STUDENT DOCUMENTARY HITS FILM FESTIVAL CIRCUIT

It’s been a busy month for Cory Gordon. The Anchorage social worker just started a new job after earning her master’s from UAA in May. Oh, and her short film is screening at two California film festivals next month.

Ililirstait (The Helpers) is a short documentary on Alaska Native social workers and their diverse roles throughout the state. While working toward her Master of Social Work (M.S.W.) at UAA, Cory simultaneously interviewed, shot and edited the entire project, which follows four M.S.W. graduates and their work in the community. The movie premiered in Anchorage last week and will next screen in both San Francisco and Los Angeles in early November.

Cory first fostered her interest in film as an undergrad at UAF—where she majored in psychology with a minor in film studies—and movie-making was still on her mind when she arrived at UAA. She applied to UAA intent on using film to benefit social service campaigns. It was an odd pitch, but the social work department was immediately on board. “They were really accepting of it,” she said. It turns out her interests fit right in with the structure of the program.

Continued on page 6
During the 2015 Spring semester, Drs. Donna Aguiniga and Pam Bowers were awarded a Center for Community Engagement and Learning (CCEL) grant to implement a service learning project in the two sections of their SWK 331 Social Work Practice II: Communities and Organizations course. Each class partnered with a local agency to implement the macro focused projects. Professor Aguiniga’s class partnered with Covenant House, which provides services for homeless youth, and Professor Bowers’ class partnered with Identity Inc., a LGBTQ advocacy organization. In each course section, students participated in the creation and implementation of a macro project as a member of one of three groups: Community Forum, Fundraising, and Advocacy Campaign.

Community Forum teams in both classes were trained by Professor Aguiniga on how to plan and moderate a community forum. The overall intention of the forum in the National Issues Forum (NIF) style is to engage community members in deliberation about challenging social issues to provide education, increase understanding of different perspectives, and foster connections between people. For this course, the forums were focused on different aspects of homelessness. Professor Bowers’ students moderated a community forum on March 31st that focused on LGBTQ+ young adult homelessness. On April 15th, Professor Aguiniga’s students facilitated a community forum addressing youth homelessness in Anchorage. Both forums were attended by approximately 30 community members and brought together community leaders, residents, and UAA staff and students.

The Fundraising teams each developed and hosted an impressive event to raise funds for their respective organizations. The fundraising team in Dr. Aguiniga’s class planned a rummage sale and silent auction, with goods donated by area residents and businesses, which were held in downtown Anchorage. Their fundraising efforts raised $2,400 for Covenant House. Dr. Bowers’ students planned a Variety show/drag show at Mad Myrna’s to benefit Identity Inc. and raised over $1,600 dollars.

Finally, the Advocacy Campaign teams in both classes identified current trends and prevalence of the issue of homelessness for youth, and for LGBTQ young adults. The teams planned and implemented advocacy campaigns to bring awareness to the issues they identified as most pressing. Posters and flyers were distributed in the community alongside messages via social media. The students also partnered with Covenant House and hosted an informational table at the UAA Student Union, developed public service announcements that were aired on local radio stations in April, and created a short video featuring an interview of a community member who was homeless as a youth.
Donna Aguiniga, Assistant Professor, recently completed her second year with the School of Social Work. She continues to research issues related to family functioning, poverty, and homelessness. She was awarded, with Dr. Troy Payne from the UAA Justice Center, the College of Health Interdisciplinary Grant to investigate the use of mapping technology in understanding the intersection between space and place and the experiences of homeless youth related to crime victimization, substance use, and social service utilization.

Donna works with the Center for Community Engagement and Learning as a Faculty Fellow for the Dialogues in Public Life initiative. This initiative is part of a national effort, in collaboration with the Kettering Foundation, to engage communities in deliberative dialogue about difficult social issues. As part of the initiative, Donna and her UAA colleague, Stephanie Bauer, trained a team of students to moderate and plan community forums.

In October 2014, Donna presented two papers, “Exploratory analysis of child protection mediation permanency outcomes” and “Integrating mental health content across the BSW curriculum” at the Council of Social Work Education Annual Program Meeting. Continuing her interest in pedagogy and student learning, Donna completed two research projects on social work education, one on team-based learning and the other, in partnership with Dr. Pam Bowers, about the use of service learning in a macro social work practice course. She was selected to be a 2015-2017 UAA Technology Fellow and attended a four-day Teaching Poverty 101 Workshop at the Institute for Research on Poverty in May 2015.

Mary Dallas Allen, Assistant Professor, succeeded Chad Morse as the MSW Program Coordinator beginning in Fall 2014. In Fall 2014, she taught SWK 632 (Social Work Practice with Families and Groups) as a distance course, and in Spring 2015 she taught SWK 624 (Research Methods) as a distance and campus course. Mary Dallas continues as the social work core faculty member for the Alaska Leadership Education in Neuro-developmental Disabilities (LEND) program. In addition to teaching and MSW Coordination, Mary Dallas was engaged in research in the area of early childhood mental health consultation. She was awarded a Faculty Mini-Grant for Community Engaged Research in Spring 2015 to conduct a qualitative research study on early childhood mental health consultation in Head Start programs. BSW student Kallie Dorsey (Class of 2015) was a Community Engaged Student Assistant (CESA) on the project, and her CESA position was funded by the UAA Center for Community Engagement and Learning. Mary Dallas also served as a steering committee member of the national Network of Infant and Toddler Researchers (NITR), and in January 2015 she traveled to Washington, DC to participate in the annual NITR Member Meeting. Mary Dallas also serves as a Board Member of the Alaska Association of Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health.

