Dear Friends,

This has been an exciting year for the School of Social Work (SSW) at USF. We started the fall off with strong enrollments in both the BSW and MSW Programs. We currently enroll about 150 MSW students and 80 BSW students. In December, we graduated 25 BSW students and have admitted another cohort this spring. We also began a cohort of 16 advanced standing students this semester and they will join the second year students in the fall. Plans are in place to admit another cohort of advanced standing students in the summer. We are also recruiting for a new Ph. D. class to join us in the fall of 2013. Interested students can view the program bulletin and access the application for admission on our website.

We are focusing this Spring newsletter on the international activities and programs of the School of Social Work. As the world becomes more interconnected, it is crucial for students, faculty, and social work leaders to learn from diverse communities whether these communities are local, national, or global. A number of the faculty are engaged in research and teaching programs across the globe and some of these are highlighted in this newsletter. We also focus on social work student scholars in this issue. We have had a number of graduate students participate with faculty in research projects that have been published in peer-reviewed journals or presented at social work conferences. Congratulations goes to Jessica Greaves, one of our BSW students, who graduated in December as a Student of Distinction from CBCS.

Plans are underway for the Fourth Annual Social Work Celebration event, scheduled at the USF Alumni Center on March 22, 2013. This annual event, celebrating Social Work Month, is co-sponsored by the Florida Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers. We will present the Field Instructor of the Year awards and will also honor Dr. Cleo Roberts, Professor Emerita, for her lifetime achievements in social work education. We hope to see all of our alumnae and friends of the School that evening for this celebration of our profession.

With great pleasure I am pleased to announce the new members of the Professional Advisory Council of the School of Social Work. Ms. Lorita Shirley, Executive Director of Eckerd Community Alternatives, Mr. Joseph Rutherford, Chief Executive Officer of Mental Health Care, Inc. and Mr. L. Harrison Reeder, Chief, Social Work Services of the Veteran's Administration Hospital in Bay Pines have all joined the PAC this year. Their perspectives on social work practice and their knowledge of the trends in practice going forward will be invaluable to the continued growth and development of the School.

Thanks to all of you…our friends and donors, the School of Social Work Alumnae Chapter, the PAC, and the faculty, students and staff of the School for your support of our wonderful programs.

All the best,
Bonnie L. Yegidis, Professor & Director

Making a difference beyond our borders

The School of Social Work goes global in efforts to improve the quality of life and wellbeing of individuals and communities throughout the world. A few highlights are profiled in this issue.

Haiti

In May 2012, Assistant Professor Dr. Guitele Rahill visited Haiti to meet with administrators and staff at the Université d’Etat d’Haiti (UEH). UEH is located in Port-au-Prince and is the largest institution of higher education in Haiti. During her visit, Dr.
Rahill gained knowledge on the current resources and strengths of UEH in regards to higher education in the 21st Century global society, as well as on traditional health practices in Haiti – in particular on HIV/AIDS knowledge dissemination.

Dr. Rahill invited UEH Sociology Professor Calixte Clerisme to present at USF. Hosted by Dr. Nancy Romero-Daza of USF Anthropology, in collaboration with Dr. Celia Lescano (USF CBCS Mental Health Law and Policy), Dr. Julie Baldwin (COPH), Dr. Wilson Palacios (USF Criminology) and USF School of Social Work Director Dr. Bonnie Yegidis, Professor Clerisme visited in October and presented on “Traditional Medicine in Haiti: Integration with Western Biomedicine and Implications for Health Care and Policy.”

During his visit, Professor Clerisme also worked with the aforementioned USF scholars to continue preparation of an NICHD R24 proposal that was due 12/7/12. Dr. Lescano and Dr. Rahill are Co-PIs on that effort; Professor Clerisme is the Haiti-based PI; and the other USF scholars mentioned above are Co-Investigators.

The proposed SHARE-HAITI (Syndemics HIV/AIDS Research Education in Haiti) is a five year interdisciplinary research and educational collaborative. It is rooted in a team mentoring approach that is in keeping with NICHD’s cross-cutting priority to “strengthen the research infrastructure of institutions in developing countries” via providing resources necessary to mitigate the “tragic consequences of HIV/AIDS at the national, community, family, and individual levels” and training in HIV prevention.

