Welcome to the Alumnae Newsletter of the Department of Social Work!!
In this volume you will find lots of information about what the Department is doing at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, information from faculty about their activities, and stories about our fabulous students. Please enjoy and please keep in touch! If you found this on the website but didn’t receive an email from us, let Bill know so he can update the email list and add you to it.

Chairperson’s Perspective
by Bill Anderson

I had the pleasure of chatting with many graduates of our bachelor’s program at MSSA last month, and was struck by the many changes that they noticed. Over the past decade, we’ve seen changes to the university (another new name, more buildings, semesters instead of quarters, etc.), changes to the program (new curriculum, new degree title - “BSSW”, more electives available), and changes to the faculty (five faculty retired or moved on since 1994, while nine “new” ones have arrived). Throughout all of this our students have continued to excel, and working with them continues to be our primary mission. They face significantly higher tuition and book costs, more work hours than ever, and a very busy and challenging program, but still find time for many positive activities, especially through the Club.

Of course, the biggest change has been the development of the MSW program. Dr. Fitzsimons has an update on that project below, but it doesn’t begin to reflect all the work that has gone into building university support for the new degree, developing the curriculum, writing the enormous accreditation materials, hiring the new faculty, and now teaching the first cohort of students. With two more cohorts beginning this summer (in May and August) we will become one of the larger graduate programs on campus.

While size does pay the bills and keeps the administration happy, we continue to manage enrollments in both the BSSW and MSW programs with a focus on providing the best education possible. The MSW cohorts are limited to 15-20 students each and our target for the BSSW cohorts is 25-30 new admissions per semester. Given the number of faculty that we have, we believe that these cohort sizes give us the best opportunity for the close working relationships with students in class and fieldwork that have long been a hallmark of our department.

Please read the articles by Professors Alvarez and Zammit to get just a taste of the new faculty that we have added this year, while you also keep up with the fine folks who continue to serve the department!
The Advanced Generalist MSW Program is off to a great start! Last spring the Department had the first of four Commission on Accreditation (COA) site visits. Dr. Elaine Ferraro from Columbia College in South Carolina conducted the Benchmark I site visit. Dr. Ferraro recommended that the MSW Program be granted candidacy and the COA agreed. At the October 2007 meeting, the COA voted to grant candidacy. This is an important milestone on our way to achieving accreditation in October of 2010. The Department is in the process of drafting our Benchmark II document in preparation for our second site visit on April 24 and 25. Dr. James Adams from the University of Alabama will be conducting our Benchmark II visit. The faculty are working diligently to ensure that the MSW Program remains in candidacy.

We admitted our first cohort of Traditional (2-year) MSW students last August. Twelve students are currently enrolled in the MSW Program. This semester students began their foundation year field practicum. Students are in a variety of practicum sites, including county agencies, schools, and programs that address homelessness. We have successfully negotiated for approximately a third of these students to use their place of employment as their practicum site. If you have a MSW degree, and the agency you are with is interested in serving as a MSW practicum site, contact Robin Wingo at robin.wingo@mnsu.edu or 507-389-5084.

Two new faculty joined the Department in the fall with each having primary assignment in the MSW Program. Michelle Alvarez, MSW, EdD, is co-coordinating graduate field education and teaching the professional competence seminars and foundations of generalist practice in the MSW Program. Kimberly Zammitt, MSW, ABD, is teaching foundations of generalist practice, advanced direct practice, and applied research courses in the MSW Program. Dr. David Beimers will join us in the Fall and will bring his strong background in macro practice to teach the advanced policy and administration courses in the MSW Program.

Applications for the 2008-2009 academic year were available on October 1, 2007. We are thrilled to report that as we expected there is a demand for a MSW program in our region. The MSW Admission Committee had many qualified applicants from which to select! In the fall of 2008 we will admit our second cohort of Traditional (2-year) students. In addition, the MSW Program has admitted students to the Advanced Standing (1-year) program. Only applicants with an undergraduate degree in social work from a CSWE accredited program can apply for advanced standing. We expect that 16 students will begin the Advanced Standing program in May 2008.