Pam Hancock Bowers, Assistant Professor, extends a big thank you to the faculty, staff, students, and community partners for making her first year at UAA a warm and welcoming experience. Over the past year, Dr. Bowers was busy getting acquainted with Anchorage and Alaska through teaching, research, and service. Professor Bowers published several empirical studies on health related topics including the relationship between smoking and other drug use among LGBT youth, the experiences of obesity and identity among sexual minority women, and the mental health barriers to integrated treatment of substance abuse and trauma among women. Additionally, she presented two papers on cultural adaptations of health interventions at two national conferences in New Orleans, Louisiana and Tampa, Florida. In partnership with the American Lung Association and Identity, Inc., Professor Bowers presented on LGBT tobacco health disparities at the LGBT Youth Leadership Summit. As summer begins, Dr. Bowers will be facilitating a smoking cessation training for 15 service providers, from across Alaska, so they can assist youth in becoming smoke free. She will also be presenting as an expert on an LGBT panel at the Alaska Tobacco Control Alliance (ATCA) summit for health service providers. In the Spring 2015 semester, she began serving on the College of Health diversity committee and plans to continue this service for the 2015-2016 year.

To view a presentation that Diane made at Columbia University, her MSW alma mater, on the topic of The Role of Congress, Its Processes and Procedures in Federal Policymaking, go to https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R0g4q_1HS Dw
Welcome!

HOLLAND MCMULLEN

We are pleased to welcome Holland McMullen as the Business Manager for the School.

She comes to us with an MBA from UAF, four years of experience as the Deputy Director of Operations for the UAA Center for Behavioral Health Research and Services (CBHRS), and exceptional prior experience in multiple roles as a resourceful leader. Holland has been a wonderful addition for faculty developing and managing an array of federal and state grants. Her grace and charm brighten our office. Welcome, Holland!

ANCHORAGE —The National Association of Public Child Welfare Administrators (NAPCWA) has awarded OCS Director Christy Lawton the 2015 Betsey Rosenbaum Award.

This award honors a state or local public child welfare agency administrator who has “demonstrated leadership, innovation and a commitment toward safer children and stronger families.” Lawton was selected for her “dedication and passion to improve outcomes for Alaska Native children in Alaska.”

“Humbled doesn’t even begin to describe how I feel about winning this prestigious award,” Lawton said. “Behind every leader is an amazing team of unsung heroes and that is certainly true in my case. I’ve been fortunate to have the best of the best working alongside me, all of whom are dedicated to the health and success of the families we serve. I am supremely grateful for their commitment and dedication to our collective goals for Alaska’s child welfare system as well as to ensuring the safety, permanency and well-being of the children for whom we are responsible.”

Behind every leader is an amazing team of unsung heroes and that is certainly true in my case. I’ve been fortunate to have the best of the best working alongside me, all of whom are dedicated to the health and success of the families we serve.

-CHRISTY LAWTON

UA PRESIDENT AWARDS ADDITIONAL FOSTER YOUTH TUITION WAIVERS

AMANDA METIVIER, MSW, YOUTH EDUCATION COORDINATOR, CHILD WELFARE ACADEMY

In July, 2014, University of Alaska President Pat Gamble added three additional Foster Youth Tuition Waivers to the current twelve that are awarded each year, bringing the total to fifteen for Academic Year 2014-15. The waiver is good for up to 144 undergraduate credits within six years of the initial award to a foster youth. The number of waivers were increased when the university observed that there was an increasing number of foster youth utilizing them, and that the youth were retained in college at campuses throughout Alaska.

In her letter to Lawton notifying her of the award, Julie Krow, President of NAPCWA, wrote: “Your leadership in facilitating the first Tribal maintenance agreement with Tanana Chiefs demonstrates the impact of your work in improving child welfare practice and influencing policy. Those who submitted recommendations noted your efforts to recruit and train a workforce capable of delivering trauma-informed care and respond effectively to Alaska Native and American Indian children in the state’s child welfare system. We are truly inspired by your work, proud to have you as a champion in our field and honored to present you with this year’s award.”

Lawton, who is from Fairbanks, has worked in OCS for 17 years. She was named acting director of the division in 2010 and officially appointed in 2011. She will be honored at an awards ceremony in Washington, D.C., June 6, 2015.

-Susan Morgan
State of Alaska, DHSS
May 6, 2015 Press Release

Editors Note: Christy Lawton is a 1997 UAA MSW graduate. Congratulations, Christy, on your well-deserved honor!

ALASKA LEND 2014-2015

The Alaska LEND (Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities) program has completed its fourth year of providing interdisciplinary leadership and training to family members and professionals who work with children and youth with developmental disabilities. In 2014-2015, eleven professionals from across Alaska, representing the fields of family, psychology, special education, nursing, occupational therapy, and speech and language pathology, participated in the leadership and training program. Mary Dallas Allen, Associate Professor of Social Work, was the social work core faculty member. A new cohort of LEND Fellows will begin in Fall 2015! If you are interested in participating in LEND or applying to be a LEND fellow for the 2016-2017 cohort, please contact Mary Dallas Allen (mdallen@uaa.alaska.edu).
FAREWELL THOUGHTS FROM PROFESSOR RANDY MAGEN…

In my 17 years at UAA, I’ve taught 22 different social work courses. In a couple of those courses, the topic was termination. My departure from UAA is a termination.

The termination process, as I’ve taught it, involves evaluation and sharing of feelings. I am using this opportunity, in this article, to both evaluate and share my feelings.

During my years at the School of Social Work, I have seen 380 MSW and 305 BSW students walk across the graduation stage. These 685 graduates fill me with satisfaction and pride. While I am moving from Alaska, I like to think that I’m leaving something behind; part of me is in every student I taught.

I came back to Alaska in 1998, when the Master’s program was in its third year of operation. Part of what drew me back, in addition to Alaska’s gorgeous scenery and outdoor opportunities, was the belief that social workers can be a powerful positive force for change in this small state. I still hold that belief.

One of the things I will miss are the chance encounters with social work alumni in restaurants, grocery stores, at the dog park and elsewhere. From those former students, I learn about the remarkable work that UAA’s social work graduates engage in every day.

