ONE-HOUR FREE CEU HIGHLIGHTS
Oct. 9 Homecoming Festivities,
reception to follow at 6 p.m.

As the School’s way of saying “Thank You” for all that you do in the community, TSSW is offering our alumni a free, one-hour CEU event at 5 p.m. on Oct. 9 as part of the 2010 Homecoming festivities.

The annual Alumni Reception will follow from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. in the James Lounge at the Lavin-Bernick Center.

The one-hour CEU event will be presented by alumna Mindy Milam (MSW ’83) and is entitled “Using Mind-Body Skills for Self Care.” The event will be free for all alumni and their guests, and the focus will be self-care for both retired and practicing social workers.

“It is our way of saying “thank you” for all that you do for the community,” Dean Ron Marks said.

The CEU event will take place in the Stibbs Conference Room on the second floor of the Lavin-Bernick Center.

The annual free reception will begin at 6 p.m. featuring food, music, drinks and fellowship. It will take place in the James Lounge, located on the first floor of the Lavin-Bernick Center. All alumni and their guests are encouraged to attend.

The TSSW Alumni Association invites all TSSW alumni and a guest to come enjoy an evening of fellowship, memories and good times on Tulane’s campus.

Please RSVP prior to the event by visiting http://tulane.edu/socialwork and clicking on the link in the right hand sidebar.

DEAN’S UPDATE

SCHOOL’S GROWTH CONTINUES

The fall 2010 semester is officially underway at the Tulane School of Social Work, and I am absolutely delighted to report that we have entered the largest class in more than 15 years. Ninety five full-time students and 12 part-time students began their journey to become a professional social worker this month. To put this into some perspective, the entering class size was about 50-60 full-time students when I started my tenure as dean in the fall of 2001. We were building steadily and planned to enroll the largest class in several years in late August 2005 (85 full-time students). Of course, Katrina made its most unwelcome visit and our students, faculty and staff were dispersed for the fall semester. Since that time, our class size has been growing steadily and last year we once again approached the pre-Katrina admissions level. Our students are a truly stellar group and come from 29 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and Canada, making this one of the most geographically diverse groups ever.

In line with this growth, the School has been approved to search for a new full-time tenure track faculty member to begin in the fall 2011. Building the community of scholars and teachers is one of the more exciting
Dr. Luz Lopez

Each year, the Alianza Hispana recognizes a group of extraordinary women for their outstanding contribution to one of 10 fields, including education. Dr. Luz Lopez (Ph.D. ’98) was one of 11 honorees for 2010, and Lopez was chosen because of her contribution to the field of education and her community.

Lopez, an Assistant Professor at Boston University, became interested in social work during her undergraduate studies once she learned of social work’s emphasis on social justice and the opportunity to work with varied ethnic and socio-economic individuals. Dr. Lopez, a TSSW doctoral graduate, was attracted to the Tulane School of Social Work’s doctoral program because the curriculum offered an integration of clinical and community practice and the opportunity to gain valuable research skills.

Lopez specializes in the prevention of substance abuse, HIV risk behaviors, and Public Health Social Work, working with Latinos and other diverse groups. She currently works as an evaluator for a Substance Abuse Mental Health Service Administration Center, which is funded by a Substance Abuse Prevention grant, that helps individuals in reentry to the community after incarceration. The goal of the program is to reduce HIV risk behaviors, substance abuse relapse, overdose and recidivism through evidence based interventions. She also facilitates a trauma support group for men and women in recovery at a residential substance abuse program in Boston.

Lopez was instrumental in initiating, designing, and currently directing and coordinating an annual MSW and Ph.D. cultural immersion course to Puerto Rico. The course includes lectures, agency/field visits, Spanish classes and a mentored public health social work research experience. The students gain new approaches, cross-cultural perspectives and skills they can apply when working with Latinos and other diverse U.S. populations.

Lopez’s future interests include continuing to help increase access to higher education for Latinos and for other students from low socio-economic levels and to expand opportunities for learning and travel experiences in international public health social work.

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Exchange students experience U.S. social work

Social work in India and the United States is like comparing apples and oranges, but for four exchange students from the Tata Institute of Social Sciences in India, the experience was one of a kind.

TSSW and the Tata Institute’s exchange program sends several TSSW International students to India each fall while four Tata students visit TSSW for five weeks each spring. This year’s group included Pratik Phadkule, Sudhir Maske, Vijay Sansare and Manohar Davane.

