Director’s Welcome

Elizabeth A. Sirles, Director and Professor

Greetings and best wishes from the School of Social Work faculty and staff. We hope you enjoy catching up on the activities of our school, alumni and students in Academic Year 2010-2011. As you’ll see, the work summarized in the newsletter demonstrates the diversity of experiences and opportunities for social workers with BSW generalist and MSW advanced generalist preparation for practice. We’re fortunate to be able to offer a wide range of curricular and practicum options for students – introducing them to best practice theories and methods in social work. As a result, students and alumni are impacting policy, programs, and people’s lives locally, statewide, nationally and internationally. Our graduates are assuming leadership roles, working in a broad array of settings, and addressing important social issues.

All of us at the School of Social Work know the successes we’re so proud of are the direct result of contributions by field instructors, agency representatives, adjunct faculty, advisory council members, peers and family members. We send our sincere gratitude and invite you to join us in congratulating the BSW and MSW graduates of 2011. Thank you and please keep in touch!

Beth

Dr. Tracey Burke receives the 2011 Selkregg Award

Associate Professor of Social Work Tracey Burke is the winner of the 2011 Selkregg Community Engagement and Service Learning Award. The Selkregg award will be used to support another arm of the partnership with the Food Bank of Alaska and associated agencies such as the United Way and Lutheran Social Services. Recently invited to be part of a Hunger-Free Anchorage initiative, Tracey will work with UAA students to conduct research needed to guide the development of a plan to improve policy and services for people struggling with poverty and hunger. The Selkregg award will enable Dr. Burke and her students to conduct in-depth interviews with users of food pantries and to produce a series of “Day in the Life” sketches of poverty and hunger to tell the stories that numbers never fully address. By interacting directly with 30 families experiencing food insecurity, they will identify challenges not previously recognized and opportunities for new strategies to reduce hunger for Anchorage families. Tracey has partnered with the Food Bank of Alaska for several years and teaches a service-learning course that takes hunger as its core theme.

The Selkregg Community Engagement & Service Learning Award of $5,000 supports faculty to develop community-based research, creative activity and course-based service-learning projects. The award seeks to encourage, inspire and reward faculty at UAA for engaged scholarship that creates and sustains our community partnerships. Purposes of the award are to recognize community engagement projects with significant discipline-based scholarship, community partnership and student leadership development. The projects ultimately aim to improve the quality of life for Alaska residents and develop civic leadership, democracy and social justice on campus and in the community.

- Edited contribution from the team at UAA University Advancement
BSW and MSW Alumni News

1997 Christy Lawton (Sturgis) (MSW, Fairbanks, AK) was appointed Director of the Office of Children’s Services in April 2011, after serving as Acting Director since August 2010. Christy joined OCS in 1998 as a social worker and has been a supervisor, staff manager, Children’s Services manager and child welfare administrator with the division.

1998 David Newell (MSW, Boys Town, NE) was appointed Executive Director of Nebraska Families Cooperative on September 1, 2010. David is also an LMSW and ACSW.

2000 Kim Swisher (Husby) (MSW, Fairbanks, AK) became a Clinical Assistant Professor and BSW Field Director at the University of Alaska Fairbanks Department of Social Work in August 2010. Kim was previously with the Office of Children’s Services, working in a variety of positions over the previous 10 years. Contributing to a year of big change, Kim also married in June 2010.

Susan Kay (Sukie) Selma-Murphy (BSW) makes her home in Canyon Lake, TX.

Rose Stasco (BSW, 1992; MSW, Anchorage, AK) is now “semi-retired”, having worked full-time at Southcentral Foundation and then part-time at the Anchorage School District (Migrant Education), Big Brothers/Big Sisters, and the Alzeheimer's Disease Resource Agency of Alaska. In “semi-retirement”, Rose is focusing on temporary or contract social work opportunities.

Carol Velasquez (Kasecky) (MSW, Sugar Land, TX) is a psychotherapist in private practice with Behavioral Health Consultants. Carol is an LCSW and is working on her Ph.D. in Clinical Sexology. She has a profile in Psychology Today.

2001 Kelly Wright (MSW, Anchorage, AK) obtained his LSW in the spring of 2011, adding it to his credentials of LMSW and CDC II certification. He continues to practice in Anchorage.

2002 Theresa Bovey (BSW, Anchorage, AK) is CEO/President of Trinion Quality Care Services, a company she founded in 2005. A senior care agency, her company now employs over 150 employees. Theresa is a Certified Senior Advisor, is Secretary on the board of the National Private Duty Association, Alaska Chapter and is Board Treasurer on the board of the Older Persons Action Group.

Pauline (Polly) Slisz (MSW, Anchorage, AK) continues her work as a Mental Health Clinician II with the State of Alaska Department of Corrections. Polly has her LMSW.

2003 Shelley Biss (MSW, Anchorage, AK) obtained her LCSW in 2007 and maintains that license and her CDCII. While a stay-at-home mother of two (ages 7 months and 3 years), Shelley serves on boards and committees of several organizations including Food Bank of Alaska, March of Dimes, the Performing Arts Center, and her church (New Song Covenant). Shelley is also a vocalist in a Bossa Nova Jazz band called “Nuevo Bossa Amor.” Additionally, she is enrolled in a Ph.D. Clinical Psychology program at Colorado Theological Seminary and hopes to complete their program over the next two-three years. Shelley and her family continue to travel and are planning a two-week trip around the Black Sea in September.

Jennifer Fredericks (Hernandez) (BSW, Gig Harbor, WA) married in 2008 and had a baby girl, Lola, on April 22, 2009. Jennifer is a Drug Court Compliance Specialist with the Kitsap County Drug Court.

James Gallanos (MSW, Juneau, AK) specializes in suicide prevention and behavioral health as a Program Coordinator with the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Behavioral Health.

Wanda Katsinsky (MSW, Anchorage, AK) is Director of the Oncology Service Line at Providence Alaska Medical Center. Wanda became an Oncology Certified Nurse in August, 2010 and co-authored a community case study entitled “Collaboration to increase colorectal cancer screening among low-income uninsured patients” in the Centers for Disease Control May 2011 issue of Preventing Chronic Disease: Public Health Research, Practice, and Policy, 8(3), 1-7. She continues to work as a CASA, is President of the Alaska Nurse Foundation, and is a steering committee member for “Ride for Life Alaska”, a nonprofit organization that raises funds to fight cancer through a 120 mile, two-day bike ride from Anchorage to Seward.

Sue Ellen May (MSW, Anchorage, AK) has an LCSW and works as a Veteran’s Administration Senior Social worker and MST Coordinator in Anchorage. Sue published a VA Clinic brochure entitled “Coping with Medical Care” for survivors of sexual assault and initiated the first transgender veteran’s support group.

2004 Crystal Poirier Fisher (MSW, Fairfax, VT) now makes her home in Vermont with her husband and 3-year-old child, Stone.