For more information about the MSW Program contact Nancy Fitzsimons, Program Director (nancy.fitzsimons@mnsu.edu or 507-389-1287) or Annelies Hagemeister, Admissions Coordinator (annelies.hagemeister@mnsu.edu or 389-5078). Additional information is also available on our website at http://sbs.mnsu.edu/socialwork/graduate
Social Work Day at the Capitol

The Social Work Department took students to the NASW-Minnesota Chapter sponsored Social Work Day at the Capitol last year on April 2nd, 2007, and took another group this year on April 7th, 2008. In 2007, two Department faculty, Nancy Fitzsimons and Chris Black-Hughes, accompanied 24 social work students to the 11th Annual Social Work Day at the Capitol. Elsa Keskitalo, visiting professor from Helsinki Polytechnic Stadia in Finland, also joined them. Over 500 social work students, educators and professionals participated in this event. They spent the morning at the Minnesota History Center learning about lobbying and important policy issues in the areas of Child Welfare, School Social Work, Health Care, Poverty, and Mental Health. In the afternoon they marched to the Minnesota State Capitol for a spirited rally in the Rotunda. During the rally the Department of Social Work was recognized for our lobbying efforts at the 2006 Social Work Day at the Capitol. BSSW students MacKenzie Collin and Brianna Carroll accepted the NASW Advocacy Award on behalf of the Department. Drs. Fitzsimons and Black-Hughes accompanied students to meetings with area legislators, including Representative Terry Morrow and Representative Kathy Brynaert. Students individually and as a group met with their representatives to talk about issues of important to social workers, including funding for child welfare services, universal health care for children, and higher education funding. The student group again won an award at the 2007 event -- the Advocacy Award for excellence in group projects, preparation, and lobbying efforts.

MacKenzie and Brianna have again organized the 2008 group and again it was an award winning effort! Dr. Nancy Fitzsimons and Victoria Hanson, Adjunct Faculty, and Missy Manderfeld, Department Secretary accompanied 17 social work students to the 12th Annual Social Work Day at the Capitol. This is the 6th year that Dr. Fitzsimons has taken students to this event. After participating in training sessions to learn about issues of interest to social workers and specific bills under consideration by the Minnesota Legislature, the group marched from the Minnesota History Center to the Capitol and held a spirited rally in the Rotunda. The Department of Social Work was the recipient of the National Association of Social Workers – MN Chapter Advocacy Award for the second year in a row. Faculty and students met with legislators to lobby for passage of the Children’s Health Security Act, Food Shelf Programs Act, Minnesota Health Act, Family Substance Abuse Programs Act, Crisis Nursery Grant Program, and bills to reduce tuition at Minnesota state colleges and universities. They met with several legislators, including Representative Kathy Brynaert, Senator Kathy Sheran, and Representative Terry Morrow.

Rural Social Work Caucus by Bill Anderson

During July of 2007, Nancy Fitzsimons, Robin Wingo and Bill Anderson attended the Rural Social Work Caucus in Montgomery, Alabama. While July may not be the best time of year to head for Alabama, they were able to attend many good workshops at one of the few rural-focused national social work conferences. A particularly moving day was spent visiting many of the key civil rights sites in the Selma/Montgomery area, including museums, march sites and Reverend King’s church. For more pictures, see: http://homepage.mac.com/wanderso/PhotoAlbum19.html
Recent Faculty Conference Presentations by Paul Mackie

