Summer Study in Hong Kong & China

The international travel study program proved to be an excellent educational and experiential learning opportunity for the GCSW students enrolled in the summer elective course, Globalization and Social Development in Hong Kong/China. The two-week travel course included visits to Hong Kong and Mainland China and provided much more than a three hour elective credit for participants. The student delegation, led by Jan Leger, Amber Mollhagen and Ann Liberman were accompanied at the ICSD Conference in Hong Kong by Dean Colby, Dr. Patrick Leung, Dr. Monit Cheung and five UH GCSW doctoral student conference presenters. The 30 member group comprised the largest university-led delegation at the conference.

The first week was spent in Hong Kong participating in The 15th ICSD Symposium, Seeking Harmony and Promoting Social Development in a World of Conflict, held at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University. In this capacity, students explored issues, challenges and solutions to global and social development by participating in a dynamic conference, fueled by internationally renowned speakers. A high point was the opportunity to visit selected social service agencies in Hong Kong; this provided a basis for comparison of systems utilized in the United States. Tours included site visits to mental health agencies, urban renewal initiatives, as well as programs serving the elderly, adults and youth.

Sightseeing and cultural exposure to Hong Kong and China were integral parts of the journey. Exploring the markets in Hong Kong, enjoying scenic views from Victoria Peak, traveling by sampan at Aberdeen Fishing Village, feasting on elaborate traditional Chinese dishes, are but a few unforgettable experiences.

The UH delegation joined the post conference tour of Mainland China and had the pleasure of traveling with 22 additional ICSD conference participants in exploring Beijing, Xian and Guilin.

Time and time again, people ask what the most impressive part of the journey was. In truth, it was meeting fellow social work professionals from all over the world, committed to their passions, sharing insights and foresights, and experiencing the Asian culture first hand; add to that the incredibly long history that appears before your eyes simply walking down the walls of the Forbidden City, The Great Wall and the Museum of the Terracotta Warriors, and it creates an indelible memory. Having walked hand in hand with agency professionals in Hong Kong has made the world a smaller place. Witnessing first-hand the determination and commitment social workers have to helping people near and far, taking in the many wonders of the world, while strengthening ties to our friends abroad, are lasting memories of an incredible travel adventure.

Ann Liberman
The new curriculum is finally in place and all of us are experiencing the “highs” and “lows” of trying out something new. Students and faculty alike are embracing the new curriculum, though at times we faculty probably wish for the “old familiar curriculum” — we knew what to expect, what to teach, and how to assess our students. But the unease with the new curriculum should not surprise anyone — implementing a new program that has never been tried out before, anywhere, is risky. But, if we are to be a relevant educational partner, change is necessary and with that goes the risk of the unknown.

Recently, I have found that my teaching approach is now very different even though I am holding on to a few tasks from the old curriculum. For years I have begun each policy class with a discussion of “what’s in the news.” The discussions broaden our understanding of community and world issues while helping us to clearly articulate problems in front of a group.

In the past few weeks, however, the opening news discussion items have been disturbing, but they speak to the heart of the profession. The demonstrations and violence in Myanmar; the tens of thousands of people who marched in Jena, Louisiana to protest the lack of equitable justice over hate crimes; the racist comments made by talk show host Bill O’Reilly; and the sexual harassment conviction of New York Knick’s basketball coach Isaiah Thomas all serve as examples. The students felt and expressed anger, dismay, and disappointment. Not one said, “oh well, that’s just the way it is,” nor would we expect a GCSW student to hold that perspective.

Since the beginnings of the social work profession in the mid 19th century, the promotion of justice has been and remains central in our work. So, what do we do when there is hate among us that continues to divide rather then unite us? We must continue to stand up and confront such injustice. As Martin Luther King, Jr. said, “History will have to record that the greatest tragedy of this period of social transition was not the strident clamor of the bad people, but the appalling silence of the good people.”

To be honest, I left classes this week feeling a bit more optimistic after listening to the students discuss these and other issues. While they struggle trying to balance their coursework, field internships, assignments, family life, and work, I also see a growing understanding and recognition to their profession’s responsibility towards justice.

