Dear Alumni, Friends and Colleagues,

I want to share with you all my State of the School remarks, which I delivered at the Welcome Ceremony of the School’s 90th Anniversary Celebration this past July.

State of the School

The anniversary theme of tradition and transformation resonates well with our School’s present and future. It is reflected in a mantra developed by Professor Kathryn Basham and adopted by many of us at SSW — “relationship-based, culturally responsive, theoretically grounded clinical social work education and practice.” I have been drawn to this mantra for I believe it represents the best of our past and our tremendous capacity for the future of clinical practice, research and education. Relationship is at the heart of practice, our capacity to pay attention to the internal dynamics of the other and ourselves. Cultural responsiveness captures the intersubjectivity that reflects contemporary relational practice models. Thus we continue to be respectful of our psychodynamic grounding and its continuing development while being ever aware of the environmental and cultural factors within the transitional space.

Every anniversary represents a moment to reflect on the past, to celebrate in the present and to dream for the future. The past you know well. Ninety years ago the School began in response to the needs of those affected by “shell shock” from World War I. Our block program with academic course work occurring during an intellectually rich summer session and seminars during the field placement experience was designed in response to the reality of available resources at Smith College and the need to provide clinical social work services in psychiatric and veterans’ hospitals.

In this present moment, we find ourselves called to respond to the major issues of our day that are both old and new – trauma that affects individuals and families as military personnel return from wars; historical issues of trauma as experienced in racism and other forms of oppression; the economy and its impact on the most vulnerable, our children and elders. Today, we are much more aware that these problems are not just national; they are global.

As we reflect on these challenges in the life of the School, I find...
that there are two markers in our past journey that serve to guide us in moving forward to meet the challenges of the future. First is the significance of the Smith College motto. The College’s motto is ‘in virtue, knowledge.’ Virtue speaks to the quality of good in human conduct. Among several characteristics, it speaks to wisdom, courage and justice. It speaks to art and the highest excellence to which we aspire. That art and excellence is found in the practice of relationally based social work. It is shaped by the values of our profession; values that include self-determination, economic, social and political justice; and dialogical praxis. It is enacted in our commitment to the person in the situation and dedicated to helping people from many cultures, ethnicities, races, sexual orientations, religions, ages and abilities live healthier and more meaningful, productive, courageous and caring lives. Knowledge is what gives virtue strength, direction and enables a reflective stance. Theories give balance to our practice when they are held gently and kept open to continuing explorations and questions. Second, and equally important, is a strong learning community, focused on critically thinking about the theories that inform our relationally based practice in a world that demands we hold to the importance of cultural responsiveness in an international community.

Vision for the next decade

As we develop a perspective of a collective vision of what we can claim as our practice wisdom, I trust in the commitment of faculty, staff, students and alumni to connect with each other in the best interest of the School. That interest includes increasing excellence in clinical research and practice, increasing accessibility to insure diversity in our student body, creating a reflective learning community that is responsive to the changing context of practice and active in pursuing issues of justice which, in the thoughts of Bertha Reynolds, go hand in hand as an outcome of excellence in clinical practice.

As we continue our past efforts in consideration of the future, I highlight the following markers for the last five years: We have successfully re instituted a tenure system; renovated Lilly Hall; hired reflective learners/practitioners. By that I mean they need to explore ideas presented in the curriculum and examine their belief systems or assumptions as they intersect with their work with others; they must understand and critique theories of development and change; they must engage in experiential and participatory learning; they must be open to intuitive and imaginative processes to redefine problems from different perspectives. They must participate in discourse (dialogical praxis). They must search for common ground or synthesis as they use their best judgment to act on their reflective insights. Critical, reflective thinking leads to transformative learning and practice.

Continued on page 43
A U.S. Army colonel, whose research documented the psychological effects of tours in Iraq and Afghanistan on more than 6,200 soldiers, offered lessons for mental health workers now treating veterans of those wars.

Lt. Col. Carl Castro, director of military operations in the medical research program at Fort Detrick, Maryland, addressed a capacity crowd at the start of the three-day conference “Combat Stress: Understanding the Challenges, Preparing for the Return,” co-sponsored by the Smith College School for Social Work and the organization “Give an Hour,” and generously supported by the Brown Foundation.

“Mental health training [for soldiers] works,” said Castro, referring to the preparation known in the military as battlemind training. “This is where I think mental health workers can do the most in advance.”

Three months after their return from deployment, soldiers who had received battlemind training reported fewer symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and fewer sleep problems than those who received standard stress education, said Castro.

Castro delivered the first talk of the conference, which celebrates the School for Social Work’s longstanding dedication to the treatment of war veterans. The School was founded in 1918 to train mental health workers to address “shell shock” experienced by World War I soldiers. It currently offers a full scholarship to a member of the military who wants to treat veterans and their families (see story on page 4).

The need is real. According to recent reports, more than 300,000 members of the U.S. military are now experiencing PTSD, and another 320,000 have most likely experienced a traumatic brain injury. Earlier this year, the Army reported that the suicide rate among the enlisted is at a 26-year high.

None of the military branches had any standardized battlemind training at the start of the U.S. action in Afghanistan and Iraq, said Castro, noting that has since changed.

Castro’s research also indicated that the military needs to provide training on responding to the moral and ethical challenges that service members will undoubtedly face in regard to the treatment of noncombatants. Training for mid-level military leaders is also a necessity because service members’ confidence in those leaders — the people from whom they receive orders on a daily basis — can reduce the impact of combat trauma.

Castro touched upon another widely reported issue surrounding ongoing military efforts: repeated redeployments. The mental health adjustment that takes place in a soldier returning from battle takes longer than 12 months, he said, which means it does not occur by the time many soldiers are redeployed.

Further, the longer the duration of multiple deployments, the more likely they are to lead to mental health problems. “You are not going to harden soldiers by exposing them to the horrors of combat,” he said.

Castro’s remarks resonated both personally and professionally with many of those wearing their military uniforms in the audience.

“I think one of the biggest issues is getting people to accept care,” said Capt. Robert Williams, a social worker in the Air Force in Spokane, Washington, who has twice been deployed in recent years. “The persona of the military is ‘I take care of other people.’ We are not good at taking care of ourselves.”
Ninety years after the Smith College School for Social Work began training caregivers of traumatized World War I veterans, a new generation is preparing to meet the growing number of U.S. veterans with mental health needs. And some of these students are no strangers to life in the military.

Candice T. Karber, M.S.W. ’08, a veteran of the Army National Guard, was the first recipient of the School’s full military scholarship, established in 2006 to attract military personnel committed to serving the mental health needs of veterans and their families. Karber earned her M.S.W. in August, along with service members Mary E. Fisher of the Army Reserves, and Jerry Beene of the Air Force.

The trio is among the first wave of military personnel to graduate from the program in the modern era, and during their 27-month academic tour they helped reinvigorate the program’s commitment to its founding roots in 1918.

“I definitely can say we really feel like people want us to be here,” said Karber, just days before this year’s commencement ceremony. “They’ve listened to us and asked what it is we need, and they’ve really put those things into action.”

“It just makes sense to go back to what the School’s mission was in the first place,” she added.

Karber, of Washington, D.C., was instrumental in helping the program identify areas where military issues needed a stronger presence. As a result, military case studies and literature have been added to the program’s curriculum. And, while doing her field placement at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Karber helped initiate regular conference calls so that students working in military settings could communicate with each other about their experiences.

Parachuting back into academia from military life was not an entirely smooth transition, however. Both Karber and Fisher said the discipline they learned in the military helped them manage their time and keep pace with the rigorous program.

Although fellow students aired their political views at times, Fisher noted that her graduating class was generally very understanding and mindful of her military background as well as her commitment to serving her peers (she spent eight months in Iraq in 2003 and her husband serves there today).