The Minnesota State Mankato social work department continues to move forward with exciting research and conference presentations aimed at informing practice, especially in rural areas. In March of 2008, Dr. Paul Mackie presented “Professional Burnout: Are Social Worker’s as Crispy as We Think?” at the 115th Annual Minnesota Social Service Association conference in Bloomington. This presentation is a review of what is known about social worker burnout, including Dr. Mackie’s own research on the topic. Professor Robin Wingo also presented at MSSA, focusing on “Students in the Agency: What to Expect” in which she looked at ways that students, agencies and universities can meet each others’ expectations. In April, Dr. Mackie and student MacKenzie Collin will present “Keeping the Promise: Teaching ICWA Online for Undergraduate Child Welfare Learning.” This presentation focuses on the online course developed by Dr. Mackie and Dr. Gohagan aimed at better preparing Title IV-E students to serve Native American children and families protected by the Indian Child Welfare Act. This will include a discussion about how higher education can provide continuing education across large geographic areas (rural). In addition to speaking at the Fall MSSWA Conference (see article below) Michelle Alvarez will also be active at the MSSWA Summer Institute. Dr. Black-Hughes will be traveling to South Africa this summer to present a paper at the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW), along with doing teaching and volunteer work in Ft. Hare, SA.

MSSA State Conference -- 2008

In March of 2008, 50 students and 8 campus and field faculty from MSU attended the Minnesota Social Services Association (MSSA) Conference in Burnsville. This annual field trip is popular with students who in many cases are exposed to a very large gathering of professionals for the first time. Students participated actively in workshops and attended special student-oriented sessions hosted by MSSA. As usual, students took the lead in planning and developing the Region IX “Cabana” activities, focusing on “Sticking up for Minnesota”. Even Jane Adams appeared as she graced the signs that students made. It was great to see all the alumnae that stopped by the department exhibit booth to visit with faculty and hear about the still fairly new MSW program. While our strong 58 attendees fell just shy of last year’s record 63, we are annually the largest delegation from any of the Minnesota programs; several of our new MSW students also attended and enjoyed the conference. Of course those are just the students and field faculty sponsored by Minnesota State -- many more of our adjunct faculty and our students sponsored by their field agencies also attended. There are lots of leadership opportunities available in your MSSA Region and at the State level -- we are always looking for new Board members here in south central Minnesota!
Social Work Club

In the 2006-07 academic year, the Social Work Club, under the leadership of Emily Bittner and Jennifer Othoudt carried on the Club’s tradition of service to the community. In the fall the club had a Halloween Party for the children living at Theresa House, collected women’s clothing apparel for the St. Peter Regional Treatment Center and CADA House, and volunteered to help supervise children at the Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Family Camp. In addition, the Club conducted a “Supplies for Soldiers” drive in which over 700 pounds of food, books, games, and personal care items were sent to 175 troops serving in Iraq. In the spring the Club volunteered at the Mardi Gras Celebration of Youth, worked with our Region 9 MSSA chapter to design, decorate and run the cabana at the statewide Minnesota Social Service Association Conference, and sponsored a team for the American Cancer Society Relay for Life. During the spring the Club participated in several fundraising efforts, including selling social work clothing, selling social work “stand up for others” bracelets, and working concession at the Civic Center. Mankato Area Healthy Youth received $240 dollars, with the remainder covering the $800 dollar entry fee for the American Cancer Society Walk. The Social work Club won the award for the best decorated campsite at the Relay for Life. Emily Bittner received a Community Service award from the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences for her outstanding community service and volunteer efforts.

The Club continued its efforts in 2007-08, mixing community service with fun activities that exposed students to a variety of client needs and agency programs. They worked with VINE during the Fall leaf clean-up, raking yards for persons unable to perform that task. Members of the Club volunteered at the Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Retreat working with children experiencing FASD. For the third year, the Club hosted a Halloween party for children living at Theresa House, a local shelter. Members also volunteered at CADA House’s Benefit Concert and Dinner and at the Mankato Area Healthy Youth “Mardi Gras” Celebration. They helped with preparing conference materials for the MSSWA Conference on campus and of course had a fabulous cabana at the MSSA Annual Conference in Bloomington. They are also sponsoring a team again this year in the Relay for Life sponsored by the American Cancer Society. Dr. Frank and a group from the Club organized our department’s booth at the District 77 Career Day for high school students from 12 schools. As always, it is amazing how many activities the Club develops, especially given the heavy course loads and workloads of our Juniors and Seniors! The College of Social & Behavioral Sciences once again honored the Club with its Community Service Award.
An Implicit Journey of Self-Awareness