But this should not come as a surprise to you, because you too were there in these very same seats. You struggled with a similar balancing act. And today, our community is in a much better place because of you, the GCSW alumni.
EXCELLENCE in Action

The David M. Underwood (DMU) Chapter of the American Humanics Non-profit Certificate Program, the only program serving undergraduates at the GCSW, experienced one of its most successful years since its founding in 1993. While it has consistently exceeded expectations in turning out well-prepared professionals for the Houston non-profit community, the 2006-07 academic year was filled with events and milestones that solidified its reputation for EXCELLENCE.

In January, the DMU Chapter of American Humanics at the University of Houston was awarded the national 2007 Program Excellence Award. This honor is presented to just one AH program in the country each year that exceeds the national standards of academic and experiential programming required for students to earn certification. The award is the culmination of 14 years of hard work on behalf of our students, alumni and local non-profit partners. Joining the AH students in Washington D.C. to receive the award were Dr. Ira Colby, Dean of the Graduate College of Social Work; Ann McFarland, Director, Office of Community Projects; founding AH Community Council Chair Gary Nichols and his wife SueAnn; and Executive Vice President for Junior Achievement of Southeast Texas and current Community Council Chair, Wayne Norden. Also joining the group was D.C. based AH Alum, Yvonne Dawson.

In the fall semester, the American Humanics Student Association raised nearly $30,000 to send 29 students to the Institute. The AH Student Association was able to accomplish this through corporate ask and letter-writing campaigns, the annual “Alumni Phone-a-thon,” product sales, and a garage sale.

At the Annual Recognition Dinner on May 10th, the DMU chapter was presented with a generous gift of $350,000 by the Board of Directors of Hope Center Youth & Family Services. This contribution will be added to current endowment funds and will be used to support AH students in internships at area non-profit organizations and to provide scholarships to AH students entering the Graduate College of Social Work.

The DMU Chapter certified its 200th graduate at the May dinner! 15 students and two summer candidates were honored during the evening of which 12 were recognized for having found employment in non-profit organizations and/or for plans to enter the GCSW in the fall. The graduates included Whitney Arp (YES Preparatory Academy), Sherry Bernard (YMCA, GCSW fall 2007), Guadalupe Bravo, Lauren Bryce (Bering Omega Community Svcs.), Govinda Gonzalez (summer candidate), Alicia Hicks (American Red Cross), Melissa Houser (Sheltering Arms), Yvonne Meza (AVANCE), Madalena Nguyen, Shelly Pleasant (Westlake Child Dev. Ctr.), Adriana Sanchez, Megan Sharp, (AH G.A., GCSW fall 2007), Flor Sifuentes (AVANCE), Nicole Standley (South Houston ISD), Chrystal Thornton (I Have a Dream), Tuan Tran (summer candidate), Natasha Wade (Houston Hope).

Each year, the DMU Chapter awards two scholarships: The Gary Nichols Scholarship for Leadership and Service and The Flanakin American Humanics Scholarship. Veralisa Hunter was named Nichols Scholar. Sherry Bernard and Megan Sharp, both attending the GCSW in the fall, were named Flanakin Scholars. Veralisa Hunter is also the recipient of a national AH, Inc. academic scholarship.

Through a generous grant from, and in collaboration with, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, American Humanics, Inc. will be awarding over $4 million dollars to our “Next Generation Leaders” over the next 5 years in the form of internship stipends. This effort is the first step in a long-term plan to assist and encourage college students to consider non-profit careers and to engage national and local non-profits as partners in this goal.

In the first selection of NextGen Leaders, four students from the DMU chapter were awarded $4,500 each. DMU Chapter NextGen Leaders and their internship sites are: Heidi Alaswad (Junior Achievement), Sherry Bernard (YMCA M.D. Anderson Branch), Veralisa Hunter (LISC), and Chrystal Thornton (I Have a Dream).
Austin Internships

My Experience at the NASW/Texas Chapter

The spring semester of 2007 is one that I will always remember. As a graduate student at UH in the political concentration, I was provided with an opportunity to spend five months working in Austin during the 80th Legislative Session. I was fortunate to obtain an internship with the National Association of Social Workers Texas Chapter, where I worked directly with Carol Miller LMSW, who is the Government Relations Coordinator for the chapter. The semester provided me with vast knowledge of the Legislative Process, Texas politics, and how these processes affect the development of public policy. While under Ms. Miller's supervision, I worked with established coalitions, tracked active legislation pertaining to our aging population, and attended Senate and House Committee meetings and Legislative sessions. In addition, I researched and tracked several key aging bills and provided written testimony on behalf of the NASW membership. I was able to develop and author monthly articles for the NASW Network providing the NASW membership with information pertaining to legislative issues that directly affected the aging population.