“It was really a great experience to be here because social work in the U.S. is different from social work in India,” Pratik said. He added his interaction with students, faculty and staff at his field placement enriched his learning experience.

During their time in New Orleans, the exchange students sit-in on TSSW classes, work a field internship and experience New Orleans including working on a Habitat for Humanity home. This year’s field placements included Louisiana Public Health Institute, Trinity Christian Community and Families Helping Families.

“The people who are volunteering show such a great commitment to that work, and it was a really great experience,” Pratik said about Habitat for Humanity.

Vijay, who works with India’s rural communi-

ties, said the volunteer culture in America is similar to rural communities when people work in one person’s garden one day and in another person’s the next. The students added they were impressed with the regulations and certification social workers must obtain to practice in the U.S.

“We don’t have a licensing system in India, so we’ll bring back some of the best practices that we can use in our future social work practice,” Vijay said. “This has been a great learning experience.”

Sudhir said U.S. social workers’ professionalism and welcoming nature made his five weeks a very memorable experience. “This was my first time studying abroad, but I never felt that I was very far away from my home,” he said.

All four talked about how the dignity of the person is so important in U.S. social work, and Pratik, whose field placement was at LPHI, added that the effectiveness of LPHI’s programs was impressive.

“The projects there are really addressing the needs of the population so that is a really positive thing.”
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 few projects going on in the community, in the classroom and in our faculty’s research arenas at the School.

TSSW Professor Fred Buttell has teamed up with Tulane’s innovative service-learning program to teach “Law and Politics of Domestic Violence” this Fall.

This is the first undergraduate-level course on domestic violence, and the course was created with support from the political science department and the Center for Public Service.

Buttell will be teaching the class along with Tania Tetlow, associate professor of law who is director of the law school’s Domestic Violence Clinic, and Sally Kenney, executive director of the Newcomb College.

“This class will give undergraduate student several interdisciplinary perspectives on violence,” Buttell said. “Hopefully, this will better prepare young women to avoid dangerous relationships, given every woman thinks it will never happen to her. The sobering statistics show otherwise.”

Nearly a dozen TSSW students and alumni worked at the St. Bernard NORD Center this summer to help New Orleans’ youth lead healthy, happy lives.

They were working with the Cops for Kids summer camp, an eight-week program for children aged 5-13 sponsored by the New Orleans Recreation Department, New Orleans Police Department, New Orleans Police and Justice Foundation, Crimestoppers and Greater New Orleans Afterschool Partnership.

Camp coordinator and Tulane alumna Kathleen Whalen (MSW ’88) said there were 170 registered campers. “The majority is from New Orleans East, but we pull from all over,” she said. “It has been very positive, and I’m really pleased with how it worked out.”

The program uses engaging and enriching educational projects to help children develop and reinforce literacy and math skills while learning about the city’s rich culture. Daily interaction with police officers and a curriculum such as Save the Children’s Journey of Hope are designed to teach resilience, anger management and conflict resolution, providing campers with the skills and attitudes to navigate their world with confidence.

Student Brittaney Bernard was one of the workers.

“I think the biggest learning experience for me has been working with children who have problems communicating their feelings,” said Bernard, whose school-year internship is at Edward Hynes Charter School. “I can look at what background factors are influencing this child’s behavior.”

Professor Charles Figley was recently honored by the Board of Directors of the Society for Family Psychology with the 2010 Florence Kaslow Distinguished Contribution to International Family Psychology Award.

This award was created to acknowledge Dr. Florence Kaslow’s long-standing and outstanding contributions to family psychology around the world.

Past trauma, poor literacy and conflicting family relationships as well as poor mental health, incarceration histories and substance abuse, are a few common themes revealed during the first 18 months of detailed study of homeless men in New Orleans conducted by So’Nia Gilkey, an assistant professor at the Tulane School of Social Work.

The study, which will continue for another 12 to 16 months, is being performed at Ozanam Inn, an emergency and transitional housing shelter for men run by the Society of St. Vincent de Paul of the Archdiocese of New Orleans since 1955.

“The work that we are doing could lead to some groundbreaking changes in the lives of homeless men in New Orleans,” Gilkey says.

The study’s goal is two-fold. Gilkey will evaluate the program’s effectiveness in securing positive outcomes for men in the transitional housing program. She also hopes to determine what service gaps are present in both program components so that resources are found to provide more comprehensive, client-driven services.

