In November 2003, and again in May 2004, GSSW students, faculty and staff had the incredible hands-on experience of studying cross-cultural child welfare issues in Hong Kong and China through a GSSW travel study course offering. The opportunity arose through an academic exchange agreement with the Department of Applied Social Studies at City University of Hong Kong. The agreement has been in place for three years and enables City University to send four third-year students to the GSSW's MSW program where the students complete course work at the GSSW and receive the bachelor's degree from City University. A number of the exchange students elect to remain in the United States and go through the graduate admissions process in order to pursue the MSW at UH. In return, a 17-member delegation from UH visited Hong Kong and China through the graduate course Child Welfare Policies and Practices in China and the United States this Fall and again in Spring of 2004.

Initially postponed due to the SARS outbreak, the trip was so well received in November 2003, when led by Dr. Monit Cheung, that it was repeated in Spring 2004, led by Dr. Patrick Leung. Dean Colby participated in the travel course and summarizes the experience by saying, “The arrangement provided opportunities for both students and faculty to interact and learn from each other. We learn globally and practice locally.”

Sheryl Stanley, a student participant, shares her experiences with us through her own journal records. “My first impression, a continuing one, was how very welcome and safe and ‘cared for’ we felt during our entire stay. Three things struck me about Chinese culture. One was about food. I noticed that breakfast and lunch there were quite similar and that course after course of delicious food just kept coming at each meal!” Sheryl continues with the observation, “In Shanghai, the Chinese do not heat their buildings. Child care agencies, elder homes, and universities that we visited were as cold as the outdoors (about 40 degrees). It was something to see students and instructors in their coats conducting classes!”

Additional impressions were that Sheryl rarely felt that she was in a Communist or politically repressed country. “The Chinese seem to have taken to capitalism wholeheartedly.” She continues, stating, “We saw everything from child welfare and elder homes, to law courts to temples and amusement parks. The trip to the top of Victoria Peak in Hong Kong was one of the most spectacular experiences of my life—the combination of natural and manmade grandeur was singular.” Of the many places visited, Shanghai was her favorite. “The Bund, the old European section of town with one bank looking like Nice in the Mediterranean and the other a fitting home for a Star Wars segment with the Oriental Pearl Tower and its futuristic buildings.”

The two-week tour included visits to Hong Kong, Shenzhen, Shanghai and Beijing, China. It included learning, teaching, cultural exchanges, historical intake, food, touring, shopping and the ultimate experience of a lifetime. For future study abroad opportunities, contact Dr. Patrick Leung at pleung@uh.edu or Dr. Monit Cheung at mcheung@uh.edu.
A MESSAGE FROM DEAN COLBY

The latest chapter in the life of the GSSW is now coming to a close with the graduation of the 34th class in May. Some of our highlights include: reaffirmation of accreditation by the Council on Social Work Education, the most successful student scholarship event in the history of the school, the presence on the GSSW faculty and engagement with students by a Nobel Laureate, two international travel classes to China, and featured nationally recognized speakers including noted writer Ann Crittenden, former chair of the federal Civil Rights Office, Linda Chavez, and former executive director of the NAACP, Benjamin Hooks.

A significant milestone in this year’s chapter was the US News and World Report ranking of graduate social work programs, which was released in the late spring. In this popular magazine’s report, the GSSW moved up from its ranking in 2000 to number 46 of 184 graduate programs. In the entire south and southwest, the GSSW is the 9th highest ranked program of 52 graduate schools. The improved national recognition attests to the GSSW’s excellence.

Yet, there are challenges that we face, the most significant being the increased costs for higher education. With limited available revenues, the Texas state legislature is no longer able to support all public programs and must painfully decide to support children’s health care, for example, or higher education. While many of us argue that the state should support both, the political reality is otherwise. As a result, an increased percentage of expenses will be passed on to students.