Jane Kimura (Smith) (BSW, Ketchikan, AK) moved to Ketchikan in 2007 and married James Kimura in 2009. Jane works as a Juvenile Probation Officer II with the State of Alaska and is active on the boards of the Ketchikan Youth Court and the First City Peace Officers Association.

Mary Joe Stasch Williams (MSW, Anchorage, AK) is an LCSW, currently working as the Veteran’s Administration HUD-VASH Coordinator/Social Worker a position that involves working with homeless veterans who live with a dual diagnosis. Prior to her work with the VA, Mary worked at Anchorage Community Mental Health Services initially providing home-based services for at-risk children and their families and later becoming the clinical supervisor for their Little Tykes program.

2005 Jacqueline Archer (BSW, 2002; MSW; Graduate Certificate in Social Work Management, 2008, Anchorage, AK) continues as the Head Start Program Director with Chugachmiut. Jackie received certification in CLASS (Classroom Assessment Scoring System) and continues to work in the communities of Nanwalek, Port Graham, and Seldovia. She presented a literacy workshop at the 2011 Alaska Head Start Conference and received a Head Start Body Start grant that funded the renovation of the playground at the Port Graham Head Start Site. Jackie is also the proud grandparent of Arianna Louise (born 1/12/11) and Damien (almost three years-old).

Stephanie Bonner (MSW, Washington, DC) worked as a clinical social worker in her religious community before returning to her previous career in child welfare. Stephanie and her husband welcomed their second child into the world in 2009. She hopes to teach overseas in the future.

Jessica Ullrich (Ruck) (MSW, Anchorage, AK) was promoted to supervisor of the ICWA at the Office of Children’s Services in Anchorage. Prior to her promotion, she was an ICWA specialist.

Angela Watts (BSW 2004; MSW, Anchorage, AK) announces a new addition to their family: Fiona was welcomed into the world on July 19,
From Alaska to New Zealand: Lessons from an international social work placement

This past year, from September 2010-December 2010, I had the privilege to complete my final UAA MSW concentration field placement in Palmerston North, New Zealand (NZ) at the Palmerston North Hospital, Ward 21. The planning and preparation of this began 18 months in advance of the actual placement. I needed that amount of time to arrange the logistics and permission, as well as prepare myself culturally, financially, and academically. After receiving a response of interest from Kathryn (“Kath”) Hays, Massey University, I began in earnest to coordinate with Janet Emerman, UAA MSW Distance Field Coordinator, Massey University, and, eventually, the Mid-Central District Health Board that oversees the Palmerston North Hospital. Kath was able to secure a location for me in Ward 21, Acute Mental Health Inpatient Unit, working with Mathew Keen, Psychiatric Social Worker. Mathew was the sole social worker that was responsible for many aspects of the individuals who were admitted and eventually discharged from the Ward. Mathew was a skilled psychiatric social worker who had 19 years practicing in New Zealand and had supervised numerous social work students from Massey University. He was willing to take on the challenge of supervising an international student, for 540 hours and to share his perspective of social work in context of NZ mental patient health.

“My interest in going to NZ stemmed from my previous experiences travelling there. I was also very interested in the cultural aspects of Maori culture, and the similarities or differences that their experience was to the Alaska Native population.” — Margie Thomson

My interest in going to NZ stemmed from my previous experiences travelling there, and my brief 10 months living there in 1997. I was also very interested in the cultural aspects of Maori culture, and the similarities or differences that their experience was to the Alaska Native population. As it turned out, I did get to have a brief birds-eye view into some of the issues that the NZ first peoples were experiencing. Unfortunately, the similarity that the first peoples are overrepresented in the welfare system, legal system, etc. was too close to what I have seen in Alaska. The social, economic and cultural changes have changed the village life, and also increased the incidence of alcoholism and violence, and triggered many other social problems that both countries see, as well as the watering down of culture.

In NZ, I had a two-day training on the Treaty of Waitangi (Te Tiriti o Waitangi), which is a foundational document. It strongly emphasizes the need for the recovery approach in the delivery of services, and the importance of meeting the mental health needs of Maori, because mental health is so closely tied to physical health. The Treaty is also cited as one of the principles that many agencies and services operate under. The Code of Ethics in NZ is very similar to the Code of Ethics that NASW follows, yet the NZ code specifically names respect for the Maori and the Pacifica people, yet the NASW Code is more general in its guidance for us.

Some of the experiences that I had on the ward with the Maori individuals and families of inpatients were incredible. I had hoped to be exposed to Family Group Conferencing, and had read about it in my earlier social work classes. I was able to follow a young woman, 37 weeks pregnant, who was a mental health consumer, along with the father of the child, and I got to see the formation of a Multi-Disciplinary Team meeting (MDT), comprised of the Ward 21 social worker, maternity ward social worker, occupational therapist, Maori mental health worker, community mental health worker, psychiatrist and psychologist. This group worked with “Amour”, to help prepare her for birth, as well as create a plan for after the baby was born. Although I had completed my hours, and had begun to travel with family, I heard about the family group conference that was held to decide the fate of Amour’s child. This MDT gathered all of the aunts and uncles of Amour, and the father of the baby. They met together for a facilitated two-day conference, solely to decide what is in the best interest of this child. SO much care and consideration went into this important decision, and as a social worker, I was glad to witness the integrity of the process and the sincerity of the individuals involved.

The benefits of having an international field placement were huge! I felt like I had the opportunity to not only work with New Zealanders, but also live among them and experience their lifestyle and values. I took the opportunity to travel as a local, getting to know the bus schedule and different transportation options (train, backpacker budget travel bus). I lived in a room in a family home, which allowed me to catch a glimpse into school life, youth recreation, arts and theatre, and family meals. I travelled most weekends to a sheep farm of friends from a past NZ trip. This became my sanctuary and sacred place to spend my free time. As it turned out, I did get to have

Continues on page 8
The title of this goodbye note is taken from an Earnest Hemmingway short story about the end of a love affair. The story has an ambivalent theme, a poignant mixture of sadness and anticipation. My nine years with the school of social work has been a love affair of sorts – at least that’s the way I see it – and I leave with the same mixed feelings.

I began my career in social work by accident. I was drafted into the Army in 1966, told that I was a “clinical psychology specialist” and sent to a duty station in Germany. Upon arrival at a military hospital I reported to the officer in charge who asked me if I would rather be a psychology or a social work specialist. I asked him what the difference was and he said, “Well, the psychology specialists score tests and the social workers see people.” I chose the people option.

I had been an awful college student (I majored in psychology because I thought it didn’t have any math) and my grades would not support a successful application to graduate school. I did apply after the Army but was rejected by several schools of social work. I went to work instead, first in New York City and then Anchorage in 1970. There were so few MSWs in Alaska then that a BA graduate with some experience was pretty competitive. I was hired as a supervisor at Alaska Children’s Services and three years later as executive director of the Ketchikan Children’s Home. Belatedly, I developed the intellectual curiosity I lacked in college and, finally, was able to begin graduate study. I graduated from Smith College in 1977.

