

# SSA magazine

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

A PUBLICATION OF THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SERVICE ADMINISTRATION



## Supporting Parents

The Latest Thinking  
about Preventing Child  
Abuse and Neglect



VOLUME 14 | ISSUE 2 | FALL 2007

- 4 The Front Line in the **War on Immigration**
- 7 Hidden Costs of **Witnessing Violence**
- 8 **Rethinking Crime** and Addiction
- 16 The Incredible **Strength of the Family**
- 20 **Can We Afford** Public Service?

# SSA magazine

VOLUME 14 | ISSUE 2 | FALL 2007



## features

- 10** > COVER STORY: **Protective Services**  
We know more than ever before about how to prevent maltreatment of very young children.
- 16** > **Close Support**  
Froma Walsh has become the leading advocate of the idea that families can provide the strength to individuals to work through almost any trauma or adversity.
- 20** > **The High Cost of Giving Back**  
How can financial aid be fixed so graduate students can still afford to work in public service?

## departments

- 2** > **viewpoint: from the dean** **Insuring an SSA Education is Accessible to the Best and Brightest**
- 4** > **conversations** **In the Land of Immigrants**
- 6** > **ideas**  
**The Power of Stigma** The shame of mental illness can derail clients already receiving treatment.  
**Neurobiology and Substance Abuse** A study of dopamine may hold a key to how addiction works.  
**The Future History of Violence** When children are exposed to violence outside the home, it has significant developmental effects.
- 8** > **a voice from the field**  
**Crime, Addiction, and Second Chances**
- 36** > **behind the numbers** **On Call**  
Medicaid has moved far beyond its role as a last-resort health care program for the poor.
- 24** > **inside social service review**  
**Parenting Trap** Stress and lack of resources have a negative impact on children.  
**Necessary Expenses** Women who found work after welfare reform aren't spending more on their families.  
**All on the Family** Welfare reform's effects on child welfare are unclear in a new study, but some of the indicators are troubling.
- 26** > **faculty notes**
- 30** > **memoranda**
- 32** > **the alumni community**
- 35** > **in memoriam**

## school news

SSA magazine  
VOLUME 14 | ISSUE 2

### DEAN

Jeanne C. Marsh

### EDITORIAL BOARD

Robert Chaskin, Chair  
William Borden  
Evelyn Brodtkin  
E. Summerson Carr  
Colleen Grogan  
Jennifer Mosley  
Stephen Gilmore (ex officio)  
Tina Rzepnicki (ex officio)  
Maureen Stimming (ex officio)

### EDITOR

Carl Vogel

### ASSISTANT EDITOR

Brandie Egan

### DESIGN

Anne Boyle, Boyle Design Associates

### PHOTOGRAPHY

Dan Dry  
Joan Hackett  
Peter Kiar  
Juliana Pino  
Marc PoKempner  
iStock Photography  
Susan Reich  
Shutterstock

### EDITORIAL ADVISOR

Melcher + Tucker Consultants

SSA Magazine is published twice a year for alumni and friends of the University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration. Articles may be reprinted in full or in part with written permission of the editor. We welcome your comments. Please send letters to the editor to alumni@ssa.uchicago.edu.

THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL  
SERVICE ADMINISTRATION  
The University of Chicago  
969 E. 60th St.  
Chicago, IL 60637  
P 773.702.4334  
F 773.834.1582  
www.ssa.uchicago.edu



Made from 30% recycled fiber and chlorine free (TCF/ECF) pulp using timber from managed forests

©2007 SSA, The University of Chicago

I'M HONORED TO BEGIN A TERM AS THE CHAIR OF THE VISITING COMMITTEE at the School of Social Service Administration, a position that has been held over the years by thoughtful and passionate advocates such as Reverend Kenneth B. Smith, Sr., Judy Block, Stanley Harris, and, most recently, Valerie Jarrett. I hope to be able to continue their fine work with the committee.

In the course of my career, I have been fortunate to be associated with a number of Chicago institutions that have been part of the social fabric of this city for more than a century: the First National Bank of Chicago, The Art Institute of Chicago, the Chicago Board of Trade, the Chicago Public Schools. Now, with SSA, I'm proud to be involved with another premier institution in Chicago as it prepares to start its second century.

Much of my work over the years has been in helping successful institutions undergo transformations to meet new challenges and opportunities. At the bank, we went from being a traditional commercial bank into a modern investment institution, for instance, and as CEO of the Board of Trade, I helped usher in the era of electronic trading.

A common thread in these experiences has been the importance of a strong and capable administrative infrastructure that can support change and allow the effective pursuit of the organization's primary function. For example, at CPS we have placed great emphasis on creating an improved human resource department to recruit and support great teachers. It may seem to be a prosaic task—to be the back office to the front-line work—but I've seen first-hand how crucial it is for any institution's long-term success.

One of the things that impresses me about SSA is that not only are its graduates found providing services in social service organizations across the country, but they are also setting policy, conducting research, leading organizations, and running operations. SSA knows, as I do, that for an organization truly to be able to make a difference, every aspect of an enterprise needs to be up to the task.

I'm also pleased to be involved with SSA because, while the School is not undergoing an intense transformation, it is starting its centennial year developing the resources, opportunities, and political support necessary to move the field into the next century. Dean Marsh's campaign for a new building for the School is fundamentally about creating resources that will allow SSA to continue to find better ways to teach, do research, and provide service, as it has done now for nearly 100 years. I look forward to being part of that process.

Sincerely,



DAVID VITALE  
*Chair of SSA's Visiting Committee*

## Insuring an SSA Education

**t**o all the graduates of the University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration: Remember that moment long ago—or perhaps not so long ago—when the envelope from the University of Chicago arrived to let you know *you were accepted* into SSA? The thrill of that moment was, no doubt, only surpassed by receipt of the financial aid information letting you know that *you could actually afford* to attend.

Making graduate social work education accessible to the best and brightest students has been a priority for the School since its inception nearly 100 years ago. Most students have received and continue to receive two types of financial aid that enable them to attend SSA: loans and gift aid from endowed scholarship funds.

The students who are able to attend SSA because of the help of financial aid are an impressive group. You probably know many from your time at the School—there's a good chance that you were one yourself. Today is no exception. One of our student scholars is a magna cum laude from Indiana University who has logged years of experience working with developmentally disabled adults before coming to SSA. Another graduated with highest honors from DePaul University and has performed relief work in Mexico and the Dominican Republic, as well as youth mentoring in the Chicago Public Schools. A third is a summa cum laude graduate from the University of Connecticut who has assisted low-income high school students and worked in developing countries to better women's economic situations.

All SSA students are distinctive, but they tend to share the traits that make the individuals I noted above so special: They're tremendously intelligent and curious, fiercely dedicated to social welfare issues, and extremely hardworking. In short, they're the kind of people we as Americans want to be working in public service. We need such committed and impressive citizens to have the best training and experience possible to help us solve the many issues that plague distressed communities and individuals.

We are proud of the education offered by SSA. With tuition of about \$32,000 annually, however, affording an SSA degree is a challenge for students. Not an insignificant number arrive at graduate school with loan debt from undergraduate studies ranging from \$5,000 to \$74,000, with an average of \$20,172. On top of this,

# is Accessible to the Best and Brightest

according to a recent survey of graduate social work programs, 81 percent of social work graduate students add additional debt, approximately \$25,000, to their overall debt load.

At the same time, attracting the best and brightest students to SSA is increasingly competitive. The number of programs nationally has increased 82 percent, from 106 programs in 1995 to 193 in 2005, according to the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). In Illinois alone, there were six CSWE accredited programs in 1995, and 11 in 2005 (with seven of these in the Chicago area). The good news is that talented social work students have an increasing number of options available for graduate school. The challenge for SSA is that financial support has become an increasingly important factor in students' choice of graduate school.

This issue's article about student financial aid, starting on page 20, outlines the high costs of student loans, and also some recent improvements. The new federal student loan bill, the College Cost Reduction and Access Act of 2007, represents welcome news for social work students and others who pursue typically low-paying jobs in public service. If you work for a government or nonprofit organization in public service, the government will forgive your outstanding loan balance once you have made payments on that balance for ten years. This bill will ease the anticipated burden for prospective SSA students, but it will only ease it, not eliminate it.

Gift aid from endowed scholarship funds will continue to play a vital role in determining whether a prospective student will be able to attend SSA. We know that when our most talented applicants make their decision about whether to attend SSA or another top-ranked program, their decision typically rides on whether they can actually afford to come. Forty-four percent of our top applicants last year declined because of better financial aid offers from other schools.

SSA is fortunate in that alumni and friends of the School have been generously contributing scholarship and gift aid from our earliest days. For example, our largest memorial scholarship, the Patricia McKnew Nielson Scholarship, was created by Arthur Nielsen to



Jeanne C. Marsh

honor his wife, a member of the SSA Visiting Committee and a tireless advocate for the School's work. The fund supports students pursuing clinical social work careers helping vulnerable and distressed people. Two graduates who were the first recipients are now practicing social workers; one works with urban school children and the other with Latino single mothers.

Two new gifts this year illustrate how important such philanthropy can be. The Alex and Miriam Elson Scholarship was created by friends of Alex and Miriam in their honor, recognizing the Elsons' unique and complementary viewpoints about getting involved at many levels: individual, familial, community, and systems. The fund will help two students whose focus is helping disadvantaged families in the most needy Chicago neighborhoods. SSA graduate Susan Rosenson and her husband Edward began a scholarship this year for a clinical student, inspired by her 40-year career in social work, which included both clinical and academic responsibilities. Their hope is that the gift will help to contribute to the continuation and the further development of the field of social work by attracting and retaining great people who are as dedicated, smart, and well-prepared as she was.

These types of investments in SSA students have enabled generations of the most talented students to attend the premier social work graduate program in the country. We are forever grateful to the benefactors whose gifts provide funds to help our students earn a University of Chicago education.

The need for talented, University of Chicago-prepared leaders and practitioners in social work fields has never been greater. The need for you to support the next generation of SSA graduates—just as you may have been supported—has never been more compelling. As we move into the celebration of the SSA Centennial, I hope you will consider supporting or increasing your support for SSA student scholarships. Our future depends on it. ■

*Jeanne C. Marsh, Ph.D., is George Herbert Jones Professor and dean of the School of Social Service Administration.*

The students who are able to attend SSA because of the help of financial aid are **an impressive group**. You probably know many from your time at the School—there's a good chance that you were one yourself.

# In the Land of Immigrants

**With both tensions and rhetoric rising on immigrations issues** over the last several years, the failure to pass the federal Comprehensive Immigration Reform bill this summer has already impacted immigrant communities across the country. Perhaps the biggest news is a proposed crackdown by Homeland Security on “no match” letters, which flag invalid employee Social Security Numbers, with bigger penalties to firms that continue to employ workers. As this issue was going to press, a federal court was starting to hear a case against the policy brought by several labor unions and immigrant rights organizations.

For this issue’s Conversation, **Virginia Parks**, an assistant professor at SSA whose fields of special interest include urban labor markets, immigration, and community organizing, sat down with **Juan Salgado**, executive director of the Instituto del Progreso Latino, a community organization in Chicago’s Pilsen neighborhood dedicated to meeting the needs of Latino immigrants, and **Lars Negstad**, research director for Local 1 of UNITE HERE, which represents more than 14,000 hospitality workers in Chicago.



**Salgado:** Since the effort to get a comprehensive immigration bill failed, the number of anti-immigrant local ordinances is escalating. We’ve seen an increase in ICE [Immigration and Customs Enforcement] raids, not just in the traditional places like meat packing plants, but more here in Chicago. And probably the most damaging of all is the Homeland Security announcement on Social Security no matches.

**Negstad:** In the past, there would be occasional no-match letters from the Social Security Administration that employers often would file away, and there wasn’t a lot of follow-up. Sometimes employers would use them to scare workers. In fact, four or five years ago, in a meeting with local elected officials and management from one hotel corporation, essentially the message was kind of a “don’t-ask, don’t-tell” policy about immigration status, and the company really settled down. The climate has definitely changed in just the last few months.

**Salgado:** And people are fearful, and

that’s having devastating consequences in our community: psychological, emotional, economic, and in our churches and community organizations and unions. I don’t think we have an idea what this will do in the long run. A mom just came in to our office yesterday with a letter that basically stated that—even though she’s a citizen, even though her children are citizens—her husband has no right to be in this country anymore because he entered the country without authorization. He has to return to Mexico for 10 years before he can return again. And what will that family do? What will her 15-year-old son do without his father? Think about this multiplied throughout our communities.

**Parks:** Right. We’ve shifted the burden of responsibility to individuals. It’s been very effective on the part of people who are anti-immigrant to say, “It’s these people or this person who decided to break the law and cross the border.” But really, it’s all of our responsibility. We have created, politically and economically, a system that demands

this low-wage work but puts these people at great risk.

**Salgado:** The United States of America went out and created the global economy. We were the ones proactive in the NAFTA agreements and the CAFTA agreements and creating all of those open markets. But we didn’t

bring our entire economy to a grinding halt. And it will create incredible instability in our communities and incredible instability politically, I think.

**Salgado:** Immigrants have subsidized this whole country’s well-being in many, many different ways and not just by



“We’ve created a political and economic

deal with the labor end of it.

**Negstad:** Madeline Talbott of ACORN once wrote a really great letter about immigration that said it’s just simple. You put a rich country next to a poor country and people are going to move from the poor country to the rich country. So to punish individual workers, who are just trying to make a better life for their family, is just unconscionable and outrageous.

**Parks:** We really have to step back and understand that we’ve created a political and economic system that is creating a whole separate class of people in our society. And it’s a moment where we have to recognize what the full consequences of that are. Our current path to reform won’t just affect one hotel on Michigan Avenue that all of a sudden

doing the low-wage work. The reason immigrant workers are so successful is that they show up a half hour early and they’re willing to stay two hours late and all those kinds of things, and that’s the truth. Start from the fact that they have to finance their own way to this country, and they have to do it through coyotes, which means they have to pay \$2,000 to \$3,000 per person to cross the border and risk their lives.

Then they finally get here and, you know, they’ve got to make a new life for themselves. What Lars said earlier—that “don’t-ask, don’t-tell” policy that permeated the country for many, many years—that allowed people to establish roots and make this their home. Think about the institutions in Chicago. Where would the Catholic Church be today if it were not for the influx of immigrants? What would that

mean to the city of Chicago?

**Negstad:** Or even the population of Chicago.

**Parks:** Yes. Chicago's population was declining for decades, but in 2000 we saw the population of the city growing, and it was primarily due to immigra-

Americans for such a large and shameful part of our nation's history.