My commitment to the students, the faculty and alumni is to insure that we, the GSSW, continue to create additional pathways of accessibility to our quality educational program. Our scholarship event this past spring, that raised more than $180,000 in one night, illustrates remarkable backing for GSSW students from a variety of people, including alumni as well as non-social workers. They believe in the importance of the GSSW and stepped forward to help fulfill the dreams of our students. We will, with your help, continue to create new scholarships as well as other student-directed funding opportunities.

Later this summer marks my fifth anniversary as dean of the GSSW, which, to be honest, has passed by very quickly. During my short tenure, I have met many alumni whose work truly reflects the GSSW’s mission and their stories, your stories, portray wonderful people who day in and day out are making differences in the lives of so many.

During the upcoming academic year we will celebrate the 35th anniversary of the program’s founding and the 25th anniversary of the dedication of our building. We will use these special occasions to reaffirm our long-standing commitment to promote justice through the education of individuals for competent, ethical advanced social work practice. I hope you will participate in as many of the celebratory programs as possible. Let’s plan to use this special occasion to celebrate our collective stories.

Angela Blanchard, President and CEO of Neighborhood Centers, Inc. and an active member of the GSSW Dean’s Advisory Council has been named recipient of the prestigious 2004 Edward A. Smith Award for Excellence in Nonprofit Executive Leadership. Ms. Blanchard was co-founder of the University of Houston Center for Organizational Research and Effectiveness (CORE) that brought corporate quality considerations and programs into the nonprofit arena and established the CORE Organizational Excellence Award, designed to recognize achievements in nonprofit management.
March 30, 2004 was one “whale of a day” for the GSSW. The fund-raising party held in downtown Houston at the new Aquarium perfectly carried out the theme: “Fish and Glitz at the Aquarium—Hooked on Social Work.” More than 350 folks gathered to support our school and our students, raising over $180,000 to be used primarily for scholarships. (A portion of the funds will assist the School’s American Humanics Nonprofit Certificate Program.) The event was chaired by one of our alumnae, and her mom: Laura Canion Chiles and Cam Canion.

This evening recognized two remarkable honorees: Nancy Frees Fountain, philanthropist, board member extraordinaire, partner in many school projects, a “social worker at heart,” and Foley’s Department Store, donor for more than a century to hundreds of social service agencies, and creator of the SAVVY Award which recognizes outstanding volunteers. Thirty student and alumnae “Ambassadors” were seated among the diners to explain, promote and celebrate our profession and our School.

After a reception on the outdoor terrace, there was a seated dinner, backed by the mellow music of the Moores School of Music Jazz Quartet. The Master of Ceremonies was Ernie Manouse, PBS’s favorite news commentator (“WeekNight Edition”) and weekly talk show host (“InnerViews”). After dessert, the lights were turned down low, and faculty and students presented a 10-minute multi-media treat, “Celebration of Social Work.” Faculty persons Cindy Reibenstain and Patti Aldredge created a montage of music and photos, interspersed with readings of client tributes by our students standing dramatically in the spotlight. Powerful stuff!

We could go on and on:...the surprise appearance of Mayor Bill White and his wife among the crowd!...the glittering underwater-themed decorations which included 300 fish swaying gently from the chandeliers (thank you, Nancy Fountain)!....that incredible dessert with the cookie fish on top!....the Big Catch Raffle and Auction!....the after-party tour of the actual Aquarium!....

The Dean’s Advisory Council and the GSSW Alumni Association, presenters of this event, give heartfelt thanks to the alumnae, students, and friends of the school who shaped this event; to Reliant Energy who designed and printed all our mail-outs and our program; to donors to the raffle; and to the GSSW staff who make it all happen.
Patti Aldredge, Associate Director of Field Practicum and Clinical Instructor, received the Lifetime Achievement in Social Work Award presented by the NASW Houston Branch at the Fourth Annual Social Work Awards Breakfast in March.


Brené Brown, Assistant Professor, has a new book, Women & Shame: Reaching Out, Speaking Truths & Building Connection (2004, 3C Press) published June 1. A book release and signing will be held at Barnes & Noble (Holcombe @ Buffalo Speedway) on June 10 at 7 p.m.


