It is my pleasure to offer my first welcome to all who are affiliated with the University of Alaska Anchorage School of Social Work. If the school’s accomplishments measure up to those faculty, students, and partners achieved this past academic year then Academic Year 2018 to 2019 will prove to be an amazing one.

Building on its great history, the school will be setting a new course of development and advancement involving collaboration, civic engagement, and engaged learning through service, activism, and interprofessional projects. Successful re-affirmation of the school’s undergraduate and graduate programs by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) in May of 2018 recognizes the considerable strengths of the school’s academic, research and service efforts, and the substantial assets students, faculty, and partners bring to making social work education an integral part of Alaska. Faculty members are preparing to advance their research, service, and teaching building on previous efforts through enduring and emerging community partnerships, innovations connecting teaching and service, leadership for innovation at local levels, and creative engagement of students in new forms of learning and diverse forms of professional development.

The school is moving into the new academic year offering a stronger child welfare core, emerging innovations in behavioral health, outreach to veterans, and new forms of community engagement, particularly in sponsoring civic dialogues, involving students in volunteer social service through a new initiative with AmeriCorps, and undertaking a range of evaluation research projects connecting the school to social work practice in its diverse forms.

The school anticipates the addition of new faculty members and the appointment of a Multicultural Post-Doctoral Fellow, a new faculty position sponsored by the UAA Provost, will strengthen our connections to diverse Alaskan communities. Growth in the school’s distance education MSW program anticipates the involvement of graduate students in their home communities through engaged pedagogy and learning, and the expansion of experiential learning, especially through on-line simulation activities. The school’s undergraduate program will offer an array of options for students who seek to concentrate in particular areas of social work practice. The addition of the National Resource Center for Alaska Native Elders (NRC-ANE) further expands the capacities of the school to involve Alaska’s elders as active members of our learning communities. The NRC-ANE is working to tap into the wisdom, expertise, and leadership of the state’s Alaska Native elders.

And, the school will be planning to build on its students’ successes. In the previous academic year, two students earned recognition by the Morris K. Udall and Stewart L. Udall Foundation for their activism addressing the needs of Alaskan Natives and for their own development as vital leaders. We are devoted to increasing the number of our students for national recognition.

Academic Year 2018 to 2019 promises to be a year of transformation of the...
Greetings from Costa Rica! My name is Isaac Winters and am taking a break with my wife between BSW graduation and starting classes in the summer for the MSW program. I am what is considered a non-traditional student, as I was an Ironworker for almost 20 years. There have been several reasons for my career change. I remember, as a youth, a strong desire to help American Indian people flourish and overcome many of the economic, social, and political struggles that have continued to be an obstacle for both American Indian and Alaska Native people.

I am Navajo (Dine’h) and had spent much of my youth growing up on the Navajo Reservation in New Mexico. The elders in my family were very active in fighting for tribal rights/social justice through governmental positions and processes. My plans to follow in their footsteps would change when my family moved to Oregon, and I would find myself working construction rather than seeking secondary education. While working in metal fabrication, I met my wife while she was attending Portland State University completing her MSW program. I not only fell in love with her, but the work she did as a social worker. After our two children had grown and moved out to go to college, we decided that I had an opportunity to seek a career that would fulfill my dreams that I had as a youth to make a difference for AI/AN people through the many career paths that Social Work could afford. An opportunity to move to Alaska was presented, and we quickly decided to make Alaska home.

Like most of the other BSW students, senior year practicum placement brought both excitement and apprehension. As my desire was to work with AI/AN populations, I was excited to be placed at Alaska Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC).

One event that I was excited to participate in was the Unalaska Community Health Fair organized by the Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association and many other community health providers that happened in early May 2018. We (ANTHC) hosted an unused/expired medication deactivation table that also gave away small, medium, large deactivation bags to those wanting to safely dispose of unwanted or out of date medications. We also provided a Question Persuade Refer (QPR) suicide prevention class for community members during the health fair. Along with health-related educational materials, we engaged youth and community members about secondary education opportunities and resources. I had some great conversations with youth and young adults while in Unalaska. Having the opportunity to go out and experience rural Alaska has put into context many of the challenges that have been discussed about providing health care in rural areas. It has also shown me the many strengths that are abundant in rural communities. I am blessed to have had this practicum placement and have been able to work with some of the most dedicated professionals in Tribal Health. As I transition to the UAA MSW program this summer, I will continue to hone and build my skills as a Social Worker and look forward to learn new ways that I may be able to serve. Ahe’hee’.
DIRECTOR’S WELCOME

Continued from page 1

school into the state of Alaska’s flagship for social work education. Increasingly diverse stakeholders recognize the many contributions the profession of social work makes in advancing the quality of life, health status, and well-being of Alaskans from all walks of life. Such engagement will add to the school’s signature as the state’s flagship school of social work.

Expect a new website in 2019, and anticipate the school’s expanded presence on social media. Friend us on Facebook. It will be an exciting year for the school and for social workers practicing across this great state. And, as in the past, we will work together in making ideas happen in practice. •

SOCIAL WORK SIMULATION OPPORTUNITIES

ALEXA FILANOWICZ, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

Faculty member Alexa Filanowicz, chair of the UAA Interprofessional Simulation Committee, is actively engaged in simulation efforts at UAA. These opportunities are coordinated with the UAA College of Health Simulation Center, whose director and staff are highly skilled in planning and facilitating simulations. While each simulation is unique, they all include students being provided with the opportunity to interact with a “standardized patient”, who is hired by the Simulation Center and trained for the role by the faculty member. This academic year, UAA BSW and MSW students engaged in both required and optional simulations, which included:

- **BSW juniors** addressing opioid misuse and activities of daily living with a client who was recovering from surgery
- **BSW seniors** partnering with UAA Nursing students to address a scenario involving interpersonal violence
- **MSW students** engaging with a client due to reported substance use. This simulation was completed via a tele-health model by using “Zoom” for the client-student interaction.

Simulations are an incredibly valuable learning tool. The School of Social Work is dedicated to continuing these efforts! •

DIALOGUES FOR PUBLIC LIFE

DR. DONNA AGUINIGA, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

The School of Social Work is a sponsor of the Dialogues for Public Life program, an initiative on campus founded in 2014 to build the capacity of the UAA campus and Alaska communities to engage in public dialogue and deliberation about social issues. Dr. Donna Aguiniga, Social Work, and Dr. Stephanie Bauer, Philosophy, created the program in 2014 after UAA was invited to participate as a member of a national learning exchange cohort with The Kettering Foundation.

Dr. Aguiniga manages the program, whose activities include in-class trainings for students, workshops on dialogue and deliberation, and partnerships with non-profit agencies to host and moderate community dialogue or deliberation events. The program also trains its community engaged student assistants (CESAs), who receive tuition assistance from the Center for Community Engagement & Learning, to plan and moderate community dialogues.

