

# PhD Student News from the School of Social Work



## From the Editor

This newsletter serves as a communication tool for students in the PhD in Social Work and Social Research program at Portland State University. We hope to highlight accomplishments and share good news, and also help connect students to faculty at our university and beyond.

Printed in partnership with the PhD Students in Social Work Association (PSSWA), we hope to publish this newsletter twice per year. This issue will catch us up with accomplishments of our students that have occurred over the last year.

If you have news to share in this publication about awarded grants, publication,



Melanie Sage

research, progression through the program, or other successes that we can celebrate together, please contact Melanie Sage at [Melaniesage@gmail.com](mailto:Melaniesage@gmail.com). Student and faculty contributions are welcome.

## Upcoming Events

2/10/07: NASW networking night. Special Guest: State Representative Chip Shields, MSW. Mississippi Pizza Pub, 6-8pm.

3/8-3/10/07: Western Political Science Federation, Las Vegas, Nevada - La Riviera Hotel

3/21/07: Social Work Month Open House, NASW. Presentation by Susan Hedlund, LCSW, oncology social worker. 1 CEU free. 5-7:30pm. 7688 SW Capitol Hwy, Portland, OR.

4/9-4/10/07: 31st Annual Oregon State University Gerontology Conference. [www.osugero.org](http://www.osugero.org)

4/16-4/21/07: 16th National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect. Oregon Convention Center in Portland, OR.

**"WE DID NOT WEAVE THE WEB OF LIFE; WE ARE MERELY A STRAND IN IT. WHATEVER WE DO TO THE WEB, WE DO TO OURSELVES."**  
~ CHIEF SEATTLE



4/25-4/28/07: 42nd Annual Society for Social Work Leadership in Health Care Conference. Philadelphia, PA.

**4/30/07: PhD/Faculty cookie lunch mixer in room 465B at 12pm in the School of Social Work.**

5/2-5/4/07: Blazing the Trail: Leadership in Oncology Social Work • Hilton Portland & Executive Tower • Portland, Oregon

5/11-5/12/07: NASW-WA State Chapter Annual Conference, Doubletree Hotel Seattle.

**5/31-6/2/07: Research and Training Center on Family Support and Children's Mental Health Annual Conference. Portland, OR Hilton.**

10/27- 10/30 2007: Institute for the Advancement of Social Work Research Annual Program Meeting, San Francisco, CA. (Abstracts now being accepted.)

## Newly appointed

Congratulations to PhD student Jody Becker-Green, who was just hired as the Assistant Secretary of the new Office of Planning, Performance, and Accountability within Washington State's Department of Social and Health Services; and to Mike Ponder, who was asked to serve on the State Epidemiological Outcomes Workgroup for the Oregon Department of Human Services, where he will represent program evaluators and community coalitions.

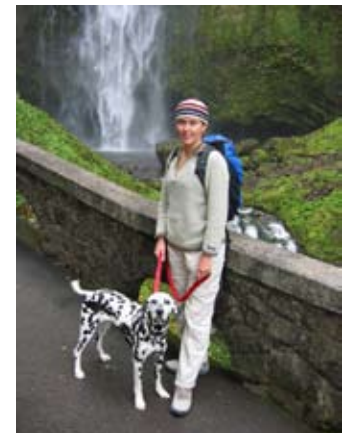
Congrats to Melanie Sage who completed supervision requirements and passed her LCSW exam this term.

## Notable Quotes

"If we knew what we were doing it wouldn't be research."  
-- Albert Einstein

"What is research, but a blind date with knowledge?"  
-- William Henry

"Scientific research consists in seeing what everyone else has seen, but thinking what no one else has thought." (author unknown)



Lisa Stewart

## Program Progress

Congratulations to the following students who have successfully defended their dissertations in the last school year:

Rebecca Block 5/06  
Natalie Cawood 10/06  
Pat Ebert 9/06  
Pati Zimmerman 11/06.

Several students have successfully defended their dissertation proposals. They are:

Diane Cole 10/06  
Jodi Kerbs 6/06  
Andrew McCormick 11/06  
Karen Morgaine 1/06  
Sara Schwartz 2/06  
Kitty Huffstutter 12/05.

Hooray for the PhD students who have completed their specialization papers and are now hard at work on dissertation proposal writing:

*Jenny Powers is owned by her dog, Buddy*



Heidi Allen, Mary Dallas Allen, Jody Becker-Green, Mandy Davis, Moshoula Desyllas, Jean Kjellstrand, Peg Sandeen, and Marcia Sims.

Finally, Jenny Powers and Melanie Sage have successfully completed comprehensive exams this term.