During my tenure at UAA, I have served two Presidents, three Chancellors, nine Provosts, five Deans, and one Director of the School of Social Work. The one Director is Beth Sirles, who hired me and has been a stable force in spite of the comings and goings of a number of other administrators.

I’ve worked with 22 full-time social work faculty members and 15 different staff at the School. I’ve learned from many of them and have even borrowed their favorite phrases…

• Carolyn Hughes’ favorite remark about working through difficult practice situations, “It’s not about you.”
• Gene Mangiardi’s probing question, “What’s your hypothesis about…?”

It is bittersweet to say goodbye. On one hand, I’m looking forward to my new position as Director of Social Work at Boise State University, the opportunities to grow and learn in a different environment, and to our new adventure. At the same time, I’m sad to leave behind people I like and care about.

Thank you for being a part of my career and life.

Randy Magen
Professor and Associate Dean

TWO NEW AND EXCITING INITIATIVES BEGIN AT THE CHILD WELFARE ACADEMY

TOM MCRBOERTS, TRAINER, CHILD WELFARE ACADEMY

This past year has been exciting for the Child Welfare Academy (CWA). We continue refining our foundational staff development with the Office of Children’s Services, but have also embarked on two new initiatives. The first initiative expands our ongoing work on Strengthening Families Alaska. The CWA supports Alaska’s role in Strengthening Families, a growing national movement that uses the framework of the five Protective Factors Framework to develop innovative programs across the country. These programs help parents develop five Protective Factors: Parental Resilience; Concrete Supports in Times of Need; Social Connections; Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development; and Social and Emotional Competence of Children. Research shows that when parents develop protective factors, the risk of child maltreatment is greatly reduced, child development is improved, and families are stronger.

The Child Welfare Academy provided a two-day Strengthening Families training in February 2015 in Nome. Community partners from Nome and the villages of Brevig Mission, Golovin, Elim, Noorvik and Shungnak participated. These partners went on to apply for mini-grants to embed the Protective Factors into programs in their communities. As a result, the team leaders in all locations held numerous family events aimed at improving protective factors in all families. Follow-up visits in each of the locations provide technical assistance and help with the implementation. Additionally, CWA provided a five-part video series training on the protective factors to sites in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Dillingham, Kotzebue and Nome. Other Strengthening Families training is provided as requested.

The second new initiative is the development of coaching with new supervisors within the Office of Children’s Services. After newly hired supervisors complete core supervisory training, they go through a new Coaching Supervisors to Best Practice (CSBP) Program. The program is focused on building competency and confidence in supervising front line workers in best practices. CSBP uses development methods such as classroom training, readings, assignments, webinars, and coaching programs in which each supervisor is assigned a personal coach who provides one hour of coaching to the supervisor each week. CSBP is a 22-week program and emphasizes transfer of learning with their staff. The first cohort will finish this summer by demonstrating mastery through a case presentation to a panel. We will keep you posted as this innovative new program continues to develop.
Full-time students in the M.S.W. program receive their degree in two years, splitting their time between on-campus courses and year-long external internships. In addition to passing their classes, students record over 1,000 hours of service with their designated organizations before they don their cap and gown.

Cory’s second-year internship placed her alongside Susan LaBelle, a pioneer of UAA’s social work program with deep connections to both UAA and the Alaska Native community. Susan was part of a dedicated corps who successfully lobbied for the state’s first M.S.W. program and was among its first cohort of graduates in 1997. She earned the Alumni Humanitarian Award from the UAA Alumni Association in 2013 and has spent over 30 years in the social work profession, serving as a voice for Alaska Native people.

Cory’s interests matched perfectly with Susan’s ongoing initiative, and Ililirstait is a direct outcome of their partnership. Susan’s long-term goal—to increase the number of Alaska Native social workers by promoting homegrown interest—matched perfectly with Cory’s plan to use film as an outreach tool. So when Susan set out on recruitment trips in the Bush, Cory boarded the plane with her recording equipment.

As the duo traveled to career fairs, schools and Native health centers across the state, Cory recognized a divide between perception and reality in regards to social workers. “When we went to talk to the kids about social work, we learned that lots of people didn’t know about the profession or had different views of what the profession is,” she noted. “We wanted to show that young people are in this profession—you can work in so many capacities and it’s an exciting profession, and we just really wanted to empower people by showing them.”

The final project achieved both Cory and Susan’s goals—a complete documentary that stressed the value of Native Alaskan social workers, capable of providing improved services through the unique cultural context of their communities.

Cory’s film focuses on four individuals, all Alaska Native and all graduates of UAA’s social work program. “I met all sorts of different people and they were all very inspiring,” she said of her early scouting efforts. “That was one of the hardest parts—choosing the social workers to be in the film—but the ones I chose all have diverse backgrounds, they’re all different ages and help their people in different ways. I thought that was important to show.”

Her four subjects in the film include Carolyn Iverson (M.S.W. ’06), the director of outpatient services at Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation at the time, now a social worker at Bethel’s Yup’ik immersion school; Mark John (M.S.W. ‘97), cultural director and president of Calista Elders Council; Heather Gatti (M.S.W. ‘14), a recent graduate of the M.S.W. program raised in Ketchikan; and Susan LaBelle (M.S.W. ‘97), Cory’s mentor throughout the project.

After recording interviews and footage in Anchorage, Barrow, Bethel and Sitka, Cory edited Ililirstait into a 23-minute short documentary. The finished project—completed on a miniscule budget—is a true representation of the independent film.

Cory and Susan already had money set aside to travel through the state, but the equipment and initiative was all on Cory’s shoulders. She rented a $200 camera from UAA’s audiovisual services and bought her own microphone to fix to the collars of her subjects. When conducting interviews in Anchorage, Cory converted her office to a makeshift soundstage, tacking a black sheet to her wall and angling the lights just so. Her friend Hamilton Cleverdon—a local freelance music composer—agreed to score the film pro bono. “It was a very no-budget project,” she laughed.

