Conference held March 30-31 and April 1, 2008 at the OU College of Continuing Education. NASW Pioneers Ruth Knee and Ina Javallas joined Virginia Olds, Owen Pollard and Eunice McDowell, for a lively discussion and historical review of their social work careers. August 25, 2007 proved to be a significant date when the BOV building Improvement Committee chaired by Mike Fogarty met with OU President David Boren. Committee members Tim O'Connor, Sue Lunsford, Gail Lapidus, Rietta Miller and BOV Chairman were also present when President announced plans for a new building.

Board, faculty and students joined in mourning the loss and celebrating the life of Markisha Gates, undergraduate student. The BOV spearheaded efforts to address immediate financial issues faced by Markisha's family. Supportive contacts and efforts resulted in contributions to the School's fund in behalf of the Gates family. BOV member, Evelyn Seaton, deserves recognition for her response enabling immediate provision of food in behalf of the Gates extended family.

The BOV is enthusiastically working with Director Don Baker to launch a History of Social Work in Oklahoma Committee; to be chaired by Dr. David Moxley; a curriculum study committee; and a BOV fund raising financial support. Committee to address financial needs of students and the education program mutual efforts are also underway to plan the 2009 Annual Social Work Day.

Ina Javallas , Chairman

## SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK BOARD OF VISITORS



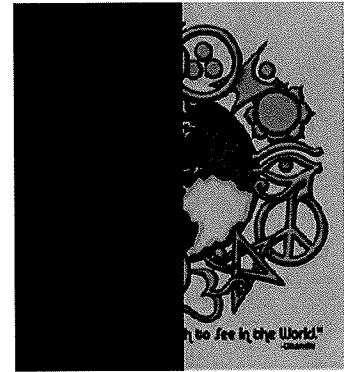
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# Practicum Program News

## Notes from the Field

The practicum program continues grow and expand on both campuses. The Practicum Manual and Practicum webpage have both been revised to reflect our ever growing use of technology in the Practicum program. The Practicum Manual features a new design created by student Shelby J. Kanaly (see picture). Please take some time to visit our new Practicum website

<http://www.ou.edu/socialwork/practicum/manual.html>



**Laurie Bradford** joined the Practicum program as administrative assistant in September 2007. Her organizational and technical skills will enhance the program as we move toward the use of the new database and tracking systems.



Martha Scales

**Martha Scales**, LSW, the statewide Coordinator of the Child Welfare Professional Enhancement Program for the last seven years has stepped down from this full time position and will now work part time with CWPEP students on the Tulsa campus and assist

**Barbara Bramble**, OU-Tulsa Practicum Coordinator, with the practicum planning for all OKDHS MSW and CWPEP students. Martha also will oversee and coordinate the specialized CWPEP practicum unit in OKDHS, Tulsa County D; this practicum unit serves CWPEP MSW students and CWPEP BSW students from NSU and ORU. Martha serves as the liaison with OKDHS for the Tulsa Social Work Program. The full time statewide Coordinator for CWPEP is **Linda Smith**, MSW, who is housed on the Norman campus.

The University of Oklahoma School of Social Work recognized winners of field education awards at a reception for graduates held in May. Two graduating students in Norman and one in Tulsa were honored as recipients of the Nadine J. Roach Memorial Award. Two field instructors in Norman and one in Tulsa were awarded the Heart of Social Work Award. The Nadine Roach Memorial Award recognizes students who demonstrate the creative synthesis of social work theory and practice in their practicum placements. Practicum instructors play a pivotal role in the field experience and professional development of social work students. The Oklahoma Heart of Social Work Award recognizes field instructors who inspire their students with their commitment to the profession and who serve as models of ethical and professional conduct and service.