My experience with the NASW has provided me with the confidence and tools to advocate on behalf of my clients. One of the most important things I learned during this Legislative Session is that in order to be an effective advocate you must be willing to compromise and work with both political parties. As a Legislative Intern with NASW, I was given many opportunities to advocate and lobby for and against public policy. Most importantly, I discovered that many people are not familiar with the political process, nor do they understand that sometimes changing and/or creating policy can be a slow and deliberate process.

Although several of the bills I tracked during the session did not make it out of committee, I had a valuable learning experience. Having the opportunity to watch the political process develop, honing lobbying skills, communicating with Senators and Representatives as well as their staff members, tracking aging legislation, and providing written testimony, are experiences that have left me with the knowledge and skills that I could never have acquired from text books. I will never be able to articulate just how much I gained from my NASW Texas placement.

By Janice Dykes
May 2007, Galway, Ireland marked the Nobel Women’s Initiative First International Women’s Conference: Women Redefining Peace in the Middle East & Beyond. The NWI Conference was a culmination of the efforts of students, interns, and staff who produced the event across the Atlantic Ocean. Organizing student interns from the GCSW included Melanie Fisk, Shannon Fyfe, Jessica Hayman, Saralyn McIver and Nancy Wade-Norwood. The NWI’s First International Conference brought together over 80 women’s rights activists from 30 countries with the purpose of advancing peace through an integrative approach to understanding the private and public dimensions of violence against women.

The Nobel Women’s Initiative was formed in 2006 by sister Nobel Peace Laureates Jody Williams, Shirin Ebadi, Wangari Maathai, Rigoberta Menchu Tum, Betty Williams and Mairead Corrigan Maguire. Recognizing the awesome responsibility of receiving such an honor, the six women banded together to support, strengthen and bring recognition to the important work of women’s rights advocates around the world. The mission of NWI is to address and prevent the root causes of violence by spotlighting and promoting the efforts of women’s rights activists, researchers and organizations working to advance peace, justice and equality.

In speaking with Melanie Fisk, an intern of the Nobel Women’s Initiative, and colleague, I thought about how truly impressive her internship must have been. She elaborated on the various procedural, and very detailed steps that went into bringing 80 women’s rights activists to Galway, Ireland. It was in this capacity that Melanie describes what transpired during the course of her internship. “In looking at the ongoing communications and passports, I realized that this was everything that I had learned about in policy – this is the geopolitical context of women’s rights, women’s lives. When two women because of their country’s policies cannot come together, or when one woman cannot travel out of her country to advance the work of peace and solidarity – that is powerful. That is our reality.”

The NWI Conference gave impetus to emerging peace campaigns and provided momentum for active campaigns, with the Stop the Iraqi Oil Law serving as an example. The Nobel Laureates collectively signed a declaration in opposition to the Iraq Oil Law. This law would make reconstruction aide contingent to its passage. Since the vision of the NWI Conference was to bridge the gap and connect activists to one another with the intention of addressing the broader goal of global justice, it is not a surprise that this declaration, among others came to fruition.

When asked about what she gleaned from the NWI Conference, Melanie’s eyes gloss over and she describes the last evening in Galway. “It was amazing. The last night we shared music and danced like never before. Here you have someone playing techno music from India, followed by Turkish music and dance. It was cathartic.” In reflecting back on her internship, Melanie says, “I learned that yes, I am but one small piece of this broader struggle for social justice, but I am also that much stronger, and not so small.”

Isabel Hilton wrote, “Peace-building is patient, exacting, unglamorous, long-term work, whose footsoldiers are often women - the opposite of the shock and awe of modern war.” It is the work of everyone committed to justice to toil endlessly over the seemingly small and, in the end, not-so-small tasks that comprise our work for global justice – that is what social workers do.

For more information about the Nobel Women’s Initiative and the NWI First International Conference visit the website: www.nobelwomensinitiative.org/home.php

By Nadia Kalinchuk
Welcome New GCSW Faculty

Dr. Charles Kaplan

Dr. Charles Kaplan joined the GCSW faculty this fall as Research Professor and Associate Dean of Research. He served as Research Professor and Director of International Programming with ODSPR for five years prior to his recent appointment. The majority of Dr. Kaplan’s impressive career has been in Europe where he directed drug abuse research on both European and international scales. While at Maastricht University his research expanded into social networks and psychiatric social work, HIV/AIDS, children in difficult circumstances, and continued in drug abuse. Among numerous US faculty affiliations, an appointment with the Hispanic Research Institute at University of Texas San Antonio brought Dr. Kaplan to Texas.