India

Maternal and Child Health related project in northeast India: As part of a collaborative team comprising of faculty from USF’s Colleges of Pharmacy, Public Health, the School of Social Work, and USF’s partner organization in India – Research Institute of World’s Ancient Traditions, Cultures and Heritage (RIWATCH) – Dr. Manisha Joshi is designing a baseline survey on maternal and child health, and health professionals, to be implemented in the Roing area of the geopolitically significant state of Arunachal Pradesh in India. Arunachal Pradesh is the northeastern most state of India and shares borders with three countries – China, Bhutan, and Myanmar. It is home to about 24 major tribes and more than 100 sub and minor tribes, and shelters a diversity of cultures. Dr. Joshi will be involved in training the interviewers and will oversee data collection activities, scheduled for summer 2013.

Interactions with USF’s partner organization in northeast India: The School of Social Work hosted a reception for our partners from India and visiting scholars from Canada and Mexico on Monday October 29th. The reception was well attended by Social Work faculty, CBCS Dean Serovich, faculty from the College of Pharmacy, and Dr. Maria Crummett, Associate Vice President of USF World.

In addition, on November 2, 2012 the School of Social Work co-sponsored a seminar on “Research Opportunities in the geopolitically significant and ethnically diverse North East region of India” with the Center for India Studies, USF World, Asian Alliance, and the International Center for Cultural Studies USA Inc. The speakers included:

(1) Dr. Joram Begi, Director of Higher Education for the State of Arunachal Pradesh in India, and the first member of his tribe (Nyishi) to attend college,

(2) Vijay Swami, a Fulbright Scholar, a professional social worker, and the executive director of RIWATCH, based in Arunachal Pradesh, and recognized by the United Nations as a Regional Center of Expertise (RCE) on Education for Sustainable Development.

In the seminar, opportunities for research collaborations between USF and RIWATCH were discussed on topics related to health of indigenous populations and socio-economic and cultural issues in the northeast region of India. In addition, the speakers and USF faculty and students brainstormed on the creation of international learning opportunities for interested students.
Dr. Joshi also participated in the “Showcase of Global USF Health” on October 18th, 2012, where she, along with colleagues in the College of Pharmacy, and Indian partners, were invited to present their health-related work in northeast India.

**Uganda**

On October 11, 2012, visitors Emmanuel Ofumbi, Martha Kawala, and Samali Nyabeli from Eastern Uganda met with first year MSW students and spoke about life in their village of Papoli. Emmanuel told the students about the many strengths of Papoli people – hard work, faith, and a great joy in life.

In addition, Elizabeth Blakley, Program Director for Village Partners International (VPI) and a graduate of the USF COPH, described her experiences in Papoli last year, where she and several MPH students lived during their initial collection of data.

Also present for the presentation were Dr. Richard (Ran) Nisbett, professor of Global Health at COPH, Betty Castor, a strong supporter of VPI and former president of USF, and three School of Social Work professors – Drs. Manisha Joshi, Guitele Rahill and Anne Strozier.

Emmanuel shared that Papoli has received many gifts from VPI, Palma Ceia Presbyterian Church, and COPH.

Together, they have built wells for the community, a much-needed clinic for children, a school and housing for widows.

An exciting outgrowth of this initial presentation is that the School of Social Work has taken the first steps of building a collaboration with VPI and COPH so in the future MSW students will be offered the opportunity to volunteer and conduct research with Elizabeth and MPH students in Papoli. If you are interested in learning more about this possibility, please contact Dr. Strozier at strozier@usf.edu.

For more information about VPI, visit (www.villagepartnersinternational.org or contact Elizabeth at elizabeth@villagepartnersinternational.org.

**Behavioral Health Disparities Curriculum Infusion Project**

Dr. Guitele Rahill was invited to participate in the Behavioral Health Disparities Curriculum Infusion Project, which was co-sponsored by the Council on Social Work Education and the National Association of Deans and Directors. The charge of this Project is to develop advanced practice competencies in behavioral health for graduate social work programs. A 2-day working group was held on October 1-2 in Denver, CO.
North American Mobility Program

The School of Social Work is a member of an eight-university consortium funded by the federal Department of Education to promote mobility in higher education in North America. The consortium includes three universities in Canada: University of Victoria, Carleton University, University of Cape Breton; three in Mexico: Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla, Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey, Universidad Autónoma de Tamaulipas; and two in the US: Baruch College, City University of New York and USF. The title of the project is The Role of Civil Society in Sustainable Community Development and the purpose is to provide funding for student exchanges and faculty collaborations between the eight universities. Participants take graduate courses and do internships in social work, public administration, business, and engineering to advance their understanding of both the policy and practical implications of the shift toward citizen engagement and place-based decision-making for social, economic, and environmental sustainability.