In all then, it’s been some forty-four years since I saw my first client. I can’t say I enjoyed every moment of my career but, in retrospect, I would do almost all of it again. I certainly could not have ended in a better way and I see my several years of teaching as a kind of capstone, a time of making sense of my experience and an opportunity to pass my learning on to a new generation of social workers.

There is no denying the pain of ending though; it’s the price of having done something worthwhile. I do not envy those who leave a long career without a flicker of ambivalence. What good is there in a life’s work that one cannot wait to stop? I’ll take the agony of ending something of value. It’s the better price to pay.

-Gene Mangiardi

Social work junior Krista Howard won an undergraduate research grant to support her senior honors project in which she will work with Professor Tracey Burke on the experience of hunger in Anchorage. The project is linked to Tracey’s own work with the Food Bank of Alaska, but Krista will be independently responsible for a component of the broader project. Krista has also served as a CCEL-supported Community-Engaged Student Assistant (CESA) with Tracey’s service-learning class, which inspired her interest in the research.

Mary Dallas Allen During the 2010-2011 year, Assistant Professor Mary Dallas Allen was engaged in teaching, scholarship, and service. Mary Dallas is a core faculty member with the UAA Alaska Leadership and Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities (LEND) without Walls planning team, which is developing a leadership and training program for professionals who work with children with neurodevelopmental disabilities and their families. During Spring semester, Mary Dallas developed a new elective for the BSW and MSW program, Social Work and Sustainability in the Arctic, which addressed the environmental, economic, and social aspects of sustainability and climate change in the Arctic through a multidisciplinary perspective. In the area of scholarship, Mary Dallas and Kathi Trawver presented a roundtable discussion on the roles and responsibilities of social work faculty in supporting students who experience mental health disabilities. In addition, Mary Dallas has continued her research in the area of early childhood mental health consultation. A paper titled, “A multi-level analysis of consultant attributes that contribute to effective mental health consultation services,” which was co-authored with Beth Green, PhD, of Portland State University, has been accepted for publication in the Journal of Infant Mental Health. Finally, Mary Dallas was invited with Lisa Wexler, PhD (University of Massachusetts Amherst) to attend “Building Bridges: Advancing American Indian/Alaska Native Substance Abuse Research,” to support developing research that addresses suicide among Alaska Native youth. In the area of service, Mary Dallas continues to serve on the board of the Alaska Youth and Family Network, which is a family-support organization for youth who experience social, emotional, and behavioral challenges and their families.
In June, 2010, I was fortunate to attend the International Federation of Social Workers, International Association of Schools of Social Work, and the International Council on Social Welfare’s 2010 Joint World Conference in Hong Kong. The theme of the conference was “The Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development.” This was the first time these organizations had collaborated to develop a global agenda. The collaboration was intended to strengthen the voice of those who dedicate their lives to improving the lives of others.

The conference focused on four sub-themes: Social and economic inequalities within countries and between regions; dignity and worth of the person; environmental sustainability; and the importance of human relationships.

Over 3,000 social workers from 113 different countries attended the conference. It was an amazing experience to meet people from around the world who are working toward the same goals. With multiple sessions taking place simultaneously, the biggest difficulty was deciding which session(s) to attend. It was interesting that despite the diversity of people, countries and cultures represented, the issues were very similar in varying degrees: funding; politics; stigma; social norms; poverty; and access to services and education. Additionally, Ann Nelson, LCSW, (UAA MSW, 2006) and I were selected to make two presentations entitled: “Alternatives to Mental Health Treatment: Alaska Innovations” and “Recovery-Oriented Treatment: Patient- Centered Treatment Planning in an Acute Care Setting.”

Our Chinese hosts were very hospitable and set up a number of events allowing us to experience the Chinese culture. The events included city tours, dragon dancing, Chinese acrobats and musicians, cultural night featuring traditional food and crafts, and daily training with local Tai Chi masters. The cultural experience was culminated in a farewell dinner of traditional Chinese celebration food, a sword dancer, a face-changer (bian lian), and karaoke, which included audience participation.

As the world becomes more globally interdependent, it is important to remember that there is strength in numbers. A collaborative effort of this type has the ability to make a large impact on social service systems worldwide. The outcome of this conference was to establish the agenda. More information on the agenda can be found at http://www.ifsw.org. A second Joint World Conference tentatively titled “Social Work Social Development 2012: Action and Impact” is being planned to take place in Stockholm, Sweden in July of 2012 to discuss how the agenda can be realized.

- Kamaree Altaffer, MSW student, Class of 2012
Trauma Training Project Begins

Through a grant from the State of Alaska Behavioral Health Services, the UAA Social Work Evaluation Program is assisting Anchorage Community Mental Health Services (ACMHS) Child Trauma Center in developing a series of courses to better equip professionals, paraprofessionals, parents, caregivers, and others to help people who have experienced psychological trauma.

The project, extending from fiscal year 2011-2013, will begin with a Trauma 101 curriculum, covering definitions, the physiology of trauma, impact of trauma on the developing brain, domains of impairment, and how to assist people who have experienced trauma achieve a greater sense of safety in their lives. Subsequent modules will focus on trauma treatment and other topics for specific audiences. Josh Arvidson, LCSW, Director, Child Trauma Center, is the grant project director, and Susan Pope, Ph.D., is the curriculum developer. The Child Trauma Center, in conjunction with local and national content experts, has been developing and delivering trauma training for several years in conjunction with direct services to children and families who have experienced trauma. The curriculum will draw on a foundation of existing courses and research to create a consistent curriculum. In addition to Trauma Center staff, a statewide advisory group guides the project.

-Susan Pope, CTC Curriculum Developer

**FACULTY Updates**

**Tracey Burke**  Associate Professor Tracey Burke has focused her efforts this year on her work with the Food Bank of Alaska. She has further developed the written assignments associated with her service-learning class (SWK 243, Cultural Diversity and Service Learning), making the “learning” part more rigorous while also deepening the service with the Food Bank and its partners. She and a student assistant organized a campus-wide Food Stamp Challenge with support from the Food Bank, and the year culminated with winning the Selkregg Award, a $5,000 community engagement grant to support research with the Food Bank of Alaska. (Please see further details about the Selkregg Award on page 1.) Tracey has also been writing about civic engagement and social work. She has an article published in the upcoming Advances in Social Work, is working on a chapter for a book on civic engagement programs, and on a paper related to her service-learning class.

**Patrick Cunningham**  Associate Professor Patrick Cunningham’s proposal, Care Coordination Challenges in the “Last Frontier,” submitted to the Alzheimer’s Association 2011 International Conference on Alzheimer’s Disease (AAICAD) Conference Committee, was accepted. He will conduct a poster presentation during the Conference which will be held in Paris, France, July 16-21, 2011.