Dr. Kaplan believes that social work research will play a leading role in future advancement of knowledge, development of policy, design of interventions and the implementation of comprehensive services for vulnerable populations affected by today’s massive social changes. He is passionate in his belief that social work’s future leadership role, formed by its unique social scientific perspective, will inspire multi-disciplinary efforts to deliver basic and applied research that informs social change and advances communities.

Dr. Kaplan’s professional commitment is to contribute to this process through the organization of multidisciplinary research clusters in which social work faculty and graduate students can exert leadership in obtaining research grants, author high-impact publications and offer their knowledge and expertise in consultations to governments, business and community-based organizations. Welcome Dr. Kaplan to the GCSW!

Dr. Patrick Bordnick

Dr. Patrick Bordnick joined the faculty at the GCSW as Associate Professor in the fall of 2007. He brings over fifteen years experience in clinical and laboratory research on cocaine, alcohol, amphetamine, and nicotine addiction to the college. Dr. Bordnick’s experience includes clinical medication trials, treatment development, human laboratory studies, and data collection/database management.

In 1999, Dr. Bordnick developed a real-time computerized data collection program for assessing alcohol craving and use in the natural environment. Since 2002, Dr. Bordnick has been developing interactive virtual reality (VR) teaching tools and assessment systems in collaboration with Virtually Better, Inc. He has led the charge to develop and test virtual reality assessment systems for nicotine, alcohol, and cannabis abuse and dependence. His current studies include: virtual reality coping skills treatment for nicotine dependence, PTSD research using VR, and VR cue reactivity assessment of craving for alcohol and nicotine dependence. Dr. Bordnick has been funded as a research fellow by NIDA and has individual grants for nicotine, alcohol, and cannabis studies. He has been co-researcher on many NIH funded projects and has had numerous state and privately funded projects on drug abuse and dependence. To view his virtual research website, go to: web.mac.com/bordnick/VRCRC/Welcome.html.

Dr. Bordnick received an international award in 2004 for outstanding scientific merit in VR drug abuse research from the Canada Chair in CyberPsychology. We welcome Dr. Bordnick, one of the foremost experts in the world on virtual reality cue reactivity, to the GCSW.

Dr. Gerson David, Professor Emeritus and Founding Faculty Member Retires

After 39 years of dedicated service to the University of Houston and the Graduate College of Social Work, Dr. David has retired and has returned to India to live.

Dr. David’s awards, accomplishments and connections with students, faculty and social work professionals throughout the world are extensive. Throughout his tenure, Dr. David strived vigorously to clarify the mission of the GCSW, purpose and values aimed at realizing social justice, political participation and economic well-being for all people who comprise the diversity that is the very essence of our nation’s strength. His many contributions to the GCSW will forever remain with all of us.

From all of us at the GCSW, the best to you always, Dr. David.
**FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS**

**Andrew Achenbaum**, Professor of History and Social Work, has been selected as a “Fellow of the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education.”


Dr. Cheung delivered the following presentations: “Therapeutic games and guided imagery: Tools for professionals working with children and families,” Title IV-E Roundtable Conference, San Marcos, Texas (June 2007); “Play Therapy with Asian children,” *Asian American Family Services*, Houston, Texas (February 2007); “Training the-trainer certification programme on child protection special investigation,” Hong Kong Government Social Welfare Department and Hong Kong Police Force, Hong Kong (January 2007).


Dr. Connell-Carrick delivered the following presentation: “Methamphetamine and the challenge for families: What child welfare workers need to know,” 17th Annual Family Preservation Conference, San Antonio, Texas (October 2006).


Dr. Karger will be on leave, from fall 2007 to spring 2008, heading the School of Social Work and Applied Human Sciences at the University of Queensland in Brisbane, Australia. He has also been appointed to the Sage Editorial Board for Human Services.

**Jean Latting**, Professor, has been nominated for the National Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi. Only six University of Houston faculty members were selected to join the University’s Chapter this year.