The annual meeting for the consortium was held here at USF October 29-31 and the school sponsored a reception that was attended by consortium members from Puebla, Tampico, Victoria, Ottawa, Sydney, Nova Scotia, and New York City as well as students who are here on exchanges, and those interested in upcoming exchanges. Our colleagues from abroad enjoyed a tour of USF facilities including the College of Global Sustainability and the new visualization center in the physics building. Two of our Canadian colleagues also enjoyed tailgating at Raymond James Stadium and watching the Bulls take on Syracuse. Penny Carlton a second-year MSW student was on exchange at the University of Victoria last summer and with two years remaining in the current grant we are looking forward to more students taking advantage of this opportunity.

The event was attended by the School of Social Work faculty and CBCS’s Dean Serovich.

For more information about the project please contact Dr. Rowe at wsrowe@usf.edu.

Social Work Society Partners with Everyday Blessings

On November 19th, members and students from the USF Social Work Society visited Everyday Blessings, Inc. a residential facility in Thonotosassa that provides high quality care for sibling groups through a live-in caregiver model. During their time with the children, they providing lunch, arts and crafts activities, and games. The children and students had a fantastic time interacting with each other during these activities.

Everyday Blessings cares for up to 36 children, primarily sibling groups, while they await permanent placement. The children range in age from newborn through 17 years old. They come from all economic backgrounds and ethnic groups and have been removed from their previous homes due to abuse, neglect, or abandonment.

The Social Work Society plans to continue their partnership with Everyday Blessings and will soon be planning the next activity. Stay tuned for further information about these and other activities of the Social Work Society and for upcoming meeting announcements.
Alumni News

Where are they now?

**Chris Card**
Lutheran Services Florida has hired USF Alumni Christopher J. “Chris” Card as Chief Operating Officer. Card received his Doctorate of Social Work at the University of South Florida. Card has extensive experience in many arenas of social services including five years as a child welfare case manager and supervisor in Houston, Texas, five years managing an inpatient treatment center for children and adolescents, five years as a statewide advocate and association director for the Florida Network of Youth and Family Services, and nearly a decade as a Community Based Care lead agency executive director.

**Zach Wray**
Zach Wray, a recent graduate of our dual degree program (masters in social work/masters in public health), is the Director of Residential Services at Hillsborough Achievement and Resource Centers (HARC). The position is demanding; the population he serves is marginalized; and the work is fulfilling. Congratulations Zach on this professional achievement!

**Rebecca Day**
The work of Rebecca Day, a former MSW student and now a Mental Health Liaison with the Florida 6th Judicial Circuit/Office of the Public Defender, was recently published in the *International Journal of Child, Youth & Family Studies* [(2012) 4.1: 546–568] regarding her research conducted while at USF. Working with Assistant Professor Jody Lynn McBrien from the USF Sarasota-Manatee campus, Day used the medium of photography to help newcomer refugee students express themselves beyond their current capacities in English.

According to the article, *From There to Here: Using Photography to Explore Perspectives of Resettled Refugee Youth*, 17 refugee students from three counties in Florida, the state that currently resettles the largest number of refugees, were asked to record their impressions of life in the U.S. using digital cameras.

“We asked the students to take photos that capture daily experiences since resettlement. We then interviewed them about photos they chose to discuss, asking them what the photos said about their lives,” shared Day and McBrien in the article. “Their photos, and their commentaries, provide critically important information for teachers, social service providers, and others working with refugee youth.”

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Student Service Learning

BSW Students Julie McGary and Leigh White thoroughly enjoyed a project with Professor Conforti-Brown and Professor Harrell on sensory integration that involved working with children who have disabilities. Through a program called Friendzone, they focused primarily on autism and discovered a proven beneficial sensory integration intervention call the Snoezelen room.

The Snoezelen room has been around since the late 1970’s and incorporates a variety of sensory equipment and materials that can assist clients with sensory sensitivity and stimulation to adapt more easily to the ever-changing environment. Originally it was created to help those with learning disabilities, but is now used for those with brain injuries, dementia, chronic pain, and PTSD.