So far, more than 1,400 men have been surveyed. Gilkey says that graduate student Patricia Hawley has been essential in administering the surveys and has contributed significantly in helping Gilkey ensure a sustainable university-community partnership with Ozanam.

Every man who comes to Ozanam for an overnight stay fills out a survey assessment of need and well-being. The survey form, compiled by Gilkey and graduate social work students, considers past homeless episodes, family relationships, trauma, substance abuse, mental health and physical health status, literacy needs, Hurricane Katrina experiences and several other factors of general well-being.

“Our work at Ozanam helps to improve societal understanding of homeless issues, and further provides evidence that issues of homelessness are quite complex and require a social response that speaks to the varying complicated needs of men in a homeless experience,” Gilkey says.
Gulf Aid Grant Focuses on Mental Health

Thanks to a $35,000 grant from Gulf Aid, the Plaquemines Community C.A.R.E. Centers Foundation will provide mental health support for residents of the Louisiana parish that reaches into the Gulf, with help from the Tulane School of Social Work.

While much of the Gulf oil spill response has focused on plugging the leak or cleaning up crude, the long-term mental health effects are expected to be extensive. After the Valdez oil spill in Alaska, studies documented that a lack of a well-organized community intervention to deal with the stress on families hampered and slowed down community healing.

Parker Sternbergh, assistant director of the Porter-Cason Institute for Advance- ment of Family Therapy at the School of Social Work, says, “Higher rates of generalized anxiety, domestic violence and addiction were some of the consequences of the Valdez spill in Alaska, and we can expect similar issues in Louisiana.”

Two social work students, Karmella Minor and Libby Farvot, will help with the first portion of the grant — a needs assessment of Plaquemines Parish residents. The assessment will be conducted at community-determined spots including grocery stores, pharmacies and schools. That needs assessment will be a portion of their professional project.

Next, the School of Social Work will contract with the Plaquemines foundation to provide support for mental health activities. The Porter-Cason Institute will facilitate best-practices training from national experts in areas critical to the community’s mental health needs.

The grant will fund a half-time social worker to provide some case management and to coordinate services needed by families as well as supervise Tulane social work interns.

“The tragic explosion, loss of life and the spill constitute a protracted community trauma,” says Jane Parker, clinical associate professor and director of the Institute for Psychosocial Health. “Proper assessment and subsequent mental health services will help mitigate effects [of the trauma] and promote resilience.”

Gulf Aid, a nonprofit corporation established after the oil disaster, has held benefit concerts to raise funds for Gulf Coast communities.

Continued from Page 1....

Dean’s Message: Homecoming Celebration Set for Oct. 9

things I do as dean and I am very pleased to have this opportunity to do so. I believe we are entering a significant growth period at the School not only in number, but in the diversity of projects and community engagements, both near and far. As such, I anticipate several additional new faculty hires over the next three to five years. A national search is currently underway for this new position. As I’ve stated in previous messages, our international social work programs are expanding on many fronts and we are also conducting a search for the next permanent full-time director of international social work programs at the School.

It is every administrator’s desire to be able to report with integrity that their operation is on very firm financial footing. With these developments noted above in mind, I can say with confidence that the School is indeed entering a very healthy period. We are far beyond stability and in a position of significant growth. I’m excited that this growth includes new faculty and staff to be hired and new projects on the horizon.

Finally, be sure to plan to be at this year’s homecoming event set for Oct. 9 that includes a CEU event on self-care and a celebration of “where we are today.” As always, it’s a wonderful event characterized by good company, good food and an opportunity for refreshing oneself from which we all benefit. I look forward to seeing you there in October.

Sincerely,

Ronald March
“I think the best social work is not done at a desk; rather it’s done on a curb, on a doorstep and in an abandoned house…”

-- TSSW graduate Mike Miller

As New Orleans pauses to bookmark one of our nation’s greatest disasters, TSSW alumnus Mike Miller (MSW ’05) has made extraordinary strides to impact positive change for thousands of individuals who continue to experience homelessness, “tucked deep within the hollows of abandoned houses.”

Miller reflects, “I’ve always been interested in psycho-pathology and how it affects people’s interactions with their social world.”

Miller first became interested in social work during his undergraduate career at Tulane while majoring in sociology. “I was attracted to Tulane because it’s the best school of social work, in the best city in the world – hands down…”

As a TSSW social work student, Mike became very cognizant of certain segments of the population that the profession seemed challenged to service adequately.