## Publishing & Presentation

Many students are making their marks in print, and many collaborations are currently taking place—sure to be on the “published list” soon. Say congratulations to the folks who have presented at professional conferences have had articles accepted and published in journals and newsletters recently.

*Andrew McCormick*

**McCormick, A J**, Engelberg, R, & Curtis, R J (in press). Social workers in palliative care: Assessing activities and barriers in the intensive care unit. *Journal of Palliative Medicine*.

**Karen Morgaine** has had two conference papers accepted, the first at the International Conference on Violence Against Women titled *Diversifying Social Responses*, Montreal, October 2006 (presented paper, same title in press). The second will be presented at the upcoming Western Political Association

Conference (March 2007) and is titled *Domestic Violence and Human Rights—Bringing the International Movement Home*.

*Peggy Nygren*

Ventres W, Kooienga S, Vuckovic N, Marlin R, **Nygren P**, Stewart V. Physicians, patients, and the electronic health record: an ethnographic analysis. *Annals of Family Medicine*. 2006; 4:124-131.

*Melanie Sage*

**Sage, M.** (2006). Shortage of mental health services drives inappropriate placements in juvenile detention. *Focal Point*, 20(2), 28-30.

Walker, J., & **Sage, M.** (2006). Strengthening Social Support: Research implications for interventions in children’s mental health. *Focal Point* 20(1), 2-9.



*Jody Becker-Green*

## Funded Research, Scholarships, and Awards

Mary Dallas Allen has been awarded a Sports Lottery Graduate Scholarship for 06-07. She has also won a Head Start Graduate Student Research Grant which will support her dissertation research during the next two years. Mary Dallas will be studying the process of mental health consultation in Head Start settings in Oregon and Alaska.

Marjorie McGee has won the Robert and Rosemary Low Scholarship from PSU. She also won an ELA Scholarship from the Ethel Louise Armstrong Foundation, whose mission is to “change the face of disability on the planet.”

Karen Morgaine has received a John Longres dissertation award.

Students Cindy Cecil and Jody Becker-Green have both been awarded Laurels Scholarships, which waive tuition expenses for the current school year.

Sara Schwartz has just been awarded a post-doctoral fellowship at Berkeley. Read more about Sara’s success in the “Student Spotlight” section on the following page.

## Student Spotlight: Sara Schwartz

Sara Schwartz began the PhD program in 2002, and has taken advantage of the many opportunities associated with academic life. She works as an evaluator on two grants at the RRI - the Co-occurring Methamphetamine Expanded Treatment (COMET) Program and Clark County and the Young Women's Equity Project (YWEP) with the Immigrant and Refugee Community. She also teaches- this term, Community Organizing and a capstone course with Lane Middle School, in which her students spend time in community service work. Sara has been busily working



Sara Schwartz

on her dissertation, taking advantage of a summer program offered at the University of Michigan that taught her methods in Structural Equation Modeling, a research analysis technique that she is employing in her dissertation work. She is now sharing her model with the Data Analysis class students who are benefiting from her experience.

Sara's dissertation title is *Engaging our Workforce: How Job Demands and Resources Contribute to Social Worker*

*Burnout, Engagement and Intent to Leave.* The study is testing an explanatory model of how burnout, engagement and intent to leave occur in a sample of Multnomah County Child Welfare Workers. Her dissertation research has sparked the interest of public child welfare administrators, who have been inspired to work toward an intervention to address the burnout issues in our state.

Although Sara will graduate with her PhD this summer, her academic life continues. She has accepted a competitive Post-Doctoral Scholar award, and will be hosted within the Mack Center for Nonprofit Management in the School of Social Welfare at the University of California, Berkeley.

## Committee & Club News

Jenny Powers and Brienne Hood are serving on the PhD Committee. They report that the committee has most recently been reviewing applications from next year's students. They have also spent time this year reviewing data from student satisfaction surveys that were collected last year.

Melanie Sage is serving on the Bachelors in Social Work (BSW) program committee and helping to plan for the program, still in the proposal stage, which may soon find a home within the School of Social Work at Portland State University. If approved, it is anticipated that the first cohort could start in 2008/2009.

The PSSWA (PhD Students in Social Work Association) is organizing events. The most recent, held on Feb 6th, was a lecture on how to finish a PhD. At cookie mixers, students have the opportunity to talk with faculty about research interests and connect with students in other cohorts. If you would like to suggest a PSSWA event, contact this year's co-chairs, Lisa Stewart and Jenny Powers.