The permitting process was another adventure in independent cinema. Due to her sensitive subject material, Cory worked
hard to receive approval from multiple parties. “One of my big goals was to be as ethical and respectful about it as I could,” she said. That included receiving permission from businesses, as well as individual clients and sometimes even the whole community. She also had to deal with usage rights of Native-owned land, making sure to film in appropriate areas to avoid land use fees. Like any movie, a lot was happening behind the scenes.

But now the project is off to the big stage. Since its completion, the social work department has used the film as recruitment tool and Ililirstait (The Helpers) had its first public screening last week at the Alaska Federation of Natives Convention in Anchorage.

Next, it gets the Hollywood treatment. The film debuts at the American Indian Film Festival in downtown San Francisco on Monday, Nov. 3. The following week, it screens at the Red Nation Film Festival in Beverly Hills on Nov. 9. The film will raise national awareness of Alaska Native social workers, but will also place UAA’s social work program on the national stage. “It was exciting,” she said of the nationwide attention. “We all put a lot of work into it and it’s nice recognition.”

The film has already been nominated for best short at the American Indian Film Festival.

Cory hopes to make it to a screening, but a new job in Anchorage may keep her grounded for now. Just this month, she started a perfect job that, yet again, combines her dual interests in social work and film. She now works as an account executive for Northwest Strategies—an Alaska Native-owned marketing and advertising company that specializes in social marketing campaigns. With Susan’s mentorship, a minor in film from UAF and two festival screenings on her résumé, she’s eager to start applying her University of Alaska-learned skills to enhance social services across the state.

It’s been a busy October.

UPDATES:

PLEASE VOTE!! The film has also been nominated for a NASW Media Award. You can vote for it at: http://www.socialworkersspeak.org/2015-nasw-media-awards-filmsdocumentaries

Ililirstait (The Helpers) is posted online, in its entirety, on the School of Social Work website: http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/socialwork/index.cfm

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) has accepted Ililirstait into the CSWE 2015 Virtual Film Festival. It was one of nine chosen for the honor. The festival runs from mid-April until mid-September.

For more information on the Red Nation Film Festival go to: http://www.rednationff.com/ Red Nation Film Festival is the premier showcase for Native independent film with a mission of breaking the barrier of racism.

For more information on the American Indian Film Festival go to: http://aiffsf.com/festival/2014/ The American Indian Film Festival (AIFF) the world’s longest running exposition of film by and about Native people. USA Today ranked AIFF as one of the top 10 best Native American Experiences of 2014.
**BSW AND MSW ALUMNI News**

-----1997------------------

**Helen Funk (Bartholomy)** (MSW, Medford, OR) is the founder and Chief Enthusiasm Officer of Active Courage Leadership, LLC.

**Mark John** (MSW, Anchorage, AK) is self-employed as a consultant and has contracts with Calista Education and Culture, the Native American Rights Fund, and the Alaska Native Heritage Center. His work was recently highlighted in the Alaska Dispatch News on May 28, 2015. The article may be found at: http://www.adn.com/article/20150528/ways-real-people-scholars-document-traditional-yupik-life-talking-elders-who-lived

-----1998------------------

**Maria Carter** (MSW, Anchorage, AK) is the Learning Center Administrator at Alaska Housing Finance Corporation.

**Jami Cole** (BSW, 1994; MSW, Anchorage, AK), LCSW, works as an Assessment Specialist at Providence Hospital’s Psychiatric Emergency Department and as a social worker with the Native Village of Eklutna. Jami reports that she is having fun with her grandchildren.

**Jamie Cushenbery** (BSW, 1997; MSW, Colorado Springs, CO) began her 12th year in District 11 of the Colorado Springs School District, working as a school social worker. She continues to serve: on the District’s Budget Accountability Subcommittee; as an Association Representative for the teacher’s union; and on the Teacher Compensation Committee. Jamie is a certified trainer of the Nonviolent Crisis Prevention Program and has presented on conducting threat assessments in schools for the Colorado State Safe Schools Resource Agency. She also continues to serve as a field instructor for MSW students and she mentors new social workers and SPED counselors in District 11. Her summer travels have included Greece and Korea and this summer, she plans to travel to Japan to visit her daughter, Brittany, who teaches English.

**Sandra Csaszar-Swanson** (MSW, Anchorage, AK) reports that all is well with her in retirement and that she spent the winter cheering on the Lady Seawolves Basketball Team, who were ranked #1 for much of the season.

-----1999------------------

**Janet Campbell** (BSW, 1991; MSW, Edcouch, TX) retired from Providence Alaska Medical Center Breakthrough after 20 years and moved to Texas.

**Marie Lavigne** (MSW, Anchorage, AK), LCSW, OSW-C, is an Oncology Social Worker at Katmai Oncology. Marie writes, “It is wonderful to be in a thriving oncology practice with offices in Anchorage and the Kenai Peninsula and working with a great team.” Marie is developing a workshop for a national conference on “Creating Your Wellness Vision”, which is based on narrative therapy and the principles of health coaching for oncology social workers.

**Ruddy Taylor** (BSW, 1995; MSW, Anchorage, AK), LCSW, earned her Ph.D. in Clinical Community Psychology with a Rural Indigenous Emphasis in Fall 2014 from UAA/UAF. Ruddy is employed as a Mental Health Clinician III at the Alaska Psychiatric Institute.

-----2000------------------

**Julie Garcia** (Hartzog-Beatty) (MSW, Nashville, TN), LCSW, lives in Nashville, TN with her husband Roy, daughter Lindsay, and son Sebastian. She continues to work at Monroe Carell Jr. Children’s Hospital at Vanderbilt in Pediatric Oncology. Julie has just received a scholarship to attend the Master of Health Care Management Program at Vanderbilt University and will begin classes in August 2015.

**Kim Swisher** (Husby) (MSW, Fairbanks, AK), LMSW, is a Clinical Assistant Professor at the University of Alaska Fairbanks.

-----2001------------------

**Kelly Wright** (MSW, Anchorage, AK), LCSW, has his CDCII and SAP certifications and is in private practice (Kelly’s Services).