“The focus is always on the soldier, not anyone’s political views,” said Fisher, who did a field placement in the trauma recovery program at the VA Medical Center in Atlanta, Georgia where she is returning to work after graduation. Asked what advice they have for those who follow in their footsteps, both Karber and Fisher said it’s important for civilians as well as service members to speak up on behalf of military personnel, regardless of their political persuasions.

“We’ve all seen it. We all know it’s coming,” said Fisher, of the rising tide of veterans needing mental health services. “It’s not just a military issue. It’s a civilian-military issue.”
Social Worker Improves Hopes for California’s LGBT Youth

By Larry Parnass

Though Caitlin Ryan, M.S.W. ’82, came back to Smith this summer to talk about research, she values action over analysis. In her view, research had better improve lives.

Ryan directs efforts at the César E. Chávez Institute in San Francisco to help California teens survive pressures that accompany coming out as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgendered. She has guided millions of dollars into research to understand how families respond to crises over gender orientation.

As she explained to a Smith audience on June 23 when presenting this year’s Brown Clinical Research Institute lecture, Ryan had a hunch a lot could be learned by interviewing families across California. What happens when teens who come out are rejected by families? Does their physical and mental health decline? What new risks do they face?

Ryan believed teens were suffering and families needed help. “It wasn’t a research project for research’s sake,” she said. To date, Ryan’s work with the Family Acceptance Project at San Francisco State University has produced 8,000 pages of transcribed interviews. In those pages lie profound lessons about damage done by unaccepting families.

Ryan’s research shows that teens whose families do not accept their coming out show twice as many symptoms of depression. It found that among adolescents whose families reject their gender orientation, 60 percent consider suicide, compared to eight percent of those with accepting families. More use illicit drugs and face a higher risk of HIV.

Because she believes in what she calls “action-oriented” research, Ryan’s team shared its findings with families - and did so in plain language. Families were moved to action, she said, after seeing the effects a lack of acceptance had on adolescents. Even a small increase in acceptance makes a difference.

“When they saw what we found, they were able to change their behaviors virtually overnight,” she told her Smith audience. “These families loved their children. They just didn’t know how to help them. We were able to help them connect up their experiences.”

Reaching East to Treat the Whole Client

By Larry Parnass

Anyone arriving late to Cecilia L.W. Chan’s lecture on July 28 might have thought a chorus was in town. Chan, a cheerleader for Chinese medicine, invited her Wright Hall audience to engage in “Ha breathing.” On a loud, shared exhale, the auditorium hummed with holistic health.

The energetic Chan outlined ways in which therapists can integrate eastern philosophy, especially its focus on harmony and balance, into practices that help clients with a wide range of problems. Don’t see people as piles of symptoms, Chan said. “We see the person. Look for their strengths. Especially look for their resilience.”

In Chan’s system — called SMART, for Strength-oriented, Meaning-focused Approach to Resilience and Transformation — a therapist uses many approaches during what she termed “sit and talk” sessions, flowing among them gracefully. Breathing exercises, she said, are especially useful in countering chronic depression.

“It doesn’t take you four years to learn these clinical skills,” she said, drawing laughter. “You can do these things with your clients.”
When Bao Chau Van, ’09 arrived at the Smith College School for Social Work last year, she never thought her Vietnamese roots would end up playing a key role in a faculty research project — and lead to the subject of her master’s thesis.

But that’s precisely what happened when Van, 28, of Springfield, Massachusetts, was tapped earlier this year to assist Professor Joshua L. Miller and Assistant Professor Yoosun Park on a research project focusing on a Vietnamese-American community turned upside down by Hurricane Katrina three years ago.

After months of preparation, Van traveled with Miller to “The Point” section of Biloxi, Mississippi in April where she spent three days interviewing more than two dozen Vietnamese-Americans about their lives before, during and after Hurricane Katrina.

“It was a very rich learning experience,” said Van, who is a mother and received her undergraduate degree at Bay Path College. “It opened my eyes to a lot of different areas.”

The research seeks to understand the psychosocial aspects of the Vietnamese community’s experiences in the context of the hurricane and through a historical and cultural lens. While interviewing the hurricane’s victims, Van also sought to understand the sources of strength and resiliency as well as vulnerabilities within this tight-knit immigrant community.

The Vietnamese Americans of Biloxi relied heavily on the commercial fishing industry for employment before Katrina destroyed their livelihoods. Their homes and shrimp boats were severely damaged or wiped out, and Van said the majority of those she interviewed remain unemployed and live in Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) trailers.

She found that the hurricane disrupted relationships within families, amongst friends and, in some cases, ruined marriages. Most in the community are still reeling from the disaster and continue to suffer financially and psychologically, she said.

“I had to really position myself as a learner, be respectful and not come in as a ‘professional,’” said Van, adding that there was “a lot of reflection and some crying” during her interview sessions, held in groups and individually.

Van found that most of her interviewees did not leave Biloxi when Hurricane Katrina moved towards the Gulf Coast, nor did they prepare for it.

“They didn’t think that it was going to be that bad,” she said, noting that many later fled to neighboring states only to return to Biloxi.

Interestingly, Van says that the Vietnamese community did not express a lack of resources and services available to them in the wake of the hurricane, including food, clothing and shelter. As for coping psychologically and socially, most sought strength in community settings, such as the local Catholic church, Vietnamese temple, and Boat People SOS agency, she discovered.

“Culturally, we’re not familiar with mental health,” said Van, when asked whether Vietnamese hurricane victims sought mental health counseling on their own...
own. “People don’t always express their vulnerabilities.”

Despite the enormous hardships and obstacles they face, Van said she suspects the bonds among the Vietnamese community in Biloxi are generally strong. She noted that some interviewees coped with the hurricane by placing it in the context of the war and poverty of Vietnam, which they fled more than 30 years ago. In other words, “I started out with nothing before, so I can do it again,” she said.

Others sought strength in places of worship. Van described one Vietnamese-American woman who expressed surprise that her normally quiet, 27-year-old son volunteered to be interviewed. The man had attended the local temple only occasionally prior to Hurricane Katrina, but now goes regularly.

“He found that helpful for him,” Van said.

Van’s familiarity with the immigrant experience, and her fluency in the Vietnamese language, played a critical role in the field work in Biloxi. Most of her interview subjects were males and did not speak English.

“She’s been working with us from the very beginning,” said Park, of Van. “She helped conceptualize the project, and made all the contacts in Biloxi. We couldn’t have done this project without her.”

Park said the research is a melding together of her interests in intervention in refugee and immigrant populations and Miller’s work involving mental health responses to community disasters. A longtime American Red Cross volunteer, Miller had earlier traveled to Biloxi in the wake of Hurricane Katrina to provide mental health counseling.

The research is expected to culminate in several papers, Park said, while Van plans to turn aspects of her research into her master’s thesis.

“It’s a model that I’d like to see happen more often,” Park said, of dovetailing faculty research with the development of students’ thesis projects. “It’s multi-layered learning.”

Van said that her master’s thesis will likely focus on the ways in which the Vietnamese-American community coped with Hurricane Katrina. Indeed, there is evidence of community strength and connectedness, but those bonds should be explored further to enlighten future interventions, she said.

“What is it that’s helping them?” Van asks. “Is it true that there is resilience in this community?”

Said Park, of all of their research: “It will be an interesting tale to tell in many ways.”
Beware the willful bigot, for as Salman Akhtar suggests, their numbers are growing. Akhtar, a psychoanalyst and professor of psychiatry, led a packed Wright Hall audience July 18 on a journey to redefine a term most no doubt believed they already understood: prejudice.

Using personal stories, humor, and tart assessments of prejudice exhibited both by George W. Bush and Osama bin Laden, Akhtar offered social workers a new way to understand and counter bias.

On an evening when a thunderstorm raked the campus, Akhtar showed an energetic but damp audience that defining prejudice is no simple task. Unless it is understood, he suggested, it cannot be pushed back in social work practice or in private lives.

And only a careful parsing of its dimensions can prepare a clinician to see the gray areas in which bias intrudes into the thoughts and behaviors of even well-meaning people, including clinicians.