**Patrick Leung**, Professor of Social Work, was appointed Coordinator of the Office of International Social Work Education at the University of Houston, Graduate College of Social Work. Dr. Leung also received a three-year appointment as Honorary Professor at Hong Kong Polytechnic University.

**Susan Robbins**, Associate Professor, serves as Executive Board Member, American Board of Forensic Social Workers, and Commission Member, The Commission of Forensic Education, The American College of Forensic Examiners Institute of Forensic Science.


Presentations included: “Honoring our elders: Let them have work!” Yom Limmud – A Day of Learning, Jewish Federation of Greater Houston, Houston, Texas (January 2007); “Meeting the needs of Hispanic Elders and their aging families, with implications for ‘peer pairing’,” *Annual Meeting and Educational Leadership Conference of the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education*, Portland, Oregon (March 2007).

Alumni/Student Medical Mission to Mexico

While attending a luncheon in November 2006, I suddenly found myself engaged in an energizing conversation with a woman named Janis Parsley, which led me to do what I have always dreamt of doing—International Social Work. Three months later, I embarked on my first weekend medical mission to provide aid to impoverished families in Mexico who live in unimaginable conditions. Ms. Janis Parsley, R Ph, MBA, Executive Director of Constituent Development at UH, is the coordinator of the Mexico Medical Missions through Christ United Methodist Church, a group of medical, dental, pharmacy, veterinary professionals and students, who travel four times a year to Reynosa, Mexico.

During the mission, I voiced a strong conviction about the need to include additional mental health professionals as part of interdisciplinary travel teams. Over the past five years, mission teams have worked in tents, under trees, in churches, and out of the backs of vans to provide needed services. The missions serve up to 500 individuals during each trip, mostly women and children.

As an alumni of the Graduate College of Social Work, I connected with the college and its alumni organization as a means to recruit bilingual graduate social work students. The mission allows for students to learn about the effects of abject poverty and civic/global responsibilities that reach far beyond the scope of the typical field education experience. My husband, Dr. Jack Chuang, Psychology Professor, also an alumnus and I, recruited three bilingual undergraduate students and one MSW student for the trip this past June. In October 2007, we will return to Mexico, hopefully with more bilingual social work students to enhance the mental health team component. We hope to provide basic psychosocial education, care and support during the visits. Our future goal is to expand our work beyond Mexico and to travel to other parts of the world working for a Non-Governmental Organization.

The Mexico Medical Missions group requests ongoing donations of personal hygiene items, learning toys and Spanish children’s books to distribute during future missions. To learn more or to donate items, contact Aye Khaine, LCSW at travels67@gmail.com.

Aye Khaine currently oversees three programs at Catholic Charities, including: Services to the Alone and Frail Elderly (SAFE), a case management program aiding seniors to age in place for as long as it is safe to do so; AIDS Ministry, providing supportive and case management services to HIV/AIDS clients; and Serenity House, temporary affordable housing for family and patients being treated in the medical center, particularly cancer patients.

Aye Khaine, LCSW
GCSW Alumna ’97

Congratulations GCSW Alumni Association on receiving the 2006-07 Houston Alumni Association Gold Banner Award!
Capturing the Moments

Black Alumni Members (BAM) Social
The first GCSW Black Alumni Members (BAM) social was held on August 30th at the Ensemble Theatre. The social hour was complimented by a scene performed by the Ensemble Theatre actors, and the formal evening program followed. The evening social was spearheaded by the BAM Planning Committee which included: Sondra Malry (Event Chair), Kenneth Beason, Byron Parker, Dymisha Richardson, Pamela Boveland, Othea McCoy, Needha Boute-Queen and Jennifer Herring. Dr. Jean Latting, who was in attendance, commented that she looks forward to working with BAM and stated, “This gathering was a wonderful launch of the Black Alumni Association. Participants talked about various ways they might network among themselves and contribute to the GCSW, particularly as mentors to black students.”