Gerson David, Professor, was interviewed in the article “Social Work AGEnda” published in the Association for Gerontology Education in Social Work (Fall 2003) crediting his role as both a scholar on productive aging and an exemplar of productive aging. Dr. David’s contributions to social work span a half century. The text of the article can be accessed at www.sw.uh.edu/

Karen A. Holmes, Associate Professor and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Brené Brown, Assistant Professor, and Beverly McPhail, Adjunct Faculty, published “The Status of Women and Girls in Greater Houston 2004”, the second edition of the 1997 report. The report was completed under the auspices of The Women’s Resource of Greater Houston, and was distributed at the Women’s Resource 14th Annual Celebration Luncheon.


Ellen Stevens-Roseman, Associate Professor and Patrick Leung, Associate Professor, co-authored an article entitled “Enhancing Attitudes, Knowledge, and Skills of Paraprofessional Service Providers in Elder Care Settings” that has been accepted for publication in Gerontology & Geriatrics Education.

Avelardo Valdez, Professor of Social Work and Director of the Office for Drug and Social Policy Research, has been awarded a National Institute of Health grant to study substance abuse among Mexican Americans in the Southwest. His research is a five-year project that will identify means of developing intervention and prevention programs.

Gerontology Students Honored

Lanre Asubiaro, Gerson David Gerontology Student Scholarship Award

Kimberly Davis, Richard J. DeBottis Gerontological Social Work Student Advocate Award

Grace Heo, Master’s Level Emerging Scholars Award - sponsored by the National Institute on Aging

Cynthia Parker Robertson, NASW Brazos Valley Unit Student Social Worker of the Year Award

Julie Walker, Richard J. DeBottis Gerontological Social Work Student Advocate Award
SNORTING BROWN: THE NEW COHORT OF CHICANO HEROIN USERS IN SOUTH TEXAS

Dr. Avelardo Valdez, Social Work Professor and Principal Investigator, and his staff at the Office for Drug and Social Policy Research –San Antonio Field Site Office, are in their 3rd year of data collection for a National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) funded study examining 300 Mexican American noninjecting users (NIUs) of heroin in San Antonio. The field staff has currently recruited and interviewed the projected sample and is in the process of conducting 6 month and 1 year follow up interviews with these NIUs. The sample consists of Mexican American users of heroin via intranasal or other non-injecting methods. Included in the sample are male (67%) and female (34%) heroin sniffers between the ages of 16 and 40 (mean age 22.15). In the course of the study, ethnographic observations and interviews are being conducted with NIUs. This qualitative data has revealed a unique drug-using environment that has very important implications for the increased use of non-injecting heroin among this young Mexican American population. Presented below are some preliminary findings on several factors affecting this drug-use context: 1) changing market dynamics, 2) purity, 3) availability, and 4) changing perception of heroin use.

CHANGING MARKET DYNAMICS The drug market in San Antonio’s Mexican American community is a highly diversified marketplace with various actors operating at different levels. Exclusive networks of multigenerational family and friends carry out these drug activities. The city’s heroin market radically changed when a Mexican American prison gang entered into this marketplace in the early 80s. During 1995 –1999 this gang gradually gained control of a large portion of the heroin and cocaine drug market in large areas of the west side. The control of the market was accomplished through a highly regimented vertical organization using ex-felons recruited in the prisons and connections in Mexico.

ACCESSIBILITY During this time, the prison gang made a concerted effort to target heroin sales to two vulnerable populations: delinquent non-gang youth and gang members. They succeeded by making the drug more accessible, lowering the prices, offering higher purity levels and by using them as sellers. The presence of this adult prison gang has also facilitated the participation of independent small dealers. Prison gang members are now “fronting” heroin to these individuals who, in turn, are making it readily available to users not only in the west and south sides but in other parts of the city as well.

