DEAN’S UPDATE

Time flies when you’re a dean

At the last School faculty meeting for this academic year, I announced that I will not be requesting a fourth 5-year term as dean. A year’s notice may seem like a long time, but it is especially important to assure a seamless transition and maintain the integrity of the School’s complex and many operations. Next year will be my final year on this current contract – my 15th year as dean. Beginning July 1, 2016, I’ll take a one year sabbatical, return to the School and resume my work at the School in my tenured faculty position.

Provost Michael Bernstein attended our School faculty meeting to discuss the process of the national search for the next dean. During his comments, filled with praise for our School, he said we will be handing the next dean a “sack of gold.” I’m pretty sure he didn’t mean this literally, but it certainly speaks volumes to the esteem and respect he and the senior administration of the University have for our School. We are highly valued by the administration and his optimism is shared by many including both me and the University President. We all agree there is nothing but growth and opportunity ahead for your alma mater.

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to complete in October -- that she gave a $1,000 gift to help continue its growth in the state and the Gulf South.

Maguire, who has lived in Mobile, Ala., for the past eight years, said she attended The Summit in Seattle with John Gottman and Sue Johnson where she first learned of EFT. Once she heard that EFT was coming to Louisiana, she jumped at the chance to attend.

“Was excited to find out that they were having it here,” said the private practitioner of five years. “When I first graduated, I worked mostly in trauma — physical, sexual and emotional abuse. I did my internship at Family Service of Greater New Orleans and was subsequently hired by them after graduation.”

Maguire moved to hospice work after Hurricane Katrina, but once she started working with couples, she knew it was her calling.

“What got me interested in couples is that I enjoyed it,” she said. “Even when couples would start arguing, I wouldn’t be afraid of it. The communication basis of this approach to helping couples is powerful.”

Maguire said her gift was inspired by her desire to give back and help those who need it.

“I’ve been very fortunate to get where I’m at in my career, so I want to give back to people who don’t have,” she said. “I wanted to specifically give to something that was important to me. The Porter-Cason Institute goes into the community to help people through this type of training. They want to help therapists transition what they have learned into the community. They want to help people who don’t have.”
Although our alumni are no longer roaming our halls in search of knowledge, our students are just as hungry as those more experienced hands who are reading this. Here are just a couple projects going on in the community, in the classroom and in our faculty’s research arenas.

From visits to such agencies as the U.S. State Department and the Department of Homeland Security, to lectures on humanitarian decision-making and disaster management, participants in the upcoming Disaster Resilience Leadership Academy (DRLA) Summer Institute in Washington, D.C., will be immersed in lessons on humanitarian advocacy and disaster operations.

The DRLA is a Tulane University program, housed in the School of Social Work, that promotes research, stimulates global communication among disaster resilience leaders and trains current and future leaders in disaster resilience and humanitarian assistance.

The Summer Institute, open to both Tulane and non-Tulane students, offers two three-credit courses: Institutions & Politics of Humanitarian Advocacy (July 1–14), in partnership with the U.S Institute for Peace, and Case Studies in Disaster Operations (July 15–28), in partnership with World Vision International.

Ky Luu, executive director of DRLA, said Washington, D.C., is the ideal setting for the institute because it is home to dozens of agencies involved in disaster management, including FEMA, the U.S. Agency for International Development, the Department of Defense and InterAction.

“Students will be able to hear firsthand from the policy and operational actors who are on the front lines of global humanitarian and development challenges like Syria, Central African Republic and Nepal,” Luu says.

“We’re also going to reflect on the 10th anniversary of Hurricane Katrina and highlight lessons that have emerged from this ongoing recovery, and how it can inform both domestic and international efforts to reduce disaster risks and promote resilience in vulnerable communities.”

Among those who have already signed up are several Tulane graduates, including students pursuing master’s degrees in social work and disaster resilience leadership, as well as non-Tulane participants, including Said Abdullahi Mohamed, a member of the Federal Government of Somalia and its former minister of planning and international cooperation.