“I became fascinated in Harm Reduction approaches and the stigma this course of treatment had within the academic and cultural realms of social service delivery. I believed, and still do today, that the profession was failing in its mission to serve the most vulnerable, the most mentally-ill, the most physically frail, because of perceptions of moral frailty related to substance abuse, survival sex, non-compliance, etc. It’s easier to blame the clients’ resistance to change than to start the process of healing,” he contends passionately.

According to Mike, who is currently employed as Director of Supportive Housing at UNITY of Greater New Orleans, a non-profit organization continuing to address a plethora of the city’s post-Katrina homeless problems, there are still 55,000 abandoned buildings in New Orleans.

Miller contends, “Clinically, we have some of the highest per-capita rates of mental illness in the country. We have a shattered health-care infrastructure, too few doctors and poor inter-system communication.” Miller adds that “New Orleans is one of the toughest places to live economically with tens of thousands of New Orleans residents rent-burdened. It’s the perfect place to be a social worker if you work with the homeless.”

Miller recently had an essay published in the book This I Believe II. When asked about such a note-worthy honor, he responds, “I still have trouble believing they published the essay. I’m honored to have it placed between skateboarding great Tony Hawk and Statesman Colin Powell…”

Miller’s untiring quest to make a difference in the lives of those experiencing homelessness continues.

“My most significant contribution to the field of social work involves being there, whether it’s in the emergency room, the abandoned factory, the encampment, under the bridge, the gutted house or the shelter -- 90 percent of social work is just showing up!”

Are you or another alum doing amazing work in your community? Let us know! -- jhalm@tulane.edu or 504.862.3483
Resilience Conference Nears

With just two weeks left to register, Professor Jane Parker promises this year’s best practices conference on resilience will be worth every penny.

“This is not going to be your typical conference,” Parker said. “What we want practitioners to learn about are the new programs out there that are mitigating trauma and boosting resilience. We’ll look at really creative and non-traditional programs.”

The conference entitled “Rethinking Resilience: From Research to Rock and Roll” will be held Oct. 8-9 at Basin Street Station. For a $150 fee, professionals can participate in the two-day event and earn eight CEU hours. On Friday, Oct. 8, the conference will be held from 8:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The conference will conclude Saturday with the final session from 12:45 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

The registration fee includes lunch on Friday, snacks both days, CEU hours and free, safe parking at Basin Street Station, located at 501 Basin St.

“We’re going to talk about everything from research-based methods to what new and creative things people are doing in the community today,” said Parker, who heads the Institute for Psychosocial Health at TSSW.

The first day will be an update about different disasters, including the Gulf oil spill and the Haiti earthquake, and effective programing around those disasters,” Parker said. “The second day will focus more on the creativity of local practitioners and the effectiveness of new programs as well as ways to boost professional resilience.”

Registration deadline is Oct. 1, and a complete speaker schedule is available online. Individuals can register online at http://tulane.edu/socialwork.

The Alumni Association Wants You!

By Jerry L. Smith, Alumni President

As the school’s 100th birthday quickly approaches, it is truly an exciting time to serve as the TSSW Alumni Board President!

The excitement was showcased against a backdrop of academia excellence within the walls of the Tulane School of Social Work and the Lavin-Bernick Center at the school’s New Student Orientation Aug. 30. More than 100 newly enrolled students participated in the program that we hope continues to grow.

I am a 2004 MSW grad of the first part-time class in TSSW’s history. I have served on the TSSW Alumni Board and chaired the Communications Committee for four years, and I’m currently employed as the Director of Child Welfare and Attendance Department and Adult Education for the St. Charles Parish Public School System. With more than six years of experience in addictions and substance abuse treatment counseling, I also work for the 29th Judicial Drug Court Treatment Program on a PRN basis.

But enough about me, my vision for the Alumni Association includes attracting a strong, solid membership; promoting the School’s curriculum initiatives and supporting the successful matriculation of students through the program. I’m also working on the implementation of a community service project that all alumni can own and planning the initial phases of the School’s 100th year celebration in 2014.

Now I just need your help! Become actively involved in current and future initiatives at TSSW. Please visit the school’s web site at http://tulane.edu/socialwork to keep abreast of upcoming events and to communicate with us!

TSSW offers new Ph.D. in City, Culture & Community

Hurricane Katrina put the post-doctoral program at TSSW in jeopardy, but thanks to Professors Charles Figley and Fred Buttell, TSSW is offering a new interdisciplinary Ph.D.