Norman Awardees	Tulsa Awardees
<p><i>Nadine Roach Memorial Award</i> MSW Student Cate Powers, Oklahoma Regional Food Bank and Homeless Alliance BSW Student Iris Padilla, Latino Development Community Agency</p>	<p><i>Nadine Roach Memorial Award</i> MSW Student Natalie Hughes, Fort Smith Public Schools</p>
<p><i>Heart of Social Work</i> Michael Jackson, ISW, Associate Director, Education and Employment Ministry Diane Powers, MSW, Student Field Unit Coordinator, Cleveland County DHS</p>	<p><i>Heart of Social Work</i> Kathleen Pataki, LCSW, St. Francis Hospice, Tulsa, OK</p>

The OU-Tulsa field program has been exploring collaborative relationships with agencies in an attempt to create stipends for students in practicum placements. The most recent stipend created is in the field of Children's Mental Health at Family and Children's Services in Tulsa. This program provides a wide range of services for children and families, including school-based case management and therapy, home based services, after school programs and group psycho educational programs throughout the community. For more information please visit <http://familyandchildrensservices.org/> (check "Children's Mental Health").

# Child Welfare Professional Enhancement Program

*By Linda Smith, MSW, CWPEP Program Coordinator*

**Child Welfare Professional Enhancement Program....you'll never have to wonder if you are making a difference.**

The mission of the Child Welfare Professional Enhancement Program (CWPEP) is to enhance and support Oklahoma's public Child Welfare workforce by recruiting MSW and BSW graduates into the field and providing educational opportunities and support to current Child Welfare staff. The CWPEP is a partnership between the OU School of Social Work, 5 BSW programs at universities across the state, the Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) and the federal Department of Health & Human Services. A key component of the program is the significant financial support provided to participating students who make a contractual commitment to work in public Child Welfare in Oklahoma.

In Fall 2006, OKDHS Child Welfare staff embarked on an effort to clearly articulate the standards that would guide the State's public child welfare social work practice. Staff from across the State came together for complicated in-depth discussions to explore beliefs and values about the work. While there was no conscious effort to tie the standards to the Social Work Code of Ethics, the similarities are striking. The Child Welfare Practice Standards that resulted are as follows:

- We Continually Examine our Use (Misuse) of Power, Use of Self and Personal Biases*
- We Respect and Honor The Families We Serve*
- We Listen to the Voice of Children**
- We Actively and Continuously Seek to Learn Who Families Are and What They Need**
- We Believe in the Value of "Nothing About Us Without Us"**
- We Maintain A Childs' Permanent Connection to their Kin, Culture and Community**
- We Conduct Our Work With Integrity At All Levels Of The Agency**

Most people get into social work in order to make a difference in the lives of others. Public Child Welfare is one of the hardest and most challenging areas of social work practice, but by doing it you will never have to wonder if you are making a difference.

*Linda Smith*



*Martha Seales*

**If you are interested in a career in public Child Welfare, please contact CWPEP at (405) 325-2907 or see our website : [www.ou.edu/socialwork/projects](http://www.ou.edu/socialwork/projects). The deadline for applications is June 1.**

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## OU-Tulsa Student Awards & Accomplishments



**Linda Bell**

Recipient of the LVD Charitable Trust Scholarship, OU-Tulsa

**Nancy Bigheart**

Recipient of the Cherokee Nation Scholarship

**Jennifer Davidow**

2008 NASW Graduate Student of the Year

1<sup>st</sup> Place award for poster at Oklahoma Public Health Conference (2008, March)

3<sup>rd</sup> Place for oral presentation at OU-Tulsa Graduate Research Day (2008, April)

*More  
Info*

**COMMUNITY CLASSROOMS: ENGAGED LEARNING ON THE TULSA CAMPUS**

*OU Social Work students' presence in Turley has been the best thing that has happened here in over a hundred years. – Third Generation Turley Resident*