PURITY In San Antonio, the predominant form of heroin is identified as Mexican Brown (powder). More than 15 years ago, injecting black tar was the preferred form of heroin and method among Mexican American users. While Mexican Brown was available, it was not potent enough to sniff. Current fieldwork indicates that the quality (potency) of retail level heroin has increased, including that of brown. Traditional patterns of injecting are being replaced with snorting/sniffing among young users in these neighborhoods.

CHANGING PERCEPTION OF HEROIN USE A distinct heroin subculture developed over the last 50 years in southwestern cities and towns among Mexican American IDUs or tecatos. Tecatos have been stigmatized because of a distinct street identity that revolves around a “pachuco” lifestyle characterized by heroin use, criminality, incarceration, distinct style of dress and tattoos, and distinct street-based social networks. Preliminary findings indicate that IDU continues to be seen negatively by the younger NIUs. For instance, subjects who have never injected appear to see snorting brown as a way of avoiding and minimizing the adverse negative consequences associated with injecting (i.e., criminal involvement, incarceration, HIV, etc.) and consequently, addiction. Sniffing heroin, therefore, is socially acceptable given that they perceive it as a way in which to avoid the consequences associated with tecato lifestyle.

Heroin use in the south and west sides of San Antonio is considered to be part of the cultural milieu for members of this Mexican American community. These young NIUs in this study have been exposed to an environment that has facilitated the “social learning” process associated with the consumption of heroin via family, friends and acquaintances. For decades, heroin has had a constant presence that many argue is exacerbated by the proximity to Mexico’s drug markets. More importantly, there is a history of segregation and marginalization that has contributed to the creation of thriving illicit markets and illegal economic institutions in these communities.
2004 GSSW GRADUATES

DECEMBER 2003 GRADUATES

PH.D. GRADUATES

Needha McNeil Bouteé-Queen
Dissertation Title: Identifying Barriers to Obtaining Social Work Licensure
Dissertation Chair: Dr. Monit Cheung

Edward J. Muldrow III
Dissertation Title: Depression, Parenting Stress and Social Support Among Fathers in the Divorce Process
Dissertation Chair: Dr. Maxine W. Epstein

MAY & AUGUST 2004* CANDIDATES

PH.D. CANDIDATES

Susan Carol Mapp
Dissertation Title: A Test of Systems Theory to Assess the Impact of Sexual Abuse as a Child on Current Risk of Physical Abuse by Mothers
Dissertation Chair: Dr. Patrick Leung

Patricia Greaney Taylor
Dissertation Title: Enhancement of the Integrated Personal/Professional SELF (IPPS) Through Reflective/Experiential Learning in Graduate Social Work Students
Dissertation Chair: Dr. Monit Cheung

Beverly Ann Spears
Dissertation Title: Implications of a Relationship Focused Intervention Targeting Aggression, Violence and Resilience
Dissertation Chair: Dr. Steven Applewhite

M.S.W. GRADUATES

Monique Joubert

Susan K. Kulbeth

Leah Anne Lister

Christine L. Gautreaux

Megan Wightman Gossett

Smitri Dawra Grover

Cheryl Suzanne Guy

Katie Hampton

Jeongim Heo

Jennifer Noelle Herrington

Shalanda L. Joyce Hilliard

Ronald Phillip Hogan

Amy Ruthven Holck

Iloro George Inyang

Evelyn Hines Jacobs

Allison Ann James

Aisha Trevan-ann Jones

Kimberley Antonette Jones

Lynn Suzanne Kopol

Deborah Lynda Kumar-Misir

Lakeisha Nicole Lewis

Elsie Lo

Kimberley Evans Loken

Anastacia Lopez-Hernandez

Tina Marie Lucas

Kim Thien Luong

Ernesto Abraham Macias

Sheila Rose Matthew

Paulette Land Mayfield

LaSonya Cartmeeese McArthur

Marki L. McMillan

Veronica Medrano

Janice Marie Miller

Tyeshia Jawanna Miller

Carol Ann Montedonico

Margaret Fran-New Mount

Brooke Ingrid Newhouse

Wing Sai (Don) Or

Adriana Padilla

Michael Parrish

Laura Johnson Pattillo

Anth Drimalas Pavlcek

Roslynn LaChele Pettigrew

Mary S. Quinlan

Pamela J. Rall

Debra M. Reyna

Martha Rosa Piedra

For the first time in its history, the University of Houston held commencement ceremonies for each of the 12 academic colleges and The Honors College, including the Graduate School of Social Work, during a special three-day Commencement Weekend. This celebration replaced the convocation ceremonies previously held after the university graduation.