**Kathi Trawver**  Assistant Professor Kathi Trawver continued to serve the School as BSW Program Coordinator. Along with her teaching duties, she co-edited “The Clinician’s Guide to Evidence-Based Practice: Psychosocial Treatment of Schizophrenia,” and authored/co-authored two chapters in that text published in 2010 by John Wiley and Sons. She was a presenter at the 2010 International Forensic Mental Health Services Conference and the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Annual Program Meeting. This June, she will be an invited plenary speaker for the 1st Annual Intermountain Mental Health Court Conference to be held at Utah State University. During this past academic year, Professor Trawver’s service-related activities included continued appointment to CSWE’s National Council on Disability and Persons with Disabilities, Co-Chaired CSWE’s Annual Conference Disability track, and served as a grant reviewer for the U.S. Department of Justice. Additionally, she served as Vice Chair of the Board of Directors for the Disability Law Center of Alaska, Chair of Alaska’s Mental Health Rights Advisory Board, and was a member of API’s Advisory Board, as well as chairing and serving on several University of Alaska Anchorage committees.

**Beth Sirles**  Professor and Director of the School of Social Work, focused attention on children as the Principle Investigator for a grant from the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority to develop a Graduate Certificate on Children’s Mental Health and an Undergraduate Minor in Children’s Mental Health at UAA. These academic programs are multidisciplinary options for graduate and undergraduate students in psychology, special education, social work or other behavioral health programs. She was appointed by Governor Parnell to the Alaska Early Childhood Coordinating Council (AECCC), formed to support the creation of a unified, sustainable system of early care, health, education and family support for young children and their families. Beth is co-chairing the Workforce Development Committee of the AECCC. She recently traveled to Boston with Sue Pope to attend the Child Trauma Conference organized by The Child Trauma Center of the Justice Resource Institute. Beth presented “Innovations in Telehealth” with Robin Hobbs and Jenny Miller at the Alaska Health Summit in Anchorage and the National Association for Rural Mental Health conference in Denver, Colorado. In May, Beth hosted a delegation of Russian faculty from the Tomsk State University Social Work Department as they conducted a study of current approaches and methodology of work with socially deprived families in a multicultural community. She continues her work as the Chair of the Western Consortium for Rural Social Work Education, the Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education Internet Course Exchange (WICHIE ICE) and serves as a member of the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority Workforce Development Focus Group.
During the 2011 legislative session, I had the pleasure and good fortune to do my UAA Social Work concentration practicum in the Office of Representative Herron of Bethel (District 38). While there, in addition to other responsibilities, I assisted staffer Liz Clement with issues that came before the Health and Social Services Committee. In this role, I assisted with pre-filing House Bill 78: An Act establishing a loan repayment program and employment incentive program for certain health care professionals. This bill will create a loan re-payment program that will allow for the payment of up to $20,000 per year for clinical social workers and psychologists who hold at least a master’s degree, and who are willing to work in underserved areas of the state. This bill will also offer loan re-payment for other providers, such as doctors and nurses, and it does not matter where you obtained your education, as long as it is from an accredited institution.

The purpose of this bill is to provide an additional incentive for master’s- level social workers, psychologists, and other health professionals to stay in the state and work after their educations have been completed. Currently, there is a serious shortage of all these types of health care professions in Alaska, and we are one of only four states that do not offer a loan repayment program. There are two federally funded loan re-payment programs that master’s-level social workers and psychologists can currently utilize in Alaska: The National Health Service Corps Program (NHSC) and the Alaska State Loan Repayment Program (ASLRP). The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) also offers loan repayment to providers who are tribal members and who chose to work for an organization that is a tribal or BIA-funded provider. Both the NHSC and the ASLRP programs offer loan repayment for social workers who choose to work in an underserved area defined as a Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA). The level of need in an area is determined by its HPSA score, which is calculated by specific criteria—the higher the score, the greater the level of need. HPSA scores are calculated for three different provider categories: Mental Health; Dental; and Primary Care. The NHSC program only serves the most highly underserved areas, or those with the highest HPSA scores, while the ASLRP allows for loan repayment in areas with somewhat lower HPSA scores. (For information about HPSA scores and areas of need, you can contact the Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Public Health, Office of Health Planning and Systems Development or visit http://hpsafind.hrsa.gov/).

If HB 78 passes, the State of Alaska will be able to provide loan repayment for social workers and health care providers in many areas that are currently not eligible because they have not been determined to have a high enough level of need by the federal definitions, i.e. their HPSA score is too low.

During this session, HB 78 was moved out of the House Health and Social Services Committee and forwarded to the House Finance Committee. The bill also gained two new cosponsors: Representative Millet and Representative Tuck have joined Representative Miller and Representative Herron (the primary sponsor). During the 2012 session, the bill stands a good chance of becoming law and it needs your support.

If you would like to see an additional college loan repayment program for social workers, along with the expanded availability of services to underserved populations, please contact Liz Clement at Representative Herron’s Office (liz.clement@legis.state.ak.us), or better yet, send them a letter of support! (Session Address: State Capitol, Room 411 Juneau, AK 99801-1182; Interim Address: PO Box 886 Bethel AK, 99559) One thing that I learned during this legislative practicum is that letters and personal communication to our lawmakers does really make a difference.

- Richard Bloomquist, MSW, 2011

Richard was a legislative intern with Rep. Herron’s office during his MSW concentration practicum and he highly recommends the experience. Associate Professor Patrick Cunningham coordinates the legislative internship program for the University of Alaska Anchorage.
space to ground me, refill and renew, before heading back into a 40-hour work-week on the Ward. I learned to shear sheep, sort and throw fleece, herd cattle, work with pigs, chickens, work dogs, dig thistles, mend fences and work harder physically than I ever had before. Self-care was an important part to learn, as well as clinical skills, if I was choosing to work in the mental health field.

The disadvantages of doing an international exchange was that it took 18 months to plan, arrange for, sort-out financing (supporting two homes), being away from family, and the idea of creating new supports from school and personal support. The timing of participating weekly in UAA classes was tricky, due to time zones; however, the temperature and climate was a positive aspect. I would often participate in UAA distance E-live class or teleconference through Skype, while sitting outside in a tank top in 80ºF temperatures, while my cohort classmates were experiencing November’s winter weather in Bethel or Fairbanks.

Being exposed to gang life was new to me as a Juneau girl, and I quickly learned that I needed to understand the culture to be effective on the ward, as well as understand the changing dynamics, depending on the “mana” or power that the gang member in-patient had. Others giving up their chairs, meals, cigarettes, money, and anything that will win favour of these gang members demonstrated the power and authority of a gang member with a lot of ‘mana’. I had a steep learning curve on this one.

In many ways, this immersion into New Zealand, mental health, and personal growth was exactly what I needed to cap off my MSW concentration year of study. Not only did this international placement become the highlight of my formal training, but it also led to the realization that this was not the culmination of an educational process, but rather the wonderful beginning of “real world” professional clinical practice.

For more information or details about this placement, please feel free to email Margie at thomson2@gci.net or visit http://margieinnz.blogspot.com/ which was created for this internship.