Faculty on the Tulsa campus have been involved in creating innovative educational experiences for students. These experiences offer students opportunities to directly impact the communities in which they work and live. The OU School of Social Work and the Master of Social Work Student Association has been in collaboration with the community of Turley since 2006. Students enrolled in the Groups, Communities, and Organizations course with Dr. Lisa Byers have participated in a service-learning project designed to identify assets to address disparities. Students have offered a demographic profile of the community, proposed potential projects tailored to the area, identified agricultural, architectural, and organizational assets. The MSWSA has selected Turley as a site for the Big Event Day of Volunteering for two years. This past spring this involved the donation of over 1000 trees to the community and the MSWSA helped distribute and plant the trees to replace the ones that had been devastated during the

ice storm. The partnership with the Third Place Community Foundation in Turley and its Director, Ron Robinson has resulted in the establishment of an OU-Bedlam Mobile Health Clinic and a social work practicum placement. Most recently, the MSWSA and students enrolled in Dr. Byers' and Moxley's Community Asset Assessment offered to co-host a celebration on August 23<sup>rd</sup> 2008 to commemorate the Third Place Community Centers Grand Opening a year ago.

In addition, the students in the summer class "Perspectives on Poverty" recently facilitated a poverty simulation for a group of more than 50 people representing more than 15 different agencies and service providers in the Tulsa area. This project was the finale of this summer course that focused on the roles of social workers in working directly with low income families, as advocates with policy makers, and as community educators. The simulation involved asking participants to play the role of a member of a low income family. Some families were newly unemployed, some were recently deserted by a "breadwinner", some were homeless and others received TANF. Still others were senior citizens living on retirement income, grandparents



raising grandchildren with special needs, or adult children raising their siblings. The tasks of all of the families were to provide for their basic necessities and shelter during four 15 minute "weeks" that symbolized a month in poverty. The simulation was written originally by a group of women receiving welfare benefits themselves. They later sold the copyright to the simulation to the Missouri Association for Community Action, who expanded the roles and now markets the simulation nationwide. This same simulation was facilitated in Norman for social work students this past Spring. Lori Franklin, a clinical assistant professor in the OU School of Social Work in Tulsa, and the instructor of the "Perspectives on Poverty" class, attended training in Missouri to become a facilitator of the simulation. She will continue to offer the simulation to area businesses

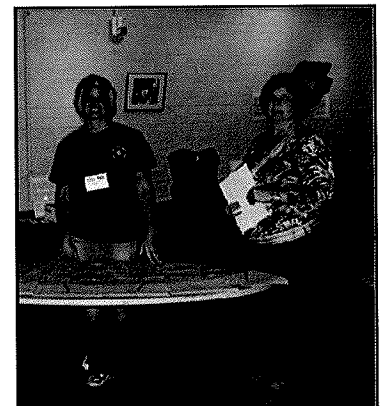
and agencies in order to further enhance the community of Tulsa's response to people living in poverty.

**Students Save the Tomatoes at Neighbors Along the Line.**

The "Perspectives on Poverty" class this summer was on the lookout for a service project that



would help populations in poverty right here in Tulsa. They found a great one: the community garden at an agency called Neighbors along the Line. The agency serves the west side of Tulsa, and has a food pantry, GED / literacy classes, NA and AA meetings, and is a community recreation center. The agency started the garden in order to provide fresh produce to supplement their food pantry stock, as often times folks who utilize food pantries receive only canned or processed foods. While the agency provided the space for the garden, it is maintained by the residents of the community who come work at any time and help themselves to the produce. Social work students certainly got a chance to enhance their skills in organic gardening, as they weeded, mulched, and watered the garden. But students also learned a great deal about community gardens as a creative approach to increasing nutrition among food



insecure populations, and also what to consider when organizing a community project like this one. The garden had tremendous support originally from the community of west Tulsa, but as it got hot and the garden got overgrown, some support dwindled. The agency hoped that with our help in getting the garden back to a manageable amount of work, residents could again maintain it. While we worked, many residents of the community came and helped, and the word is that now, a few weeks later, there are plenty of residents maintaining the garden and enjoying their tomatoes.