## Faculty Spotlight: Dan Coleman, LCSW, PhD

Dan Coleman, Assistant Professor in the School of Social Work since 2003, is currently up for tenure-track review. He has the support of many PhD students who have benefited from his help and guidance. Not only has he been a member of many recent specialization and dissertation committees and advised several PhD students, he has also worked with students on their data analysis and publishing goals. This year he has served as a mentor to a PhD student by letting her lead his class for teaching practicum experience.

Dan teaches in the MSW program and PhD Program, and also offers a data analysis seminar designed to provide experiential learning opportunities to extend and practice class content on research design and methods. The data analysis seminar provides a research group ex-

perience: a format for people to work together on projects, and consult with the group about research design and analysis issues, and a place to practice conference presentations.

Among his many roles, Dan manages two research projects: *Evaluation of Garrett Lee Smith Memorial Act Grant to State of Oregon, Youth Suicide Prevention Efforts.* Evaluation of state public health department grant funded suicide prevention initiatives. First of 3 years, \$25,000 per year, (funded, in-progress); and *The Dougy Center Evaluation. Regional Research Institute, Portland State University.* Evaluation of program for bereaved children and their families. 1 year, \$10,000. (funded, in-progress). His most recent publication is an article entitled *Therapist-Client Five-Factor Personality Similarity: A Brief Report*, in *Bulletin of the Menninger Clinic*, 70(3), 232-241.



Daniel Coleman

## Current PhD Students

Barbara Allard, 2005 cohort. Research interests: the criminal justice system, Mental Health Court, women in sex work, and the aging workforce.

Heidi Allen, 2003 cohort. Research interests: health disparities and the uninsured and social work GLBT populations.

Mary Dallas Allen, 2004 cohort. Research interests: Head Start, early childhood mental health consultation, school social work.

Jutta Ataie, 2006 cohort;. Research Interests: Alzheimer's Disease and end-of-life care

JungHee Bae, 2006 cohort. Research interests: Empowerment, youth leadership, social inclusion, and policy analysis.

Diane Cole., 2002 cohort. Research interest: College attrition and retention in students who are first generation or of minority status.

Jodi Becker Green, 2004 cohort. Research interests: Indian Child Welfare, gerontology, disability issues.

Samantha Blanchard, 2006 cohort. Research interests: Military deployment issues surrounding the active duty member as well as his or her family.

Leah Brookner, 2003 cohort. Research interests: early childhood intervention, progressive therapeutic techniques, and Animal Assisted Therapy.

Moshoula Capous-Desyllas, 2003 cohort. Research interests: Transnational migration, human trafficking, migrant sex work.

John T Casey, 2004 cohort. Research interests: suicide among middle-aged males, within the context of the broader population of adults with co-occurring psychiatric and substance disorders

Terry Chianello, 2006 cohort. Research interests: women, trauma and psychosomatic illness.

Mary Ann Dearborn, 1998 cohort. Research interests: Mental health needs of people aging with serious and persistent mental illness.

María L. García Gettman, 2001 cohort. Research interests: racism and mental health

Brianne Hood , 2006 cohort. Research interests: early childhood, prevention, intervention, program development and evaluation, and child welfare.

Kitty Huffstutter, 2001 cohort. Research interests: Children's mental health and work-life integration.

Jodi Kerbs, 2002 cohort. Research interests: Juvenile justice, family participation, community mental health, and youth with serious emotional disorders.

Jean Kjellestrand, 2004 cohort. Research interests: children of incarcerated parents and youth aging out of foster care.

Cindy Marchand-Cecil, 2005 cohort. Research interests: Native American community, including health and housing and qualitative case studies.

Anthony Kramer, 2005 cohort. Research interests: gerontology, and work-force & employment issues, efficacy of supported employment programs, intergenerational violence, effects of social interaction on health quality, and historical research.

Andrew McCormick, 2003 cohort. Research interests: palliative care, end-of-life care decision-making and Biomedical Ethics.

Marjorie McGee, 2006 cohort. Research interests: Disabilities, public health, health equity.

Karen Morgaine, 2003 Cohort. Research interests: social movements, social problem framing, human rights, violence against women, qualitative research methodologies.

Peggy Nygren, 2005 cohort. Research interests: child well-being, child neglect, visiting nurses programs.

Jolanta Piatkowska, 2006 cohort. Research interests: children and youth mental health group programs.

Michael Ponder, 2005 cohort. Research interests: program evaluation, social work research methods, substance abuse, and community coalitions.

Jenny Powers, 2005 cohort. Research interests: youth in foster care who experience disabilities, HIV in older adults and substance abuse.