“I have worked with this population for many years, but learn new and exciting things each time I’m invited into their community,” said Julie. “Our project replicated the Snoezelen room in an economical way that gives parents another intervention to try that won’t leave them bankrupt. We tried to incorporate all the senses: sight, sound, smell, and touch, while leaving out taste because of allergies. We used basic household materials to create the room based off each sense.”

Julie and Leigh took into consideration small details such as different colors and smells playing a part in your mood (i.e. blue and vanilla are calming).

“This is the first time I had worked with children with developmental disabilities,” said Leigh. “I now feel more comfortable having gained a bit of experience. Snoezelen room is so amazing, because it has the ability to help so many people. I tell everyone about it, seriously I’m telling everyone! I was impressed that it is so unconventional. And that is definitely how I would describe myself. Snoezelen speaks to me.”

“Both Leah and I believe that knowledge is the key to change,” added Julie. “We realized that many parents and professionals are still unaware of this effective and fun therapy and it is our duty as a Social Worker to make them aware as well as others. This project has been a wonderful experience for us and we hope that our intervention into this community impacts generations to come.”
**Kudos to our students!**

**Student Scholars**

Congratulations to MSW student Amy Brown, who was part of a team of four students selected by the Graduate School and the Office of Research and Innovation as part of the 2013-2014 Graduate Student Research Challenge Grants: Building Research Partnerships Across Disciplines. Amy will work with students from the College of Arts and Sciences Psychology Department (Esther Davila, Jason Chen and Erica Coates) on the grant titled: *Coming Home: The Post-deployment Reintegration Process and Health Outcomes in Military Student Veterans and their Children*.

The one-year projects are designed for students to develop research skills that will allow them to excel in their chosen fields. It is part of the mission and strategic plans of USF and the graduate school to build leaders through excellence in collaborative graduate education and research.

Amy also presented a poster at the Society for Social Work Research Conference in January 2013, with Dr. Joshi, entitled *Intimate Partner Violence Among Female Veterans and Active Duty Service Members*.

★ Doctoral students, Jodi Jordan and Beena Patel and Associate Professor Lisa A. Rapp recently received notice that their article, *Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking: A social work perspective on misidentification, victims, buyers, traffickers, treatment and reform of current practice*, was accepted for publication in the *Journal of Human Behavior and the Social Environment*.

★ Doctoral student Kristin Smyth, and Assistant Professor Alison Salloum recently had their manuscript, *Clinicians’ experiences of a podcast series on implementing a manualized treatment*, accepted to the *Journal of Technology and Human Services*.

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**Student Distinction Honor**

Congratulations to BSW winter graduate Jessica Greaves on receiving the honor of graduating with distinction! To graduate with distinction from CBCS, students must clearly stand apart from peers.

The criteria for nomination include scholarly activity, professional development, community service, and/or examples of overcoming adversity/hardships. A letter written by Dr. David Kondrat, Assistant Professor and Chair of the BSW program gives many reasons why Jessica is so deserving of the award.

Jessica received all A’s in her social work courses and has been very committed to research. She participated in the Florida Mental Health Institute’s 2012 Summer Research Institute and won the Outstanding Research Project award. Working with her mentor, Dr. Alison Salloum, Jessica completed a program evaluation of the Youth with Sexual Behavior Problems program at the Crisis Center of Tampa and is working with Dr. Salloum on writing a manuscript for publication in a peer reviewed journal.

She has also been invited by Dr. Kathleen Moore to work on a research grant. Jessica is committed to engage in research and obtain a PhD. She has actively volunteered since she was 11 years old, and currently mentors two young women in the community who have substance abuse and mental health issues.

Throughout Jessica’s life, she has overcome adversity and hardship. At the age of 15, she made the decision to drop out of school (she later earned her GED). For the next five years, she states that she “ran wild and had no concern for the world around me, my life, or for the people who cared about me. I was lost completely.” At 20, Jessica made the decision to enroll in a few classes at Hillsborough Community College. She realized that she has a passion for learning and helping others and her success at HCC allowed her to enroll at USF where she ‘fell in love with social work’.

“My educational path was long and hard,” said Jessica, “so when I got to the School of Social Work I found myself finally being completely engaged in what I was learning in school. The school’s staff and professors made me want to get more involved with my education and start planning early for my future career. We have an awesome social work program here at USF, complete with caring staff who are willing to go to many lengths to support the education of their students.”

“Jessica recognizes that overcoming adversity has positioned her to be successful and has formed her into the person she is today,” said Dr. David Kondrat, Assistant Professor and Chair, BSW program.