**Parks:** At all points in the history of the U. S. when there has been a move to include more people, there's always a battle. And this is something I've been thinking about a lot lately, that at this period of time, I think there's this

with race in America. This whole issue has turned into an issue largely of Mexicans and of Latin Americans. There's this fear that somehow we're going to be radically different than other immigrant groups. But we dye the river green here for the St. Patrick's Day parade.

in sociology, that's considered the end point of assimilation: actually marrying outside of the ethnic group. The other side of this fear is cultural, a fear that somehow an immigrant group is so different, they will never understand our society, what we hold dear, what's most important. And yet what we



system that is creating a whole separate class of people in our society.”

tion. I mean the very health and vibrancy of our cities depend on immigrants, people who are willing to live and work here. You need immigrants here as consumers. They keep our economy going.

**Negstad:** There's one thing I want to touch on too: the hatred for immigrants. It's connected very directly to the insecurity and fear of working-class people who are seeing manufacturing jobs disappear, seeing wages go down, seeing health care benefits or pension benefits just come off the table. And that fear is so intense that it's very easy for demagogues to get in there and tap into that and say, here's a solution, scapegoat the immigrants—particularly the Spanish-speaking immigrants, because they're pretty visible. I think it must be very similar to the intense hatred directed towards African

great insecurity given the inequality that we're experiencing. This country is as inequitable as it was during the Gilded Age.

So it's interesting that at a point in time when Americans have so little, it becomes so important for them to keep other people from having what little they have. People see it as a zero-sum game; that if we let these immigrants in, somehow they'll take away from what I have. And yet what you've been saying Juan, is that we have what we have *because* of immigrants. They contribute to this growing economy so that jobs that people do have—even those that may not pay well or have much security—are partly due to a growing immigrant population.

**Salgado:** It also brings us back to the reality that we're obviously still dealing

**Parks:** Yet we don't fear the Irish. Now we've accepted them as part of American society.

**Salgado:** And so there will come a day when Mexican culture is accepted. And it already is. I mean, people love to eat in our restaurants, right? They love to listen to our music. It's already happening. And so there's this natural progression. I have to say that the fact of the matter is, we are integrating like no other immigrant group ever has. For Mexican Americans of my generation, you're more likely to marry someone who isn't Latino than someone who is. In my entire family, every one of my younger cousins—there are about 15 of them—none of them are married to Mexicans.

**Parks:** According to a classic argument

know, from looking across history, that people assimilate—whether they want to or not—largely because they have children. This is borne out in the literature time and time again: Even people who say that they're going to come for 10 years or 20 years and go back, don't, because their kids grow up as Americans and their kids aren't going back to Mexico.

**Salgado:** The only major threat to any kind of immigration and assimilation is isolation.

**Parks:** That's a really a good point, and I think we need to consider the political consequences of that. That's what we're doing right now. We're forcing isolation upon a particular group of people based on no other factor than their status. ■

# Neurobiology and Substance Abuse

**F**OR MOST OF US, the ideas of liking something and wanting something would seem to be almost identical. But for substance abusers, the two thoughts can become completely uncoupled—someone who is addicted may no longer really like the substance that he now craves. Jeff Beeler, a neurobiologist at the University of Chicago, is working to tease out how the neurotransmitter dopamine plays a role in this dichotomy and how understanding the biological factors



**A study of dopamine may hold a key to how addiction works**

BY CARL VOGEL

that compel substance abuse can help quell those desires.

“My work looks at the relationship between learning and motivation and how the dopamine system mediates this relationship. I think dopamine evolved to highlight to the brain what it should pay attention to, what’s important. For substance abusers, it is widely believed that the natural reward system is being hijacked by the drugs of abuse,” says Beeler, who also teaches “Biomedical Perspectives in Social Work” at SSA as a member of the adjunct instructional staff.

As a postdoctoral fellow in Dr. Xiaoxi Zhuang’s laboratory, Beeler is using genetically engineered mice to examine the phasic activity of dopamine. Although we have known about dopamine for nearly 50 years, much of how it functions in the body is still a mystery. Scientists no longer believe that dopamine is a signal transmitter for pleasure, but how it helps process stimuli is not fully clear. “Dopamine seems to take pleasure information and help the brain learn from it,” Beeler says. “It’s involved in a lot of psychological problems—ADHD, substance abuse, schizophrenia—many of the issues that social workers deal with in their work.”

Beeler, who has a M.S.W. from the Jane Addams College of Social Work at the University of Illinois at Chicago,

became interested in neurobiology while working with chronically mentally ill adults. “I started to increasingly appreciate how biological factors might cause people to act in ways that are so very different,” he says.

In the course that he teaches at SSA, Beeler provides students with information about the biological factors that impact issues from mood disorders to substance abuse. “Social work always has put forth the idea of biological, psychological, and social perspectives, but the biological components aren’t really looked at as much,” he says. “We want a social worker to recognize the potential biological factors that may contribute to challenges faced by their clients and to understand what options and treatments are available and when they might be appropriate.”

## The Power of Stigma

BY CINDY BARRYMORE

**The shame of mental illness can derail clients already receiving treatment**

**A**S PART OF HER RESEARCH on the quality of services for people with serious and long-term mental illness, SSA associate professor Beth Angell studies the social integration of clients. She says that the lingering stigma of mental illness plays notable, and in some ways surprising, roles in how patients interact with others—which in turn can affect how well they are served by treatment programs.

Researchers have been able to document the impact of stereotypes and negative attitudes, from preference for social distance to outright discrimination, about those who have a mental illness. For example, a cross-cultural study Angell conducted on employer attitudes toward people with psychotic disorders shows that public misperceptions can hinder these clients’ employment prospects. A new study she is conducting with Amy Watson, Ph.D., ‘01, an assistant professor at the Jane Addams College of Social Work, is finding that people with mental illness who’ve had contact with the criminal

justice system face stigma from both statuses, limiting housing and employment opportunities.

Research also shows, though, that people with mental illness hold the same stereotypes about the condition as the general public. Once they’ve been formally diagnosed, people with mental illness are often less likely to interact socially. “It’s threatening to their self-esteem, and they fear that other people can detect [mental illness] in them,” Angell says. “Because many withdraw from mainstream social interactions, their social networks can become dominated by either service providers or fellow clients in the program.”

While some people with mental illness relish the comfort of the common bond with other patients, others don’t want to be reminded of this “powerful signal of

their own illness” or to organize their lives exclusively around a disabled identity, Angell says. And for clients, a more complete social network is an important step to learning to live with the illness, and its social capital can provide opportunities from child care options to job referrals to emotional support.

Some service providers incorporate specialized interventions to bring clients delicately into the flow of “mainstream” relationships. For example, a program pilot tested in New Haven paired volunteer peers with people with mental ill-

ness and gave them funds to support recreational activities. Other programs, including a flagship project at the VA medical center in Los Angeles, aim to increase social functioning by teaching social skills to clients. “In my view the most important thing that professionals can do, though, is advocate for their clients to live and work in the mainstream community and to access community resources. This means avoiding clustering people with mental illness together in large congregated facilities,” Angell says.

Unfortunately, innovating programming is becoming less common. “Mental health programs in an area of restricted funding focus on the most pressing needs first, such as psychiatric stabilization, locating affordable housing, and securing financial benefits,” Angell says. “When programs are forced to operate solely in a crisis mode, goals of helping people integrate into the community go by the wayside. I see this happening more now than when I began studying this issue in the mid-1990s.”



# The Future History of Violence

When children are exposed to violence outside the home, it has significant developmental effects

BY CHELAN DAVID



SSA Associate Professor Dexter Voisin

**T**HE CONSEQUENCES of inner-city youth being exposed to community violence may be more significant than previously imagined. Findings by Dexter Voisin, an associate professor at SSA, suggest that violence exposure among African-American youth is a conduit to psychological distress, low school achievement, negative peer involvement, and risky sexual behaviors.

"It appears that exposure to violence is not just a one-time event," Voisin says. "The effects of violence affect adolescents in many ways: It affects them psychologically; it affects them in terms of their ability to perform at school academically; and it also influences the type of friends they associate with." His article entitled, "The Effects of Family and Community Violence Exposure Among Youth: Recommendations for Practice and Policy," appeared in the *Journal of Social Work Education* (2007).

Community violence, defined as violence that happens outside the home, takes many forms. In inner cities, it can include witnessing or being a victim of a robbery, witnessing or being a victim of a mugging, sexual assaults, and witnessing gang-related deaths.

The genesis of Voisin's latest findings began more than a decade ago, when his research found that there was a consistent pattern of association between high levels of violence and youth engaging in higher levels of sexual risk-taking behavior. One study Voisin conducted involved multiethnic youth aged 14-19 years old in New York City, where he found that victims of community violence were almost four times more likely than their non-victim peers to have had sex without condoms, to have engaged in sex after drug use, and to have had group sex.

Next, Voisin set out to determine what factors were responsible for this correlation. By looking at pathways—factors that might explain why and how community violence exposure affects teenagers—he discovered that those who reported high levels of community violence also reported high levels of psychological distress. Psychological distress, in turn, was associated with low school achievement.

"Previous studies have looked at some of these relationships in a vacuum," Voisin explains. "What our research has done is show that the relationship between community violence

and psychological distress is not a final outcome and that the relationship between community violence and low school achievement is not a final outcome. These forms are actually interconnected. We've found that psychological distress is the pathway through which community violence is connected to low school achievement."

The study also found notably high levels of exposure to community violence, particularly for African-American youth. Of the 600 African-American Chicago high school students interviewed by Voisin for his latest study, nearly a quarter reported being a victim of a robbery or mugging and nearly half witnessed a gang-related injury or death. Startlingly, nearly a third of the participants indicated they had witnessed a dead body in their community not related to a funeral. African-American youth are anywhere from 7-10 times more likely than their white peers to be exposed to violent crimes such as homicides, muggings, and robberies, and 30 percent of the males in Voisin's research study reported some involvement in gangs.

The issue of inner-city violence has been intensely scrutinized in Chicago during a recent run of gang violence

that has claimed the lives of over two dozen Chicago Public School students from last September to date. Since the onset of the murders, Voisin has given perspective on his work to CNN's *Anderson Cooper 360*, National Public Radio, the *Chicago Tribune*, and the *Chicago Sun-Times*.

"There was quite a bit of response in terms of the media and community trying to understand what is responsible for these patterns of violence; however, it is equally important for this attention to be sustained and translated into some visible corrective action steps by the powers that be," Voisin says.

In most instances, however, inner city violence doesn't make headline news. "Community violence very often goes unrecognized and undocumented by educators, social work providers, and even parents," he says.

Voisin hopes the consequences of his work include drawing more attention to the developmental consequences of community violence. "The effects of violence exposure don't start with the actual event," he says. "There is a whole sequel, a negative lingering aftermath, as a result of being exposed to violence." ■

# Crime, Addiction, and Second Chances

BY SASHA ABRAMSKY

the nation. The group is at the forefront of the movement to decriminalize addiction—though not to legalize drugs—regularly pushing cutting-edge ideas into practice.

Rodriguez is a deeply religious woman, a Lutheran, and her religion has, in many ways, guided her career trajectory. “It’s important to have second chances,” she explains. “Being hopeful, believing that change is possible, that people are good.” In many ways, this is not just her philosophy, but a guiding principle for the whole TASC movement. Addicts, TASC believes,

years. Then, wanting to pursue a career in social work, she enrolled as a graduate student at SSA in 1980. She says that professors like Bob Coates, who taught her how to evaluate data, and Karen Teigeser, an expert in systems-thinking, imparted lessons that have remained with her over nearly three decades. “And Chuck Shireman, [a criminal justice expert], he always believed in people’s ability to change,” she says nostalgically.

Now aged 51, Pam Rodriguez has two sons of her own and lives in the Chicago suburb of Elk Grove Village. At



**“Pam’s one of the people in the room who helps keep people focused on the reality in the drug culture and the courts.”**

**P**AMELA RODRIGUEZ GREW UP IN RURAL northern Minnesota, the oldest of four kids. Her parents split when she was a young child, and her mother raised the children alone. They were poor—Pam’s mother had re-enrolled in college to study to be a teacher, and for a while, until the teaching qualification came through and her mother got a job teaching in the southern part of the state, the family relied on public assistance.

The experience taught the young Pam that government programs, when run well, can make a difference in people’s lives. “I think we have forgotten what government is for, the role of government, and what government can do and should be doing for us,” she argues. It also left her with the steadfast belief that sometimes all that is needed for a person to flourish is a helping hand.

Since shortly after graduating from SSA with a master’s degree in 1982, Rodriguez has put that belief into action at TASC, Inc., where she now serves as executive vice president. TASC, which stands for Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities, is a 31-year-old national organization that helps get substance abuse treatment to those ensnared in the criminal justice system and designs and advocates for model programs.

When launched, TASC was a barebones operation in Illinois and a handful of other states, pushing the then-radical notion that drug addiction and crime were linked problems and that institutions like rehab programs, community mental health centers, and halfway houses might offer the best solutions. Today, TASC is a multi-million dollar institution that connects drug addicts to treatment programs with chapters in more than half the states in

retain their humanity as well as their potential to recover and to do good things with their lives. “TASC recommends dealing with addiction as a disease and a public health problem,” Rodriguez says simply, “and not a criminal justice problem.”



AS A HIGH SCHOOL TEENAGER, Rodriguez says she befriended all sorts, from jocks to druggie kids struggling to stay afloat. “I saw in them all something worthwhile,” she recalls. “And I felt there was a lot of prejudice against people who were different, who didn’t have advantages. I really identified with people who were struggling to fit in, to make it, to overcome obstacles.”

After doing her undergraduate work at Bemidji State University in Minnesota, Rodriguez worked in the juvenile justice system for a couple

TASC, her days are a mix of meetings with policy makers and national treatment experts, work on program management, and ensuring that services are of a high quality. Several days out of the month she’s on the road, visiting drug treatment programs, and attending meetings and conferences.

“Frankly, I’m a problem solver,” she says. “I’m the leader, the director.”

“She never loses sight of why we do the work we do,” says her friend and erstwhile colleague Leslie Balonick, now senior vice president at WestCare Foundation, a drug treatment organization that operates in seven states and the U.S. Virgin Islands. “Pam’s one of the people in the room who helps keep people focused on reality—in terms of what’s going on out there in the drug culture and the courts. She takes a practical, commonsensical approach.”

Illinois TASC employs more than 400 people, nearly 100 of whom are

full-time case managers, working directly with clients. TASC staffers trawl regular criminal courts, drug courts (courts set up in several states specifically to deal with drug offenders and to look for alternatives to incarceration), county jails, and state prisons looking for addicted offenders whom they judge, through use of sophisticated assessment tools, to be good candidates. For example, if a defendant's case is tied to substance abuse—if the crime was committed to support a drug habit, for instance—TASC has found that there is more likelihood of rehabilitation.

these, fully 85 percent stay arrest-free for the three years following their completion of the program. In comparison, less than half of the prisoners released in Illinois in 2002 stayed out of jail over the next three years, according to the Illinois Department of Corrections, including those arrested for drug crimes or property crimes.