Thad "Bo" Smith, Chair for the UH System Board of Regents and Jerald W. Strickland, Interim Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Interim Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, joined Dean Colby, distinguished faculty, staff, families and friends in honoring the 115 graduates of the GSSW. Degrees were conferred by Regent Smith during the ceremony held at the UH Cullen Performance Hall on May 15. Vicki Hansen, LMSW-AP, Executive Director, NASW/Texas, was the school’s invited speaker. The ceremony was followed by a beautiful reception sponsored by the GSSW Student Association.

Kimberly Davis and Rolando Elizondo, Co-Vice Presidents of the GSSW Student Association, presented the following faculty and student awards during the ceremony: The Martin Luther King, Jr. Social Justice Award was presented to Marki McMillan, the Mahatma Gandhi Peace Award to Julie Walker, the Barbara Jordan Unity Award to Laura Easton, the Mary Richmond Award to Sara Stansbury, The Jane Addams Award to Dora Cisneros, the Outstanding Faculty Award to Brené Brown, the Friend of Students Award to Patti Aldredge and Sandra Lopez was honored as the faculty member selected to hood MSW Candidates.

Congratulations to all 2004 graduates!

* Pending successful completion of all university and college requirements.
ALUMNI & CAREER SERVICES

The Office of Alumni & Career Services began operations within the GSSW in 2001. Over the last three years, hundreds of GSSW students and alumni have been supported in career decision making, in preparing to enter the social work job market and in connecting with fellow alumni.

Career services are available to assist students and alumni in transitioning from the role of graduate student to practicing professional. The GSSW career office offers the only job posting website devoted exclusively to social work job opportunities in Houston! Log onto www.sw.uh.edu/alumni/jobs.htm for viewing. Employers are encouraged to call (713)743-8071 or email aliberman@uh.edu to post a social work position at no cost.

Additional career services include résumé development and critique, career consultation, and a workshop series covering such topics as job search techniques, interview strategies, social work salary updates and state licensing information. The UH GSSW participated in the annual national Job Market Survey for 2003 MSW Graduates this past year and findings will be summarized for GSSW graduates in the near future.

The GSSW Alumni Relations Office links the GSSW and its alumni board through staff support and serves as a point of contact for alumni of the school. The Connections newsletter is a publication of the Office of Alumni & Career Services. All alumni of the GSSW are encouraged to take advantage of joining the alumni association at the post graduation special rate of $10 for the first year and $45 to renew membership annually.

It was a first for Austin area GSSW alumni on March 25 at Serranos Restaurant at Symphony Square. Excited alumni gathered for “Happy Hour and Conversation with Dean Colby.” The evening provided an opportunity for networking and casual reminiscing of the GSSW days. Be on the lookout for upcoming events in other cities. The GSSW Alumni are “on the move” to connect!

Congratulations to all of our May graduates. Please contact the Office of Alumni & Career Services for résumé or job search assistance and to share your employment success stories as dreams come true for each of you! Best of luck throughout your social work careers.