– Margie Thomson, MSW, 2011

**FACULTY Updates**

**Randy Magen** Professor Randy Magen was appointed to NASW national’s private practice section committee. This committee is one of the many specialty practice sections (SPS) operated to meet the needs of NASW members. The SPS offer professional development, free CEUs, and a bi-annual newsletter. One of Randy’s recent contributions was a newsletter article on iPhone applications that social workers might find useful.

Randy is currently working on two grant-funded projects with the Office of Children’s Services (OCS). The first is a collaboration between the State Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (CDVSA), the Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (ANDVSA), Tribal family services, OCS and UAA. The purpose of this project is to increase the safety of women and children who find themselves involved in these multiple service delivery systems. We worked two or three years prior to ANDVSA receiving a federal grant for the project. It is a slow process to change service delivery systems, however I am hopeful that the pilot projects in Fairbanks, Kodiak, Juneau, and Dillingham will produce policies and procedures useful across the state. Randy is working as the evaluator for this project. An added bonus to working on this endeavor is that several UAA MSW alumni are also involved with the project: Sharon Fleming, Mary Gray, Christy (Sturgis) Lawton, and Jeri Museth.

The second project with OCS is a program development grant to assist the agency in designing and planning a parent-navigator system. The idea is that parents who have successfully worked with OCS are in a good position to provide support and guidance to parents who are new clients. The project is just getting underway. Again, in this project Randy has the opportunity to work with a UAA BSW alumnus, Panu Lucier.

At UAA, Randy has been very involved in a program called Making Learning Visible (MLV). Most faculty members evaluate their teaching through informal feedback, student grades, and end-of-semester evaluation forms. All of these methods have major limitations. We are helping faculty members develop research questions related to student learning and then assisting them in selecting data collection methods that will provide information that answers the research question. In other words, this is systematic evaluation applied to the college classroom – just like we teach our students to do in their own social work practice!

Finally, in January Professor Magen attended a memorial service for his mentor, Sheldon Rose. He writes: “Sheldon was a professor at the University of Wisconsin Madison and a scholar of social work group work. He had a tremendous influence on my career, the way I think about social work, and even how I teach. We had a wonderful celebration of his life and career. I hope that each of you can find a mentor who provides guidance throughout your career and that you, in-turn, mentor a new social worker.”
2010. Angela continues as a Clinician with Denali Family Services and has been adjunct teaching periodically with the UAA School of Social Work and will be doing so again in the fall of 2011.

2008 Krista Pemberton (Petumenos) (MSW, Anchorage, AK) and Maureen Young (MSW, Anchorage, AK) announced their entrance into private practice at the offices of Fuller Diagnostics, LLC on April 8, 2011. Both have obtained their LCSWs and are offering child, adolescent and adult therapy.

Sean Rummelhart (BSW, Iowa City, IA) has been accepted into the MSW Program at University of Iowa School of Social Work and will begin studies in the fall of 2011.

JoAnne Simmerman (MSW, Fairbanks, AK) was promoted to Staff Manager of the Northern Region at the Office of Children’s Services, effective July 1, 2010.

2009 Dan Bigley (MSW, Anchorage, AK) is excited to announce that he and co-author Deb McKinney have secured a book deal with St. Martin’s Press to publish their non-fiction narrative of how the grizzly bear attack that blinded him has given him a new way to see and appreciate life. The book’s release date is scheduled for the spring/summer of 2012 and will be available through all major book retailers. Dan will be going live with a new website soon. Meanwhile, feel free to stay in contact through his Facebook page (www.facebook.com/dan.bigley?ref=profile) or his blog: bearattacksurvivor.blogspot.com

Benjamin Kanohokula (BSW, Anchorage, AK) was named as one of the “Top 40 Under 40” in 2011 by the Alaska Journal of Commerce.

2010 Dawn Bell (MSW, Los Angeles, CA) currently works with Providence St. Joseph’s Medical Center as a Clinical Social Worker in the Emergency Department. Dawn relays that she is enjoying sunny California and is feeling joyful to continue working within the Providence Health System.

Stephanie Engel (BSW, 2006; MSW, Anchorage, AK) is enjoying her position as a social worker with the Veterans Health Administration and has been approved to sit for her LMSW exam.

Ashley Hice (BSW, North Las Vegas, NV) works as a Social Worker I with the State of Nevada’s Aging and Disability Office and is a licensed social worker (LSW).

Cory Karge (MSW, Anchorage, AK) accepted a position with Anchorage Community Mental Health Services in August 2010, operating a school-based mental health program for SED children, grades K-5.

Laura Lucas (MSW, Juneau, AK) is an LMSW and works with Wildflower Court, a nonprofit long-term care and skilled nursing facility in Juneau. She was also a volunteer curator and graphic designer for the 2011 exhibit and calendar “Out of the Rain: Portraits of People Emerging from Homelessness in Alaska’s Capital City”, a project sponsored by the Juneau Homeless Coalition to raise public awareness about homelessness in Alaska.

Pam Sheperd (BSW, 2005; MSW, Anchorage, AK) is a Chemical Dependency Counselor with Volunteers of America and is applying for CDC I certification in the next few months.

Donna Shock (MSW, Anchorage, AK) received her LMSW in October, 2010. Donna is a Pediatric Social Services Clinician in the Children’s Hospital at Providence Alaska Medical Center.

Johnny Weaver (MSW, Anchorage, AK) is a Clinician with Denali Family Services in Anchorage.

2011 Jennifer Allen (MSW, Graduate Certificate in Social Work Management, Anchorage, AK) is a consultant for RurAL CAP and the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, specifically working on the implementation of the Karluk Manor supportive housing program and the Trust’s Statewide Alcohol Initiative. Jennifer and her family will be leaving Alaska in September, as they begin their next adventure in their family’s military life.

Thanks to all of you for keeping in touch!

We would really like to hear from more of you! If you have news you would like to share in the 2012 newsletter, we now have a link to the form to make it easier for you to complete: http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/socialwork/alumni/update.cfm

After completion, please e-mail to Chad Morse at afcem@uaa.alaska.edu or mail it to: Chad Morse, UAA School of Social Work, GHH 106, 3211 Providence Dr. Anchorage, AK 99508. We really look forward to hearing from you!
Six Students Spend Spring Break in Kotzebue: A First-Person Account

The University of Alaska Anchorage School of Social Work, thanks to a grant from Alaska’s Center for Rural Health, sponsored six students on a Spring Break trip to Kotzebue. I was privileged to be one of the six. Others making the journey were Brandy Rountree, Daisy VanSlyke, Joel Riojas, Linda Brown, and Eric Larsen.

We arrived in Kotzebue early Monday morning, March 7, to a stunning sight. Mamalak Mountain was silhouetted by an orange and red sunrise. It was a beautiful start to our adventure. Ray Coppock, whose Native name is Qualequaq (collie'-caulk), met us at the airport and became our mentor for the next four days.

The first day began with an exploration of Inupiaq Native culture. Storytelling is one way Native Alaskans pass traditions from one generation to another and Ray is a skillful storyteller. He mesmerized us with tales of Native history, some happy and others sad. This introduction set the stage of understanding what we were about to experience.