TASC's allies argue that the approach works well for everyone: Addicts get the help they need in specialized treatment settings. The courts don't have to send so many petty offenders to prison. Taxpayers save

support network of another 150 or so community groups has developed to work with TASC clients after they complete their formal rehabilitation programs, making sure they stay on the straight and narrow for the long haul.

"We're advocates for clients. We're intermediaries between systems. We match them to appropriate care and appropriate levels of treatment," Rodriguez says.

"It's a win-win to have these collaborations between systems," argues Mary Shilton, the Alexandria, Virginia-based director of the national consor-

addicted criminals.

Rodriguez convenes discussions between top state politicians on drug policy and is generally thought of as a voice of reason, able to cut to the chase in complex debates and with all the leadership skills needed to keep a large organization running smoothly. She gives testimony at Congressional hearings on crime and drug addiction and was recently made a member of the federal Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. TASC also has strong working relationships with large institutions



"TASC comes at substance abuse from a **social justice** mindset."

- 1 : Pamela Rodriguez, executive vice president of TASC, Inc.
- 2 : Rodriguez with Hon. Paul P. Biebel, Jr., presiding judge of the criminal division, Circuit Court of Cook County

Ten years ago, TASC had about 18,000 clients a year, according to Rodriguez. Today, it has about 30,000, more than half of whom are from the Chicago area. Much of the growth is due to TASC's relationship with courts, sheriffs, and police departments—where personnel use TASC to steer offenders into treatment rather than into the regular court system and then imprisonment—and parole systems that turn to the state chapters for help in dealing with addicted clients in the period following their release from prison.

For example, the Cook County Diversion Program, an innovative program that moves non-violent first offenders into drug education and criminal justice education classes rather than straight into jail or prison, sends about 4,000 men and women to TASC a year. Of these offenders, a rather impressive nine in 10 complete the program and see their charges dropped. And of

money, since even the best drug treatment programs cost less per person per year than do prisons (A white paper by TASC release earlier this year found that Illinois could save more than \$220 million annually with a more aggressive drug-treatment program). And communities are made safer because large numbers of addicts are getting better, rather than simply being warehoused behind bars, released with all the same problems they had on the day they were first incarcerated.

Unlike other similar organizations such as Delancey Street in San Francisco, and Fortune in New York, TASC doesn't provide drug treatment services directly to its clients. Instead, it links them up with licensed treatment programs in the community, ranging from intensive drug treatment communities to mental health services and job training. About 150 such programs now work with TASC clients. In the last few years an ancillary

tium of TASC programs. "TASC is kind of entrepreneurial. It's a bridge between systems, long-term advisory groups, and projects. TASC is there at the systems' level, getting people to sit down and problem solve, bringing community resources out."



IN AN ERA OF CRIMINAL justice policies that have been largely defined by rather simplistic "lock-'em-up" messages and politicians overeager to play to a fearful crowd, TASC's steadfast focus on second chances—and its success in that approach—have stood out. Now, as the get-tough movement around crime and punishment has stalled somewhat in recent years and with electorates increasingly reluctant to fund an ever-larger correctional infrastructure, TASC has become an influential voice when it comes to innovative sanctions for drug-

around the country such as Texas Christian University and the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

"What TASC does is a reasonable alternative to the all-or-nothing approach," says Shilton, referring to her belief that the 'Just Say No, War on Drugs' philosophy has signally failed. "If the all-or-nothing approach only feeds back into the use of drugs, then the reasonable approach is you have to do something else to break the cycle."

"TASC comes at substance abuse from a social justice mindset and recognizing that our criminal justice system has turned into our safety net. It's where people who've failed in other systems land," Rodriguez explains. "But we're human beings, for Pete's sake. We're all flawed, but hope springs eternal. You have to believe it can be better." ■

# Protective Services

We know that helping moms and dads be better parents helps prevent maltreatment of very young children. But what works best?

BY CARL VOGEL

**K**isha Lemmons spends a lot of time riding the CTA. Lemmons doesn't drive, but a big part of her job at the University of Chicago Doula Project is to make a weekly home visit to each of her dozen or so clients, all first-time teenage mothers.



So she crisscrosses through some of Chicago's most distressed neighborhoods via train and bus to sit on family couches and at kitchen tables, providing support, answering questions, and giving reminders to young girls just starting parenthood.

Lemmons isn't an archetypal doula, and not just because her clients are low-income moms, rather than middle-class expectant mothers who have hired a doula to help during labor and delivery. In that more typical arrangement, the mother/doula relationship ends more or less

once the baby is born. The paraprofessionals in the University of Chicago Doula Project, however, keep visiting the mom for weeks after the birth. And their job isn't just to ease labor—it's to help support a healthy family and prevent child maltreatment.

By giving mothers someone to talk with about the new baby in the house, Lemmons and her colleagues offer parents what has proven to be a powerful mix of emotional support and practical advice. "They ask questions like, 'Can you spoil a baby?' and 'How long should a baby cry?'"

Lemmons says. "I work with the youngest moms in the program, so a lot don't understand what it will take to be a mother yet."

"It's a strengths-based program, working with parents who are at high-risk, promoting good parenting behavior," says SSA Professor Sydney Hans, who launched the University of Chicago Doula Project in 2000. "A really important part of the underlying philosophy is to work with the family before anything bad happens, the earlier the better."

The most lurid tales of child abuse—parents who have systematically starved their own children or burned them with cigarettes—sicken us when they make the headlines. But these horrific cases are only a small part of the issue. Many more children are abused in smaller but still hurtful ways, and more still are neglected: not adequately fed or left with someone who cannot care for

their needs. Abuse can strike once or repeatedly, while neglect tends to be a chronic condition. Both can be terribly damaging to a young child.

Nearly 900,000 children were determined to be victims of abuse or neglect by a caretaker from referrals to child protective service agencies nationwide in 2005, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). More than 60 percent of those cases were neglect, and another 17 percent were victims of physical abuse (the remainder were cases of sexual abuse or emotional maltreatment). And nearly eight times out of 10, the perpetrator of this kind of child maltreatment was a parent.

Designed to support mothers, home-visitation programs, particularly for parents of new infants, have proven to be an effective way to lower rates of child maltreatment. "Few people intentionally



injure a child, but many can and do lose control when they are unable to stop a baby from crying or find themselves simply overwhelmed. We want to create a sense in the parent that you have to take hold of yourself before you take hold of a child,”

avoid all the costs that accrue, socially and economically, when the child protective services system becomes involved.”



but unhurt. Guterman points out that about 80 percent of fatalities related to child maltreatment occur in children age 3 or younger.

What we've learned in the last decade or so about the importance of the first years of a child's life—the impetus to fund Head Start and similar programs—has also led to more efforts to protect babies. For example, research has shown that, starting prenatally, exposure to abuse and neglect can affect brain development in children. “We know a lot more about how the brain develops until age 3. You can literally see the difference in brains of children who have been hurt or exposed to violence,” says Ben Tanzer, the director of strategic communications at Prevent Child Abuse America, which works with chapters and Healthy Family America home visiting sites focused on the prevention of child abuse and neglect in 41 states, Washington, D.C., and Canada.

Parents themselves are the other part of the equation. Raising a baby can be stressful, and stress is a major precursor for abuse. “No expectant mom imagines that her baby will be fussy, or that the baby will be resilient to her soothing,” says Larry Gray, a development and behavioral pediatrician at the University of Chicago Comer Children's Hospital. In fact, the need for help for parents to cope with a screaming baby can be so acute that Gray and colleagues have launched the Fussy Baby Network based at the Erikson Institute.

“Parents can start seeing a child in a negative way, and that



You can literally see the difference in brains of children who have been hurt or exposed to violence.

says Deborah Daro, a Chapin Hall Research Fellow and the former director of the National Center on Child Abuse Prevention Research.

“Most cases of neglect in this country are parents who are struggling and just can't handle the challenges of parenting. They're not responding adequately to their child's needs,” says Neil Guterman, a professor at SSA who is in the process of running several research studies on the issue of child maltreatment. “There's growing empirical research that in many cases we can prevent child maltreatment before it ever starts, avoid unnecessary trauma to the child, and

**C**ONCENTRATION AND FOCUS of child maltreatment prevention these days concerns babies and toddlers. In large part, that's because it's the age when many children are abused or neglected: HHS has found age 0-3 to have the highest rate of victimization, at 16.5 per 1,000 children. Babies can't report that they're living in unhealthy conditions or have been hit, and very young children are also more likely to suffer serious injuries due to abuse—a vigorous shaking that can cause a fatal case of Shaken Baby Syndrome would leave a 10-year-old scared and crying

can get locked in,” says Linda Gilkerson, the founder of the Fussy Baby Network and a second-year master’s student at SSA. The network offers an 800 number for parents at the end of their rope and home visitations for parents who need extra help. “Parents who shake a baby aren’t trying to kill the baby,” she says. “They’re trying to stop the crying.”

Many new parents are also misinformed about how babies act and their developmental stages, and bad expectations can lead to more stress. If a mom or dad doesn’t know that a baby will cry more a few weeks after birth—when an infant’s sleep patterns change—they can get frustrated. Parents who expect a toddler to potty train before the child is a year old will be stymied again and again, and perhaps take out their anger on the child.

On the other hand, programs like the home visitation option at the Fussy Baby Network show success because of the positive side of working with parents of very young children: They can be more receptive to advice about parenting. “During pregnancy or right after the birth, parents are especially open to new ideas. It’s a real window of opportunity,” Hans says.

Home visitation for new parents has a long history, dating back to the earliest years of social work and child protection more than a century ago. In the last few decades, variations on the practice have been studied closely and research has shown they help some parents avoid hurting their children. The best-known research on home visitation was launched in Elmira, N.Y., in 1977. David Olds, now a professor of

pediatrics, psychiatry, and preventive medicine at the University of Colorado, began to operate and study a program that sent highly trained nurses to visit at-risk young mothers at home repeatedly, before birth and two years after their first child was born.

due to alcohol and drug abuse.

Over the years, similar home visitation programs have been launched throughout the country and internationally, and many of these have shown similar success in a wide variety of socioeconomic, geographic, and racial



The results were impressive. In the group of low-income, unmarried teen mothers who did not receive nurse visits, the incidence of child neglect or abuse was 19 percent. For those who did receive visits, the incidence was 4 percent. In a 15-year follow-up study, the moms who had been served by the nurse-family model had 79 percent fewer verified reports of child abuse or neglect—and the results paid dividends in other ways as well. There were 56 percent fewer arrests of the adolescent children whose moms had worked with the nurses, for instance, and 44 percent fewer maternal behavioral problems

settings. A 2003 report by the Centers for Disease Control, which reviewed 21 studies of early childhood home visitation on child maltreatment, found a median reduction of cases of child abuse or neglect of approximately 40 percent. Based on this “strong evidence of effectiveness,” the report recommended home visitation for families at risk for maltreatment, including disadvantaged populations and families with low-birth weight infants.

“We believe we have something that works with home visitation,” Daro says. “Now the struggle is how to take it to scale.”

**Few people intentionally injure a child, but many can and do lose control when they find themselves simply overwhelmed.**

**I**N THE LATE 1990s, Sydney Hans learned about several community service organizations in Chicago that were providing a variation on home visitation that utilized a doula rather than a nurse. With the support of the Irving Harris Foundation, she established a doula home visiting program based at the University of Chicago. A federal Maternal and Child Health grant allowed her to initiate a five-year study of how well the program helps young families.

The focus of the University of Chicago Doula Project, like the nurse-family model, is on young, at-risk mothers, but Hans says that outreach conducted by a doula creates a different program in several ways she thinks may be very important. For starters, since the doulas are paraprofessionals, the cost is lower than using nurses—a notable distinction when considering

how to build a program that, if proven to be effective, can be more widely replicated.

The type of care provided by a doula is also distinct. “In the Olds method, it’s more about health and parenting education. The doula project works more from a family support model, offering support and information as a way of empowering,” Hans says. “The doulas become surrogate family members, like an older sister.”

Each of the doulas has grown up herself in the same urban neighborhoods as her clients; most were teenage mothers themselves. The mothers, who are referred to the program from local clinics and social service agencies, usually enroll in the program when they’re six or seven months pregnant. The time the doula spends with the mom preparing for birth is important, both to support strong prenatal care for the child

and to become a trusted ally. The comfort and emotional assurance the doula provides at the birth further builds that bond.

“It’s not an effective strategy to approach a teenage mother and say, ‘I know more than you, and I’ll teach you.’ If I was in the hospital myself with a new baby and someone came in and said, ‘Let me make you a better mother,’ I don’t know how well I’d listen,” Hans says. “First there needs to be a relationship.”

For six weeks after the baby is born, the doula continues to make a weekly visit to the mom, maintaining the themes that the doula and mother were discussing before the child arrived—the importance of breastfeeding, how to return to school and care for her baby, how to read the baby’s cues, how to lower the stress.

“We go through scenarios of what will happen with a new baby and say, ‘What will you do in that situation?’ We try to help them understand that you’re dealing with a newborn baby, and a big part of that is the parent/child bond. We’re big proponents of reading to the baby, interactions you can have with a baby,” says Deborah Bump, the program’s clinical supervisor. “And we’re there for them beyond the home visits. Sometimes they call and want to talk, and we just listen.”

Hans has finished gathering the data from the five-year study and is in the process of analyzing it for publication. “We’re very pleased with what we’ve found so far,” she says. “We’ve seen improved mother/infant interaction, as measured by how much they talk with their babies, hold their babies, take pleasure in their babies’ accomplishments.



**“A policy to promote marriage in and of itself might not have the anticipated impact in reducing cases of abuse and neglect.”**

NEIL GUTERMAN  
SSA Professor

The findings suggest that the moms think differently about their roles as mothers. We’ve also found some limited positive health-related outcomes, such as more initiation of breastfeeding.”

Although the University of Chicago Doula Project is past the federal grant support period for operation, Hans has been able to continue to provide services by connecting to funding from the Illinois Ounce of Prevention Fund, a partnership between private donors and the state of Illinois that supports programs to help children who are born into poverty. “The idea of using doulas for this work originated with community agencies here in Chicago, and the model is



**“It’s not an effective strategy to approach a teenage mother and say, ‘I know more than you, and I’ll teach you.’”**

SYDNEY L. HANS  
SSA Professor

spreading throughout the state and nationally,” Hans says.

>>> ■ <<<

**T**HE POWER OF THE SOCIAL CONTEXTS in which early child rearing occurs is just beginning to receive greater attention. Fathers, for instance, are over reported in most severe cases of abuse and neglect, and their role in the family can also be an important factor in cases where the mother is the perpetrator. For example, confirmed incidents of child abuse and neglect among Army families increased significantly when a father is deployed specifically to a combat zone, according to a study from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Public Health released this summer. When soldier-husbands left mothers at home to care for the children in these circumstances, the rate of physical abuse nearly doubled, and the rate of neglect was nearly four times higher.