By Kimberly Zammit

Social workers provide a multitude of services throughout society at many different levels of practice. This function of the profession becomes the interface for diverse groups. It is this crossing point of diverse cultures, races, ethnicities, socioeconomic statuses, sexual orientations, national origins, religions, ages and abilities that challenges social workers to be conscious of their own personal values and attitudes, and how these values and attitudes may inhibit and possibly negate the therapeutic relationship with various client systems. Constant awareness of values and attitudes is a prerequisite for effective social work practice. This awareness reduces the risk of imposing values or posturing attitudes onto client systems, which is predicated on the assumption that the social worker is aware and “conscious” of his/her values and attitudes. However, the literature suggests that attitudes have a dual nature and operate on two distinct levels of cognition, conscious and unconscious.

The literature also indicates that unconscious or implicit attitudes represent a more accurate reflection of people’s true feelings or true attitudes toward an attitude object; that the use of indirect methods provides access to a cognitive domain inaccessible to self-report measures; that implicit attitudes are more stable and less likely to change; and that implicit attitudes are predictive of various spontaneous behaviors. Subtle nuances, such as a grimace from the social worker toward a client that the social worker is unaware that he or she is projecting, can be the cause of a poor helping relationship or premature termination of services.

So how aware are you of your implicit attitudes? Check out the Implicit Association Test (IAT) at Project Implicit, https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/, to delve into your unconscious attitudes. You might uncover that there are differences between your conscious and unconscious attitudes, a common finding with this instrument. Hopefully, this will fuel some introspection and increase your self-awareness in the field. Happy journey!

Social Welfare Scholars Awards and Departmental Scholarships

As part of our ceremony on Honors Day each Fall we recognize the excellent writing of three of our SOWK-190 students. This annual event (begun by retired faculty member Dr. Vanda Manahan) celebrates one of social work’s most valuable skills, high quality writing. Each student presents a summary of their paper and suggestions to the next generation of how best to do the research and writing required to be chosen as a scholar. Congratulations to Renee Lips, Holly Hagen, and Jennifer Kolstad! Speaking of scholarship dollars, we continue to appreciate the contributions that we receive from so many of our alumnae! Coupled with dollars donated by faculty members, we are able to support five or six scholarships each year. Of course we also have scholarships from the Board of Region IX MSSA, the Kiwanis Club, and the endowment donated by retired faculty member Wayne Sandee and his wife Carol. As the costs of being a social work major continue to increase, our students greatly appreciate the support the folks provide!
Studying Social Policy in Bristol, England by Robin R. Wingo

The Department of Social Work continues to encourage and provide credit-earning opportunities for students attending the Bristol International Credit-earning Programme (BICEP) in Bristol England. In the Summer of 2007 Dr. Debra Gohagan accompanied five undergraduates from Minnesota State University, Mankato (Melanie Mattern, Crystal Kramer, Tasha Novotny, Sara Martin) and Winona State University (Christine Rollin) as they pursued their policy interests, visited social service sites, talked with service providers and service consumers, and earned credits toward graduation! They reported “I do think that I learned things that I could not learn on campus, because the experience opened me up to things that I could not have seen before. The experience as a whole has changed my view of service users in every area.” and that “I learned so much about the British political system and social welfare. I think the best part of the program was having the opportunity to speak with service users about their experiences.” The general consensus was “it was an awesome experience!“ While tourism is not the main feature of this trip, students were able to visit a number of well-known sites including Parliament, Stonehenge, the Moors, and the Mayflower Steps.

