

Catch the Social Work Spirit!

Spring 2020

Graduation Celebration December 19, 2019

Volume 1 Issue 2

Inside this Issue:

**2. Conor Aylsworth and
Bridget Simon**

2. SWSA Event

2. Inclusive Excellence

3. NASW Student Conference

3. Dr. Carolyn Knight

**4. Field Placement Agencies
Needed**



The 73rd Undergraduate Commencement was held at UMBC's Event Center on December 19, 2019. The traditional pomp and circumstance accompanied the processional of students and faculty.

President Hrabowski's greeting reflected the words he often states at university gatherings:

Ours is a special community—committed to nurturing people, ideas, and the values that support excellence and service. It is a community that cherishes a common past and looks forward to an exciting future. The poet Langston Hughes tells us to 'Hold fast to dreams.' Remember that your dream and, most important, your character determines who you will become.

The following social work graduates did hold fast to their dreams as they crossed the stage to the applause of all those that gathered: Janice Arana, Tiffany Bilbo, Kimberly Blumgart, Grace Brown, Marjorie Carrillo Pena, Claire Cherry, Haben Debessai, Deborah Donkor, Amy Fox, Marijka Frazier, Ikran Ibrahim, Skyelar Ingram, Jessica Kirbow, Garmai Korvah, Rebecca Lopez, Genesis Mendoza, Rachel Oddoye, Kirsten Peacock, Adwoa Prempeh, Victor Sarceno, Neneh Sey, Farah Shirazi, Tenier Sims, Jeminetu Usman, Toni Walker, and Andrea Williams.

When students were asked what their graduation meant to them comments offered included: a life long dream, something for my family to celebrate, the chance to work as a social worker, the opportunity to attend graduate school, and adventures in life.

The social work faculty and staff congratulate the recent graduates and wish them all the very best in the years ahead.



Welcome Back Pizza Parties!

Please join the Student Work
Student Association

Tuesday, February 4th
and
Wednesday February 5th

12:00, Noon

Sherman Hall 334

Visit our websites for event
information:

UMBC:
<http://socialwork.umbc.edu/>

Universities at Shady Grove:
[http://www.umbc.edu/shadygrove/
socialwork/](http://www.umbc.edu/shadygrove/socialwork/)

Conor Aylsworth, Business Services Specialist

Bridget Simon, Administrative Assistant II

The Social Work Office has a different look thanks to Conor Aylsworth (right) and Bridget Simon. Congratulations to Conor for her promotion to Business Services Specialist in September 2019. Conor started in the Social Work Program in 2011 as a part-time office assistant and eventually became the Administrative Assistant II. Although she now has her own office, she admits to missing being the first one to greet students, but she is enjoying the new challenges. In her new role, Conor is learning a lot and building new professional relationships all over campus, but most importantly, she continues to serve the Baccalaureate Social Work Program faculty and students.

Bridget Simon, is the program's new Administrative Assistant II. She started at UMBC October 2019 after working in the field of medical oncology at St. Agnes Hospital for 19 years. During that time, she developed an interest in patient care, social work, and individuals' well-being. Watching the social workers within the hospital gave Bridget the great inspiration which helped guide her to social work education at UMBC.

Both Conor and Bridget are gifted in working with people and meeting the diverse needs of students and colleagues. Their resourcefulness, creativity, and humor are remarkable assets for the program.

Please make a point to congratulate Conor and Bridget in their positions!



Reducing the Stigma of Homelessness



The Social Work Student Association (SWSA) at USG offered several events throughout the fall semester. Pictured are the speakers that addressed issues of homelessness at a campus-wide forum. With a focus on Montgomery County, statistics on homelessness were provided along with an array of services to address the immediate needs of people in need of shelter, as well as policy initiatives that consider permanent housing as a right.

SWSA President Julie Resendiz, and Co-Vice President Christian Figueroa moderated the panel discussion and connected social work practice to the various agencies that work with homeless individuals. Audience questions focused on the need to address homelessness among the veteran population.

During the forum mention was made of the Montgomery County Food Bank that collects and distributes food and resources to those in need, including homeless people.

Special thanks to SWSA members who organized and conducted this event!

Making a Community Together

UMBC is committed to inclusive excellence and a strong sense of community. Through programs like the Meyerhoff Scholars and McNair Scholars the campus demonstrates a commitment to increase the number and diversity of Ph.D. graduates who move into academic or other professional careers.

There are numerous community-based groups at UMBC organized to promote the recruitment and opportunities for diverse faculty and staff. Specifically, the Black Faculty Committee, LGBTQ Faculty/Staff Association and the Latino/Hispanic Faculty Association work to raise the recruitment, visibility and opportunities for faculty staff and students.

Please visit FACULTYDIVERISTY.UMBC.EDU to learn more.