Ann Liberman, M.S.W.
Director of Alumni and Career Services

AMERICAN HUMANICS RECOGNIZED FOR EXCELLENCE

The David M. Underwood Chapter, American Humanics Nonprofit Certificate Program, Graduate School of Social Work, was recognized for “Excellence in Internships” at the American Humanics Management Institute in Kansas City, Missouri in January 2004. The University of Houston Chapter of AH was awarded this national acknowledgement for providing numerous quality internship opportunities with AH, Inc.'s national nonprofit partners and many grassroots nonprofit organizations in Houston. This year alone, the Underwood Chapter has placed 24 interns in organizations such as the YMCA and International YMCA, The United Way of the Texas Gulf Coast, Catholic Charities, DePelchin Children’s Center, Ronald McDonald House and The AIDS Foundation. Not only does the program place students in quality placements, but also provides a structured experience that maximizes the opportunity for both the students and the organizations.

Thirty students accompanied Program Director Margaret O’Donnell to the Management Institute, a three-day educational symposium for college juniors and seniors enrolled in the American Humanics nonprofit management program on college and university campuses across the country. The Management Institute serves as the capstone academic experience leading to American Humanics certification in nonprofit management. More than 75 colleges and universities from around the U.S. and over 30 corporations and national nonprofit organizations were represented at the Management Institute. The UH students raised over $20,000 from corporations, individuals and fund-raising events to send their group to Kansas City. Next year, the Institute will be held in Atlanta, Georgia. Donica Beckett, UH-AH Student Association president, was chosen for the national 2005 Institute planning team, the 10th UH representative in 11 years to serve as part of this prestigious group.

Currently, more than 70 undergraduate and post-baccalaureate students are pursuing their nonprofit management certificates through the UH program, and 20 others were certified at the May 12 Recognition Dinner at the Athletics/Alumni Center. Since 1993, more than 150 students have been certified by successfully completing the UH AH requirements.
Pat Murphree ('76) lives in Austin where she has been in college textbook publishing for the past 25 years. She encourages any 1976 alumni to give her a call.

Bob Navarro ('76) has recently retired after 23 years with what began as Entex and ended with CenterPoint Energy where he served as Managing Director for CenterPoint Alternative Fuels. He remains actively involved on five boards and serves as a member of the Dean’s Advisory Council at the GSSW. He enjoys golf in his spare time.

Larry Bolado ('78) lives in Austin and has his own private practice.

Marsha Sharp Jones ('86) works with homeless children and youth as an HISD social worker. She has been recognized for services to children by Barbara Jeanne Ward, State Coordinator for Homeless Children and Youth.

Mark Viator ('90) is living in Austin and works with People’s Community Clinic.

Ed Lyles ('92) LCSW, LMSW-ACP, has moved to Evanston, Wyoming to work in rural social work and psychiatric treatment. He is enjoying great skiing, great trout fishing, great trekking and great living.

Chery Petre-Okamoto ('93) lives in Austin and loves the work she does as a hospital social worker. She recently made a trip to St. Maartin.

Sandra Grimes ('93) has received her LMSW-ACP and is working in the Intensive Outpatient Program at Seton Shoal Creek in Austin.

Mariel Miller ('93) is living in Austin and enjoying life as a stay-at-home mom.

Stephanie Davis ('94) had twin girls in November 2002 and is now a stay-at-home mom! Prior to delivery, she worked as the social worker for the Women’s Health Centers of Presbyterian Hospital of Dallas. In 2000, she was voted the Dallas-Fort Worth Hospital Council’s Employee of the Year.

Milt Clark ('94) lives in Austin where he uses his social work skills to help design the interior of people’s homes. He has graciously volunteered to “host” the next alumni event in Austin.

Maggie Lubanski-McCreary ('95) is happily married with two children, ages 8 and 5. She works part-time at St. David’s Rehabilitation Center and is in private practice in Lago Vista.

Leticia Gamez-Balderas ('96) has proudly completed her ACP training and will be testing soon! She is working part-time as an Austin Independent School District pre-kindergarten teacher.

Gabrielle Langley ('96) LCSW has been working as a clinical social worker with Seven Acres Jewish Senior Care Services for the past seven years. She recently gave a presentation to GSSW students on “21st Century Jobs in Gerontological Social Work”.

Renata Domatti ('98) is working as a medical case manager in Austin.