Summer of 2008 is shaping up for another group to attend this exciting programme. This will be a particularly interesting year to be in England and observe policy shifts and changes with the new Prime Minister in office. Other changes closer to home are that the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee, Helen Bader School of Social Welfare has assumed the US leadership role. The program will continue to focus on social welfare policy with study groups on family (child protection, substitute care, or family violence), health (aging, mental health, or health education –substance abuse or sex), and or criminal justice issues (juvenile justice or adult offenders). Final programme decisions are made based on student interest and enrollment!

Looking for continuing education opportunities? Alumnae are welcome to attend BICEP! Robin R. Wingo and Bill Anderson serve as coordinators for this program and may be contacted by calling the Department of Social Work at 507-389-6504 or by email at robin.wingo@mnsu.edu or william.anderson@mnsu.edu.

Working Together for School Social Work by Michelle Alvarez

The Minnesota School Social Work Association’s Fall Conference was a huge success -- there were over 125 people in attendance and Minnesota State University in Mankato was a very welcoming host. Thanks go to region 2 and 11 for their hard work in coordinating this conference, with a special thank you to Tammie Knick (MSU,M alumna) and Molly Norris (MSU,M adjunct faculty) for their work!

MSSWA recognized Minnesota School Social Worker of the Year, Leo Bulger from Minneapolis Public Schools. He delivered an important message including the need to be present with each of our clients and treat "each IEP as the first one so that we are fresh" with our families and students. MSSWA then recognized Legislature of the Year, Rep. Tom Tillberry from District 51B who authored the bill that increased the school levy from $27 to $30 a pupil all of which is (continued)
available for student support services. It was a huge step for school social workers and all of our colleagues (school nurses, school psychologists, school chemical health specialists, and school counselors) to finally come together on this issue. The Friend of School Social Work was awarded to Geri Graham from the Minnesota Department of Education for her work on Social Emotional Learning and her commitment to the "whole child" and assisting MSSWA in drafting legislation to include Social Emotional Learning into the State Education Standards.

It was a great conference and best of all, it was an important time for professionals to work together and network with fellow colleagues. We don't get enough time to talk with people who understand the hows and whys or the myriad of things we do. What a fabulous opportunity to gather with professionals who believe that change is not only possible but who move in the direction to make it happen.

**School Social Work Summer Institute**

The Minnesota School Social Work Association will offer its 6th annual School Social Work Institute, June 23-25, 2008, at Superior Shores Resort, Duluth, MN in collaboration with Minnesota State University, Mankato and the Minnesota Department of Education. The theme of the conference is *Evidence Based Practice for School Social Workers: A Little Bit of Theory and a lot of Practice* and will feature speakers on the topics of Art Therapy, training in use of the BASC, and progress monitoring as part of the Response to Intervention process. Minnesota State Mankato Extended Learning will offer a “Current Topics in School Social Work” course in conjunction with the Institute for 1-3 undergraduate or graduate credits. Information to register for the Institute and the online school social work course is available through the Minnesota School Social Work Association (Institute) at [http://www.msswa.org](http://www.msswa.org) and MSU, M Extended Learning (accompanying online course) [http://www.mnsu.edu/ext/cpe/socialwork.html](http://www.mnsu.edu/ext/cpe/socialwork.html).

**Social Work Alumna of the Year -- Times Two!**

**Two more years, two more great graduates**

In both November of 2006 and 2007 we recognized two of our graduates as “Alumna of the Year”; this celebration takes place as part of our annual Honors Day, a time when we also recognize beginning BSSW students who wrote the best papers in our SOWK-190 “Social Welfare Services” course. In 2006 we honored Mindy Hawkins Thielges (class of ’85) for her years of high quality service in nursing home social work and supervision. Mindy gave a moving and inspirational speech as she demonstrated the strength she has shown during her recent bouts with serious health challenges.