Tulane University’s City, Culture, and Community (CCC) Ph.D. program was created with cooperation from the Department of Sociology, the School of Social Work, and Urban Studies, along with participating faculty located in the School of Liberal Arts, the School of Architecture, School of Law, School of Public Health, and the School of Science and Engineering. The intellectual focus of the program is unique in bringing together interdisciplinary approaches in the social and natural sciences, social work, architecture, law, humanities and applying them to understand a range of issues pertaining to cities, culture, and communities.

“As a broad-based and integrative graduate education-research program, the CCC will address interrelationships between the physical environment, the built environment, and social, economic, and political institutions and processes that shape urban areas,” Figley said. “The program’s breadth of interdisciplinary study will allow students considerable flexibility to develop their training to individual research interests while providing a depth of disciplinary training for those students who wish to pursue training in social work.”

By interconnecting interdisciplinary and disciplinary education and training, the CCC program faculty encourage graduate students to select dissertation topics that offer the potential for a cross-disciplinary approach with the doctoral degree awarded in “Social Work – City, Culture, and Community,” “Sociology – City, Culture, and Community,” or “Urban Studies – City, Culture, and Community.”

“This program offers students practical and creative experiences to pursue careers in a wide range of sectors: academic, governmental, community, private, and public, or some combination,” Buttell said, adding the first students will be admitted for the Fall 2011 semester.
Students celebrate classmate’s life, courage

Where are you now? -- Fill out our online form at http://tulane.edu/socialwork/alumni/

Cherie Altobello (MSW '99) of Geismar, La., recently gave birth to her new baby girl, Gwendolyn Elise, 6 lbs., 9 oz., born June 25 at the Ochsner Birth Center in Baton Rouge. Cherie and her husband Alex also have one other child, Isabelle. Cherie said her career is on hold at the moment so she can stay at home to raise her children.

Rachel Bishop (MSW '94) of Fallbrook, Calif., is working on a per diem basis for a hospice and for a home health agency as a medical social worker in the San Diego area. Rachel married Michael Stutz in 1996, and they have a 10-year-old boy and a seven-year-old girl.

Herman Gates (MSW ’71) of Whitefish Bay, Wis., is currently working for the Veterans Affairs Administration in Milwaukee, Wis.

Kristine Herman (MSW ’95) traveled to Afghanistan this past fall to work in partnership with the Attorney General’s Office of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to establish the country’s first Violence Against Women (VAW) Unit. A project of the International Development Law Organization, funded by the Italian Government, Kristine lived and worked in Kabul for three months to assist with the creation of a specialized prosecution unit dedicated to the investigation and prosecution of crimes against women in Afghanistan. This exciting and successful project created the foundation for the first efforts in Afghanistan to meaningfully address the widespread violence against women, such as forced or child marriage, murder, beating, rape, and other gender-based crimes. Since returning to the U.S., Kristine continues to advise and receive updates on the progress of the VAW Unit.

Elaine Kleinbart (MSW ’07) of New York, is a licensed psychotherapist and certified sex therapist in private practice. She’s on the faculty of the New York Presbyterian Hospital, Weill Cornell Medical Colleges, Department of Psychiatry where she teaches in the Human Sexuality Training Program. She is also an Associate of the Department of Psychiatry at the Beth Israel Medical Center. Her most recent publication is “Breast Cancer and Sexuality,” Journal of Sex Education and Therapy, Vol. 26, No. 3.

James L. Meadows III (MSW ’07) of New Orleans, is working as a social worker at a geriatric psychiatric hospital. James has attended both reunions and CEU events in the past.

Charlie Myers (MSW ’81) retired from Louisiana’s Office of Public Health where he was the administrator of the Genetic Diseases and Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Section for almost 27 years. He saw many advances in technology during his administration which dramatically expanded newborn screening services for the state. When he started, babies were screened for two disorders before leaving the hospital. By 2008, newborns were required to be screened for 21 metabolic diseases, two endocrine, three hemoglobinopathies and cystic fibrosis. He also was very involved in reestablishing the Genetic Diseases Section services statewide just days after Hurricane Katrina. After retiring, Charlie relocated with his wife and Tulane Public Health alumna Maureen to her hometown of Denver. He’s currently working on establishing a digital archive of his father’s industrial design career materials. He also remains interested in patient advocacy and in bicycle access and safety. He’s looking forward to joining with fellow alumni next year for their 30th class reunion.