-----2002------------------

**Sue Ellen May** (MSW, Eagle River, AK), LCSW, retired from the Alaska VA Healthcare System in June 2014. She was the Suicide Prevention Coordinator. She was a clinician for 7 years, preceded by 2 years as a Victim Advocate with the Fort Richardson Family Advocacy Program. Thus far in retirement, Sue Ellen is working as a substitute Naturalist at the Eagle River Nature Center, leading school groups and preschool programs.

-----2003------------------

**Shelly Lynn Biss** (MSW, Anchorage, AK), LCSW, has her CDC II certification and is 3 credits from earning her Ph.D. in clinical social work with a Christian focus. Her goal is to graduate during the summer of 2015.

**Eileen Heaston** (BSW, 1998; MSW, Anchorage, AK), LCSW, is the mother of a 7-month old baby girl, Evelyn. Eileen is a Long-Term Care Coordinator with the Alaska VA Healthcare System.

**James Gallanos** (MSW, Juneau, AK) coordinates statewide suicide prevention projects and services, including grant programs, agency and community-wide trainings, and raising education and awareness that suicide is preventable. “With Help Comes Hope”. James writes: “There is a lot happening across Alaska. If you want to be certified in suicide prevention training or to find out more information, contact me.” James is the Prevention Program Coordinator with the State of Alaska Department of Health and Social Services.

**Lorrie Lundquist** (MSW, Graduate Certificate in Social Work Management, 2007, Anchorage, AK), LCSW, has been in private practice for the past two-and-a-half years, as well as providing services to military service members (Alaska Air and Army Guard) on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, serving as a military family and youth counselor.

-----2004------------------

**Crystal Poirier Fisher** (MSW, Fairfax, VT), LICSW, AAP, works as a clinician with LUND.

**Andy Parker** (MSW, South Portland, ME), LCSW, continues his private practice with Creative Change Counseling. Andy is EMDR certified and is in the process of training a therapy dog. Andy writes that he is “Living the dream.”

Continued on page 11
Patrick Cunningham, Associate Professor, will be on a one year sabbatical from the School of Social Work during the 2015-2016 academic year. His primary focus will be on his research interests. He plans to complete articles for publication regarding previous research. In June 2015, he is beginning a scientific control group study of a mutual support program for residents of the Anchorage Pioneer Home, who have cognitive impairment. This year-long study will use a standardized program using music therapy and other interventions intended to foster mutual support among the group members reducing loneliness, depression, and cognitive impairment, while promoting quality of life. Professor Cunningham received a start-up mini-grant from the UAA Center for Community Engagement and Learning to begin the program. His plans are to create similar programs in the other four Pioneer Homes in Alaska as well as other nursing homes, adult day care centers, and large assisted living facilities in Alaska, during his sabbatical year.

Professor Cunningham also will be pursuing his interest in the use of nutrition to respond to behavioral health problems. During the Spring 2015 semester, Professor Cunningham completed an upper division Preventive and Therapeutic Nutrition course. He is consulting with his professor, Amanda Walch, a dietitian and UAA faculty member in the Department of Dietetics, to design a study for clients of the Narcotic Drug Treatment Center in Anchorage, who are addicted to opiates and are participating in the Methadone Maintenance Program at the Center. This control group study will analyze the effects on clients who will receive whole food nutrition each day along with their Methadone dosage, regarding their drug craving and functional status. Professor Cunningham also plans to enroll in a nutrition program offered by Cornell University, and receive a certificate in nutrition that will assist him in becoming an expert in this area. He plans to incorporate nutritional information into course work offered in the School of Social Work that will benefit students in applying nutritional concepts in their future work with client populations.

Alexa Filanowicz, Clinical Assistant Professor and BSW Field Education Coordinator, is appreciative for ongoing community support of BSW students placed in myriad settings for their practicum placements and would like to thank everyone for a successful year! Professor Filanowicz continues to gain knowledge and experience in the area of field education and attended the annual meeting for the Northwest Field Consortium in Seattle in January. Alexa also traveled to Kansas City, MO in March for the Association of Baccalaureate Program Directors conference. Both of these events fostered networking and ongoing learning about issues and approaches related to social work field education.

Alexa continues to be involved in an area of interest through membership on the Interprofessional Simulation Committee, which hosted a simulation opportunity during the fall 2014 semester that centered on a stroke patient scenario. Through participation in this opportunity, MSW Foundation students in the SWK 630 Practice Skills Lab course were paired together to facilitate an Activities of Daily Living (ADLs) assessment with a standardized patient (actor) in the Health Sciences Building (HSB) Simulation Center. The students then attended a group debrief a few weeks later in order to gain insight into how other professions addressed the needs of the patient. Other students had the opportunity to engage in simulation as well, including the BSW seniors, who took part in an ongoing collaborative home visiting simulation with undergraduate Nursing students in both the fall and spring semesters. Students from both disciplines continue to be positive about this experience and it will continue during the 2015-16 academic year. Additionally, groups of students in the undergraduate social work case management course...
Thanks to its members, the Social Work Coalition had another busy, productive, and exciting year! The first event of the 2014-2015 academic year was Campus Kick-Off in August, and the remainder of the fall semester included hosting a booth at the UAA Halloween Fun Night in October, partnering with the Human Services Club in holding a coat drive for AWAIC in November, and jumping into Goose Lake to benefit the Special Olympics of Alaska in December.

As always, the spring semester started off quickly! The first event of 2015 involved Coalition members assisting with the Unsheltered Youth Point In Time Count in January, volunteering at both Kids’ Kitchen and the Stand Down event at the V.A. Domiciliary in February, and hosting a BBQ at Providence’s Hickel House facility in April. The Social Work Coalition also invited Melinda Freeman and Nancy Burke to present about Housing First, and hosted this community event in the Consortium Library in April.