In 2007 we honored Audrey Splinter (class of ’73) based on her years of service in county mental health and other fields of practice. As has become a tradition, Audrey gave a moving presentation about what it has meant to her to work in our profession; she shared her high expectations for social work practice as a way to inspire the audience of beginning professionals.

We will be recognizing another graduate this Fall and would appreciate your nominations of any alum who has been working in the field at least 10 years since graduation!
The Nepali Student Community  by Marilyn Frank

Did you know that there are 150 students from Nepal attending Minnesota State University Mankato? Nepal is located between India and China and the capital city is Kathmandu. Nepal has a diverse landscape ranging from lowland plains in the south to the mountainous area of the Himalayas in the north which includes Mount Everest, the world’s highest mountain. Nepali is the official language, but many Nepali's speak English. I had an opportunity to visit this wonderful country in the spring of 2002. At Minnesota State Mankato, Nepali undergraduate and graduate students are studying computer science, nursing, engineering, business, and management information systems, graphic design and photography.

For the past couple years I have enjoyed the opportunity to serve as the Nestcom (Nepali Student Community) faculty advisor. Nestcom is a very active and supportive student club. For some Nepali students, moving to Mankato is the first time they have lived away from Nepal and their families. Nestcom members welcome and help new students get adjusted to the university and life in United States. They continue to support each other as students and as alums. Nepali students are hard working both in their studies and around campus. If you eat in the Student Union, or use the computers in ACC, chances are you have had an opportunity to chat with a student from Nepal.

Nepali students organized Nepal night in the early fall and a culture presentation in the spring. Nepal night is a wonderful event where you can try Nepali food, and learn more about Nepali culture, music and dance. This event is so popular if you attend Nepal night next year, you will want to purchase a ticket early because they sell out. I hope over the coming years social work students and students from Nepal will find opportunities to meet and get to know each other. If you want to learn more about Nepal or Nestcom, or have ideas for activities between Social Work and Nepali students, please contact me at marilyn.frank@mnsu.edu

Sabbatical Activities  by Christine Black-Hughes

My 2007-08 sabbatical has created many opportunities for learning and growing personally and professionally. Even though the sabbatical did not begin until the beginning of the 2007 Fall Semester, I believe the adventures of the past year began with a trip to East London, South Africa. I would like to thank three 2007 graduates who requested to complete Social Work 450 & 455 Senior Practicum & Seminar in East London, SA. The students were Amber Kinner (currently a Graduate Student at U of M, Duluth), Katie Prosnick, LSW (employed at St. Louis County DHS) and Justin Martin, LSW (Employed at St. Louis County CD Agency). I also want to thank The Social Work Faculty and Students at University of Fort Hare, East London (UFH) for the good fortune of being able to learn and teach in their community. I will be returning to South Africa this summer as co-presenter at the International Association of School of Social Work and will be staying with my social work Colleagues from UFH.

(continued)
Upon my return, I volunteered to conduct research for the Minnesota Department of Social Work as part of a 2007 Legislative Mandate. This research project required learning a very little about Geographical Information Systems (Mapping) and relying on a Minnesota State Mankato Graduate Geography Student, Yong-Seuk Park for keeping me from getting lost in the data. The title of this project is *Identification of Underserved Areas Served by Persons Licensed as Social Workers in Minnesota* and will be presented to the MN Legislators on December 15, 2008. My writing has also included article submissions on Female Attachments and on Ethics. I have also entered into a small private practice with Dr. Trisha Buss to provide EJJ and Certification for courts in South Central MN,

I have also had the ability to travel to Vermont, to see my son, and to Georgia with Phyllis and Tom Tiedeken to take a Cultural Geography course from Dr. Cindy Miller. I was also able to visit with MSU graduates and family in Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky, Pennsylvania, and Missouri and accompany my husband on a business trip to Italy and Monaco. I am looking forward to returning to the classroom in the fall to work with the students and the practicum supervisors.