During this past academic year, Dialogues for Public Life’s activities included two free workshops open to the campus and community, a World Café in partnership with the Alaska Resilience Initiative on Child Resiliency; in-class training to students enrolled in Philosophy, Social Work, English, Anthropology, and Environmental Studies courses; financial support for community forums developed and hosted by social work students; and leadership in an interdisciplinary network that was awarded a national Campus Compact Fund for Positive Engagement Grant for AY2017-2018.

In June 2018, Dr. Aguiniga and two of the program’s CESAs, Margaret Herbert (Social Work) and Jaina Willahan (English) received support from the School of Social Work to present a workshop, **Strengthening civic engagement & advocacy skills through public dialogue & deliberation**, at the ISP Social Policy 2.0 conference in St. Louis, MO.

Students interested in becoming CESAs with the Dialogues for Public Life program should contact Dr. Aguiniga at dialogues@alaska.edu for more information. •

LEFT (L-R) STEPHANIE BAUER, CESA MARGARET HERBERT, CESA AMANDA HANSEN, AND DONNA AGUINIGA AT THE WELCOMING ANCHORAGE COMMUNITY CELEBRATION IN SEPTEMBER 2017.

BELOW CESAR MARGARET HERBERT MODERATES A WORLD CAFÉ ON CHILD RESILIENCE IN MARCH 2018.
2010

Ashley Beeman (Hice) (BSW, Fernley, NV), LSW accepted a position as Social Worker II with the St. Mary Regional Medical Center in Reno, NV. Ashley is the proud mother of John Craig “JC” Beeman who was born in 2017.

Sara Cockerham (MSW, Anchorage, AK), LCSW, OSW-C is the Manager of Cancer Resources & Navigation at Providence Alaska Medical Center. She also “successfully achieved for the fourth year in a row a specialty certification in oncology social work.”

Cory Magro (MSW, Anchorage, AK), LCSW is contracted with Elmendorf AFB as a LCSW, Embedded Provider. She clarifies “Recently signed on with a contractor for an amazing program to serve our airmen and women in Anchorage! This is a beta program designed to destigmatize behavioral health and service, which in and of itself is amazing. Further, I am embedded in a unit/squad and work with and among the airmen/women so they don’t have to come to me, I am there for them! As of this writing it is new for me and not quite off the ground yet (no pun intended), but I think I’m going to love it!”

Jennie Schroll (MSW, Chugiak, AK), LCSW became the Adoption Support Specialist for Alaska Center for Resource Families in March 2018. “In this position, I will be providing training, education and support to pre- and post-adoptive families. In November 2017, we welcomed our third child, Rylen, into our family. Our two older daughters love their new little brother. We continue to serve as Therapeutic Foster Parents and enjoy assisting our teen girls with their transition to adulthood.”

2011

Kathryn Chapman (Juneau, AK), LCSW is the State Opioid Treatment Authority for the Division of Behavioral Health, State of Alaska. “I have spent the last 7 years focusing on working with the SUD [substance use disorder] population. Much of my focus now is on medication assisted treatment and providing support to the federal grants that fund opioid treatment in our State. Through all the social work career responsibilities, I have had two babies - a 3 year old and 6 month old. My significant other has just been accepted into the UAA MSW advanced placement program and so we are soon going to be a UAA MSW Alumni family!”

Mariel St. Savage (BSW, Portland, OR) earned her MSW from Portland State University in 2015. She is currently staying at home with her 1-year-old son Andreas.

Christopher Sharpe (BSW, Des Moines, IA), LCSW, ADC earned his MSW in August 2015 through Walden University. Christopher shares “Human Behavior in the Social Environment is still a class from which informs and helps clarify my perspective. I’ve never used statistics once to date, but everyone likes to use the words “quantitative” and “qualitative”, so that was money well spent. We need to be an impact in macro policy on the community, state, and national level now more than ever. I was proud to be a Bernie Sanders delegate from Kodiak in 2016! I have fond memories of Mel Henny, Dr. Cunningham, and Tracey Burke.”

Margie Thomson (MSW, Juneau, AK), LCSW is the Coordinator of Counseling at the University of Alaska Southeast, Disability Services and Health Clinic. “I am still working at UAS (10 years+) and enjoying the students and growing program. I am also seeing private practice clients at my business, Koru Counseling, and am finding a niche of working with transgender individuals and loving the privilege of being a part of their journey.”

Mary Wagner (Sullivan) (MSW, Anchorage, AK) is a Philanthropy Officer with the Providence Alaska Foundation. Mary was married in 2017 to her best friend and is expecting her first child in 2018.

2012

Sandra DeHart-Mayor (MSW, Anchorage, AK) is a Social Service Program Officer with the State of Alaska.

Karen Kelly (MSW, Graduate Certificate in Clinical Social Work; Graduate Certificate in Children’s Mental Health, 2014, Wasilla, AK) LCSW, MAC, CDCS passed the social work clinical licensing exam in May 2018. She also shared her excitement about another happy event. “Yay!!! I’m buying my house that I love thanks to a dear friend (she knows who she is).”

Jean Kollantai (MSW, Anchorage, AK/ Tomsk, Russia) completed her fifth year as a Senior Lecturer at Tomsk State University. “I support people in publishing articles in English in international scholarly journals, teach courses on academic uses of English and publishing practices, and do a number of activities to stir up the use of English for international and intercultural communication and for actual fun. Social work skills continue to be the most important element, and people in this university city are very friendly and open.”

Katrielle Machida (Rios) (BSW, Anchorage, AK) is a Case Manager Supervisor with Catholic Social Services. She earned a Master of Public Administration degree in 2017 and had a baby boy, Zavier Eli Machida, in May 2018.

2013

Kjersti Bowen (MSW, Fairbanks, AK), LCSW is the Directing Clinician for Fairbanks Community Mental Health Services, LLC. “Community mental health has been my social work home for almost five years now, and it continues to present constant opportunities for personal learning and growth and interesting clinical work. Somatic Experiencing has captured my interest as a tool for understanding the impacts of trauma on body systems and assisting clients in their trauma recovery process, and I’m happy to be entering the second
year of certification training. I think of the MSW program with pride and my cohort members with fondness."

**Rebecca Hereford** (Muir) (MSW, Cherry Hill, NJ), LCSW is a Clinical Social Worker with DaVita.

**Stephanie Staveland** (Johnson) (MSW, Anchorage, AK), LCSW is enjoying being home with her daughter who was born in Winter 2016.

**2014**

**Betsy Chivers** (BSW, Anchorage, AK) is a Training Coordinator for the UAA Center for Human Development, Alaska Training Cooperative. “Since graduating I spent 3 years as a contract FASD Case Manager for the State of Alaska, Department of Health Social Services. I spent almost a year at South Central Foundation working as a Behavioral Health Technician working at the Quyana Club House before accepting my current position at the Alaska Training Cooperative.”

**Aisha Merced** (MSW, New York, NY), LMSW, was recently promoted to Supervisor in JCCA’s Child Success NYC program (regular foster care) after 1.5 years as a Social Worker in their Therapeutic Family Foster Care program. She has completed application requirements for the LCSW credential and is awaiting approval to take the exam.