Akhtar, a professor of psychiatry and human behavior at Jefferson Medical College of Thomas Jefferson University, offered the keynote lecture, “From Xenophobia though Prejudice to Ethnic Violence,” at the 90th Anniversary Celebration.

Akhtar first offered a seemingly adequate dictionary definition of prejudice: a negative judgment made about someone else based on inadequate knowledge. “Long live Wikipedia,” Akhtar said, drawing laughs. With information so readily available online, no one in a developed country can claim to have no access to facts and truth, he said.

Rather, the inadequate knowledge that feeds prejudice, Akhtar argued, stems from intellectual laziness—or worse: “An active, paranoid jettisoning of the facts.” Ignorance isn’t to blame, he insisted. “Those were the old days. Now, not wanting to know causes prejudice.”

Turning to issues that specifically concern social workers, Akhtar spoke of the “villain hunger” that, he said exists in the hearts of all human beings. People who’ve come through trauma or deprivation, he said, are least able to keep that impulse at bay.

He drew laughter with anecdotes of interfamily antagonisms—from sibling rivalries to children’s anger about parental sex. “Some aggression has to flow outside,” he said.

In the human heart, the seed of prejudice is that hunger for an enemy, Akhtar suggested. When left to fester, it can power awful histories between people and nations. When a group stops thinking, he said, everyone is in danger.

“They find a trauma of the group and make it appear, with ‘time collapse,’ that it happened only yesterday,” he said. “You become morally sanctioned to commit acts of violence…and cruelty is glorified.”

If a child is well-loved and has the strength and resources to also love himself, that need for an enemy withers. The outcome is sharply different, however, for a child who is taught to hate or is subjected to trauma, Akhtar said. “And then we need enemies very badly.”

He drew a distinction between the prejudiced mind and the therapeutic mind—offering his listeners a scorecard of sorts to better understand how bias clings to thoughts and behaviors. The prejudiced mind, he said, believes there are either good people or bad people. The therapeutic mind sees one kind of people, who can be both good and bad.

The prejudiced mind dwells in belief, while the therapeutic mind lives by knowledge. The former avoids information, while the latter seeks it out. And one focuses on the attributes of groups, while the
other is interested, as Akhtar explained it, in one person at a time. For therapists, the challenge is to “master whatever little prejudice is left in you,” he said, and then to help others do the same. He urged his listeners to explore feelings of hatred, whether their own or in their clients. Rather than ignore such impulses, pry them up into the light and ask why people feel this way. “We should not become harsh to our harshness,” Akhtar said. “Not prejudiced to our prejudiced sides, but curious about them.”

### Remember Skits?

In honor of the 90th anniversary of the School, Professor James Drisko compiled some of the more memorable skits from the past 25 years. If you missed the 90th or missed seeing the compilation there, now is your chance to purchase a copy. The following skits are contained on the DVD. (Please note: quality is variable.)

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The DVD cost is $19.00 (plus $.95 sales tax for Massachusetts residents) and all proceeds will benefit student scholarships. If you would like to purchase a copy, please fill out the form below and mail to Tonya Dixon, Smith College School for Social Work, Lilly Hall, Northampton, MA 01063.

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Questions? Call Tonya Dixon at 413-585-7983 or email tdixon@email.smith.edu
~Celebrating 90 Years~

Expatriate Cowgirl Comes to Smith

By Bob Flaherty

An enveloping dusk floats over the giant ceramic bowl skylight of Sage Hall. Chara Riegel, M.S.W. ’08, stands motionless on the hearth-like stage, ribbons of marigold hair falling about her neck and shoulders, her gaze mesmerizing. Her story is Texas.

“I grew up in a city that shot JFK, and held that gun in all kinds'a ways.”

“Cowgirl Expatriate: A Texas Memoir” is performance artist Riegel’s examination of the white privilege she enjoyed as a child, oblivious to the inequality all around her. She created it during her first year of the master’s degree program, in fulfillment of the School’s community practice project requirement. This performance was held on July 17, 2008, in conjunction with the School’s celebration of its 90th anniversary.

“Mom & Dad had the perfect life, church on Sunday, stars and stripes…”

Now in her final summer at the Smith School for Social Work, the Texas native “who never watched how the other half lived,” confronted her internalized biases as she made her way in the world. The “little girl learning all the ways to hate” gave way to the self-aware young woman seeking to undo the privileged cards she was dealt.

Gunracks, pickup trucks, the hate speech heard at Texas A&M, the cop who beat up the guy with the white woman in his passenger seat — all are flashpoints for Riegel’s deepening empathy.

“My good girl ways never bought me any time. My mind is learning what my heart’s always known.”

Her racial awakening, painful but liberating, is told mainly through the voices of others. Based on interviews she did with Texans near and far, asking questions she never asked as a kid, Riegel transforms herself into a stunning array of characters.

The arrogant patron at the all-white swimming pool; the worker at the NAACP; the Texas mom’s take on her daughter’s lesbianism: “Of course I’d be happier raising my kids with my best friend — but that’s not what you do!”

But when she sits at the grand piano, and lends her strong and lyrical voice to the half-dozen original songs woven throughout the piece, the effect is almost heartbreaking. Riegel is wholly Riegel here, asking as much from herself as she does from the system she decries:

“When push comes to shove, why do you get pulled over? When the hurricane hits, why can I get out of town? I wanna wake up—from this American…dream.”

With co-facilitator Tanya Williams, Riegel engaged in a “talk-back” with audience members after her show, many of them SSW alumni.

Riegel said she wrote the piece as a way to make sense of her childhood. “There was so much happening I wasn’t aware of,” she says. “I was taught not to notice race, not to mention it even exists. Ironic how much I benefited from a system that was disadvantaging people of color.”

“It’s white privilege not to think about race,” she says. “It’s a privilege you have to give up.”

Expatriate Cowgirl Comes to Smith

Photo: Michael Thomasson, Pivot Media
created 90 years ago to serve soldiers unhinged by the first World War, the Smith School for Social Work continues to prepare graduates for a similarly “cataclysmic” world.

With that nod to the School’s founding, Provost Susan Bourque on July 18 welcomed those returning for anniversary programs in a ceremony in the Campus Center. Bourque noted that the School continues to embody College founder Sophia Smith’s wish that graduates be a “perennial blessing” to the world.

Just recently, she observed, a conference on post-traumatic stress disorder showed the School to be rededicating itself to understanding the needs of people touched by war and violence. Today, the impact of PTSD is felt by families and society as well, and the School is taking the lead in addressing that, along with pushing into fields like gerontology and death and dying.

“The College takes enormous pride in the Smith School for Social Work,” Bourque said. The provost also lauded a strengthening of ties between the School and the College, including new links in research activities. “There are wonderful synergies that have developed,” Bourque said.

Dean Carolyn Jacobs, in her own welcome to the Carroll Room audience, said that just as at the end of World War I, the School for Social Work is answering a call to the issues of the day — as a place where intellect meets intuition. Today, she observed, “These problems are not just national, they’re global.”

Over the past five years, she told those gathered, the School has instituted tenure, renovated a hall, hired five new faculty members and 10 administrators and staff. Faculty scholarship is on the rise, she said, and all those associated with the School for Social Work are serving as able “stewards of the discipline.”

“Our initiatives have added to the strength of the School at the present moment.” Three of those faculty members — Joan Lesser, Dennis Miehls and Carolyn du Bois — offered short updates on changes within the School. They ranged from the state of the practicum experience to new uses of case material in the study of theory, a new course on clinical practice involving the military and a deepening approach to intensive family intervention work.
You received your B.A. from Vassar College, your M.S.W. from Smith College School for Social Work, and your Doctorate from the Wurzweiler School for Social Work at Yeshiva University.

You are considered the premier expert on developing mental health services for children and families of the inner cities of New Jersey. You are respected for your advocacy of services for the disadvantaged youth of the Hispanic community. Early in your professional career you were appointed as director of the children’s services at the MHCP in New Jersey, working with a tiny staff of eight to serve the largest number of multi-ethnic groups and a population of approximately 400,000.