**Social Work Students Lobby at Violence Against Women Action Day**

By Annelies Hagemeister

![Image of Social Work Students Lobby at Violence Against Women Action Day](image)

On February 27, twenty students enrolled in SOWK 427/527: “Social Work and Domestic Violence” attended the Violence Against Women Action Day at the Minnesota State Capitol. The group joined with advocates and survivors from the Committee Against Domestic Violence (CADA) to meet with Senator Julie Rosen. They heard from many advocates and survivors of abuse about their experiences and about statutory changes that are supported by various advocacy organizations such as the Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women and the Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault. Students made signs and attended a noon rally and a memorial tribute to the women, children, friends, and family killed due to domestic violence in 2007. As a follow-up to this trip, students wrote personal reflections about their experience at the rally. For most it was their first social action rally. Many mentioned being moved to action by what they heard. Students who attended also wrote letters to state or federal legislators advocating for legal changes or to maintain and increase funding for domestic violence and sexual assault programs.
Title IV-E Child Welfare Training Grant Update by Debra Gohagan

Recruiting, training, and retaining qualified, talented, and committed professionals are difficult tasks in any human service field of practice. It’s particularly so in child welfare. About 20 years ago, the federal government responded to this concern about the lack of well-trained child welfare professionals by making Title IV-E training funds available to support students graduating with MSW degrees. Recognizing that many child welfare professionals are bachelor’s level employees, Title IV-E educational funds were also made available to undergraduate social work programs in public institutions about 10 years ago.

As we reported in the last newsletter, The Minnesota BSW Child Welfare Consortium was established in Spring 2005 to address the need for social work trained child welfare professionals in the rural communities of Minnesota. This Consortium consists of five undergraduate social work programs plus the University Of Minnesota School Of Social Work and the Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare. The Consortium contracted with Minnesota Department of Human Services through the Title IV-E programs to provide increased educational opportunities and funds to prepare bachelor’s level social workers for a career in public child welfare services in rural Minnesota.

MSU Mankato Department of Social Work BSSW program has supported 31 child welfare stipend students since Spring 2005, graduating 22 students as of December 2007. To date, our child welfare stipend students have completed their senior practica in 14 counties; 11 of Mankato’s child welfare stipend graduates have found employment in public child welfare agencies in 9 counties in Minnesota and 1 in Nevada. In addition, 2 Mankato students have pursued MSW degrees and were accepted as students in their respective school’s Child Welfare stipend programs; 10 students have completed their employment payback.

Students who receive the stipend report ‘feeling honored’ to be a ‘child welfare scholar’ and describe a satisfaction with having ‘a direction and focus’ for their studies and careers. Several indicate the child welfare stipend support made it possible to graduate with a BSSW degree. The County supervisors who have supervised our child welfare stipend students also report being very satisfied with having students who are prepared for their placement experience and who they know are committed to a career as a child welfare social worker. One supervisor reports that she was so pleased with the child welfare stipend students who completed their senior practica in her agency that she “hired 3 in one year”.

For more information about the BSW Child Welfare Consortium or the MSU Mankato Child Welfare Stipend student programs, contact: Debra Gohagan, d.gohagan@mnsu.edu <mailto:d.gohagan@mnsu.edu> ; 507-389-1699

New Staff Member Takes Over the Front Office -- Missy Manderfeld

After 19 years as our Office Administrative Specialist, Phyllis Tiedeken retired in July of 2007! Stepping into her place is our new OAS, Missy Manderfeld. Missy brings experience not only on campus, but in community agencies such as the Region IX Area Agency on Aging and the VINE program. She has already demonstrated her interest in our profession and quickly convinced us that she has the skills to maintain the department’s strong support for both students and faculty.
Keep in Touch!!

There are so many ways that you can keep in touch -- let us know where you are and what you are doing via telephone (507-389-6504), email (social-work@mnsu.edu), on the contacts page on our website (sbs.mnsu.edu/socialwork/contact/), or when you see us at conferences or site visits. We’re always looking for more field supervisors, donors, and distinguished alumae!

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