**Charlie Morrow** (BSW, Port Angeles, WA) is pursuing a Master’s in Performance Psychology and expects to graduate in December 2018.

**Stephanie Pavlakis** (BSW, Rocklin, CA) stated that after her graduation, she and her husband were commissioned and ordained as Salvation Army Officers. “We were appointed to Roseville, California where we had our first child, Evelyn Rose, and are now expecting our second little girl due June 24.”

**Eric Salazar** (MSW, Anchorage, AK) is a Combat Readjustment Therapist for the Anchorage Vet Center.

**2015**

**Sarah Abramczyk**, (MSW) is a Protective Services Manager with the Office of Children’s Services. She shares “Will soon be celebrating 13 years at OCS. I greatly encourage anyone who likes a challenge to join our wonderful child protection team here!”

**Julia Erickson** (Miner) (BSW, Anchorage, AK) is the Family School Service Coordinator for the Anchorage School District.

**Margaret Kugzruk** (MSW, Fairbanks, AK), LMSW continues to enjoy her job and colleagues at the Fairbanks Native Association, Gateway to Recovery Withdrawal Management Services where she has worked since July 2015. “It is challenging, but also rewarding work. I recently was able to attend the Annual School of Addictions and Behavioral Health in Anchorage for the first time and learned a lot as well as met some great people working in the field of behavioral health services. I would love to connect with any of my Class of 2015 cohort. Please look me up if you come to Fairbanks. I would love to meet you for a cup of coffee!”

**Stephanie Schulling** (BSW, Eagle River, AK) continues in her position as a Guardian ad litem for the Office of Public Advocacy. “I’m coming up on my two year anniversary of advocating for the best interests of Alaska’s foster children. I’m working with around 100 children at any given time and while it’s not always easy, I can’t imagine doing anything else.”

**2016**

**Sheila Baker** (BSW, 1997; MSW, Anchorage, AK), LMSW is the Coordinator of School Social Work for the Anchorage School District. “Through a SAMHSA grant, I’m currently employed in an alternative high school as the Project AWARE Counselor (Advancing Wellness and Resilience Education) and am an instructor for YMHFA (Youth Mental Health First Aid). Additionally, I serve on the Board of Directors for the NASW-AK Chapter.”

**Devin Cress** (Johnson) (BSW, Anchorage, AK) is a Senior Manager at the Clare Swan Early Learning Center. “Life has been busy since graduation! I was married in August of 2016 to the most wonderful of men, Josh Cress, a fellow UAA Alum! We moved to Anchorage after marrying where we both continue to serve the community, me with the kiddos of the Early Head Start program that is Clare Swan and Josh at the State’s Environmental Health Lab. I am thankful for the foundation the program provided me in establishing the knowledge of Anchorage based resources and the network from which to draw from.”

**Kirsten Davis** (BSW, Anchorage, AK) is “loving the case manager life with kiddos and teens in mental health! Will be a field instructor for the upcoming school year!”

**Zhenia Peterson** (BSW, Anchorage, AK) is the Anchorage Regional Field Organizer for Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest and Hawaii.

**Joni Stamm** (MSW, Wasilla, AK), LMSW is a Social Worker for the Department of Veterans Affairs. “Since graduating with my MSW I have been working the past two years with our country’s veterans to provide mental health and case management services. I obtained my LMSW last year and plan to begin studying for my LCSW after I’ve taken advantage of Alaska’s great outdoors this summer. To all my fellow social workers: wherever you are, wherever you go, and whatever you choose to do, keep on making a beautiful difference in the lives of others.”

**2017**

**Jillian Burrows** (BSW, Anchorage, AK) is a Clinical Therapist with Providence Alaska Medical Center. She shared “I am still working at Providence Adolescent... Continued on page 13
Dr. Kathi Trawver, Associate Professor, is helping to shape how the next generation of social workers are trained to work with housing insecurity and homelessness. In Spring 2018, Dr. Trawver traveled to Washington, D.C. as one of 12 experts brought together by the Council of Social Work Education to develop a curricular guide on homelessness. This resource guide will provide specialized practice information that can help faculty better connect their students with the needs of this population and prepare students, regardless of their eventual field of practice, to provide effective services.

When asked how she became involved in this initiative, Dr. Trawver shared how her practice experiences and her desire to connect her students with the community have shaped this aspect of her career. She was never directly employed in homeless services but, as any who have worked with clients know, a lack of stable housing is a universal issue that crosses fields of practice. As a Public Guardian with the Office of Public Advocacy from 1991 to 1997, she served as a court-appointed guardian and/or conservator for adults with significant psychiatric disabilities. Dr. Trawver stated, “almost all of my clients were housing insecure or homeless and they cycled between being precariously housed, jail, API [Alaska Psychiatric Institute], or the homeless system. I could see how much housing mattered in the stability and quality of life of my clients and how not having stable housing worsened all aspects of their life.”

After she became faculty at UAA, Dr. Trawver remembered how frustrated she was trying to navigate between the silos of our social and behavioral health service systems on behalf of her homeless clients and felt that developing a one-stop shop could assist clients and social workers. She was a key figure in developing and providing evaluation for Anchorage Project Homeless Connect (PHC) in the mid-2000s, an annual event to bring providers and clients together at one place. Dr. Trawver stated, “It was a great way as a faculty to be engaged in the community and expose students to the needs of homeless services. At that time, significantly less people were interested in working with this population.”

Dr. Trawver’s efforts paid off. She shared, “Students loved it. They met clients, experienced the population in a supportive environment, and better understood their needs and challenges.” In 2008, Dr. Trawver received the Selkregg Award from the UAA Center for Community Engagement & Learning in recognition of the merit of her work with PHC. Dr. Trawver and Dr. Donna Aguiniga partnered with community homeless youth service providers to develop training and conduct the first two years of assertive unsheltered youth counts in 2014 and 2015. In 2017, Dr. Trawver provided statewide training to anyone who would be collecting data from homeless people at the PHC events that now occur in several communities across Alaska. She has been awarded three faculty mini-grants and several community engaged student assistant (CESA) positions for her work with PHC and/or the annual Point-in-Time count of homeless individuals, allowing her to better connect students with the homeless population and service providers in Anchorage.

Dr. Trawver was a founding board member of the Anchorage Coalition to End Homelessness (Anchorage’s Continuum of Care) and currently serves on the State Homeless Management Information System Advisory Board. With Dr. Travis Hedwig, Health Sciences, she has conducted Phase I of a research project identifying the needs of UAA students around housing and food insecurity and homelessness. She has published and presented nationally on homelessness issues. Currently she is serving as a co-editor of a forthcoming special issues of the Journal of Social Distress and the Homeless focused on campus housing insecurity and homelessness. It is through her efforts that the UAA School of Social Work is a partner school for The National Center for Excellence in Homeless Services, a consortium created in part to respond to the Grand Challenge of Social Work to End Homelessness.