Thanks again to each of the UAA Social Work Coalition members for participating in these activities, and to each of the officers for a successful year!
**Jessica Saniguq Ullrich (Ruck)** (MSW, Kent, WA) completed her first year in the University of Washington School of Social Work Ph.D. program. Jessica plans to do her research around the issue of trauma/wellness and hopes to interview Alaska Native parents involved with the child welfare system. Jessica writes: “I can’t wait to come back home to Alaska! I’d love to be in touch with anyone that is ever interested in pursuing a PhD in social work.”

**2005**

**Jacqueline Archer** (BSW, 2002; MSW, Graduate Certificate in Social Work Management, 2008, Anchorage, AK) has moved to Akeela as the Development Services Coordinator for Stepping Stones, which is a residential program for mothers and their children. In addition to her treatment coordination responsibilities, Jackie also administers Akeela’s licensed on-site childcare program. Jackie is the proud parent of a U.S. Navy Nuclear Technician/Operator stationed on the East Coast and the proud grandparent of 3 grandchildren, with another on the way!

**Angela Watts** (BSW, 2004; MSW, Anchorage, AK) supports the UAA School of Social Work through being a field instructor and periodic adjunct instructor. Angela volunteers as Vice President of the Airport Heights Elementary PTA. Angela continues to practice self-care through winter sports like downhill skiing, and those activities now include doing so as a family, with her children Finnigan, age 7, and Fiona, age 4.

**2006**

**Justyna Raszewska** (BSW, Anchorage, AK), LCSW, has been at Providence since August 2012. Justyna writes: “I love my job, my team, and what Providence stands for. I have been at Providence for almost 7 years and I can’t imagine going anywhere else at this time. My job allows me to be appreciative of every day we have on this planet.” She has a daughter, who is now 2-years-old. “My most rewarding job is being a mom. I’m thankful that I was blessed with such a beautiful miracle. My goal now is to hopefully move to a place with palm trees in the next couple of years.”

**2007**

**Brook Connolly** (MSW, Anchorage, AK), LCSW, worked with Hospice Care and Palliative Care at Providence Hospital until 2013, when she left Providence to start her own care coordination agency. Brook shares that she loves the new challenge!

**2008**

**Karen Johnson** (BSW, 2006; MSW, Anchorage, AK), LCSW, continues her work with the Anchorage Pioneer Home.

**2009**

**Jeanette Lacey Dunn** (MSW, Juneau, AK), LMSW, ACM, is the Lead Social Work Case Manager at Bartlett Regional Hospital, supervising social workers on the medical floor, the mental health unit, and Rainforest Recovery (the residential chemical dependency program on the Bartlett campus), while also being the primary social worker for the Emergency Department. “I loved my MSW program…”

**2010**

**Ashley Hice** (BSW, S. Las Vegas, NV), LSW, works with the State of Nevada, Division of Health Care Financing and Policy, as a Supervisor-Health Care Coordinator IV.

**Laura Lucas** (MSW, Juneau, AK) reports enjoying her role as a medical case manager, providing support to the medically underserved and vulnerable populations in Juneau.

**2011**

**Richard Bloomquist** (MSW, Juneau AK) serves as a Social Services Program Coordinator with the State of Alaska Office of Children’s Services (OCS). Within that role, Richard currently is the Statewide Coordinator in the OCS State Office for Child Advocacy Centers (CAC) and the Children’s Justice Act Task Force (CJATF). Among his current projects, Richard was re-writing the RFP for CAC grants and doing a lot of work with multidisciplinary child protection teams, including working with the UAA Child Welfare Academy to develop a multidisciplinary training team to work with MDTs across Alaska. “I am drawing on skills all of the time, that I learned while studying at UAA.”

**Jackie Campbell** (MSW, Juneau, AK), LMSW, enjoys her clinical work with adults as a Mental Health Clinician at the Juneau Alliance for Mental Health, Inc. and is working toward her LCSW credentials.

**Arika Jensen** (BSW, Troy, ID), LMSW, and her family moved to Idaho, effective mid-May 2015. After 10½ years at OCS, Arika is looking forward to trying another social work role in some arena and is “up for the challenge.”

**Marta Muntean** (MSW, Anchorage, AK), earned her LCSW in April 2014 and had a second child in May, 2014 (on Mother’s Day). Marta is a Clinician II at Southcentral Foundation (SCF), and along with her duties in that role, she spends part of her work-week with the Alaska Native Cultural Charter School (ANCCS) through a school-business partnership between the two organizations. Marta helps to meet the needs of students and families with various issues, including behavior, peer conflict, social-emotional difficulties, etc.

**Tarrin Munoz** (MSW, Rollins, MT) continues her work as a Senior Staff Associate with Action for Child Protection. Tarrin’s
Once again, it was a time of celebration for the 2015 BSW and MSW graduates at the Hilltop Ski Area Stevens Family Chalet. The May 1st Gala was the kickoff to a weekend of celebration, followed by the Master’s Hooding Ceremony in the Wendy Williamson Auditorium on May 2 and Commencement Ceremonies at the new Alaska Airlines Sports Center on May 3. Each class chose a speaker from amongst their peers to provide some final thoughts as this portion of their academic careers came to a close.

CELEBRATE!
THE CLASS
OF 2015 GALA

GALA PHOTOS COURTESY OF EVA WILSON

BSW Class Speaker Drea Pegues

MSW Class Speaker (On-Campus Cohort): Tiffany Mason

MSW Class Speaker (Distance Cohort): Margaret Kugzruk
CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CLASS OF 2015!

With this class, the UAA School of Social Work has graduated a total 691 students from the BSW Program, which began in 1973, and 440 MSW students from the MSW Program, graduating its first class in May 1997.