For information on Black Alumni Members (BAM) or to become a part of future BAM events, email: gcsw.bam@netzero.net

Upcoming GCSW Alumni Events

Back to School Again @ the GCSW
Looking for a great opportunity to connect with past school friends? Then Back to School Again @ the GCSW, in celebration of the University of Houston’s 80th Anniversary, is just the event for YOU! Join us on Saturday, November 10th for a memorable day of educational stimulation, networking with fellow alumni and faculty, great food and best of all CEUs. (Don’t worry, no exams will be given!) The event will be held at the Graduate College of Social Work from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. The event and CEUs are free for GCSW alumni members with a $10.00 charge for CEUs for non-members and guests. For information and RSVPs, contact Ann Liberman 713-743-8071 or aliberman@uh.edu.
As Director of Alumni and Career Services for the GCSW, I have the extraordinary opportunity to cross paths with many of our alumni.

Since the last issue of the newsletter, I have seen the efforts and dedication of the GCSW Alumni Board. Their tireless work in planning and implementing programs and activities to meet the social work community’s needs, is truly a benefit to us all. From co-sponsoring the GCSW PhD Symposium, to co-sponsoring Latino Education Day with the Hispanic Student Association as well as providing outreach to current MSW students, the GCSW Alumni Board is awesome, and a critical asset to the outstanding reputation the GCSW holds in the community!

Thank you Sara Lewis, Dee Dee Parker-Wright, Will Dickey, Wendy McWilliams, Shannon Bishop, Julie Cole, Cindy Gibson, Jan Leger, Adrienne LeGendre, Gene Gundersen, Shayna Taibel, Shiba Crayton, Brigitte Zabak, Michael Roberts, Barbara McGinity, Nancy Jane Otto, Cindy Reibenstein, and Josh Reynolds.

I have also had the first-hand pleasure of witnessing the enthusiasm and support of a newly identified Alumni Leadership Group. The group, composed of CEOs and top agency administration, wants to become more involved in shaping the professional development of our future graduates in leadership positions within agencies. Thank you Betsy Schwartz, Paula Paust, Cynthia Briggs, Bobby English, Candie Twyman, Chuck Childress, Laurie Glaze, Carrie Moffitt, Mel Taylor, Lee Wunch, Dexter Phillip, Shed Boren, Russell Smith and Raymond Denson for the important roles you play in the community and in your student mentorship capacities.

It is an honor to meet a social work practitioner in the community only to discover that he/she is an alumnus of the GCSW. As I discover the GCSW connection with many of you who are in the field providing vital services, I feel especially proud to be a part of the GCSW. Thank you for the incredible work you are doing!

Judith Mitchell ('76) is a practicing clinical social worker at the University of Texas Counseling and Mental Health Center and is in private practice in the Austin area.

Julie Piopert Oudin ('84) is the Preschool Principal of the Beth Yeshurun Day School.

Ellen Seaton ('90) has been named Deputy Director of the Social Services Division for the Harris County Community and Economic Development Department. She has served as the dedicated chair of the AGIFT Consortium for several years, as an adjunct professor for the college, and is a tireless alumni supporter.

Fiona Stephenson Remko ('99) is the Program Director of the Fort Bend Children's Advocacy Center and a contract trainer for Children's Advocacy Centers of Texas where she has been employed for the past four years. She was married last year and has taken Remko as her last name.

Karen O’Connell Taylor ('01) has recently received her LCSW. She reports that she has accepted a part-time position with Continuum Healthcare as a result of seeing the posting on the GCSW website.

Annemarie Redelmeier ('02) lives in Austin during the Fall and Spring semesters and returns to Houston during the summers while working on her PhD. She will be presenting at the Association of Oncology Social Work with Patti Aldredge on “The GLBT Community and Cancer Care.”

Jill Smith ('02) is a Program Manager at Any Baby Can in Austin and husband Russell Smith ('97) is Executive Director for Youth Launch. It was great to see the relocated Houstonians at the spring Austin GCSW Happy Hour.

Margarita Nanez ('03) worked at TIRR for almost 3 years after graduation. She has been with the VA one year now working in inpatient social work with the medicine care line. Her connections to the VA are stong since her dad is a veteran and she had served as a social work intern at the hospital.

Julie Cole ('04) and husband Mike, have moved to Nashville where they recently bought a home. Mike began graduate school in August and Julie accepted a position as a Care Manager with Long Term Care Group, Inc. Julie boasts that she can wear jeans everyday and is excited to be working in geriatrics.

Pam Ostaszewski ('06) has been working as a therapist at the Children’s Assessment Center since graduating from the GCSW last spring. She recently announced her engagement to be married. Congratulations Pam!

Toni Franciosi ('07) was awarded the Baylor Psychiatry Clinical Fellowship for 2007-08 to further her clinical experience in an out-patient practice setting.