As a milestone of its global mission “To Do Work That Matters”, the Tulane School of Social Work was honored this year to present the annual Excellence in Field Mentorship Award to an international field supervisor for the first time. With over 50 students having participated in semester-long field placements in a dozen different countries with a variety of organizations, the outstanding recipient chosen for the award was Monica Singh from the New Delhi YMCA in New Delhi, India. Along with attending the TSSW Annual Field Workshop in April to receive the award and share her experiences as a social worker in India, Monica participated in a panel with two of her former field students, Katherine Wharton (MSW ’12) and Jocelyn Pinkerton (MSW ’13), as well as Dr. Elaine Wright, Director of Global Programs, and Melinda Flynn (MSW ’97), Program Manager.

Monica has been a Programme Officer with the Department of Social and Human Development of the New Delhi YMCA since 1999 and received her MSW in 1992 from the Delhi School of Social Work. In her position, she is responsible for the planning and management of activities and programs of the Y’s many community development centers. She has supervised TSSW students to develop training materials on gender-based violence and to conduct literacy assessments of the Y’s women’s self-help groups.

“I had an absolutely wonderful experience at the YMCA,” Wharton said. “Monica Singh is a fantastic person to learn from and the YMCA is a...fantastic learning environment.” Pinkerton added that Singh’s “understanding of global social work and her experience are an invaluable resource.”

Monica Singh

TSSW welcomed its new cohort of alumni on Saturday, May 16. The School took part in the university’s annual Unified Spring Commencement and held a diploma ceremony following the Unified ceremony. A total of eight part-time students earned their MSWs while four members of the Disaster Resilience Leadership Academy earned their Master of Science. Abbe Garfinkel also earned her Doctor of Philosophy in Social Work. Congrats to all of our newest alumni! (Photo by Ken Redler)
New scholarship fund benefits students

By Kirby Messinger, Development

It was because of a scholarship that Elsie Wright (MSW ’72) was able to attend the Tulane School of Social Work and fulfill her dream of working with people. Now, she is giving back to future generations of Tulane social workers by making a gift to TSSW.

“I was in the process of working on my will,” says Wright. “I normally give a little bit to the school every year but I wanted to do more and I thought this scholarship fund was just a great idea.”

Wright’s gift will be the first to support the newly created Social Work Alumni Scholarship Fund. This general fund enables alumni and donors to pool their gifts to support student scholarship aid. Unlike named scholarship funds, which require a significant leadership gift, any donor may give to the Social Work Alumni Scholarship Fund in any amount. It can even be included in your estate plans. The goal is to continue building the fund over time to a level at which it can become permanently endowed and thereby benefit students for years to come.

“It’s important to me to help people get an education,” says Wright. “I felt like I did receive help so I wanted to pass that on.”

Wright says that it was because of her Tulane education that she had such a successful social work career. Although she is retired now, her Tulane education still benefits her in her volunteer work.

“I received a good well-rounded education from Tulane,” says Wright. “It is still helping me have a fulfilling retirement. I have the background to help people in a special way.”

Wright currently volunteers at a senior housing project and uses the skills she learned at Tulane to continue making a difference in the lives of others.

“This scholarship fund is a wonderful way to support the School of Social Work and other people coming into the field of social work,” says Wright. “Social work is a noble career, and it’s wonderful to help someone while they get their education.”

To learn more about how you can support TSSW students by adding to the Social Work Alumni Scholarship Fund, contact Tatine Frater at tmfrater@tulane.edu 504-314-7331.

Heather Storer joins social work faculty

Dr. Heather Storer will join the Tulane School of Social Work faculty this summer as the school’s newest assistant professor, but it was a little bit of jazz that sealed her relocation to New Orleans.