Shannon Bishop ('98) and husband Kevin Jefferies had twin boys the last week of October. Jackson weighed in at 6.9 and Beckett at 6.1.

Jennifer Battle ('98) and husband Kevin Cavanaugh proudly announced the birth of Keira Elizabeth Battle on April 12.

Sarah Blader ('99) is living in Cedar Rapids, Iowa where she is working at Mercy Hospital Sedlacak Center as a Chemical Dependency Counselor. She works on contract with Elder Services. She had twin boys in March 2003 and all are doing fantastically.

Amy Blakeney ('00) and husband Ben are the proud parents of Madeline Martha Blakeney who was born in November.

Adrienne Harrison-Gibson ('01) married Michael Gibson in April 2002 and has a newborn, Blake. She is working for Houston ISD as a social worker in the Homeless Children and Youth Program.

Candace LeMoine ('03) loves hospice work at Odyssey Healthcare. She is also involved in contract program evaluation for the Center for AIDS.
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION NEWS

As summer quickly approaches it means one of two things: either you are one of the lucky ones who gets to cross the stage and take possession of your degree or you get to register for another set of classes as your day on stage is still in the future. But if you are one of those graduating and losing the moniker of “student,” you now have a new one, Alumnus.

What that means to each of us varies as much as the personalities and opinions of the classmates we crossed paths with during our time at the GSSW. As an active member of the GSSW Alumni Association and its current president, I would hope the new title comes with pride and a desire to continue to support the school. An active, supportive alumni base can mean the difference between an ordinary school and an extraordinary school.

As an alumnus what can you do to enhance the GSSW, the quality of student education, and affect the everyday lives of social workers? The easiest answer is donating money. The more difficult response is to get involved with your alumni association.

Involvement can be in a variety of ways: 1) join a board committee and plan an event; 2) come to an Alumni sponsored event; 3) make a commitment at the board level; or 4) just sign up as a member because your membership dollars build our budget and give us the opportunity to do more.

Besides looking for leaders, members and an increased budget, we are looking for ideas of what our alumni want to do. What types of events interest you? From what we can see, it appears events with CEUs bring in the best crowds. Purely social events garner little, if any, interest. So, fellow alumni…what turns you on? If you are looking for ways to connect with your past classmates, maybe a special "reunion" style theme might work.

What we would like is for you to take the time to share your thoughts. We will do our best to put them in motion, but we also want leaders willing to organize and coordinate events. If you have some thoughts to share or want to get information on joining the GSSW Alumni Association, then send me an email at mcbap@houston.rr.com. And remember, the GSSWAA is a constituent group of the Houston Alumni Organization and you are joining the larger organization with the designation of being a GSSW grad.

Thanks, and I look forward to hearing from you.

Barbara Parrott McGinity, LMSW
Class of 2000

GSSW Alumni Association Board
Back Row (L-R) Jennifer Battle, Rufina Basu, Sarah Strickler Stone, Michael Roberts, Barbara McGinity
Front Row (L-R) Ann McFarland, Gene Gundersen, Stephanie Foy, Amber Mollhagen, Sara Lewis

ALUMNI UPDATE FORM: Bring us up-to-date!

_____________________________________________
Name Y ear Graduated
_____________________________________________
Address
_____________________________________________
Phone Email

☐ I would like to receive email updates and announcements from the GSSW. Please add my email address to the Alumni Distribution List.

☐ I would like to join the GSSW Alumni Association. Please send me information on how to join.

☐ I prefer to receive the Connections newsletter

☐ Via email
☐ In print

Please clip and send information to University of Houston, GSSW, 237 Social Work Building, Houston, TX 77204-4013 or email to gsswalum@sw.uh.edu
Tom Strain, LCSW (‘90) is remembered by the social work community of Houston for his outstanding contributions to the profession. Tom worked for many years as the Chemical Dependency Program Coordinator and HIV Outreach Program Coordinator at the Montrose Counseling Center. For the past two years, he was employed as a shift leader for MHHC Psych Response Team and served as a contract staff member and ACP Supervisor at Social Work prn.