TSSW student Kimberly Kelly was more than just another face in the crowd to her classmates and closest friends, she was a social worker in every sense of the word. Kim was taken from us too soon when she passed away on May 15, the victim of an apparent domestic violence incident at her home at the Belle Chasse Naval Air Force Base. Her death shook TSSW and its student body to the core, but the students, as social workers often are, were resilient. In just two weeks, the group organized a memorial service for Kim to celebrate her life.

Kim also will be honored during this year’s Take Back the Night Activities. The 19th annual Take Back the Night will be held on Wednesday, Oct. 27 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. in Loyola University’s Horseshoe. Tulane alumni are encouraged to participate. The following is her obituary as it appeared in the Times-Picayune.

A celebration of life service and a candlelight vigil for Kimberly Bailey Kelly will be held Sunday, June 6 at 6:30 p.m. at Rogers Memorial Chapel on Tulane’s Uptown Campus.

The Tulane School of Social Work along with the Greater New Orleans community will celebrate the life of Kimberly, a mother, veterans’ rights advocate and Tulane social work student who passed away on May 15 at the age of 32.

Kimberly was a source of inspiration and strength to all who knew and loved her. She dedicated her life to the pursuit of veterans’ rights and justice for all people regardless of racial or cultural background.

She believed “the greatest achievement is aiding people along their life journey because at some point, we all need a little help.” The daughter of a military family, Kim was also very spiritual and was an ordained minister in the Evangelical Christian Church. She also published a book entitled My Everlasting Father: A Guide to Restoration for the Fatherless.

She will be deeply missed by her family, friends and classmates who loved her unyielding desire to help others better their lives.

She is survived by her mother, Sharon Bailey, her children, Elijah and Shekinah, her sister, Tonga Rose, her uncle, Keith Bailey and her step-children.
Betty Spencer (MSW ’50) was more than just a TSSW grad and long-time social worker, she and her family were a TSSW institution. After Betty graduated in 1950, her daughter, Adriane Spencer Haber (MSW ’72) graduated in 1972.

At TSSW’s 1993 graduation, three generations were present as Beth McCranie Edwards (MSW ’93), Betty’s granddaughter, received her Tulane diploma. Betty had given the commencement speech just two years prior. She was truly a pioneer in not only social work but also in the Gulf Coast community. The following is her obituary.

Betty Spencer, of Bay St. Louis, Miss., passed away after a short illness on Friday, June 25. She was 86.

She was born in Memphis, Tenn., and spent the first 17 years of her life in Memphis. She completed her undergraduate degree at Loyola University New Orleans and earned a Master’s of Social Work degree from Tulane University in 1950.

During the next 60 years, she worked as a social worker in medical schools, mental hospitals, mental health clinics and in private practice, working with children, adolescents and adults. She maintained a practice of forensic social work and gave expert testimony in many criminal trials. She served on the faculties of University of Southern Mississippi, Tulane School of Social Work, Louisiana State Medical School, LSU School of Nursing and LSU School of Social Work.

Over the years, she won numerous awards and was recognized for her commitment to issues and ideals for the betterment of humanity. She was named Social Worker of the Year by the Louisiana NASW in 1973 and was given their Dorothy Schenthal Award for Leadership in 1984. She was also named Outstanding Alumna for 1994 by TSSW.

“The variety of settings and programs and people, both clients and staff, has been an exciting diversity for learning -- along with teaching students in social work, nursing and medicine who also taught me,” she told Postscripts in 1994.

Her professional and diverse civic activities are too numerous to mention. Her caring and love for the Gulf Coast and its people never wavered. Although she officially retired in 2005, she continued to serve on non-profit boards continuing her belief in serving others and changing lives. She took great pride and pleasure in her daughter, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

She is survived by her daughter, Adriane Spencer Haber and son-in-law, Bill Haber of New Orleans, La.; grandchildren: Burgess E. McCranie III of New Orleans, Beth Edwards and husband, Tripp Edwards of New Orleans, La.; great-grandchildren: Ryland, Davis and Coleman Edwards.

A Memorial Service was held on June 29 at Main Street United Methodist Church in Bay St. Louis, Miss. In lieu of flowers, please send donations to the USM Foundation, Account 1405 (Betty Spencer Scholarship for Social Work students) 118 College Drive #10026, Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001 or CASA Hancock County, 11975 Seaway Road, Suite A-320, Gulfport, MS 39503.