Despite findings such as this, research into the role of fathers in abuse cases has been rare, says Neil Guterman, who has been involved in collecting data from 4,800 families in 20 cities over the first three years of the babies’ lives for the first national longitudinal study on the topic. “We’re trying to figure out what it means for dads to be an economic resource, what is the relationship with the mom, how do they relate to the children—and how all these kinds of factors impact risk for child maltreatment,” he says.

Guterman and his team currently have several articles

under review from the study, which was funded by the National Institutes of Health and the Centers for Disease Control, and some of the findings could have an impact on public policy. For example, Guterman’s team found that while married mothers are less likely to abuse or neglect their children than non-married moms, it appears that marriage to fathers, per se, is not responsible for the lower risk. Rather the factors that make a difference are the “psychosocial resources” that fathers bring to the marriage, such as his positive interactions with the child, his supportive behaviors toward the mother, and his higher educational level.

“Another interesting finding is somewhat counterintuitive. Contrary to what we might think, the economic resources a father brings to the family do not seem to impact the mother’s maltreatment risk. Along with what we found in terms of the impact of social resources, it suggests that a policy to promote marriage in and of itself might not necessarily have the anticipated impact in reducing cases of abuse and neglect,” Guterman says.

Guterman is also examining how tapping social networks can complement home visitation services and leverage even greater reduction of the risk of child abuse and neglect. Participants in the University of Chicago Doula Project now have the option of meeting regularly with other mothers in the program to discuss parenthood with each other, and augmenting the one-on-one home visitation model with this kind of connection with peers is becoming increasingly common.

Also funded by the CDC, Guterman’s research on the idea



brings together a dozen or so young mothers to meet together weekly. There, they develop new skills aimed at improving the relationships in their lives, even turning a situation that can challenge parenting into an asset. “The mothers work together and support each other, ultimately developing into their own self-sustaining mutual support networks. They learn to see their own strengths and how important social networks are to their mothering,” Guterman says.

The program is currently in

the clinical trial stage, with three sites in New York City and two in Chicago. In initial research Guterman says that they’re already seeing significant improvements in lowering mothers’ stress and child abuse risk, beyond home visitation services, even with a relatively modest six-week set of professionally led sessions. “One of the clearest risks for abuse and neglect is whether the mother is isolated or involved in undermining relationships,” he says. “Giving and getting support from other moms is a way to counteract that.”



## An international career:

**Top row, left to right:**

1. Froma Walsh at a training in Seoul, Korea, with Professor Miyoung-Min Choi, part of the team that translated *Strengthening Family Resilience* into Korean;

2. With Mose and Sylvia Firestone at the Los Angeles event to celebrate Walsh being named SSA's Mose and Sylvia Firestone Professor;

3. Conducting a lecture at SSA in 2006;

4. At a conference on strengthening families at the Chicago Historical Society with noted family therapists Salvador and Patricia Minuchin;

5. Sitting with the panel at a symposium at SSA upon her retirement earlier this year

**Bottom:** With community mental health counselors at one of the trainings on traumatic loss, recovery and resilience in Jerusalem and Ramallah



# Close Support

Froma Walsh has made her reputation and a career advocating that families can provide the strength to work through almost any trauma or adversity

BY CHARLES WHITAKER

IFE IN NORTH AFRICA MIGHT SEEM AN UNLIKELY SOURCE OF INSPIRATION for a new approach to family therapy. Yet it was her experience as a Peace Corps volunteer in Morocco that lay the groundwork for much of Froma Walsh's influential scholarship.

Walsh, who has just retired from her joint appointment as SSA's Mose and Sylvia Firestone Professor and professor in the Department of Psychiatry, used ideas that took root in Morocco to develop a framework that altered the shape and practice of mental health approaches to the family. It is called resilience-oriented, family-centered collaborative mental health. And for more than 20 years, Walsh has been at the forefront of its advancement while on the faculty at SSA.

In 1964, armed with a bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of California at Berkeley, Walsh joined the Peace Corps and was dispatched to North Africa along with 27 other young women. Their assignment was to work in the country's *foyers feminine*—traditional gathering places where young Muslim women are schooled in cooking and the art of intricate embroidery. They were told that by their example, the young Moroccans would yearn to emulate them and become “modernized.”

However, Walsh and her fellow volunteers discovered that local families, with traditional values, did not see the Peace Corps crew—unmarried, living unchaperoned in a foreign country, and not particularly good at any of the domestic skills in which Moroccan women take pride—as fitting models for their daughters. “What was really

so startling for me and other volunteers was that the United States would come up with such an ethnocentric program in the first place,” Walsh says. “Fortunately they learned from our experience for projects that followed.”

In her second year in Morocco, Walsh helped establish psychological evaluations for delinquent youth who had been incarcerated. She found, contrary to the American assumption that their families must have been to blame, that most families were loving and problems stemmed from harsh economic conditions, which drove boys into the streets and girls into prostitution.

Walsh marveled at how Moroccan families were bound together in kinship groups that provided emotional as well as financial support. The practicality and resilience of those groups made her question family normality in the United States, particularly the isolation of the suburban nuclear family after World War II. “In Morocco, I was struck by the diversity in family norms and patterns, and the richness of family life,” she says. “It struck me that the taken-for-granted assumptions about family normality in our culture were really less functional than the ones in Morocco.”

When Walsh returned to the States and began pursuing a master's degree in social work, she couldn't help but notice the emphasis on dysfunction in families. “I found the heavy focus on psychopathology in mental health training distressing,” she says. “I learned it all, but it made me more curious about what mental health is, beyond treating mental illness. How can we as mental health professionals facilitate and support positive mental health?”



a

TREATMENT MODEL WITH BROAD INTERDISCIPLINARY APPLICATIONS, resilience-oriented, family-centered therapy is a systemic approach that focuses on the family's core strengths, rather than the source of its weaknesses.

Walsh believes that nearly all extended families contain a reservoir of strength and resources that can enable them to overcome trauma. The therapist's job includes identifying "islands of competence" within the family. In the first chapter of her book *Strengthening Family Resilience*, Walsh writes:

"A family resilience framework fundamentally alters traditional deficit-based perspectives. Instead of focusing on how families have failed, we redirect our attention to how they can succeed. Rather than giving up on troubled families and salvaging individual survivors, we can draw out the best in families, building on key processes to encourage both individual and family growth."

"Froma understood early on that we had been discussing pathology and dysfunctionality in families without a clear sense of what it meant to have a good-functioning family situation," says Celia Falicov, clinical professor of psychiatry at the University of California at San Diego and, like Walsh, an alumna of University of Chicago's doctoral program in human development. "She was really a pioneer in helping us see that every family has normal aspects, even a family in crises. But we were so focused on dysfunction, we had no framework for what normal was."

Mental health professionals attempting to tap into resilience must avoid looking at families through an ethnocentric lens, Walsh notes. To help the family make the connections that will aid in its recovery, therapists have to understand and appreciate the cultural context in which the family resides and be sensitive to ethnic, religious, and cultural values that may be helpful as the family attempts to repair.

Walsh says the resilience framework actually dovetails quite a bit with the recent developments in the medical field that view the body not as isolated pieces, but as interconnected parts of a whole that has natural immune potential and the ability to heal most wounds. "In terms of mental health," she says, "the research shows that individuals who have suffered major traumatic experiences can and do recover and are able to live well, work well, love well, play well."

When teaching, Walsh often uses an example that Maya Angelou has given about her own life. In a very difficult childhood, shuttled between relatives in St. Louis, Arkansas, and California, Angelou found a stable home with her grandmother and her maternal "Uncle Willie," who constantly encouraged Angelou to study and believed in her potential, even though he was poor, disabled, and uneducated himself. "Every family has an Uncle Willie," Walsh tells her class. "So rather than just pluck children out of families, we have to work to find those Uncle Willies."

Walsh has traveled around the world, doing training and con-

sultation in resilience-oriented family therapy and community mental health services. Many of the 10 books she has either written or edited (sometimes in collaboration) have been translated into foreign languages and she has presented papers, delivered keynote addresses and participated in panels in Canada, Mexico, Brazil, France, Italy, Sweden, Switzerland, Korea, and Japan. In 2002, for example, she was asked to go to Germany to share her resilience approach with U.S. military chaplains who help military families who have loved ones in war zones.

She has also helped developing countries train and establish a cadre of mental health professionals. At the invitation of the United States Agency for International Development and the government of Morocco, she returned to the country to design the curriculum and program evaluation for the first school of social work established in that country. In December, she will travel to Taiwan to teach.

"She has been one of the major influences on the field," says Monica McGoldrick, director of the Multicultural Family Institute in Highland Park, N.J., and Walsh's collaborator on a number of books and papers, including *Living Beyond Loss*. "A lot had been said about resilience from an individual perspective, but Froma is the one who said we have to look at the threads and connections. She challenged us to look at families in a more positive way, and that really helped us understand resilience contextually."

Walsh readily acknowledges that she is not the first to apply the resilience model to mental health. "One of Froma's tremendous strengths is her integrative approach to what already existed," says Falicov. "It wasn't a matter of her saying, 'I have the truth and I'm creating a new school of family therapy.' She said, 'How can we put together what we already know and bring in some new ways of looking at therapy?'"



b

BORN IN KENOSHA, WISCONSIN, Froma was the only child of a mother and father who encountered adversity throughout their lives, and she says their perseverance taught her how strong families can be. Her parents met in Hyde Park, in the midst of the Depression. Her mother was estranged from her own family, and her father dealt with the harsh consequences of a childhood disability. Her father managed a struggling gas station and her mother, a gifted musician, taught piano lessons to make ends meet. As the family was starting to get on its feet, a fire swept through the apartment building where they lived when Walsh was just two, and they were left homeless for a time.

Throughout their hardships, however, Walsh says "my parents loved me well. In our neighborhood, where most children went to work in the factories after high school, they believed in my potential and encouraged me to go to college. Because of their support, I always knew I would make something of my life."

When Walsh was 14, the family moved to California. At UC Berkeley she assumed she would have a career as a neuroscientist. But

having found a new goal during her time in the Peace Corps, Walsh entered the MSW program at Smith College when she returned from Morocco. In her first-year field placement at the psychiatric inpatient unit at Yale, she found her passion in family therapy, and during clinical work at the Yale Child Study Center had the opportunity to present cases to visiting scholars Anna Freud and Erik Erikson.

Walsh moved to Chicago in 1971 to be the family studies coordinator in a schizophrenia research program at Michael Reese Hospital. The variety she found in her “normal control group” sparked her curiosity about so-called “normal families,” and this interest led her to the University of Chicago’s doctoral program in human development. “So where my clinical work had been focused on the influences in mal-adaptation, my doctoral work looked at what contributed to positive growth, and that was the most important scholarly influence,” she says.

After a faculty appointment in the Department of Psychiatry and the Family Institute at Northwestern, Walsh joined the faculty of SSA in 1982. During her time at the School, she has served as president of the American Family Therapy Academy and editor of the *Journal of Marital & Family Therapy*. Along with her husband, John Rolland, a psychiatrist who specializes in the psycho-social complications and challenges associated with illness or disability, Walsh co-directs The Chicago Center for Family Health, a nonprofit institute affiliated with the University that provides advanced training in resilience-oriented family therapy for community-based professionals and agencies interested in using the model to strengthen vulnerable families.

At SSA, Walsh says, “Above all, I love the teaching. U of C students are bright and curious. So when I think about retirement from teaching, it is reluctantly.”

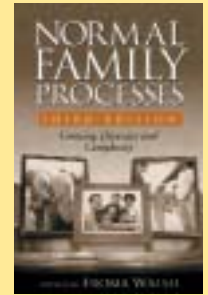
“Froma has been an incredible asset to SSA and especially to the students who have taken her courses,” says Sharon Berlin, SSA’s Helen Ross Professor Emerita. “As a colleague, I have enjoyed Froma’s incisive intellect and her wonderful sense of humor. These two assets make an unbeatable combination. I always loved sitting next to her at meetings because she brought a kind of spark, freshness, and humorous irreverence to deliberations.”

Retirement from SSA does not mean slowing down for Walsh. She will expand her consulting and training of mental health professionals internationally. She is working on a new edition of her book *Spiritual Resources in Family Therapy* and has plans to begin research into the relational significance of companion animals. “I want to draw from all the emerging research on the roles that pets play in family dynamics—including issues of divorce and custody—and their intimate relationship with people who live alone or need assistance. It’s a whole area that has barely received attention in the mental health field.”

So while her time at SSA draws to a close, she presses on in other areas of scholarly interest. And while she says she would love to continue teaching part time, she has plenty to occupy her. “All of my scholarly work will continue—at full speed,” she says. “And it will continue until I drop.” 🍷



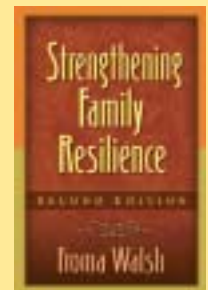
Froma Walsh



## Greatest Hits

Of all of Froma Walsh’s publications, these four may be the most influential. All of her books are still in print:

**Normal Family Processes: Growing Diversity and Complexity** (3rd Edition, 2003, Guilford Press) First published in 1993, this book challenged traditional notions of family in the United States and presents the leading research on contemporary families.

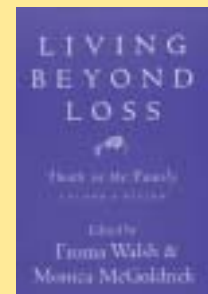


**Strengthening Family Resilience** (2nd Edition, 2006, Guilford Press) Originally published in 1998, the book is designed as a clinical resource for practitioners, providing guidelines to address a wide range of challenges.



**Spiritual Resources in Family Therapy** (2003, Guilford Press) This text examines the connection between faith and resilience, bridging a gap that has long existed in mental health literature.

**Living Beyond Loss: Death in the Family** (2nd Edition, 2004, W.W. Norton) Edited with Monica McGoldrick, the book examines the effects of loss on an entire family system and helps families and therapists with a wide range of normative and complicated losses.





# The High Cost of Giving Back

BY JOHN PULLEY

## Can financial aid be fixed so graduate students

**S**ARA BUDOWSKY had been an academic standout at Chicago's public schools, but without financial aid, she would have been unable to attend the University of Chicago. Growing up in Chicago's blue-collar neighborhoods, Budowsky had only a fleeting familiarity with financial security. Money was always tight. The family business, a record store, failed, and income provided by her father, a musician, was as up and down as random notes on a musical scale.

With grants and scholarships, however, Budowsky graduated in 2006 with a B.A. in human development. Eager to

give back to her community, she enrolled in SSA's master's degree program. "If I was able to get a degree from a place like the University of Chicago, I wanted to make sure I wasn't forgetting my roots," she says.

After graduation from SSA next spring, Budowsky says she looks forward to "working in the city in a mental health setting with children, maybe doing outreach with the school system, and being financially secure. Not well off, but able to pay off the loans and to buy a house."