For more information about Dr. Trawver’s research and service on homelessness, she may be contacted: krtrawver@alaska.edu.
In January 2018, the University of Alaska Anchorage School of Social Work partnered with Veteran’s PATH, a non-profit organization that provides mindfulness-based programs for military veterans, to conduct a program evaluation of their 2018 programs, provide program development assistance, and assist in writing and developing curriculum. Dr. David Moxley and Dr. Vanessa Meade will be working with Veteran’s PATH to analyze program participants’ feedback to determine program outcomes and to assist in further development and expansion of Veteran’s PATH programs. With the assistance of a Community Engaged Student Assistant, Isaac Winters, during the Fall of 2017 and Spring of 2018 semesters, data collected by Veteran’s PATH for their 2017 programs was also analyzed for program evaluation purposes.

In May 2018, The UAA School of Social Work met with James Pond, executive director, and Lee Klinger Lesser, the co-founder and program director of Veteran’s PATH, to further develop the program evaluation strategy. We are excited and honored to work with this wonderful non-profit that provides programs for our nation’s veterans and look forward to continuing the work of the program evaluation in Summer 2018 and the 2018-19 academic year.
**Donna Aguiniga**

taught for both the undergraduate and graduate programs this past academic year. During the year, she gave several presentations at national conferences, including presentations on social service utilization by homeless youth, quality assurance in distance social work education, and helping BSW students develop macro practice skills.

at the Annual Society for Social Work and Research conference in January. Donna co-authored two reports about the experiences of birth mothers and adoption professional experiences with options counseling. She also co-authored a white paper on barriers to children in foster care achieving permanency.

Donna continues her work with the Center for Community Engagement and Learning as a Program Coordinator and Faculty Fellow for the Dialogues in Public Life initiative. She and her UAA colleague Stephanie Bauer conducted a Facilitating Public Deliberation workshop as part of the UAA Urban & Rural in Alaska Conference in October. Donna and Stephanie also facilitated an event in March for the Girdwood 2020 Lecture Series.

**Mary Dallas Allen,**

Associate Professor, completed her third year as MSW Program Coordinator. As the MSW Program Coordinator, she worked closely with MSW students to create the MSW Student Coalition, whose mission is “To establish and foster connection between MSW students, the community, and future students”. Mary Dallas continues to be the faculty advisor for the Specialization in School Social Work, and the UAA LEND Program Core Faculty Member. Mary Dallas had the opportunity to present at several national conferences during the 2016-2017 academic year, including the 2016 National Research Conference on Early Care and Education in Washington DC, the 2016 Council on Social Work Education Annual Program Meeting in Atlanta, GA, and the 2017 Social Work Distance Education Conference in San Antonio, TX. Mary Dallas also attended the 2017 Network of Infant Toddler Researchers annual meeting in Washington DC.

**Dr. Tracey Burke**

has been thinking of Erik Erikson a lot this year because she has been very much in the Generativity stage professionally. In other words, she is in a relatively stable place to focus on digging deeper and doing stuff without the high drama of earlier stages of (project) development. Her collaborative work with Dr. Amanda Walch (Dietetics & Nutrition) and the Catholic Social Services pantry, and with Portland State University and various UAA colleagues, continues to mature. Her classes this year were all ones she has taught before so she has been able to refine them rather than get caught up in creating new ones. Now she has some new projects in development (hopefully, if funding works out) so this period of calm is ending. She was a finalist for the Thomas Ehrlich Civically Engaged Faculty award and was part of a panel comprised of the winner and other finalists at the national Campus Compact meeting.

**Alexa Filanowicsz**

The 2017-2018 academic year marked Alexa's sixth year with the UAA School of Social Work as a Clinical Assistant Professor and her fifth year in the role of BSW Field Education Coordinator. In these roles, Alexa teaches in both the MSW and BSW programs and also oversees the practicum component of the BSW program, as well as myriad other activities, all of which are immensely engaging and rewarding! Alexa is involved in committees both on campus and nationally; she is the current chair of the Interprofessional Simulation Committee (ISC) at UAA, as well as a member of the national Baccalaureate Program Director's Field Education Committee. Alexa also continues to be the faculty advisor for the Student Social Work Coalition (see the Coalition update for further information about this group's activities during AY17-18). With regard to the UAA Field Education Programs, Alexa was involved in hosting a training and luncheon for recent and current field partners, including field instructors and agency supervisors. This was a wonderful way to thank those of you involved in supporting UAA Social Work students in both the BSW and MSW programs. As always, Alexa would like to thank everyone who hosted, supervised, and guided practicum students this year—there was a lot of very meaningful learning taking place. Thanks again for your support and congratulations to all of the UAA Social Work graduates!
Vanessa Meade, PsyD, LCSW is an Assistant Professor in the School of Social Work. She has taught many classes in the School of Social Work, both the undergraduate and graduate programs since joining the faculty and as an adjunct from 2014-2016. She advises MSW students and enjoys meeting and talking with incoming MSW students about their academic and career goals. Vanessa is also a U.S. Army/Gulf War veteran and a former Alaska State Trooper. She has a strong interest in researching and writing about veteran’s issues and programs serving veterans.

In January 2018, in a partnership between UAA and Veteran’s PATH, a non-profit that offers mindfulness-based programs with veterans, she began conducting a program evaluation of their 2017 Anchor Programs. Also, with Dr. David Moxley, Vanessa is developing tools to conduct further program evaluation throughout 2018. In the past year, she has facilitated and participated in mindfulness-based workshops in California, Tennesee, Massachusetts, and Mexico and presented a workshop at the Annual West Coast Sensory Awareness Conference in Menlo Park, CA in June 2018. Vanessa is a qualified teacher in Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) through the Center for Mindfulness at the University of Massachusetts Medical School and is a recognized leader of a mindfulness-based practice called Sensory Awareness. She taught MBSR as an elective for health/behavioral health providers in Spring 2018 at UAA and hopes to develop it into a regular class offering through the School of Social Work. She also hopes to bring Veteran’s PATH programs to veterans in Alaska in 2018-2019.

Dr. Kathi Trawver continued to serve as program coordinator of the BSW program and directed UAA’s HRSA Behavioral Health Workforce Education and Training for Professionals grant and the National Child Welfare Workforce Initiative grant, both of which provide social work students specialized training and stipend support and build Alaska’s trained workforce. She has been leading collaborative efforts between UAA, UAF, and the Alaska Office of Children’s Services to develop a continuum of social work and interprofessional educational opportunities to further strengthen public and tribal child welfare workforce through University partnership.