2015 BSW GRADUATES
Emily Adeszko
Joanna Bautista
Douglas Bowers
Shadae Cardoza
Margaret Carey
Patricia Chapman
Kallie Dorsey
Jessica Greene
Michelle Hawkins
Kacee Holloway
Jennifer Honea
Niki Knowlton
Rachawadee Koetnana
Pearl Mendes
Julia Miner
Jacqueline Odena
Drea Pegues
Alexander Pendrey
Rebecca Rodriguez
Alesya Sinyawski
Shaneika Williams

Daniel Habermann
Ingrid Harrald
Kayli Helvie
Sarah Histand
Cheri Johansen
Lori Kennell
Margaret Kugzruk
Samantha Lahti
Heather Larrabee
Devon Lewis
Tiffany Mason
Joy Montgomery
Nathan Nall
Kayli Nelson
Crystal Nixon-Luckhurst
Christopher Reppel
Keita Senaga
Melissa Snyder
Ron Wilmot
Olaide Wolfe

2015 MSW GRADUATES
Sarah Abramczyk
Cameron Adams
Lindsay Bothe
Marylee Cassell-Quinto
Jenna Downs-Last
Edna Flores
Megan Gooding

2015 GRADUATE CERTIFICATES

Social Work Management
Lindsay Bothe
Kayli Helvie
Laura Baldwin (Summer 2015)
Daniel Habermann (Summer 2015)

2015 School of Social Work
Specialization
Jenna Downs-Last

CONTINUED APPRECIATION
FOR OUR ADJUNCT
FAULTY MEMBERS...

With faculty sabbaticals, research buy-outs, and faculty transitions, the School of Social Work continues to value the expertise and contributions of our adjunct faculty as they assist us in providing quality social work education to our BSW and MSW students. Thank-you to each one of you; we sincerely appreciate your contributions to our School!

• Nancy Burke
• Jay C. Bush
• Shawnmarie Carpenter
• John Cook
• William Galic
• Bernita Hamilton
• Sherrie Hinshaw
• Summer LeFebvre
• Diane McEachern
• Tom McRoberts
• Vanessa Meade
• Judith Owens-Manley
• Natasha Pineda
• Pauline Richard
• Mary Elizabeth Rider
• Brian Saylor
• Amanda Sandlin
• Michael Sobocinski
• Ann Stockman
• Mary Sullivan
• Stephanie Vaughn
• Tonio Verzone

UAA SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
YEARLY NEWSLETTER
Sign up now for our yearly summer newsletter!
• Keep in touch with faculty updates
• Programs improvements and updates
• Alumni news
• Community outreach
latest work involves implementation of an evidence-based prevention model with colleagues from the University of Maryland School of Social Work. She has recently traveled to New York City and is waiting to hear about presenting at an international conference in Romania in October 2015.

Mary Sullivan (MSW, Certificate of Social Work Management, 2012) is the new Development Manager for Bean’s Café/The Children’s Lunchbox.

Katie Corwin (MSW, Anchorage, AK), LCSW, CDC I, is an Oncology Social Worker at the Providence Cancer Center.

Karen Kelly (MSW; Graduate Certificate in Clinical Social Work, 2013; Graduate Certificate in Children’s Mental Health, 2014; Anchorage, AK), LMSW, CDC II, provides services at API as a Mental Health Clinician II. Karen plans to enroll at APU in the Psy.D. program during the summer of 2016. Karen also works as a Dual Diagnosis Substance Abuse Counselor in the outpatient program at the Salvation Army Clitheroe Center.

Katrielle Rios (BSW, Anchorage, AK) provides case management at Catholic Social Services, Homeless Family Services program. Katrielle is enrolled in the Master’s of Public Administration program at UAA.

Dana Webster-Smith (BSW, Anchorage, AK) graduated with her MSW from Washington University in St. Louis’ Brown School of Social Work, with a concentration in mental health. She is co-author on a paper that is currently being reviewed for publication in the Journal of Social in Disability and Rehabilitation. Dana currently works at the University of Alaska Fairbanks.

Mary Sullivan

At the beach and “loves living Aloha.”

Dana Webster-Smith

continued from page 11

Kathy Ensing (BSW, 2013; MSW, Waikoloa, HI) has received her Master’s-level LSW in Hawaii and works as the Field-Based Care Coordinator for United Health Group. She has bought a house just 10 minutes from the beach and “loves living Aloha.”

Cory Gordon (MSW, Anchorage, AK) accepted a position as an Account Executive with Northwest Strategies, a firm that specializes in social marketing.

Lindsay Henkleman (MSW, Anchorage, AK), following the completion of her 18-month fellowship (State of Alaska Department of Health and Social Services Substance Abuse Prevention Program), has joined the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium, Community Health Services/Behavioral Health Division as the Suicide Prevention Project Manager.

Diana Molina (BSW, Anchorage, AK) has taken on a new role, in a newly created position, as Integrated Health Consultant at the Kodiak Area Native Association. The purpose of the new position is to provide mental health and substance abuse support services to Behavioral Health Aides in the villages on Kodiak Island. Heidi is currently receiving supervision for her LCSW, and hopes to take the test in Fall 2015, while also working on her Chemical Dependency Certified Supervisor Certificate, hoping to test for that at the end of Summer 2015.

Emily Bass (MSW, Anchorage, AK) has moved into a new role as Program Officer at the Alaska Community Foundation.

Stephanie Johnson (MSW, Anchorage, AK), LMSW, is a Behavioral Health Specialist at Programs for Infants and Children. Stephanie also serves as President of NASW-AK and is newly married, as of May, 2015.

Rebecca Muir (MSW; Graduate Certificate in Clinical Social Work 2014), LMSW, is a medical social worker with Liberty Dialysis.

Ateaya Pearson Jones (MSW, McGuire AFB, NJ), passed her LMSW exam and, in a few months, will begin working toward her LCSW. She is currently volunteering with the McGuire AFB chapel in their community outreach program.

Kathy Ensing

Sarah Abramczyk (Wood) (MSW, Anchorage, AK) continues her role as Protective Services Manager I with the State of Alaska Office of Children’s Services (OCS). Sarah will celebrate 10 years with OCS in September, 2015. She will continue to be an OCS liaison with Beacon Hill.