Your strong advocacy and sensible problem solving brought about numerous programs, such as the family center child abuse and neglect program, children’s outreach home visiting advocacy program, a day treatment for young children after psychiatric hospitalization, and parent linking projects to name a few. Local and state bureaucracy forced you to recreate the wheel in order to continue community services. And you did so. Throughout your career, the interventions that you initiated and developed have been considered groundbreaking, and you have become an icon of success in the community of Passaic.

You have been an integral part in addressing the changing face of social work needs and have made creativity a hallmark in your approach to communities and the creation of programs specific to the sociological and psychological exigencies relevant to the populations served.

In 1993 you were nominated for the Tipper Gore Remember the Children Award for your commitment to, and advocacy for, family focused community-based mental health services. In 2007 you were honored with a Senate Citation as a recipient of the 4th Annual Vision & Achievement Award by the Mental Health Association in Passaic County, New Jersey. In February of this year you were chosen to receive the Hispanic Information Center of Passaic, Inc. Humanitarian Award. As one colleague wrote, “… The professional honors Dr. Schreiber has received are many; her Board memberships read like a one-person whirlwind for child social and mental health advocacy, but her most crowning achievement is the success of her vision: the thousands of individuals who have been able to become productive members of a society to which, before (her) intervention, they were observers from without.”

You have a keen intelligence, an understanding of human dynamics, and possess an empathetic sensitivity and have brought great honor to the School for Social Work, and so it is with great pleasure that I award you the Day-Garrett Award!
You have made an exemplary contribution to the field with your expertise in the areas of mental health and public health. You have a distinguished career highlighted with many honors and accomplishments.

You received your B.A. from the University of California at Berkeley, your M.S.S. from Smith College School for Social Work and your Doctorate from the University of Denver.

Your clinical experience has included: the San Diego County Department of Health’s Alcoholic Rehabilitation Clinic, Family Service Association, the Veterans’ Administration’s Mental Hygienic Clinic, the Wayne County Department of Mental Hygiene Out-Patient Psychiatric Clinic, and in the In-Patient Services of the Wayne County Psychiatric Hospital.

Prior to your extensive career in the public sector, you held academic posts at the University of Houston, Baylor School of Medicine, San Jose State University, and the University of Denver. You held tenure at the University of Houston, School of Social Work, serving as both Associate Professor and Assistant Dean. While on faculty at the California State University of San Diego you established and directed a branch of a Family Services Association that focused on training master’s students in the Hispanic barrio of the County of San Diego.

Numerous other teaching appointments were held at the University of Denver, Metropolitan State College, Baylor School of Medicine, Howard University, and the University of Maryland.

You began your public service career in 1975 at the Administration for Drug Abuse, Mental Health, and Alcohol, Public Health Service, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in Washington, D.C. During your tenure at the Public Health Service you served as Chief of Graduate Programs at the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) and moved from there to become the Director of the Office of Special Populations at the Administration for Drug Abuse, Mental Health, and Alcohol. You were later appointed by the Secretary of Department of Health and Human Services to be a senior policy advisor to the Secretary’s Task Force on Minority Health at the National Institutes of Health. It was from this posting that the recommendation was made to establish the Office of Minority Health.

You have provided extraordinary civic service on many national boards and commissions. The School benefited from your wise counsel during your membership on the Smith College School for Social Work Counselors’ Committee.

You have pursued a unique career in public policy by becoming president and CEO of the National Hispanic Council on Aging and serving on the board for the National Council of La Raza, the oldest and most Hispanic organization dedicated to political and social issues.

Your expertise has been sought as a consultant to many organizations including: Geriatric Division of Texas Research Institute for Mental Health Sciences; University of Denver Child Abuse Project;
San Diego County Probation Department, Family Subsidy Unit; U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of Rural Development; Child Welfare Division of Texas Department of Human Services; California Department of Education; National Institute of Alcohol and Drug Abuse; and National Institute on Mental Health’s Division of Manpower and Training. You were appointed by President Clinton to the 1995 White House Conference on Aging Policy Board.

Your most recent publications include: *The Hispanic Elderly: Issues and Solutions for the 21st Century; Empowering Hispanic Families, In Triple Jeopardy: Aged Hispanic Women: Insight and Experiences; and Lu Familia: Traditions and Realities*. Indeed, you hold the honor of having written the first doctoral dissertation on Hispanic elderly: *A Study of Grandparents in an Urban Barrio*.

As evidence of your position as a respected authority on issues of community and mental health, you have been a Fulbright Scholar to Columbia; received the Annie Cloc Scholarship from the San Francisco International Institute; been granted a Ford Foundation Travel and Study Grant; and served on the U.S. Commission to UNESCO; Committee on Rights and Responsibilities of Women; and the President’s Commission on Mental Health Panel on Community Mental Health Centers.

You are a highly respected, dedicated and tireless visionary who has brought great honor to the School for Social Work, and so it is with great pleasure that I award you the Day-Garrett Award!
**School News: Fall 2008**

**Thesis Awards**
The SSW Alumni Association awarded the 2008 Thesis Grants to the following recipients at the School’s 90th Anniversary celebration this past summer:

**Anastasia D. McRae, M.S.W. ’08**, is the winner of Thesis Grant for Students of Color for her thesis entitled *A Survey of Clinicians’ Use of Touch and Body Awareness in Psychotherapy*.

**Mary Fisher, M.S.W. ’08**, is the winner of the 90th Anniversary Thesis Grant for her thesis entitled *The Use of Psychoeducation in the Treatment of PTSD with Military Personnel and Their Family Members: An Exploratory Study from a Clinician’s Perspective*.


**Brianne Goodman Carter, M.S.W. ’08**, is the winner of the Alumni Association Thesis Grant for her thesis entitled *The Strength of Muslim American Couples in the Face of Heightened Discrimination from September 11 and the Iraq War*.

**Joan Laird Thesis Prize**
This year the Joan Laird Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgendered Thesis Prize for 2008 was awarded to **Molly Thomas, M.S.W. ’08**. Her thesis is entitled *Shades of Gray: Lesbian Therapists Explore the Complexities of Self Disclosure to Heterosexual Clients* and was selected because she honored so well the complexity of the topic and her writing expressed so well the nuanced responses of her subjects.

**Amith Ben-David Thesis Prize**
The Amith Ben-David Thesis Prize, which is given to recognize excellence in cross-cultural family practice and theory, was awarded to **Sara Bereczki, M.S.W. ’08**, for her thesis entitled *An Exploration of Possibilities for Clinical Work with Transracial Adoptive Family Members: Employing Narrative Therapy and Attachment Theory in Ways that are Consistent with the Rights of Transracial Adoptees*.

**Eleanor Clark Thesis Prize**
The Eleanor Clark Thesis prize for excellence in research was awarded at Commencement to **Brianne Goodman Carter, M.S.W. ’08**, for her thesis entitled *The Strength of Muslim American Couples in the Face of Heightened Discrimination from September 11 and the Iraq War*.

**Fellowships**
**Sharon Harp, M.S.W. ’08**, received a post-M.S.W. fellowship at the Emory University Counseling Center in Atlanta, Georgia. She will be on the counseling staff providing therapy to undergraduates, graduates and faculty/staff of the University.

**Jennifer Irving, M.S.W. ’08**, received the Advanced Training Fellowship for Social Workers in the Department of Psychiatry at Children’s Hospital in Boston, where she will be doing outpatient work, along with doing depression and suicide prevention in the Boston public schools.

**Liz Johnston**, a first-year doctoral student, received the Charlotte Larsen and Jeremiah Kaplan Fellowship for Studies Related to Alzheimer’s Disease.

**Elizabeth Kita**, a third year doctoral student, has been named a fellow for 2008-2009 by the American Psychoanalytic Association. The mission of the Fellowship Program is to encourage interest and involvement in psychoanalysis among the future leaders, researchers and educators of mental health and academia.