Budowsky may have trouble achieving the future she envisions. She receives more than \$20,000 annually in financial aid from the School in the form of a paid assistantship and a donor-

supported scholarship. Without this support, she says she wouldn't have been able to afford an SSA education. But upon graduation from the School, she will also have accumulated approximately \$35,000 in total debt for her graduate and undergrad degrees. Her spouse, a Chicago alumna who teaches in the city's public school system, racked up an estimated \$80,000 in undergraduate debt.

Like other graduate schools around the country that produce alumni who are ready for a career in public service, SSA works hard to provide the necessary financial aid to enroll meritorious graduate students such as Budowsky. Due to increasing costs of a graduate education and the difficulty of



The financial squeeze can be particularly uncomfortable for those who work in fields such as social work or education.

raising adequate funds, a crisis is brewing, one that may affect who can afford to attend such schools.

“We get concerned about the level of debt students are acquiring and the salaries they will be able to command,” says Penny Johnson, SSA’s dean of students. “We are always looking for scholarship funds. We have lots of endowed funds for scholarships, but they are small. Unfortunately, the capacity of social work alumni to make large donations to support the next generation is limited compared to other careers.”

>>> ■ <<<

THE FINANCIAL SQUEEZE can be particularly uncomfortable for social workers, public

post-secondary costs and financial aid that has failed to keep pace—has been building for years. In the 1980s, college enrollment of students from families of modest means surged and federal and state support of higher education began a long decline. Tuition began increasing faster than median family incomes. The impact has turned the traditional model of educational financing on its head, with students “shouldering an increasing share of the costs,” according to the PIRG report.

Even after adjusting for inflation, average student debt increased more than 50 percent in the past decade, according to a recent report from the U.S. Department of Education. In 1993, fewer than one-third of

new college graduates of four-year institutions had student loan debt. In 2004, two-thirds of new grads had educational debt. “Over the past two decades, undergraduate student loans have supplanted grant aid as the primary way students finance their college education,” the report concluded.

The crisis isn’t confined to undergraduate education. While undergraduates are eligible for government grants and other support, most master’s degree students who do not receive institutional financial aid rely on loans. The federal government provides \$8,500 in government-subsidized Stafford loans and \$12,000 in unsubsidized loans (the federal government pays the interest on subsidized loans while



Average student debt increased **more than 50 percent** in the past decade.

## nts can still afford to work in public service?

school teachers, and others who work in low-paying fields and struggle to pay off hefty student loans. Among graduates of public four-year colleges, 37 percent have too much debt to manage as a starting social worker and 55 percent of private college graduates would face serious repayment challenges as a starting social worker, according to “Paying Back, Not Giving Back: Student Debt’s Negative Impact on Public Service Career Opportunities,” a report released last year by the Higher Education Project, an initiative of state Public Interest Research Groups.

Higher education’s affordability crisis—essentially a widening gap between escalating

“Forty percent of students who **choose not to pursue graduate study** do so because of the fear of mounting student debt.”



students are in school), and students who apply early can get up to \$4,500 in Perkins loans, which can be forgiven if a graduate takes a qualifying job, such as working with children.

On the other hand, the debt accumulated in the attainment of bachelor’s degrees tends to exacerbate the financial struggles of students who pursue post-graduate diplomas. At SSA, about half the students beginning the master’s program in the current academic year have undergraduate debt, which ranges from \$5,000 to \$74,000. The average is \$20,172.

Preliminary analysis of the 2006 Annual Survey of Social Work Programs, conducted by the Council for Social Work

Education, indicates that 81 percent of graduates from master’s programs had loan debt. The median amount owed is \$25,000. The survey sought data only on debt accumulated while enrolled in a post-graduate program, but the data may be skewed by respondents who included undergraduate debt, a spokesperson says.

“Research shows that 40 percent of students who choose not to pursue graduate study do so because of the fear of mounting student debt,” says Ben Baron, vice president of graduate programs for Kaplan Test Prep and Admissions. “The reality is that for many students, there are enormous sacrifices that go along with the time and effort it takes

to do graduate school. No one should be deterred from their dream because of educational costs.”



WITH AN ANNUAL tuition of about \$32,000, the School of Social Service Administration is one of the more moderately priced options among University of Chicago graduate schools. Still, add in an estimated \$14,000 to live in Chicago, the expense of insurance and other outlays, and costs quickly become prohibitive.

To keep the School affordable for as many students as possible, SSA has made financial aid a priority for years, a commitment that has only increased in the last decade. The School now provides some 92 percent of master's degree students with scholarships, the amounts determined primarily on the basis of merit. Awards range from \$2,500 to more than \$20,000. In the competitive field of attracting the very best doctoral students, SSA provides full tuition and fees, including health insurance, to students working toward a Ph.D., and a fellowship that comes with a stipend worth \$15,000 to \$18,000 annually.

SSA raises all this money from a number of sources. Endowed funds yield approximately \$600,000 for student support each year and new gifts bring in approximately \$2 million more, of which about \$500,000 provides merit- and need-based scholarships. In addition, SSA encourages students to apply for research assistantships and other jobs that qualify for the government-subsidized work

study program. Unmet costs are met by higher-cost loans from private lenders.

“We are steadily working to encourage alumni and other philanthropists, including charitable foundations and corporations, to give,” says Stephen Gilmore, SSA's associate dean for external affairs. “We simply could not attract students of great promise and diverse backgrounds who can be successful in a rigorous environment without significant tuition support.”

Increasing diversity—racial, ethnic, economic—often means enrolling students who are least able to pay high educational costs. Linda Clum, SSA's admissions director, regularly talks to students who are interested in SSA. Those conversations tend to cover a range of topics, but “eventually we get down to the price tag,” which can be the critical factor in students' deciding to attend SSA or even to apply. Applications held steady last year, and the entering class is strong, but some coveted students declined acceptance to SSA on the basis of cost. “We're concerned that we will continue to get the most highly talented students,” Clum says.

“Because students with lower incomes are more dependent on student loans than higher income students, students who already face significant challenges to attending college will more strongly feel the effect of loan debt on career choice,” according to the Higher Education Project.



WITH THE COST of bridging the gap between the expense of a graduate education for those

## Supporting Those Who Support Children

FOR MUCH OF HER ADULT LIFE, DORIS JEAN KELLER has been an advocate for children. Her \$100,000 gift to the School of Social Service Administration ensures that others will continue doing that work into perpetuity.

The William S. and Doris Jean Keller Family Scholarship Endowment provides annual financial help to a student “who plans to work to improve the lives of abused and neglected children and to assure that every child is raised in a safe, loving, and permanent home.” In selecting recipients, preference is given to second-year master's degree students.

Social service professionals who work with disadvantaged children encounter daunting impediments, from inadequate resources to legal and bureaucratic red tape to apathy. The enormity of the challenge and the high cost to society of failing to overcome it mandates that people working in the field be smart, dedicated, and armed with the best education available. “I think it's so important to get quality people like we have in the program right now,” Keller says. “These young people are excellent. They're very innovative. They really are the best and brightest that I've ever met.”

Keller's role as a philanthropist resulted from decades of volunteer work, which began with her involvement in the local and national Parent Teacher Association. Over the years, she has served various organizations dedicated to child welfare, including the National Safety Council and a local health board. In 1977 she founded Illinois Action for Children (IAC), a statewide group that advocates for foster children. When IAC disbanded in 2003, Keller augmented the group's scholarship fund to make the \$100,000 donation to SSA.

“We can't have a just society with kids who aren't functioning,” says Keller, the mother of four grown children, including a daughter who graduated from SSA. Every year, the pair has lunch with the recipient of the family scholarship. “They all thank me tremendously,” she says. “They tell me they wouldn't be there without it.”



Doris Jean Keller

working in social welfare and the available resources falling primarily on students—and schools like SSA that are trying to ease that burden—the question becomes: Is there a better way?

In May, Robert Reich, a former Labor Department secretary in the Clinton administration, proposed a scheme for student-loan repayment that seems radical on first glance. In a commentary for National Public Radio, Reich suggested that the well-compensated graduate “who's landed that private-equity job

would pay 10 percent of his income for 10 years, which would be a hefty sum. My students who go into social work or become artists would pay 10 percent of theirs, which would be far less. The private-equity guy would, in effect, subsidize the social worker and the artist. And why not? This way all of them could follow their callings.”

It's not an unreasonable idea; in fact, a version is already in place in other countries. In 1989, the Swedish government introduced student loans with

income-contingent repayment schemes that link the amount of graduates' repayments with their level of income. Britain, South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand have introduced similar programs that calculate repayment as a percentage of future income.

Closer to home, the Income Contingent Repayment program (ICR) from the U.S. Department of Education offers a watered down version for graduates who pursue careers with lower salaries, such as careers in public service. The program pegs monthly payments to the borrower's income, family size, and total amount borrowed. Loan debt remaining after 25 years is discharged (although the amount forgiven is treated as taxable income). However, banks and other private institutions that make government-guaranteed loans are ineligible for participation and that and other restrictions make the program unavailable or unattractive to the vast majority of borrowers.

In the wake of a scandal in how some universities and banks have steered undergraduate students to specific loans, a massive \$20 billion college aid bill was passed this fall by the federal government. Much of the bill's provisions only affect undergrads, such as an increase in the amount a Pell grant will provide annually and a phased-in reduction in the rate on Stafford loans.

For graduate students, the federal aid package includes a new version of ICR, called Income-Based Repayment (IBR), which will lower the cap on monthly payments for low- to moderate-income graduates, and a loan-forgiveness component

that would allow the balance of student loans to be forgiven for those working full-time in a public service profession for ten years. "Anybody in a public service field with both high debt and low income will benefit," says Mark Kantowitz, college planning author and publisher of the website FinAid. He argues that there are a lot of good things in the bill, even though it phases in many of the new programs to keep to a budget—and reduces federal subsidies to private lenders to help raise the funds.

The hidden cost of lowering lender subsidies may still not be clear. "Some graduate students will come out worse because of [Congress's] cutting lender subsidies," predicts Dan Thibeault, cofounder and president of Graduate Leverage, a student-debt advisory service founded in 2003 by a group of Harvard Business School classmates. Thibeault notes that lower subsidies mean less profit margin for

**"We simply could not attract students of great promise and diverse backgrounds who can be successful in a rigorous environment without significant tuition support."**



private lenders, which he says will encourage them to charge higher rates of interest on their loans. More importantly, though, he says, is that escalating tuition costs will increase loan amounts.

In the end, the new federal loan forgiveness programs, while certainly appreciated by many graduates, may not have as large of an impact in helping grad students enter public service as hoped. Studies have shown that forgiveness after years or even decades does not have nearly as much of an impact as lower payments throughout the life of the loan.

For example, Erica Field, a Harvard researcher, looked at two groups of randomly assigned applicants admitted to NYU Law School. One group was offered low-debt financial aid, the other group a financial aid package that required them to carry debt that would be forgiven later on. The packages had equivalent monetary value. Participants offered the low-debt financial aid package were twice as likely to enroll in law school as their peers who were offered high-debt aid that would be forgiven. Moreover, members of the low-debt group were up to 45 percent more likely than their high-debt peers to take a first job in public interest law.

"If there is debt aversion, or psychic disutility of debt beyond borrowing costs, even educational loans that are repaid by a third party could influence career decisions," Field wrote. "Educational debts of the current magnitude dissuade even the most dedicated graduates from taking low-paying public interest jobs."


Graduate schools eager to negate the impact of onerous



**"Educational debts dissuade even the most dedicated graduates from taking low-paying public interest jobs."**

educational debt on students could choose to eliminate student loans from their financial-aid equations, a strategy that has gained adherents in higher education. This spring, Davidson College became the first private liberal arts school to join Harvard University and a handful of other elite institutions in eliminating loans as part of their financial aid packages for undergraduates.

The cost of such plans is very high, though. Paying for Davidson's no-loans policy will require the college, with an enrollment of 1,700 students, to raise an estimated \$75 million in new funds. The initiative was undertaken, in part, because graduates were abandoning social work for higher paying jobs in other sectors.

"They wanted that debt to go away," says Chris Gruber, Davidson's vice president and dean of admissions and financial aid. "We wanted students to be guided by their hearts as to what they wanted to do in the future, as opposed to their pocketbooks." 

Founded in 1927, *Social Service Review* is committed to examining social welfare policy and practice and evaluating its effects. Providing multidisciplinary and multicultural analyses of current policies and past practices, *SSR* publishes critical research from social welfare scholars and practitioners, as well as sociologists, economists, theologians, historians, psychologists, and political scientists. *Social Service Review* is edited by the faculty of the School of Social Service Administration, led by Emily Klein Gidwitz Professor Michael Sosin.



Below are summaries of three articles that appeared in the 2007 issues of *Social Service Review*.

## Necessary Expenses

Women who found work after leaving welfare aren't spending more on their families

**E**VER SINCE THE 1996 WELFARE REFORM ACT, social scientists have struggled to figure out how the major shift in policy has changed the lives of America's poor. Few dispute that welfare reform has succeeded in shifting many single mothers from welfare into jobs. But questions remain about its broader consequences for poor families—and especially for children.

A new study of the spending patterns of single mothers suggests that in some ways reform did little to help children. Single mothers are spending more on work-related expenses like transportation and adult clothing but no more than before on durable goods like refrigerators or on their children.

The study, reported in the September 2007 *Social Science Review*, found no increase in spending on children's clothing or on "education and enrichment," such as computers, books, and newspapers. The authors say that their findings, though tentative, suggest that social policies from the 1990s may have done little to close the gap between poor and better-off families.

"We were hoping we would see some increase in expenditures on children's items. But welfare reform in the U.S. did not aim to increase expenditures on children. Its aim was to move women from welfare to work," says Neeraj Kaushal, professor of social work at Columbia University and lead author of "Welfare Reform and Family Expenditures: How Are Single Mothers Adapting to the New Welfare and Work Regime?"

Qin Gao, assistant professor at Fordham University's Graduate School of Social Service, and Jane Waldfogel, professor of social work and public affairs at

## All on the Family

Welfare reform's effects on child welfare are unclear in a new study, but some of the indicators are troubling

**L**IKE OTHER RESEARCHERS, KRISTEN SLACK worried that welfare reform would hurt families, increase child maltreatment, and overwhelm the capacity of child protection agencies to cope with it.

"My main concerns about the welfare plans being vetted in the early 1990s were that they were just too harsh on families, that there were implications for family income that could have adverse effects on child welfare," said Slack, an associate professor in the School of Social Work at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, who authored the paper with Bong Joo Lee from Seoul National University and Lawrence Berger from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Now, in a study that compares

welfare sanctions and child maltreatment, Slack and her colleagues find some good news. Using data from Illinois, they conclude that families sanctioned under the new welfare laws are no more likely than other families to become cases of child abuse or neglect. But their article, entitled "Do Welfare Sanctions Increase Child Protection System Involvement? A Cautious Answer," tells a more complicated story. Although sanctions seem to produce no increase in substantiated cases of abuse and neglect, they do result in more reports of it. The authors say this increase is itself worrisome. In practice, many families are reported several times before child protection agencies are able to act on the reports. Also, families that fall under suspicion of child abuse may be experiencing real difficulties



that simply don't rise to the level of abuse, especially in states like Illinois, which imposes a relatively high legal threshold.