Leah Peavy, Xue Yang, Kacie Liput (all from the class of '07) were awarded Menninger Fellowships for the coming year which provide post graduate clinical training in an in-patient psychiatric environment.

Christine Reyes ('07) accepted the position of Director of Camps, Counseling and Case Management with United Cerebral Palsy of Greater Houston where she oversees day camp, overnight camp and play group opportunities. She provides counseling and case management for children with disabilities and their families.

Grant Schafer ('07) moved to Leesburg, Virginia after graduation. He was offered a position with Loudoun Abused Women's Shelter as a Violence Prevention Educator where he is responsible for facilitating violence prevention, anti-bullying and sexual assault prevention education to middle and high schools in the Loudoun Public School District and the county juvenile detention center.
The 2007 GCSW Alumni Annual Meeting was hosted by Village Park of Tanglewood, a Brookdale Senior Living Community, on August 22\textsuperscript{nd}. The evening began with a wine reception, complete with a jazz band and silent auction in support of the alumni scholarship fund. The reception was followed by dinner and a featured presentation, “Leadership and Vision, Creating and Sharing a Vision.” The special occasion marked the 10\textsuperscript{th} Anniversary of the Charlotte Campbell Scholarship Award.

This year’s speaker was our very own alumna, Paula Paust, Executive Director of The Women’s Home. Paula has been a leader in Houston’s hospice movement and a devoted advocate for women’s mental health. A 1979 graduate of the GCSW, Paula began a grassroots hospice movement, which led to the establishment of Houston’s first, now The Hospice located at the Texas Medical Center. During her presentation, Paula inspired the alumni audience with her discussion of “The Ten Commitments of Leadership.” Throughout her passionate delivery, she encouraged all to challenge the process, inspire a shared vision, and to enable others to act, while modeling the way.

A special highlight was the celebration and recognition of the 10\textsuperscript{th} Anniversary of the Charlotte Campbell Scholarship Award. Charlotte Campbell and previous scholarship award winners were recognized and honored. Recipients included Felicia Martin-Humphery, Dana Smith, Shannon Howe, Michael Roberts, Paola Rolden, Marki McMillan, Nancy Jane Otto, Maria Rodriguez-Crake, and Jennifer Provencher. The GCSW Alumni Association awards the $500 scholarship annually to a second-year student. Originally established in honor of Charlotte Campbell upon her retirement from the GCSW after over 20 years of service, the Charlotte Campbell Scholarship is a source of pride among alumni, faculty and staff. The Annual Silent Auction helps to raise funds for the Charlotte Campbell Scholarship Fund. As a result of this year’s auction, we are pleased to announce that the $10,000 goal, which will allow for the endowment of the scholarship, was reached! Thank you to all auction donors and purchasers who helped us reach this milestone! We hope you will continue to contribute to the scholarship fund as we strive to reach our next goal of $20,000. We anxiously look forward to the day that the endowment can support a $1000 scholarship to future deserving student recipients.

The evening included GCSW updates given by Dean Ira Colby, the election of GCSW Alumni Association officers and new board members. The 2007-08 Board of Directors includes: Sara Lewis (President), Dee Dee Parker-Wright (Vice-President), Barbara McGinity (HAO Council Representative/Past President), Shiba Crayton (Secretary/Historian), Shayna Taibel (Treasurer) with Demori Driver, Gene Gundersen, Adrienne LeGendre, Allison Lipnick, Demetri Lopez, Malikah Marrus, Nancy Jane Otto, Suki Panju, Josh Reynolds, Michael Roberts, Kay Schiller, Josephine Tittsworth, Micaela Vergara and Brigitte Zabak, serving as Directors.

Special thanks to our sponsor, Brookdale Senior Living, for making this year’s annual meeting such a success!
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Connections is a semi-annual publication of the GCSW Office of Alumni and Career Services. Its purpose is to link the GCSW with alumni and the social work community.

Connections can be accessed online at www.sw.uh.edu/alumni/newsletter.htm

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

R. J. DeBottis Lecture
November 6
Dr. Carmen Escalante
Hearthstone at Braeswood
5:15-8:30

Back to School Again
@ the GCSW
2007 Homecoming
November 10
8:30-2:00

PeaceJam 2008
March 29-30
Betty Williams
Nobel Laureate