**Arden O’Donell, M.S.W. ’08**, received The Pediatric Palliative Care Fellowship from Children’s Hospital Boston and the Dana Farber Cancer Institute. The Pediatric Advanced Care Team (PACT) is a multi-disciplinary team dedicated to improving symptoms and quality of life in children with advanced illness. The team includes physicians, nurses, chaplains, communication specialists, psychologists, child life specialists, and social workers. She will have the opportunity to work with patients and their families, as well as develop and lead groups. PACT provides inpatient and outpatient patient care and care in the community. She will function as part of a multi-disciplinary team and will be responsible for consultation with other medical providers.

**Other School News**
**Meghan Dwyer, M.S.W. ’08**, has a post-graduate position as a college counselor at Stonehill College in Easton, Massachusetts.
The Executive Committee of our Alumni Association has been hard at work the past six months, having undertaken a strategic planning process, with the aim of enhancing our effectiveness as a board. One of our first tasks was to write a concise mission statement, which follows:

“The SCSSW Alumni Association promotes the well-being of the School by serving as a liaison between alumni and the larger School community. The Association represents the interests of alumni and fosters their continued support of and involvement in School activities and direction. The SCSSW Alumni Association supports the School’s strong historical commitments to diversity and anti-racism, while particularly valuing the field of psychodynamically-oriented social work practice.”

The strategic plan, a living document, includes the following five initiatives:
1. Clarifying and Further Developing Board Governance, Role and Function
2. Optimizing Financial Management and Fund Development
3. Optimizing Data Collection and Management
4. Facilitating Increased Communication with and between Alumni, and
5. Recruiting, Marketing and Advocating for the School

Current work of board
Various members of our very active and engaged board are working on the following projects:
- Fund development education for board members
- Making revisions in alumni and student thesis awards
- Revising procedures for nominations to serve in board positions
- Researching and recording the history of the Executive Committee
- Exploring developing an online social network system for alumni
- Collecting and analyzing alumni feedback from alumni attending the 90th

New Board Members
We have several new board members this year and below are some highlights to introduce you to them:

Edward Eismann, Ph.D. ’67, Region II Representative
Edward Eismann graduated from Smith in 1967. He founded a community mental health organization in the South Bronx called Unitas, and was the Executive Director for 16 years and is now is the Clinical Director. He has taught at Smith in both master’s and doctoral levels for the past 24 years. For the past four years, Smith has conferred the title on him of “Community Clinical Advisor.” At 76 years old, Eismann still teaches, supervises, writes and is always investigating new thinking and practices in social work.

Christopher Vaughan, Ph.D. ’06, Region III Representative
Christopher Vaughan is currently in private practice in Washington, D.C., with a focus on group and couples work. Together with a co-therapist he also does a great deal of supervision and teaching both privately and with various training programs. Vaughan is motivated by the differences that make a difference in creating effective social work practitioners - whether providing psychotherapy, case management or administrative responsibilities. His theoretical framework is informed by psychodynamic and feminist principles. He is a volunteer therapist with Give-an-Hour, which provides free assessment and psychotherapy services to returning veterans and their families.

Elaine Koenigsberg, M.S.S. ’59, Region IV Representative
Elaine Koenigsberg relocated to Chicago, where her two daughters and grandchildren
News from the Alumni Board

live, from Dayton, Ohio over two years ago. She has found it difficult closing her well-established practice and getting started is difficult/different. She is on the Board of the Institute for Clinical Social Work.

Sujin Lee, M.S.W. ’04, Chair, Alumni of Color Standing Committee

Born and raised in South Korea, Sujin Lee came to San Francisco to attend the California Institute of Integral Studies (CIIS) MA program in East-West Psychology in 1994. She got a job after graduation at a residential mental health treatment program as a counselor in San Francisco. After graduation from Smith School for Social Work in 2004, she worked at the University of California San Francisco in an intensive case management program for acutely mentally ill clientele during which she was trained to utilize DBT.

Since 2006, she has been working at the City and County of San Francisco Outpatient Mental Health Clinic where she provides psychotherapy to adult populations in both English and Korean.

Alice Chornesky, M.S.W. ’78, Ph.D. ’90, President Elect

For the past 15 years Alice Chornesky has headed up a growing M.S.W. program in New Mexico, which focuses on work with families. Her areas of teaching have been HBSW, family theories and cross-cultural practice courses. Chornesky presented a paper at a conference in Australia on Grandparents Raising Grandchildren with an emphasis on indigenous grandparents. A concern of hers is the future of professional social work.

Other News

Alumni-student mentoring remains a high priority to the Executive Committee and we continue to learn from the two existing mentoring programs developed by the Alumni of Color Standing Committee (ACSC) and the Boston Mentoring Program. Thank you to former ACSC Chair Tanita Cox Teagle and to current Chair Sujin Lee, for developing the program for students of color, as well as to Jeannie Seidler for spearheading the program in Boston. The Executive Board is addressing the amount of time and energy required to coordinate mentoring projects, hence our role in expanding alumni-student mentoring to other locations remains “on the table” for discussion.

The alumni regional listserves are serving as a useful mode of communication for a growing number of alumni and we thank the various listserv moderators for their ongoing service in this important role. Please see the alumni web pages for information about joining your regional listserv.

The 90th Anniversary Celebration was a huge success, from the Executive Committee’s perspective. Highlights included not only the chance to catch up with old Smith friends and meet new ones, but also: the keynote speaker, Dr. Salman Akhtar, who gave a wonderful presentation, *From Xenophobia through Ethnic Prejudice to Violence*, Gerry Schamess’ informal discussion of reciprocity in the treatment relationship; alumni-student networking; an ACSC networking breakfast; and a vast number of terrific presentations and panels by faculty, alumni, and others. Dean Jacobs’ State of the School speech made us all proud to be Smith alumni. The 90th concluded with Ann Hartman moderating alumni experiences and their poignant recollections and accounts of “Smith through the Years.”

On behalf of all alumni, the board extends special thanks to Diane L. Tsoulas, Associate Dean for Administration, who coordinated the entire event, and to Roxanne Pin, Director of Advancement and Alumni Affairs, as well as to their army of support staff. Your many months of tireless planning created a beautifully executed weekend of continued learning, of visiting with our classmates, colleagues, and professors, and for reconnecting with our “Smith experience” for the alumni who attended.

During the awards ceremony, we recognized and congratulated this year’s student thesis grant awardees. Please see page 15 for
a list of recipients of this year’s awards.

Two special distinguished guests in attendance at the 90th were recognized. They are: Edith Atkin, M.S.S. ’30, who is 100 years old and Elaine Barkin, A.B. ’33, M.S.S. ’35, who is 95 years old.

In addition, Alumni Association Awards were presented to two awardees. This year’s Honorary Alumnus is Bob Beck. Bob was Director of Social Work Training and Education at the Baylor College of Medicine for more than 30 years, prior to his retirement in 2005. He is described as having a very positive influence on and being a mentor for hundreds of clinical social workers in Houston, through embodying the mission and values of our profession, as a clinician, scholar, and teacher. Bob has published numerous articles on couples and family therapy, supervision and consultation. While at Baylor, Bob created and sustained a vital social work presence, where he worked against great political odds to bring Smith SSW into the Baylor Clinic “fold.” Bob was motivated by a commitment to encourage and support psychodynamically informed social work education. He felt that Smith, as “one of the best schools for psychodynamic clinical learning in the country,” would be a wonderful partner with The Baylor Clinic—and ultimately with The Menninger Clinic, which was at the time leaving Topeka, and coming to Houston. Due to health considerations, Bob was unable to attend the awards ceremony in Northampton, but on behalf of the School, Jeana Hayes-Carrier, M.S.W ’84, Ph.D. ’02, looks forward to presenting him with the award at a ceremony in Houston this fall.