“I didn’t think I would love New Orleans as much as I did,” she said. “I grew up in San Diego and did my masters and PhD in Seattle. I thought that I would stay on the West Coast, but I did a broad job search, and Tulane seemed like a program that is really growing in a positive direction. I also think Tulane is a nice sweet spot between being at a R1 university and being in a livable, family-friendly environment. I think it achieves both of those things.”

While Heather was staying at the Roosevelt Hotel during her interview, she was woken up by a Jazz Band playing in the street at 5:30 a.m. It was that unique culture along with a welcoming and knowledgeable faculty that sealed Tulane as her top choice.

Heather’s research agenda focuses on exploring strategies to meaningfully engage youth as partners in the prevention of adolescent dating violence, sexual assault, and other high-risk behaviors. Her research stems from her practice work as a community-based social worker partnering with underrepresented youth on community social change projects including violence prevention efforts. She is interested in infusing youth empowerment, leadership, and participatory frameworks into the design and implementation of youth-centered and contextualized approaches to adolescent health promotion.

“I’m really interested in macro level prevention such as my media research around how violence is represented in the media,” she said. “I did some work around young adult literature and how it frames teen dating violence.”

One of her most exciting projects is her current research on Twitter. It took six days to download her Twitter data, which contains 50,000 tweets about how people are talking about dating and domestic violence over a 30-day period. It centered on the Ray Rice incident and the #WhyIShouldLeave and #WhyIStayed tweets. She’ll take a sample of those tweets and analyze all of them via computer-assisted data analysis.

“I want to explore how people are talking and thinking about domestic violence in these alternative kinds of platforms and spaces,” she said.

Building on media framing theory, Heather’s dissertation at the University of Washington explored the social representation of teen dating violence in young adult literature. Through this work, Heather identified that the structural determinants of TDV have been overshadowed in the media’s portrayal of TDV, in favor of narrow portrayals of victimization and perpetuation. Teen dating violence victimization was positioned as being the product of poor decision-making and victims’ inherent vulnerability. This work underscores how media literacy is a vital component of teen dating violence prevention programming. In addition to research, Heather has a strong commitment to preparing the next generation of social workers with the skills, competencies, and humility to engage in ethical and socially just practice.

Heather successfully defended her dissertation in June.

“Whenever anyone says doctor, I always think ‘they’re not talking about me, right?’” she said.

Heather, who is an avid runner, is married to Dylan Smith, Director of Innovative Learning at Renew Schools in New Orleans. They have a 2 ½ year old son named Wyatt as well as a Cavalier King Charles Spaniel Poodle mix named Chelsea.
TSSW Alumnus Laurin Stennis (MSW ’98) has always dreamed of having her artwork hang in galleries, and now, she’s living out her childhood fantasy.

“It’s an absolute dream come true,” the Jackson, Miss. resident said. “As a child, I used to dream about having art work in galleries, but I never thought it would be realized.”

She’s currently in three galleries – Caron Gallery in Tupelo, Miss.; Brown Fine Art in Jackson, and the Attic Gallery in Vicksburg, Miss.

Stennis’ preferred medium is linoleum block prints or Linocut. Linocut is a printmaking technique, a variant of woodcut in which a sheet of linoleum (sometimes mounted on a wooden block) is used for the relief surface. A design is cut into the linoleum surface with a sharp knife, V-shaped chisel or gouge, with the raised (uncarved) areas representing a mirror image of the parts to show printed. The cut areas can then be pulled from the backing. The linoleum sheet is inked with a roller and then impressed onto paper or fabric. The actual printing can be done by hand or with a press.

Stennis, who has worked out of her home for years, moved into her first studio space above a restaurant in downtown Jackson on May 1. She also had a press built for her by Conrad Machine in Michigan as her demand has continued to expand.

“I have hand pressed everything up to date, and I’ll continue to do that with small works because I really enjoy it,” she said. “But this will allow me to scale up in size, so I’m thrilled about that. I can’t want to get it up and running.”