Dr. Trawver has been at work on two book chapters, one on social work ethics in criminal justice practice and the other an overview of homelessness in America. Along with four other colleagues (including UAA’s Dr. Donna Aguiniga and Dr. Travis Hedwig), she has begun work as a guest editor of a special edition of the Journal of Social Distress and the Homeless. She is currently at work on several collaborative research and evaluation projects focused on mental health courts, customized employment for individuals with psychiatric disabilities, homelessness and poverty, child welfare, and rural social work practice. This spring, Dr. Trawver was one of 12 social work educators invited from across the U.S. to join a national steering committee who met in Washington DC in March 2018 to write a social work curricular guide on homelessness and housing insecurity that will be published fall 2018. Additionally, she has continued to provide professional service to the Council on Social Work Education, serving as Chair of the Disability Annual Program Meeting track and holding an appointed seat on the Council on Conferences and Faculty Development. She was just elected to serve as an undergraduate program representative on the CSWE’s national board nominating committee. Locally, she served as co-chair of the Alaska Division of Behavioral Health’s 1115 Waiver Application Project Data Team and was a member of the Alaska Statewide Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Oversight Committee.

Stephanie Vaughn, MSSW, LCSW continues as the MSW Field Coordinator. She is working on placing the MSW students and the newly admitted students for practicum. She teaches in the area of Social Work Practice and Childhood Trauma and enjoys her field seminars. Stephanie continues to explore new practicum sites for students all around Alaska and enjoys making trips to visit distant and local sites. A new project in the making will be for her practice classes, particularly practice with families and groups. Along with Dr. Moxley, she will be pursuing a virtual classroom environment to allow students to experience group and family work “in vivo” in the electronic world. More to come later, if we can get her out of the virtual world! Stephanie loves teaching and has enjoyed working with the students, faculty, and staff of the School of Social Work. Stephanie remains our resident Halloween aficionado, with additions to her office every October. The eerie sounds and candy await the unwary!
The MSW program welcomes 48 new part-time, full-time, and advanced placement MSW students from across Alaska and the lower 48. This is our third year as a fully distance-delivered MSW program. The MSW program continues our commitment to serving students in Alaska, so the distance program is only open to students living in the state.

Distance delivery brings many advantages to students living in rural and urban communities across Alaska. Students living in urban communities learn about rural social work practice from their classmates living in rural communities, while rural students learn about service delivery in the urban communities. Regardless of where students live in Alaska, all students have the option to attend the MSW program full- or part-time and the opportunity to apply for the distance-delivered Dual MSW/MPH degree.

The UAA MSW program is a leader in social work distance education. Faculty who teach MSW courses are trained in the Quality Matters standards for the design of online and blended courses. When developing and designing MSW courses, faculty collaborate with a UAA Academic Innovations and e-Learning instructional designer. For the past four years, Mary Dallas Allen, the MSW program coordinator, has attended and presented at the Social Work Distance Education Conference. In May 2018, Mary Dallas presented a paper titled, “Student-Driven Discussion Boards: Bringing the Implicit Curriculum into Distance Education Courses.” Distance education is constantly evolving and changing, and UAA MSW faculty strive to integrate new techniques and technologies into the MSW courses.

We welcome new applications for the 2019 cohort – applications are due January 15, 2019.

Students living in urban communities learn about rural social work practice from their classmates living in rural communities, while rural students learn about service delivery in the urban communities.

We welcome new applications for the 2019 cohort – applications are due January 15, 2019.

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**Staff Farewell**

**Bethany Zabala**

Bethany Zabala, Program Assistant, accepted a new position and left the School this past year. We thank Bethany for her years of service and wish her all the best in her new endeavors.

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**Faculty Spotlight**

**Recognizing Our Adjunct Faculty Members**

The School of Social Work values contributions and expertise of our adjunct faculty. Our adjunct faculty are critical in helping the School of Social Work provide quality social work education to our BSW and MSW students. We extend our thanks to each and sincerely appreciate their contributions to our School!

- Heidi Brocious
- Lisa Cauble
- Ed Ford
- Bill Galic
- Retchenda George-Bettisworth
- Phill Kaufman
- Thomas McRoberts
- Amanda Sandlin
- Jessica Ullrich

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**Find us on Facebook!**

Facebook.com/UAASSW
During the 2017-2018 year, we spent time continuing to establish the Coalition and trying to determine the best way it should run. Maggie Herbert was our student leader, while Rachel Boudreau, Sarah Holland, Brianna Aspelund, and I helped with different aspects of running the group. We surveyed students to figure out what people would like to see from the Coalition, hosted monthly meetings, moved days and times around to try and include more of our distance students, and updated our Facebook page with community activities around the state. We have also begun work on a student directory that will hopefully connect us better and help us interact with those in our own communities and with those who share our interests. Some of the social events that we did this year include a cookie decorating activity, a game night, and a doughnut and coffee social to welcome incoming MSW students and congratulate the graduates.

Sarah Holland has agreed to lead us this next year, while Bri and I will still maintain our support of the group. Bri is acting as our Anchorage faculty liaison, and we are looking for a student from outside of Anchorage to be a faculty liaison as well. We would also love for many, many more students to get involved - both those who have been in the program and those who are starting this fall! We hope to make the MSW Coalition something that will provide fun social events for students to attend, connect us through community service opportunities, and improve the program for everyone involved. We are looking forward to a new year, new opportunities, and new faces!

**SHAR MILLER**  
PROGRAM ASSISTANT

Shar Miller is the newest member of the School of Social Work administrative staff. As a vital member of the staff, Shar assists students with program applications and with event programming, including field orientations, the holiday open house, and the annual gala. Shar supports faculty and the BSW and MSW students. She is oftentimes the first point of contact in the School to answer questions as needed and directs students and community members to the appropriate staff or faculty. She states "I love working with the public and helping others find their purpose in life."

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The Student Social Work Coalition was active and engaged during the academic year and met biweekly each semester. Before the academic year even officially began, the Coalition started off the 17-18 academic year by participating in Campus Kick-Off. During the F17 semester, the Coalition hosted a game booth at the UAA Halloween Fun Night, held a hygiene product drive that benefitted homeless and at-risk youth at Alaska Youth Advocates, and took part in a community training. In the spring, the Coalition volunteered with Bean’s Café & Children’s Lunchbox, made decorations for a Volunteers of America Alaska event, and assisted with an incoming student event hosted by the College of Health. You are a dedicated group and I really enjoyed our time together this year. Best wishes to each of you!

**PRESIDENT** Amanda Nalawaja  
**VICE PRESIDENT** Brynn Byam  
**SECRETARY** Sydney Idhe  
**TREASURER** Brianna Plumb  
**CLUB COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES** April Sears and Jaquie Gonzalez  
**SOCIAL MEDIA COORDINATORS** Amanda Nalawaja, Sydney Idhe and Cassandra Turney

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The UAA School of Social Work hosted a Council on Social Work Education reaffirmation site visit in February 2018. Accreditation for both the BSW and the MSW programs was reaffirmed through 2026. Preparing for reaffirmation is a multi-year undertaking, and special thanks is given to former Director Beth Sirles, BSW Program Coordinator Kathi Trawver, and MSW Program Coordinator Mary Dallas Allen for their leadership during the process.