The Executive Committee of the Alumni Association has created an Alumni Volunteer Award to recognize an alumna/us who has rendered distinguished volunteer service to the Association, to current students, and/or to the School. The first recipient of this award is Tanita Cox Teagle, M.S.W. ’99. Her lifetime of volunteering began in high school, where she tutored younger students, and continued through to Spelman College, where she was the first Bonner Scholar, a designation given for community service. Then at Smith SSW she served as co-President of the Council of Students of Color and also

Alumni of Color Standing Committee

The Alumni of Color Standing Committee (ACSC) is a subcommittee of the Alumni Association Executive Committee. The role of the Committee is to initiate, review, and monitor relevant issues or concerns regarding minority participation at all levels in the School, including faculty, admissions and recruitment policies, retention, field experience, and curriculum/research content of the School for Social Work.

The ACSC functions as a resource for, and provides information to, the Alumni Association, the School, and its community on relevant minority affairs. The ACSC functions as a resource to all students of the Smith College School for Social Work, both while they are on campus and in field placements. One program of the ACSC is an alumni/student mentoring program which will be featured in the next issue of In Depth. For more information on ACSC, see www.smith.edu/ssw/alumni/sswaalanding.php.

A networking breakfast for alumni/students of color during the 90th Anniversary celebration had more than 60 attendees and many inspirational and encouraging stories were shared. If you have any questions about the ACSC, please feel free to contact Sujin Lee, M.S.W. ’04, at acscsmith@gmail.com.
helped to recruit prospective students to the School. Since graduation Tanita has continued to help the School recruit prospective students. From 2004 to 2007 Tanita served as Chair of the Alumni of Color Standing Committee. She identifies her proudest achievement volunteering for Smith SSW as the creation of the Alumni-Student Mentoring Program for students of color. She says she most treasures “the personal touch – knowing that students and alumni could call me and get a personal response – especially with students, because they were going through some difficult times.” Tanita has continued to ask what else she can do to help the School and, most recently, in responding to the School’s annual solicitation for alumni volunteers, she offered to provide assistance in 14 of the 19 categories listed. At the award ceremony Karen Bellows, Ph.D. ’99, President of the Alumni Executive Committee, stated “You inspire us, by embodying the power within each of us to live more fully, through your shining example of giving of yourself to others.”

Our General Assembly Meeting, held during the 90th Anniversary weekend, was attended by 41 alumni. The Executive Committee members were introduced, followed by a presentation of our mission statement and strategic plan initiatives. The results of the alumni survey conducted in 2006 were disseminated. The survey showed that professional development and continuing education were ranked among the most valued opportunities by which alumni remain connected to the School. The Student of Color Mentor Project and the Boston Pilot Mentor Program were presented. The meeting concluded with a productive question and answer session.

We are seeking written feedback from all alumni about how the Alumni Association can better serve you, how you would like to contribute to the success of the School and its students, and what questions or comments you have about the current curriculum or direction of the School. Please email your feedback to SCSSWAlumniBoard@yahoo.com.

In conclusion, Dean Jacobs’ charge to us at the Alumni General Assembly was, “to consult the possibilities rather than consulting the fears and limitations” of what we can envision for clinical social work in the future. She also challenged us to take action by engaging in advocacy efforts for clinical social work at the national level. We take this inspirational message to heart and appreciate the support from Dean Jacobs and the School on behalf of all alumni, as the Executive Committee works to assume greater autonomy as a collaborative partner with the School.

I believe that your alumni board is in an excellent position to envision what is possible and to face the challenges ahead by virtue of the dedication and willingness of its members to create a more business-like and effective board. It has been a great pleasure to serve on the Executive Committee during this transformative process. I urge each of you to become part of the action through becoming meaningfully involved in our far-reaching network of alumni who volunteer on behalf of the School community.

On Behalf of the Alumni Board,
Karen Bellows, Ph.D. ’99,
President, SCSSW Alumni Executive Committee

Boston Pilot Mentor Program Update

Several years ago, after receiving such positive feedback about the Alumni of Color Standing Committee’s mentoring program for students of color, and hearing from students that they would like to be more involved with alumni, the alumni executive committee began exploring the possibility of offering all students the opportunity to be mentored by a SSW alumni.

We are just beginning our second year piloting a mentor program, which for now is limited to students placed in the greater Boston area. Last year, 18 students were paired with SSW alumni mentors,
and the feedback from both mentors and students was overall positive, encouraging, and mutually beneficial to both students and alumni. In the words of students who were mentored last year, having an alumna/us who could relate to the Smith experience, but who had the perspective of being in the field and who was not in a supervisory or evaluating role allowed students to “keep the big picture in perspective,” “feel more comfortable with my internship and thesis because she was a positive support and encouraging and reflecting my experience,” and “helped to dispel fears of life after Smith.”

Likewise, alumni who were mentors benefited from the relationship: “I enjoyed being a mentor. It was nice to feel connected to Smith and to feel that I could offer some support to a current student.”

“I’d recommend other alumni become mentors to give back to a student, to help them grow, and to learn from them.”

By next summer, we would like to expand the program to students placed beyond the Boston area. If you are living in the greater Boston area and are interested in mentoring a current student, or if you are living outside the Boston area and would like more information about the program please send an e-mail to sswmentorprogram@gmail.com or call Jeannie Seidler at 617-876-8400.

Left: Members of the class of 1954 gather at the President’s reception. From left to right: Clara Genetos, Ann Everetts, Aline Bier, Phyllis Silverman, Ann Hartman, Joan Israel, and Dottie Brier.

Below left: Dean Carolyn Jacobs and President Carol Christ cut the 90th anniversary celebration cake.

Below: Alumni Association Executive Committee President Karen Bellows, Ph.D. ’99, greets the 90th anniversary celebration attendees.
**2008 SSW Annual Fund Breaks Record**

At the time of this writing we are in the midst of the 2008 Olympics and athletes are breaking records in many sports. When goals are reached and achievement records are broken, it is a proud moment. It is with great pride that I report that the School for Social Work has significantly broken the record for Annual Fund support. What makes our achievement so special is that 728 different people and organizations contributed to that success!

The final figure raised was $239,900. What a way to celebrate *90 Years of Excellence in Clinical Social Work*! I was very proud of our accomplishments in 2007, when the Annual Fund exceeded $130,000, which was a 10 percent increase over the previous year’s achievement. Words cannot convey my pride and excitement when I report that we had an 82 percent increase in total dollars raised this year. Collectively, we won a gold medal. Thank you!

As with any accomplishment, come expectations for the next challenge. I firmly believe we can maintain this level of support, but the key to that success is for us to work together. We need everyone’s participation. Please join our winning team today and help keep Smith College School for Social Work ahead of the rest. Please use the reply card in your recent letter from me or go to www.smith.edu/ssw/giving to make a pledge or gift today.

Jeana Hayes Carrier, M.S.W. ’84, Ph.D. ’02, Chair of the Annual Fund

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**SCSSW Alumna Promotes Online Pledges and Gifts**

School for Social Work alumni rarely make a pledge to the School; instead, the majority of supportive alumni make outright gifts. Last year, an *In Depth* article suggested using the online form as a means to make a safe and convenient gift to the School for Social Work. In particular, the article focused on making a gift using pledge commitments as a convenient means of supporting SSW. Pledge payments can be broken down into smaller increments and can be spread out over the year enabling the donor to make a larger gift.

Alumna Lorraine Caputo, M.S.W. ’86, rose to the call and made her pledge using the online tool. “Online giving makes it easier for me because I am in front of my laptop every day and the automatic payments are one less thing to think about,” said Lorraine. She also said that she prefers to make her gifts using credit cards because of the added benefit of earning incentive points. Additionally, Lorraine cited “immediate gratification” as being another outcome of giving online.