Joanna Bautista (BSW, Chula Vista, CA) was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in the U.S. Army National Guard at the UAA Army ROTC Commissioning Ceremony on May 2, 2015. She will work in medical services.

Cheri Johansen (MSW, Dillingham, AK) is assisting people in recovery in her work with the Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation, as well as focusing on the opiate epidemic in the region through coalition development at the local, regional and state level. Cheri also wrote a federal Rural Health and Social Services continuation grant that includes a request for funds to send ICWA workers, VPSOs, Tribal Chiefs, Mentors, and Elders to the Rural Health and Human Services Certificate at the University of Alaska Fairbanks.

Lori Kennell (MSW, Miles City, MT) has accepted a new position as Social Services Director at Friendship Villa Healthcare Community in Miles City, Montana. This is a new career for her, working with older adults, following many years of work with the Alaska Office of Children’s Services.

Devon Lewis (MSW, Juneau, AK) transitioned to a new position following her MSW graduation. Devon worked for several years with the State of Alaska, DHSS Division of Behavioral Health’s Prevention & Early Intervention program and following graduation, has moved to the Office of Children’s Services as a Community Care Licensing Specialist II, overseeing foster care
A PASSING OF THE NEWSLETTER BATON…

This is the 10th issue of School of Social Work’s annual NEWSConnection. I have been the “ghost” editor for each issue and it is now time to pass the baton. I would like to thank Mariajose Echeverria Stewart at Yuit Communicaitons, for her outstanding work as our layout/graphic design professional. She takes our content and brings it to life in an exciting and colorful way. I would also like to thank the staff and faculty of the School, for without them, their content contributions, and support over these 10 years, there would not be a newsletter.

One of the most enjoyable parts of creating each year’s newsletter is Alumni News. It is really exciting to see what our Alumni are accomplishing. In my opinion, it is really the section that “makes” the newsletter. I’m sure it is probably the first section that most NEWSConnection readers turn to when they receive it. So, a big thanks to all of you who have sent us information over the years, responding to our annual requests for updates and a special thanks to Sharie Field for organizing the outreach to all of you, through her email reminders and mass mailings.

Wishing you all much continued success…

-Chad Morse, Clinical Professor

IN MEMORIAM

Nicholas Bradley, BSW, 2005; August 17, 1981-February 3, 2015

Thanks to all of you for keeping in touch!

This important section of the newsletter does not happen without you! This newsletter had the largest response ever with 64 of you sharing your news! Please send the news you would like to share in the 2016 newsletter. We have a link to the form to make it easier for you to complete: http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/socialwork/alumni/update.cfm

We really look forward to hearing from you!

FACULTY Updates

Continued from page 9

facilitated an intake interview with standardized patients in the HSB Simulation Center and used this interview as the foundation for assignments throughout the semester. Not only have students been able to gain experience through simulation, but so too have faculty and the community through an Interprofessional Simulation Workshop that took place in September. Participants were guided through the process of developing, facilitating, and debriefing simulation scenarios. Due to ongoing interest, the workshop will be offered again in August 2015: Alexa is also a member of the Interprofessional Education Committee, which hosted its first, very successful, case-study centered Grand Rounds event this spring and will hold two additional Grand Rounds events during the Fall 2015 semester.

Professor Filanowicz continues to be the Faculty Advisor for the Social Work Coalition, so please see the “Coalition Corner” in this newsletter for an update about this year’s activities. Thanks again to everyone for a great year!

Kathi Trawver, Associate Professor, served as program coordinator for the BSW program for the eighth consecutive year. She continued her research on mental health courts and also partnered with Professor Donna Aguiniga on a UAA Chancellor’s research grant that funded an exploratory study on the impacts of interpersonal relationships on family well-being among low-income mothers. She presented at several national conferences and authored two social work text chapters, including the first known chapter on social work practice in Alaska; the second described therapeutic jurisprudence and problem-solving courts. Dr. Trawver was awarded a three-year Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Behavioral Health Workforce Education and Training for Professionals grant and has assumed program director responsibilities for a Child Welfare Workforce Initiative grant, both of which provide stipends ($8,000 to $10,000) to social work students. Professor Trawver continues to provide professionally-related service to the Council on Social Work Education, the Anchorage Coalition to End Homelessness, the Anchorage Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Point-in Time Count Project, and the Alaska Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Oversight Committee. This summer she will travel to Vienna, Austria to present her research on mental health courts at the XXXIVth International Congress of Law and Mental Health.

IN MEMORIAM

Nicholas Bradley, BSW, 2005; August 17, 1981-February 3, 2015

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We really look forward to hearing from you!
THE EXCELLENCE IN SOCIAL WORK FUND

Social Work at UAA has come a long way since we hired our first faculty in 1973. As of Spring 2015, the School has awarded 1,131 degrees.

As the School seeks to continue to grow and improve its offerings, we want to bring every resource to bear for the benefit of our students. To that end, we have created the Excellence in Social Work fund at the UA Foundation to help us build the School through student support, faculty development, community engagement and other needs that cannot be met using state funds.

Join me in making a contribution to the Excellence in Social Work fund. Each and every gift makes a difference. If each alumnus and faculty member were to make a contribution of $25 today, we could raise over $20,000. That would ensure a lot more deserving students receive scholarship support, that faculty will receive the latest training and professional development opportunities to remain current on the latest studies, that the School can bring in state, national and international experts, and more.

Please complete the gift form and return it to the UA Foundation at 1815 Bragaw Street, Suite 203, Anchorage, AK 99508. Or if you prefer, you can make a gift online at www.uaa.alaska.edu/giving with your credit or debit card.

Thank you so much for your support and remember to keep those alumni updates coming in! We love to hear from you.

- ELIZABETH A. SIRLES, PROFESSOR AND DIRECTOR

YES!
I WANT TO SUPPORT UAA’S SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK.

Please direct my contribution of $___________ to:

☐ Excellence in Social Work
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   Exp. Date:__________________________
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