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The School of Social Work has brought back its annual Holiday Open House. This festive occasion is an opportunity to share good conversation and yummy food with our campus and community partners and friends. We hope you join us for this year’s event on December 14th. Look for more information this fall.
Two UAA BSW students have received national recognition by the Udall Foundation. Corrina Atkins and Eva Gregg, incoming seniors, were nominated by the University of Alaska Anchorage for the prestigious Udall Undergraduate Scholarship. This nationally competitive program was developed to support college sophomores and juniors who have demonstrated leadership and public service and who are committed to careers in Tribal public policy, health care needs of Native Americans and Alaska Natives, or the environment.

Nationwide, 437 students from 209 colleges and universities applied for one of the 50 Udall scholarships to be awarded in 2018. Eva was one of only 50 applicants to receive Honorable Mention. Eva's accomplishments were the foundation for this recognition, and Eva shared “My own accomplishments at UAA have been a direct result of lots of good people helping me along the way paired with lots of hard work and numerous sleepless nights to get quality homework turned in.”

Corrina was selected as a Udall Scholar and will attend a five-day Scholarship Orientation in Tucson, AZ in August 2018. Corrina reported she is looking forward to this conference. “This is a great opportunity to network and brainstorm ways in which we can better the lives of indigenous communities all over the country. I am eager to bring these connections and ideas back to our communities and our campus this fall.” Corrina will use the training she receives to help her complete a community-based research project on the perceptions of telehealth in rural and remote Alaskan communities in 2018-2019.

Applying for a major scholarship is a challenging process that can spur reflection about one’s accomplishments and goals. Eva shared that being nominated for the award “made me look at my choice to become a Social Worker. I realized that I am more compassionate about becoming a Social Worker than I realized and that I take this very seriously.”

Corrina noted “Becoming a Udall Scholar has really helped me to recognize and have more confidence in the ways in which my ideas have the potential to drive change…. This nomination really helped me in multiple ways, the application process provided me with the opportunity to really put my educational and career goals in perspective and I had the opportunity to focus in on one way that I could combine these passions, through research.”

The School of Social Work is proud of both students’ accomplishments. Social work students interested in learning more about major scholarship opportunities are encouraged to meet with faculty member Dr. Donna Aguiniga.

FIELD PARTNER RECOGNITION LUNCHEON

On March 30, 2018, the School of Social Work held the first Annual Recognition Luncheon to recognize and thank all of its partners in the field program. These partners from all over Alaska and all areas of social work practice fields came together for a day of recognition, good food, and a little extra training provided by Dr. Jordan Lewis, Director of the National Resource Center for Alaska Native Elders. Dr. Lewis provided Social Work Licensing contact hours for our field instructors on the topic of “Social Work and Alaskan Native Elders: Tapping into Traditional Wisdom to Advance Practice”.

As a wonderful exclamation point to the day, Alaska Native dancers from the Anchorage Northern Lights Dancers Group with Eva Gregg, social work student, thrilled the participants with displays of Alaska Native dances. Lunch was provided by Indigo Tearoom and was a delightful mid-point break in the day.

The Field Coordinators, Alexa Filanowicz and Stephanie Vaughn, want to thank everyone again for helping to make our field programs for social work students so successful. If you missed this year’s event, remember, this will be an annual event so we will look forward to seeing you next year. We couldn’t do it without you!
A SPECIAL THANK YOU

The School of Social Work would like to extend its appreciation and gratitude for the many field instructors, supervisors, and agencies who hosted our practicum students during the 2017-2018 academic year. Their commitment to social work education has helped provide our students with knowledge, skills, and values they will carry forth into their professional practice.

- Akeela, Inc., Children’s Mental Health
- Alaska Center for Pediatrics
- Alaska Children’s Trust
- Alaska Court System, Wellness Court
- Alaska Job Corps Center
- Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium
- All Alaska Pediatric Partnership, Help Me Grow Alaska
- Anchorage Community Mental Health Services, Alaska Youth Advocates / Seeds of Change
- Anchorage School District
  - Creating Successful Futures Program
  - Northwood ABC Elementary School
- AWAIC (Abused Women’s Aid in Crisis)
- Bassett US Army Medical Command, Family Advocacy Program
- Bean’s Café
- Catholic Social Services, Refugee Assistance & Immigration Services
- Co-Occurring Disorders Institute, Inc.
- Cook Inlet Tribal Council, Child and Family Resource Center
- Covenant House Alaska
- Denali Family Services
- Equine Assisted Therapy Alaska (EATA)
- Fairbanks North Star Borough School District, PASS / SMART Program
- Hope Community Resources, Inc.
- Housing Resources, Inc.
- Joint Base Elmendorf Richardson
  - Fisher House of Alaska
  - Social & Behavioral Health / VA Clinic
- Kenaitze Indian Tribe, Dena’ina Wellness Center
- LEAP Alternatives to Violence Programs
- Mat-Su Regional Medical Center
- Mount Sanford Tribal Consortium
- Office of Public Advocacy, Guardian Ad Litem
- Providence Alaska Medical Center
  - Adolescent Residential Treatment Program
  - Family Medicine Center
  - Hospice Program
  - Valdez Counseling Center
- Resource Center for Parents and Children, Stevie’s Place
- Sitka School District, Baranof Elementary School
- Southcentral Foundation, Pathway Home
- Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium, Alaska Crossings
- State of Alaska
  - Alaska Psychiatric Institute
  - Anchorage Pioneer Home
  - Lemon Creek Correctional Center
  - Office of Children’s Services
- University of Alaska Anchorage
  - Center for Community Engagement & Learning
  - Child Welfare Academy
- Volunteers of America Alaska, ARCH Program / ASSIST
- YWCA Alaska

Residential Treatment Center and I am working towards my LCSW. I will be getting married in July 2018.”

Nicole Gerritsen (MSW, Damascus, OR) CSWA, is a Primary Counselor with the Volunteers of America. “I work with inpatient adult women who have substance abuse, mental health, and criminal back grounds. I am working on my LCSW and getting my CADC license.

Jasmine Hendricks (BSW, 2016; MSW, FE WARREN AFB WY) gave birth in October 2017 to her son Dean.

Andrea Jurewicz (MSW, Queensland, Australia) is employed as a DFV Counsellor and assisted with the development of a new Domestic Violence program. Andrea is currently training in EMDR and shared “My manager, CEO, and Board Members are willing to consider my proposal of including Animal-Assisted Therapy as a supplemental therapeutic modality for our DFV program, and I will be presenting the research/benefits/policies/etc. later this year.” She is now working to become an Accredited Mental Health Social Worker (LCSW equivalent).

Laura Swanson (BSW, Palmer, AK) is an Advocate for Alaska Family Services. She works directly with women who have experienced domestic violence or sexual abuse. She states “Now, I hear directly from clients that I have made a difference in their lives.”

Leighanne Serio (MSW, Sitka, AK), LMSW is a Behavioral Health Clinician for Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium – Raven’s Way. She states “I enjoy the work and the continued learning that comes with it.”