Smith College uses VeriSign Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) Certificates to ensure that all electronic donations made using the online giving form are secure. Go to www.smith.edu/ssw/giving to make your pledge or gift today.
James Drisko was elected to the Board of Directors of the Group for the Advancement of Doctoral Education in April. GADE is comprised of doctoral-level program directors from the United States and Canada, and serves to guide doctoral education direction and policy. He was also newly appointed as the Chairperson of the American Academy for Psychoanalysis in Clinical Social Work’s Research Interest group. Dr. Drisko also presented a workshop offering on “Introduction and Critical Appraisal to Evidence-based Practice” at the Dorothy Dix Hospital in Raleigh, North Carolina in February and again for the Massachusetts Chapter of NASW in April. Together with doctoral students Florence Loh, Kara Cavel and Beth Kita, he presented a four paper panel entitled “Psychodynamic Theory and Reflexivity in Qualitative Research” at The International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry in Champaign-Urbana, Illinois in May. Dr. Drisko presented his seventh “Rigorous and Relevant” qualitative research workshop for the Institute for the Advancement of Social Work Research in Washington, D.C. in August.

Mary Hall was presented the College’s prestigious Charis Medal by Provost Susan Bourque during the School’s 90th Anniversary Celebration this past summer on campus. The Charis Medal is an award for faculty who have served the College for twenty-five years. It was commissioned by President Mary Maples Dunn in 1993 and first awarded to faculty in 1994. Dr. Hall also presented a well-attended and received workshop for alumnae on Substance Abuse in Women during the anniversary celebration.

Dr. Hall recently learned that she has won the NASW National Election for the position of Region I (New England) representative to the National Committee on Leadership Identification (NCNLI). This Committee is charged with building a diverse pool of nominees from which a slate is developed for national elections. It also collects information on campaign guideline compliance and reviews allegations of violations.

Dr. Hall has recently been appointed as the next Chairperson for the Academic Committee on the Board of Trustees at Otterbein College in Westerville, Ohio where she received her bachelor’s degree. In her role as a Trustee, she currently serves on three committees (Academic, Enrollment and Student Life) and is in her second four-year term.

Dr. Hall’s teaching assignments are diverse and across four sequences of the School: Practice, HBSE, Policy and Research. She teaches an Integrative Clinical Seminar on At-Risk Populations in the Practice Sequence, Advanced Studies in Race and Racism in HBSE, Substance Abuse Policy and does thesis and clinical advising. She will be on sabbatical during the 2008-2009 academic year and intends to finish writing projects that have been on hold and explore funding to expand on her research on substance abuse in women.

Joan Lesser is working on the second edition of Human Behavior and the Social Environment: Theory and Practice, published by Allyn and Bacon and co-authored with Donna Saia Pope, Adjunct Assistant Professor at NYU Silver School for Social Work. Dr. Lesser has just completed a prospectus for a new book, provisionally titled Social Work and Social Justice: A Clinical Casebook. Dr. Lesser presented a workshop on Cross Cultural Research, Practice and Training at Smith’s 90th Anniversary Celebration this past July. Dr. Lesser and Smith master’s student Omer Mendelson have completed the
first phase of their research with participants in the Mother’s Circle, a program sponsored by the Jewish Outreach Institute. Dr. Lesser is hoping to expand this research project to include Mother’s Circle participants around the country. She and her research colleagues from Fordham University Graduate School of Social Services and Springfield College School for Social Work are collaborating with Dr. Cecilia Chan, Professor of Social Work at the University of Hong Kong, on expanding their cross-cultural research study of depression and help-seeking behaviors among community-residing older adults in the Chinese-American Boston community and Guangzhou, China to include elders residing in Hong Kong, and possibly the Chinese-American community in New York City. Smith doctoral student Florence Loh will continue to work with this project. Dr. Lesser continues to provide clinical services as a member of Pioneer Valley Professionals in Holyoke, Massachusetts.

Josh Miller and Ann Marie Garran conducted a half-day workshop about successful teaching in an anti-racism institution for all SSW faculty at the annual Spring Faculty Meeting. They followed this up with an online course about racism for faculty and, along with Edith Fraser, co-facilitated Pedagogy and Diversity discussions for faculty during the summer. Dr. Miller and Ann Marie Garran also presented a paper on social identity at the Southeast Conference on Psychosocial Issues in Counseling and Education in Savannah, Georgia and a workshop on teaching about racism at the Massachusetts NASW conference in Boston.

Dr. Miller and student Bao Chau Van A09 (see accompanying story on page 6) went to Biloxi, Mississippi and conducted about 25 interviews with Vietnamese-Americans who survived Hurricane Katrina about their psychosocial well-being, as part of a joint research project with Yoosun Park. Dr. Miller and Dr. Susan Donner conducted a minicourse for undergraduate faculty at Smith College that focused on integrating issues of race and racism into any course. Participants came from a broad range of disciplines, including Italian, Biology, English, Psychology and Mathematics. At the School’s 90th Anniversary, Dr. Miller presented a workshop entitled “The Cycle of Reconciliation: Responding to Armed Conflict and Terrorism,” and co-presented with Adjunct Associate Professor Fred Newdom about the history of the SSW anti-racism commitment.

Adjunct Associate Professor Fred Newdom is coordinating a project of NYS-NASW to provide a series of training conferences throughout New York state on veteran mental health issues and treatment. The project is funded through a grant from the state legislature and is projected to run for three years. He also will continue an annual project of developing informational materials for frontline human service workers on a range of benefits and tax credits aimed at helping low-income families. These materials, ranging from health insurance to nutrition programs to senior citizen services and federal and state tax credits among numerous others, will be available online and in print form so that staff working with potentially eligible families will have reliable and up-to-date information to share with their clients. Finally, he continues to lobby for New York’s WIC program to assure adequate funding and legislation to support the women and children using this key nutrition program.

Marsha Kline Pruett’s dissemination of the evidenced-based Supporting Father Involvement project continues, with the project expanding across California and seeping further into child-welfare agencies spanning locally based family resource centers right up to the Department of
Social Services itself. Taking on a higher risk population, the team will try to demonstrate that their program works not only across low income Caucasian, Latino, and African American groups, but also for all families with open child-protective cases. Along with colleagues from across the United States, she has completed the APA book on couple relationships, interventions and child development. She is in full swing with her next book, being co-written with husband Kyle Pruett, on co-parenting, titled Your Father Let You Do What?. Master’s student Mareike Muszynski is helping with research for the book. Also, recent graduates Tandeka Guilderson, Emily Fischer, and first-year student Susana Ochoa are working on coding parent-child videotapes. Master’s students are working with her on the California data, juvenile justice data from Connecticut, and various projects of their own pertaining to father involvement. She is also enjoying her role as research advisor to a number of doctoral students. Dr. Pruett taught family policy courses this summer for the first time to master’s and doctoral students. The classes included an in vivo policy discussion taking place on television, which students and professor watched together. Job and/or training opportunities may be available for a California student/alumnus, and a local resident. Contact Dr. Pruett at 413-585-7997 to find out more.
Referring to the diplomas that the master's degree candidates were about to receive August 15, commencement speaker Ann Marie Garran suggested that they are provisional licenses. Even after two years of hard work, a new master’s degree in social work, Garran cautioned, is a learner’s permit. “How will you prepare yourself for your road test?” she asked.

At the school’s 88th commencement, held in the Indoor Track and Tennis Facility, Garran and other speakers described the roads that lie behind and ahead for this year’s graduates. The speakers suggested that to pass their chosen career’s personal and professional tests, social workers must respect the power of relationships and work avidly to build community.

The commencement, held during the school’s 90th year, drew hundreds of family members and friends, and gowned graduates arrived to a procession performed by the Western New England Brass. Six students received doctoral degrees and 112 earned master of social work degrees.

After an invocation by Jennifer L. Walters and welcoming remarks by Dean Carolyn Jacobs and Smith College President Carol T. Christ, members of the class heard from three of their classmates.

Garran, who earned a Ph.D. for a study of racial identity and empathy issues in therapy involving urban adolescents, spoke of her 12-year relationship with the School for
Social Work, which grew into both her doctoral work and a position since 1999 as an adjunct associate professor.