NASW Annual Student Conference



The Social Work Program was well represented at the November 16, 2019 National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Student Conference held on the UMBC campus. Mike Lewandowski, a UMBC alumni, and a MSW intern from the School of Social Work in field placement at the NASW Office, was primarily responsible for organizing the event that brought together students from across the State of Maryland.

This annual conference is an opportunity for students in social work programs across the state to gather and network while attending workshops and learning from a panel of social work practitioners in a variety of practice settings. Vendors representing graduate schools and employers offering possible social work positions were available to provide information and answer questions.

Dr. Wendy Shaia (bottom row/right side) keynote speaker addressed the topic of “If not us - who? The Rebirth of Radical Social Work.”

Dr. Shaia is a Clinical Associate Professor and Executive Director of the Social Work Community Outreach Service (SWCOS), and a graduate of the University of Maryland School of Social Work.. She obtained her Doctor of Education in Human and Organizational Learning from The George Washington University.

Dr. Carolyn Knight Retires

Dr. Carolyn Knight taught her first course at UMBC in 1983, while studying for her Ph.D. at the School of Social Work, University of Maryland Baltimore. When she was offered a tenure track position in the Social Work Department at Hood College in Frederick Maryland, Dr. Knight started her formal career as an academic, but she always knew that she wanted to be a member of the UMBC community. Her opportunity finally came in 1993, when she became an Assistant Professor of Social Work. And now Dr. Knight is retiring after twenty-five years in the Social Work Program.



While at UMBC Dr. Knight taught the methods sequence and served as a faculty liaison to students in their year-long field placement. She also served on numerous university and program committees including the faculty Promotion and Tenure Committee. As for the School of Social Work, Dr. Knight was along-standing member of the Faculty Executive Committee (FEC) and she taught in the Ph.D. Program where she was a member of several dissertation committees.

When asked about her UMBC experience, Dr. Knight replied that she has “loved every minute of my time here”. With the support of, first, Dean Gust Mitchell, and then Dean Carolyn Tice, and her colleagues, Dr. Knight concludes she has thrived and grown as a teacher, researcher, scholar, and practitioner. Importantly, students have challenged and amused her and never ceased to amaze her with their passion, thirst for learning, and desire to make a difference in the lives of their clients.

So, what’s next? Well, Dr. Knight states that she will teach from time to time at the School of Social Work in Baltimore and will continue to write and lead workshops on generalist practice (her text *The Life Model of Social Work Practice*, 4th ed, comes out Fall 2020!), trauma-informed practice, group work, how to teach practice. She is also excited to work with Fidos for Freedom to get a program established in a local prison in which incarcerated individuals train a service dog for a veteran living with PTSD.

But, Dr. Knight makes it clear that she wants to indulge in her passion for travel (currently she is learning the French language skills in advance of renting a home in that country for several months), for wine (she and her husband already work at a local winery), and for family. In a case of perfect timing, Dr. Knight’s son and daughter-in-law are expecting their first child in April 2020. As might be expected, Dr. Knight has already signed up for unlimited babysitting responsibilities as BeeGee (Best Grandma).

The social work community offers Dr. Knight thanks for her remarkable contribution to the profession and well-wishes for a long and adventuresome retirement.

Field Placement Agencies Needed

The UMBC Office of Field Education is currently recruiting new social work agencies and field instructors for the upcoming 2020-2021 academic year! Agencies are needed for the UMBC and the Universities at Shady Grove (USG) campus.

Field education involves two semester-long courses taken during a student's senior year. As part of each course, students are placed in a human service agency where they have the opportunity to integrate theory from the classroom with actual experience, supported by the field instructor, faculty field liaison, and the Office of Field Education. The field instructor provides supervision to enhance learning opportunities and monitors student's progress, process recordings, and interactions with clients and staff. Faculty field liaisons work closely with field instructors and conduct field visits to agencies and maintain ongoing communication with field instructors. The faculty field liaison is the connection between the field instructor, the student, and the Office of Field Education. If issues arise, the student and/or field instructor may seek guidance from the field liaison.

An important component of field education is the field seminar, which is conducted monthly by the faculty field liaison. The field seminars are small (8-12 students) and are designed to support student learning and problem-solving in the field by addressing topics common to all students (i.e., building relationships with clients, using supervision effectively) and by fostering mutual aid between students. Students will attend the seminars on one of their regularly scheduled field placement days. Attendance and active participation in these seminars are mandatory and failure to attend and participate fully could result in a failing grade for the field placement.

If you are interested in offering a field placement site, please contact Dr. Adrienne Ekas-Mueting at UMBC campus (aekasm@umbc.edu), Katie Leiser (leiser@umbc.edu) at USG, or go to the program's website to fill out a new Field Instructor Information form: <https://socialwork.umbc.edu/field-education/field-instructor-resources/>

Thank you for your consideration and ongoing support of social work education at UMBC!



**BACCALAUREATE SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, BALTIMORE COUNTY**

1000 Hilltop Circle
Baltimore, Maryland 21250