Melanie Sage, 2005 cohort. Research interests: child welfare practice and training, child welfare workforce issues, work force burnout and engagement, qualitative research, democratic education, technology in social work, and efficacy of narrative and art therapies.

Peg Sandeen, 2003 cohort. Research interests: Death with Dignity, health policy, and HIV.

Sara Schwartz, 2002 cohort. Research interests: workforce issues, theory building.

Don Schweitzer, 2006 cohort. Research interests: homelessness, poverty, social justice, and runaway and homeless youth.

Lisa Stewart, 2004 cohort. Research interests: mental health , Work-life Integration.

Karen Tvedt. Research interests: welfare, child care and early learning.

Judy Vang, 2004 cohort. Research interests: multicultural social work education, the juvenile justice system, and Southeast Asian mental health issues.

Leslie Wuest, 1999 cohort. Research interests: children in foster care, spirituality and social work, mental health issues.

*\*note: not all students submitted information*



## Funding Opportunities

Beyond the scholarships offered at the School of Social Work or announced at the Financial Aid website for the university, several scholarships, grants, and fellowships exist for graduate and PhD students. Some of those include the Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Award (NRSA) Research Training Grant and the Veterans Health Administration predoctoral fellowship. Some scholarships are offered by associations within a specialization, such as awards for or scholarship offered by NASW or CSWE. Ask around to find out where other students have received their funding. I am collecting funding information to feature in the next student newsletter. If you know of good sources for money, share the information with us!

## SSWR and Preparing for Academic Work

Each January, the Society for Social Work Research (SSWR) holds a conference. Besides presentations and keynote speakers, many of the top Schools of Social Work attend this conference to meet and interview students who are entering the job market.

Portland State University's School of Social Work interviewed applicants during the conference, and also gave current students the opportunity to sit in on interviews. This learning experience allows soon-to-be graduates think about style and presentation involved in exploring research and teaching opportunities. Attendees also commented on the opportunity to network with students and faculty from other schools. Students often attend the year before they graduate. This year, several students attended the conference in San Francisco, including Lisa Stewart, Leah Brookner, Mike Ponder, Sara Schwartz, Jean Kjellstrand, Mary Dallas Allen, Judy Vang, Kitty Huffstutter, and Diane Cole. Several of these students observed interviews- ask them for the scoop! The January 2008

conference will be held in Washington, DC.



Jenny Powers



Mary Ann Dearborn



Leah Brookner

## March is Social Work Month!

The Oregon Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers will celebrate social work month with a lecture and free CEU unit (see upcoming events section on page 1.) The focus of this years' celebration is on Social Work in the health field. The National NASW office is selling commemorative pins, id card clips, and other merchandise. See [www.naswdc.org](http://www.naswdc.org) for info.

The Teaching Practicum class at PSU gives students an additional opportunity to sharpen skills and prepare for entry into the job market. This class incorporates teaching assistantships to practice the art of performing for an adult student audience, and guidance is given in crafting a statement of teaching philosophy and curriculum vitae.

Additionally, an ad hoc committee for marketing research students has been created. This committee is discussing ways to help PhD students prepare for the job market. This committee is willing to review C.V.'s and help arrange practice colloquia. Committee members include Kevin Corcoran, Eileen Brennan, Jenny Powers, and Heidi Allen. The committee is open to new members and suggestions about what students might find most helpful.



## What are we learning about in the School of Social Work?

Child Welfare  
Worker Resiliency

The Aging Work Force

Native American  
Communities

Indian Child Welfare

Head Start Transitions

End of Life Care

Program Evaluation  
Models

Persistent Mental Health Prob-  
lems in Elderly Populations

Juvenile Justice  
System

Youth Engagement

Grant Writing

Work-Life Integration

Youth with Disabilities in Foster Care

Internet-based  
survey design

Structural Equation Modeling

Qualitative Methodology

Mental Health Courts

Teaching and Presentation

This is a student-written newsletter, and an extension of the PSSWA student organization. If you have news or information that you would like included in future issues, please contact newsletter editor Melanie Sage ([melaniesage@gmail.com](mailto:melaniesage@gmail.com)). If you would like to see a certain activity hosted by the association, please contact PSSWA Co-chairs, Lisa Stewart ([stewartl@pdx.edu](mailto:stewartl@pdx.edu)) and Jenny Powers ([powers.jenny@gmail.com](mailto:powers.jenny@gmail.com)). Calls for submissions to the newsletter are posted to the PhD listserv; if you are not on the listserv, please contact Pauline Duffy ([pauline@pdx.edu](mailto:pauline@pdx.edu)) in the School of Social Work.