After our introduction to Inupiaq history, Ray led us on a tour of his village. Kotzebue was founded on a spit of land sandwiched between the Hotham Inlet and Kotzebue Sound. This strategic location has made Kotzebue a hub to the Northwest Arctic Borough. Our first day concluded with a trip to the Park Service Museum. Mounts of indigenous animals and exhibits of various land formations were displayed. After the trip to the museum, six tired students returned to their hotel rooms and fell, exhausted, to sleep in anticipation of the next day.

A trip to Noatak filled our second day. While waiting for our flight to the village, I observed two traditional Native values demonstrated, respect for elders and closeness of community. Three elder females were sitting near each other, talking in Inupiaq. Several other younger adults were sitting quietly. They had their heads bowed in respect while listening. The eldest of the three women interrupted the Inupiaq dialogue with an English sentence, “When you get to Noatak, tell them I said Hi.” A second elder woman inquired, “Tell who?” The first replied in Inupiaq, “Kenaamnaa.” All the Inupiaq who were listening began to laugh. Seeing the puzzled look on my face, the eldest female explained, “That means everyone.” Then we all laughed…humor, a third traditional value.

When we arrived in Noatak, we visited the village-based clinic. Itinerate therapists from Maniilaq fly from Kotzebue to the area villages and meet with their clients at the clinic. Therapists will often utilize the behavioral-telehealth system. Through this, clients can meet with a psychiatrist or psychologist from Kotzebue, Anchorage, or Seattle. This has improved the delivery of mental health services to the Bush.

As an introduction to subsistence living, Ray took us ice fishing on our third day. Many of the residents in the Northwest Arctic, Native and non-Native, rely on fish and caribou as their main food source. It is sheefish season now. Ray skillfully drilled a hole in the ice and gave each of us a jig (a small stick with a line and hook). There were no bites, but then we were not very diligent because of the cold and returned early.

We returned to Anchorage early on the fourth morning. Ray accompanied us to the airport where we said our goodbyes. Ray just said, “I will see you later.” Kotzebue, what a lovely village, full of lovely people.

- Pamela Huffman, MSW 2011
It was another good year for the BSW field education program, and many thanks to Tracey Burke for finishing out the first semester in Janet’s absence. We had a relatively small class this year – 9 students in field for their senior year. But, we will more than double that number next year, as we accepted 21 students into the field program, pending successful completion of some classes this summer.

Some BSW factoids:
Types of placements in 2010-11: Anchorage School District (2), State of Alaska agencies (2), medical (2), faith-based non-profit (1), substance abuse/homeless (1), and policy analysis (1). At least 3 of these were mostly macro social work, 2 were Native-funded organizations, and 4 were brand-new BSW placements: Make-A-Wish Foundation, Anchorage Faith and Action, Ursa Minor/Major Elementary Schools (on Joint Base Elemendorf-Richardson), and First Alaskans Institute. (There is overlap in the above categories.)

We are now in the process of placing students for the 2011-12 year and will mention a few placements that are new for the BSW program: 2 new ones with JBER (Joint Base Elemendorf Richardon), a new one with Providence (Crisis Recovery Center), the YWCA, 4As, and the UAA Child Welfare Academy. As always, we are so grateful that the community opens its doors for our practicum students, and we always welcome new agencies/agencies we haven’t worked with.

In each of the past few years, around 70% of our Field Instructors for BSW students are former UAA School of Social Work grads. We are growing our own!

One of our Field Instructors, Ben Kanohokula (BSW ’09), was named to the 2011 Alaska Journal of Commerce “Top Forty Under 40” list – a real honor and one that is well-deserved! Congratulations, Ben!

One of our BSW seniors, Mariel Savage, spoke publicly about the BSW student experience in front of hundreds at the 5th Annual Pathways into Health Conference in Arizona this spring. The overall theme of the conference was to make education in the health professions available to all American Indian and Alaska Native individuals. Great job, Mariel!

A number of our BSW students, including seniors Alyse Mondok and Amada Arredondo, were instrumental in advocating for UAA to broaden its non-discrimination clause to cover sexual identity. Amada Arredondo testified before the Board of Regents, and the Board ultimately added sexual identity to the official UAA non-discrimination policy.

Our graduating BSWs are now dispersing – some to other states for military obligations or job opportunities, some to graduate school at UAA, and some will undoubtedly be entering our social services workforce here in Anchorage or in nearby cities. Congratulations to all of them – It was a GOOD year!

- Janet Emerman, Clinical Professor/BSW Field Coordinator
Social Work Student Coalition

The Social Work Student Coalition was very engaged on campus and in the community during the 2010-2011 school year. Led by BSW students Amada Arredondo, Alyse Mondok, Brandy Rountree, and Robyn Corbett, the Student Coalition sponsored and engaged in many events. In the Fall Semester, the Coalition worked with Healing Racism Anchorage to co-sponsor a community lecture on racism by Tim Wise. They also conducted a drive for the Abused Women’s Aid in Crisis (AWAIC) shelter, and they conducted outreach on the UAA campus for World Aids Day. During Spring Semester, the Student Coalition developed and implemented a Professional Social Worker roundtable event in which students and professional social workers gathered together to share experiences about life in the social work profession. This inaugural event was a huge success! Many Coalition members also volunteered at Project Homeless Connect.

The Student Coalition would like to thank all students who participated in these events and the hours of planning that went into making each such a success.

Looking forward to the 2011-2012 academic year, the Coalition Officers are Carmela Ramirez (President), Krista Howard (Vice President), Brandy Rountree (Secretary), Daisy VanSlyke (Treasurer), and Rose Ebue and Maggie Tuazon (sharing the position of Student Club Representative). We look forward to another wonderful year!

-Mary Dallas Allen, Assistant Professor, Club Sponsor

Welcome to our staff!

Ken Schultz

We are pleased to introduce a new staff member this year, Ken Schultz, who joined us in January and very quickly integrated himself fully into our team. Ken has recently retired from a successful twenty-year career serving in the U.S. Army. He and his wife of 20 years, Jennifer, have raised three wonderful sons. Their oldest two are both serving in the Armed Forces and their youngest son will be joining UAA as a student in the 2011 summer semester. We are daily grateful to the skills and knowledge Ken has brought to the School of Social Work. Ken and Eva Wilson are job-sharing a position, so you may encounter either one when you call us or drop by.

-Mary Parker, Office Manager
Our MSW Distance practicum students spanned the globe this past academic year! Fairly literally – with one working on a nationwide child protective services training project, one student in Michigan, and one in New Zealand! Three faculty members conducted eLive field seminars and monitored the Distance students in their practicum sites: Mary Dallas Allen and Randy Magen with the Concentration students and Janet Emerman with the Foundation students. Many thanks to Angela Salerno, in Juneau, for finishing out the first semester in Janet’s absence.