Stennis began focusing on linoleum block prints almost exclusively over the past five years, and she said it’s been rewarding.

“I’ve really found my home in terms of mediums,” she said. “I still play with various mediums. But the carving and the print making has really clicked with me in a way where I lose track of time. It’s just a fabulous match for me.”

She said its interdisciplinary nature – carving, filling with ink and pressing on the paper – makes it extremely interesting.

“This harkens back to my studies at Tulane because interdisciplinary endeavors attract me,” she said. “There are so many different steps and processes that contribute to one piece. It’s like the social holistic view of systems and families. It really taps into that view of looking at the world.”

Stennis said she was influenced by both the Arts and Crafts movement and East Asian woodblock printing and her work often features Southern flora and fauna laced with subtle social commentary.

Prior to becoming a full-time artist, Stennis worked as an LCSW with a concentration in gerontology providing psychotherapy in nonprofit community health organizations. She said her time at Tulane has guided some of her social commentary in her artwork.

“I still have wonderful friends that I met during my time at Tulane, and New Orleans is a second home to me,” she said. “I visit quite a bit. My mother (the late Martha Alired Stennis (MSW ’64)) got her master’s degree in social work from Tulane years ago, so it was nice to carry on that tradition. It was nice to study where she did.”

Stennis recently had a linoleum block relief print of Eudora Welty selected as a featured artwork in an upcoming E-zine reader about Miss Welty. Her work will be featured in an upcoming edition of “The Bitter Southerner,” a weekly web magazine that features one great story from the South every Tuesday.

Stennis hopes to expand her gallery showings to New Orleans, Memphis and Birmingham in the future. To view her latest artwork, visit www.facebook.com/StennisInk.
Saying Farewell!

Associate Professor Judy Lewis (left) and Admissions Coordinator Gail Brown (right) retired on June 30. The duo has been a part of the TSSW community for more than 50 years. Lewis was an faculty member for 23 years while also serving as field director. Brown has spent the last 28 years as our admissions coordinator, which means she has handled more than 7,000 applications during that time. We wish them both the best in their well-earned retirements!

(Photos by Joseph Halm)
Mindy Appel (MSW '79) resides in Del Ray Beach, Fla., and is the Director of Clinical Services at the The Orchid Recovery Center. The Orchid is a drug and alcohol rehab facility located in South Florida that is specifically geared to the needs of women afflicted with addiction and unresolved trauma. Mindy, who has been with Orchid since 2006, said she would love to connect with other TSSW alumni in South Florida. Her passion and specialty is in women’s issues including treating addiction, mental health issues, trauma/PTSD, anxiety, depression as well as eating disorders.

Brittaney Baskin Brackett (MSW ’12) currently lives in Houston and is a social worker at M.D. Anderson Hospital in the Pediatric Unit. Brittaney married Thomas Brackett on May 2, 2015.

Deidre D. Hayes (MSW ’90) currently resides in New Orleans and recently earned her Doctor of Social Work from the University of Tennessee. Hayes LCSW, BCD, was the first of her class to successfully defend her Capstone II project, entitled, “The Impact of the Wraparound Model on Youth Functioning, Behaviors, and Risks.” Hayes’ work was on research on the wraparound process and its growth in an effort to demonstrate its efficacy. Data gathered on 187 youth who participated in wraparound in the Greater New Orleans Area was used to examine client outcomes as evidenced by the Child and Adolescent Needs Assessment scores (CANS) in three domains: life functioning, emotional behavioral needs, and youth risks. A single group pre-and post-test design examined a snap shot of de-identified CANS scores for each domain at a one-year follow-up to examine outcomes. Results revealed positive significant results for the emotional behavioral needs domain. Findings underscore that fidelity to the model is important for youth successful outcomes. Hayes is currently working as a clinical consultant for a nonprofit agency, NHS of Louisiana. It manages adult ACT and FACT teams as well as the Wraparound program for Children. She also has a private practice, Positive Directions Inc., where she provides individual and family therapy.