“The week before I graduated, I was so overwhelmed with feelings of gratitude,” added Jessica. “I was completely humbled that I had actually made it! In fact, this was the first time I ever graduated from anything. I chose to put the word “Gratitude” on my gradation cap so that I could share this feeling with my peers and so that everyone would see how thankful I was to be there. I would like to thank USF’s School of Social Work, USF’s SRI@FMHI program, and my family and friends for their support through this process. I would like to especially thank Dr. Alison Salloum and Dr. David Kondrat for recommending me for the honor of graduating with distinction. I am grateful beyond words.”

Jessica plans to complete the Master of Social Work program here at USF and will continue working with youth in the community. We wish her much luck and success in all of her future endeavors!
Reflections on the Origin of USF Social Work Research Curriculum

By Cleora Roberts, USF Professor Emeritus

I joined the Social Work Faculty in 1987 and assisted in preparing for the school’s Reaccreditation by the Council on Social Work Education. The Council approved our research curriculum, which involved the entire faculty in supervising research projects completed by MSW students. They suggested we go a step further and create a way to disseminate the findings. Since I had been involved in developing Research Day in the College of Medicine at Michigan State University, I suggested we prepare a similar model.

The first Research Day only involved six students doing brief oral presentations for several hours. However, we had high expectations, and by 2006, Research Day consisted of all graduating MSW students doing either an oral or poster presentation of their findings. (Currently, students do an evaluation study which is presented in class and a capstone paper.)

Prior to coming to USF, I had been in clinical practice for many years. I then obtained my PhD and did my dissertation on the “research gap” in social work. I learned that social work researchers, mostly in academia, complained that practitioners didn’t utilize their research. By examining social work journals, I concluded that the research did little to inform practice and therefore was not useful to clinicians. As a result, I decided that my own research would be practice oriented.

When I first moved to Tampa in 1996, due to my husband’s job transfer, I was hired by Nancy Newman, the social work director at the newly opened Moffitt Cancer Center and Research Institute. This was the beginning of a productive collaboration with Nancy, the Moffitt social workers, and Dr. Charles Cox, director of the Breast Center. Most of my publications were co-authored by social work clinicians who provided ideas for meaningful, practice oriented research projects. My collaboration with Dr. Cox resulted in an often-cited article titled Influence of Physician Communication on Newly Diagnosed Breast Patients’ Psychologic Adjustment and Decisionmaking (Cancer Supplement 1994; 74: 337-41), a peer-reviewed publication of the American Cancer Society.

I am proud that over the years approximately 25 students worked with me on research projects, which were published in social work or medical journals.

The opening of the school’s doctoral program in 2005 provided more intensive research training for social workers in Florida and neighboring states. Increasingly, social workers with a PhD are more likely to be hired as administrators in traditional social work agencies and mental health settings.

I was thrilled to learn recently that Dr. Alison Salloum was awarded a grant from the National Institute of Health. This no doubt will result in greater prestige for the school and, more importantly, enhance our knowledge about serving clients.
GIVING
to the School of Social Work

Please consider making a gift/pledge to support the USF School of Social Work and its mission. You can choose to support one of our established programs listed below, or consider creating a new initiative that fits with the priority areas for the School of Social Work. Your gift is a vote of confidence and it will directly impact the lives of students, faculty and alums of our School.

- 421360 Department of Social Work Operating Fund
- 221800 Cleo and Jerry Roberts Doctoral Student Support Fund
- 421320 Social Work Alumni Operating Fund
- 421570 Social Work Scholarship Fund

To find out more about donating to the School or specific programs, please visit our website at http://socialwork.cbcs.usf.edu and click on the link “donation options,” or contact Dr. Karen Griffin at kagriffin@usf.edu, or (813) 974-9139, or Dr. Bonnie L. Yegidis at byegidis@usf.edu. Thank you in advance for considering a donation to the school.

Save the Date!

4th Annual Social Work Celebration

Friday • March 22 • 5:30-8:30 pm
USF Alumni Center

Join us in celebrating National Social Work Month and recognizing the outstanding accomplishments of Social Workers & Social Work Educators!

- Awards Ceremony
- Networking
- Appetizers
- Drawings
- Cash Bar
- Free Parking

Sponsored by USF Social Work Alumni Chapter, The School of Social Work, & NASW-FL Tampa Bay Unit.