And there's more troubling news. The authors found that other kinds of grant reductions, such as cuts in wel-

fare payments due to marriage, higher income, or failure to file the proper paperwork, did result in more proven cases of maltreatment when other sources of income did not make up for the cuts.

Historically, researchers have

Contrary to expectations, welfare reform seemed to produce no increase in spending on childcare.

Columbia University's School of Social Work collaborated with Kaushal in the study.

Kaushal and her colleagues used a three-part analysis to focus on single mothers with no more than a high-school education and to pare away the effect of other factors. They looked at total spending but also different categories of spending. Unlike previous researchers, they found no increase in total spending. But they did find that welfare reform changed how mothers spend their money.

One question that remains unanswered concerns childcare. Contrary to expectations, Kaushal and her colleagues found that welfare reform seemed to produce no increase in spending on childcare. Single mothers may be relying on family and friends for more child care, or childcare subsidies may be reaching the families that need them most, she said. ■

Kaushal, Neeraj, Qin Gao, and Jane Waldfogel. 2007. "Welfare Reform and Family Expenditures: How Are Single Mothers Adapting to the New Welfare and Work Regime?" *Social Service Review* 81 (3): 369-96.

found that families on welfare run a higher risk of involvement with child protection services. But Slack, the study's lead author, said they have found little evidence that welfare reform has produced "huge effects on kids, good or bad."

And yet these findings have not laid to rest all her questions about the reform effort, now 11 years old. She noted that many studies of welfare reform date to the economic prosperity of the 1990s and fail to take into account the more difficult years that followed. She also said it was important to look beyond welfare sanctions for signs of families in difficulty.

"We shouldn't just assume that only sanctioned families need help," she says. She and her colleagues

point to a "social welfare policy frontier," where families suffering economic hardship under the new welfare rules find themselves in what Slack calls a "programmatic limbo."

"Many of them are doing worse, but their hardships do not rise to the level of 'abuse' or 'neglect' under state statutes," she says. "What are we supposed to do with this group of families? Neither the welfare system or the child welfare system is addressing their needs. Whose responsibility is it to help these families? Where are they supposed to turn?" ■

Slack, Kristen S., Bong Joo Lee, and Lawrence M. Berger. 2007. "Do Welfare Sanctions Increase Child Protection System Involvement? A Cautious Answer." *Social Service Review* 81 (2): 207-28.

## Parenting Trap

New indications about how lack of resources have a negative impact on children

**H**OW DOES ONE BECOME A GOOD ENOUGH PARENT? What promotes good parenting? And under what conditions do parents struggle?

Such questions have no easy answers. But social scientists have focused increasing attention on the complicated nexus of income, family structure, parenting, and child well-being. A recent study tries to shed light on factors that lead to poor parenting, with implications for both welfare reform and marriage-promotion policies.

In an article published in the September 2007 *Social Service Review*, Lawrence Berger finds that children are more likely to experience "substandard parenting" if their mother has a partner who is not their biological parent. At the same time, money moderates the effect in these families. Substandard parenting decreases as income rises.

Berger also found strong evidence that single mothers who work longer hours are more likely to exhibit substandard parenting.

"Potentially it's a story of stress," says Berger, an assistant professor in the School of Social Work and an affiliate with the Institute for Research on Poverty at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. "You've got more to do. You're splitting time between working and being with the kids. That's one potential explanation. Another is that with things like accidents and injuries, or being able to take kids on outings, you're simply there less."

It's well known that poverty is hard on children. Researchers have consistently found connections between children's well-being and family income and structure. Children tend to thrive better in wealthier families and in families where they live with both biological parents.

But how to explain these findings? Berger and other researchers have been focusing on parenting as one of the links between how children grow up and their development and well-being. One challenge researchers face is how to identify—and measure—inadequate parenting. Reasoning that even adequate parents have different strengths and weaknesses, Berger looked at a range of indicators, including parental warmth, frequency of spanking, neatness and cleanliness of the home, and the number of outings



and activities. Parents who fell in the bottom 10 percent in any one category were deemed to expose their children to substandard parenting.

The data came from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, which followed over many years thousands of girls and young women, many of whom became mothers. The survey data allowed Berger to see how changing circumstances affected parenting over time.

Berger says his findings suggest that policies to promote marriage need to take into account their effect on previous children, since the quality of parenting appears to decline for children whose mother lives with a man who is not their biological father. They also raise questions about how encouraging single mothers to work may hurt their ability to be good parents. But given the shifting nature of modern families, Berger sees still broader implications. "The demographics of families have changed a lot in the last 40 years," he says. "About 50 percent of kids spend part of their childhood in a single mother family, and about a third spend time living with a step-parent. These transitions are going to affect a lot of families." ■

Berger, Lawrence M. 2007. "Socioeconomic Factors and Substandard Parenting." *Social Service Review* 81 (3): 485-522.

## Levine Wins SSA Pollak Award

**Judith A. Levine** is the 2007 recipient of the William Pollak Award for Excellence in Teaching at SSA. Levine is a faculty affiliate of the University of Chicago Population Research Center and Center for Human Potential and Public Policy. Her fields of interest are social stratification, poverty and social policy, low-wage work, gender inequality, sociology of the family, social demography, children's outcomes, health, and economic sociology. Levine is completing a book manuscript entitled *Reaching for the Bottom Rung: Low-*



**Judith A. Levine**

*Income Mothers' Climb into the Labor Market Before and After Welfare Reform*, which provides a rare qualitative comparison of low-income women's experiences with welfare and low-wage work before and after welfare reform through open-ended interviews with 95 low-income mothers.

Since 1994 the Pollak Award is presented annually to an SSA faculty member or instructor nominated by students and selected by past recipients. The winner is chosen to recognize contributions to classroom teaching, including innovative or interdisciplinary approaches or leadership in curriculum development, and unique ability to encourage, influence, and mentor students.

## Childhood Summit Brings Norton to Washington

**Dolores Norton**, SSA's Samuel Deusch Professor, was a participant at the National Summit on America's Children, an event sponsored by House Speaker

Nancy Pelosi at the Capital Building in Washington, D.C., on May 22, 2007. Webcast nationally, Norton's program was part of "The



**Dolores Norton**

Science of Early Childhood," a panel with neuroscientists who described early brain development and its relationship to learning and behavior.

Norton spoke about early interactions, relationships, and communicative experiences between babies and young children and their primary caretakers, as well as the environments that contribute to developing brain architecture. University of Chicago Professor James Heckman, the Henry Schultz Distinguished Service Professor of Economics, gave the keynote address.

## Ludwig on Housing Team, Publishes New Research

The Housing and Urban Development Department has tapped SSA Professor **Jens Ludwig** to join a research team evaluating the long-term impacts of



**Jens Ludwig**

Moving to Opportunity (MTO), a HUD-funded randomized residential mobility experiment. Ludwig is helping lead the effort to

supplement HUD resources available to support data collection for the evaluation. Nearly \$9 million in federal and private funding has been invested in the research by the National Science Foundation, National Institutes of

Health, the Centers for Disease Control, and a variety of private foundations.

Ludwig has also recently published several pieces. His benefit-cost analysis of the Head Start early childhood education program was published as a Social Policy Report by the Society for Research on Child Development, and a mixed-methods study of underground gun markets in the city of Chicago (with Duke professor Philip Cook, Columbia professor Sudhir Venkatesh, and Harvard professor Anthony Braga) is forthcoming in the *Economic Journal*.

## Chaskin Co-Edits Book on Child Welfare Practices in Several Countries

Using research as an advocacy tool for policies and practices that help children is the subject of a new book co-edited by

**Robert J. Chaskin**, associate professor at SSA and research fellow at the Chapin Hall Center, and Jona M.



**Robert L. Chaskin**

Rosenfeld, the Gordon Brown Professor Emeritus and former director of the Paul Baerwood School of Social Work, Hebrew University of Jerusalem. In *Research for Action; Cross-National Perspectives on Connecting Knowledge, Policy, and Practice for Children*, published by Oxford University Press, Chaskin and Rosenfeld have assembled six child welfare case studies authored by noted experts and teams from the U.K., Ireland, Israel, South Africa, and the U.S. into a collection that provides perspective on different policy and cultural environments.

## Mental Illness Medication Management from McCracken

Individuals with severe psychological disorders are significantly less likely to maintain necessary medications treatment unless they also receive specialized counseling therapy, according to SSA Senior Lecturer



**Stanley McCracken**

**Stanley McCracken**. In a chapter of *Clinical Motivational Interviewing* (Guilford, 2007), entitled, "Motivational Interviewing for Medication Adherence in Individuals with Schizophrenia," McCracken and co-author P.W. Corrigan outline the methods for helping therapists build effective relationships with clients around medications management.

## Pollack Joins Drug Committee

Associate Professor **Harold Pollack** has been appointed to the National Academy of Sciences Committee on Understanding and Controlling the Demand for Illegal Drugs, which is attempting to identify what is known about the nature and scope of markets for illegal drugs and the characteristics of drug users. Researchers will look at factors influencing drug demand in the U.S., including the differences among illegal drugs, characteristics of users, the influence of risk on users and sellers, and the effects of enforcement on demand. The project will identify new research directions.

Pollack is a widely published scholar on the relationships between

# New Faculty on Campus

## SSA welcomes three new professors to the faculty this fall

### Charles M. Payne

Charles M. Payne joins SSA from Duke University, where he taught African and African-American studies, history, and sociology, and served as director of the African and African-American Studies Program. A prominent scholar in the areas of urban school reform and the history of the civil rights movement, Payne has been named the Frank P. Hixon Distinguished Service Professor at SSA.

Payne's research on school reform, which draws from many years in academia as well as his experience as executive director of the Urban Education Project from 1982-86, has focused on why urban school systems have been so consistently dysfunctional. His latest research will appear in a new book, *So Much Reform, So Little Change*.

"Urban school systems as we used to know them are dying—the *laissez faire* systems that dominated the 1960s, '70s and '80s have changed to something we don't have a label for," Payne says. "The leadership of urban school systems has been much more aggressive. The question is, does that mean they've been any smarter?"

Payne completed an anthology, *Teach Freedom*, earlier this summer that encapsulates his most recent research on the civil rights movement. The focus is on liberation education, a tradition of self-consciously political schools in African-American communities that include the "freedom schools" established in Mississippi in the 1960s.

Such schools are "intended to produce students who had a deeper, more critical understanding of the systems they're in, but who also understood themselves as change agents," Payne says. "The research I have done on the civil rights movement has been on the theme of trying to understand the movement from the bottom up."

After settling in and continuing his research in the fall, Payne will

begin teaching at SSA in the winter, covering topics like urban education and school reform, the civil rights movement, and the sociology of race relations. Payne is no stranger to the Chicago area, having taught at Northwestern from 1985 to 1997 prior to his appointment at Duke.



Charles M. Payne

### Jens Ludwig

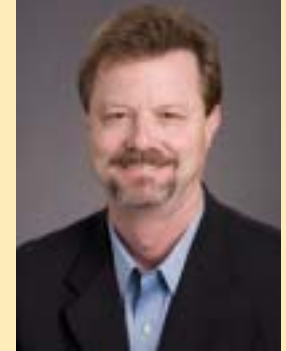
Professor Jens Ludwig joins SSA from Georgetown University, where he taught public policy from 1994 until the spring. Ludwig's primary appointment is at SSA, with affiliated faculty appointments at the Harris School of Public Policy and the University of Chicago Law School, where he also taught as a visiting professor in 2004 and 2006. He also has been affiliated in the past with the Northwestern-University of Chicago Joint Center for Poverty Research.

Ludwig's research focuses on improving the life chances of low-income children and examines a variety of systems ranging from schools to criminal justice. "My research winds up looking at all the programmatic areas that bear on the question of how you help low-income kids," he says. "One of the things I hope to contribute to SSA is to help people who are running agencies and engaging in clinical practice think even harder about the larger policy context in which they're operating."

Among the programmatic areas Ludwig has tracked is public housing. Over the past decade, HUD funding through the HOPE VI program has helped support the demolition of some of the nation's highest-poverty public housing projects. Policymakers continue to debate what form of housing assistance should replace these projects, with possibilities that include lower-densi-



Jens Ludwig



Michael Woolley

ty, mixed-income development or even housing vouchers. "What are the implications of those different housing policies on the life outcomes of kids?" he asks. "Are they more likely to engage in crime? Are their mental and physical outcomes different?"

This fall, Ludwig will move forward with research and helping his wife, a lifelong Southerner, adjust to Chicago's weather. "We're going to spend the fall sweater shopping," he says with a laugh. In the winter, he will teach a crime policy course for the Harris School, and then in the spring he will make his SSA debut teaching advanced quantitative methods to doctoral students.

### Michael Woolley

Assistant Professor Michael Woolley joins SSA from the University of Michigan School of Social Work and School of Education, where he has taught since 2003. Woolley spent part of last school year as a visiting professor at the Yonsei University School of Social Welfare in Seoul, where he taught a course on clinical practice with children and presented at the International Conference on School Social Work.

A former school social worker, Woolley has focused his research on the social, contextual, and environmental factors that influence children's school outcomes. These can include school climate or culture, family dynamics, and neighborhood issues.

"I've done research that shows how the social environment in the school, the relationships between students and supportive adults—especially the relationships between students and teachers—all affect student outcomes," Woolley says.

"Similarly, family dynamics—how involved parents are in the educational process, whether parents talk to kids about schooling, and what they did that day, and future plans—affect outcomes."

When Woolley talks about school outcomes, he digs deeper than grades and test scores. "I look at the attitudes and beliefs about school and education," he says. "Students having a perspective about their future that includes school, their feelings about being connected or bonded to school, are also important outcomes that we don't measure or attend to enough in research. My research supports the idea that some of those behavioral, psychological, or attitudinal outcomes, in turn, affect academic outcomes." Woolley's research has also indicated that longstanding achievement gaps, differences in student academic outcomes by race/ethnicity, can be explained by differences in those critical social environmental factors at school, in the community, and in the family.

At SSA, Woolley will teach courses on social work practice and school social work, and he hopes to get involved with the Chicago Consortium on School Research.



Associate Professor Harold Pollack has joined a committee researching illegal drug markets for the National Academy of Sciences

poverty, policy, and public health. An expert in health administration and policy at SSA, and director of the Center for Health Administration Studies, Pollack's recent research concerns HIV and hepatitis prevention efforts for injection drug users, drug abuse and dependence among welfare recipients and pregnant women, infant mortality prevention, and child health.