In Memoriam

Jo Ann “Jody” Hager (MSW ’58) passed away on August 15, 2014. She retired to Birmingham, Alabama, from Youngstown, Ohio, in 2005 to be closer to her daughter and family. She was the only child of the late Bertram Louis Menne, Sr., and Irene Robinson Menne of Lexington, Kentucky. She spent her formative years in Lexington. Jody graduated from the University of Kentucky in 1956 where she was also a member of the Alpha Delta Pi Sorority. Jody received her Masters of Social Work from Tulane University in 1958. Throughout her life, Jody was involved in the mental health field and held various positions with respective agencies. Prior to her move to Birmingham, she was a real estate agent in Youngstown for 20 years.

Her husband, Dudley Pierce Hager, passed away in 1993 after 34 years of marriage. She is survived by her daughter, Leslie Hager Passafiume (Philip) of Birmingham; son, Bradlee Pierce Hager (Patricia) of Cary, North Carolina; and son, Gregory Edward Hager (Mary) of Charlotte, North Carolina. There are three grandchildren, Katlyn Kimmel Passafiume of Birmingham, Blake Patrick Hager and Pierce Keenan.

MSW candidate Sophia Esparza recently was awarded a Council on Social Work Minority Fellowship with Youth.

The Minority Fellowship Program - Youth (MFP-Y) provides a monetary stipend, specialized training, mentorship, and other supports to direct practice focused racial/ethnic minority social work master’s students who are committed to providing mental health services to at-risk children and youths in underserved minority communities.

The program is designed to enhance the training of full-time, master’s-level, direct practice-focused social work minority students in their final year of study at a CSWE-accredited institution. Applicants must identify mental health service delivery to at-risk children, adolescents, and transition-age youths as the focus of their specialization and be committed to seeking employment with this target population after graduation.

The purpose of the program is to reduce health disparities and improve behavioral health-care outcomes for racially and ethnically diverse populations by increasing the number of culturally competent master’s-level behavioral health professionals serving children, adolescents, and populations in transition to adulthood (aged 16 to 25). Funds for the MFP-Y are provided by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Center for Mental Health Services.

Sophia also is pursuing a Certificate in Disaster Mental Health and Trauma Studies along with her MSW. She is putting her Spanish speaking abilities to good use through her field placement at Esperanza Public Charter School, a bilingual K-8 elementary school in New Orleans, under the supervision of Annette C. Allison, LCSW. Among her duties are working with students with challenges in attendance, emotional-behavior problems, home problems, academic problems, and students in crisis. Her experience includes assessments, counseling and interventions, prevention and awareness programs, referrals and consultation. In particular, her 990-hour field experience includes working with bullying, suicidal ideation, peer mediation, de-escalation of violence as well as working with families through home visits, hospital visits, individual Education Plans and an assimilation group with immigrants.
WHERE ARE YOU NOW?

Please share your thoughts, ideas, and information to be used in Postscripts. You can also visit our web site at http://tulane.edu/socialwork and click on the alumni tab to complete this form or for additional alumni updates.

Name: __________________________________________________________ Year of graduation: __________________
Address: _______________________________________________________ City: __________ State: __________ Zip code: __________
E-mail address: __________________________________________________ Phone number: __________________

Degrees/certificates earned: _______________________________________

1) What are you currently doing professionally?

2) Have you received any special awards or honors, or have you been published? Please specify.

3) Have you been involved with Tulane School of Social Work since graduation? If not, what events or special services would draw you to become involved?

4) Do you have special news that you would like to share with other alumni (marriage, children, relocation, hobbies, new projects)?

5) Is there anything you would like to start seeing in Postscripts? Is there anything you think should be omitted from the newsletter?

Please complete and return to:
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