**MSW Distance Factoids**

We had 9 Distance Foundation students placed in: Fairbanks (2), and one each in Juneau, Kenai/Soldotna, Cordova, Ketchikan, Dillingham, Michigan, and Anchorage.

We had a total of 19 Distance Concentration students placed in: Juneau (6), Fairbanks (2), Kenai/Soldotna (4), and one each in Ketchikan, Sitka, Naknek, Bethel, New Zealand, and Anchorage.

These students represented UAA in: macro settings like the national Child Protective Services training project and the State Legislature; Native organizations (Ketchikan Indian Corporation); Veterans’ services; medical settings; behavioral health agencies; and youth facilities, to name a few. Five of the MSW students were placed in schools around the state and in Michigan — some of them may look into our new School Social Work Certification program.

**Some highlights**

One of the Distance Concentration MSW seminar instructors piloted e-portfolios this year. Many of you will remember the very large end-of-semester portfolios that each field student submits... the e-portfolio may be our future! According to Professor Mary Dallas Allen and to her seminar students, it was a successful venture and may be expanded in the near future.

Margie Thomson, our Concentration student who did her placement in New Zealand, will be a published author as a result of her experience. A chapter written by Margie, her New Zealand field instructor, the New Zealand host university field director, and Janet Emerman, discussing the factors that contribute to a successful international field experience, has been accepted for publication in a forthcoming New Zealand social work text about international social work.

Margie, immersed for the whole semester in New Zealand culture, was thoroughly exposed to it, everything from experiences with, and education about, New Zealand’s indigenous Maori peoples to the New Zealand culture of sheep farming. (See Margie’s article on page 3 in which she shares her insights and highlights some of her experiences.)

Foundation student Deneise Wehymiller had a flexibly arranged placement in a school district in Sturgis, Michigan with a lot of cross-cultural experiences. Deneise did her fall semester in a 6-week block placement in Sturgis, and her spring semester in another part of that district in another 6-week block. In the fall, she was placed primarily at the elementary school level, where the schools were comprised of a very large migrant work force, mostly Hispanic. She did a lot of work helping non-English speaking families understand the school system and finding Spanish-language resources for them, and found her Alaskan training in cultural sensitivity to be model examples of how to work competently across cultures. The second semester she worked with the special education department of the same district, doing group and individual work with young adult students living with developmental disabilities. All of this took place in a region of Michigan/Indiana, which is populated by one of the largest concentrations of Amish people in the U.S. Altogether a rewarding experience in a fascinating area!

Foundation student Linda Brown studied, wrote protocols, policies and procedures to establish a telebehavioral health program at her hospital placement in cooperation with API, bringing much-needed services to her rural community of Cordova. She spent part of her practicum time in Anchorage, studying on-site with Robin Hobbs and API’s statewide telebehavioral health program during her first semester; the second semester she learned much more about in-patient long-term care and health provision in the same local hospital.

Concentration student Brianne Smith, who also found time to get married during her practicum year, was instrumental in professionally piloting a possible social work position with a Family Birthing Center in Juneau, performing social work roles and then looking into sustainable funding sources.

A number of our students made creative use of their background skills in their placements:

- A musician by avocation, Concentration student Brian Messing organized a client and staff musical performance at Gastineau Human Services in Juneau and very capably connected the project to the therapeutic process and group dynamics.
- A former biologist, Concentration student Richard Bloomquist learned all about policy formation, the Legislative process, and socioeconomic impacts while placed with State Representative Robert Herron and among other activities for his practicum, assisted staffer Liz Clement with issues that came before the Health and Social Services Committee. (See Richard’s article on page 7.)
- And in one of my favorite projects, Foundation student Laura Baldwin did a macro placement where she worked all year with Frontier Community Services in Soldotna in planning for their first upcoming COA accreditation. She analyzed all the accreditation standards and any existing gaps, gathered the evidence that would be needed for the self-study, met with department directors to write and rewrite mission statements and policies/procedures, and conducted a pre-mock site visit agency-wide for everyone to run through the process. It was a tremendous learning experience for her and a tremendous benefit to the agency.

As always, thanks to all of you for your support and enthusiasm for our program! Academic year 2011-12 is not a practicum year for students in our part-time Distance MSW program, but we will be placing again for 2012-13 and look forward to continuing community partnerships and building new ones.

- Janet Emerman, Clinical Professor/MSW Distance Field Coordinator
The Child Welfare Academy Blooms with New Growth

As our beautiful Alaskan summer arrives, the Child Welfare Academy flourishes as we strive to be the training facility for Alaska social workers and child welfare professionals. Earlier this year, we changed our name from the Family and Youth Services Training Academy (FYSTA) to the Child Welfare Academy.

The new name represents our commitment to new innovations with our training, curriculum, and staff. Check out our new website: http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/childwelfareacademy/ The newly remodeled site briskly walks you through our new changes and innovations. You’ll see our new mission, new curriculum agenda, and links to other trainings that support development for professionals who work with families throughout the state. The website is part our strategic plan to be the “go to” agency for any professional from any discipline who shares the Office of Children’s Services vision of “Safe Children, Strong Families.” Our “curricular array” offers a broad spectrum of trainings. We emphasize family-centered practice to encourage collaboration with families, tribes, communities, or any professional who share the responsibility of keeping children safe and families strong in Alaska.

Our latest new training, The Protective Capacity Assessment (PCA), reflects OCS’s concurrent vision for innovation and growth with their agency.

Our latest new training, The Protective Capacity Assessment (PCA), developed for the Office of Children’s Services (OCS) and their tribal partners, reflects OCS’s concurrent vision for innovation and growth with their agency. Christy Lawton, the new Division Director for OCS, describes PCA as a “four-stage process by which the worker engages the parent in a truly meaningful dialogue about what needs to change and looks to the parent to set the pace, direction, and focus for what they want to address first.” People who work with families will recognize the PCA as a state of the art, evidence-based best practice for facilitating meaningful and permanent change for families. We are also working with OCS to develop new trainings that will help workers better assess and support relatives and foster family homes. Other training will support the assessment, critical thinking, and decision making skills of OCS supervisors to achieve expertise, fidelity, and to improve outcomes for families statewide.

Along with our direct training and support for OCS staff and tribal workers, we continue to work with our community partners in creative ways. We are especially proud of the Parents as Partners – Peer Navigation Services for Alaskan Families Project. Tammy Sandoval, our Director at CWA, Professor Randy Magen from the School of Social Work, and Panu Lucier, the Executive Director to the Alaska’s Children’s Trust, collaborated with parents in Alaska to provide training and education to parents in five Alaskan communities. The collaboration, training, and education will culminate in a two-day planning session to develop, author, and implement the design of parent navigation system within OCS. Similar programs in other states have had great success in empowering parents to understand and direct their own progress within child welfare systems.

We also have some other ideas in the works. We are talking with the Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, the Infant Learning Program, the Strengthening Families Program, and other community partners to develop and implement new trainings and programs for people who work with families in all kinds of roles. Our hope is to bring people together to partner with us not only to develop trainings but to support efforts that recognize that child welfare is a collaborative effort.