## Gehlert Added to Two Cancer Research Teams

The state of California has asked SSA Professor **Sarah Gehlert** to be a member of the strategy team of the Special Research Initiative of the California Breast Cancer Research Program (CBCRP). Gehlert will contribute to the design of a plan to use California public tax revenues to advance breast cancer research at the University of California. The plan, accompanied by a report entitled, "Identifying Gaps in Breast Cancer Research: Addressing Disparities and the Roles of the Physical and Social Environment," will link funding proto-

cols to research that examines cause-and-effect relationships between environment, lifestyle, race, and cancer vulnerabilities.

The National Institute of Health (NIH) has also appointed Dr. Gehlert to a five-person site visit team for reviewing the social and behavioral research branch of the NIH National Human Genome Research Institute. She has recently authored a paper entitled "Early-Life Conditions and Mechanisms of Population Health Vulnerabilities" published in a special September/October issue of *Health Affairs on Caring for the Vulnerable*. As director of the University of Chicago's Center for Interdisciplinary Health Disparities



**Sarah Gehlert**

Research, Gehlert collaborates with a team of University researchers examining the lives of African-American women in Chicago to determine if stress and social isolation contribute to breast carcinogenesis.

## NYC to Use K-12 Research Methods from U of C

Efforts to improve Chicago Public



**Melissa Roderick**

Schools led by the University of Chicago, including researchers from SSA, will be replicated in New York City, according to New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg and a partnership comprised of social scientists from Columbia, NYU, CUNY, and business leaders. Chicago's leading researchers on public education, **Melissa Roderick**, Hermon Dunlap Smith Professor at SSA, and John Q. Easton, the executive director of the University's Consortium on Chicago School Research, will consult with the New York initiative.

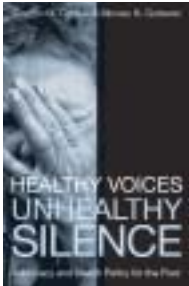
Developed and fine-tuned over nearly 17 years, the University of Chicago, working closely with Chicago

Public Schools, has collected data from across the city tracking students' performance over time, teacher turnover, and school spending priorities. According to Easton, directly involving school officials is essential: "Part of what has made us trusted is that we had all the opposing voices together. If they don't buy into it, it's not going to be listened to." The University of Chicago's schooling data collection and assessment spans nearly two decades, and has become one of the nation's most important sources of insights on public education outcomes.

## Grogan Book Calls for Advocates' Input on Health Policy

Having returned from her Fullbright Fellowship at Queens University of Belfast, Northern Ireland, **Colleen Grogan**, associate professor at SSA, co-authored *Healthy Voices, Unhealthy Silence; Advocacy and Health Policy for the Poor* with Michael K. Gusmano,

assistant professor of health policy and management and Lauterstein Scholar in the Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia and former Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Scholar in health policy, published by Georgetown University Press.



The book is a call to action for public servants and health advocates for the poor who remain silent during policy development and debate. Grogan and Gusmano examine how representatives for the poor participate in the advisory board process, assess how well nonprofits affect policy debates, and provide prescriptive advice for creating a participatory process. The authors conclude that nonprofit groups with significant government funding are more likely to increase political advocacy when a change in government funding or government policy is contemplated that might affect them directly, but that they are also as likely to suppress political activity if that is in their agency's best interests.

## Three New Voisin Papers on Youth

Associate Professor **Dexter Voisin** is the lead author on several recently published papers. The *Journal of HIV/AIDS and Social Services* includes "Understanding Motivations for Having Sex among Detained Youth: Implications for HIV Prevention Programs." The *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* published "Community Violence Exposure and Health-risk Outcomes among Detained Adolescents." And "A Commentary on Community Violence Exposure and HIV Risk Behaviors among African American Adolescents" appeared in *African American Research Perspectives*. 🍷



**Dexter Voisin**





## Award to Honor Jarrett as She Leaves Visiting Committee

Valerie Jarrett, who has been a member and chairman of the School's Visiting Committee since 2001, stepped down from the role this spring. A leading



**Valerie Jarrett**

voice in support of SSA, Jarrett is CEO of The Habitat Company, and vice-chairman of the Board of Trustees of the University of Chicago. She is also chairman of

the University of Chicago Medical Center Board and of the Board's Executive Committee. "Valerie has been instrumental in raising awareness and support for SSA," says Dean Jeanne Marsh. "She has also been crucial in advancing understanding of the role and value of social work in our society." Jarrett has been succeeded as chairman of the Visiting Committee by David J.

Vitale (see page 1).

To honor Jarrett's contributions to the School, SSA announced the creation of the Valerie Jarrett Award for Faculty Leadership in May. The award will be presented to a faculty member who has demonstrated distinguished leadership that has contributed to the development and enrichment of the faculty, their research, the recruitment and retention of exceptional scholars, and the greater good of the School. The recipient will be chosen by a committee led by the deputy dean for the Faculty.

## SSA Program Focusing on Infants and Young Children

A new three-year SSA project funded by the Irving Harris Foundation will offer professional development opportunities for social workers who practice with infants, young children, and their parents. Sidney Hans, professor at SSA and director of the School's doctoral program, will lead the project and be joined by colleagues Dolores Norton, the Samuel Deutsch Professor at SSA,

Associate Professor Julia Henly, and Victor Bernstein, a research associate professor and clinical psychologist.

The initiative is designed to educate and prepare future practitioners and researchers interested in infant mental health. The School will establish a professional development training site at SSA that offers classes in family support to social work students and advanced training in infant mental health through the School's Professional Development Program. The project will support doctoral students with interests in young children, increase the visibility of infant mental health within social work education nationally, and develop a library of video/DVD/ training resources to be shared with practitioner training sites.

SSA has long been a leader in training practitioners to support families and young children and has produced scholarship that has transformed clinical practice, clinical education, and social policies affecting families and children. Announcing the grant, Phyllis Glink, executive director of the Irving Harris Foundation, said, "We believe you have identified a critical need to elevate the field of infant mental health and child

development within the social work field."

## SSA Launches New Aging Initiative

SSA has received a John A. Hartford Foundation Practicum Partnership Program (PPP) grant to encourage second-year social work students to study the field of aging. Up to 30 Geriatric Leadership Fellows (GLF) will be trained over the next three years through an innovative collaboration with field instructors and agencies serving the elderly.

Fellows at SSA are required to take two courses in aging: Aging and Mental Health, and Aging and Public Policy. In addition to field placements as their anchor sites, they have two or more "rotations" over the course of the year. These are opportunities to learn different aspects of the continuum of care for older adults.

Integrative Seminars, a unique feature of the Hartford PPP, are scheduled throughout the year. Fellows at the various field sites introduce their GLF colleagues to their anchor organization,



SSA Celebrates: Photos from the conferences to honor the careers of Froma Walsh and Sharon Berlin.

1. Panel discussion of the presenters at the conclusion of the Walsh symposium
2. Sharon Berlin and Froma Walsh
3. Bill Borden with Berlin
4. Beth Angell and Berlin
5. Keith Madderom
6. Walsh with daughter Claire Whitney and husband John Rolland
7. Dexter Voisin and Berlin
8. Dodie Norton and Sydney Hans

to the work they are doing, the clients they see, and projects they are engaged in. The settings include hospitals, senior centers, community-based mental health centers, and a unique volunteer organization serving the socialization needs of elders.

SSA and Loyola University School of Social Work are collaborating in the Practicum Partnership Program, making Chicago an ideal place for social work students interested in working with the elderly.

## Students Win Awards to Work Abroad

The U.S. State Department awarded recent SSA graduate Jonathan Wildt a critical language scholarship to study Arabic in Cairo, Egypt. One of 20 Americans in the program, Wildt was the only social worker. Upon completion, Wildt, who earned a master's degree from SSA in 2007, is preparing to go to Sudan where he will serve as the assistant director of the Educational Development Organization. As the sole non-Sudanese member of a 10-person team, Wildt will work to start a com-

munity-based school in Darfur for displaced refugees. Partial funding for this program has been provided by the University of Chicago Provost's Office from the Darfur Victims and Education Fund.

Second-year student Corrine Widmer was the recipient of the 2007 SSA International Social Welfare (ISW) Fellowship. Over the summer of 2007, Widmer worked with street children in Central America. Established in 2005, the ISW group is a student organization dedicated to promoting the discussion of international social justice issues and social work's response to these issues.

## Kennedy Gives San Juan Cafferty Lecture

Randall Kennedy, the Michael R. Klein Professor of Law at Harvard Law School, gave the Second Annual Pastora San Juan Cafferty Lecture on Race and Ethnicity in American Life on April 12, 2007. Kennedy's talk was titled, "Sell-out: The Politics of Racial Betrayal." This annual lecture is held in honor of the career of SSA Professor Emerita Pastora San Juan Cafferty, and

is presented by SSA, William Brodsky, Frank M. Clark, Jeanne Marsh, Alan McNally, Linda Johnson Rice, and the Pastora San Juan Cafferty Lecture Fund.

## Berlin Honored at Conference

"The Play and Place of Theory in Social Work Practice," a conference that celebrated the career of Helen Ross Professor Sharon B. Berlin, was held on May 11. The conference, which included speakers Malcolm Payne, Jerome C. Wakefield, Susan Kemp, James Clark, Froma Walsh, Edwina Uehara, and Sara



Frank M. Clark, Jeanne Marsh, Pastora San Juan Cafferty, and Randall Kennedy at the 2007 annual Cafferty lecture.

Taber, echoed Berlin's dedication to critical thinking, theoretical pluralism, and pragmatism. The program was made possible in part by the Ikuo Yamaguchi Memorial Seminar Fund.

## Walsh Symposium Celebrates Career

On the occasion of her retirement, SSA hosted a symposium on October 12th to honor the work and career of Froma Walsh, SSA's Mose and Sylvia Firestone Professor and professor in the department of psychiatry at the Pritzker School of Medicine at the University of Chicago. The day-long symposium, entitled "Strengthening Resilience in Vulnerable Families," featured notable scholars and practitioners, including Monica McGoldrick, Carol Anderson, Waldo E. Johnson, Jr., Celia Jeas Falicov, Robert-Jay Green, John S. Rolland, Evan Imber-Black, Peter Fraenkel, and Michael Ungar. Funding for this program was made possible in part by the Ruth Knee Endowment for Spirituality in Social Work.



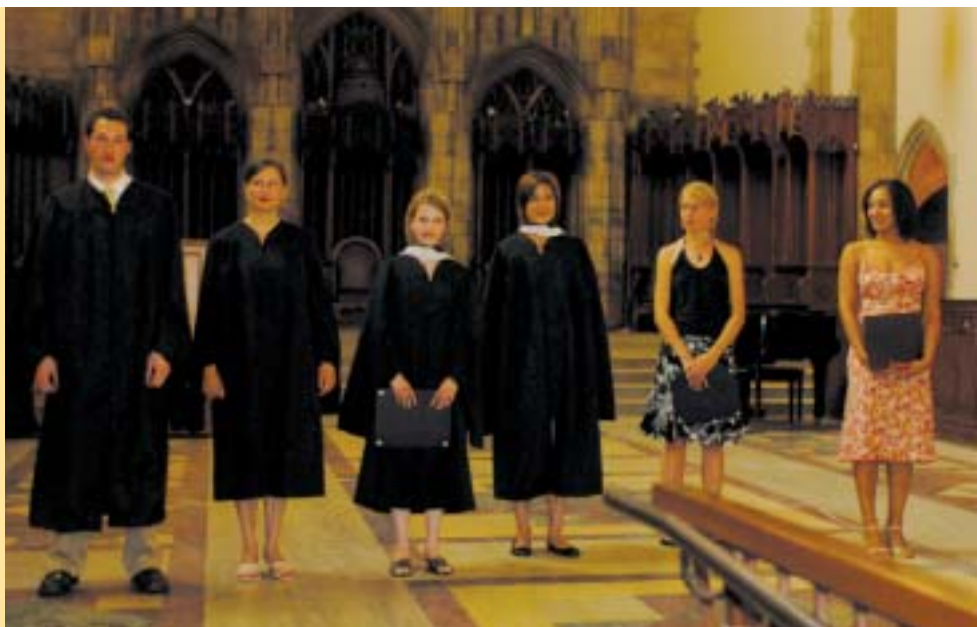
**Scenes from 2007 Alumni Weekend (clockwise from upper left): Dean Jeanne Marsh and Edwina Uehara, Ph.D. '87; Susan Gail Austin, A.M. '87, and Deputy Dean of the Curriculum Karen Teigiser; Sharon Berlin delivering the 2007 Rhoda G. Sarnat Lecture; Roslyn Marshall Paine, A.M. '02, with her husband Andrew Stuart Paine and son Ian; Gregory Gaither, A.M. '84, talks with Richard Scott III, A.M. '98; the crowd at SSA Nite! raises their glasses to toast the upcoming Centennial.**

## Alumni Weekend Celebrated for 2007

SSA and the University of Chicago celebrated Alumni Weekend on June 1-3, 2007. This year's events included the School's 50 Plus Luncheon, honoring the class of 1957 and emeriti alumni, and the third annual Rhoda G. Sarnat Lecture, "Why Cognitive Therapy Needs Social Work," by Helen Ross Professor Sharon Berlin. SSA Nite!, a reception hosted by members of the SSA Alumni Association board of directors, honored Edwina Uehara, Ph.D. '87, with the Edith Abbott Award (see "Alumni Updates" on page 34), and also bid farewell to board president, Harley Grant, A.M. '96, and welcomed Molly Baltman, A.M. '98, as the president-elect.

## Student Awards Highlight Graduation Ceremony

To honor the commencement of 162 graduates, SSA held its spring hooding ceremony on June 7, 2007. In addition to presenting the 2007 William Pollak Excellence in Teaching Award (see Faculty Notes on page 26), a number of student awards were celebrated during the event. SSA students Phoebe Cherenfant and Corrine Widmer were honored with the Wilma Walker Honor Award, which is presented to students for outstanding work in the first year and promise for future achievements in social work. Beth Ann McDowell and Caroline Ryan were the recipients of the Sonia Berz Honor Award, which is given to graduating master's degree students for outstanding work and promise in the field of aging. Angela Habr was the recipient of the Evelyn Harris Ginsburg Memorial Prize, awarded to a graduating master's degree student for outstanding work and promise for work in schools. Jarred Butto was honored with the Solomon O. Lichter Memorial Prize, presented to a master's degree student for scholarship and professional leadership. 🍷



**Award winners—SSA students and graduates honored at commencement (from left to right): Jarred Butto, Angela Habr, Carolyn Ryan, Beth Ann McDowell, Corrine Widmer, and Phoebe Cherenfant.**

## Alumni Association News

### Openings on Alumni Association Board

SSA is seeking candidates to serve on the Alumni Association Board of Directors. Nominations and letters of interest are due by March 1, 2008. Board members act as ambassadors for SSA, encourage alumni participation in SSA and University of Chicago initiatives and events, participate in committees to develop and implement programs and events, contribute annually to The SSA Fund, strengthen the relationship between the SSA Alumni Association and the University of Chicago Alumni Association, and initiate and encourage an open dialog with SSA alumni, students, faculty, and administration. Members serve a term of at least two years (but are eligible to serve two consecutive two-year terms) and attend quarterly meetings and alumni events.