Share your news! Send updates to: uaa.alaska.edu/socialwork/alumni/update
THE NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER FOR ALASKA NATIVE ELDERS

DR. JORDAN LEWIS

The National Resource Center for Alaska Native Elders (NRC-ANE), funded by the Administration for Community Living/Administration on Aging, and housed at the UAA School of Social Work, is committed to identifying Alaska Native Elder health and social issues. Through education, training, and technical assistance, we collaborate in the development of community-based solutions to improve the quality of life and delivery of support services to the Alaska Native Elder and caregiver populations. The NRC-ANE also serves as the focal point for developing and sharing technical information and expertise for Title VI Directors, who provide nutrition and supportive services for Alaska Natives, which has expanded to include caregiver support services. We are focusing our programs on Alzheimer’s Disease and related disorders, traditional foods and nutrition, and elder abuse in partnership with the National Indigenous Elder Justice Initiative (www.nieji.org).

NRC-ANE HOSTS WORKSHOP ABOUT ELDER ABUSE

DR. JORDAN LEWIS

The National Resource Center for Alaska Native Elders (NRC-ANE), in partnership with the National Indigenous Elder Justice Initiative, hosted a workshop to provide training, education, and national/state/tribal resources for the identification and prevention of Elder Abuse among Alaska Natives.

This free two-day training event targeted those working directly with Native Elders in urban and rural areas, including Community Health Aides, VPSOs, Ombudsman, Adult Protective Services Officers, caregivers, family members, and community members committed to the well-being of Native Elders.

The training was led by Drs. Jordan Lewis (Aleut) and Jacqueline S. Gray, Choctaw and Cherokee (Director, National Indigenous Elder Justice Initiative, University of North Dakota), the nation’s leading expert in Indigenous elder abuse and justice. Workshop sessions included: Recognizing Signs of Abuse, Legal & Policy Issues, Elder Disrespect vs Honoring Our Elders, Financial Abuse, Healthcare, Social Services, and Caregiving. Presenters included Alaskan representatives from Adult Protective Services, Elder Fraud, Medicare, Senior Disabilities Services, Kake Circle Peacemaking, and more. We will be hosting a 2nd Positive Outcomes for Alaska Native Elders training on dementia next year.

1. (L-R) SARAH MCCONNELL, JORDAN LEWIS, SHARON MCCONNELL, REV. ANNA FRANK, DON THIBEAU

2. NRC-ANE POSITIVE OUTCOMES TRAINING TOTE BAGS WITH CONFERENCE/TRAINING MATERIALS

3. SHEILA SHINN, MS, PROJECT MANAGER, NRC-ANE; ELDER LISA DOLCHOK, SCF ELDERS PROGRAM, ELDER MENTOR

YOU CAN LEARN MORE ABOUT THE NRC-ANE AT OUR WEBSITE:
HTTP://ELDERS.UAA.ALASKA.EDU
**FACULTY Welcome**

Jordan P. Lewis (Aleut from the Native Village of Naknek) is the Director of the National Resource Center for Alaska Native Elders and an Associate Professor of Medical Education with the UAA WWAMI School of Medical Education. Trained as a cross-cultural community psychologist and social worker (BSW, MSW), and a credential professional gerontologist (CPG), Dr. Lewis has worked with Alaska Native Elders for many years in numerous capacities, including federal policy in Washington, DC, state and local capacities with education and program development, and tribal health programs in 3 rural regions and 2 urban cities of Alaska.

Dr. Lewis’s research identifies characteristics that enable Alaska Native Elders to age well and become role models for their families and communities. Using the lessons and experiences of elders, Dr. Lewis develops culturally-tailored approaches for family and community members to improve the health of all generations, from long-term care programs, dementia caregiver education programs, peer-based alcohol interventions, to community-based programs to support aging in place. His research identifies characteristics that enable Alaska Native elders to age well, overcome addiction issues, and become role models for their families and communities. Using the lessons and experiences of elders in long-term recovery, he is developing culturally tailored approaches for alcohol and drug abuse disorders.

One of his research interests is exploring the role that “generativity” plays in the mental and physical health of Alaska Native elders. This term, first used in the work of Erik Erikson, refers to one generation passing on its knowledge and experience to guide the development of the next. Through his studies of Alaska Native elders, Dr. Lewis found that healthy aging in Alaska Native communities not only promoted overall individual and community well-being but also preserved traditional cultures (cultural generativity).

In his role as Director of the National Resource Center for Alaska Native Elder, housed in the UAA School of Social Work, he is responsible for developing and sharing technical information and expertise for Alaska’s Title VI Directors, caregivers, Elders, institutions, and professionals working with elders. It is his vision to develop and grow the NRC-ANE to be an Eldercentered and community-based resource center where Elders’ and communities’ voices are solicited, respected, and heard and the NRC-ANE resources meet the needs of our families, communities, and agencies while honoring and respecting cultural values, teachings, and beliefs. Jordan received his BSW from the University of Alaska Fairbanks, MSW from Washington University in St. Louis, and PhD from University of Alaska Fairbanks.

**ALASKA LEND 2017-2018**

The Alaska LEND (Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities) program has completed its seventh year of providing interdisciplinary leadership and training to family members and professionals who work with children and youth with developmental disabilities. In 2017-2018, eleven professionals from across Alaska, representing the fields of family, special education, early childhood 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.

**Leadership and Education in Neurodevelopmental and related Disabilities**

The 2018-2019 cohort of LEND Fellows will begin in Fall 2018! If you are interested in participating in LEND or applying to be a LEND fellow for the 2019-2020 cohort, please contact Mary Dallas Allen (mdallen@alaska.edu). Applications will be available in March 2019.

**STUDENT Spotlight:**

**JENNIFER SPENCER**

UAA’s Student Support Services participant and Social Work major Jennifer Spencer has been selected as a winner of the Friends of NAEOP (Northwest Association of Educational Opportunity Programs) Scholastic Achievement Award for 2018. This $1,500 scholarship is awarded annually to exceptional TRIO students who exhibit those qualities which indicate outstanding scholastic achievement through participation in a TRIO program while overcoming barriers to educational success. Nine students from the NAEOP region will be presented the awards at the annual conference in Eugene, Oregon in October, with Jennifer being the only Alaska TRIO student selected for this competitive scholarship.
SWK 331 STUDENTS PARTNER WITH LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS

Dr. Donna Aguiniga, Associate Professor

BSW students enrolled in SWK A331 Social Work Practice with Organizations and Communities complete a service learning project that allows them to acquire and demonstrate macro practice social work skills through a partnership with a non-profit agency. In Spring 2018, one section of the course was partnered with Alaska Youth Advocates (AYA), a program to support at-risk youth, while the other was partnered with the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network Alaska (ACS CAN Alaska), a non-partisan advocacy organization.

Students in each class were on one of three teams: Community Forum, Fundraiser, and Advocacy Campaign. Each team developed and implemented a project that fostered community discussion, raised funds, or increased awareness about the social issue their respective programs addresses.