Paula D. Ostrove, LMSW, LPC (‘78) dedicated the last 28 years of her life to helping others. She passed away October 2003 after a lengthy illness. She realized her goal of helping people in need over the years through her work with Jewish Family Service, MHMRA, Visiting Nurses Association, Sharpstown Hospital Psychiatric Service and in the private practice of psychotherapy.
**The Third Annual Jenkins Distinguished Lecture**  
**“Affirmative Action–Is it still needed?”**

“Affirmative Action–Is it still needed?” was the topic of debate on November 20, 2003 as civil rights activist Benjamin Hooks and conservative opponent Linda Chavez took to debate on the 2003 landmark Supreme Court case ruling involving University of Michigan’s affirmative action guidelines. The Jenkins Distinguished Lecture was hosted by the University of Houston Graduate School of Social Work in support of the annual event’s intent to present speakers who are nationally and internationally known for their expertise on political and public policy issues to UH and the Houston community. The event was underwritten by Margie Jenkins, GSSW alumnus, and her husband Robert R. Jenkins. The debate was preceded by a beautiful reception co-hosted by the UH African American Studies Program and the Blaffer Gallery.

Hooks, former National Executive Director of the NAACP, lawyer, preacher and former FCC member, debated in favor of affirmative action while Chavez, president of the Center for Equal Opportunity and former Chair of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, debated in opposition to the policy. The evening was stimulating for all in attendance.

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**Fourth Annual Social Work Awards Breakfast**  
**“Let’s Get Political”**

The Annual Social Work Awards Breakfast is sponsored by the UH GSSW, National Association of Black Social Workers-Houston, Inc., National Association of Social Workers Gulf Coast Branch, National Association of Social Workers Houston Branch, Society for Social Work Leadership in Health Care-Texas Chapter, Texas Southern University-Social Work Program and the UH Graduate School of Social Work Alumni Association. Sylvia R. Garcia, Commissioner, served as this year’s keynote speaker and was awarded NASW Houston Branch Public Citizen of the Year.

Commissioner Garcia began her career with a B.S.W. degree from Texas Woman’s University and worked for Sheltering Arms Senior Services. After receiving her Doctor of Jurisprudence degree from the Thurgood Marshall School of Law at Texas Southern University, Commissioner Garcia worked with the Gulf Coast Legal Foundation. As a judge for the Houston Municipal Court System, she coordinated a staff of 50 judges and established the operation and administration policies of the courts. She was elected to serve in the position of Controller of the City of Houston. She was sworn into her current office as Commissioner of Harris County Precinct Two in 2003, which made her the first woman and the first Hispanic ever elected to serve on Commissioner’s Court in Harris County.

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**2004 Underwood Lecture**  
**“Does Feminism Have a Future?”**

Ann Crittenden was the extraordinary featured lecturer for the ninth annual Underwood Lecture held at the UH Hilton on April 22. Ann is a former economics reporter for the New York Times and a Pulitzer Prize nominee. She has also been a reporter for Fortune, Newsweek, and an occasional commentator for CBS News and National Public Radio. Her most recent book, The Price of Motherhood, argues that “although women have been liberated, mothers have not.” Crittenden shared personal stories and research findings in addressing the issues that face women today involving careers and motherhood.

The lecture is sponsored annually by Mr. David M. Underwood, Neighborhood Centers Inc., Panhandle Energy, The Jeremy Head Charitable Fund of the Greater Houston Community Foundation and The Tenneco Lecture Series.
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Connections can be accessed online at www.sw.uh.edu/alumni/newsletter.htm

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

GSSW Alumni Sponsored Seminar
Corpus Christi
June 18, 2004

DeBottis Lecture
November 9, 2004

GSSW Alumni Annual Meeting
August 24, 2004

GSSW’s 35th Anniversary
Celebration Events 2004-2005

Continuing Education
Class Information
can be accessed at www.sw.uh.edu/ocp