Elizabeth M. Butler, A.M. '46 (right) with SSA faculty and staff.

### Call for Butler Award Nominees

In 2008, the Alumni Association of SSA will honor a recent graduate alumna/us who shows exceptional promise in the field of social work over the course of his/her career. Nominees for the 2008 Elizabeth Butler Award must have earned an A.M. or Ph.D. from SSA between five and 10 years ago and demonstrate extraordinary career success and consistent achievement. The successful candidate will show a strong commitment to social change, leadership in an agency or a community, creativity in non-traditional or innovative approaches to practice, contributions to the field through research and publications, and/or demonstrated professional skills.

Nominations are due February 1, 2008. For more information, please call 773-702-1431, email [alumni@ssa.uchicago.edu](mailto:alumni@ssa.uchicago.edu), or visit [www.ssa.uchicago.edu/alumni/](http://www.ssa.uchicago.edu/alumni/).



Presidents and Dean: Molly Baltman (left) with Dean Jeanne Marsh and outgoing Alumni Association President Harley Grant.

### A Q&A with Molly Baltman, AA Board President

**Incoming SSA Alumni Association President Molly Baltman** serves as a program officer in the communities grantmaking area within the Chicago-based McCormick Tribune Foundation. She talked with SSA Magazine about her plans for the 2007-08 year.

**Q: What do you see as the role of the SSA Alumni Association?**

**A:** The three main goals of the alumni association are to advise the School on the needs of alumni and current practices in the field, provide opportunities for alumni to give back to the profession by mentoring students, and provide avenues for alumni to network and learn from each other professionally. Learning doesn't stop at graduation. Client services and community impact improves when we are broadening ourselves, which we do by connecting to each other and to the School.

**Q: What do you plan to emphasize during your term as president?**


**A:** This year, the focus of the alumni board is to support the 100th anniversary of the School. We want to engage all alumni in centennial activities and to support the centennial planning committee in helping them document the history of the School. This includes recognizing alumni who have made significant contributions to the history of the field.

We also want to focus on engaging alumni outside of Chicago by recruiting volunteers in different cities to connect with fellow alumni and develop programming that provides a connection back to the School. We have representatives on the board from many different cities, and have a committee dedicated to engaging alumni outside of Chicago.

**Q: What does SSA stand for, in your eyes, and why is it important to you?**

**A:** SSA has a very well-respected curriculum, graduates who have an impact in the field, and a rich history. One hundred years ago, our founders developed an approach to improving social conditions—the intense study of the intellectual base of social work—that SSA is still known for. The School's emphasis on direct service and administration is incredibly valuable in social work today. I think SSA does an excellent job of giving students the tools they need to advance in their careers.

**Q: Any last thoughts?**

**A:** I would encourage alumni to get involved by joining a committee of the board, attending lectures, contributing to the School, or mentoring students. The centennial celebration is an important time for the future of the School. Regardless of where alumni live, I encourage people to get involved in centennial activities and come to Chicago for reunion weekend on June 7, 2008 to celebrate this significant milestone for SSA. 

## Alumni Updates

**John Wax, A.M. '47**, (1922-2000) was posthumously inducted into the Social Work Hall of Distinction at a ceremony in Burlingame, Calif., on May 4, 2007. The Hall is sponsored by the California Social Welfare Archives at the University of Southern California. Wax was a nationally known social work leader, author, administrator, and theorist who provided new focus to team practice and staff development in health care settings throughout the country. He was particularly well known for his emphasis on building social work power through negotiation, mediation, and interdisciplinary team development. His career in the Veterans Administration health care system, the largest employer of social workers in the United States, spanned more than 40 years and influenced the development of thousands of social work staff members.

**Maryetta Andrews-Sachs, A.M. '68**, has been elected chair of the National Group Psychotherapy Institute at the Washington School of Psychiatry in Washington, D.C. The Institute offers a training program in group psy-

chotherapy consisting of weekend conferences, supervision seminars with faculty, and personal group psychotherapy.

**Vivian Loeth, A.M. '69**, was announced as Social Worker of the Year by the National Association of Social Workers - Illinois Chapter (NASW-IL) at an awards dinner held June 27, 2007. Loeth is currently the executive director of Youth Guidance, where she has spent the past three decades working on the front lines of social welfare issues with the Chicago Public Schools and others to improve educational outcomes and to remove the barriers that prevent children from realizing their potential. In 1990, Loeth helped found the Chicago Comer School Development Program. Since then, she has promoted extensive growth in the organization, which now works for systemic reform in several Chicago public elementary schools and other schools throughout the Midwest region.

**Charles Scurr, A.M. '75**, has been appointed associate vice president for Florida International University in Miami. Prior to joining the university he

served as city manager of several Florida municipalities including South Miami and Palmetto Bay. Scurr will have responsibility for campus master planning and strategic real estate development, as well as the oversight of the design and construction of Florida International University's recently approved medical school complex.

A new book by **Brian Quinn, A.M. '79**, *Wiley Concise Guides to Mental Health: Bipolar Disorder*, was published in May of this year. The book focuses on issues of critical importance to clinicians concerning this mental illness: differentiating unipolar from bipolar depression, alcohol and drug abuse in bipolar patients, suicide, pharmacologic and psychosocial treatments, and nonpharmacologic interventions. Quinn is in private practice in Huntington, N.Y. His previous book, *The Depression Sourcebook*, is now out in a second edition. In addition to his practice and writing, Quinn teaches seminars around the country on bipolar disorder. He received a Ph.D. in clinical social work from New York University in 1994.

**Lisa Boulden Williams, A.M. '92**, was recently named executive director of supportive housing for YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago. The YMCA provides 1,500 units of housing and wrap-around supportive services at five locations in the city and suburbs. Williams also serves as executive director of Lawson House, the largest SRO supportive housing facility in the Midwest.

**Maria L. Ugarte-Ramos, A.M. '93**, is the president and chief executive officer of FAMA Enterprises, LLC, a firm that focuses on improving the communication of organizations and their clients through the use of the English and Spanish languages via translation, interpretation, business writing, and Spanish language training. Ugarte-Ramos is a member of the Latino Giving Circle, a donor-advised fund of The Chicago Community Trust, the Steering Committee of SSEE (Stroke Survivors Empowering Each Other), an advocacy group of the American Stroke Association, and a board member of Dorothy Stang Popular Education Adult High School. She is also a part-time instructor at



## Uehara Wins SSA's 2007 Abbott Award

Edwina S. Uehara, Ph.D. '87, was named the Edith Abbott Award recipient at a celebration held during SSA's Alumni Weekend on June 2, 2007. The Abbott Award is given to an SSA graduate who has demonstrated extraordinary career success and consistent, long-term, high-level achievement.

Uehara currently serves as dean of the University of Washington's School of Social Work. Prior to joining the faculty at the University of Washington, she completed a National Institute of Mental Health post-doctoral fellowship in mental health services at the University of Chicago. Her active research agenda looks at the effects of violence both in urban environments and on immigrants who experienced violence in Southeast Asia. In addition, she is interested in social networks, social support systems, and the financing and organization of health services, particularly as they affect economically disadvantaged ethnic minority populations. 🍷

Edwina S. Uehara, Ph.D. '87

## Maintain the Connection:

Remember to stay in touch with the SSA community by sending your news to [alumni@ssa.uchicago.edu](mailto:alumni@ssa.uchicago.edu).

DePaul University's School for New Learning, where she teaches a course entitled, "Exploring the Nonprofit Workplace."

**Evelyn Diaz, A.M. '98**, has been appointed deputy chief of staff in the City of Chicago Mayor's Office. She will work as the Mayor's Office liaison to the city's 10 human capital departments, including the Chicago departments on aging, children and youth services, domestic violence, human relations, human services, people with disabilities, public health, and workforce development. Diaz will also serve as the liaison to the Chicago Public Library system and the Chicago Public Schools. Additionally she will work with the Chicago Housing Authority on resident services matters and with several citywide initiatives to address homelessness, poverty, jobs, and economic security.

**Kari Hill, A.M. '06**, received a Human Rights Fellowship from the University of Chicago's Human Rights Program to work in Kitgum, Uganda, one of the most conflict-affected areas in the northern part of the country. During her time in Africa, she provided support to vocational training centers that provide many formerly abducted youth with a means to earn an income. Upon completion of her fellowship, Hill was hired as a Protection Officer by AVSI, an Italian non-government organization. She is based in Pader, Uganda, and plans to continue with AVSI as a program manager overseeing the implementation of the camp management and return movement monitoring program in 2008. ■



## in memoriam

**Earl L. Durham, A.M. '69**, passed away on October 27, 2007, after a brief illness. Durham was a member of the National Association of Black Social Workers and the National Urban League. He also served as a board member of the Chicago Area Project and vice president of the Board of Trustees of the Edward Hazen Foundation in New York City.

**Migdalia "Miggie" Baerga-Buffler, A.M. '89**, died on August 22, 2007. Born in Salinas, Puerto Rico, Baerga-Buffler worked full-time in a factory while attending high school in New Jersey, earning scholarships to attend Rutgers University. Graduating with high honors, she earned one of three Minority Merit Scholarships to attend SSA and complete her graduate degree in clinical social work. While at SSA, Baerga-Buffler received a National Hispanic Council on Aging Gerontology Fellowship and later served as a Congressional intern in the United States House of Representatives Subcommittee on Human Services. During her social work career, Baerga-Buffler served in the United States Probation Office and as a probation administrator in the administrative office of the United States Courts. She also founded Jewels 4 the Spirit, an inspirational jewelry business. Baerga-Buffler is survived by her husband, son, and grandson.

SSA has learned of the death of **Betty Jean Allen**, a University of Chicago employee for 30 years, a member of Teamsters-Local 743 for 25 years, and an SSA employee from 1985-2005. Allen began work at SSA in the Office of Student Recruitment and was SSA's events coordinator at the time of her departure. She is survived by a daughter and grandson in Chicago and a sister in Colorado Springs, Colo. ■

## On Call

### How Medicaid has moved far beyond its role as a last-resort health care program for the poor

**M**edicaid is often described as America's health care program for the poor. Yet it has 12 million more participants than Medicare, our universal program for the elderly and disabled. Medicaid covers one out of five of the nation's children, pays for more than one in every three childbirths, covers two-thirds of the elderly residing in nursing homes, and pays for half of all states' mental health services, according to federal statistics from 2003.

The U.S., which has repeatedly favored private-sector health insurance approaches, has such a large publicly funded health care program for three interrelated reasons. Understanding how they work gives a glimpse into how Medicaid *can* become a rallying point for middle-class participants—and lead to universal health care coverage for all citizens.

#### Expensive Needs

Relatively few Americans have been able or willing to purchase private insurance to provide long-term custodial nursing home care (LTC), which is enormously expensive (an average cost of approximately \$70,000 per year). Even after adjusting for inflation, LTC costs have increased 149 percent for the aged and an astounding 522 percent for the disabled since 1975. However, since Medicare does not cover this type of care, the disabled and elderly rely on Medicaid. Between 27 percent to 45 percent of elderly nursing home residents become eligible for Medicaid after spending down their resources.

Although the elderly and disabled

make up only a third of Medicaid enrollments, they consume two-thirds of expenditures. With an aging population and no other LTC proposals seriously on the table, Medicaid will remain America's de facto LTC program.

**57,000,000**  
Americans covered by Medicaid, making it the largest health insurance program in the U.S.

#### Lack of Health Care Reform

America relies on private employer-sponsored health insurance for the majority of its citizens (61%) and yet has never mandated that employers offer this coverage. Starting in 1965, with the passage of legislation that created Medicare and Medicaid, the assumption has been that workers and dependents had private insurance, the elderly and disabled had Medicare, and the poor and unemployed could fall back on Medicaid.

The number of uninsured has continued to grow, however, and now includes 47 million Americans, many of whom do have a job. Private insurance is affordable if your employer subsidizes the cost of the premium, which is the case for most middle- and upper-income Americans. Health insurance is not offered, though, as an employment benefit for many middle- and low-income people. Buying health insurance

without support from an employer is very expensive, or essentially unobtainable if there are preexisting medical conditions or risk of poor health. These uninsured end up knocking on state government's door, and the states have turned to Medicaid to fund these costs.

#### Federal Financial Incentives to Expand

Since 1965, the federal government has mandated that state Medicaid programs cover specific types of poor persons.

many low-income clients were eligible, shifting programs and services that were paid for under state-only dollars on to Medicaid to take advantage of the federal matching rate.

#### What's Next

Put these factors together and the result is that Medicaid has become our health care safety-net for a wide range of people across various illnesses, age-groups, and income levels. Indeed, Medicaid has become an important

Today the mandatory coverage groups represent a very restricted group of people with very low income levels, such as children up to age 6 and pregnant women who live in households under 133 percent of the federal poverty level (FPL). Medicaid legislation, however, also specifies "optional groups" that states may cover, such as the same populations but at higher income levels, and includes groups such as working parents up to 250 percent of the FPL. States have expanded health insurance coverage through Medicaid's optional groups in the last decade, which now consume two-thirds of Medicaid expenditures.

States also expand coverage to save money through various Medicaid maximization schemes. The most common example is mental health care services. Although the federal government clearly limits which mental health diagnoses can be defined as a disability for Medicaid eligibility, states realized that

element of health care security for middle-class families.

Considering how many people are now covered or protected by Medicaid, it is not unreasonable to think that the program could be America's unexpected, but potentially sturdy stepping stone to universal coverage. Once citizens feel entitled to support from a program, like the elderly do with Medicare, they can then advocate for the type of program they want. With middle-class political mobilization for the program, Medicaid can become the country's way to ensure everyone has decent medical coverage. ■

*Colleen Grogan is an associate professor at SSA, the faculty chair of the Graduate Program in Health Administration and Policy, and a research associate at the Center for Health Administration Studies.*



# In the last 100 years...

We explored **outer space**

The **nuclear age** came of age

**Segregation** of American schools was declared illegal

The **Berlin Wall** fell

The **School of Social Service Administration** placed its mark on society

... and **you earned your SSA degree**

**Commemorate history. Become involved with the SSA Centennial!**

**Send a reflection** on your career and life for the SSA memory book

**Submit a news note** for the *SSA Magazine*

**Volunteer** for Alumni Weekend, the Centennial Gala, and regional programs

**Nominate an alumnus** for an award

**Be a messenger** for the School's Centennial

For more information contact Christina Cole, director of Alumni Affairs and the SSA Fund at [ccole@uchicago.edu](mailto:ccole@uchicago.edu) or visit [www.ssa.uchicago.edu/Centennial](http://www.ssa.uchicago.edu/Centennial).



THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SERVICE ADMINISTRATION



**SSA/CHICAGO**

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO  
969 East 60th Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60637

[www.ssa.uchicago.edu](http://www.ssa.uchicago.edu)