1: ACS CAN Alaska Fundraiser Team coordinated a 5K Fun Run at the Eagle River VFW that raised more than $2,000 in one morning.
2: AYA Forum Team hosted a forum on how adults and youth can work together to ensure healthy development for youth.
3: ACS CAN Advocacy Team provided community outreach and education and partnered with the UAA Planetarium to offer a Night of Stars to Support the STAR Act.
4: ACS CAN Alaska Forum Team moderated a forum about how to increase survivorship and quality of life for children fighting cancer.
5: AYA Fundraiser Team held a silent auction at the Hard Rock Café, raising more than $2,000 in one evening.
6: AYA Advocacy Team provided community outreach and education, including at the Eagle River / Chugiak High School Out of the Darkness Campus Walk.
A TIME OF GROWTH & INNOVATION AT THE CHILD WELFARE ACADEMY

VANESSA VERIGIN, CWA TRAINER

If you have ever considered a career in child protection, now is the time! From the groundbreaking Alaska Tribal Child Welfare Compact to legislative support for additional Office of Children’s Services (OCS) workers, this is a time of positive change and growth for Child Welfare in Alaska.

In light of the changes, the Child Welfare Academy (CWA) has grown substantially this past year. Two additional weeks of core training are now available to new OCS workers and Tribal Partners. The learning environment at CWA is buzzing with creativity, innovation and diversity as we implement the most cutting-edge techniques to prepare a skilled and resilient child protection workforce.

Tracey Eason, Elsie Boudreau, Terrell Walker, and I are all excited to be the newest Trainers.

Tracey and Terrell bring many years of experience from the field as OCS workers, particularly in rural settings. Their expertise is invaluable for connecting classroom learning with challenging and realistic practical applications. Elsie Boudreau brings wisdom and compassion to the team with experience in child advocacy, trauma informed care and partnership with Tribal organizations. Elsie has taken on a leadership role in the effort to continue promoting the Strengthening Families initiative, especially in ways that are relevant for the people and regions of Alaska. My own prior experience includes time as an OCS Supervisor in Utqiagvik and a Crimes Against Children Investigator. I enjoy having a role in core training as well as projects ranging from forensic interview training to technical assistance for OCS and Tribal Partners.

Our team has traveled all over the state to facilitate Strengthening Families and to provide training and technical assistance to OCS field offices. CWA continues to provide the popular Coaching program to promote expertise and best practices for OCS leadership. Our Services Array continues to include Cory Bryant’s excellent work supporting Child Advocacy Centers statewide. CWA recently took on a new project to develop training in partnership Tribal Compact Co-Signers, the first topic being Diligent Relative Searches.

Valerie Dudley continues her work as an ICWA expert and Knowing Who You Are (KWYA) Certifier to expand social justice in child protection systems. She has also taken on a role developing web-based learning, a service that helps accommodate the geographic scope of the professionals we serve.

PROFESSOR PATRICK CUNNINGHAM RETIRES AFTER 30 YEARS

Professor Patrick Cunningham, a champion of policy advocacy in social work, has retired from the University of Alaska Anchorage. Professor Cunningham joined the university in August 1988 as faculty with the then Department of Social Work. He educated three decades of future Alaska social workers into the profession, with the majority of those students having Professor Cunningham instruct them in a social welfare policy class. Dr. Kathi Trawver shared “He was a huge advocate with engaging students with the legislative process and learning advocacy skills to affect change…. He cared more about policy in a real way.” Dr. Tracey Burke agreed “it [policy] wasn’t an abstraction for him,” referencing the key importance he placed on the role of social workers in understanding and advocating for social welfare policy and described Professor Cunningham’s decision to have the policy class align with the Alaska State Legislature session as “brilliant.”

Professor Cunningham’s interests ranged beyond policy to include geriatric practice, Alzheimer’s disease, and nutrition. In addition to developing and teaching an online Geriatric Social Work course, he researched and published on the benefits of a music club for residents in an assisted-living facility and, in 2016, completed an Advanced Clinical Dementia Practice Certificate through the University of Michigan School of Social Work. Other opportunities Professor Cunningham used to advance his own knowledge-base include earning a Plant Based Nutrition Certificate from the T. Colin Campbell Center for Nutrition Studies at Cornell University in 2015 and a Policy Practice Certificate from the Council on Social Work Education in 2017.

His colleagues and students wish him all the best in his retirement!

“Patrick was the last of the original group that made up the Department of Social Work when I started working here and I’m going to miss him very much. I admired his passion for the profession overall and engaging students in the classroom. I was always impressed with his continuing education pursuits, such as when he took a Mandarin-language class before a trip to China or obtained a Certificate in Plant-Based Nutrition to help improve his own and students’ eating habits. I also enjoyed hearing of his personal life like the weekend ski trips to Alyeska each winter, his family trips to Cebu in the summers, and - of course - his constant engagement with the legislature to take action that would aid Alaska’s elderly, homeless, and hungry. Patrick was a force to reckon with and I hope he realizes how much good he has done for our state, our city, and our students.”

- SHARIE FIELD, 20-YEAR COLLEAGUE OF DR. CUNNINGHAM
Congratulations
CLASS OF 2018

The UAA School of Social Work graduates 30 students from its BSW Program, which began in 1973, and 17 MSW students from the MSW Program, which graduated its first class in May 1997.

2018 BSW GRADUATES

Joshua Adams
Tina Anaya
Anna Ancheta
Yuki Batten
Samara Berg
Laurel Brady
Chelsie Bucolo Williams
Mariah Burroughs
Brynn Byam
Scott Crisp
Amanda Donnally
Victoria Fishburn
Michele Gann
Jaquelyn Gonzalez
Sydney Ihde
Nataliya Kudryn
Danielle Larson
Amey Messerschmidt
Amanda Nalewaja
Brianna Plumb
Rowena Queja
Melissa Schmitz
April Sears
Genesis Smith
Tonia Tippins
Tracey Tucker
Cassandra Turney
April Valentine
Cimmie White
Isaac Winters

2018 MSW GRADUATES

Tamara Boeckman
Rachel Boudreau
Erica Buenger
Kameron Daniels
Margaret Herbert
Rachel Higgins
Robyn Howlett
Amber Latham
Shannon Major
Tiara McDougal
Eli Michael
Mariah Miller
Brook Pigg
Vanessa Shannon
Alesya Sinyawski
Christina Sumey
Christine Walters
The May 4th School of Social Work Gala was the kick-off to a weekend of celebration, followed by the Master’s Hooding Ceremony on May 5th and Commencement Ceremony on May 6th. Isaac Winters, BSW cohort, and Margaret Herbert, MSW cohort, were selected by their peers to share their thoughts about their education and what the future may hold for the new social work professionals as this portion of their academic careers came to a close.
Social Work at UAA has come a long way since we hired our first faculty in 1973. As of Spring 2017, the School has awarded over 2,000 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 http://greenandgold.uaa.alaska.edu/give/ 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 EMERITA