We are fortunate to have an incredible staff, energized and committed to all of our new growth. Jay C. Bush, Stephanie Vaughn, and Tom McRoberts are our trainers. Tammy Sandoval, our Director, started last year and helped us tremendously with all the innovation and focus the year has brought. Marianne Mahon and Sandra Medina, our excellent administrative staff, keep everything running smoothly.

Please call, email, or visit our new website. We would love to hear from you!

- Tom McRoberts, CWA Trainer

Adjunct Faculty Continue to Contribute Valuable Expertise

The School of Social Work continues to appreciate the willingness of our adjunct faculty members to contribute their valuable time and energy in providing their valuable expertise and thus enhancing the learning experiences of our BSW and MSW students.

Serving as adjunct faculty were: Terry Bates, Bernita Hamilton, Robin Hobbs, Meg Loomis, Verna Loosli, Jenny Miller, Amanda Sandlin, Nancy Schuetz-Freymiller, Leona Schick, Rich Steinzeig, Ann Stockman, and Stephanie Vaughn.
Thank you to all the agencies who hosted practicum students

The agencies listed below participated in the UAA School of Social Work Field Education Program by hosting one or more BSW and/or MSW practicum student(s) during the 2010/11 school year. Many thanks to the dedicated people at these agencies who contributed to the excellent educational experience provided to the UAA School of Social Work students. We cannot accomplish our educational mission without you!

Anchorage
AARP, Alaska Children’s Services, Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, Alaska VA Healthcare System, Anchorage Community Mental Health Services, Inc., Anchorage Faith in Action Congregations Together, Anchorage School District Denali Montessori Elementary School, Nicholas J. Begich Middle School, Romig Middle School, Ursa Major Elementary School, Denali Family Services First Alaskans Institute, Hospice of Anchorage Make A-Wish Foundation, Municipality of Anchorage, Dept. of Health & Social Services, Senior Services, North Star Behavioral Health Care Planned Parenthood, Providence Alaska Medical Center, Adult Mental Health Unit, Cancer Center Cancer Center Navigation, Case Management/ NICU/Prenatal Unit, Palliative Care, RurALCAP Homeward Bound Program, St. Elias Specialty Hospital, Southcentral Foundation, State of Alaska Alaska Psychiatric Institute, Anchorage Pioneer Home, Dept. of Corrections, Parole & Probation Office, Dept. of Health & Social Services, Adult Protective Services, Office of Children’s Services, Office of Public Advocacy, STAR, UAA Center for Human Development.

Bethel
McCann Treatment Center

Cordova
Cordova Community Medical Center

Dillingham
Dillingham Public Schools

Fairbanks
Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Fairbanks North Star Borough School District, Hope Counseling Center, Interior Aids Association

Homer
Haven House/Child Advocacy Center

Juneau
Bartlett Hospital Mental Health Unit, Gastineau Human Services, Juneau Family Health & Birth Center, Office of Representative Bob Herron, State of Alaska, Dept. of Corrections, Lemon Creek Correctional Center, Wildflower Court

Kenai
Hope Community Resources, Kenai Vet Center

Ketchikan
Ketchikan Indian Community

Sitka
Sitka School District, Baranof Elementary School

Soldotna
Frontier Community Services, Kenai Peninsula Community Care Center, Serenity House

South Naknek
Bristol Bay Borough School District

Lower 48 and International
Sturgis Public Schools, Sturgis, Michigan St. Joseph County Intermediate School District, Centreville, Michigan, National Resource Center for Child Protective Services, Madison, Wisconsin Midcentral District Health Board, Palmerston North, New Zealand

-Prepared by Suzanne Dvorak, Program Assistant

Social Work Book Group

“Wicked people never have time for reading. It’s one of the reasons for their wickedness.”
-Lemony Snicket

Okay, maybe that sentiment is a bit negative, but hopefully it caught your eye, and it IS Lemony Snicket, after all.

One of the most exhilarating seminar discussions of last semester involved exchanging ideas about good books we had each recently read. Being someone who needs an hour, more or less, before falling asleep at night to clear my head of daily worries and to ‘live’ somewhere else, I thoroughly enjoyed the ideas being exchanged, and heard from the students involved that they did too. Thus was born the idea of a social work book group.

There are SO many books out there that discuss “social work-type” ideas – people and places and problems and pathos that we can relate to (and learn from!). I am proposing a monthly get-together, on-site and with distance technology to include any interested distance students and agency people and alumni, beginning this September.

The inaugural meeting will be Friday, September 9, from 5-6 pm. I will bring some snacks to hold people till they can get home for dinner. We will find a room somewhere in or near the library at UAA. Parking is free on Fridays at UAA.

Continues on page 16
Continued from page 15, Book Club

Since this is close to ‘9-11’, the book I would suggest is Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close by Jonathan Safran Foer, an interesting novel that takes place post 9-11 and involves a young boy’s search for his missing and presumed dead father. The following abstract describes the book: Jonathan Safran Foer, a talented young New York author tells in “Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close” the story of the extraordinary nine year old Oskar Schell, who lives with his mother and her new boyfriend in a flat in Manhattan. What is so special about Oskar is his ability to invent all kinds of stuff, his incredible imagination, and his unquenchable thirst for knowledge. He describes himself as an inventor, pacifist, atheist, scientist, and adventurer and, in addition, speaks French with passion, plays the tambourine, and designs and creates jewelry. At first he seems to be a very happy young man, but the truth is that he is incredibly sad and very unhappy. He misses his father, Thomas Schell, who died in the attack on the World Trade Center in 2001. “Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close” is a wonderful story about ups and downs in life, about how several persons handle horrible occurrences, about losing something or someone that you love, and about coming to terms with this loss.” (Retrieved from http://www.gymmurenchenstein.ch/stalder/happy_reading/gina_summary.htm)

Please come ready to discuss this book, and at this meeting, we can discuss future books and future meeting times – one suggestion would be the first Friday of each month from 3:30-4:30, or over the lunch hour. If you can’t make this first meeting but want to be involved in future meetings, please email me (janet@uaa.alaska.edu) and suggest possible times. Parking is free at UAA on Fridays.

Here is a partial list of books already suggested – there’s probably something here to interest everyone! Feel free to email me your ideas, and please join us on September 9th. The location and the call-in number for distance folks will be posted on our website (http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/socialwork/).

- History of Love
- Kids from Nowhere
- Olive Kitteridge
- Ordinary Wolves
- The Sparrow
- The UAA Book of the Year
- Unbroken
- Water for Elephants

Some of the above are fiction; some are non-fiction – ALL can be related to social work themes such as culture, poverty, aging, faith, physical/mental health, growing up, self-esteem, resilience… Please suggest your favorites, and please join us on September 9th. Open to everyone who receives this newsletter or who you choose to invite with you!

“We read to know that we are not alone.”
-C.S. Lewis

- Janet Emerman, Clinical Professor