While friends in her native New York City sometimes questioned why she kept traveling to Northampton, Garran said she was increasingly drawn to the School’s “crazy-making, robust, nuanced community.”

Garran celebrated the ability of that community to work to heal its own occasional rifts and to grow. Her enthusiasm for those 12 years may lead her to go over her alloted speaking time, she warned.

“The ushers will be giving out sleeping bags. This is going to take a while,” she said to laughter. Garran urged graduates to think carefully about how they will use their Smith training to address social problems and to improve the lives of their clients. “I implore you to think about the answers now,” she said.

A key part of the answer, she said, is engagement. Graduates should be worldly and political, tapping into their passion as advocates for social justice. And in doing so, they should reach out. “I urge you to seek relationships with people who will take you out of your comfort zone,” she said. “Relationships are the cornerstone of any community.”

On a personal note, Garran explained how profound a step earning her doctorate is for her devoted and supportive family. She cited statistics on how few black and Latina women in the U.S. have earned Ph.Ds.

“This accomplishment has become a tremendous part of my legacy,” she said.

The M.S.W. class speaker, Enroue Halfkenny, thanked his ancestors, the Earth and “divine and sacred forces” and urged his fellow graduates to be “present” with everyone — giving the gift of one’s full attention and commitment.

“Let us be present with all the joys and tears...the losses and laughter...that have accompanied us,” Halfkenny said. “At the heart of our practice is our ability to sit, and be here, with our clients.”

The Ph.D. class speaker, Nora Padykula, joked about the glazed look that can come over the faces of those who pursue months of deep discussions. “For those unfamiliar with the program, we analyze,” she said.

Padykula reflected on how students at Smith come together in a new community both to transform the School’s culture and be transformed themselves.

In her welcoming remarks, Dean Jacobs commended graduates for embracing the School’s mission to “seek knowledge that leads to excellence.” “In the words of Sophia Smith, may you be a perennial blessing to our country and to our world,” Jacobs said.

President Christ reflected on the School’s founding in 1918, in response to the problem of “shell shock” among veterans of World War I combat. She said an April meeting that year at Grand Central Station in New York City led to the arrival of 70 women students three months later. “This must be a record in administrative efficiency,” she said.

Christ applauded graduates for choosing a career devoted to helping other people. “You will realize Sophia Smith’s dream,” Christ said.
Letter to the Editor

Dear In Depth,

I very much enjoyed and appreciated the article on the history of SSW in the Spring edition. I do want to point out an error in fact on page 19: The strike that “was threatened”... and then “called off” actually took place. As I recall, about 200 out of the 240 students on campus took part that day. It was an extraordinary event for Smith at that time, and was so noted in the New York Times. I know because I spoke with the reporter on the day of the strike.

Also, I think that it is not quite accurate to say that the students demanded “equal representation” with the faculty...just some more formal and recognized input.

Finally, I suspect that the family-style meals, etc. that disappeared after that time were a casualty of changing economics. No student I knew objected to the superb food, but more than a few of us felt uncomfortable sitting in our seats while the “maids” waited on us!

Thanks again for a great article.

Stephen Day Ellis, M.S.W. ’71, Ph.D.

Day - Garrett Award

Nominations

We are seeking nominations for the annual Day-Garrett Awards. Your professional contacts and affiliations in the field make you an ideal source of nominations for this prestigious Smith College School for Social Work award.

If you would like to submit a nomination for the Committee’s consideration, please complete the on-line form available at www.smith.edu/ssw/alumni/sswaa_awards.php.

For questions or to email completed forms contact sswalum@email.smith.edu. The deadline for nominations is January 15, 2009.

Corrections

In the “Smith College School for Social Work History, 1918-2008,” published in the Spring 2008 edition of In Depth, Lydia Rapoport’s undergraduate degree was incorrectly identified. She actually graduated from Hunter College. In Depth regrets the error.

A photo on page 30 of the Spring 2008 edition of In Depth was incorrectly labeled. The photo was of Donald Meeks, Ph.D. ’65 and The Honorable Michaëlle Jean, Governor General of Canada. In Depth regrets the error.
five new faculty; three administrators and seven staff; and maintained strong entering classes of master’s and doctoral students representative of our commitment to diversity. Faculty scholarship has increased and our faculty is called on by the Veterans Administration and other agencies, Smith College and other colleges to share their clinical expertise and their knowledge in anti-racism training.

We have developed a collaborative relationship with the Sanville Institute in which we have an exchange of faculty and doctoral students.

The following initiatives have added to the strengths of the School in this present moment:

I. Initiative regarding clinical work with veterans, military personnel and their families: our recent Combat Stress Conference and our scholarship for military personnel committed to working with this population and their families. Course work, field placements, and telephonic seminars support this initiative. Professor Kathryn Basham is providing faculty leadership for this initiative.

II. Initiative regarding aging: Professor Phebe Sessions is principal investigator of a National Science Foundation grant on enhancing control and empowerment for elders through assistive technology. In addition, she has recently been funded through the Council on Social Work Education Gero-ed center for a project on curriculum infusion of gerontological competencies.

III. Initiative regarding international social work: Associate Professor Catherine Nye has developed field placements in Thailand. This is the second year that students will be placed there. Associate Professor Joanne Corbin continues her research and consultation in Uganda. We have one doctoral student from Bulgaria and look forward to exploring ways to continue inviting other Bulgarian social workers to experience our summer academic session.

IV. Initiatives on anti-racism are more fully discussed in the summer 2007 School for Social Work progress report on our anti-racism mission statement, which is available upon request. I invite you to read the report for both a history and report on our progress in improving student recruitment, classroom and field curriculum, staff development, faculty development, efforts to diversify hiring and appointment of faculty and staff, and efforts to improve lectures, workshops and faculty research.

V. Other initiatives include: the development of student research assistantships with faculty with initial funding by Professor Katherine Reebel, M.S.S. ’43; and five years funding for the Charlotte and Jeremiah Kaplan doctoral fellowship for studies related to Alzheimer’s.

Our capacity to pay attention to ourselves, what grounds us, what do we sense grounding the other is critical in relationally based practice.

VI. And finally, our initiatives in developing advanced continuing education certificate programs which have resulted from our responsiveness to the evolving needs of the field: End of Life Care; Advanced Clinical Supervision; and Contemplative Practice: An Advanced Certificate Program in Spirituality and Social Work Practice.

At the heart of our School vision is a holding environment that increases our capacity to pay attention to self and other while sustaining and developing the core of the School’s dynamic focus in responding to evolving theories and the needs of vulnerable populations. The above initiatives are important steps in our future. Our capacity to pay attention to ourselves, what grounds us, what do we sense grounding the other is critical in relationally based practice. This capacity provides ways for our intellect to meet our intuition and in the meeting to find the life-giving energy that opens us to new insights, new possibilities, new ways of being present in the changing environment. This is where virtue and knowledge meet in clinical social work education at Smith. It is in this process that our deepest longings for excellence in clinical education and practice meet the needs of our world and we go forth in informed passionate conviction that we have been transformed by the experience into the clinician, the scholar, the faculty member, the researcher, the steward of the discipline, the compassionate clinical practitioner/leader for the future.”

Warmest Regards,

Carolyn Jacobs, M.S.W., Ph.D.
Dean and Elizabeth Marting Treuhaft Professor
STATEMENT OF ANTI-RACISM:
Smith College School for Social Work has committed itself to becoming an anti-racism institution. The School pledges to overcome racism in all of its programs. All programs are expected to monitor and report on their anti-racism efforts to the Anti-Racism Consultation Committee.

NOTICE ON NONDISCRIMINATION:
Smith College is committed to maintaining a diverse community in an atmosphere of mutual respect and appreciation of differences. Smith College does not discriminate in its education and employment policies on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national/ethnic origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, or with regard to the bases outlined in the Veterans Readjustment Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. The following office has been designated to handle inquiries regarding nondiscrimination policies: Director of Institutional Diversity, College Hall #104, (413) 585-2141